

# MYSTARA

## CODEX IMMORTALIS

by Marco Dalmonte



❖ BOOK TWO ❖

## RELIGIONS OF MYSTARA

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# CHAPTER 3

## PRIESTS

### SPECIALIST CLERICS

As previously explained, all the Immortals draw power from the worship they receive from their followers, and because of this, the ultimate aim of each of them is to increase their number of followers in the Multiverse. In order to achieve this, they are served by priests (also known as clerics), chosen individuals, selected for their understanding of the doctrine and laws of the Immortals, who have devoted their own life to the cause of a specific Immortal or cult.

The priests are distinguished from the normal faithful by the fact that they have a special bond of confidence and fidelity with the Immortal, a higher spiritual unity that they attain thanks to their practices of meditation and self-denial for the Immortal's cause and what he represents. The Immortal, for their services and of their eternal and conditional dedication, gives his clerics part of his own divine power, as their spiritual bond is a channel through which mortals can access the Immortal's power. This divine bond with his patron Immortal enables the priest to cast clerical spells. The priest must meditate every day at a set hour (usually at sunrise or sunset), and offer praise to his Immortal (asking in exchange to serve him and use the Immortal's power for his greater glory). This renews the priest's faith and the spiritual bond. Afterwards, when the need arises, by uttering simple prayers or ritual formulae they invoke the divine power to create miracles and magic phenomena. These prayers are not magic *per se*, which instead are the arcane formulae of magic and wizards, but are effective and produce spells only because of the faith and the spiritual union that exists between the priest and his Immortal (this is how divine magic differs from arcane magic).

It is, therefore, easy to realise how important it is for a priest to always follow his patron Immortal's dictates to the letter, attempt to convert others to his faith (which is generally why an Immortal creates a body of priests from his worshippers) and fight in his name. In fact, if he fails in his service and commits actions that go against the dictates of his Immortal, he risks not only the temporary loss of his own powers, but also of being severely punished by the Immortal (many are quite vindictive). In game terms, whenever the DM sees that a character with clerical power is acting contrary to his religion, he should deprive the PC of his spells until when the guilty party has atoned for his "sins". This atonement is usually a form of physical or material penance, like self-flagellation and the loss of characteristic points or (permanent Hit Point loss in the more serious cases), or by an arduous quest that brings honour and fame to the Immortal and his cause. Only in

the cases of a total conversion to an enemy or opposing cult, or of a direct and public insult to the Immortal, should the DM impose on the cleric a divine punishment in the form of a curse or a direct intervention on the Immortal's part (or some its particularly zealous initiates).

#### SPECIALIST CLERIC:

Holy Symbol: The cleric carries only the typical Holy Symbol of his Immortal.

Favoured Weapon: If, outside of parenthesis, a specific weapon is listed then the cleric is obliged to learn how to use this weapon (or weapons, if more than one is listed) from first level and to advance in the weapon's use; giving it priority over all others. He always gets a +10% bonus to his attempt to advance in his mastery of the weapon [see the *Manual of Weapons and Mastery* available online for further information], and if he inscribes the symbol of the Immortal, he can use his own weapon as a holy symbol after having it blessed. These powers do not apply if the favoured weapon is a natural weapon.

Clerics' skills and powers: The cleric possesses all the abilities and powers shown in this paragraph.

Spells: The cleric has access to all the additional and/or alternative spells listed in this paragraph.

### POLYTHEIST CLERICS

A second (less common) type of cleric also draws power from a spiritual union with the Immortals. These are the so-called polytheist (or pantheist) clerics. Unlike a specialist (devoted to only one Immortal), a polytheist priest worships the entire pantheon of Immortals recognized by his church, each of which has a role to play – assigned by the church's doctrine to maintain the universal balance. This division is especially evident in priests who belong to a church that worships various Immortals (like the Church of Traladara, the Church of Bellayne or that of Darokin). A priest may either choose to dedicate himself to one Immortal (a specialist) or the worship of all the Immortals of the cult equally (a pantheist). The polytheist priest can exist only within of an officially organised polytheist church that embraces Immortals with concordant objectives, unless the DM doesn't allow the character the ability to worship an entire cultural or regional pantheon.

It is clear that while a specialist cleric is more closely bound to the code of conduct and dictates that his Immortal imposes, the polytheist priest instead enjoys a greater freedom; he must mediate between the diverse dictates and interests of the various Immortals and can choose which one he focuses on for a time. Therefore, unlike the specialist cleric, he doesn't run the risk of seeing

himself deprived of spells if he fails to act in the interests of one Immortal, as his church's other Immortals continue to provide his spells. Only if he abjures or contravenes the dictates and founding dogmas of his church does he risk being deprived of his power, as the pantheon acts in common accord. This is based on certain priorities that the cleric must always respect and on which is based the bestowal of his powers.

### **POLYTHEIST CLERIC:**

Holy Symbol: The cleric can use the recognised symbol of his church or, alternatively, use any one of the holy symbols of an Immortal worshipped in the pantheon.

Favoured Weapon: The cleric can select any one of the favoured weapons of an Immortal of the pantheon he serves, if the dogma of one of the Immortals worshipped doesn't prohibit it. It doesn't have any priority over other weapons, but he doesn't get any special bonus when he uses it, nor can he use it as his holy symbol.

Clerics' skills and powers: The cleric doesn't gain any of the special skills or abilities listed in this paragraph.

Spells: The cleric has access to all the additional or substitutive spells bestowed by the Immortals of his church that allow priests of his alignment.

## **PHILOSOPHER CLERICS**

A third type of priest exists on Mystara that don't worship any Immortal but still receive spells thanks to his own faith in Order or in Chaos: they are called philosopher clerics. They don't place their own faith in the Immortals, but generally follow one philosophy, idea and dogma of behaviour aligned with one of the two poles of established Multiverse's structure: Law (Order, Life) or Chaos (Disorder, Death). It is important for a philosopher cleric actions and thinking to respect the dictates enforced by his church's ethics of the church (for example that of Thyatis or Ochalea), and the dictates of Order or Disorder even if he doesn't have to take in account any Immortal. These priests draw power either directly from the Sphere of Order (Matter, Thought, Energy and Time) or from the Sphere of Chaos (Entropy, which is the only balance to the four Spheres aligned with Order). Therefore, their power derives mainly from their strength of faith in their principles, their religion's doctrine or religious philosophy. The moment they deviate from this course, they are immediately severed from their only mystical link with Order or Chaos and cease receiving divine powers as they are no longer aligned to their ideals (as a form of unconscious, spiritual, self-punishment).

That's why it is often much more difficult and demanding to pursue the path of a philosopher cleric in respect to that of a specialist or pantheist: he must always be loyal to his alignment and to the laws of his church, without any compromise.

### **PHILOSOPHER CLERIC:**

Holy Symbol: The cleric uses the recognised symbol of his church.

Favoured Weapon: The cleric is obligated to use only the weapons allowed by his philosophy or church. It doesn't have any priority over other weapons, but he doesn't get any special bonus when he uses it, nor can he use it as his holy symbol.

Clerics' skills and powers: The cleric doesn't gain any special skill or additional abilities.

Spells: The cleric has access to only the spells in the standard list, except for those expressly forbidden by his church. It is possible to substitute others, according to the traditions of the priest's church.

## **DEFENDERS OF THE FAITH: PALADINS, DRUIDIC DEFENDERS AND AVENGERS**

Among followers of the Immortals are warriors who possess a particular wisdom and dedication. At a certain point in their life, they may decide to take the same vows as the priests and take their Immortal's (or church's) doctrine to the world. These so-called Defenders of the Faith serve by weapon, work and oratory. To be ordained by the priests these fearless champions of the Immortals merely need to demonstrate they are sufficiently skilled and qualified (or true believers). They are then invested into the "armed branch" of their faith, and from that moment, they must respect all the dictates enforced by the Immortal (or church) to its priests (including permitted weapons, acceptable behaviour and shared objectives) and obey the orders of the ecclesiastic hierarchy that approved his investiture. In exchange however, the defender of the faith is tied to the Immortal or Sphere of Power by the same bond that the priests share with it, even if the magic powers that the knight receives are of lesser importance.

There are three types of defender of the faith (or Sacred Defender) that are based on the alignment of the devotee: Paladin (Lawful), Druidic defender (Neutral) and Avenger (Chaotic)<sup>1</sup>. A Paladin or Avenger can be a devotee to an Immortal who admits this type of follower (only of their alignment) or to a church that follows the philosophy of Law (Paladin) or Chaos (Avenger). In the latter case, both directly draw their power from the Sphere of Order or Entropy and keep their powers as long as they remain in the church's good graces. The Druidic defender instead must serve an Immortal protector of nature who allows

<sup>1</sup> In the D&D 3E system the Paladin is a base class of 20 levels, whilst the Paladin shown here is called the Templar and is one of three paths (more specifically he who has taken the Lawful character) suggested by a 10 level Prestige Class called Defender of the Faith. He is distinguished from the Paladin since he is devoted to a church or to a particular Immortal, whilst the Paladin is the epitome of the champion of Good and of Law. He is not obliged to swear to any religion, but his power is derived from his purity of heart and his spiritual bond with the universal Order.

the existence of this type of figure among his devotees (some are profoundly opposed to war and don't permit an armed branch in their cult).

The warriors attuned to a church or an Immortal (that must allow lawful or chaotic clerics or druids) become Paladins (Lawfuls), Avengers (Chaotics) and Druidic defenders (Neutral followers of nature) [who were hinted at by the Paladins and Avengers of D&D, presented in the *Companion* set]. They keep their fighter THAC0, Saving Throws, Hit Points, weapon progression, XP, and Combat Options. They also acquire the ability to cast divine spells (clerical for Paladins and Avengers, druidic in the case of Defenders), if they have a holy symbol, as a cleric of  $\frac{1}{3}$  of his own actual level (rounding down). They gain the abilities and special powers (listed in the paragraph "Abilities and powers of the Defenders" and the additional or substitutive spells given by the Immortal, see the list of Immortals in the following chapter), and can request free shelter and asylum in any temple or abbey of the Immortal that they serve. In exchange, they are subject to the same weapon restrictions as clerics of the same Immortal, and must obey the high office of the church to which he belongs, respond to their call and fight for them when demanded.

### **PALADIN**

The paladin is the epitome of courage, righteousness, order, honour, and devotion in the crusades of his Immortal and Order. Broadly speaking, he is a true example of self-restraint, virtue and honesty in the service of a cause or faith. Frequently, paladins become famous heroes, loyally serve a church and regnant, command armies, and are adored by the faithful. Never doing anything immoral or illegal and always respecting their code of honour and the rules enforced by their religion.

When a paladin commits a sin, his deep sense of honour and duty immediately drives him to seek a way to atone and resolve his mistakes, accepting the punishment and momentary loss of their powers with deference. It sometimes, however, happens that their sense of purity, perfection and superiority so intoxicates some paladins that they become extremely vain, contemptuous and cannot see their own shortcomings. In these cases, they become blind to their own errors as that they consider themselves infallible, and don't study their acts of faith or self-critical hypothesis. Only their church leaders can recover them and put them back on the correct path. However, if either the individual is too arrogant and sure of himself, it isn't rare that he views these appeals as signs of envy and ignorance and the paladin refuses to follow them or he isn't convinced of his own errors and only superficially obeys the appeals. In this case, he is by now on the right path to the moral corruption that could cause his fall as a champion of Order and Good and become a servant of Chaos and Injustice for Entropy.

### **DRUIDIC DEFENDER**

The druidic defender is a warrior devoted to protecting nature and the natural balance by force of arms and his zeal in the belief that all should respect nature's perfection and defend it to the last. He serves his own Immortal (an Immortal always associated with nature) or his affiliated druidic order with unrelenting loyalty. He usually guards a specific area considered either at risk or particularly sacred. At other times, he is in the front line in a crusade against some race or organisation thought to threaten nature everywhere he can find it. He, therefore, can find himself travelling from place to place by following his Immortal's signs or responding to the calls of help of threatened druidic circles or friendly creatures.

The druidic defender executes a campaign of attack, sabotage and interference in any place where a force operates that threatens nature, preferring pre-emptive action when possible to prevent any damage occurring. They are always in touch with nature and don't like to remain in urban settings, considering it, at the worst corrupt, or simply cold and alien. The equilibrium of the natural ecosystem and the respect of the creatures that live within it are the cornerstones of every druidic defender's doctrine. He never hesitates in responding to the appeals of druids and followers of their own Immortal whenever it reaches his ear, even if such a duty is much looser than a paladin's.

### **AVENGER**

The avenger is a free-spirited warrior who loves Chaos and anarchy and who refuses to adhere to the laws and codes that he considers limit his own potential. He serves his own Immortal or church without closely following the rules, but follows his instincts with the clear-cut intent of increasing anarchy in the world. The avenger fights for the cause of Entropy anywhere it is required and using any means necessary. His devotion carries him forward and allows him to accomplish exceptional and tremendous exploits without having to take into account ideals like a sense of honour or the established order, which he considers are barriers to creation's natural form: Chaos.

Avengers always serve churches and Immortals attuned to Entropy and the philosophy of Chaos. In some cases they are excessively evil and amoral, fanatic megalomaniacs or maniac sadists intoxicated by the power slaying anyone in their way. These individuals pursue Evil with the same passion with which a paladin defends the cause of Good. When they can, they prefer to resort to violent and painful methods to achieve their own objectives, for the sadistic pleasure that they feel in bringing suffering and destruction. The idea of moulding the world to their idea of chaos and anarchy, which they judge is the perfect form for life, obsesses others. These avengers are unpredictable and open-minded characters, and never hesitate in flouting any rule just for the taste of bringing disorder in circumstances where order creates too much stagnation.

## OPTIONAL NOTE: RESURRECTION

Normally Lawful priests should be disinclined enough to use spells to resurrect and animate the dead, because:

- a. They are among the most delicate to use.
- b. They interfere with the divine authority of their Sphere
- c. They interfere with the sovereignty over the souls of the dead.

No cleric can claim the right to raise an individual after his death, as this is the duty of the Immortals, who judge the creature's life based on its actions and its devotion to its beliefs and then decide the soul's fate after it has spent some time in the Afterworld. True, those clerics that worship Immortal patrons of necromancy and destruction don't have any scruples either about animating the dead and use them in Entropy's cause, or reviving those slain in battle if this helps them to bring further death and destruction.

However, the clerics of the majority of the Immortals are respectful of the Immortals' power in the afterlife and usually wait for a response from the Immortal before attempting to bring the dead back to life. This gives the Immortal time to judge the soul of the deceased and decide his fate. In fact, they believe that if the soul was sent to the home plane of the Immortal worshipped by the deceased, he can no longer be brought back to life, and therefore any attempt automatically fails (as the Immortal doesn't permit them to go against his decision, and doesn't grant the power to revive the individual). If, however, the soul was judged impure or unprepared for eternal peace (or in torment), then the Immortal welcomes the opportunity to return the deceased to life, as it gives him a new chance to fulfil his destiny and redeem himself.

It is, however, worth remembering that any priest is authorised to try to revive a follower of his church or the same vocation or to the same church. He is never required to try to revive another religion's follower, given that as a rule an Immortal doesn't permit followers of another Immortal to try to recall the souls of his worshippers. It is a grave insult to attempt to meddle in the Immortal's judgement, and it could not only nullify the resurrection attempt, but it could also result in retaliation from creatures who serve the Immortal against those who have dared change the divine judgement. Because of this, before a cleric attempts to revive a follower of another faith, he asks the permission of his own patron and that of the deceased through a special ritual. He can only proceed if he gets a favourable response can proceed (this often occurs if the two Immortals are allies, like Ixion and Valerias, Ilsundal and Ordana, Asterius and Koryis, etc.). Naturally the priests of extremely chaotic Immortals and devoted to necromancy don't have all these scruples, but in they are more likely to animate the body with energy from the Sphere of Entropy, than return it to life.

The probability that the spirit of a follower can be returned to life is based on the concept that the more powerful he has been in life and the more of his destiny he has completed in the eyes of the Immortal, the more he deserves the permanence of the everlasting afterlife. The formula to use (unless the DM decides) is as follows (d%):

$$100 - \text{age}^2 - \text{level} = \% \text{ of success of resurrection}$$

**Example:** for a human (max 100 years) counts the same age of the dead, but for a dwarf (max 300 years) divide his age by 3 to understand how long he has lived in respect to the maximum destined for him.

Possible bonuses/penalties to consider:

+5% if of the same alignment of the cleric (Good or Evil; Chaotic, Lawful or Neutral)
+10% if of identical alignment to that of the cleric's Immortal
-10% if of opposite alignment to that of the cleric's Immortal
-50% if devoted to an Immortal enemy of that of the cleric

The real problem is those deceased that don't worship an Immortal or are agnostic. According to the beliefs of the majority of priests and of planar philosophers, when they die they enter into Limbo – a place of mists. They aren't subject to Immortal judgement, but are condemned to wander in this land whilst trying to avoid the spirits and demons that rule this plane from devouring his soul. It is, therefore, possible to resurrect them straight after death, but the priest must have a valid reason (personal or better) to do so. This is because he is granting the most precious gift that an Immortal can bestow (that of life) to an individual who doesn't have any faith in the Immortal that performed the miracle. It is likely that a cleric will be more inclined to revive the soul of an agnostic rather than that of a follower of another Immortal. This is because the former would be easier to convert after his dramatic experience of Limbo, while the latter would only be favourable to conversion if he came from his Immortal's hell and wishes to avoid a return. (In this case, you should realise that you are reviving somebody worthy of eternal punishment).

Furthermore, anyone who tries to recall a soul from Limbo with the *resurrection* spell risks attracting the spirit of any entity that dwells on that plane. In general, the longer time passes from the moment of death, the more difficult it is for the deceased to survive the legions of spirits and demons that infest Limbo, especially if dealing with a character of low level. The probability (d%) that the real possessor of the body returns is calculated in the following manner (this percentage should always remains secret to the players, so as to make them think long before trying this way):

$$50 + \text{character level} - \text{days dead} = \text{probability \% that the original soul returns from Limbo (minimum of 1\%)}$$

<sup>2</sup> **Note on age:** The age should be expressed as a percentage based on the maximum age achievable by the race of the deceased.

**Example:** Vanglar the Furious, 15<sup>th</sup> level Fighter, has always mocked the Immortals and their representatives. At the moment of death, he enters into Limbo and must try to survive. If his friends find the means to resurrect him after 20 days of death, the chance that his soul returns to the body is:  $(50+15)-20 = 45\%$ . After two and a half months, it is nearly impossible to bring back Vanglar (1%), and each attempt could very easily cause the spirit of a chaotic and voracious creature to dwell in the body of the fighter, posing as him. If a different spirit returns to inhabit the body of the deceased, there can be various possible results, that the DM can decide or roll 1d20 and consult the following table:

1-5	Corpse is reanimated as a zombie of 2d4 HD
6-9	Corpse is reanimated as a ghoul of 2d6 HD
10-12	Corpse is reanimated as a wight of 1d10 HD
13-14	Corpse is reanimated as a vampire with 5+1d6 HD
15-19	Corpse returned to life with the chaotic and/or evil soul of a different dead creature dead
20	Corpse returned to life with the chaotic and evil soul of a spirit of Entropy

Naturally the actions of the restored spirit depends on the objectives that it had in life and it tries to hide its true nature (except in the obvious case of the undead) from whoever revives it, until it is in a position to eliminate potential enemies and gain full freedom of action.

# CHAPTER 4

## RELIGIOUS ORGANISATIONS

This chapter lists the most widely known religious orders and *organisations* (and gives their ecclesiastical structure and established hierarchy) of Mystara. The following list includes all the religions (including those that are monotheistic) mentioned in official TSR supplements, even if, in some cases, there have been additions to the list of Immortals – based on logic and coherence (in order to introduce some Immortals who, despite their power, appeared to have no followers on Mystara). Of course, the DM is able to modify (in all or in part) each of the orders described below, and develop the information regarding to their doctrines and to their codes of conduct.

### LEGEND

First (in bold and larger text) is the order's name. The line below shows where the cult is present with at least one consecrated site, representatives of the clergy, or a large number of faithful (at least a hundred); the list of countries is in decreasing order based on the cult's popularity within the country. As far as the list of the Immortals, the first column shows the official pantheon of that religion, followed by the enemies of the faith's doctrine (who are usually also active in the regions in which the religion is worshipped). It is necessary to note that the Immortal enemies of the official pantheon don't always collaborate. **Bold** is always used to show the leader (or the group of leaders) of the pantheon (official or enemy), where a recognised leader of the cult exists. They are followed by the rest of the Immortals in order according to their importance within the religion (note that the leader of the pantheon is not always necessarily a "good" Immortal). The second column shows the Immortals portfolios. *Italics* instead show the Immortals that this manual's authors have added to the pantheon, and the asterisks refer to the explicit notes at the end of each religion.

### CHURCH OF DAROKIN

**Worshipped in:** Darokin, Alfheim, Sind, Thyatis, Ierendi, Karameikos

<b>Asterius</b>	Trade, communication, money, cleverness
<i>Koryis</i>	Peace, prosperity, diplomacy
<i>Twelve Watchers</i>	Arts and crafts
<i>Khoronus</i>	Wisdom, history, philosophy, loyalty, patience, good government
<b>Thanatos</b>	Death, oblivion, corruption

The Church of Darokin is the official religion of the Republic, although the Darokinian government has never proclaimed it the national religion. This means that the authorities do not compel the Darokinians to worship exclusively the Immortals of the Church of Darokin.

Indeed the church itself is tolerant towards all other religions present in the Republic if they prove of public benefit. Darokin is in fact full of temples and single churches dedicated to the Immortals (as well as independent religious orders that worship the Immortals of the Church of Darokin's pantheon), in which the citizens can freely follow their own religion.

Darokin is a "land of leftovers", as its inhabitants love to define themselves as, and therefore the Church of Darokin cannot help reflect this incredible mix of faiths and cultures. The Immortals worshipped within the church's pantheon share a peaceful relationship and have always shown a particular interest in the Republic's population and territory, achieving a small number of followers from the inhabitants from before the foundation of the church.

Asterius is the undisputed leader of the pantheon, and has always remained the Darokinians favourite Immortal due to his abilities as patron of trade, of money, of communication and of diplomacy (the basis of modern Darokinian culture). The First Patriarch who founded the church in 892 AC, Simon Stone, was a devout follower of Asterius. He understood that if he wanted to unify the various faiths within Darokin; he would have, however, to use a common or accepted point of reference by all: Asterius the Merchant was obviously the best candidate for the role. However, he also understood that the Church of Darokin should be a polytheistic cult in order to **embody** the real spirit of the nation, a country based on multiracial integration. Therefore, he also added, to the pantheon, other Immortals that best expressed the ideals of Darokin: freedom, sacrifice, work, diplomacy, education and equality.

Darokin is the most democratic and liberal state of the Known World. Almost all official churches have at least one "mission" within the Republic, and they (mostly) peacefully compete and co-exist to spread the faith, advancing the objective of protecting the Darokinian population. The Church of Darokin embodies the epithet of the "typical Darokinian church", and draws many myths and ceremonies from the other faiths affiliated to it, but in its pantheon made sure to gather only those Immortals that embody "the spirit of the nation" – Asterius, Koryis, Khoronus and the Twelve Watchers. The religion is mainly within the national borders – because this is considered enough to satisfy the religious requirements of the Darokinians and cement their national spirit. The pivotal point of the doctrine of the **Just** is that it is easier for the faithful to achieve salvation within the Republic. This is because it is considered blessed by some and the only country in



which everyone can realize their dreams of freedom and prosperity. However, it is not the state religion, as Darokinian law prevents such an institution in order to defend the religious rights of everyone, considering this a personal matter and not one for the state. The Church of Darokin, therefore, respects the religious freedom of other faiths and it preaches to not persecute those of differing religious inclinations, even if it emphasizes that the path dictated by its patriarch is the only one that in fact guarantees salvation.

The church's holy symbol is a gold disc divided into four sectors by two lines that cross in the centre. Within each sector is a symbol: a white hand with palm raised, a blue hourglass, a pair of black eyes, and a silver coin (a fusion of its patrons' holy symbols); the use of the individual symbols of the pantheon's Immortals is also accepted. The common attire of the religion's clergy is a grey robe with a golden circle on the upper part of the torso that contains the church's holy symbol.

### HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

The Church of Darokin **basis is** a series of cults that have shaped the Darokinian culture since the time of the monarchy. It was founded by Simon Stone, a cleric of Asterius, who began to preach a faith based on **industry as the way to salvation**, on the necessity of diplomacy as the only instrument to bring peace and prosperity, on the centrality of Darokin, and on the importance of honest work **as a way to make something of themselves, create a paradise in this world, and inherit it after death**. All the Darokinian classes, but especially the middle class, immediately embraced its instructions (based on mutual respect and tolerance, and cementing national unity), and gave numerous donations and favours for the construction of the first cathedral in the capital. Those **joining** the creed promoted by Stone were numerous, **as were the various clergy of other Immortals that joined the church to share the** message, first of these were Annios Cletus, priest of Khoronus (the Darokinians' patron of diplomacy, justice, and wisdom since the time of King Eastwind I), Clemente Seferis, cleric of Koryis (an Immortal who had become known and respected by the Darokinians due to their contact with Ochalean merchants in the VII century AC), and Lino Volterra, cleric of the Twelve Watchers (already worshipped by the copper and silver classes). The four clergymen co-wrote the codices that form the basis of the Church's philosophy, and in 892 AC published their thesis in a small volume called the *Acts of the Righteous*. This act formalised the Church of Darokin's foundation.

Later, the patriarchs tried to influence the Republic's merchant founders to declare the Church of Darokin the state religion. The merchants remained outside of the religious debate, and with the Grand Unification of 927 AC they stipulated a constitution that clearly provided for religious freedom in Darokin, wisely dividing the political sphere from the religious. **The exponents** of the Church accepted the defeat and tried to widen their

sphere of influence by sending more and more clergy on missions into other regions until, after barely a generation, they had established a presence in each of the **Inner Lands and many parts of the frontier**.

By the end of 960 AC they began to send missions to other countries, **instigated by written treatises** of the **Church's theologians** called Letters (to the Thyatians, Ylari, Elves, Hin, Dwarves, Traladarans, and the Northmen), **in which they hope for peace and collaboration** with the Republic, immigration within the borders of Darokin, considered the only land where it is possible to realize their dreams of prosperity and unity, and the founding of new missions in those lands to spread the message of Probity. In short time, the Church also established temples in many of these states, and where this was not possible its clerics remained as missionaries.

It was as a result of the failure of various attempts to expand the Church's doctrine abroad that a group of clergymen proposed a reform of their ecclesial organisation and theological laws. The hoped for change did not go **as planned**, but help to create in 976 AC a new reformed church, called the Church of Universal Harmony, and although tolerated by the Church of Darokin is clearly disowned.

Currently the High Patriarch (third to rise in office) is Alexian Vasilius, an old priest devotee of Khoronus who was among the first missionaries to the time of the Letters. He has already named his own successor (the so-called Holy Legate) the youthful Syleos (a pantheist cleric) – the first Darokinian elf to convert to the faith of the church (at the start of the X century).

### ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH

The Church of Darokin is lead by the High Patriarch; the cleric who amongst all the Immortal's spokesmen is the spiritual descendant of the Church's founder. The Council of Archbishops assists him; a group formed from the clergymen who supervise the operations of the Church within the entire Republic – in a structure similar to that of the Darokinian government. The High Patriarch has a special adviser called the Holy Legate, who helps him with the day-to-day bureaucracy and examines the diplomatic and religious issues that arrive daily before presenting them to the patriarch. The High Patriarch personally chooses the Holy Legate from among his more experienced clerics (at least of 9<sup>th</sup> level) and he is destined to become the new High Patriarch upon the death of the current one. There are only three exceptions to this rule (which have yet to occur):

1. If the Holy Legate dies before the succession, The High Patriarch is obliged (if still alive) to choose a substitute. If, however, the High Patriarch dies without leaving a Holy Legate, the task of naming the new High Patriarch passes to the members of the Council of Archbishops, who choose from a short list of

candidates (maximum 10), each of which it must have the support at least four Archbishops. A successful candidate needs the votes of at least two-thirds of the assembly

2. If the High Patriarch is dead and had previously decided that the Holy Legate was not worthy to succeed him, he has the power to choose his own successor without giving any reason for his decision. In this case, the former nominee is named Abbot of a monastery or administration of his choice (but cannot rise to the rank of Bishop or Archbishop).
3. If, at the death of the Head Patriarch, an assembly of at least a third of the Archbishops asserts that the Holy Legate is not up to the task for serious reasons (he has spoken of forsaking the order's values, apostasy or heresy), he must undergo trials to support this accusation under the watchful eye of the collected assembly. This assembly of all the Bishops and the Archbishops will decide by voting in a secret poll and with a majority of two-thirds of the assembly the relevance of the trials. If the tests are accepted, the Holy Legate is banished from the Church and the Council of Archbishops chooses a new High Patriarch as explained above.

There is an **Archbishop** (a cleric of at least 8<sup>th</sup> level) for every city of the Republic with a population of over 10,000 inhabitants. Currently there are seven Archbishops in the council. The Archbishop of the capital is the High Patriarch who resides in the Cathedral of Darokin. The Archbishops administer the commercial and religious affairs of the archdioceses that they represent. Each of which is made up of the dioceses (areas that include several villages and at least one small town) controlled by the Bishops. They also have the power to prevent the election of a new High Patriarch (as explained above), even if it is an option that they have yet to exercise. The office of Archbishop lasts for life (as are all others within the church) and when necessary, a new Archbishop is elected from amongst the bishops of the leaderless archdiocese, on the basis of a majority vote in a poll of the Council of the Archbishops. Each Archbishop can also be removed from his office or the Church by a unanimous decision from the Council and High Patriarch.

Each of the Republic's central lands forms a diocese, governed by a **Bishop**, for a total of 33 bishops. Moreover, every foreign mission (in Alfheim, Karameikos, Five Shires, Thyatis, Ierendi, and Sind) is overseen by a bishop (even though each of these foreign missions doesn't have more than a hundred followers). Therefore, there are a total of 39 bishops in the Church of Darokin. Each of them governs the diocese's political and religious matters and reports to his direct superior, the Archbishop. The Bishops have the power to ordain Clerics and Abbots, and boycott or publicly condemn

those people or trade societies that violate the Church's laws or that threaten Darokin. **For more direct action they must gain their Archbishop's approval, who can allow them to take the accused before a Magistrate, but only if there is overwhelming evidence.** The Bishops are chosen and named (when necessary) by the region's Archbishop from amongst the clergymen of at least 7<sup>th</sup> level, and they remain in office until their death, promotion, or expulsion from the clergy. A diocese is divided into several administrations; each of which is grouped around a village and governed by an **Abbot**, who can count on his clerics and acolytes to help him with the daily matters. The Abbot runs the local abbey (the temple where the faithful gather) and organizes the tasks for each of his **Clerics**, whom form the backbone of the Church of Darokin, as it is they who deal daily with the faithful of all classes, and that they have the trust of an Abbot, a Bishop or an Archbishop. They lead the daily prayers in the abbey; visit the sick and the artisans to give aid or small requests, and offer comfort and council to those who wish it. The common clergyman is the link between the faithful and the church's upper levels—they approach him to request favours or present petitions. Usually the clergymen are asked to respect the hierarchy (and, therefore, address only their direct superior), but it is not rare to come across cases where a cleric presented a petition directly to the Bishop or Archbishop, if it needs immediate and thorough attention.

Furthermore, the clerics have the task of recruiting new acolytes to the order (which only accepts male clergy, even if it does not impose celibacy on its ministers) and teaching them the principles of the Church of Darokin, so that they may become good clerics in the future. Finally, the clerics are a settlement's first defenders and their actions must set an example to the faithful. The clerics who reach 3<sup>rd</sup> level automatically get their orders from the Bishop in person, and are usually entrusted with the duty of building an abbey and founding a new administration. If not there are enough large villages to accommodate a new administration, the cleric can either become a missionary (leave on a five year long (at least) evangelical mission), or remain in his administration as a simple cleric, aid the Abbot like the others, or transfer to a new diocese and try and obtain permission there to found a new administration. In fact, the Church prohibits any administration from gathering more than four clerics under the guide of a single Abbot (although there is no limit on acolyte numbers), to force its clergy to extend its network of believers as far as possible.

On the bottom rung of the ecclesial ladder are the **Acolytes**, the novices whom want to swear their oaths and become members of the order. They must study with a cleric and serve the order for at least a year before obtaining official permission (usually from an Abbot), always obey their superiors, and help them in the day-to-day matters. The Acolyte can ask for the right to enter

the order from any cleric, who can refuse or accept at his whim. The Acolytes are clerics of 1<sup>st</sup> level, and they must always remain with a superior clergyman until they reach at least 2<sup>nd</sup> level, unless they choose to leave or take their vows in the Church. If they leave they will never again be able to become members of the order, but they retain the clerical powers they have learnt, provided that they continue to worship their chosen Immortal.

### CLERIC MISSIONARIES

The Church of Darokin encourages its clerics to become missionaries (once they reach 3<sup>rd</sup> level), as it is now spread throughout the Republic, especially within **the Inner Lands**. The missionaries' task is to wander from one place to another, especially abroad, to take the Church's philosophical message to as many as possible, improve the political and trade links between other countries and the Republic, and generally give a good impression about Darokin and its citizens.

Many of the order's clergy don't agree with these policies, and believe that the clerics should remain within the Republic to better serve the Darokinians. This diatribe is the basis of the reform with the Church of Universal Harmony for example, which instead encourages proselytism through missionary work, and now makes missionaries unpopular in certain archdioceses. The missionaries, however, believe that it is their duty to spread their Immortals' words everywhere, and they take this responsibility very seriously. **They answer for their own operations directly to their Archbishop**, and they are obligated to return and report their actions roughly every five years. On these meetings, the Archbishop tells the cleric whether his mission is complete or if he should continue to travel the world – and particularly where he should focus his attention. A missionary who refuses to obey an order from his Archbishop is accused immediately of insubordination and recalled for an internal trial. The result of which could be a warning, a change of role, or even excommunication.

### THE EARTHLY LIFE AND THE AFTERLIFE

The Church of Darokin teaches its faithful that it is the deeds that they accomplish in life that forms the basis of their soul in the Afterlife. As such, it is important to obey the law, apply themselves to their work, and really cooperate in their community's development, to benefit from their toil once dead. Naturally it is also essential to worship the Immortal who daily watches and advises the faithful, as this forms part of a true believer's duties. Only in this way, by respecting himself, his work, and the Immortals, can he be sure that his soul will be able to enjoy the benefits he earned in his mortal life.

The Church teaches that those who have a lot in this life deserve it thanks to their work. However the Immortals see everything and they know who has worked honestly and who, instead, has dishonestly taken advantage of others, and this will be judged upon death.

Who has acted honestly will go and live in a world where his neighbours lavishly satisfy his requirements, where he is remembered and justly rewarded for all the wonderful work that he has done, and where work is no longer a daily task, but a pleasure that can be sought whenever he wishes. Those who, instead, earned a living by taking advantage of others, cheating, or killing people, will be condemned to serve the virtuous souls. He will be watched by whip-wielding angels and after spending an eternity of redemption, he will be reborn in the mortal world, to try again for salvation. The Church of Darokin promises its faithful that each will arrive in the paradise that is due to him, based on his life choices, and his chosen Immortal. In fact, each Immortal rules another world, and everyone is destined to reach his idea of perfection there:

Asterius	<u>Silver Palace</u>	(Merchants and traders)
Khoronus	<u>Island of Utopia</u>	(Thinkers and artists)
Koryis	<u>Valley of Peace</u>	(Negotiators and pacifists)
Twelve Watchers	<u>City of Perfection</u>	(Craftsmen)

However, those who do not successfully follow the way of the Righteous can expect a terrible punishment in the betrayed Immortal's home. They will be condemned to serve the most deserving, and endure the tortures of angels inflicted as a punishment for sins that they committed. When the Immortal deems their sins cleansed, they are returned to Mystara to start again from the beginning and demonstrate they deserve eternal peace.

The fate of the non-believers is in the hands of the other Immortals, according to the Church. Those who were faithful to their Immortal will be judged by him, while those who didn't pay sufficient attention to their spiritual life or didn't honoured the Immortals as they deserve, will see their soul enter the eternal void of Limbo, between the shifting fogs and infinite roads that do not lead anywhere, to meditate on their misdeeds and try to survive Limbo's ravenous spirits.

According to the Church of Darokin's doctrine, the faithful only have one chance to achieve their salvation, and if they waste it, they will not be able to return. For this reason, the Church forbids its clergy from reviving the faithful, as it denies the righteous their chance of eternal happiness, and allows the ungodly to escape their deserved divine punishment. However, the clerics can resurrect non-believers, with the single aim to convert them to their own faith. This can only be attempted after assessing that the deceased wasn't an evil individual and will be a good follower if he is returned to life. This assessment usually requires that the cleric speaks with the deceased's friends (who will also be those that initially asked the cleric to perform the ritual) and his patron Immortal to know its opinion about, so the decision will only take place a couple of days after the request.

The Church's members respect and remember their own deceased, but it is forbidden to try to speak with them, and it is considered highly immoral and deviant to

deal with the spirits of the Afterlife, with the undead and necromancy<sup>3</sup>. In fact, necromancy is considered an attempt to steal the power of life and death from the Immortals, and undead in particular are an abomination, damned spirits that have made a pact with Death: to escape their eternal pain they have accepted to return to the mortal world in a state of false life to cause suffering to the mortals whose torments they would have had to endure, subverting the natural order. Because of this, the Church of Darokin ferociously fights the undead and never hesitates in calling for expeditions to destroy anyone who tries to use such Immortal powers on the souls of individuals. The Church identifies its only common enemy as Thanatos, Patron of Death and Destruction (also called Old Nick or Grim Reaper), and any other demon it thinks is responsible for corrupting the soul and the proliferation of undead.

## CHURCH OF KARAMEIKOS

**Worshipped in:** Karameikos

Tarastia	Law, order, truth, justice and just vengeance
Chardastes	Healing, purification, health, medicine, life cycle, eternal life
Asterius	Trade, money, communication, travel, messengers
Vanya	War, conquest, victory, glory, honour
Kagyar	Crafts, metallurgy, miners
Patura	Women, families, babies, maternity and fertility
Ilkundal	Nature, wisdom, learning, tradition, serenity and peace
The Grim Reaper (Thanatos)	Death, entropy, destruction, decadence, oblivion, corruption

The Church of Karameikos<sup>4</sup> is a Lawful religion founded by Oliver Jowett, a former member of the Church of Thyatis. Leaving Thyatis to follow Duke Stefan Karameikos III, Jowett and his followers decided to form a new church that combined the doctrine of the Church of Thyatis with the needs of the Karameikian people. In short Jowett tried to unite the Thyatian immigrants and the Traladaran natives under one flag and one philosophy by creating a religion appropriate to the new nation (Karameikos, not Traladara or Thyatis) and give its followers a new cultural identity to its

<sup>3</sup> This belief of faith implies that clerics of the Church of Darokin have no access to the spells *Speak with Dead* and *Animate Dead*.

<sup>4</sup> In GAZ1 and *Poor Wizard's Almanac 2* the Church of Karameikos is described as a lawful religion based upon the philosophy of the "unblemished spirit", without naming particular Immortals worshipped by its clergymen. Later on in *Dragon*, Bruce Heard (editor of the Mystara line) specified that the Immortals worshipped the clerics of this religion are: Asterius, Valerias, Vanya, Chardastes, Ilkundal, and Kagyar. Given the lack of further information about the presence and role of a decidedly chaotic Immortal like Valerias in a lawful church like Karameikos, in this handbook it is chosen to replace Valerias with Patura (more oriented to good will, chastity and maternal love), and add Tarastia, Thyatian Immortal patroness of justice and law.

faithful: that of the modern Karameikian (a fusion of Thyatian and Traladaran). Therefore, the Church of Karameikos is similar to the Church of Thyatis, but with some distinguishing feature. Patriarch Jowett, in an attempt to acquire followers from amongst the locals while retaining the support of the Thyatian immigrants, took some traditions from the Church of Thyatis and began to build on them until he had formed a new religion based on the philosophy of the "pure soul". The religion is not directly connected to the Thyatian Empire (still seen as oppressors by the Traladarans) but typical of the newly formed Grand Duchy of Karameikos. This philosophy holds that no sin is too great that it cannot be forgiven with an act of sacrifice and penance (even if many converts misinterpret this and think they can do anything and be forgiven).

The doctrines of the Church of Karameikos are as follows:

1. The acts of violence, murder, theft, adultery, lying, treason and cohabitation without being married in front of Immortals are all sins that stain the sinner's soul.
2. The use of magic that does not have its basis in the rituals of the church is only ignorant superstition that leads the faithful astray, and it must therefore be avoided and condemned
3. The sins demand action and a ceremony of purification of varying severity depending on the sin, to purify the soul.
4. The unwillingness to wash oneself is a sin itself, punishable by removal from the church. Its ultimate result can result in eternally damning the sinner's soul, which can longer be purified.
5. Your role in the afterlife is governed by your accrued sins when you die.
6. It is the responsibility of the church's members to spread the church's philosophy to unbelievers and to carry its benefits to other peoples and nations.

The common believer fears his sins will divorce him from the church and his fellow worshippers. He fears that he will accumulate some many sins that he will be unable to be purified, and because of this, he always tries to confess his own sins to the clergy and respect the punishments and the acts of contrition that the sins earn. Therefore, the clerics have an enormous influence with the faithful, as they know all their sins and secrets. As a result, it can appear that some of the Church of Karameikos's clergy demand large donations to purify the soul of wealthy or weaker people, or that they use the information revealed in the confessional either for their own advantage or to keep control of the country's politics (which in effect happens regularly).

The Church of Karameikos is a religion based upon a rigid philosophical and moral doctrine (the pure soul). It is intent on improving and purifying the spirit, and it is not surprising therefore, that it is made up of mostly

philosopher clerics (90%). However, there are a small number of specialist clerics (8%) and polytheist clerics (2%) within the Church. The Church offers its followers a pantheon of Right as an example for proper veneration – Thyatian Immortals who perfectly embody the Church’s theological virtues. This is used by Jowett as a contrast to the triad of the Church of Traladara (Vanya as an alternative to Halav, Patura as an alternative to Petra and Ilsundal as an alternative to Zirchev) and to attract the support of Karameikos’ demihuman population (hence the introduction of Kagyar and Ilsundal as generic patrons of crafts and nature). In this sense, Asterius embodies the ideals of Tolerance and Peace that prosperity provides; Kagyar those of Honesty, Talent and Work; Ilsundal symbolizes Wisdom and Purity; Vanya embodies Courage and Defence of the Valorous and Patura embodies Maternity, Fertility and Charity. Therefore, the church doesn’t worship one Immortal above the others, and doesn’t impose the worship of any on its followers, but asks them to follow the virtuous model of the Just. Additionally, The Church of Karameikos does not vehemently condemn the other faiths (in order to prevent civil war within Karameikos). It prefers to direct its worshippers’ hatred towards sin and demons – particularly against the Grim Reaper (Thanatos). He is the father of all those vices that constantly tempt a faithful’s soul and which it is vital to resist to avoid damnation and the losing of his soul.

The clerics of the Church of Karameikos are recognized by the formal dress they wear. This consists of a long-sleeved grey habit that reaches down to cover the ankles, a pair of leather boots, a metal sceptre (often used as a mace) and the church’s symbol (a slanted wand with a sun up on the left and a moon segment low on the right) embroidered or painted on the chest.

Currently about 25% of the Karameikian population follow the Church’s doctrine. The majority of these followers are Thyatians and nobles in positions of power – although a number of Traladarans have been converted over the last thirty years and have begun to spread the religion among their fellow compatriots.

### ORDER OF THE GRIFFON

The Order of the Griffon is the military branch of the Church of Karameikos and clerics, fighters and paladins are able to be part of it. Belonging to this order is an act of great prestige for a Karameikan fighter; inasmuch as its members are always engage in adventures in favour of the Church, the nation and the common people, and for this, each year many combatants seek to enter. Aspiring members are presented to Patriarch Jowett of Specularum; who assigns a supervisor of the Order to each of them. The supervisor assesses their combat ability, their knowledge of Karameikan doctrine and their character. To become a member of the Order of the Griffon an individual must meet the following requirements:

1. Have a good combat ability (be at least 5<sup>th</sup> level).
2. Be a follower of the Church of Karameikos.
3. Make a solemn oath to fulfil the tasks of the Order and to respect his superiors.
4. The sex of the aspirant is not influential, but they do not admit humanoids or monstrous creatures, nor thieves or arcane spellcasters.

A member’s responsibilities are:

1. Donate 25% of his income to the Church of Karameikos as part of the Order of the Griffon.
2. Obey the dictates of the Church of Karameikos with regard to sins and purifications.
3. Accept missions and the duties assigned to you by the Patriarch of the church or by his superiors of the Order (these missions are often adventures or military missions in the interests of the Order, of the Church or of the nation).

A member of the Order has the following benefits:

- ❖ ***Asylum:*** The possibility to ask for asylum in any consecrated temple of the Church of Karameikos or building of the Order of the Griffon.
- ❖ ***Respect:*** A Knight of the Griffon should be treated by all Karameikians as if he were a noble knight (faithful to the crown of Karameikos), despite his real social rank, given the respect and admiration that the Order enjoys within the nation and he should thus be accommodated by nobles and take part in their adventures.
- ❖ ***Brotherhood:*** A member of the Order enjoys the company and the friendship of his confederates, who will become his friends and do their utmost in order to help him in moments of need with spiritual, military or economic assistance.

The Order of the Griffon’s members are called Knights of the Griffon and always bear a symbol that declares their membership (a white rampant griffon on a black field). This can be anything from a simple cloak pin, to an elaborate medallion, to a worn tabard or to a picture on a shield or on the armour. A member can resign at any time, or be banished if he does not honour his own responsibilities.

## CHURCH OF NARVAEZ

**Worshipped in:** Narvaez, Torreòn (Savage Coast)

**Ixion** Sun, wisdom, learning, strength and passion, balance

The Church of Narvaez is a Lawful religion based on what became known as the Ispana Heresy. This was caused by an internal schism within the Church of Thyatis in 900 AC and the subsequent migration of the majority of the ethnic Ispana from the Known World to the new frontier, the Savage Coast, during the time of the Thyatian Empire’s greatest expansion. At that time, a lot of the Church of Thyatian’ ethnic Ispan clergy led by the

charismatic Balthazar de Narvaez, had begun to spread a series of writings and theories that openly contradicted the Church of Thyatis's balanced philosophy. They were trying to promote Solarios (who the Ispans called Ixion) as the Church's central and supreme Immortal. The Ispans, forever bound to a sun cult, had tried to reform the old Church of Thyatis and give new impetus to the population's conversion, in particular in the colonies, on the wave of a mystical and religious fervour brought by some miracles completed by Balthazar in Ixion's name, but the ecclesial hierarchy, threatened by this monotheistic change, openly lined up against the actions of the rebel clergy, branding their doctrine the Ispana Heresy. Feeling the strong pressure mounting within the empire from both the ecclesials and the people, the Emperor Gabrionus VI, on the direct council of the Pontifex Magnus, gave the Ispan governors and Don Balthazar de Narvaez a choice to avoid a civil war: renounce their heretical doctrine and return to the Church of Thyatis's teaching, or emigrate with the expedition that was preparing to sail and colonize the new frontier, the lands of the Savage West beyond the Gulf of Hule. Naturally the Ispans chose exile, and led by Balthazar de Narvaez they arrived and settled in that region, which was inhabited by a few humanoids and elves, claiming it in name of Thyatis in 902 AC. A few years later, in 904 AC, due to the distance from Thyatis and the frequent disputes with the Thyatian bureaucrats sent to control the colonists, the Narvaezans declared their independence from the Thyatian Empire. After following the advice of the Pontifex Magnus, Gabrionus VI didn't try to regain possession of the Savage Baronies, judging it more trouble than it was worth. This evident laxity caused the Barony of Narvaez to fragment in to the various states that now make up Los Guardianos. Ixion's faith, however, only remained strong in the Barony of Narvaez, while the other small nations rejected the religious fervour that had characterized the first years of the colonization. Faith became a private affair and in many cases decidedly superfluous, and mainly focused on the cults of those Immortals seen as less "overwhelming" and more important for the Baronies lifestyles (causing the cults of Milan, Valerias, the Ambassador, and the General to proliferate) to the detriment of Ixion's cult, which was relegated to just the baronies of Torreòn and Narvaez. In Narvaez's case, the power has remained in the hands of Balthazar de Narvaez's descendants, who continue to govern the barony as a theocracy, as the Baron is also the High Patriarch of the Church of Narvaez (therefore uniting temporal and spiritual power).

