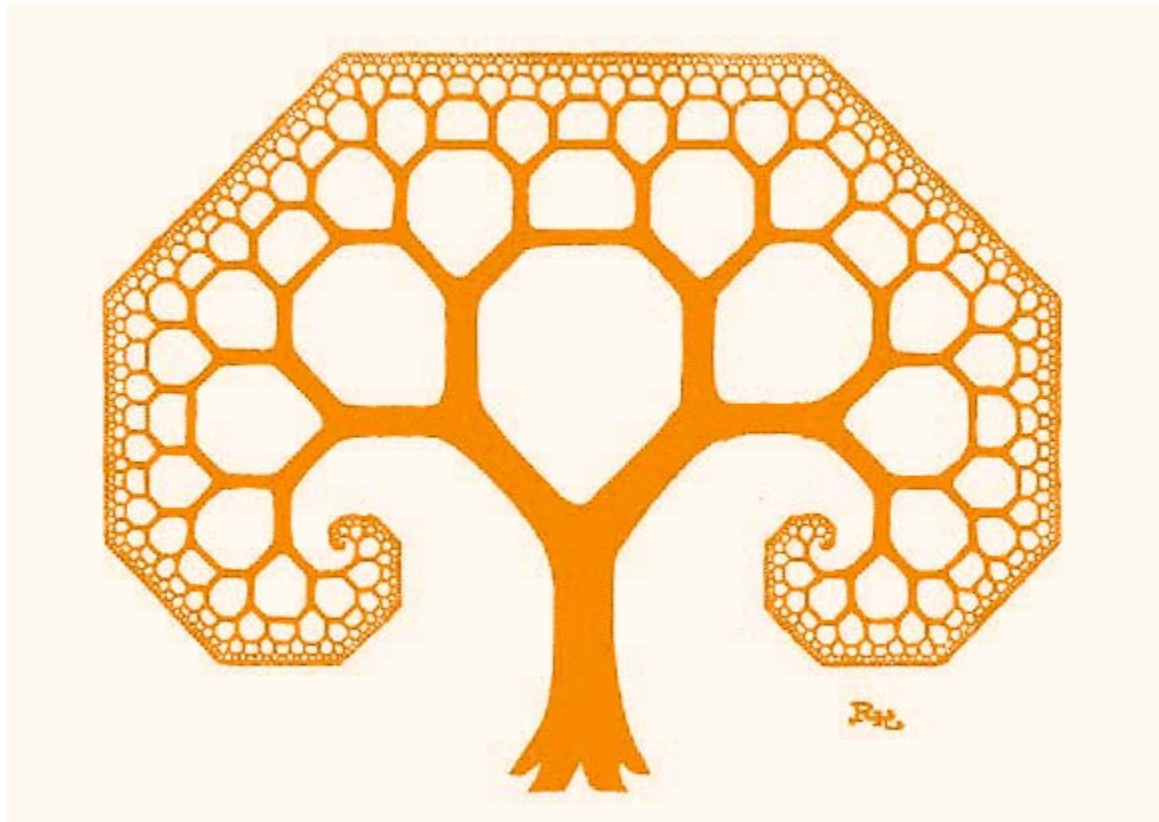
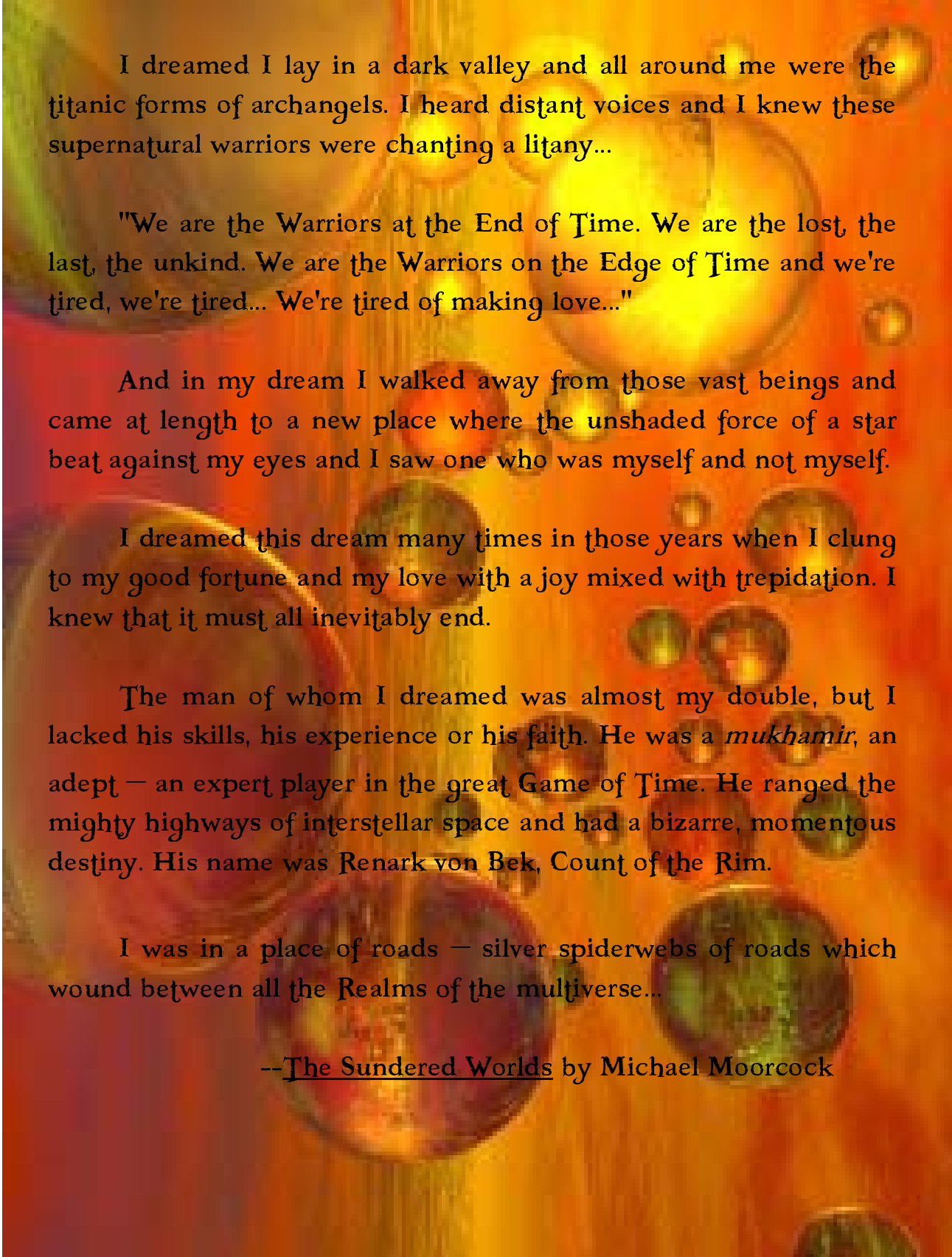


THE ASH IN THE TWILIGHT
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A Campaign Bible of the Worlds of Michael Moorcock



I dreamed I lay in a dark valley and all around me were the titanic forms of archangels. I heard distant voices and I knew these supernatural warriors were chanting a litany...

"We are the Warriors at the End of Time. We are the lost, the last, the unkind. We are the Warriors on the Edge of Time and we're tired, we're tired... We're tired of making love..."

And in my dream I walked away from those vast beings and came at length to a new place where the unshaded force of a star beat against my eyes and I saw one who was myself and not myself.

I dreamed this dream many times in those years when I clung to my good fortune and my love with a joy mixed with trepidation. I knew that it must all inevitably end.

The man of whom I dreamed was almost my double, but I lacked his skills, his experience or his faith. He was a *mukhamir*, an adept — an expert player in the great Game of Time. He ranged the mighty highways of interstellar space and had a bizarre, momentous destiny. His name was Renark von Bek, Count of the Rim.

I was in a place of roads — silver spiderwebs of roads which wound between all the Realms of the multiverse...

--The Sundered Worlds by Michael Moorcock

THE ASH IN THE TWILIGHT

This is a role-playing campaign using the Stormbringer 5th edition rules, and will take player characters from the dark and decadent lands of the Young Kingdoms to the cold and silvery paths of the roads between the worlds and beyond. It will be a game of epic fantasy adventure, with philosophical and pop-culture overtones, just like the novels of Michael Moorcock.

Since not everyone is familiar with Moorcock's works, this 'bible' is meant to give general background information on his worlds, themes, characters, books, and maybe a few brief looks into what's going to be happening in the game. With luck, it will help guide you in creating characters that are suited to a tale of dark cosmic fantasy and adventure along the paths trodden by the Eternal Champion and his foes the Lords of Law and Chaos.

While this is a fantasy setting, there are certain things that set it apart from others, not the least of which is the fact that magic and science exist side by side, to varying degrees, along with demons, angels, and even stranger things. Nothing is impossible in these worlds, and nothing is forbidden. But it never, and I do mean NEVER, occurs the way one might expect.

Moorcock's vision is one influenced by literature, history, pop culture, rock and roll, and at various times, cynicism, romance, psychedelia, and rebellion. His heroes are always greatly outnumbered by the forces that are arrayed against them, often thrust into unfamiliar environments or circumstances, and frequently tragic. They are sometimes saviors, and often sinners. They are lost souls waging a war against both Heaven and Hell, wanting only their freedom to choose their final damnation or salvation, rather than having it chosen for them.

But enough of that for now... Inside you'll hopefully find everything you need. So come with me now to the Million Spheres, and see what's happening in your part of the multiverse...



COSMOLOGY

A Description of the Second Ether and the Million Spheres



In the Beginning:

There must always be a beginning.

In this case, the best place to begin is with a description. For every choice a person makes, there are an infinite number of possible outcomes. Each outcome creates its own universe. Each universe orbits the others, moving through a vast and infinite space known as 'The Second Ether'. They are known as 'The Million Spheres', though they are not spheres, and their numbers are infinite. The silvery paths known as 'The Moonbeam Roads' wind through the spheres and those who are knowledgeable can travel them and move from world to world.

The Second Ether

The Second Ether is the battleground for a number of cosmic powers who all vie for control over The Million Spheres and their inhabitants. Their agents are most often found among the Spheres, playing what they refer to as 'The Game of Time.' The 'Game' is actually a rather subtle and strategic war, used to tip the scales in favor of one side or the other. These agents are called *jugadores*, gamblers whose stakes are not only worlds, but the whole of everything that has ever been or will be. The very greatest players are given the title of *mukhamir*, which implies a level of skill far and above those of ordinary players. They are considered so skilled that their arts are almost supernatural. They are the Adepts of the game, who play the most dangerous scenarios, for the highest stakes.

The Forces that act on this level are threefold: Chaos, Law, and Balance. The inhabitants of the Million Spheres are all directed by these forces in one sense or another. In some worlds, Law might prevail and it is there that Chaos' Agents might work to tip it into their own realm. Balance seeks out equilibrium between the two, and attempts to prevent either from ever gaining complete victory. Agents are free to choose which

power they might serve, but a betrayal of any of them can result in serious consequences for the betrayer.

The inhabitants of the second Ether are almost exclusively either players of the Game of Time, or those who support the players. There are occasional wanderers found, though these seldom venture far from their homes in the Million Spheres. These are generally wizards and scientists whose arts have opened up small parts of the Second Ether for their use.

The silver web of pathways that crisscross between the Spheres allow those in the Second Ether to travel anywhere they might want, provided that they can find their way. Navigation can be difficult for even the most seasoned travelers, and most who venture into the black void between the Spheres without a guide become lost forever. Some end up walking the moonbeam roads forever looking for the way home.



The Million Spheres

Perhaps more important, and certainly more varied than the Second Ether are the realms of the Million Spheres. Every world that could possibly exist is found in one of the Million Spheres. By extension of this, everything and anything can exist in the Spheres. This makes them very attractive to the *jugadores* and others who walk the moonbeam roads. Their games are played within the Spheres, and this is from these worlds that they draw their resources.

It would be foolish to try and describe them all. Suffice to say there are worlds trapped in eternal ice ages, worlds where civilizations have grown and died a hundred thousand times, worlds where time has run its course, worlds that have achieved levels of science that appear like magic, and others where magic looks like science and technology. Clubs can be found next to swords, and guns, and lasers.

It is the interplay of the three great powers of Law, Chaos, and Balance that determine what is or is not possible in a given Sphere rather than any set of natural physical laws. A Sphere that tends toward Chaos will have more of a more unpredictable nature, and magic is more likely to function. In a Sphere where Law reigns, science will curtail the unreasonable influence of sorcery. And where balance is ascendant, magic and science might exist side by side.

The races of the Million Spheres are equally varied. Predominantly they are human, but also can be found the amoral and elfin race known as 'The Eldren,' which are also known as the Vadagh, or the Melnibonéans. There are genetic mutations caused by wars with nuclear weapons, or biological agents, or magic, or even natural evolution.

There are created races that would not exist without the intervention of others. And there are monsters, demons, angels, and fantastic beasts.

Sometimes the Spheres are close enough together to influence one another, or interact on a regular basis. Sometimes they orbit each other, or lie in line with one another. Usually, the Spheres cannot be seen with the unaided eye, and require magic or high science to make them visible. There are exceptions, however, depending on what powers hold sway in a given Sphere.



Legends of the Second Ether

As with any world, the Second Ether has its own legends and mythology. However, unlike most other mythologies, it is not the basis of a religion, because it is not a god who is the central figure. The Second Ether is a realm of gods, so it is only appropriate that their legends revolve around a mortal hero.

This hero is a one that exists in every world, and at every time. He (although sometimes this figure manifests as a woman) is called The Eternal Champion. This being is a figure that rises at crisis points in a world's history and guides it toward one of the three powers. The figure is cursed to fight forever, from one end of time to the other, in every world, and in every guise.

The Champion rarely knows who he is, or what his destiny is. He may have bad dreams or nightmares in which he hears the other names by which he is called across the dimensions: Elric, Ulrich Skarsol, Asquiol, Erekoze, Dorian Hawkmoon, Corum, Von Bek, Jerry Cornelius, John Daker, Jherek Carnelian. The names are endless.