The Church of Narvaez worships Ixion as the great creator and giver of life and justice, guardian of universal balance, giver of wisdom, knowledge and power to the virtuous, and implacable against his enemies and the ungodly. The Narvaezans admit and recognize the existence of many other Immortals, but they place Ixion over all others, therefore bestowing the most veneration

on him, and they consider the other Immortals as servants or allies of an inferior rank. Ixion's faith is dealt with in particularly hard and fast manner in the Barony of Narvaez, where anyone accused or suspected of irreverence towards Ixion risks imprisonment, followed by a ruthless interrogation to find out if he is an enemy of the faith, in which case the punishment is death on the pyre. This practice became fairly prevalent after the initial political schisms that divided the original Barony of Narvaez in the various small states, due to **Vanya's** (called in espa the Inquisitor or Faña) influence. In the last eighty years, the Inquisitor's cult has earned prestige with the family of Narvaez and the Church, and its clergy have taken the religion of Ixion to more and more rigid and intransigent positions, thereby covering the roles of the faith's martial order and the hunters of heretics and traitors. This great power has eroded some of the prestige and authority that previously was exclusively the clerics of Ixion, and has created great tension within the Church of Narvaez, which however seems to continue to tolerate and support the Inquisitor as Ixion's only loyal ally. Even Valerias's cult, which was initially welcomed by the clergy of Ixion as it embodied the ideal wife of the Sun, has over time and through the influence of Vanya's clerics, has become seen as a dangerous practice. Currently for the Church of Narvaez, Valerias has passed from being Ixion's bride to being an unreliable and scheming handmaiden, symbol of wantonness, sin, and the human mind's weakness when it is beguiled by feelings.

The Church of Narvaez believes that the Red Curse is a punishment sent by Ixion to non-believers (and in a certain sense it has reason to). As such, the only relief from the curse is distributed by the clergy, who control the *cinnabryl* reserves, and who only use their clerical spells to alleviate the Afflicted's suffering and maintain healthy worshippers. For this reason, those who do not regularly visit church and the clergy fall victim to the Red Curse, and this clearly separates the faithful from those guilty of sinning against Ixion (it also gives the Church of Narvaez's clergy total control over their followers loyalty). When a citizen first shows signs of the affliction, he is examined by the Inquisitor's clergy to discover if he is an infidel or just a sinner: in the former case he is condemned to life imprisonment with hard labour, or if his guilt is particularly grave, to death on the pyre (to be purified by Ixion's flame). In the latter case, the sinner is transferred to one of the special enclaves outside of the most populous settlements, where his malady is cured by Ixion's followers whenever possible. These Afflicted are persuaded to believe, by the clerical propaganda, that they have committed a sin and deserve to be punished with the Red Curse. They live in a condition of deep reflection, constantly at the Church's service in an attempt to redress their sins and redeem themselves. Many Afflicted even become clergymen of Ixion, even if their clerical duties are restricted to isolated monasteries or the enclaves of Afflicted in Narvaez.

## ECCLESIAL HIERARCHY

Hugo de Narvaez y Montoya – known as “El Despiadado” (The Despised), the baron and most important man of the Narvaez family, currently leads the Church of Narvaez. Since the death of Balthazar de Narvaez, who amalgamated the offices of **High Patriarch** and **Baron of Narvaez**, his descendants have tightly held the reins of both Church and state, knowing that spiritual authority is the basis for politics within a nation whose people have been thoroughly indoctrinated. The High Patriarch has the power of issuing moral edicts, establishing new beliefs, declaring a holy war or Inquisition against a foreign nation or against one or more individuals, as well as consecrating bishops, missionaries and the Church Knights of Narvaez. As he embraces the offices of both spiritual and temporal head of state, his power is practically limitless and completely unopposed.

Under the High Patriarch is a council of four **Bishops**, representatives of the most important noble families of Narvaez, who control their respective regions of influence. They administer the financial resources of various temples and the national supplies of *cinnabryl*, explain the actions of their clergy to the Patriarch, ordain clerics, and investigate any alleged miracles or missing ancient relics. These positions are hereditary, although the Baron has the right to deprive a nobleman of his lands if he is guilty of treason or to promote another noble family to that level. This might, in theory, shatter the current balance, but (in over fifty years) no baron has ever taken advantage of his power to upset the status quo of the Narvaezan nobility. This is a clear sign that the de Narvaez family is able to impose its own will on all the junior officers.

Next in rank are the normal **Clergymen** of Ixion (named with the noble prefix “Don” as a sign of respect) who answer to the Council of Bishops and the High Patriarch, and the **Inquisitors** (the clerics of Vanya), who have equal importance before the Bishops and who answer to the **Head Inquisitor** – a priest of Vanya chosen personally by the High Patriarch to control the inquisitors’ actions. The Head Inquisitor additionally, doesn’t take orders from the Patriarch, so he is untouchable by the Bishops, which they view threatens their sovereignty, which has created numerous tensions in the last decades. On the bottom rung of the ecclesial ladder are the **Afflicted Clerics** – those who took their vows after being afflicted with the Red Curse. They are confined in monasteries where they carry out menial or particularly secret duties, and are kept busy administering the enclaves of Afflicted, always under the supervision of a Head Healer (a cleric of Ixion pure and untouched by the illness) who reports to the Bishops. They are unlikely to get a position of responsibility or the chance to become a missionary.

Finally, the so-called **Missionaries** deserve a close examination. They are clergymen with special cultural

training and of proven loyalty to the Church who are tasked with going on missions abroad to carry the word of Ixion. Every five years the missionary must return home to report on his progress and his findings to his Bishop superior, who then decides whether to renew his trust and task, or transfer him to other duties (or even to send him to the Inquisition if they suspect him of treason). The missionaries act as evangelists (even if their often dogmatic and inflexible character alienates the people who they seek to convert) and spies on the Church’s behalf, sometimes resorting to orthodox methods like corruption, blackmail, or physical violence (or convert the people or incite a revolt against an enemy ruler) to achieve their results.

## KNIGHTS OF NARVAEZ

The Knights of Narvaez order is made up of individual, secular followers of the Church, endowed with great virtue and the economic means to maintain their own mount and armour. They are frequently ambitious, small landholders; young members of the landowning nobility who discover a passion for adventure and wish to devote themselves to the Church’s cause to gain its official support and increase their own prestige. Some of them are simple exhibitionists who enjoy lording it over others with the clergy’s approval, while others are true fanatics of the faith; men who defend Ixion’s cult by any means and without compromise. The Knights of Narvaez are famous for their tendency to leave on heroic missions and holy pilgrimages in an attempt to carry the word of Ixion to distant lands through the strength of their arms and faith, or to recover the ancient artefacts and relics of the Immortals scattered around the world (one of these artefacts is preserved in the Grande Catedral de Ciudad Quimeras, a heavily fortified edifice that has become a focus for annual pilgrimages by the faithful). They are encouraged by the clerics or guided by prophetic dreams and omens sent by Ixion.

## CHURCH OF RENARDY

**Worshipped in:** Renardy (Savage Coast)

Saimpt Renard	Freedom, wisdom, cleverness, jokes and entertainment, nobility
Saimpt Clébard	Family, loyalty, patriotism
Saimpt Ralon	Life, trade, agriculture, money, food
Saimpt Mâtin	Security, sacrifice, guards
Saimpt Loup	Night, hunting, instincts, animals
Saimpt Malinois	Vengeance, courage, fighters, hunters
Saimpt Soubrette	Arts, talent, persuasion, illusion

## HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

The Church of Renardie operates in the territory of the Kingdom of Renardie (previously known as Renardy), in the Savage Coast. It was established around the V century AC by Bishop Richel of Louvines, tutor to the young King Luuis I, after a period of great revolts led by the clergy.

When the Kingdom of Renardy was founded at the end of the I century AC by the unification of the region's five powerful lupin tribes, its first king, Kaarlup I (who was heroic and victorious in his battles against the northern goblinoids), created the law that the Renardois crown would pass down by right of blood through his dynasty, and that any future coronation would be blessed by a priest of Luup, but the cleric wouldn't have any power to prevent it. Immediately afterwards, they established that the temporal power was held by king and his noble vassals (the five most powerful families' descendents), while the clerics of the lupin Immortals (Luup, Maleen, and Renard) were confined to the common class, without any decision-making power or the nobles' prestige, although some of them lived in the king's palace or his nobles' castles as court healers or diviners. A clerical career was not, thus, an easy livelihood, but a true vocation. As such, the clergy, although divided and incapable of planning a common strategy, began to gain the respect and the support of Renardy's lower classes (and most numerous), who personally observed and experienced the clerics' dedication. Over the next three centuries, successive rulers recognised the clergy's increasing popularity, and schemed to pit the three faiths against each other to prevent them from uniting, which could some day threaten the nobles' authority. In this game of power, the Renardois monarchy supported at one time or another, each of the three orders with small gifts of capital or land, based on the aid received from the latter, and the situation remained unchanged until V century AC, when each of the three clerical orders was governed by a far-sighted and ambitious Patriarch, who had previously shared many common battles. So, the three Patriarchs decided, by common accord, to combine their three faiths into a single sect to worship all three lupin Immortals, and proclaimed the formation of the Unified Church of the Lupins. On the strength of the land they owned and their follower's support, the three clerics presented to King Philou II their request for the Unified Church to be recognised as the official state religion. They also asked that anyone who became a Patriarch of the Church be granted a noble title. Fearing a political schism, and urged on by the nobility who had no intention of sharing power with the clergy, the king refused to grant either of the clergy's requests. His refusal, however, was deemed as a show of contempt for divine authority, and the three Patriarchs assembled their forces and urged the people to revolt both in their own lands and throughout the country. In just a few years the climate became so enflamed, with public riots and attacks against the nobility's rule and vineyards, that only the clergy could hold the crowds at bay. In an attempt to crush the opposition created by the clergy, King Philou tried to imprison and execute the three Patriarchs for treason, but this was the final straw. The country rebelled and was split between the monarchists and the pious,

with the result that the king decreed martial law and raised the army against his own people in what later became known as the Period of Terror. The remaining clerics were branded as traitors and openly hunted. Many sought refuge in the countryside and steppe, where they were made welcome and protected by Luup the Black's nomadic lupin followers.

It was one of these clergymen, Richel, one of the three murdered patriarchs' assistant, who gathered the forces of faithful, and with the support of the nomads, marched unexpectedly against the royal palace in Louvines, besieging the king while his army was dispersed throughout the nation trying to restore calm. Richel reasoned with the Royal Guard and captured King Philou when he tried to escape. Addressing Louvines's citizens and the soldiers gathered in the public square, he ordered the king's death by divine will, and that it was always the divine intention he would protect and teach Philou's young son until Luuis became an adult. So Richel took Luuis, still a pup, under his protection and governed the kingdom in his stead for fifteen years. In 479 AC, he ratified the Church of Renardy's birth which had cost the preceding king his life. Richel as Royal Tutor and Bishop of Louvines, manipulated the young Luuis's wishes to his own liking, and he used his position to approve a series of laws that guaranteed nobility and temporal power to the clergy if they owned land capable of producing quality goods, principally wine (as the Renardois valued nothing more than a fine wine). Since then, the clergy have established small abbeys and monasteries in all the uncultivated or unclaimed areas of fertile land, and then gained from the Bishop the right to own the property and thus the aristocratic status that goes with it. As a result, the Church of Renardy's clergy have assumed great power and the Church's lands have increased, which has made the clerics the people's spiritual guides, master winemakers, and skilful merchants. Upon Richel's death, King Luuis XIV definitively sanctioned that the Church's patriarch would also be the Bishop of Louvines, and since then the custom became law.

Over successive centuries the church was reformed and the initial pantheon of Renard, Maleen, and Luup slowly increased with the addition of heroes like Mâtin and Ralon. The arrival, in 899 AC, of the Glantri noble Clébard de Clairvault and his disciples caused the nation's greatest change. Assaulted by a horde of enraged goblinoids, the Renardois had already lost their king in battle and the country's northern regions when the Glantrian lupins' led by Clébard, came to their aid. He later claimed to have been guided there by the visions of Saimpt Renard, of whom he later became an avid follower. Due to his strategic skills and his clan's war preparations, Clébard broke the goblinoid supply lines and, coordinating his own actions with noble Renardois leaders', finally curbed the invasion and crushed the goblinoids. At war's end the population acclaimed him



and he married the previous king's daughter, guaranteeing the nation a new strong and powerful dynasty. When Clébard came to the throne, Renardy was still a kingdom of backward provinces, but the nation became a truly enlightened state thanks to Clébard's progressive reforms; a series of laws and codices that the king claimed united the lupins' ancient traditions with the legal principles that he had learnt in Glantri. It was Clébard's wish that the nation was renamed Renardie, and Renardois (derived from Averoignese) became the national language. The latter was initially the idiom of the noble class and subsequently spread among the bourgeoisie – the middle class of merchants and rich gentry. The reformed church was also influenced by the Renardois language, many of the ancient Immortals became "Saimpts" (saints) and, in some cases, their pronunciation was modified (Maleen became Saimpt Malinois and Luup became Saimpt Loup). With Patriarch Sevres's agreement, the Church of Renardie began examine all the kingdom's clerical orders and to the more desirable ones admit within itself, and forcibly disband those that proved to be particularly dangerous.

There, however, are still a few heretics among the Renardois lupins, particularly of the most dangerous heresy – Pflarrian. These heretics support the Immortal Pflarr the lupins' creator, and believe that the only true nobles are those lupins that have the blood of Pflarr's progeny in their veins. In fact, they pass on a custom according to which at the kingdom's dawn only those who, in a mystical ceremony, could show that they have Pflarr's mark are given a noble title and allowed to govern the lupins. Since the current monarchy began, nobility has been conferred on the custom of the identifying the better wines: in practice the king confers tributes (leaves) that make a winemaker a noble (as wine production is the basis of the Renardois economy). The Pflarrians accuse the Renardois church and monarchy of perverting the truth for pure opportunism and demand the overthrow of the false nobility, and a return to their origins with Pflarr properly honoured as their creator. As such, Pflarr's order, the sponsor of "nobility of blood", is considered a national enemy and persecuted by both the monarchy and church, which instead support the "nobility bourgeois".

### STRUCTURE OF THE CHURCH

The Church of Renardie is mainly made up of normal clergy who live in the nation's various parishes (each is administered by a Parish priest, whose superior is the Bishop of the region's capital), and members of orders devoted to a specific saimpt (usually organised around a monastery or city where the order was founded). The Renardois orders are:

- ❖ **Clebardians:** disciples of Saimpt Clébard, they specialise in converting non-believers to the Renardois faith and indoctrinating them in the national ideals. They often act as missionaries or govern important academies and seminaries in

their homeland. They are also responsible of any internal Church investigation and hold the key positions in the clerical bureaucracy.

- ❖ **Loupians:** disciples of Saimpt Loup, these lupins prefer to follow an ascetic way of self-sacrifice and isolation, seeking enlightenment through hunger and their contact with the wild nature and basic instincts.
- ❖ **Matinites:** disciples of Saimpt Mâtin, these indomitable defenders of the faith and nation make up the Church's martial branch. It is a militant order that acts as a type of police force in the domains governed by the bishops, and that joins the soldiers stationed in the observation towers to watch the borders. They answer to the Church's Patriarch, but usually they follow the King's orders in matters of national defence and military campaigns, unless specifically told otherwise by the Patriarch.
- ❖ **Malinese:** Disciples of Saimpt Malinois, this sect is feared by the entire nation as it supervises and protects the faith, investigates cases of heresy and lycanthropy, and looks for evidence relating to the holiness of possible candidates. They are also consulted during investigations concerning occult events within Renardie.
- ❖ **Ralonians:** disciples of Saimpt Ralon, they promote the adage "pray and work", as they join workers in the fields and (mainly) vineyards for prayers devoted to Ralon. They are among the nation's best winemakers.
- ❖ **Renardans:** disciples of Saimpt Renard, they are specialists in history and religious and mystical philosophy, custodians of ancient knowledge, and devoted to meditation and study rather than action.
- ❖ **Soubrettians:** disciples of Saimpt Soubrette, these clergymen are skilled artists that usually produce all the works deemed acceptable by the Renardois religion, and protect the Church's more precious works of art. They are expert orators, many of which often help the Renardan or Clebardian diplomats during important political meetings.

To be numbered among the Church of Renardie's saimpts, it is necessary to show that the candidate has performed miracles during his life, and that following his disappearance, someone has performed at least one miracle ascribable to this saimpt's divine intervention. Every petition for sanctification is examined by a special tribunal, the Theological Academy, which examines each case, the testimonies taken, and the life and work of the figure under investigation. It then judges, jointly with the Assembly of Bishops, whether or not there is enough evidence to accept the petition. These then, are the basis for the Academy's conclusions, who then vote on the proposal to add a new saimpt to the Renardois Church.

If the proposal passes with a two-thirds majority, the individual is canonized and becomes a Saimpt. This procedure has been successful in only four cases (Soubrette, Ralon, Mâtin, and Clébard), as the pantheon was initially comprised of the cults of Saimpts Renard, Loup, and Malinois. There are numerous other proposals that still have to be assessed by the Academy (particularly the canonization of Vezy, a most important winemaker who lived two centuries ago, which is reviewed every five years), and each year at least one more is added to the already long list. As a result, over the last three centuries, the waiting time for the resolution for divination petitions has become extremely long.

## CHURCH OF THYATIS

**Worshipped in:** Thyatis, Isle of Dawn, Ochalea, Pearl Islands, Ierendi, Karamaikos, Minrothad, Darokin, Alfheim

The Church of Thyatis is a Lawful religion instituted by the will of the Empress Valentia in the II century AC, as the means to indoctrinate the Thyatians with a new ethic and a sense of state – to cement the nationalistic glory and reinforce the basis of the conservative policy introduced by her. The followers of the Church of Thyatis are therefore raised in a more complete respect for the “published matter”, the religious morals, and the cult of the ancestors and to live a quiet life. The Church isn’t oppressive or excessively intransigent like some monotheistic cults, but exacts a spirit of sacrifice from its faithful and utmost loyalty to its maxims of life, which are preached for a better peaceful co-existence and the consolidation of the prestige of the Thyatian nation.

The Church of Thyatis is led by the Assembly of Elders and the Pontifex Magnus (the High Patriarch), which has the power to direct the policies of the church, crown the Emperor, promote new missions, and initiate the process of the Evocatio – necessary for expanding the pantheon of the Immortals and saints honoured by the Church. The Assembly of Elders consists of the Elder Patriarchs (the wiser and more powerful priests of the cult). The number of which corresponds exactly to the number of Immortals recognised by the Church – to represent metaphorically the voices of the many Immortals who protect Thyatis. It is necessary to note that these Elders aren’t necessarily specialist clerics of the recognised Immortals, but simply the priests, devoted to the Church of Thyatis, of highest rank and that have at least the 20 years service within the Church’s hierarchy. Both the Pontifex Maximus and the Elders have a seat at the senate as senators, but said office is temporary and revoked the moment they leave their office within the Church.

The majority (80%) of the clergymen of the religion are philosopher clerics, while the rest are divided into polytheistic (18%) and specialists (2%). The polytheist clerics receive their powers from the lawful Immortals of the pantheon, while the philosophers get their power

directly from four spheres of the Order (Matter, Energy, Thought and Time). The polytheists are tolerated by the philosophers (who hold the most important positions in the clergy), as they don’t worship one Immortal above the others but recognise the importance of all for the good of the state. The specialists are viewed with suspicion, as now and then, they tend to put the interests and the glory of their own Immortal ahead of the welfare of Thyatis. Indeed because of one of these heresies (called the Ispana Heresy), there was a mass exodus from the Empire. This was at the start of 900 AC, when a large group of Ispan heretic followers of Ixion left Thyatis to colonise what would later become the Savage Baronies. This was to avoid a conflict with the ecclesiastic hierarchy over a theological dispute about the role of Ixion in the creation of the world and in the rise of Thyatis. Another reason was a reform project that envisioned a redistribution of ecclesiastic powers. Actually, Solarios (the Thyatian name of Ixion) is still one of the Immortals honoured by the Church of Thyatis, although his followers have been closely watched during the last century. The Church of Thyatis is the official Thyatian religion and operates in all the Empire’s territories with monies derived especially from the denari that the senate pours into the coffers of this institution, and is therefore a powerful force within Thyatian politics. It’s no surprise the title of Pontifex Maximus (High Patriarch of the Church) is bestowed only to the candidate who enjoys the support of the emperor and the more influential senators, and it’s never an exclusive decision of the ecclesiastic hierarchy. The Pontifex in fact remains in office until his death, and only a joint decision of the Senate and of the Assembly of the Elders in cases of grave violation (high treason or heresy) can remove him. The election of the new Pontifex happens in two stages. There is first a secret poll in the assembly of the Elder Patriarchs to create a shortlist of candidates. This list is presented before the Senate where it is subject to a new secret vote. The candidate proclaimed Pontifex Maximus is the one with the majority of votes. In order to assume the office he must renew his pledge of loyalty to the Empire and the Church on the tomb of Valentia, in the presence of the Emperor and in front of the assembly of the Elder Patriarchs and the Senators gathered in the Cathedral of Thyatis. In this way, the state is assured the support of the Church in pursuing the same aims as its founder. The Church of Thyatis exists to serve Thyatis and not vice versa, and all its worshippers learn that the ultimate end of the life of a believer is his own sacrifice for the common good, or the survival of the Thyatian state. It can, therefore, be said that the principal objective of the priests of the Church of Thyatis isn’t so much that of saving the souls of the faithful as that of consolidating the prestige and the power of the Empire and controlling the popular consensus.

Given its political importance, it is therefore understandable to discover that the Church has many

cathedrals and missions within the imperial borders, especially in those areas considered crucial to international politics. In these places, priests operate more to support Thyatian ambassadors, merchants and spies than as missionaries, since people who are not native of the Empire rarely accept this religion.

The Church of Thyatis is therefore a national institution that promotes a religious doctrine and philosophy based on lawful moral principles that are précised in the Sacred Pentalogy:

1. Loyalty to the State
2. Respect of Tradition
3. Respect of Immortals
4. Respect of Ancestors
5. Respect of Neighbours

**Loyalty to the State:** The Church is firstly loyal to the Empire of Thyatis and to its official representatives, and then to its voting citizens. It's no accident the highest members of the ecclesiastic hierarchy also have the dual role of senators. This duty shows, again, how the church embodies the spiritual side of Thyatian politics. This doctrine of faith asks the believers to submit to the national authorities and to the will of the Emperor and the Pontifex Maximus (both political figures and members of the Thyatian state) as chosen by the Immortals from among the best and the most worthy ("first among equals"). The gravest sin for a member of the Church of Thyatis is therefore betraying or lying to a national functionary or a cleric of his church. This sin not only involves eternal damnation but expulsion from the priesthood and the loss of Thyatian citizenship – a risk that is unbearable for any good Thyatian. With this doctrine, therefore the Church asks all believers to respect the law and the authority of the functionaries and place themselves at the complete disposal of the state. Martyrdom for the Thyatian cause is therefore the noblest end to which a follower can covet and the start of the path towards saintliness and the insertion in the cult of the Ancestors. It's no surprise mastery of weapons has consequently spread among the Thyatians, and many followers feel an obligation to join the Thyatian legions to serve the motherland and defend it from its enemies or enhance its international prestige. Others prefer to shown their own devotion to the nation by entering the clergy.

**Respect of Tradition:** The Church of Thyatis has a vast list of traditions, beliefs and acts that every follower consider holy. The list is precisely catalogued and annotated in the sacred text of the Thyatian faith, the *Liber Valentianis* (Book of Traditions). The editing of this book began in the II century AC by the hand of the Empress Valentia, founder of the church, but over the centuries, it has been expanded and reviewed – and as a result, it has attained biblical proportions. It remains under the attentive eyes of a select group of theologians, the Keepers of Tradition. This group has two aims: updating the book based on the decisions of the Assembly of Elders and the Pontifex Maximus, and

making other copies so it can be spread through the world.

Listed below are the most famous and usually most respected traditions:

- ❖ **Act with fairness** – Thyatians believe that the Immortals note every mortal action and, upon death, mortals are judged according to their actions and sent to a heavenly kingdom based on their own conduct.
- ❖ **Improve the world** – As the Thyatian culture is the best in the world, it should be extended to every other culture by any means possible.
- ❖ **Honour the feast days** – It is right to cease work for at least a day on the days consecrated to an Immortal or to the ancestors, to pray to the patron of the day and make him an offering in exchange for protection.
- ❖ **Listen to the Haruspices** – Every month a group of clerics specialised in interpreting the signs of the Immortals proposes a prophecy or an augury that pertains to the Empire. Every follower is invited to meditate on the augury to discover if he has an important part to play in fulfilling it.

**Respect of Immortals:** The Church is not devoted to one Immortal in particular, and indeed one of its principal precepts is that of worshipping and respecting all the Immortals considered "guardians" of Thyatis. They are the Immortals who promote doctrines and ideas used for the growth and to the welfare of Thyatis (thus not subversive in the eyes of Thyatian priests and politicians) and that according to the Church's doctrine have interceded in the past to protect or aid the Thyatians. Currently the pantheon of Immortals recognised by the Church of Thyatis comprises of the following 16 Immortals (listed in the order they joined the Church): Vanya, Tarastia, Asterius, Valerias, Khoronus, Tiresias, Vulcan (Wayland), Odin, Thor, Solarios (Ixion), Ilsundal, Kagyar, Koryis, Idraote, Carnelian and Patura.

The Church has only one way an Immortal can be considered worthy of worship by the faithful and admitted among the protectors of Thyatis: the ritual of the Evocatio. Through the Evocatio, the Church recognises the divine power of a being and that it has manifested itself within the Empire's territory to bring profit and glory to Thyatis. Five prerequisites need to be satisfied to begin the Evocatio ceremony:

Obtain from one of the Prophets or a priest of higher authority the permission to build a temple to his divinity within the imperial borders (this usually takes a month – during which a group of theologians question the petitioner about his and his religion's intentions).

At least one of the Immortal's followers must demonstrate he has clerical ability and able to invoke the divine power of the Immortal in front of a throng of witnesses (usually a congress of theologians).

The cult must achieve some worthy service in the struggles of the Church or of the state of Thyatis, and this service must be made possible by virtue of the divine powers granted by the Immortal.

The cult must demonstrate that it has at least a hundred followers within the Empire's borders.

The ministers of the cult must agree and nominate a high patriarch who officiates at the ceremony of the Evocatio together with the Pontifex Maximus.

Once that all five of the conditions are satisfied, the patriarch of the cult is admitted to the presence of the Pontifex. He sifts through the information presented by the special Council of Sages regarding the Immortal in question, and will decide to proceed with the Evocatio if he thinks that the cult of that particular Immortal upholds the Church of Thyatis' principles. The ritual is publically held within the Great Cathedral of Thyatis and co-celebrated by the Pontifex and by the patriarch of the new Immortal. After which this Immortal is considered benevolent for the Empire and its clerics can (if they desire it or require it) enter into the Church of Thyatis' ecclesiastic hierarchy.

Naturally, there are many independent temples that worship one or more Immortals who are already numbered among the Protectors of Thyatis without belonging to the Church: these temples are naturally left free on their own initiative, even if they are closely and discreetly monitored. Other cults instead have never asked to be tolerated within the Church, as they don't share much of its doctrine, but they continue to peacefully coexist with it on the imperial land (for example the followers of the more chaotic Korotiku and Tyche).

Finally the Church of Thyatis opposes the cults of those Immortals who are considered bringers of destruction and misery (Thanatos, Orcus, Alphaks and Hircismus), or that can hinder the Empire (like Alphatia, Palartarkan and Razud – notorious protectors of rival Alphatia, and Saturnius, patron of pirates and rebel slaves). These cults are banned and persecuted as heretical by the more intransigent Church members, who often demand the support of the political and military institutions to fight against the proliferation of heresies. It is necessary however to emphasise that although the cult of Alphaks (an Immortal known for its anarchic and destructive tendencies) has been banned in the imperial territories, this Immortal frequently attracts the sympathy of the more nationalistic extremists, who appreciate his doctrine of anger and hate directed, by his followers, against Thyatis's greatest enemy – the Alphantian Empire.

**Respect of Ancestors:** The Church of Thyatis is also renowned for a special reverence that it holds for ancestors and some particularly important figures in Thyatian history that are considered Saints. The difference between a saint and an Immortal is modest. If an individual during his life proves he has shown acts of incredible power that has brought substantial benefits to

the Thyatian cause, then upon his death, he can become a saint (a priest of the church needs to present a documented demand to the Council of Sages) and he is worshipped as part of cult of the ancestors. If later, a true faith rises, from the cult of the ancestor, in which the ministers demonstrate they receive divine powers from the ancestor, he can be recognised as an Immortal and with the ritual of the Evocatio will be numbered among the Protectors of Thyatis (as in the successful cases of Idraote, Carnelian and Patura). Currently the holiness of the figure of Liena (formerly Aline Sigbertsdottir – mother of the Emperor Thincol I Torion) has been recognised thanks to the intercession of her son, and the procedures to prove her divinity have started. It's not surprising that the cult of the ancestors has spread through all the social layers of the Thyatian population, as every individual can have an illustrious ancestor on whom he daily depends for his family's protection and future. The main difference between the veneration of an ancestor and that of a saint is that the saints have frequently made and continue to grant miracles, which elevates him above normal ancestors. So much so, that anyone who has a saint among his ancestors is admired and respected by his peers), even if the cult is run by simple worshippers and not by real clerics (as it still isn't an Immortal).

**Respect of Neighbours:** The Church of Thyatis asks it's faithful to respect the neighbour in the largest sense of the duty. They must avoid harassing or irritating their neighbours, impolite displays or have prejudices based on sex, and finally lend aid to their fellow townsmen when it's formally asked for. The church enforces a sense of the respect for privacy and at the same time of mutual solidarity to their fellow worshippers. This solidarity however doesn't automatically extend to members of other religious denominations nor of other nationalities. On this the Church is extremely explicit: whilst it does oblige its worshippers to mutually help and respect each other, in conflicts with foreigners this obligation drops and the behaviour is totally at the individual's discretion (it being understood that he must always attempt to be friendly and demonstrate the superiority of the Thyatian culture).

The clergy of the Church of Thyatis wear habits of different styles according to their role, but all are obliged to show openly the church's holy symbol, which is a crown encircling the blue imperial eagle encircled, which holds between its talons two lightning bolts, to symbolise the power of the Pontifex and the Emperor.

The **Acolytes** are clerics who still haven't taken the vow of loyalty to the Church and/or have still not received spells. They are usually youngsters who study the faith's doctrine and carry out the more arduous and routine tasks. They wear a brown, long-sleeved robe that covers the ankles and has the church's symbol embroidered on the chest, and a pair of leather boots.

The real **Clerics** wear leather ankle boots and dress in a similar robe but of white colour, with a brown sash around the waist and with the holy symbol embroidered on the chest and back. There are several clerical orders within the Church of Thyatis, which can be distinguished based on the function that each order carries out for the cult and nation. Some of them (the more important) are:

**Haruspices** – Their task is studying the future and making forecasts via oracles, omens, dreams and visions.

**Hospitaliers** – They are experts on medicine, childbirth and healing. They study disease, the human body and seek healing methods based on magic, alchemy and herbalism.

**Guardians** – They are clerics devoted to the protection of certain places or holy icons, as well as of important personalities of the Empire)

**Itinerants** – They are priests who live their life without a fixed abode. They attempt to execute the Immortals' will anywhere the Church or state decides to send them or where they feel called.

**Militants** – This is the armed branch of the Church. It is trained to fight along soldiers or to discover and destroy heretics and cultists that threaten the Empire.

**Missionaries** – These priests only operate outside the borders of Thyatis. They are usually assigned to a temple or embassy, or as agents for affairs of state.

**Thanatologists** – They are clerics assigned the procedures of preserving and interring the deceased, funeral rites, and the study of necromantic practices to control and destroy the undead.

**Theologians** – These are the students of the holy writings, the faith's doctrine and Thyatian history. They usually serve in temples where they act as scribes or teach the acolytes, or are tasked with examining the lives and work of certain historic characters undergoing the process of sanctification. Finally, they act as the advisers of high prelates or judges in public or religious processes and procedures of Evocatio.

The **Curates** are clerics of at least 5<sup>th</sup> level whose task is to govern and administer a Curia (a district of about 1,000 persons) or a Temple (a community of over 1,000 faithful or has a cathedral). They wear a white robe with the hems of the sleeves gilded, a purple sash around the waist and possess a silver ring engraved with the faith's holy symbol.

The **Prophets** are clerics of at least 7<sup>th</sup> level whose task is to supervise and coordinate the operations of all the temples and the curias within each Thyatian province or fief. They hire and fire the Curates and pay particular attention to the activities of other cults and to the rise of possible heresies). They wear a black tunic with gold embroidery, a white sash and a silver sceptre at the waist, a golden medallion with the church's symbol around the neck and a monogrammed ring on his finger.

The **Elder Patriarchs** are members of the Assembly of the Elders. Their tasks are to direct religious life and the

common activities of the clergy, elect the Prophets and maintain the relationships with all the other faiths and temples present within the Empire. They wear a long red silk robe with a white sash around the waist, a golden medallion with the holy symbol around the neck, a monogrammed ring on his finger and a golden sceptre.

Finally, we have the **Pontifex Maximus** (supreme head of the Church. He mediates the relationship between the state and the church and maintains the relationships with other states and institutes missions outside of the Empire. He elects the Elders and institutes the procedure of the Evocatio). He is always austere dressed in white, with a bejewelled tiara on his head, the golden amulet with the church's symbol around his neck, the Pontiff Ring (relic of the Empress Valentia) on his finger and holds a knotty staff.

It is necessary to underline that the Church of Thyatis does not have any sexist or racist prejudices and accepts both men and women of every race and social class, even if it enforces a strict rule about the separation of the housing of members of both sexes. However civil unions are tolerated between members of the Church, which does not impose any religious ethics regarding marriage, or perform any rites on these occasions (unlike funerals, which must be performed according to a pre-established rite), limiting them to follow the civilian canon in things.

## CHURCH OF TRALADARA

**Worshipped in:** Karameikos

Halav	War, strategy & tactics, weapons & armour, strength & determination, sacrifice, fight humanoids
Petra	Patriotism, protection, courage, resistance, virtue, loyalty, fighting clerics, besieged cities, Traladarans
Zirchev	Hunting, survival, tolerance, magic, sylvan races, nature, animals, outcasts
The Goat	Death, evil, sadism, mass destruction, necromancy, lycanthropy, cannibalism
Ranivorus	Gnolls, madness, racism, destruction, hatred
Wogar	Goblins, war, conquest
Karaash	Humanoids, battles, tactics, conquest, rule of the strongest
Jammudaru	Ogres, giants, vengeance, violence
Bartziluth	Bugbears, rage, combat

The Church of Traladara is a Lawful religion whose beliefs are based on the Song of Halav, a legend in verse handed down for generations by those who observed the heroic deeds of the triad Halav–Petra–Zirchev during the Traladaran golden age. The church's main objective is to return Traladara in this age via the worship of the three Immortals and the morals within the Song of Halav. It tries to to grant security to its followers and combat the malignant forces that plot the fall of the Traladarans and their protectors. The malignant forces are especially associated with the Immortals that protect the humanoids that have threatened or invaded Traladara. The main two are Ranivorus (patron of the gnolls that

caused the end of the golden age), and the Goat (Orcus) – a sinister being responsible for acts of brutality and violence and the protector of all the monsters that hide in the shadows (like undead and lycanthropes). Sects and nations that seek to weaken or destroy the Traladaran people and the faithful of Halav, Petra and Zirchev are treated with suspicion and hatred.

According to the Traladaran doctrine, these are the definitive beliefs that must be respected by the faithful to attain salvation and divine favour:

1. The events described in the Song of Halav are true. King Halav, Queen Petra and Zirchev are now Immortals who guide the righteous and punish evil within the Traladaran lands.
2. Harming, cruelty, killing and lying are sins, committed out of weakness or because of the interference of evil or animal spirits.
3. Sins have a punishment appropriate to their seriousness, including both corporal and spiritual punishment. Only death redeems the most serious sins like murder or demon worship.
4. All those who plot either to destroy the Traladarans or to hinder or offend the faiths of Halav, Petra and Zirchev are evil.
5. All humanoids are evil, as testified in the Song of Halav, and their Immortals are responsible for all the evil and pain in the world. Therefore, humanoids and their protectors must be annihilated wherever they are found for peace and humanity's good.
6. The use of ritual magic (like the reading of tea leaves, palms, cards or animal entrails, the use of charms or philtres) is an expression of human curiosity towards the world and is tolerated only when it is directed by the will of those who guard against evil or to improve the human condition. The Immortals sometimes reward the use of such methods with glimpses of the future or of the world's nature, but only when the heart of either the practitioner or his patron isn't stained by evil or immoral desires.
7. An individual's role in the afterlife is determined by his wisdom, faith, and goodness upon his death.
8. Traladara's golden age will only return if the belief in Halav, Petra, and Zirchev remains unflinching and when all the believers respect the Church's doctrine.

To sum up, the Church of Traladara's philosophy is that the people should do no evil to others but live peacefully with their neighbours and the Immortals. If someone should transgress this, then the community must punish the guilty party in proportion to his sin. Therefore, the private relations between men and women or within the family are matters in which the Church does not get involved, unless the aforementioned sins

occur. The role of a Traladaran cleric is to counsel the young based on their own experiences and the morals within the Song of Halav, to use their wisdom to resolve disputes and protect the faithful from the hidden dangers of demons or of their more direct servants. Traladaran clerics therefore advise the young, officiate marriages and funerals, give moral judgments, preach the Church's philosophy of peace and harmony, and when needed fight to save endangered life and defeat evil. The clergy of this Church is divided fairly equally between polytheistic (50%) devotees to the triad, and specialist (45%) followers to one of the Immortals (especially Halav and Petra), with a minority of philosopher (5%) clerics.

The formal livery can distinguish the clerics of the Church of Traladara. It consists of a brown, long sleeved robe with a habit that covers the knees with the Church's coat-of-arms (a stylized fighter in Traldar armour armed with a spear and a shield, with a sun on the background to its left) embroidered on the chest, and a pair of leather boots. The clerics also carry a knotty stick as a symbol of membership. The Church of Traladara is predominant in Karameikos, where it is attended by 70% of the population (Traladarans and a few of mixed Thyatian-Traladaran descent). It has also achieved success in the Gulf of Hule's City States, where Traladaran exiles and merchants founded it, in an obvious sign of their deep-rooted Traladaran cultural identity.

## **CHURCH OF UNIVERSAL HARMONY**

### **Worshipped in:** Darokin

The Church of Universal Harmony is a religious order devoted to the principles of Good and Order. It began as a reform of the Church of Darokin in the work of a dissident Bishop, Luther Martins, who wanted to change many of the Darokinian Temple's foundations. Unfortunately his ideas were not accepted by the Council of Archbishops, and Martins was forced to abandon the Church and found his own religious order. From his original theories the Church of Universal Harmony doesn't worship specific Immortals but rather some Immortals known as the Custodians of Harmony, which Martins didn't define. To the contrary, he forbid the explicit association with recognized divine figures so he could include all benevolent Immortals and not upset any (in this he was heavily influenced by his studies in the Eternal Truth's doctrine, which had spread to Selenica).

The precepts of this order say that the way to perfection is through work, prayer, and mutual tolerance. To be in spiritual union with the universe and create harmony, each person must first be at peace with himself, which he can attain only through a job that ennobles his spirit. To be in spiritual union with the Immortals he has to pray each day in private, and when possible participate in religious ceremonies, although the daily prayer is the most important. Finally, to be in spiritual union with his neighbours tolerance and charity are necessary, as how he treats others is how he will be equally treated. The respect

of these precepts creates a living community of elect bound to Harmony anywhere they live. It is not important to be Darokinian, as there is no promised or chosen land, and anyone can become clergyman of the Universal Harmony, regardless of race or gender. For these reason, Martins' doctrine is considered heretical by his old order.

The Church of Universal Harmony's only temple is in Selenica, and its patriarch is the octogenarian Father Martins. He asks his clergy to roam the Known World and proclaim his words of truth, without needing to build churches and temples of stone, as true Harmony is found in a person's soul, not an earthly construction. The order has many followers throughout the Known World and Alphatia, who try to convert the unbelievers with simple persuasion and without the use of force.

According to the doctrine of Harmony, life is a rotating wheel: those who don't become one with Universal Harmony will be reborn and must repeat their journey, until their soul becomes part of the wheel and is no longer forced to walk around its edge. This naturally signifies that demonic creatures and undead are simply obstacles; some of the hidden dangers placed in Harmony's way by those who want to promote Chaos and Disharmony. As such, it doesn't condemn them, but tries to redeem them, and free them from their fate, reintegrating them into the harmonic cycle. Similarly, resurrection is part of the divine design, as a power to allow them to complete their cycle and enter their Harmony with the universe, and it helps in those cases where conversion to Harmony is decidedly probable.

The Church of Universal Harmony's clerics are all philosophers and called Brethren among the faithful (the patriarch is the Father). They always bear the order's symbol, a golden wheel at the centre of a spiral galaxy, and they dress in normal tunics, shunning any type of ostentation. They aren't mandated to maintain a certain physical appearance (so some of them truly resemble vagabonds), but, besides their holy symbol, they can be recognized by the fact that they never cover their face or head, so they're always visible to others, in harmony with the people's appearance and minds.

## **COUNCIL OF ALPHATIAN TEMPLES**

### **Worshipped in:** Alphatian Empire

The Alphatians aren't known for their devotion to the Immortals or for being particularly religious, as ruling the empire is a caste of spellcasters that only acknowledges arcane power and considers the Immortals nothing more than mortals who due to their powers are able to attain a higher level of existence. For that reason the arcane aristocrats don't see the Immortals as a model of perfection, but as reference points that can be followed to attain a higher power. However, since their arrival on Mystara, their relationship with religion has changed, given the low number of Alphatians that are born with a natural gift for arcane magic. So a kind of religious

fervour has spread among the common class that has caused many individuals to take their vows and swear fidelity to the Immortals, considered by the devoted not simply superhuman but truly omnipotent divinities. Due to the clergy's divine power most of the Alphatians' first period of colonization problems was resolved, and upon the institution of the Grand Council it was decided to honour and recognise the benefit of ordained clerics; so anyone capable of spellcasting (arcane or divine) would be considered a noble. However, this resulted in many converting to religion and take their vows just to be considered nobles, which has provoked further fragmentation (although unofficial) of the aristocratic class: the high nobility (the arcane spellcasters – sorcerers, gifted with innate powers, and wizards – who need to study to learn the magical arts) and the low nobility (the divine spellcasters, who gain their spellcasting ability from the Immortals).

With the proliferation of divine magic over the centuries, the Grand Council started to recognise that the powers of the divine spellcasters were beginning to increase in a worrisome way, and so the Emperor personally passed an edict approved by the Council which instituted the Council of Alphatian Temples. This is an organisation where all the religious orders authorised by the crown would be represented to organise and present their demands to the Emperor and Grand Council. However, the Edict of Bettelyn enacted in 1030 AY (30 AC) by Alphas VI has sanctioned that any religious order which isn't tolerated by the Council would be declared illegal, and so couldn't practice its doctrine or erect temples in honour of any Immortal without the local authority's authorization. In this way the Empire achieved two objectives: firstly effectively limiting the expansion of divine power, and secondly gather all the various faiths' exponents in a single more controllable body.

It was through the Council of Alphatian Temples that every Alphatian nation gained its own patron Immortal, and that some of the greatest Immortals became universal "guardians" of the various periods of the year and the different schools of magic, resuming an outdated custom from Old Alphatia.

Temples now exist devoted to various Immortals in every Alphatian kingdom, although none of these orders are international. This means that the Temples of Razud in Vertiloch and in Arogansa, for example, though they worship the same Immortal don't acknowledge a single patriarch, but rather each nation has its own high cleric who represents his church's interests within the Council. It can create a chaotic dialogue among followers of the same Immortal concerning bureaucratic, political, and religious questions, which prevents the members of the religious caste from having a truly united vision and goals. Indeed, there are far more alliances between one nation's exponents of several faiths than between clerics of the same Immortal from different kingdoms, because

of their common objectives or to keep their privileges. This is secondary effect of the Council's creation, a situation that reflects the Alpathian Empire basic chaotic and individualist character.

Each officially approved temple of every kingdom thus has the task of selecting a representative to act as its spokesman in the Council. His participates in Council meetings to decide questions of political, theological, and economical nature bound to the religious orders, keep his brothers up to date, and suggest religious missions that should be jointly financed by the other churches. The envoy can change year by year, and he hasn't always been the most powerful cleric, but he must be extremely charismatic an individual who can successfully exploit the church's political and economic support to direct the Council's direction. Then the Council, after having reached an agreement about some important matter by a majority vote, sends its request to the Lord Chancellor for Religious Affairs (one of the ministers who aids the Emperor to administer Alpathian policy<sup>5</sup>) He evaluates it and, if he thinks it's worthwhile, he takes it to the Emperor who will decide what to do unless it concerns international matters (in which cases the Grand Council is convened). In turn, only the Lord Chancellor can ask the Council to admit a new religious order (a request that must be approved by a simple majority of the Council). He is responsible for the collection of tithes and defining the privileges that each national temple receives from the imperial crown in exchange for its tithe and performing its services. There haven't been requests for admission to the Council by new orders in over 400 years, and the representatives of the recognised churches are extremely loath to admit new religions, as according to a (by now) ingrained custom it is necessary to associate the Immortal to one of the motherland's states, all of which however

<sup>5</sup> In the Alpathian government, all the power is in the hands of the Emperor/Empress, who must be an Alpathian arcane spellcaster of great power. He can be opposed only by the Council of Thousand, a permanent council of a thousand arcane spellcasters that have attained a certain level of power and who are mostly the descendents of the first council formed following the union of the Alpathian continent and at the proclamation of the first Emperor.

The emperor's powers are vast but not limitless, because by a Council's decree he must give large autonomy to every king or queen. There are therefore some of the imperial laws and a national and international policy advanced by the emperor, but for the rest every state makes its own laws, provided that the aforementioned regulations don't threaten the existence of the empire.

The Emperor doesn't personally manage all the imperial bureaucracy. He uses a cabinet of ministers which he personally nominates at the start of his office and can change at will. These are the offices accorded by the crown:

- Lord Councillor for Internal Affairs
- Lord Councillor for External Affairs
- Lord Councillor for Planar Affairs
- Lord Councillor for Arcane Affairs
- Lord Councillor for Religious Affairs
- Lord Councillor for Fiscal Affairs
- Lord Councillor for Economic and Mercantile Affairs
- Lord Councillor for Military Affairs
- Lord Councillor for Judicial Affairs
- Lord Councillor for Legislative Affairs

already have an Immortal patron. The Council have been discussing this situation for several centuries and are being pressed annually by the clergy of Ka, Garal, and humanoid and demihuman Immortals for entry, but they haven't yet reached an accord about the admittance of new orders. This is why, currently, the Council of Alpathian Temples is virtually closed to any new religions.

## PANTHEON OF THE SCHOOL OF MAGIC AND OF THE MONTHS

The School of Magic's pantheon has been created based on a presumed tie between each type of discipline and an Immortal's recognised interest. Moreover, because the Alpathian mages believe that the magic which permeates Mystara is variable and that each month is associated with a certain type of effect (the month when that type of effect is strongest), this has resulted in each month also being linked to the Immortal who presides over that genre of magic.

It's not surprising that as well as the eight known canonical schools of magic, the Alpathians also acknowledge four elemental schools. This legacy, from Old Alpathia's arcane philosophy, divides the universe in to the four fundamental elements of Air, Earth, Fire, and Water. Therefore, as in Old Alpathia, there exists four arcane orders each devoted to one element, this tradition has been kept in the Alpathian Empire, although these schools are much smaller than previously (a reminder of the initially philosophical and later real battles that caused the destruction of the Alpathians original planet). Furthermore, whereas previously each elemental school only recognised its own Elemental Lord as its superior, since the formation of the Council the four Immortal patrons of the elemental schools have changed, and in agreement with the arcane aristocrats they have chosen to highly regard the Immortals (well known both among the commoners and the nobles), who also have a strong bond with the chosen element.

Finally, Talitha, the Thief of Magic is considered the enemy of the School of Magic's pantheon. Her cult is disliked by both the Council of Alpathian Temples and by the Council of 1,000, as she is an Immortal who has frequently acted against Alpathian interests and who has always shown dislike for the spellcasting aristocracy. Given her nefarious influence, she is also considered the patroness of the "Day without Magic" (an event that happened irregularly in the past due to the Nucleus of the Spheres' influence sucking up Mystaran magic, and that since the events of the *Fury of the Immortals* happens annually on the 28<sup>th</sup> of Burymir, renamed the Day of Dread).

Immortal	Magic School	Month
Alpathia	Abjuration	Alphamir
Valerias	Enchantment	Vertmir
Ssu-Ma	Divination	Sulamir
Pharamond	Evocation	Hastmir
Eiryndul	Illusion	Eimir



Razud	Invocation	Cyprimir
Nyx	Necromancy	Nyxmir
Zirchev	Transmutation	Burymir
Protius	Water	Amphimir
Palartarkan	Air	Islamir
Ixion	Fire	Andrumir
Terra	Earth	Sudmir
Talitha	<i>Thief of Magic</i>	Day Without Magic

### NATIONAL PANTHEON

The following Immortals are those officially recognised by the Council of Alphatian Temples, and each has its own religious order that's a member of the Council. The association between nation and Immortal has been based on the importance of each temple in the kingdoms of continental Alphatia, so each Immortal is considered as the guardian of one kingdom in particular. Naturally, there is also Alphaks who is considered an enemy by the entire Empire. He is the guardian of the Volcano of Alphaks, and his only interest is the complete destruction of all Alphatians. As such, the island known as the Volcano of Alphaks is considered cursed and avoided by anyone with an ounce of good sense, as the rumours that surround it consider it to be full of innumerable monsters and cultists of the ancient emperor.