The Eternal Champion is a tragic figure, doomed to a violent life and often a violent death, he seldom knows happiness or peace. For this reason, the Champion is usually surrounded by others to help him survive and cope. These others don't always have the shadow of doom that lies over the Champion, but don't always have easy lives either.

The Companion is frequently a figure that is found by the side of the Eternal Champion, but not always. Certainly, this is a more fluid role than the Champion, and also the one more likely to change frequently. Many times though, it is the Companion who carries more knowledge of the fate of the Champion than the Champion himself.

Equally important to the Champion is The Love. The Love is frequently the most tragic figure in the mythology. Sometimes this figure is slain to provide the impetus for the Champion to take up arms. Other times, the Love is removed from him by other means. It is very rare for the Love to ever survive long once the Champion appears.

But for every hero, there must be a villain. The Eternal Adversary is always lurking about, waiting to challenge the Champion. Again, there are sometimes multiple Adversaries at any given time. The Adversary has as many names as the Champion; Gaynor the Damned, Theleb Ka'aarna, Frank Cornelius... And unlike the stories of old, sometimes the Villain wins.

The Cycle of the Eternal Champion has many diverse elements to it even beyond the central players. These elements are often legends unto themselves as well, though their names and appearance may vary wildly from one incarnation of the Cycle to the next.

For instance, no Champion can be without a weapon which he wields against his foes. Often, in the Eternal Champion Cycle, it is a black bladed sword, engraved with runes that glow an unholy blood red in battle. In the case of Elric, the sword is called Stormbringer, a fearsome weapon that drinks souls. In the case of Ulrich von Bek, it is Mournblade, the twin of Stormbringer. More terrible still is the black sword of Erekoze, called Kanajana, whose very presence weakens and whose touch is deadly. But it is not

always black in color, nor is it always a sword. The rosy-hued Sword of the Dawn that was wielded by Hawkmoon against the forces of Gran Bretan is thought to be an aspect of this weapon, as is the sleek needle pistol and laser that was used by Jerry Cornelius.

The weapon of the Champion varies in power depending on the laws of the particular Sphere it manifests in. Sometimes it is no more than an ordinary weapon. At other times, such as with Stormbringer or Kanajana, it is practically a power unto itself. It is usually something that suits the Champion and world that it is found in.

More unusual are the manifestations of the Balance that appear throughout the Million Spheres. The mysterious agent of the Balance is the phantasmal Warrior in Jet and Gold, who frequently appears to convey the words of the Balance, or to aid the Champion in his work. If he is ever slain in battle, his armor falls empty to the ground. It vanishes when it is not being watched. He might appear again, depending on the wishes of the Balance.

Another incarnation of the Balance is known as The Runestaff. The Runestaff is perhaps the ultimate manifestation of the power of Balance in the Spheres. It appears to be nothing more than a short rod of glossy black material, whose surface is covered in tiny, undecipherable glyphs and runes. However, it is a powerful tool. The Warrior in Jet and Gold is its protector, but it sometimes allows itself to be carried by those it deems both worthy, useful, and most in need. It is said that

any army that carries the Runestaff as its standard cannot be defeated.

Finally there is the City of Tanelorn. It is also called Eternal Tanelorn because its legend stretches across all the Million Spheres. It is said to be a city of peace and rest for any who are able to come within its sphere of influence. The Lords of Law and Chaos are both prohibited from entering its walls. As for the city itself, it is difficult to find. It is ironic that Elric of Melniboné found its peace so easily, and yet gave it up because he could find no solace there, when so many others seek its protection and never find it. Sometimes it appears as an empty ruin, and other times as a thriving metropolis. Its location seems to shift with the whims of the Balance. A legend has grown up around the city, that only those who need its solitude and peace will ever Find it.



A GAZETTEER

Of the Young Kingdoms



An ancient, dying world...

This is the Sphere where the initial part of the Campaign will take place, and so will be the one which will be detailed the most. The Young Kingdoms is Earth, but a million years ago, at the height of a dozen long forgotten and unknown civilizations. The continents have not even moved into their present familiar configuration.

At the heart of the Young Kingdoms is the island of Melniboné, The Dragon Isle, seat of the millennia old Bright Empire. The Eldren race that inhabits the island, here called Melnibonéans, have worshipped and served the Lords of Chaos since they first came to this world. They have dominated the world for almost four-thousand years, controlling the seas with their Golden Battle Barges and the skies with the Dragons which gave their name to their island.

The Emperors of Melniboné have held pacts with all the Elemental Rulers and Beast Lords for mutual service and protection, but paramount to them is their alliance with Arioeh, Knight of the Swords and Duke of Hell. This Lord of Chaos is the patron of the Ruby Throne, and it is the exclusive right of Emperors of the Bright Empire that they can call upon him for aid.

However, after so many centuries, the Bright Empire is in decline and has retreated to it island, and now relaxes in decadent splendor and a drug-induced haze inside the scintillating towers of their capital city, Imrryr, The Dreaming City. There are no commoners in Melniboné, there are only aristocrats. The lowest most base of them are still wealthier than the kings of most other lands. Even the slaves which serve them are kept in wealth and opulence.



The reputation of the Melnibonéans in their world is not a positive one. They are hated far and wide, and the tales of their brutality are still told today to frighten children. They are considered a race of demonic sorcerers and monsters. Most are quite happy that the Bright Empire has lost interest in outside affairs, but are also more than happy to continue trading with the wealthy nation.

The Emperor of Melniboné is presently Sadrac the 86th who is old and sickly. His heir apparent is his son Prince Elric, an albino who needs potions to maintain his strength. However, his claim to the Ruby Throne is contested by his cousin, Prince Yyrkoon. The gossip at Court is rife with speculation about the brewing conflict between the two. Elric is physically weak, but by far the superior sorcerer. The throne may go to whoever is able to summon the more powerful demon. On the other hand, Yyrkoon is no fool, and knows a good assassin could decide the issue before it comes to that.



The decline of the Bright Empire has brought about the emergence of a large number of newer nations, collectively known as 'the Young Kingdoms' due to their age when compared to the Bright Empire. These kingdoms vie among themselves for precedence in the world, but all keep a wary eye on the Dragon Isle, lest the Dreaming City wake and re-emerge into the world from behind its impenetrable Sea Maze.

The Theocracy of Pan Tang attempts to emulate the Dragon Isle and the Melnibonéans, and have earned the disdain of the Melnibonéans and the fear of the other Young Kingdoms. They are brutal and fundamentalist followers of Chaos, and seek to convert by the sword if other methods fail. They indulge in piracy and raids, and the word of their Theocrat, Jagreen Lern, from his citadel in the capital city of Hwamgaarl, the City of Screaming Statues, is tantamount to the word of the Lords of Chaos themselves. Melnibonéans consider them upstarts and poseurs. The feeling is mutual, as the Theocrat feels that Pan Tang is the natural successor to the Bright Empire, and that they now hold the mandate of the Lords of Chaos to spread their worship across the world. Their grasp of the tenets of Chaos seems limited to its darker aspects.