However there are no Immortal patrons of the so-called "provinces" (all the kingdoms and protectorates outside of continental Alphatia), as the activities of the Council of Alphatian Temples are to the continent and the Council's sphere of influence doesn't extend beyond the continent's borders. The provinces, thus, have full autonomy over the running of their religious affairs, as well as defining the type of legislation and legal structure they prefer (like the continent's kingdoms).

Ambur	Valerias	Greenspur	Maat
Aquas	Protius	Haven	Alphatia
Floating Ar	Palartarkan	Limn	Ka
Arogansa	Pharamond	Randel	Eternal General
Bettelyn	Terra	Shiye-Lawr	Eiryndul
Blackheart	Marwdy	Stonewall	Ixion
Eadrin	Koryis	Stoutfellow	Kagyar
Foresthorne	Zirchev	Theranderol	Pangloss (Ssu-Ma)
Frisland	Nyx	Vertiloch	Razud
<i>Enemy</i>	Alphaks the Destroyer (Volcano of Alphaks)		

### CULT OF HALAV

**Worshipped in:** Karameikos

Halav	Traladara, war, strategy and tactics, sacrifice, strength and determination, fighting humanoids.
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The Cult of Halav is a church founded by Sergyev, a member of the Church of Traladara, following a vision in which he saw **Halav** come down to earth and reveal he had returned to life in the person of Stefan Karameikos III, to return his favourite Traladarans to the Golden Age. After having revealed his vision to a superior and having been mocked, Sergyev decided to leave the order and to found his own cult dedicated to the worship of Halav in his embodiment as Stefan Karameikos. Thanks

to his fervent sermons and to his magnetic personality, he has managed to gather a small number of followers and other clerics, and indoctrinate them with the three beliefs of this faith:

1. King Halav, who died on the field of battle in the final clash with the king of the beastmen, had been taken by the Immortals, to be resuscitated, healed and put asleep.
2. The aim of the Immortals is to return Halav to Traladara when the moment is right to return the nation to its ancient glory.
3. The Immortals deciding that the moment has arrived and they have sent the spirit of King Halav into the baby Stefan Karameikos III, to make him the new King of Traladara.

Currently the cult is dedicated to the idea that the Duke will transform Traladara into a powerful nation and will equip its armies to conquer the entire world. The prime objective of the Cult however is still to convince all, including Duke Karameikos, on the truth of this prophecy – this has yet to happen. However, despite the frustrating spot in which they have been relegated – accused of being visionaries and lunatics by the majority of Karameikans, its members are very determined and well indoctrinated by Sergyev, and will not give up. In particular, even if at first sight they can seem excited and crazy, these clergymen are, however, able to cast divine spells, a clear sign that they enjoy the favour of the Immortals (and of Halav). This gives them strength and makes them sure of the truthfulness of their own theories. Only a small part of the Traladarans of Karameikos (about 1%) belongs to this cult. The clerics of the Cult of Halav do not have a formal robe that unites them. Their scruffy and humble aspect, their long beards, the fervour with which they preach can identify them, and by Halav's holy symbol (a sword plunged into an anvil) engraved in a medallion that is always worn around the neck.

### HELDANNIC ORDER

**Worshipped in:** Heldannic Territories, Davania, Hollow World

Vanya	War, conquest, victory, glory, honour, strength
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**Note:** The following section about the Heldannic Order is the original work of Bruce Heard, director of production and the Mystara line during his time at TSR. Although this work is non-canonical (as it appeared on the official Mystaran site only at the start of 2000, some years after the closure of the setting and its licensing from TSR), he still remains the most exhaustive and articulate contributor in defining the form and substance of the Heldannic Knights, which was part of Bruce Heard's imagination and so it has been decided to follow the path set by his articles on this topic.

## THE HISTORY OF THE ORDER

The Heldannic Order is a military and religious order based upon the worship of Vanya and respect for the Codex of Heldannic Leadership. It traces its roots back to the Order of Vanya, a secret sect created in 808 AC to pursue the ambitions of a handful of Hattian knights who hadn't welcomed the Emperor of Thyatis's excessive control over Hattias and wished to establish a nation exclusively devoted to conquest, where they could prosper. At the instigation of some of the most charismatic members who belonged to the Brotherhood of the Grey Lady, the sect began to venerate Vanya as the supreme Immortal, as she embodies all the values (supremacy, courage, and valour in battle) that they had followed for some time. Over the years the sect spread and began to become organised and powerful enough to become a real threat for the Thyatian government, which identified the sect as a potential source of Hattian revolt. After years spent mediating between the Order and the Empire, in 948 AC the Temple of Vanya gained imperial approval for the Order to colonize Norwold. In practice, Thyatis allowed the Order's members to organise an invasion of Norwold and independently administer the domains they had conquered, provided that the Thyatian government didn't have to spend a single lucin and on condition that the new colonies swear loyalty to the imperial crown. The Order accepted these conditions with the certainty that it would easily attain its objective, especially after Argo Tannengrub's secret news. He had left on an epic quest in 941 AC, and had returned with a sensational discovery: he had discovered the Tomb of Vanya, and in this holy reliquary, her perfectly preserved corpse and an artefact of immense powers – named the Star of Vanya – that would help the Order to excel in the world.

After gathering a real naval fleet due to the support and finance of the sect's richest shipowners, in 950 AC, the Order sailed at once to Norwold, but despite what Emperor Gabrionius V anticipated, the expedition led by Klaus Stamhoffer (Grand Master of the Order) didn't make landfall to the north of Oceansend. It chose, instead, to conquer the Heldann Freeholds, judging it more profitable and strategically important area than wild, Alphatian and Thyatian contested Norwold. In 952 AC the Vanyans began two great works: the first being the foundation of the fortress of Vanya's Rest in northern Davania, to guard the reliquary with her mortal remains and artefact; and the second the conquest of Haldisvall, last bastion of the Heldanners (it was later renamed Freiburg and became the nation's capital), and found the Heldannic Territories. Immediately, the conquerors began to rename the Heldanner villages with the names of their most illustrious commanders, and Stamhoffer renamed the sect the Order of Heldannic Knights or Heldannic Order, of which he became its first Hochmeister. He chose to adopt the adjective "Heldannic" to differentiate the nation from the

preceding mass of independent Heldanner fiefdoms, but at the same time present the conquerors as the true heirs of the heroic spirit and unifiers of the defunct Heldann, and thus gave a sense of unity and continued history with the conquered people. Naturally these adjustments of fact were contrived to formally sanction the political, military, and economic independence from the Empire of Thyatis. By the end of the Heldannic Campaign in 960 AC (the year that the last independent settlement fell to Helga Grauenberg), both the conquered Heldanners and the neighbouring nations learnt at great cost that the Knights intended to impose their regime and vision of a martial theocracy devoted to Vanya by any means.

Immediately after the Heldannics seizure of power, the neighbouring nations' governments (especially the Northern Reaches and Ethengar) and Emperor Gabrionius V strongly expressed their censure and condemnation for their totalitarian treatment of the Heldanners. The Empire of Thyatis hurrying to distance itself from the Heldannic conquest to not risk yet another diplomatic incident with Alphatia, branded the Order as a "traitor to the imperial cause". This constituted a strong deterrent for trade and diplomatic contacts with the Heldannic Territories during the first ten years of government, but despite the blockades and the embargoes declared by Thyatis, the Heldannic Knights managed to hold onto the support it sought in Wendar, neutral nations like Minrothad, and some of the Isle of Dawn's kingdoms. Later within the Territories, the Knights had to cope with a Heldanner resistance, organised by the noble caste that had been dispossessed during the invasion, trying to reclaim their freedom with hit-and-run techniques. Showing great merit in their ability to remain independent, resist Thyatian pressure and oppose the Heldanner guerillas' actions, the Heldannic Knights have also begun to study and exploit the powers of the Star of Vanya. This artefact allowed the Heldannic Knights to begin the construction of their powerful aerial fleet of Waffnadler and Sturmkondor, flying ships powered by Star that gives the Heldannics a military supremacy better than their real military ability and allowed them to make new conquests and clinch alliances with distant populations (particularly in the Hollow World, discovered by the Heldannics in 961 AC, the Savage Coast, and in small measure Davania).

Currently the Heldannic Territories is a powerful nation and it is carefully watched by both the Alphatian and Thyatian Empires. Vanya's monotheistic cult has made the Heldannics a race dedicated to maintaining their Order, and all the enemies of their state and faith are deemed Servants of Chaos and so must be exterminated. This willpower fused with a religious almost secular fanaticism and with rigorous military training has made the Order's converts into deadly soldiers willing to die for Vanya's cause, which has made the Heldannics even more formidable and dangerous.

The Order tries to make other governments understand that it can offer them protection against the attacks of the Servants of Chaos, and that an alliance with the Knights is preferable to any type of invasion or the anarchy that could engulf their domains if the Order's enemies should prevail. In exchange, for this support, the Order simply asks for land, where it can build its temples, monasteries, or fortresses, or to conduct trade in the allied territory without any taxation, placing at their allies' disposal their own capital, financial assurance, and security services. In practice, the Order has instituted a banking system very similar to that of the Republic of Darokin, and with the conquered Oostdokian gnomes in the Hollow World, it has created banking agencies and credit houses to promote international trade. The major difference is that while the Darokinian credit houses only operate in the Republic's territory, the Heldannic houses are spread through all the Order's allied territories, and so the Heldannic banking system is much more widespread and in a large number of the world's nations. Naturally, the fact that the Order can guarantee the defence of its deposits as well as its profound Lawful faith is further guarantee of the security of these investments, and this has caused merchants and even some governments to use the Heldannic bank, which has given the Heldannics great political power with its trading partners. This type of relationship obviously protects many nations from open invasion by Heldannic forces, although, when simple economy and diplomacy isn't enough, military aggression is used as a last resource to impose a Heldannic presence in those territories considered enemies or "at risk" of invasion by the Servants of Chaos. Among these potentially dangerous nations are the magocracies of Alphatia and Glantri, which the Order's members consider crucibles of subversive anarchists, heretical blasphemers, and adepts of Chaos. The important thing for the Heldannic Knights is to maintain Law, by any means necessary, so ultimately it isn't a question of a conflict between Good or Evil but of one between Law and Chaos, in which the ends justifies the means.

#### **ORGANIZATION OF THE ORDER**

The large number of Heldannic Order members is divided between the laymen, military, and priests, the majority of whom come from the lower classes of the Heldanner population or neighbouring regions. The knights of Hattian descent hold the highest ranks of the military and ecclesiastic hierarchy. The volunteers that enter the order do so for their faith or with the intent to improve their social standing, as the Order not only offers permanent board and lodging to its members, but also the chance to participate in adventures in faraway lands. It even includes the protection that a new life brings, escaping justice or debts in other nations. All a new members is asked is to select a new name to cleanly sever any link with their past (for example, the current Grand Master of the Order changed his name from Rolf

to Wulf von Klagendorf), and to pledge an oath of eternal loyalty to Vanya and her clergy. As such, except for clerics of other Immortals, it is possible to find among the Heldannic Knights people of every social rank, from escaped slaves to their masters and to decadent nobles. The Order isn't sexist and freely accepts both male and female members, nor does it differentiate between the sexes in assigning roles, orders, ranks, and status within the clergy and the army. However, it applies a rigorous division between males and females to prevent discipline problems (such as being assigned separate dormitories), and one of the duties of any good member is to observe the vow of chastity that is imposed by the Oath of Service. Reprimands, severe corporal punishment, and even expulsion await any knight, cleric, or novice who disobeys this rule.

The Order's major problem is the creeping racism that pervades it, as in their arrogance the sect's leadership (influenced by the Fist of Hattias sect) have always prevented non humans from taking the Oath of Fidelity, considering the other races too inferior to understand and correctly follow the word of Vanya. Furthermore, the discrimination has often affected those brothers of non Hattian descent, which has resulted in the highest military and religious offices being held exclusively by members of Hattian families. This has encouraged an internal conflict that undermines the Order's stability and deprives the Heldannics of capable and loyal individuals by pure hypocrisy.

Those that wish to join the Order must firstly contact a Chaplain of the Hammer (one of the Order's branches), who has the task of explaining what will happen during the applicant's initiation and ecclesial or military life. The first thing to understand is that money and personal freedom become things of the past once he enters the Order. The new brother is given the brown tunic of the so-called **Serving Brethren**, the first step in entering the Order. During his initiation, he learns how hard clerical life is and is trained to obey the laws of Vanya and respect the Heldannic Knights' imposed discipline. This instills a sense of communion and belonging to the same large family, which must be honoured at any cost until his death. For a year the apprentice lives in a total austere and submissive state to his brothers, carrying out without complaint all the most menial tasks assigned to him by the priests and knights. The Serving Brethren are usually posted to the abbies or garrisons where their help is required and must report to the local Chaplain, who indoctrinates them each day in the faith's beliefs and appraises both their dedication to the cause and their effective ability. If, after a year of apprenticeship, the Chaplain deems the Serving Brother lacks the skills needed to enter the Order's higher ranks, the candidate has two choices: leave or remain as a Serving Brother, knowing that nothing will ever elevate them above that status. Naturally, if the brother's conduct is judged unacceptable by the Chaplain, he can

be expelled from the Order at any time, even before his apprenticeship ends. All the Order's members below the rank of Novice are called **Lay Brothers** and receive a monthly fee for their duties, which is usually partially sent to their family. These laymen serve in the Order for a decade in various roles (most fill the army's lowest ranks as soldiers, archers, and pikemen), which must pass before he can renew his service or leave the Order. In the Order there are at least ten laymen for every Heldannic Knight.

If the Serving Brother has proved himself to be useful and faithful to Vanya's doctrine he will be judged worthy of remaining in the Order. The Chaplain performs an official ceremony in which the apprentice takes his vows and swears the Oath of Service to the Heldannic Order, which involves sticking to his principles, obeying its rules and his officers' orders, and a life of service within the army or clergy. The new brother becomes a **Novice** and, enters either the clergy (becoming an **Acolyte**) or the army (gaining the title of **Squire**) based on his attitude. The apprenticeship continues for an undetermined period of time during which time the Acolyte studies theocracy and other scholastic matters, and learns all the duties of a good cleric of Vanya (without forgetting his martial training), while a Squire serves with a Knight to learn the art of war and weapons. When the novice shows that he is sufficiently mature to become a **Knight** or a **Prior** (the Order's next rank), he receives the appropriate equipment and garments in an official ceremony, and is assigned his first task of responsibility (usually care of an Abbey or a Commanderie), and a Prior is asked to join one of the clergy's orders. The Knights can later rise in rank within the Army, or take their vows and become clerics, without losing their role within the Army. In this case, they obey their military superiors when they are assigned to an army corps. When this task ends, they return to be members of the clergy and answer to their clerical branch. The priests can rise in the ecclesiastic hierarchy and become an **Abbot** (or **Abbess**) only if he is called to govern an Abbey or a Temple of the Order, and the maximum rank that he can attain is that of **Primate**, the supreme head of each of the three clerical orders. The Heldannic Order is in fact made up of four principal branches: the Army (the Heldannics' instrument for territorial expansion and exploration) and the three clerical orders, which are the Voice of Vanya (which administers the Order), the Hammer of Vanya (which enforces the laws and assures the military's orthodoxy), and the Heart of Vanya (which creates and interprets the laws of Vanya). It is, however possible, to be transferred or ask for a transfer to one of the other clerical orders, based on the talents and skills a member demonstrates on the field (for example, the clerics of the Hammer who become too old to fight are usually transferred to the Heart of Vanya), likewise the Knights may ask for a transfer to one of the priestly branches.

**Army:** The Grand Master of the Heldannic Order is also the supreme commander of its military machine. The task of leading an army is up to him or one of the other two Primates of the clergy (the heads of the Heart and Hammer of Vanya – the Grand Master is the head of the Voice of Vanya). Under him are the Grand Knights, who command the army companies or the scattered Garrisons in the Heldannic possessions. The Hochmeister, the Primates, and the Grand Knights all have an elite bodyguard from the cavalry corps, the Sergeant-at-Arms, whose responsibilities include safeguarding their commander's security and ensuring that their orders are received and carried out.

Each of the Order's army corps is divided into three sections: a Vanguard, a Body, and a Rearguard. Before combat, the Vanguard holds the right wing, the Body the centre, and the Rearguard the left. These three groups, in turn, are divided into Chapters of 100–500 soldiers, each commanded by a Knight Banneret. Each Chapter is subdivided into Companies of infantry and Lances of knights (usually ten per Chapter). Each Company includes 20–30 heavy foot or 40–60 archers, crossbowmen, or pikemen. A Lance is made up of about 10 heavy knights. A Knight Banneret commands a single Company or Lance. All the army's knights have a Squire (or a novice) who serves and protects him, and in each Company there is a lay Sergeant for every 10 soldiers, who trains the foot and helps them in battle. It is very common among the knights of a Lance to seal a pact of brotherhood after a battle by sharing their blood; they cut open their forearms and apply the wounds together. This practice, although tolerated by the Army, is frowned on by the clergy as it conflicts with some of the Order's rules of conduct (particularly points 2 and 3, see the section *Precepts of the Order*) and the clerics fear that this fraternal loyalty between comrades might overcome or diminish their loyalty to the Order and their obedience to their commanders.

The Army, as well as deploying a land army, also has a small maritime fleet (which allowed it to accomplish the invasion of Heldann and create the Order trade and financial power) and an aerial fleet created after the discovery of Vanya's relic.

**Maritime Fleet:** each ship has a crew formed from conscripts (Marines) like those of the infantry. The Knights are officers, while a Bachelor performs the functions of the Ship's captain (Herr Kapitän); the commander of the Maritime Fleet is a Grand Knight with the title of Admiral (Herr Admiral). The ships are used to transport goods, military supplies, or troops and patrol the Heldannic Territories' coastal waters. The Heldannics aren't skilled in the tactics of maritime combat and prefer to depend on their aerial fleet to carry out attacks against enemy vessels or transport troops for conquest.

**Aerial Fleet:** The flying vessels are divided into two main classes based on their tonnage: the Sturmkondor are the largest ships, the true bombers, while the Waffenadler have a smaller tonnage and fewer personnel on board and are the more common ships in the fleet. The aerial fleet's personnel are treated differently from those of the maritime fleet, as all the airmen must take the Oath of Service before boarding. This means that the common crew are Squires (called Airmen), the officers are Knights, and an Abbot of any branch of the clergy performs the role of Capitan (Herr Luftkapitän). All the other priests that serve on board are Hammer of Vanya members. The Grand Master of the Order is the Commander-in-Chief of the aerial fleet (Luftadmiral), while the Grand Knights who command the garrisons where flying vessels are stationed can command and use them at their discretion for important missions. The aerial fleet is used for emergency transport or military reasons. The Waffenadlers regularly patrol the skies above the Heldannic Territories and its colonies, and connect the capital Freiburg with all the Heldannics worldwide domains (particularly with the Holy Citadel in Davania). The number of flying vessels that can exist simultaneously is fixed by the power of the Star of Vanya, as they all depend on the relic for their flight. The artefact can move up to 5,000 tonnes through Mystaran space. The aerial fleet, therefore, usually includes 28 Waffenadler and 2 Sturmkondor.

**Heart of Vanya:** This branch assures that all the Order's members are in constant communion with Vanya. Its duties include religious services at the temples, studying holy scriptures and other sources of knowledge, interpreting the will of Vanya through omens and meditation, defining what constitutes heretical behaviour, creating and maintaining the Order's internal laws and the laws of the land, and providing magistrates to settle internal and external issues. The order's priests (mostly women) are the most erudite and studious, and perform a first-rate service as battlefield healers, even though its martial ability is rather lower than the other orders. Its headquarters is in the Holy Citadel, but the order always has a delegation in Freiburg and many of its members are assigned to the more dangerous garrisons as expert healers. The Voice of Vanya doesn't control the activities of the Heart of Vanya but may try to veto new laws proposed by the Heart. In this case, a council is called to resolve the issue, which involves all the Order's Grand Knights and Abbots. They each have one vote, and a simple majority decides the poll's result.

The *Company of the Star* is a sect within the Heart and is made up of all those Knights and Abbots who have served on the Heldannic flying ships. The most illustrious members, called Witnesses, those that have travelled in deep space, hold to a conviction that the more they adventure in outer space the closer to the Immortals they get. A festive and pompous ceremony

usually welcomes those that return from their first space journey: their names are engraved into a metal plaque that is later hung in the Hall of the Triumphs, the Order's principal palace in Freiburg. The aim of this sect is to gather, organise, study, protect, and develop any knowledge acquired in space. As such, the sect runs with utmost secrecy a library and a laboratory, which are accessible only to the Witnesses, who give complete and detailed reports of their experience and observations in space. Although it isn't obligatory, the Waffenadler commanders sent on space missions are usually recruited from among this sect's members. The Company of the Star is approved by the Heart, which considers outer space the new frontier and a sort of holy land that only the chosen (those whom Vanya has given the ability to create ships capable of passing Mystara's Sky Shield) should visit. Many simply consider the sect a club where the flying ships' arrogant captains can boast of their own deeds, as only the three Primates and the Witnesses know of the Library and Laboratory's existence and their real aims. The sect has full autonomy to seize and eliminate anyone suspected of having both spied and removed information relating to their field of study. The Company commands at least one Waffenadler crewed by an elite company and has the authority to commandeer any other ships that would be useful to achieve or protect an important aim, on the condition that the vessels are not put at risk.

**Hammer of Vanya:** This branch of the Order does most of the Order's work and usually works in concert with the Heart of Vanya, from which it receives directives on the laws' application. Along with the Heart of Vanya, the Hammer's priests can balance the power of the Voice during moments of crisis. The Hammer pursues the religious indoctrination of common soldiers, enforces Heldannic law, and identifies any possible heresy or unorthodox thinking within the Order. It is the Hammer that pursues the eradication of any heresy and the conversion to the Ways of Vanya of non-believers. The Hammer also controls the recruitment of all the volunteers that choose to enter the Order, and the subjects destined to serve the homeland as laymen soldiers (the conscripts). Each family within the Heldannic Territories with more than one son is called to provide an adult (either male or female) skilled with weapons for the obligatory ten year long levy service. Only if an annual duty is paid on the family's behalf is it possible to avoid this conscription; however, the moment this duty isn't paid, the conscript is forcefully taken from his home and forced to serve his remaining time. It is the Hammer that elevates the brother squires to the rank of Knight and promotes the acolytes to the clergy's branches. The military levy cannot rise in rank unless they become life members in the Order (a position the adept keeps until his death or dishonourable discharge) and make the Oath of Service. The Hammer has its own representatives within the Army, as every combat unit has

at least one Chaplain. The Chaplain is always a Prior tasked to keeping the troops' morale high, maintain their dedication to the Heldannic cause, and aid the military in battle with their divine spells. These priests are always extremely skilled and well equipped fighters, who love to wield their hammers. They are battle hardened and demonstrate great fervour and a natural inclination to command. Among the Primate of the Hammer's Sergeant-at-Arms there are frequently high level Chaplains with great experience.

**The Anvil of Blood** is an internal sect within the Hammer, formed from all those priests who have helped guard the Star of Vanya in the Holy Citadel of Davania. It is an approved sect, so much so that its members are considered Vanya's most virtuous and best servants, and many high ranking members of the Hammer and the other clerical branches know of its existence. However, the task is so delicate for the Heldannics' security that the sect's members (both those current and those no longer in service) mustn't reveal their membership or duties to anyone. It isn't possible to choose to belong to the Anvil, as it is its leaders that judge who is capable of becoming a member and summon him. The call is sent via an anonymous message that is slid under the chosen's door during the night. The candidate can decline the offer by simply not answering the call, vice versa the message gives him the time and place where he has to go and pray (usually an empty chapel or confessional). There he will find further instructions to follow to be introduced to the sect's mysteries. In the Holy Citadel a special antechamber exists that leads to several chapels beneath the fortress. Only one person at a time can enter this antechamber, and only after the previous occupant has left it. Within the antechamber there are several doors, one of which requires a special mechanism to open: this leads into a protected area of the citadel, which only the Anvil's members can enter. The acolyte must wear a special uniform left in the corridor beyond the first door entered in the holy sanctum: red-enamelled armour, covered by a crimson tabard, and with a helmet that completely hides the face. The sect's members come and go at different times to avoid meeting in the passage, and so very few of its members know the identity of any other brother, a privilege only allowed to his superiors (known as Guides). The Guides organise the members' shifts so that there are always at least twelve guardians present in the Star of Vanya's chamber. The members have sworn to defend the relic with their life and to undertake a holy quest to retrieve it, should it be stolen or lost. If a guardian is judged guilty of some deficiency, he will find that the door's mechanism no longer opens for him: this is a sign that he has committed a grave sin and has been expelled from the Anvil. He must leave his post to be assigned another task, and is obligated to remain silent about the secrets that he learnt: indeed death awaits those that dare reveal the relic's functions and powers.