If Pan Tang claims to be the successor of Melniboné on the basis of religion, The Island of the Purple Towns would be its successor economically. The capital city is Menii and the Lords of the Purple Towns are the richest merchant princes in the world. The Island itself sits strategically between the lands of the western Young Kingdoms and the lands collectively known as 'The Unknown East.' It has a healthy trading relationship in both directions, and a huge merchant fleet. At any given port in the Young Kingdoms, a significant number of ships docked at any given time will be from the Purple Towns. Unlike Pan Tang, The Purple Towns honor the Lords of Law, preferring a steady paycheck to the uncertain benefits of Chaos worship.

Dharijor is a kingdom dominated by the shadow of Pan Tang. They are prosperous, with fertile farmlands and forests for wood and mines for metal. The ruling class is wealthy and eager for conquest. They've expanded their borders 5 times in the last hundred years and collected tribute from neighboring Tarkesh a number of times. Dharijor, in turn, pays tribute to Pan Tang and worships the Lords of Chaos. Bloodsport is a common enough entertainment, but they tend to focus on the more positive aspects of Chaos than Pan Tang does.

Nearby to Dharijor is Jharkor, a land who trades in metals brought from Myrrhyn in the interior of the continent. They are much like Dharijor, but do not bow to Pan Tang. Although they honor the Lords of Chaos, they are not actively hostile to followers of Law. In fact, the capitol city of Dhakos is home to a Temple of Law. Jharkor is considered a sophisticated nation by the standards of the Young Kingdoms, and is highly urban.

The Mountainous area known as Myrrhyn is the home to a strange race of winged humans. It is said that this race had been brought to this world when the Young Kingdoms were new by alien gods that were neither lords of Law or Chaos. Their lost magical arts were based on these unknown gods. They are isolationist, and slowly dying out. Some have begun to venture out into the world though as possibilities for them at home dry up.

Shazaar is a backwards, rustic land. It has but a single city that is small compared to most other Kingdoms, and is primarily an agricultural nation. The Lords of Law reign



supreme here, and it is a carefully regulated, feudal system. It's a poor, but proud kingdom. On the edges of the Shazaar are wastelands where monsters dwell. It is said that the wastelands here were once under the control of the ancient enemies of the Bright Empire, the non-human Dharzai.

The Kingdom of Tarkesh is thought to produce the bravest and greatest sailors in the world. The ships they build are sold to other nations, particularly in the North, and the people are more than willing to hire themselves out to crew any ship that needs one. The people there are passionate about the sea, and even worship a minor Lord of Law called Pozz-Mann-Llyrr whose realm is the sea.

If Law is too powerful anywhere in the Young Kingdoms, it is in the Kingdom of Vilmir. The land is worn out from overwork. The large and powerful noble and priestly classes rule harshly and there is a tremendous polarity between rich and poor. Vilmir's chief industry (for most of the population in urban) is the importation of raw materials which it then fashions into a wide variety of trade goods of mediocre quality. Civil war periodically burns through the land since the overlarge noble class produces many individuals with good claims to the throne. The worship of Chaos is forbidden, and strict adherence to the tenets of Law is required here. Many Vilmirans leave to find a better chance for life elsewhere.

To the North of the Young Kingdoms is a loose confederation of duchies known as Ilmiora. It's a pleasant land of rolling farms and forests. There is no King here, but a series of city-states bound together by friendship and trade. People here worship as they please, though technically Ilmiora follows Law. Temples to Chaos are not allowed, but

traveling priests and agents are common. There are ruins from the long lost Dharzi and Bright Empire's occupations of this area ages ago. The Sighing Desert, which lies to the north of Ilmiora is an unforgiving wasteland, where the fabled city of Tanelorn is said to be found.

The Weeping Waste is a wide and sweeping area of unsettled wilderness. Its much like the steppe-lands of Russia on modern Earth. Never a significant factor in the politics of the Young Kingdoms, or the Bright Empire before it, The Wastes are the home to a number of nomadic and barbarian tribes. These tribes however, have one asset of considerable value to the other Kingdoms: They produce some of the finest armor and bows known to exist. They are not skilled with working metal, so their armor is made of carved and lacquered wood, lighter than plate mail and superior in all ways to leather. It has the additional advantage of being able to float. As for their bows, they are only surpassed in power by the fabled bone-bows of Melniboné. These weapons and armor are often carried into the Young Kingdoms by traders and those nomads who hire themselves out as mercenaries.

The Kingdom of Argimiliar is in many ways the most open of the Young Kingdoms. The nobility includes a large number of merchant princes. Religiously, Law and Chaos are both worshipped, with perhaps a slight edge going to Chaos. The Temples often have good natured competition between them, indulging in shows of magic and gadgets. Sports and music are popular there. The capital city of Cadsandria is known throughout the world for its Universities.

One of the most bizarre nations of the Young Kingdoms is Pikarayd. The people are all paranoid and xenophobic. They drill constantly for a war they expect to occur between Law and Chaos. As a result, they are some of the most skilled soldiers in the world. The priests of Chaos encourage the paranoia. The only access allowed to the country is in a small trading enclave in the port city of Chalal. Strangers, in fact, are sometimes sacrificed to the Lords of Chaos in out-of-the-way temples in Pikarayd. The nation is faithful to the Theocrat of Pan Tang but also recognizes its own religious leader, the Hierophant. The King and his advisors concentrate of war while the priests run the day to day business of the country. Strange beasts roam the wilderness here.

Lormyr is a kingdom almost as storied as Melniboné itself. It is the most ancient stronghold of Law in the Young Kingdoms. And like Melniboné, it is a nation in decline and has been declining for the past four hundred years. The Lormyrian Empire has been shrinking as Lormyr turns itself spiritually inwards. Lormyr once stood at the edge of the world. Myshella, Empress of the Dawn, the ultimate Agent of Law in the Young Kingdoms waited at its edge for a hero to come, and when he came they formed the rest of the world. Now, the Tower of Kaneloon is simply her home, and the Lords of Chaos look longingly towards it, hoping to use it as a gateway for more of their forces into the Young Kingdoms. The pace of life has slowed here. Even the language they speak is archaic.

The Kingdom of Filkhar is the opposite of Lormyr. It is a vibrant and flourishing place that patronizes the arts and indulges in a lot of freewheeling trade. They pay lip service to Law and then go on with business as usual.

Oin and Yu are two nations that were once provinces of Lormyr before they fell into backwards lands overrun by barbarians. These are some of the some of the best lands to acquire fur, though there is only a single decent port city between the two lands; Dhoz-Kam. Few have anything good to say about the barbarians that live here. They are short, dirty, smelly kilt-wearing brutes. They worship nature spirits and any manifestation of Chaos they might encounter. They have little use for anything they can't eat. The people are short, gnarled, and hairy.

The last significant lands of the Young Kingdoms are the countries known as 'The Unknown East'. These mysterious lands are almost unknown to the vast majority of people. Their names are known; Eshmir and Phum. It is known that Elwher is the capitol of Eshmir and that it is the home to Warrior-Priests of Chaos. Its people tend to be red-haired and short. If one were to cross Ireland with China, you might have an approximation of their society.