**Voice of Vanya:** The Grand Master of the Order is the head of this clerical branch. It has a discreet power in the regions subject to Heldannic control. It administers the Order's finances, acquisition and administration of property, diplomatic relations with the foreign powers, and to all the internal bureaucracy of the Heldannic Knights' branches. The Voice of Vanya leads and supervises all the banking operations in the nations in which the Order is economically active (Thyatis, Darokin, Isle of the Dawn), and as such finances the Order's worldwide activities. It also administers the monies and collects the taxes in the Order's directly controlled lands. The headquarters of the Voice is at Freiburg, the Territories' capital, but has members in the garrisons of the Heldannic protectorates (like Oostdok and Stonehaven in the Hollow World, and the Holy Citadel in Davania). These garrisons remain, however, under their Grand Knight's direct authority.

Furthermore, there is a legally approved sect linked to the Voice called the **Eyes of Vanya**. Despite being known by both the Order's members and some foreign governments, its activities and members remain a mystery for most people. The Eyes include a small number of priests and knights who recruit and control mercenary spies in the territories under Heldannic control or in the regions of great strategic interest to the Order. The members of the Eyes are directly chosen by the sect's leader after a careful analysis of the members' skills, and it isn't possible to approach it and simply ask for admission. The Eyes conduct acts of espionage and counter-espionage on behalf of the Voice, and most of its agents are foreigners or individuals outside of the Order who are paid for their services. The Eyes provide information to the Voice to help them administer the controlled territories and manage effective diplomatic treaties with foreign nations. The Army's commanders, moreover, receive crucial strategic information before every battle or before planning a military campaign by the Eyes on behalf of the Voice. During the conflicts, spies of the Eyes are often assigned to battlefield commanders for practical reasons, but also send reports to their own superiors. The Eyes also collaborate with the Hammer to provide information about renegades or outlaws wanted by the Order (for example, the feared Wolves of Heldann, a group of rebels faithful to the Haldis clan who seek to reinstate the old Heldanner order). On rare occasions the Eyes are asked to watch the Hammer's activities, especially if the Voice's hierarchs suspect treason or corruption. Obviously, the leader of the Eyes pays great attention in recruiting its members, attempting to keep out enemy spies, as well as the members of troublesome sects like the Fist of Hattias and the Partisans. Over the last few years, some spies recruited by the Eyes have shown such skill and loyalty that they have received permission to take the Oath of Service and become permanent members of the Order (to the Fist of Hattias's anger).

As well as these, however, there are several illegal sects formed by members of the Heldannic Order.

**The Fist of Hattias:** this group is comprised of the most racist and brutal Hattian members of the Heldannic Knights, called in slang “Fingers”. Their aim is to promote and strengthen the Hattian influence and supremacy within the Heldannic hierarchy. They are often responsible for the removal of recruits that they consider unworthy due to their lineage or nationality, as they prefer to see the Order collapse rather than share the privilege of being a Knight with those they consider the Order’s lowly servants or slaves. They consider the ancient stories, which tell of the first Hattian conquerors that roamed Heldann arbitrarily enforcing laws on the natives, as the true model of life and destiny for all Heldannic Knights. Numerous Chaplains of the Hammer tacitly support this vision, turning a blind eye to the more intolerant Hattians’ fanaticism, and this helped to make it more difficult to discover the real members of the Fist of Hattias. The sect has a close relationship with the Hattian nobility of Thyatis and with the higher echelons of the Storm Soldiers, and view the Partisans (see below) as their primary enemy within the Order. Some sect members have, moreover, joined the Company of the Star, and plot to eliminate or abduct the Grand Master and the Primate of the Heart and lay the blame on the Partisans or some other enemy and help elect a new Grand Master who’s more inclined to support their racist-based imperialistic policies.

**The Partisans:** the other illegal sect of the Order is made up of priests, knights, and conscripted laymen who usually have been victims of intolerance or abuses of power by other brothers (often Fingers of the Fist of Hattias). They are organised secretly to defend them from abuses in general and to foil the threat of the Hattian sect. Generally they are peaceful individuals who seek to extinguish the flames of hate and resentment among the brothers to keep the peace and calm in the Order. They have agreements with the civilians of Heldann and Norwold (like innkeepers, merchants, farmers, hunters, or fishermen) to hide among them all those whose lives are judged to be in serious danger. Some particularly disillusioned members of the sect have supplied information through their civilian contacts to resistance organisations like the Wolves of Heldann, in the hope of forever destroying the Heldannic Order and give the oppressed their freedom and justice. The sect has infiltrated some of its members into both the Fist of Hattias and Company of the Star to closely monitor their enemy’s movements, although these are the most dangerous and delicate assignments for a Partisan and so the number of infiltrators is rather low and those chosen don’t know each other.

To sum up the existing positions within the Order, these are the principal titles in order of decreasing importance:

**Ranks of the Army:** Grand Master (Hochmeister), Grand Knight (or Admiral), Knight Banneret, Knight Bachelor (or Ship’s Captain), Knight, Sergeant, common soldier (or marine). All the soldiers under the rank of Knight are called “Brother” or “Friar” (or “Sister” for the women) followed by the name of the soldier. A common Knight is addressed as “Brother Knight” or “Brother” followed by his name. When addressing any other Knight of superior rank the speaker must put in front of their name the title “Sir” or “Herr” for the men, “Madam” or “Dame” for the women. For the Grand Master the term “Milord” or “Meinherr” is used. Sergeant-at-Arms and Squires are not military ranks but functions. One of the Sergeant-at-Arms should be a Grand Knight or a Knight Banneret who will act as the commander’s seneschal. The seneschal replaces an army commander in his absence. The squires are equivalent to common sergeants, but unlike the latter, squires have taken their Oath of Service to the Order and merit more respect from the common soldiers.

**Ranks of the Clergy:** Primate (a role that automatically also confers the military title of Grand Knight), Abbot (or Abbess for women), Prior, Adept. The authority of a Primate places him in a position subordinate only to the Grand Master and superior to any Grand Knight. The Abbots and the Abbesses are considered equivalent to a Banneret as regards authority, while the Priors are comparable to the common Knights. All the Acolytes and the Laymen who serve the clergy are addressed as “Brother” followed by their name. The Priors who belong to the Hammer of Vanya are called Chaplains, and the term with which is used to refer to Priors and Chaplains is simply “Reverend Father” (or “Reverend Mother” for the women). The Primate of the Heart is called “Your Eminence”; that of the Hammer has the title of “Your Grace”, while obviously the Primate of the Voice, who is also the Grand Master of the Order and Commander of the Army, is always greeted with the title of “Hochmeister” and the appellative “Meinherr” or “Milord”.

#### PRECEPTS OF THE HELDANNIC ORDER

The discipline within the Heldannic ranks is notorious throughout the world, and is based on the respect of the Heldannic Codes of Conduct, a series of rules modelled on the ancient Codes of the Triumph (the theoretical and practical basis of the Cult of Vanya in Thyatis) to which all the members of the Order and the laymen in its service are obligated to adhere to. When they take the Oath of Service, the adepts swear to follow and respect the following precepts (the articles are listed below in point form in order of descending importance):

1. **Devotion:** A brother must honour Our Lady Vanya and none other than Our Most Gracious Guide, and in every way support Her Purpose. Brother knights and brother priests must display Her Symbol at all times, clearly and unequivocally.

2. **Order:** A brother must abjure and shun all portents and cohorts of Chaos, and cleanse the Order from its baneful corruption.
3. **Obedience:** A brother must obey Commanders of the Order immediately and without question so long as the Devotion to Our Lady Vanya and the Order are preserved.
4. **Loyalty:** A brother must hold fidelity to the Order above and beyond his own life and well-being. A brother must never permit harm to come directly or indirectly to a fellow brother and the Order.
5. **Discipline:** A brother must never break rank or abandon a post, or cause harm to the Brotherhood through lack of attention or dereliction of duty.
6. **Bravery:** A brother must endeavour to show courage and boldness in combat, so long as Obedience and Discipline are preserved.
7. **Respect:** A brother must show all due reference to commanders, to companions, and to The Law, in words and behaviour, and shun any and all profanity.
8. **Self-sacrifice:** A brother must entrust his life and well-being to Our Most Gracious Guide to protect the Order, a fellow brother, and the honour of Our Lady Vanya's name.
9. **Humility:** A brother must show humbleness in words and behaviour to all in the Order, for no mortal is fully worthy in the eyes of Our Lady Vanya.
10. **Virtue:** A brother must never envy, cheat, lie to, or steal from a fellow brother, wager, play games of chance, or pursue frivolous goals.
11. **Cleanness:** A brother must endeavour to remain clean, in body, in, clothing, and in arms so as not to soil or damage the Order's property and symbols.
12. **Achievement:** A brother must never offer or accept material goods or services in order to gain or entitle another brother to a greater standing in the Order.
13. **Poverty:** A brother must neither seek nor conceal from the Order any material wealth. Temporal goods must be conferred to the Order for the benefit of all.
14. **Abstinence:** A brother must steer clear of the tyranny of hard beverages and unhealthy substances corrupting the body and the mind.
15. **Frugality:** A brother must shun gluttony and all excesses so body and mind remain healthy, robust, and alert as shown by Our Most Gracious Guide.
16. **Hardwork:** A brother must labour at all times for the benefit of all, for it is through one's hardship that spring forth power and prosperity.

17. **Chastity:** A brother knight or a brother priest must resist the temptation of mortal flesh for it engenders Chaos and peril to the Order.
18. **Celibacy:** A brother must devote his time, thoughts, and efforts on this mortal world to Our Lady of Vanya, and shun matrimony and affairs of the heart.
19. **Restraint:** A brother must not act in anger, or in revenge, or in provocation for therein lie the seeds of Chaos and Destruction.
20. **Duty to the People:** A brother must protect any and all subjects of the Heldannic Territories in danger of falling before Spawns of Chaos.

During the decades following the new Heldannic Code of Conduct, The Heart and the Voice have enacted amendments essentially to reflect practical issues:

**I Amendment: Devotion:** Indentured brothers in arms of another faith than Vanya are tolerated, but must keep their faith discreet and to themselves.

**II Amendment: Respect:** A brother must take meals in silence as the Holy Scriptures are read by the brother chaplain.

**III Amendment: Cleanness:** A brother must endeavour to wear appropriate and complete attire at all times.

**IV Amendment: Achievement:** The Order may reward a returning brother with items of magic as appropriate to rank and achievement.

**V Amendment: Poverty:** A brother is entitled to a stipend to cover minor personal costs when involved outside the Order.

**VI Amendment: Celibacy:** Indentured brothers in arms may take a spouse but must keep matrimonial life discreet and to themselves.

**VII Amendment: Restraint:** A brother must forego undue cruelty to people and animals, and respect the property of Heldannic subjects and the Order.

Different punishments are applied in cases of transgression of one or more articles of the codex. They are listed below in decreasing severity. The Magistrates of the Heart can at their discretion increase or decrease the punishment inflicted by a level, based on the case's circumstances. Furthermore, garrison commanders can apply sentences of Atonement and Hardship without needing a Magistrate's presence.

**Rules 1-4: Loss of the House** – the brother is banished from the Order and its lands; confiscation of arms and clothing bearing the mark of the Order or of Vanya; branding in the forehead. The Order and subjects of the Heldannic Territories may not harbour, help, or consort in any way with a branded criminal. The penalty may be upgraded to a death sentence in case of extreme and damaging cowardice, treachery, or heresy.

**Rules 5-8: Loss of the Robe** – the brother is permanently condemned to wear the brown robe of the Serving Brother; 1-10 years hard labour in an abbey of the



Hammer, depending on the gravity of the damage to the Order.

**Rules 9-12: *Temporary Loss of the Robe*** – the brother is condemned to wear the brown robe of the Serving Brother for one to three years; the brother must regain status and rank as a newcomer. Penalties for simony or murder of a brother are automatically upgraded.

**Rules 13-20: *Atonement and Hardship*** – 6-24 lashes; fasting and praying before the altar until collapse. The punishment may be downgraded to 1-6 weeks at an abbey of the Heart to pray, meditate, and repent, especially for elder, frail, or unhealthy brethren.

In case of multiple crimes, 6-24 lashes are sometimes added in addition to possible upgrading for the worst offence.

## GARRISONS

The term garrison indicates all those settlements garrisoned and populated by the Order's members. There are two types of garrison: the Commanderies (which have a purely military function) and the Abbeys (which carry out all other functions).

**Commanderie:** this term includes any type of garrison commanded by the Army, from a simple fortified house to the most imposing castles. These buildings dot the many parts of the Heldannic Territories and guard the borders, the roads, and other strategic points, paying particular attention to foil invasions, enemy incursions, and acts of banditry. A Commanderie typically includes a Commander (Bachelor), two Knights, three Squires, two Sergeants, six soldiers, twelve archers or crossbowmen, a ballista with three artillerymen, a Chaplain, and four Serving Brethren to handle the settlement's menial tasks. As a rule, around the garrison are other barracks where 20–30 farmers live, hired by the Commander. They cultivate about thirty acres of land with tools supplied by the Order (including ploughs) and look after the Heldannic Knights' livestock (usually a bull, two oxen, four cows, twelve pigs, twenty sheep or goats, and dozens of poultry and fowl). The House, as the Commanderie is usually called, has within its fortified area several dormitories (rigorously subdivided between male and female in the case of the presence of women), stalls for the horses and mules, a mess hall, a chapel, and a few individual rooms like the Commander's quarters, the kitchen and the pantry, the hayloft, the hen house. Barns and wooden structures for storing tools and other farm-related equipment are situated outside the fortifications.

**Abbey:** the Abbeys are in the more peaceful and civilised areas controlled by the Order. They endeavour to develop the region's agricultural potential, control the peasantry, recruit new levies (both aspiring adepts and conscripts) and collect their subjects' taxes (which are sent to the nearest main garrison to be entrusted to the Voice of Vanya). They also provide the necessary religious, health, and education services for the region's

inhabitants. Furthermore, the Abbeys are the places where the elderly brothers retire when they can no longer efficiently perform their duties. The Abbey is governed by an Abbot (or an Abbess) from one of the three clerical orders, and the clerics who populate it (upto 20 Priors or Chaplains and 200 others between Adepts and Serving Brethren) belong to all three of the sects, although it is usually the Heart's priests who manage the Abbey's daily business.

In the borderlands or recently conquered lands, there are fortified abbeys that have the crucial task of suppressing any will of resistance by the natives, both through indoctrination and physical repression of the more subversive. They act to reduce the influence of other faiths and convert the population to the Ways of Vanya. These abbeys lead a much harsher life than those situated in the civilised lands, and their inhabitants follow a stricter discipline than the other Heldannic garrisons. They are frequently used as places in which the more disrespectful and weak-willed brothers can atone for their past guilt and learn the Ways of Vanya in a harsher manner. The Hammer of Vanya governs these outposts, and based on the need it is possible to find a military detachment like that of a standard commanderie stationed in the abbey.

## CLOTHING AND IDENTIFICATION STANDARDS

The laymen, the Serving Brethren, and the Novices normally wear a brown surcoat over their clothes. The Sergeants and the Squires have a badge sewn on the upper left part of the chest that displays the insignia of a black rampant lion on a white shield (the official emblem of Order). The Knights wear a white tabard with a great, black rampant lion on the chest over the armour, and even their warhorses have trappings with the same symbol. The priests wear black tunics or jackets, with a silver medallion around the neck in the form of a lion rampant. Engraved within the medallion is the symbol of the sect to which the cleric is affiliated: a heart supporting a flame (Heart of Vanya), a vertical hammer (Hammer of Vanya), or a star (Voice of Vanya). The clerics serving in the military in other functions than the Hammer, wear the knights' attire. Finally, all the shields of the Order are white and have a black rampant lion in the centre. The armour and weapons are always similar, with minimal differences based on the garrison's geographic location.

The troops always wear a coloured armband that identifies their origin: the colour indicates the province of origin. If the unit is from one of the villages outside of the capital of the province, three ribbons hang from the armband with the characteristic colours of the village of origin. If the unit is from a rural garrison like an isolated fort, an Abbey, or a Commanderie, a metallic plate with the name of the place of origin engraved on it is attached to the armband. The Army's armband colours are:

Freiburg: black

Vanya's Rest: white

Heldland: blue & white

Altendorf: black & white  
 Hockstein: red & white  
 Grauenberg: green & white  
 Oceansend: purple & white  
 Oostdok: orange  
 Stonehaven: brown & yellow

## DECORATIONS

There are five decorations that are awarded for exemplary service in the Order. They can be conferred on both the military and the clergy and can be worn with or without armour.

**The Gorgerin:** As the only decoration that can be awarded to an indentured soldier, it rewards bravery in combat. Any single chaplain or knight bachelor may request the award, which requires an approval process by the offices of The Voice. The Gorgerin looks like a crescent-shaped silver plate engraved with Heldannic motives, and with a silver chain. It is worn around the neck, with the plate resting on the chest. It symbolises the armour of the warrior. Once a day, a gorgerin provides the effect of a *bles* spell to the owner.

**The Garter:** Three Abbots of The Heart may award this decoration for outstanding work supporting the faith of Vanya, usually achieving some great feat of faith and devotion. The garter is a discreet, black band worn on the right thigh, just above the knee, symbolising humility in faith. The Garter provides a +1 bonus to Saving Throws against mind-influencing Spells (Will save for D&D 3E) and to Wisdom-based skill tests.

**The Cord:** Three Abbots of The Hammer may award this decoration, usually for converting great numbers of followers to the ways of Vanya, or protecting the Order against manifestations of heresy and chaos. The cord is a simple, black and white braided rope worn as a belt. The black and white braid symbolises law and order, and the cord's knot, the undying loyalty to the brotherhood. Some theorise it symbolises a spiritual umbilical cord, the priest being the growing child and the Order the all-giving mother (presumably Vanya). Once awarded, the cord must always be worn. The Cord gives its wearer a +1 bonus to all ST against chaotic magic (spells with the *chaos* descriptor or magic from a chaotic source, e.g. the spells of a chaotic mage).

**The Hilt:** Three Abbots of The Voice or Knight Bachelors may reward with the hilt an act of great bravery in combat or outstanding leadership. The hilt involves the alteration of the recipient's weapon, including the addition of three lion head motives to its hilt. The three decorations symbolise strength of heart, body, and mind. They grant a +1 bonus to ST versus fear and all mind-controlling magic when the weapon is held (or simply held in its scabbard).

**The Eagle:** It is the highest decoration awarded in the Order. In most cases, it awarded posthumously by two of the three Primates. So far, only a handful living members of the Order has received the Eagle. It is a marshal's baton made of obsidian surmounted with a small silver

eagle spreading its wings. It symbolises glory above all. When calling out Vanya's name, the baton turn into a semi-corporeal melee weapon, the type that the owner normally fights with. It is equivalent to a +1 magic weapon (to attack and damage). Against chaotic adversaries of at least 10<sup>th</sup> level (or HD), however, it produces additional effects equivalent to those of a light belcher's "Holy Glaive". The Holy Glaive inflicts 8d6 points of withering damage. The victim must make a ST versus Death Ray (D&D 3E: Fortitude Save DC 20). If successful, the aura only causes half damage and nothing else. If failed, a victim's body part (chosen in the following table) is severely scarred or completely withered.

2d6	Part hit	Effect
2	Head	Scarred (Charisma is halved)
3–6	Arm or wing	Destruction (can no longer use the arm, or use the wing for flying)
7–11	Leg	Destruction (movement to half normal)
12	Torso	Scarred (internal organs damaged, Constitution is halved)

The specific damage from withering to the head and to the torso can be cured with a *healing* spell, while the destroyed limbs require a *regeneration* spell. A critical failure of the Saving Throw (a 1 on a d20) indicates that the victim dies (reduces to -10 hp) because the aura has consumed an essential portion of the body.

**Oak Leaves:** Another form of decoration lies in the successive awards of the same decorations. For example, a priest may be awarded the cord three times. In this case, the priest would have one cord and two oak leaves. They are small oak leaves made of green enamel and gold which can be embedded in or attached to the garter, the cord, or the hilt (the Eagle can only be awarded once in a lifetime). Each oak adds a +1 bonus to the effect of the original decoration, up to a maximum of +4.

## DISTINGUISHED CHARACTERS OF THE ORDER

Within the Order's Palace in Freiburg there is a hall known as the Crypt of Heroes, in which the Heldannics can admire the busts and the plaques that record the names and the deeds of the Order's most important members. These are the most important characters in Heldannic history (the date recorded next to the title usually shows the year in which they started in that office, while a question mark indicates that the person is still alive)<sup>6</sup>.

### Klaus Stamhoffer

910–980 AC

First Hochmeister of the Order

First Landmeister (Governor) of Freiburg, 952 AC

### Wulf von Klagendorf

931–(?) AC

<sup>6</sup> Based on the events of the *Fury of the Immortals* and on the following Heldannic conquests, these are the names that were added to the list of the Crypt of Heroes, as specified by Bruce Heard:

Second (and actual) Hochmeister of the Order 980 AC

**Maude Erstenlicht**

936–(?) AC

First Primate of the Voice, 980 AC

**Eugen Pfefferlind**

970–(?) AC

Third Landmeister of Freiburg, 1004 AC

**Dora Riesenstein**

981–(?) AC

Third Landmeister of Grauenberg, 1008 AC

**Ludwig Hohenhaus**

981–(?) AC

First Landmeister of Heldland, 1010 AC

**Siegfried Meinhard**

967–(?) AC

First Landmeister of Landfall, 1010 AC

**Hermann Adalar**

988–(?) AC

First Landmeister of Oceansend, 1011 AC

**Manfred Himmelbrand**

964–(?) AC

High Inquisitor, 1013 AC

**Max Einaugen**

938–998 AC

First Primate of the Hammer, 980 AC

**Konrad Blutfelden**

949–(?) AC

Second Primate of the Hammer, 998 AC

**Utha Scharnheim**

939–1004 AC

Second Landmeister of Freiburg, 980 AC

**Georg Löwenstern**

917–991 AC

First Landmeister of Altendorf, 952 AC

**Fritz Hauerfang**

973–(?) AC

Second Landmeister of Altendorf, 991 AC

**Wilhelm Hockstein**

932–978 AC

First Landmeister of Hockstein, 958 AC

**Otto Morgenhammer**

941–(?) AC

Second Landmeister of Hockstein, 979 AC

**Helga Grauenberg**

921–977 AC

First Landmeister of Grauenberg, 960 AC

**Helmut Totenfuss**

926–1008 AC

Second Landmeister of Grauenberg, 977 AC

**Johan Goldzig**

930–999 AC

First Landmeister of Oostdok, 962 AC

Karl Hundkopf

968–(?) AC

Second Landmeister of Oostdok, 999 AC

**Anna von Hendriks**

972–(?) AC

First Landmeister of Stonehaven, 996 AC

**Argo Tannengrub**

901–951 AC

Knight Errant, Discoverer of Vanya's Rest

**Franz Eindecker**

924–966 AC

Luftkapitän of the Weihe (first vessel to have passed through the Mystaran Sky Shield)

## **PEOPLE'S TEMPLE**

### **Worshipped in:** Ierendi

The People's Temple is a benevolent religion created by Tomia a Minthroaddar immigrant (in reality a charismatic fraudster) at the start of the VIII century AC. It is the most popular religion in the islands, as several of the Makai beliefs were included in this religion as Tomia's goal was to convert as many as possible to his cause. Tomia certainly wasn't a disinterested benefactor, seeing as his only aim, when he formed the cult, was to prosper by exploiting the natives' good faith and peaceful nature. Built in the main Ierendi island, the first temple quickly became such a success, that his followers began to call Tomia "The Hope". To give his cult a series of rules, Tomia incised the general commandments of the People's Temple on ten pieces of stone. These were later renamed the Stones of Hope, and placed within the main temple for safety. Over the years, the cult's priests have modified the original doctrine in the name of progress, often forgetting or disregarding some of the stricter rules. To civilize slowly the islanders, without imposing too strict a faith, it was decided to incise the few (amended) principal rules directly on the walls of the temple, in a way that all could follow and understand. Over the following centuries, some of the Temple officers began to worry that its followers would discover that the cult's initial rules had been modified. They tried to eliminate the Stones of Hope but weren't able to destroy them. Therefore, the priests decided to steal the stones from the temples' vaults, hide them a secret place, and attribute their theft to an enemy sect. Currently only the Temple's officers know the truth about the theft and location of the Stones of Hope (probably hidden in the building's basement). They closely guard their secret, as they fear being exposed by other cults and that the faithful might notice that the religion that they practise has changed compared to the original model. Despite all the changes, the priests, have made to the scriptures left by Tomia, one of the messages has never changed. The Hope indeed wrote of the existence of a great treasure left by the Immortals when they were forced to leave the world. This Immortal Treasure is so great that it would make the Temple the world's richest church, and all those that

belong to it could share this money. According to the Tomia's visions, the treasure was hidden by the Immortals and will be only recovered by a valorous person during the People's Temple most difficult moment. As not even the Temple's officers know exactly when this will occur, the priests continue their ceaseless research and urge their followers to do likewise.