The People

The Young Kingdoms are made up mostly of humans of all racial stocks. No discrimination takes place on the basis of appearance however, unless the person clearly has non-human blood. After thousands of years of subjugation to the Melnibonéans, humans no longer view themselves in terms of distinct races. While regional differences in general appearance and dress are noted, factors such as skin, hair, and eye color are not typically a cause for prejudice. In the unknown east, red hair and green eyes are more common.



However, those who display Melnibonéan characteristics fare less well. A Melnibonéan is typically tall, slender, with slightly pointed ears and unusually colored almond-shaped eyes. They typically have dark hair, a languid, noble bearing, and a sardonic wit. There are long memories in the Young Kingdoms, and any link to the conquerors of old draws a good deal of suspicion and distrust, if not outright hatred.

Pure-blooded Melnibonéans are the target of much of this feeling, as they are all of the classes that used to rule the Young Kingdoms. Most, if not all, still keep human slaves. In fact, it is often through these slaves that Melnibonéans are able to interact with the Young Kingdoms. A Melnibonéan showing his face without body-guards or slaves had better be able to defend himself, else he might suffer a beating or worse. Nevertheless, the death of a Melnibonéan abroad always runs the risk of retribution from the Dragon Isle, and few are willing to risk such a fate.

Those who carry only half- Melnibonéan blood are easier targets, but still not exactly 'safe.' As with all conquering forces, there was inevitably some interbreeding between the victor and vanquished. Often times, Melnibonéan officers or nobles took human slaves as concubines, and the resultant offspring, though rare, still occurred. Half-Melnibonéans are looked down upon by those of pure blood, but are still counted as 'one of them.' The half-breeds themselves consider themselves superior to ordinary humans, and so their haughty demeanor often creates friction. Half-blooded Melnibonéans are *always* raised by the Melnibonéan parent.

What makes Melnibonéans so bad? Why are they so feared? Well, consider this. The Lords of Chaos brought the Eldren to this world thousands of years ago. So many years in fact that they don't even know the early history of their own race. However, they DO know their obligations to the Lords of Chaos, particularly Duke Arioch. It was a matter of worship and duty for them to be as creative as possible in all endeavors, including such normally negative things as war, torture, slavery... This skewed aesthetic has imprinted not only the Melnibonéan race with a rather amoral outlook, but their 'artistic' exercises have etched themselves into the memory of their victims. As a single example of this, consider what is a popular musical instrument on the Dragon Isle; a number of human slave, whose vocal cords have been mutilated so that they can only produce a single given note. They are then whipped in a particular sequence so that their screams combine into a piece of beautiful music.

The other clearly non-human race that is found in the Young Kingdoms, though in even fewer numbers than Melnibonéans, is the Myrrhyn. These winged humans were actually the first race in the world, before even the Eldren came to the Dragon Isle and founded the Bright Empire. Their strange gods placed them here for unknown reasons, and they have been a reclusive culture ever since, staying in their aeries and mountain peaks. They seldom interacted with the outside world, and save for a series of wars they fought with gigantic white owls, they have been a peaceful group of hunters and gatherers. However, their strange deities seem to have vanished, and with them the prosperity of their race. Now they worship the Elemental Queen of the Air, and trade modestly with the outside world. The men of Myrrhyn tend to be short and bald, the women are slender and beautiful, and have hair.

Not all Myrrhyn are able to fly, despite the wings. Those who can't are considered crippled, and are cared for with a sort of tender sadness. These individuals are usually obsessed with overcoming their disability and will sometimes travel in search of strange magics or technology that will allow them to overcome their disability.

A word about Melnibonéan slaves should be said here as well. Though technically not a separate race, the humans who serve Melnibonéan masters do have certain distinct traits that can set them apart from other humans. Among runaways, it is common that they bear scars of some sort (physical and otherwise) and that they may be extraordinarily resilient. Melnibonéans frequently make use of will-destroying drugs and magic to both control and care for their slaves, and so humans who have served the Dragon Lords tend to be less hardy than one might expect, given their circumstances. Some of them are even surgically modified to increase their beauty or dexterity, since their Lords love to be entertained by beauty, song and dance. Most Melnibonéan slaves are kept in luxury that is the match for any Prince or Duke of the Young Kingdoms.

Professions of the Young Kingdoms

There are a wide variety of professions in the Young Kingdoms, as in any world. Since few would actively choose the life of an adventurer, most adventurers have an odd set of skills that reflect their former lives. Some are more suitable than others for adventuring. Some offer particular perks or are only available from certain lands. It is assumed that player characters have put their past professions behind them in order to become professional adventurers.

Beggars – Beggars are found in all cities, and in the beggar Kingdom of Nadsokor. Beggars are grotesque, either by nature or design. They cunningly seek to separate people from their money, and often design elaborate scams to do so.

Craftsmen or Shopkeeper - Craftsmen are skilled at manufacturing goods for sale or trade among the Young Kingdoms. Shopkeepers provided the sale of goods and services, such as Innkeeper or Potter.

Sailors – Sailor's come in many varieties, from the merchant to the pirate, and from simple crewman to mate to captain. The Sea is the most reliable path that links together the Young Kingdoms, and so sailors are ubiquitous.

Hunters – Although there are civilized lands, there are still vast wildernesses between the cities and villages of the Young Kingdoms. Hunters are skilled in tracking and bringing down animals and beasts.

The Lost and Forgotten – There are those drifters who seem to have no past, or who have lost quite literally everything, including their memory. Sometimes they are driven by dreams or visions that they can't comprehend.

Mercenary or Bodyguard – These are simply warriors who contract their skill at arms in return for money. They are fairly common in the Young Kingdoms.

Merchant – These folk make a living through trading with accounts and agents. They rarely travel and work in abstract trade. If they become adventurers, it is usually because they have lost their wealth in some manner or other.

Minor Noble – Either far removed from the title, disinherited, or from an impoverished family, these unfortunates seldom have a steady income. Adventuring lends a sort of legitimacy to them.

Nomad – The nomads of the Sighing Desert are a hardy folk, proud, and quick to anger. They are uncomfortable outside of their own lands.

Paid Assassin or Thug – These people are paid to kill or strong-arm victims. Often, they have less sympathy for their employers than for their victims, but then, they don't allow that to get in the way of carrying out their job.

Peasant or Farmer – Peasants of the Young Kingdoms are more serf than free farmer. They are bound to the land and treated only slightly better than slaves. If they are able to escape from it, they try to never go back.

Physician or Apothecary – Obviously, skilled in healing or medicines.

Scribe or Engineer – Civil servants who oversee legal documentation or construction projects. Frequently involved in small-scale corruption or bribery.



Shaman, Priest, or Cultist – simply the chosen who follow the tenets of the Lords of Law, Chaos, or Elemental powers. They are sometimes favored with knowledge and abilities from the powers they worship.

Slave – Either Freed or Escaped, an Ex-Slave will normally do almost anything to keep from returning to servitude. Melnibonéan slaves could have been trained in almost anything, but most are menial laborers.

Small Trader – These are independent cargo carriers, sometimes running a wagon, or caravan, or maybe a small ship. Most small traders who take up the life of adventure do so because their business was destroyed in some fashion, perhaps by pirates or bandits.

Soldier, Guard or Watchman – Professional men-at-arms are always in demand, whether as city guard, marines onboard merchant ships, or working for a noble.

Tax or Rent Collector – Is any profession more hated or more necessary? Employed by Property owners or noblemen, these people either rely on good bargaining skills to squeeze just a little bit more out of the tenants, or they lose their job.

Thief – Where there are cities, there are thieves. Thieves make enemies, but are good at what they do.

Troubadour or Entertainer – Not exactly the highest paying profession, but certainly a high profile one. These sorts can be found the world over.



Magic in the Young Kingdoms

The Young Kingdoms are rich with magic. While not ubiquitous, it is common enough that people don't consider it all that unusual. The Melnibonéans are known to be the foremost sorcerers in the world, and they carried many enchanted items, magical knowledge, and summoned creatures to the ends of the Bright Empire. The inhuman Dharzi, the ancient foes of the Dragon Isle had wizardry of their own, and the wars between these two eldritch foes littered the world with items of power.

Melniboné has historically held alliances with the Lords of Chaos, Balance, The Elemental Rulers, and the Beast and Plant Lords. They know many of the secret names that can be used to call upon these powers for aid. Barring that, they have received gifts of these Powers over the millennia, and may have access to these items as well.

This is to say nothing of the strange magics known by the Myrrhyn, who were taught unusual arts by the alien gods who brought them to the Young Kingdoms. It is whispered that their shaman even know the ways of Necromancy. However, because they are reclusive and rare, no one can confirm these rumors.

The priests of Pan Tang are known to use horrible chaos magic and summoned creatures in their bid to conquer the Young Kingdoms. They are not as beloved by the powers of Balance as the Melnibonéans, so they don't have alliances with the Elemental rulers or the Beast and Plant Lords. But they can command many spells, and know the names of many demons and powers, which makes them formidable opponents.

Summoned demons can be quite versatile. On their own, they can fight on their own and retain some semblance of free will and independence, even when bound to a master. Similarly, demons bound into objects can enhance the object in question and provide special powers to it. Demon objects can be recognized by the Symbol of Chaos scribed somewhere on it. Bound demons will have some object that binds them to their master, which will in turn have the Sign of Chaos on it.



A Demon need not be bound in order to be summoned into the Young Kingdoms. Indeed, a sorcerer is limited in the number of demons he or she might have bound to him at any given time. Exceeding that number (which varies depending on the power and intelligence of the wizard) is dangerous as it allows the creatures to rebel against their master. However, demons may be brought into the world and negotiated with for their services on a case by case basis. Most bound demons have requirements that their masters must fulfill for their contract to be maintained.

Demons come with a wide variety of powers, and in different breeds. There are also other divisions called Greater and Lesser Demons that can help to identify their power level. Powers can vary with the purpose of the demon. Breeds of demons are demons that are of an unchanging type, whose qualities are well established. There is archaic terminology about the purposes behind certain demons. It is rarely used today, but can occasionally be found in certain ancient grimoires. The types thus defined are; Demons of Desire, Demons of Combat, Demons of Defense, Demons of Knowledge, and Demons of Transportation.

A final type of bound demon that must be discussed are those who carry a 'ward-pact'. This is a special defense and represents the combined might of ALL demons who will rise up against the object of the ward-pact should it be used against the pacted demon. For instance, a demon with a ward-pact against swords would be protected utterly from swords of all kinds. Even the powerful demon-blade Stormbringer has been known to be unwilling to strike against a demon so protected. The person who raises a blade against such a demon will find the weapon shattered and himself torn apart utterly by those that would dare to try and break the ward-pact. Ward-pacted demons are required by the conditions of their binding to warn the attacker in advance, if it is capable of communication.

Summoned Elementals are only capable of acting on their own element. Additional problems with elementals are that though they can be bound into object, doing such earns the enmity of the Elemental Ruler who will ever consider the Sorcerer an enemy. Likewise, the working of an elemental to death also anger the Elemental Rulers.

It should be remembered that Magic is a distinctly chaotic working. The most powerful sorcerers in the Multiverse are those that owe their allegiance to Chaos. While the summoning of elementals or use of the Spells of Law are not in themselves chaotic, they are more limited in scope than the spells of Chaos. Each time a person uses magic, he tips ever so slightly more to the camp of Chaos.

It is also possible for Characters to call upon the Lords of Law and Chaos for aid. Please note that this does not mean one summons them, as to presume that much is an affront and insult to those beings. Still, one can call on them and offer up something appropriate to them as a sacrifice, and they may deign to respond. This is on their whim, of course. Such a calling is dangerous and seldom likely to succeed. However, they have been known to answer, even if it is only to say "So sorry, can't help you now. Good Luck though!"

Some people, sorcerer or not, actively pursue an alliance with one of the Great Powers, and so act as their Agent in the worlds they travel. These agents may gain certain boons from their allegiance and also might have greater luck at getting the Lords of their power to respond personally. Those who dedicate themselves wholly and actively work to achieve the goals of the Power they serve may even become Champions of that Power, and gain even further advantages

THE GREAT POWERS



Among the players of the Game of Time, most give their allegiance to the powers of Law, Chaos, or Balance. The choice is left to free will, but once a Power is able to get its hooks into someone, it is remarkably difficult to break its hold on them. Difficult, but not impossible. The Eternal Champion is often able to break the bonds of allegiance, so Free Will is almost as important as the powers themselves.

However, the Agents of the Powers are organized within the Second Ether. The largest numbers of them serve Law and Chaos. Those who serve Law are called *The Singularity* and those who serve Chaos are known as *The Chaos Engineers*. These groups have ships that are capable of moving them up and down the Scales of the Multiverse doing the bidding of the Powers.

Chaos:

Some *jugadores* serve the Forces of Chaos. Chaos is unpredictable, harsh, and changeable. It is a creative force that can produce both art and war, romance and madness. Chaos is not, in itself, a bad thing. It is not evil, though it can have evil within it. The sign of Chaos is the Eight-Pointed Arrow: signifying the power to choose any outcome from many possibilities. The Lords of Chaos are like unto Gods, but even they serve a higher power, Chaos in its most pure form which they call “The Great Mood.”

It is said that the greatest of the Chaos Engineers that ply the scales of the Second Ether is Captain Wilhelmina Roberta ‘Billy-Bob’ Begg and her famous sentient ship *Now the Clouds Have Meaning*. Stories say that she alone has traveled all the roads between the Worlds, and knows the ways of the Second Ether like no other. She searches now for the fabled Lost Universe of Ko-O-Ko

The Lords of Chaos are the most powerful beings that owe their allegiance to The Great Mood. They are without number, but the most active ones are known in many of the Million Spheres. These are some of the most prominent:

- Mabelode the Faceless, The King of Swords** – Patron of Warriors and Soldiers.
- Chardros the Reaper** – God of death and darkness. Lord of the Undead and the Grave.
- Hionhurn the Executioner, Lord of Gibbets** – Patron of Assassins.
- Xiombarg, the Sword Queen** – A deity of warfare and cunning. Patroness of those desiring love, and those desiring retribution against former lovers.

Pyaray, Tentacled Whisperer of Impossible Secrets – Admiral of the Chaos fleet, Lord of the Depths of the Ocean.