The People's Temple is the most popular religion within Ierendi. You can find temples scattered throughout the islands, but as the ceremonies are held in the open, many communities don't have a consecrated buildings but only a sacred ceremonial area and their priests often live in ordinary houses like the rest of the population. The Temple is a very informal religion, whose rituals varies from community to community and often depends on the priests, who the faithful treat more like friends or kin than like figures of reverence or great devotion. The rites last an hour. In the first half hour, the news (good and bad) concerning the village and islands is reported, and it is an important time to socialise and create or cement the relationships between families. In the second half hour, the priest conveys a moral or philosophic message (usually connected to the messages within the Stones of Hope) with parables and tales of life lived, using several methods to make the message more effective (magic tricks, songs, dances etc.). Generally, the Temple's principal priest delievers a message of love and generosity and he urges the faithful to pull together when their brothers and sisters need help. They don't pray to any one Immortal in particular, but worship a type of "benign power" based on the principles of loving your neighbours and cooperating to avoid harming others. The People's Temple clergy are all of good alignment (mostly Neutral or Chaotic with some Lawful) and are divided into two classes: the priests and the officers. The priests' task is to spread the church's message church to all the villages and the neighbouring populace. They are the basis and skeleton of the Temple and live throughout the islands, within the Makai and other ethnic communities. The officers are the oldest, senior priests, delegated with the religion's spiritual direction and organizing the Temple's resources. The officers all live in the main temple in the Ierendi capital with the priests who operate in the capital. They also seek to prevent the true Stones of Hope from being recovered in order to not expose the differences between Tomia's original rules and the later modified rules. The clergymen of the People's Temple don't have a formal outfit and can rarely be distinguished from a common islander, although the officers always wear a yellow belt to distinguish themselves from the other clerics and usually wear simple, white cotton robes whose length varies according to the climate. The Temple's clergy cannot turn undead and each must be taught his spells by an officer when their own experience allows them to learn. Therefore, the officers decide which spells a priest may know and use. However, a priest doesn't need a holy symbol to cast

spells and pray, unlike clerics of other religions (in D&D 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, these priests are the Adepts).

## RUTHINIAN CULT

### Worshipped in: Vestland

Forsetta Justice, law, duty, loyalty, sincerity, protect Vestland

#### HISTORY OF THE CULT

The Ruthinian Cult is an indigenous order of Vestland, which came into being during the Vestlanders ten year war of independence against High King Finnboji of Ostland (604–14 AC). The war began when the Vestlander jarls, led by the valorous Gendar 'the Good', refused to pay the exorbitant tribute demanded by their Ostlander lords, who had exploited them for decades.

Gendar was a honest, iron-principled man with a deep-seated faith in the northern Immortals – particularly Forsetta, the ancient northern Immortal that millennia before, whilst still mortal and known as Ruthin, had united his people against the giants and trolls, given them their first laws, and had received from the Immortals – according to legend – the magical crown of the sun, the Sorona. The rebellion of Gendar was not the violent and selfish act of someone who didn't want to submit to authority, but was born from his peers' deep sense of injustice due to Ostland's actions. It wasn't designed to eliminate the monarchy, but to establish a more just government.

Forsetta found Gendar the right man to give his principles of law, justice, and order to the Northern Reaches. Disguised the sage Haymin, a wandering godar, he presented himself in front of the assembly of the Vestlander jarls, gathered in Norrvik. Speaking the words of an ancient prophecy, which showed that Gendar was Ruthin's heir and he would lead them to victory. Few gave credence to these words: the war dragged out for years and the Vestlander jarls were exhausted, while the enemy gave no sign of wanting to abandon its claims on the land. Gendar travelled north to meet an Ostlander army in battle; before the battle, he sat in prayer on a nearby height, where an ancient stone circle (the Stones of the Sky), of unknown origin, was erected millennia ago. It was here that he had a vision whilst praying for the return of justice to his country: a great light enclosed him, and a golden crown – the mythical Sorona – descended from the sky onto his head, crowning him (612 AC). Returning to his army with this mythical symbol of royalty, Gendar led them to victory against the Ostlanders.

Recalling the words of Haymin, Gendar, before going to Norrvik with the Sorona, decided to consult the elderly clergyman to discover this event meaning. Haymin said that the Immortals had revealed to him that it was now the time for the valorous to return justice to Vestland and that this was Gendar; Forsetta had sent the Sorona from skies to him: who would now be introduced

to the jarls, and lead them to victory. Heartened by these words, Gendar arrived at Norrvik accompanied by Haymin. When they saw the crown that shone on his forehead, the jarls knelt down knowing that Gendar enjoyed the Immortals' favour. Gendar was therefore able to gain the support of the jarls and the people and was acclaimed king; a few years later, again thanks to the Sorona's magical power, he achieved the final victory at the Battles of Bridenfjord (614 AC) against the Ostlander forces.

Many godar, in the years after Haymin's appearance and the Sorona's return, gathered around the wise clergyman, who was revealed as the ancient hero Ruthin. He is now known as Forsetta among the Immortals and he still watches over his people. He sent them the Sorona during their most desperate time to save them and point them towards a new, more prosperous and just future. Soon Haymin's sermons became followed by large crowds of believers, and Gendar financed the construction of a temple dedicated to Ruthin on the Vestfjord's northern side. The temple became the centre of the new order created by Haymin, the Ruthinian Cult, and the old sage became its first patriarch.

After the victory, Gendar was personally crowned High King of Vestland by the patriarch Haymin, with the name of Ottar; Ottar had been the mythical Ruthin's son, and Gendar now brought law and order to Vestland as the hero's second son. During his reign, with Haymin's advice, Ottar shrewdly rules and earned the name of "the Just". After his death the king was buried beneath the stone circle near where the Sorona came from the sky. Haymin mysteriously vanished shortly before Ottar's death; his followers and the faithful then venerated him as a saint, a herald of Forsetta that came in their moment of need to deliver hope and salvation.

### **PRECEPTS AND PURPOSE OF THE CULT**

The Ruthinian Cult has grown over the centuries, but it has never very large, although it is extremely respected and revered by all Vestlanders. According to its own clergy, its members must do all that they can so that the people worship their traditional Immortals and respect the justice given by the fathers. The order's task in Vestland is to protect justice and the law, and to support the monarchy and the sovereign's authority. These beliefs – absolute loyalty to the crown, as a symbol and not a person or a family, thus in essence loyalty to Vestland – form the fundamental core of the order's precepts.

The Ruthinian Cult has as several monastic centres spread throughout Vestlander territory. Although it is not very numerous, it is rather rich due to the donations of land and vassals made in its favour several times by the Vestlander sovereigns. Its most important centre of power is the ancient temple that was built by Gendar, the Monastery of Ruthin, surrounded by vast plots of the order's land, but there are others equally rich (such as the one in Rhoona).

The order's clergy perform a very important role in Vestland as legal advisers – often chosen by the nobles as impartial judges – and custodians of the laws; in their monasteries are superb collections of laws and Vestlander rights, ready to be consulted. For the order's members, the legendary life of the mythical Ruthin is a model of behaviour – as is the life of Gendar; often, in cases not covered by Vestlander law, they refer to the examples of the old legends to judge righteously. More important, however, is the clergy's role (mostly those of a higher rank) as councillors to the nobles and, particularly, the sovereign. Their advice is always about obedience, respect of customs and the ancient laws, and the worship of the Immortals and their values. The Patriarch of Ruthin has since the times of Haymin carried out the most important roles like the sovereign's councillor and the Royal Council's principle representative, many times supporting and legitimising the reigning dynasty in times of crisis. Annacks, the recently deceased patriarch, has not only been the head of the Council of Regency in the years following the death of King Gudmund (981–986 AC), but he has also been the architect of the recovery of the Sorona and the return to the throne of Prince Tenitar (crowned as Harald Gudmundson – seen in the events of the module X13: *Crown of Ancient Glory*).

Currently, the Ruthinian Cult has a strong presence in Vestland and it is also beginning to make progress in the chaotic lands of Soderfjord, where its members are trying to convince the jarls to unite under the leadership of Ragnar 'the Robust', head of the League of Nordhartar. The Heldannic Territories represent a new opportunity for the order, where the Ruthinians hope to counter the Heldannic Knights' oppression with their ideals of justice.

### **HIERARCHY OF THE CULT**

Because the Ruthian Cult isn't too large, its hierarchy is rather simple. The Patriarch is the order's head, he resides in the Monastery of Ruthin built during the time of Haymin; beneath him are several Priors each of which manages a priory, which includes a monastery, its annexed lands, and its vassals, and uses proceeds to maintain the priory. Most of the order's members are simple Clergymen, who take care of the everyday duties in the temples, preach, make sure that the people obey the law and crown and, as it has been termed, administer the low justice. Those aspiring to enter the Ruthinian clergy must be presented at a young age at one of the priories, where they carry out a rigid three year period of learning, during which they study the order's traditions and doctrine and the kingdom's laws; after which they become Novices in the order, supervised by a Clergyman – for a period of between three and six years, during which they continue to perfect their knowledge and work within the priory. Given the prestige which the order enjoys, many of the noble families that can, send their youngest sons to join the Ruthinian Cult.

The Ruthinian clergy all wear a long tunic of yellow wool with a pointed hood and a mail shirt, if necessary, under the tunic, along with a scabbarded sword to defend the population. They carry the church's symbol, which is identical to Forsetta's holy symbol – golden sceptre with four rubies set on its head, engraved on an always visible medallion.

## TEMPLE OF BOZDOGAN

### Worshipped in: Hule

Bozdogan (Loki) Deceit, guile, cleverness

The Temple of Bozdogan is Hule's official religion and its emblem is a puzzle-cube, their Immortal guardian Bozdogan's holy symbol, which represents reality's different levels of truth. The Temple's clergy term themselves Holy men and all unconditionally worship Bozdogan (Loki's Hulean alias) who bases his doctrine on deceit and guile. He asks his priests to deceive his believers to protect them from the evils of the unfaithful and rule them according to his divine will. Lies are sacred in Hule, but only Bozdogan's priests can really use them: lying to the priests is equivalent to betraying the Immortal, which is considered the gravest sin a true follower can commit.

### HISTORY OF THE TEMPLE

The Temple's doctrine was established by Hosadus, its first holy man and prophet, who due to his guile and Bozdogan's revelations freed the Hulean lands from the goblinoid hordes that had raided and invaded it for over two millennia. He convinced the horde's leaders to leave Hule, guiding them east in search of a holy artefact. He then began to preach the word of Bozdogan to the more deserving and attentive Huleans, forming the Temple of Bozdogan. After leaving his religious and political legacy to his successors and giving the region a sense of unity, Hosadus was called by Bozdogan to the Celestial Spheres to serve him in other ways and times. Sadly, his successors didn't follow his advice, and began to compete with each other generating rifts within the church and forming several autonomous and rival territories. So instead of uniting their forces against their common enemies, they began to weaken, until Hule was once more attacked from outside and brought to its knees by northern barbarians.

Bozdogan again came to his people's aid, announcing that Hosadus had been resurrected to help the Huleans to regain their land. The return of Hosadus in 600 AC gave the Huleans a new strength to resist, due to his efforts and charisma. The rival territories began to ally together to face the barbarian threat. Hule was able to drive away the invaders, due mostly to Hosadus's strategy and his alliance with creatures of the Elsewhere and the humanoid settlers in Hule's wildernesses. This victory confirmed his position as the nation's head. He started again from where he had left off, unifying all the alliance's territories and founding the Sanctified Land of

Hule. He later divided it into provinces, each governed by one of his trusted humans. He spread Bozdogan's doctrine among all the Huleans, and created the Test of Hosadus, a ritual which all must undertake to determine their degree of loyalty to Bozdogan and their guile and charisma, which forms the basis for the Hulean society's class structure. Finally, he was able to force some demons to serve him and build the kingdom's capital, Greatrealm, an impregnable fortress city within the heart of the Dark Wood, on the banks of Lake Tros. It is hidden from the population's eyes and protected by powerful magic and creatures enslaved to Hosadus. Once he completed the Greatrealm, Hosadus chose the most faithful and worthy of his followers and appointed him Master of Hule, his successor and the Temple's principle representative.

All would have to bow down before him, as he would be the land's new embodiment of Bozdogan until the Immortal selected a new successor. After which Hosadus disappeared (in reality killing the Master and taking his place, without telling the other priests, demonstrating the true nature of Loki's doctrine) and the Master reigned until, warned by a vision, he chose a successor and "disappeared", giving rise to the Master's dynasty (this stratagem has allowed Hosadus to reign over Hule since his return until the present, without anybody finding out). During the four centuries of the Master's reign, he has (for his own ends) allowed other religions a presence in the theocracy, approving the more malleable cults that have little interest in governing the country, and banning any "dangerous" religious order. This has consolidated Bozdogan's power in Hule, and simultaneously gained the protection and blessing of other Immortals like **Hel** (Ecel), **Harrow** (Aravjuk), **Faunus** (Inuus), **Iliric**, **Tyche** (Bath), and the humanoid Immortals (**Karaash**, **Ranivorus**, **Jammudaru**, **Maglubiyet**, and **Bartziluth**). In fact, according to the Temple of Bozdogan's doctrine, these Immortals now side with the Master as Hosadus cunningly gained their aid and alliance during his second return, and they are now obliged to protect the Huleans and serve Bozdogan's cause along with their ministers and followers. In particular, legend tells that Hosadus persuaded Ecel to accept his soul after he had unified the Hulean states, in exchange for her secrets of necromancy to use against his enemies. Thereafter, Hosadus went to Iliric and asked his help to escape his pact with Ecel. Thus Iliric crafted an amulet to hold Hosadus' soul. In return for the amulet, he asked to gain knowledge of Ecel's secrets. Hosadus promised that he would reveal them to him only after all his enemies had been driven from Hule.

Afterwards he summoned the humanoids' Immortals, and clinched an alliance in which he promised to respect them and feed and house their followers in the Holy Land if they would follow him in battle. The humanoid Immortals responded that they would tell their followers to obey Hosadus, but only until

they had fought one war. Hosadus then departed for the Dark Wood and summoned Inuus, lord of the wild beasts, and Aravjuk, Lord of Illusion, who challenged him to a duel of cleverness. With Bozdogan by his side, Hosadus won and gained the permanent alliance of Aravjuk and Inuus to the Hulean cause, who placed at his disposal various forest and illusionary creatures to help the Huleans. Hosadus then convinced many elves who lived in the Dark Wood to swear loyalty to the Sancified Land in exchange for Aravjuk's secrets. Finally, he gained the blessing and favour of Bath (Immortal of good luck), who promised to always help Hosadus and his descendents, until his temple is respected and full of gold. Hosadus had his victory against the northern invaders, which were first intoxicated by Inuus's followers, aided by those of Aravjuk and finally destroyed and dispersed by the Hulean troops and humanoids. He then vanished, rescued by Bozdogan, mocking Ecel and Iliric who demanded his soul. Since then Hule has continually waged war, to keep the humanoids controlled and in its service, and the Master continues to govern as his embodiment, in this way Bath supports him and Aravjuk's elves are forced to serve him.

The only Immortal that continues to strongly oppose the Temple of Bozdogan is Eiryndul, patron of a small elven kingdom hidden in the forests to the north of Rockwater. His conflict with Hule began when Loki and Harrow (Aravjuk) corrupted a large part of his followers that lived in the Dark Wood, inducing them to join the Master. Those that didn't accept were killed or driven away, and the few survivors settled in the forests to the north of Rockwater, where they now plot against the Master. Eiryndul seeks to incite insurrection in the Sancified Land using false visions and spies, but it is a long and difficult battle, using his enemies' own weapons: cleverness, deceit, and perseverance.

### SOCIAL ORDERS AND CASTES

Hule is a theocratic nation founded on the religious fanaticism advocated by the Temple of Bozdogan, whose society is divided into classes. However, these castes aren't fixed or determined by birth, but are open to all based on their skills and abilities, with particular attention to a person's guile and charisma, as behoves a philosophy like Bozdogan's. At the top of the theocracy are the **Holyman**, the Temple's most devote priests. They belong to the ruling class after having passed the Test of Hosadus in an exemplary manner: only the most capable and loyal clerics can achieve this rank, and that makes the Holyman the theocracy's most elite caste, above every law and defer only to the Master (as Bozdogan's earthly embodiment). The Holyman administer the nation's provinces (satraps) and the most important and richest cities, impose and collect taxes, check matters of commercial and legislative politics, as well as directing the military operations and training the army. They dress in long white tunics of cotton and wool, wear pointed golden metal headdress, covered with

a white turban, and around their neck a silver holy symbol of the Temple.

The **Diviners** are Hule's judges and guardians, as well as its spies. Unlike the Holyman, a diviner can be from any class, although the majority are fighters, thieves, and clerics. They answer to the Holyman and the Master, who personally selects them based on their Test of Hosadus result. The Diviners freely circulate through the various provinces frequently disguised, to pass unnoticed and better observe the actions of the population and foreigners. When they want to be seen and respected for their position, they wear a red tunic, a black leather mask (which prevents the diviner's features from being clearly seen, and allows him to go anywhere with his face uncovered with no fear of being recognised), a mace, and a crystal amulet with the Temple's symbol. They have a dual role: discover and capture 'faulty' thinkers (or dissidents), and find enlightened persons worthy of serving the Temple (as Holyman, Diviners, or Clerics).

In Hule thieves and assassins are not the only criminals. The most dangerous criminals are those who hide their "wrong" or deviant thoughts, who doubt the goodness of the state religion or the Holyman's miracles, who make alliances with the nation's enemies, or are devoted to cults not approved by the Master. Those that are accused or suspected of heresy and deviant thought are captured by the Diviners and conducted to secret places (the most terrible of these is the Temple of Death in the Greatrealm, abode of the Master, which houses the most dangerous criminals), where they are interrogated and tortured by the Diviners and Holyman until they confess their crimes. If they confess and reject their guilt, the criminals are pardoned and can enter the Instruction process. In practice, the individual is entrusted to a Holyman so that he is again educated according to the right way of thinking. This trial demands time and great will, as every day the criminal is indoctrinated with lessons of pure religious morals, accompanied by very painful physical stimulations to burn into his mind and soul Bozdogan's dictates. The criminals that leave, indoctrinated by the Instruction, become fanatically to the Holyman's orders, loyal to Bozdogan's cause, and ready to be used as spies to capture other traitors and unmask conspiracies.

If the criminal doesn't confess, he usually just "disappears". It is whispered that these derelicts are sent to Greatrealm, where they become little more than vegetables in the Holyman and Master's service. According to others, they are given to the humanoid tribes as slaves or food, each ending their miserable existence in a terrible way. The only way for them to avoid being condemned, is to show that they were acting that way for the order of Bozdogan (in which case the action is assuredly advantageous to the Hulean cause) or one of the Immortals whose cult is permitted within the theocracy (although in this case the judge must evaluate if the order has or hasn't threatened Hule).

The Diviners' second task is to seek individuals worthy of serving the government. If they discover a particularly "holy" person (astute, loyal to the Temple and without scruples), they take him before a council of Holymen so that he can be subjected to the Test of Hosadus. Based on the test's result, the candidate can become a Cleric (if he was previously a Commoner or Prophet), a Diviner, or a Holyman, thus entering the highest levels of the ecclesiastic hierarchy and Hulean government. As the Diviners are as dangerous as they are rewarding, the people both fear and respect them.

The **Hermits** are individuals that have claimed to have had a vision sent by the Immortals, according to which their new mission is to live on the margins of society, in the wilderness, in expectation of a revelation. The Hermits live in conditions of extreme poverty, covered in rags, with untrimmed beards and long hair, in complete filth, only taking a few fruits from the land or trap wild animals as their only sustenance, and depend on handouts from their neighbours or travellers. Frequently the villagers consider the Hermits enlightened individuals, and so they go to them in search of answers and omens, in exchange for food and clothes. In most cases these Hermits are clerics of Bozdogan that he sent into the barren areas as punishment for their sins, or to use them as spies to keep an eye on the humanoid communities, the more distant villages, or the border routes. Other times they are simply hopeless visionaries, solitary druids, or priests faithful to Inuus (Faunus) or Aravjuk (Harrow) fallen prey to mystical ecstasies, or enemies of the nation reduced to insanity by the governors and abandoned in the country's wildernesses. In either case, the Hermits are usually ignored by the Holymen and Diviners as long as they don't create too much disorder, or held in high consideration by the latter, as if they had been possessed by the same spirit of Bozdogan; in both cases this position gives them a great freedom of action.

The **Prophets** are individuals who are respected for their learning and wisdom, who wander the various regions in search of knowledge and ancient mysteries, usually accompanied by a dog and a disciple who bears a lamp. Most Prophets are students and mages, and many of them are devoted to Iliric, patron of magic and power and Bozdogan's ally. They aren't government officials, but given their intelligence they are often consulted by the governors when the latter cannot solve a problem or come to grips with a mystery, especially those of a magical nature. Furthermore, the Diviners often make use of their abilities for their own aims, which they cannot refuse. They are subject to the judgement and authority of the Holymen and Diviners like any other, and don't enjoy a special immunity.

The **Clerics** perform their service in the temples of the cities and villages, where they instruct the population on Hule's history and the Temple's doctrine, and shape the common folk's conscience in the way dictated by

Bozdogan. Most Clerics lead a tranquil life and prefer to stimulate the holiness of their faithful, rather than entering into the higher classes' games of power. Others constantly attempt to proclaim their own "holy" qualities, to gain the attention of the Diviners and have another chance to pass the Test of Hosadus to climb the hierarchal ladder. The Clerics always dress in long sallow coloured tunics, with a brooch pinned on the chest and modelled in the form of the Temple's symbol.

Most of Hule's inhabitants belong to the Common Folk, who are those individuals without schooling that work daily to live, following the church's dictates and attempting to refine their own holy qualities. Labourers, farmers, growers, craftsmen, merchants, servants, artists, and even soldiers belong to this class, as well as any foreigners. They are watched with disdain by the dominant classes, but tolerated as the Temple acknowledges their indispensable contributions to the cause of the Sanctified Land. The non humans that live in Hule (elves, gnomes, lupins, rakastas, giants, and goblinoids) do not belong to any caste. Each tribe or clan is considered a group apart, which acts according to its own racial laws and has various leaders that support the existing communities, even if they must all account for their actions to the Holymen and Diviners who are the Master's emissaries, who rules over them all.

#### **CEREMONIES AND BELIEFS**

The religious ceremonies are celebrated nightly, and the faithful are called to participate at least twice a week. Moreover, once a week the country's clerics lead a procession through a city or village, in search of miraculous signs, or unusual events that can reveal a sign sent by Bozdogan. These processions are always accompanied by music, dances, and libations, which serve to attract Bozdogan's attention, ask for his blessing, and open the minds of those present to his word. In these processions the priests of Inuus and Aravjuk, in particular, join the Temple's priests to enhance the rapturous effect of the dances and ceremonies. If they uncover a miracle, they convene a court composed of local Holymen who judge the authenticity of such portents and might give an interpretation of the event.

Finally, traditionally all animals must be treated with respect in Hule, as according to the religious beliefs, when a dead Holyman is called back to the world he can be reincarnated as any living creature. As the Holymen must always be honoured and respected, and no one can know for sure if the soul of one is within a common animal, religious belief imposes that everyone should always treat animals with the utmost respect (although this doesn't mean that they should allow a fierce wolf to kill a follower).



## TEMPLE OF RAFIEL

### Worshipped in: Shadowlands

Rafiel Shadow elves, radiance, order, security, peace, science and magic

The religion of the shadow elves is monotheistic and pervades their life style and history. It was founded by the first subterranean elves contacted by Rafiel in 1104 BC and it is based on the respect of the Fourteen Sacred Verses, the commandments that according to legend Rafiel carved in the Refuge of Stone, the holy sanctum guarded in the Temple of Rafiel in the capital of the Kingdom of the Shadow. The verses are as follows:

1. **Verse of the Gathering:** Before the holocaust, I was Rafiel, and I watched over my people. I gathered them into the palm of my hand, and I guided them to this refuge of stone. I, Rafiel, will guide you.
2. **Verse of the Name of the Shadow Elves:** I am Rafiel, and you are all my shadow. As I move, so you move. As I stand, so you stand. As I live, so you live. Thus shall you be shadow elves, and I, Rafiel, will guide you.
3. **Verse of the Refuge of Stone:** Let all my children learn these words, the words that guide you and give you life. Daily honour these fourteen verses and I, Rafiel, will guide you.
4. **Verse of the Shaman:** I, Rafiel, mark with my own hand those whom I empower. Let all respect be accorded these, my chosen servants. They it is who will have the power of life and death over you. Follow their teachings, and I, Rafiel, will guide you.
5. **Verse of the Crystals:** In the fullness of time, I, Rafiel, will show my shamans the secrets of the crystals that have the power of life and death and life everlasting. Guard these crystals carefully, and I, Rafiel, will guide you.
6. **Verse of Birth:** If any child be born among you that is not whole, let them be brought before me, and I, Rafiel, will guide their path.
7. **Verse of the Wanderers:** Keep the strength of the shadow elves, and let none who is weak remain among you or follow after you. Turn these to me, and I, Rafiel, will guide their path.
8. **Verse of the Temple:** Here build before me a city, and a great temple, and within it offer up to me all good things, and I, Rafiel, will guide you.
9. **Verse of Food and Cleanliness:** Let your food be pure and clean. Keep also yourselves pure and white before me, and let not your souls be spotted with wrongdoing against me, and I, Rafiel, will guide you.
10. **Verse of Days:** I will teach my shamans the goodness and badness of each day. Keep the

good days *fasti*, and the bad days *ne fasti*, and I, Rafiel, will guide you.