Slortar the Old – The oldest and most beautiful Lord of Chaos, God of hedonism, debauchery, decadence, and self-indulgence.

Balaan the Grim – God of Pain in all its forms. Sometimes revered as the god of torturers and sometimes as the god of ecstatic agony.

Arioch, Duke of Hell, Lord of the Seven Darks, Knight of the Swords – Perhaps the most powerful of the Lords of Chaos, he is fickle and cruel.

Eequor, Blue Lady of Dismay - Goddess of Knowledge and sorrowful solitude. She revels in arctic climes, and her domain only consists of an infinite number of shades of Blue.

Narjhan, Lord of Beggars – A God of ugliness and disgust.

Balo the Jester – An Insane God, counted among the Lords of Chaos, though he is not truly one of them. He is a deranged trickster, who travels between the domains of Law and Chaos at a whim. All of his worshippers are insane.

The chief tool of Chaos is Magic and true to its origins, Magic comes in many varieties, and varying effectiveness. A sorcerer traveling the Million Spheres may find that the magic he knows will not function in another world, or that a demon bound in one world may be weak and unresponsive in another. Or the opposite may occur, a simple spell may become wildly more powerful or bound supernatural servants may suddenly become intractable and rebellious.

Magic can come in the form of written runes, sung runes, chanted spells, summoning of supernatural beings, and enchanted items. Magic usually takes some time, but its power is impressive.

Law:

The Force of Law is directly opposed to that of Chaos. Law is a solid, unchanging, and predictable. It is the force of Reason and Science. Law seeks to lock all that is into a stable, static form, and eliminate that which is imperfect in it. Whereas Chaos would mold what exists into an endless variety of new shapes, that thought is anathema to Law, and their symbol is indicative of this; A single, upward pointed arrow.

The Agents of Law that fly the Second Ether in their ships, and oppose the Chaos Engineers are called The Singularity. Greatest of them, and rival to Billy-Bob Begg is Captain Horatio Quelch, and his Ether-Ship the *Linear Bee*.

Just as there are Lords of Chaos, so too are there Lords of Law. The Lords of Law appear as impossible perfect bodies, and they serve the great power of Law in its form as 'The Original Insect.' Among them are these, known as the Unchanging Nine:

Donblas the Justice Maker – Also called the Lord of Righteous Vengeance. He represents the implacable wheels of justice that grind down the guilty.

Arkyn the Meticulous, Lord of Natural Law – Lord of Science. He orders the orbits of the planets and stars, and is the patron of Scientists, Alchemists, Philosophers and Free Thinkers.

Goldar the Profiteer, Lord of Progress and Wealth – God of Trade, patron of merchants, bankers, traders and shopkeepers.

Miriath of the White Hands, Lord of Mortality – Patroness Deity of Death and Time, who decrees how long each person lives. She is served well by physicians.

Tovik the Relentless, Lord of Violence – He is the Lord of the Natural Law of the Animal Kingdom; The power of the strong over the weak.

Vallyn the Wise, Lord of Achievement – Goddess of Knowledge and Learning. Stern, Domineering, and demanding of total Faithfulness from her followers.

Salik the Potent, Lord of Fertility – God of agriculture, procreation, and birth. He is god of grape and grain, passion and life. He has few female worshippers.

Theril of the Guiding Hands, Lord of Inspiration – A muse of creative forms for poets, painters, authors and musicians. She is quick to abandon those who ignore her call.

Elgis the Gentle, Lord of Harmony – God of Peace and Civilization.

Law's answer to magic is Science. Unlike Magic, Science is immutable, and functions everywhere equally well. It may not be as impressive as Magic, but it is reliable and those that study it can perform near magical feats. There are also Lawful answers to Demons, called Virtues that may be summoned and embodied. They may be bound, as a demon might, but they can also teach and improve skills. However, these are rare since Law prefers personal skill and insight to reliance on these outside forces. Virtues are constant in their scope, and represent the most perfect of their type. Thus a Virtue embodied as a sword would do a consistent amount of damage with each stroke, or armor would always protect to the same degree.

Balance:

The Force of Balance is a far more subtle presence in the Second Ether and the Million Spheres. It doesn't have a widespread group of Agents that it uses to further its purposes, but instead makes use of what is available, and has been known to subvert Agents of Law and Chaos to its cause. Balance seeks things to remain as status quo, but its scope is over the whole of the Million Spheres and Second Ether. As a result, Balance can be found supporting Law in one Sphere and Chaos in another.

The Lords of Balance, if there are such, never make themselves known. There ARE powerful servants of the Balance that can be called on, but they are considerably weaker than the Lords of Law or Chaos. These are the Elemental Rulers and the Beast Lords. These represent the most primal and axiomatic of forces and creatures. The Elemental Rulers are the personification of the elements of Air, Water, Earth, and Fire, and the Beast Lords rule the animals or plants of their type. Their names are rarely heard, but some sorcerers know them nevertheless, and sometimes they will answer if called, particularly if there are ancient pacts binding them. The Ruby Throne of Melniboné has historically held such pacts, and their Emperors are among the few who have not only the

knowledge and power necessary to call upon them, but also have pacted with them in the past.

Grome, Lord of Earth – Grome is the jealous and greedy ruler of the earth and all that dwell with or on it. He is served by the elementals called Gnomes, which are beings of stone and soil. He often contends with Straasha, Lord of Water

Kakatal, Lord of Fire – Whose palace is the sun itself. The enemy of the followers of the air, Kakatal is perhaps the most evil of the elementals, but he is still less subject to unpredictability of the Lords of Chaos. He is served by the elementals called Salamanders, which are made of smoke and flame.

Lassa, Lady of the Air – The gentle Lady of the winds is served by Sylphs, and is a very canny being. Despite her gentle nature, she is not one to be taken advantage of. The Cult of the Winds often finds itself at odds with the cult of Kakatal.

Straasha, Lord of the Sea – A favored god of sailors, farmers and fishermen. He is served by the aqueous elementals called Undines. Many legends say that he is the lover of Lassa, and that together they bring rain (except in the Weeping Waste, where it is said that it is Straasha's tears, weeping for his separation from her...)

The Grey Lords – These beings are also called 'the Lords of Inertia' and they are indeed strange. Their influence may be greatest in Tanelorn, but they are enamored of stagnation and boredom. However, despite their similarity to the Lords of Balance in there outlook, they are as unpredictable as the Lords of Chaos.

Haaashaastaak, Lord of Lizards

Meerclar, Lord of Cats

Fileet, Lady of Birds

Roofdrak, Lord of Dogs

Nuru-ah, Lord of Cattle

The Tangled Woman, Lady of Vines

These last are a few of the Beast Lords and one Plant-Lord that have been mentioned in the context of the Young Kingdoms. They are not intelligent as a rule, but only function as per their role. Once called forth, they will only act in accordance with requests that suit their nature.

AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY of the work of Michael Moorcock



The books are listed in recommended reading order.

The Eternal Champion
Phoenix in Obsidian aka **The Silver Warriors**
The Dragon in the Sword

In these three books we meet a man called John Daker, who has a mysterious destiny. Called by magic to a world perpetually frozen in ice, he becomes a hero known as Ereköse, the Eternal Champion. Through his actions however, he becomes cursed to remember ALL the lives of the Eternal Champion, a hero fated to fight forever through an endless series of worlds and battles.

The Sundered Worlds aka **The Blood Red Game**

In this book, Moorcock introduces us to a number of individuals who seem to be shadows of things to come. Primary among them are Count Renark von Bek and Asquiol. He also introduces us to the concept of a great Game being played for the highest stakes of all; in this case, a gamble with the lives of the remnant of humanity, fighting for their lives in the depths of space against a mysterious alien power. The champions of humanity must literally play a game against the invaders in order to survive.

Elric of Melniboné
Fortress of the Pearl
The Sailor on the Seas of Fate
The Weird of the White Wolf
The Vanishing Tower
Revenge of the Rose
The Bane of the Black Sword
Stormbringer

This series chronicles the rise and fall of Moorcock's most famous fantasy anti-hero, Elric. Elric is an incarnation of the Eternal Champion who comes to power as an

emperor, but is doomed to destroy not only his own home, but the world as well. He is the pawn of great cosmic powers and his own terrible Rune Sword, Stormbringer. Elric tragically is fated to slay or betray all those who are closest to him, and so he struggles desperately to be free of his destiny. These books also detail the Young Kingdoms, which is the world The Ash in the Twilight will begin.

The Knight of Swords

The Queen of Swords

The King of Swords

The Bull and the Spear

The Oak and the Ram

The Sword and the Stallion

Prince Corum Jhaelen Irsei is the Eternal Champion in these books. His fight here is a complicated series of struggles against Chaos that ranges through a Realm known as 'The Five Worlds', which are a series of 5 planes of existence linked together. He loses his hand and eye in the fight, but has them replaced with the remains of a pair of powerful magical beings that give him sufficient power to confront the Lords of Chaos themselves.

The Warhound and the World's Pain

The City in the Autumn Stars

The name Von Bek is one to conjure with in Moorcock's writings. The family has both a history and a destiny that begins in these books. During the Hundred Years War, a mercenary Captain named Graf Ulrich von Bek tired of the constant death and slaughter and sought to escape it. Fleeing from his men, and the war, he is approached by an unlikely client with an unlikely proposition. Lucifer himself was seeking the aid of this brutal mercenary. Ulrich declined immediately, unwilling to part with his soul. However, Lucifer made a more intriguing counter-offer; Ulrich soul was already damned. It already belonged to Lucifer. But, if he were to accept the assignment, he would gladly give it back so that Ulrich could start anew. Lucifer, it seems, is as tired of his war with God as Ulrich is of the 100 Years War. He wants to be reconciled. To do this, he wants Ulrich to recover the Holy Grail, so that Lucifer might present it to God as a token of his good faith.

Thus begins the saga of the Von Bek family, and its ages long search for the Holy Grail. Their family's motto tells it all; 'Do you the Devil's work.'

The Warlord of Air

The Land Leviathan

The Steel Tsar

Oswald Bastable was a good soldier in Her Majesty's Imperial Army, until one day he accidentally stumbled through a gateway that took him far far away from home. Bastable is lost in the Million Spheres, and travels from Sphere to Sphere hoping to one day find his way back. Until that time, he learns what he can in order to survive, and

helps out where he can. As a soldier, he most often finds himself in circumstances of war, but he maintains hope.

The Wrecks of Time aka **The Rituals of Infinity**
The Winds of Limbo aka **The Fireclown**
The Shores of Death aka **The Twilight Man**

Sometimes, magic is no more real than the pictures on a TV screen. In the case of this cycle, collectively known as 'The Roads Between The Worlds', science is faced with a problem whose only solution would seem to be magic. Scientist discover a string of parallel universes, each slightly different from the next. Normally, this would be cause for a tremendous celebration, except in this case, something is destroying those worlds, one by one. As the remaining worlds combine their resources to save themselves, a new cult arises that also claims it has the means for survival, through the magic of a man called the Fireclown...

Behold the Man

Karl Glogaur was twentieth century man who believed in the power of myth. It was his obsession. In the face of critics who chose science over myth, he decided to show how and why myth was important by traveling back in time and witnessing Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem. But when he got there, he discovered that for a myth to have power, sometimes sacrifices have to be made.

An Alien Heat
The Hollow Lands
The End of All Songs
The Transformation of Miss Mavis Ming aka **A Messiah at the End of Time**
Elric at the End of Time
Pale Roses
White Stars
Ancient Shadows
Constant Fire

When the last days of Earth are near, and the sun is ready to consume it utterly, the last remnants of man, now grown beyond the comprehension of concepts such as good, evil, or morality, exist in decadent splendor amid the ruins of countless civilizations and millions of years of history. There are nearly omnipotent, but at the same time child-like, not understanding the history of their world fully, or what doom is impending upon them. When one of them, Jherek Carnelian decides to learn about such alien concepts as love, self-denial, and guilt, he travels back in time to meet very proper 19th century housewife Mrs. Amelia Underwood, and brings her to the end of time as his unwilling tutor in these areas. He could never dream of what this whim might lead to, not just for himself, but for the rest of the denizens at the End of Time as well...

The Final Programme

A Cure for Cancer

The English Assassin

The Condition of Muzak

The Adventures of Una Persson and Catherine Cornelius in the Twentieth Century

The Gold Diggers of '77

The Entropy Tango

The Alchemist's Question

Short Stories

Jerry Cornelius; spy, satyr, reverse-albino, time-traveler, Lazarus... messiah? One of Moorcock's most popular and changeable characters, Jerry Cornelius is practically indefinable. He emerges from the pages like James Bond on acid, and goes on a wild ride through numerous books, never appearing quite the same way twice. Is he a super-spy? A drug-dealer? A pathetic clown? It all depends on how you look at it and which book you read. Jerry Cornelius represents variations on a theme, and how one figure can be many things, depending on circumstances.

Blood

Fabulous Harbours

The War Amongst the Angels

Among the *jugadores* who play the Game of Time there are few who can claim the title of *mukhamir*. But there are four who hold the title unquestioned; Jack Karaquazian, Colinda Dovaro, Simon Oakenhurst, and Rose von Bek. Two set of lovers joined in friendship by the Game of Time, gambling all within the Second Ether. Why do they play, and who are their adversaries? What is the playing field? More importantly, what are you willing to gamble if the stakes are high enough? Your life? The lives of those you love? Creation itself? Law and Chaos vie for these, the greatest players of their Game... but they ignore the question they should be asking; Who is playing who?

The Jewel in the Skull

The Mad God's Amulet

The Sword of the Dawn

The Runestaff

Count Brass

The Champion of Garathorm

The Quest for Tanelorn

Dorian Hawkmoon von Koln, last Duke of Koln and sworn enemy of Gran Bretan has been captured by his enemies, brainwashed, and sent to destroy Count Brass, another foe of Gran Bretan. However, the canny Count is able to break the conditioning, and the two join forces against their common enemy. When Hawkmoon is confronted with his status as the Eternal Champion, he accepts his destiny and rallies to the standard of Balance. But when the price proves to be too high even for him, he begins to rethink

matters and sets off to change the destiny of the Eternal Champion and the Multiverse forever.