11. **Verse of the Army:** I will send fire against you, to strengthen you in my own forge. Let every man and woman among you see battle and I, Rafiel, will guide you.
12. **Verse of the King:** I will guide my shamans to choose from among you a king, who will serve as long as I wish him to serve. Let all my people obey this king and I, Rafiel, will guide you.
13. **Verse of the Other Peoples:** If any other peoples desire to live among you, let a clan adopt them, and keep them separate from you lest they offend me, and I, Rafiel, will guide you.
14. **Last Verse, The Verse of Promised Bounty:** I am Rafiel. If all my children follow my way and the Way of the Shamans, then all good things will come to them, for I, Rafiel, will guide you.

The Temple of Rafiel is governed by the Radiant Shaman, who is the most powerful priest and thus the most devoted to Rafiel's teachings (currently the elf Porphyriel). The Temple's clerics are the Shadow Shamans, and their order is divided into six circles, which shows their level of enlightenment about the meaning of Rafiel's will and the true meaning of the order's actions, which each priest acquires as he gains experience and rises in Rafiel's service. The ultimate aim of every shadow elf is to serve Rafiel's will, which will also allow them to achieve happiness and salvation. Rafiel's precepts are devoted to protecting the shadow elves and allowing them to prevail; victims of human madness, they have been deprived of their surface heritage in Rafiel's opinion, who thus seeks to re-establish the equilibrium and return their birthright to his followers – "a place in the sun".

The cult of Rafiel is not however simple, as its doctrine and practice include symbolic truths, paradoxes, and enigmas that the shamans must decipher and resolve to continue their progress to spiritual enlightenment and along the hierarchical scale. The progression from acolyte to Radiant Shaman is outwardly shown through a change in clothes that each rank wears. This tradition is based on the belief that the purer a follower's soul gets the closer he gets to Rafiel. However, a cleric's robes don't get lighter, but from the simple white of an Acolyte to the white garment but full of coloured ribbons and embellishments of the Radiant Shaman. This isn't an incongruity, as according to the cult it is the soul's purity that is important to Rafiel. So when he achieves perfection of the Radiant Shaman he won't be able to wear a robe that's as pure as his soul: it is impossible and, moreover, not necessarily in Rafiel's eyes, and thus his faithful's eyes. In practice, every shaman's appearance and soul are complementary: while a shaman is still inexperienced it is right to present himself to outsiders in the purest way possible (white clothing) to contrast to his soul's opacity, while as he gains enlightenment, his

vestments get darker a reflection of his soul's cleansing and purification. This is only one of many mysteries which the philosophers of Rafiel's cult ponder. Rafiel skilfully inserted it to distract his clerics from thinking about the more important and hidden truths, which are revealed only to the eyes of the most worthy and prepared along their road to perfection.

Rafiel has other plans for the shadow elves', a secret project that began when he first appeared to the subterranean elves and the construction of the Refuge of Stone. This project implies that studying energy, the Radiance, and particularly rebuilding the Nucleus of the Spheres (the Radiance's source) is the way to Immortality. This replica is called the Chamber of the Spheres by the elves, and it is guarded in the Temple of Rafiel's lowest level, in the heart of the City of the Stars (the capital of the elven kingdom), and thus in the most secure place guarded by the shamans. The Chamber of the Spheres is the Temple's secret focus, jealously guarded by the most powerful shamans. They gather as many soul crystals as possible, to complete its construction and power it. Rafiel plans to create a working copy of the Nucleus of the Spheres but without its defects, such as its constant absorption of Mystara's magical energy.

If he is successful in this deed which he has been carrying out for two millennia, Rafiel will not only bring great prestige and power to his Sphere, but also stop the Nucleus's continual draining of magic from Mystara.

### THE SOUL CRYSTALS

The shadow elves religious beliefs say that, according to Rafiel's teachings, the Soul crystals are receptacles that contain the souls of all future elves. So it is the duty of every devout follower, to gather the crystals and deliver them to the shamans. The shamans are the only ones sanctioned to handle them and harness their power (a shadow shaman can only cast spells if he is carrying a soul crystal). The shamans are thus tasked with conserving the crystals, but don't tell the faithful the whole truth about their true use. Not even low level (levels 1-3) clerics know everything about the crystals' hidden secret; this knowledge is only gradually revealed to them, as they advance up the ecclesiastic hierarchy.

Actually, the crystals don't contain souls at all, and the shadow elves are born like every other living being of Mystara. These stones are, in reality, natural receptacles of magical energy; solidified emanations of the Radiance that pervades everywhere, especially beneath the Broken Lands following the disaster that created it in 1700 BC, caused by the elves accidentally detonating a Blackmoorian machine.

Using the Radiance's power on the surface is difficult and often dangerous, as the energy can corrupt the flesh of those who invoke it with a devastating sickness (magical-nuclear radiation) that mortal magic is unable to cure. This doesn't happen to those who own soul crystals, as due to the magic Rafiel placed on the crystals,

the corrupting effect doesn't affect the stone's user but manifests itself in the shadow elves' future generations. This explains why so many shadow elves continue to be born deformed, despite the millennia that have passed since the Great Rain of Fire. These deformities are the price the elves pay to use the Radiance. Naturally, only the White Shamans and the Radiant Shaman know this and they never reveal it to the faithful.

The decreasing of the world's magic, the usual result of evoking the Radiance (see GAZ3), is avoided through the use of the soul crystals, as the Immortal curse that reduces Mystara's magical energy is solely linked to the Nucleus of the Spheres, and not to the crystals or the Chamber of the Spheres. The crystals are themselves minor artefacts, portable receptacles that permit the evoking of the Radiance's power anywhere or any time. Nevertheless the fact that the shadow elves (including the less powerful shamans) consider the holy stones contain the souls of unborn elves makes them extremely precious, and every shadow elf does everything possible to avoid damaging or losing them and to take them from any non elf who has them (they would be considered kidnappers of the elves' future generations). Moreover, due to their nature and the energy they contain, the crystals are particularly fragile: any crystal taken to the surface is immediately weakened by the solar radiation and is reduced to dust in seconds. As it is necessary for them to be in contact with the shaman's skin to be used, this makes their use in sunlight (both on the surface and in the Hollow World) absolutely absurd (and as the shamans must use a crystal to cast spells, this makes it impossible for them to use clerical magic there). Keeping the crystals in a dark place during the day that doesn't protect them for long as they fall to pieces after 1d4 hours.

The clergy members below the rank of White Shaman believe that the crystals harness the power of the stored souls. When they cast a common divine spell, the souls aren't actually harmed as, according to their mythos, the magical energy comes from a fusion of the cleric's spiritual power, the crystal's soul, and Rafiel's life energy. However, when they invoke one of the spells linked to the Radiance, the spell's power draws energy from the crystal and weakens it, as according to the cult's doctrine, these spells tap into the soul's power and Rafiel's will to manifest. So all Rafiel's shamans are loath to evoke the Radiance spells and only use them if forced to, as they don't want damage or destroy the souls of the unborn and risk the extinction of future generations. This satisfies Rafiel's need to reduce the crystals usage to a minimum to assure that most are conserved and used in the Chamber of the Spheres. This need to find soul crystals has caused the shadow elves (both shamans and simple believers) to search incessantly for them. These holy searches inevitably result in the recovered crystals being delivered to the Temple's leaders and stored in the Chamber of the Spheres.

## THE TEST OF RAFIEL AND THE SHAMANIC ORDER

The cult of Rafiel is unique in its genre, and totally different from the type of cult which the surface demihumans are accustomed to. It includes bizarre, enigmatic, at times paradoxical ritual formulae, and is thought to seriously test a shaman's mind and will, as Rafiel only accepts the most brilliant and devoted elven minds among his disciples.

However, not anyone can become a shadow shaman, but only those that have the "Mark of Rafiel", which is a purple birthmark (often geometric) on their face. The shadow elves have learnt to recognize it as the sign that Rafiel marks his favourites among the subterranean elves with. Those prechosen are identified while young by the shadow shamans, who contact the parents when the prechosen (70% of which are female) are old enough (about eighty), to take the chosen into their care to receive the training they'll need to serve Rafiel to the best of their ability. Once he enters into the shadow shaman caste, an elf loses his right to belong to a specific clan, as from that moment he serves all the shadow elves equally. This also means that if the shaman settles down in some city (usually his parents), he no longer has obligations to just one clan, but must serve the interests of all the shadow elves, and carry Rafiel's word and wisdom to all equally. He need only obey his superiors in the Temple of Rafiel and Rafiel's will. As such, and the numerous tasks that a shadow shaman normally has to shoulder, many of them choose not to marry. Not because it is forbidden, but because they lack time to dedicate to their family: for them, their family is the entire community they serve.

Usually, after a period of some years spent learning the way of Rafiel and the meaning of the 14 Verses of the Refuge of Stone, some shadow shamans feel the urge to leave the temple and wander the elven lands, taking their aid to anyone who needs it. During this period, they acquire further wisdom and experience, rising up the clerical ranks, until they decide to settle and establish their own temple of Rafiel.

Every shadow shaman is called, during his life, to accomplish the will of Rafiel in many different ways. It is imperative for each priest to be able to pass any test before taking his posts, as he knows that his experiences serve to mature him and change him both physically and spiritually. Every acolyte who is presented to the Temple of Rafiel knows that he must first pass the Test of Rafiel to become a true shadow shaman (and progress beyond 1<sup>st</sup> level). All the acolytes must face the test when they reach their age of maturity (120 years of age) to verify their faith and resilience; as Rafiel prefers his priests to be strong in the face of adversity, and this test shows that not only symbolically, but also physically. The test is different for each shaman, and is prepared by the Initiate Shaman (see below for further details on the shaman orders) who looks after the acolyte; usually however, it includes a test of physical resistance in a particularly

hostile region of the elven lands. If the acolyte fails the Test of Rafiel, he isn't automatically rejected, but can try again once he has gained enough experience to become a 1<sup>st</sup>-level shaman (in practice if he fails the test, his accumulated experience is lost and must be reacquired). If, however, the second test also fails, it shows that the acolyte's will is weak: the elf is driven from the temple, and over some months the mark of Rafiel vanishes from his face; he also loses the level of shadow shaman he had gained.

If he passes the Test of Rafiel, the acolyte returns to the temple along by his mentor and becomes a member of the Temple of Rafiel, after a ceremonial bath to cleanse his body and soul. During the bath, the initiate shaman recites the Verse of the Shaman to officially consecrate the acolyte, acknowledging him as a shadow shaman to Rafiel's service. It is then that the acolyte receives his first soul crystal, which is given to him by the white shaman that mentored him. With the crystal, the shaman can now draw on Rafiel's power to cast his special spells, and begin to fully understand the crystals' power.

Once he has passed the Test of Rafiel, the elf enters Rafiel's clerical hierarchy, which is made up of 7 orders (exactly half of the 14 verses, one for each of the Temple of Rafiel's levels):

*Acolytes*

*Initiate Shamans*

*Death Shamans*

*Life Shamans*

*Colourless Shamans*

*White Shamans*

The *Initiate Shamans*, as well as preparing the acolytes to enter the clergy, perform the day-to-day rituals in the smaller temples and daily travel through the shadowlands to lend their own service where the will of Rafiel requires it. It is from the ranks of the initiate shamans that the wandering priests who join adventuring groups come from to explore the subterranean caverns and the surface world, as Rafiel intends them to not only defend his word and his miracles, but to also spy on the races that surround the shadow elves' lands and oppose his people's enemies.

The *Death Shamans* have the power of life and death in the elven society. They have the grave task of taking the deformed or sick babies and abandoning them far from the place where they entered the world. They only leave them in the less traversed tunnels, after completing a ceremony to give them Rafiel's blessing and protection. Rafiel teaches that these newborn must be abandoned outside of the elven lands, and so only a sufficiently powerful shaman can undertake this important task and safely return to the temple. Likewise, the death shamans preside at the ceremonies in which the Wanderers (elves too weak and old to live by Rafiel's laws) are exiled from their clans and homes. However, halfway through the ceremony their place is taken by a life shaman, and this is

symbolically very important, as this sign of “rebirth” shows that the wanderer is preparing to enter into a new phase of his life.

The *Life Shamans* represent the balance that exists in all creation. They are dedicated body and soul to studying medicine and the healing arts, and to healing mainly with their divine spells. They frequently serve in the army to cure the wounded, and can even frequently find themselves on the battlefield to help the suffering regain their strength and continue to fight for Rafiel’s glory, although they don’t personally inflict death on Rafiel’s enemies. Furthermore, the life shamans also act as the elves historians: they are the historic memory within whom live the memories of the shadow elves’ ancient deeds, the only ones to know the real version of events that become myths or legends (or partially modified) to the commoners, and are depositaries of the more obscure secrets of Rafiel’s race. Finally, the life shamans are the first order to learn the *Call upon Souls* spell (see the description of Radiance spells in the *Tome of the Magic of Mystara* or GAZ13: *The Shadow Elves*), after finding a suitable crystal (fifth level). This event signals an important step in the shama’s life, as for the first time he is in touch with the real power of Rafiel’s spirit and begins to understand part of the Immortal’s grand plan.

The *Colourless Shamans* are thus called as they think that having reached this level they have purified their souls of any guilt in Rafiel’s eyes, although keeping this state of grace costs effort and sacrifice. The colourless shamans lead a life of meditation, prayer, contemplation, and study, and rarely leave their temple, to avoid contaminating themselves and retreating down the difficult climb that leads to the final communion with Rafiel. Those that belong to this rank, according to the religion, are immediately reincarnated once dead and they have a good chance of possessing Rafiel’s mark, a sign that the Immortal’s favour accompanies them through all their existence. Furthermore, the colourless shamans can use 6<sup>th</sup>-level spells, and this makes them extraordinarily powerful to the other shadow shamans, as only they know the mysteries hidden beyond death, can judge souls, and cast the *resurrection* spell. According to Rafiel’s cult, they are only allowed raise the souls of those who died a violent death (and the noblest case is clearly that of a shadow elf who sacrificed himself in defence of the temple of Rafiel or the elvish lands), and only after having ensuring that the individual in question was in excellent physical condition (in these cases a council of a death shaman, a life shaman, and a colourless shaman decides the issue, with the colourless shaman having the final word).

Finally, the *White Shamans* are at the apex of the shadow shamans’ hierarchy, and are the only ones allowed to cast the most powerful divine spells (7<sup>th</sup> level for OD&D, 8<sup>th</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> level for D&D 3E), including *true resurrection*, which is subject to the same restrictions

mentioned above for the lower level *resurrection* spell. The white shamans are not only pure to Rafiel’s eyes, but according to the clerical tradition, they embody the model of the perfection within the 14 Verses of Rafiel. They certainly aren’t perfect (only Rafiel is that), but represent the highest state of perfection that a mortal can attain. As such, their power in shadow elf society is great, as that they always have the last word on the interpretation of the Way of Rafiel, and their advice counts as commands at any level of elven bureaucracy and nobility. They eagerly seek any type of information about every aspect of reality, not only that of the elves but also of the surrounding world, and constantly promote the search for and examination of new acolytes to expand the ranks of Rafiel’s clergy. The thing that distinguishes them the most from the other shadow shamans is that they have access to the Chamber of the Stars, the most secret room built in the final level of the First Temple of Rafiel (which is in the City of the Stars). As a result, they have begun to understand that the soul crystals aren’t totally all they seem, as the reliquary’s technological nature has little to do with elven spirituality. Rafiel only reveals the truth about his final plan to them progressively to not weaken their faith or provoke their resentment. It is only when he finally reveals to them the existence of a spell so powerful that it enables them to transcend their mortality (the ultimate Radiance spell, *Transcend Life Force*) that they realise Rafiel has guided them to Immortality, as told in the Verse of the Crystals: “In the fullness of time, I, Rafiel, will show my shamans the secrets of the crystals that have the power of life and death and life everlasting. Guard these crystals carefully, and I, Rafiel, will guide you.” At this point, their devotion attains a new peak of ecstasy as they gradually comprehend that all Rafiel’s preceding teachings have been given to them by Rafiel with the sole aim of preparing them for the magnitude of his final gift. They still don’t know the complete truth about the Chamber of the Spheres, naturally, as only the Radiant Shaman (Rafiel’s most faithful and powerful follower on Mystara) is party to that secret.

The *Radiant Shaman*, the most devote and worthy priest, who leads the Temple of Rafiel, is chosen from among the few members of the white shamans order (usually the most powerful). There is only one Radiant Shaman at a time, and he is the Keeper of the First Temple of Rafiel and the spiritual guide of all shadow elves. All the shadow shamans answer to him, and he is the only one who knows the true secret hidden within the Chamber of the Spheres, and oversees the daily operations for its construction and upkeep; as such, becoming the Radiant Shaman is the first step on the path to Immortality.

#### THE TEMPLE AND THE CHAMBER OF THE SPHERES

Built in the centre of Temple Square, in the City of Stars’ heart (the Shadowlands’ capital within the Refuge of Stone), the Temple of Rafiel overlooks the rest of the

city as it was built on top of a series of 30 metre high stalactites that hang from the ceiling (as the City of the Stars has been constructed in a grotto in which the gravity is twofold, as it is found at the centre of the planet's two gravity fields – the Worldshield). Carved directly into the rock, with colourful mosaics and reliefs of limestone, quartz, and marble, the temple is an architectural marvel that takes the breath away. There are seven levels in the temple (half of 14, and one for each order of shamans), with the highest level (at the top of the temple) defined as the First Level. To reach it, it is necessary to ascend the 14 Levels, which are actually so high that each has been subdivided into another 14 normal sized steps. Each step is of a gradually lighter stone and has one of the verses of the Refuge of Stone etched in it. So, there are really 196 steps to climb to reach the First Level's entrance.

The steps lead to a great hall where all the followers gather in prayer, ask aid of the acolytes who live in this level, and bring offerings to the Temple. In the First Level (on both sides of the great hall) are the Acolytes' accommodation and some halls where the Initiate Shamans act as Justices of the Peace in disputes between the shadow elves that are brought to the Temple for resolution.

At the end of the hall, a staircase descends, past the Second Level's Galleries, to the Chamber of the Refuge of Stone, where the 14 Verses, cut into the grotto's bare stone by the hand of Rafiel, are kept. Each day the chamber receives visits from hundreds of faithful seeking a miracle or to offer their thanks (a safe birth, a happy marriage, the health of a parent, etc.), and it is here that the most special public ceremonies are held (like royal weddings, the passage of an Acolyte into the ranks of the Initiate Shamans, or the nomination of a new Radiant Shaman or General, etc.). The acolytes are posted in this room to aid the more weary and thirsty pilgrims with pitchers of water, to assist all those that feel faint at the sight of the holy sanctum, and to keep everything neat and tidy. Many acolytes (those that have already faced the Test of Rafiel) live in the Second Level's "unforbidden area". Part of the Second Level houses the Galleries, where the works of religious art are exhibited; particularly those that recount the shadow elves' continuing struggle against their eternal enemies: the humanoids. In fact, it is common opinion that all their military victories are a sign of Rafiel's will, and thus the Galleries are the right place to conserve these memorials. However, only the most skilled acolytes and the Initiate Shamans can pass through the bronze doors that lead from the Galleries into the Second Level's heart. In the level's heart are a small library, reading and teaching halls, a hall of meditation, and halls for food preparation. There are always several Initiate Shamans to supervise the acolytes present in this area, and at least one White Shaman, to examine the babies born in the City of the Stars that exhibit the Mark of Rafiel. The White Shaman

doesn't live in the First Level for security reasons, but must be accessible for any question and so works on this level, with an acolyte to serve his every need (it is such an extremely desirable task that all the acolytes try to impress the Initiate Shaman to be selected as the White Shaman's attendant).

In the Third Level live the Initiate Shamans, and here are found many halls of records, as these shamans act as judges in legal and commercial matters, and so they need the records close to hand. There is also a tribunal hall, where the more complex disputes are judged by Initiate Shamans or a White Shaman, depending on the case's importance. The shadow elves that are tolerated on this level are always blindfolded and are purified by rituals appropriate to the First Level of the Temple (unless they are shamans of Initiate rank or higher). Conserved in the Third Level's coffers are stocks of low level soul crystals, along with gems and gold nuggets.

The Fourth Level is the abode of the Shamans of Life and of Death, who live in halls at opposite ends of the temple. The level's heart is, however, shared by both orders for meditation and prayer (there are both separate and common chapels), and also includes their refectories.

In the Fifth Level live the Colourless Shamans and its most important feature is the Hall of the Conclave, where the White Shamans gather for the election of a new Radiant Shaman or new sovereign (when necessary). The hall is situated in this temple level as it symbolically removes the White Shamans from their isolation and brings them closer to more people to answer the more important questions for the common good. The Colourless Shamans also guard a small library dedicated to the study of the "Rafiel's magic" (Radiance spells), works of particular religious devotion, and treaties on elvish theology (like the Concordance of the Way of Rafiel, the Songs of Nasnaefel, and the Verses of the Soul of Jacquafarel).

There's a very extensive inhabited complex in the Sixth Level, although currently there are only 13 White Shamans in this area (in the past the number has fluctuated between 9 and 20 individuals). Here are the parchments that conserve the shadow shamans' most potent magic, the reserve of higher level crystals (3<sup>rd</sup> or higher) and a copy of all the Temple's religious texts. Moreover, there are alchemical and magical laboratories where the White Shamans conduct important and hazardous experiments during the day, interspersing their magical research with meditation.

The final level of the temple, the Seventh, houses the Chamber of the Sphere and is two metres below the floor of the Sixth Level, sunk into the Mystaran crust and magically protected from any type of intrusion by those who don't belong to the White Shamans' caste. Only Porphyriel, the Radiant Shaman, has the magic key necessary to gain entry to the Chamber, although Randafien (a White Shaman) has an encoded note that enables him to deactivate the magical traps and enter, if

something should happen to the Radiant Shaman. The Chamber is full of droning machinery, metallic cylinders, boilers, pipes, and metal frames. At the hall's centre are enormous shining spheres within which the suspended crystals whirl around. The soul crystals are incorporated in the machinery at many points, as if they are an integrated part. The Chamber of the Spheres is a magical nuclear reactor that combines scientific and magical principles in a unique manner, a rare example of functioning technomancy on Mystara. Moreover, the things built by the elves have an extremely particular aesthetic that reflects this race's gusto, giving them a sinister grace. Even the most common pipe in this chamber is decorated with golden etchings and numerous spiral forms along its length. Every shadow shaman protects this sanctuary's entrance with their life, although the White Shamans are aware of the dangerous and volatile elements within the Chamber and so try to refrain from conflict or offensive spells, preferring mind control or persuasion to avoid it being damaged beyond repair.

## TEMPLE OF YAV

### Worshipped in: Yavdlom (Serpent Peninsula)

Yav Yavdlom, plants, prophecy, protect the flow of time

The Temple of Yav is the official church of the Most Serene Divinarchy of Yavdlom and firmly holds the reins of both the nation's political and religious power. It was founded by followers of Yav after his first passing (500 BC), and later the same prophet helped to reform and to transform it into something important by giving his disciples the *Annals of Yav*. The Annals is a mystic canon, which is supposed to contain predictions regarding the future of the Serpent Peninsula and maybe the entire planet. The clergymen of Yav (called *ramla*) blindly believe that all the events mentioned in the *Annals* will occur as written. They protect the sacred book in the nation's holiest place, the *Azizi Berungi*, the Palace of the Great Prophet, an immense, 60-metre tall structure (made from an enormous, spiral seashell and mother-of-pearl) that was built in the centre of the capital – Tanakumba (renamed Thanopolis by Known World merchants).

The fatalist philosophy of the Temple is based on the so-called Laws of Yav, which is a series of rules personally written by the First Prophet and given to his disciples to avoid repeating the injustices and strife that had nearly destroyed his people. The first and most important law advocated by Yav is one of non-interference (in full respect of his Sphere of Time's beliefs): the clergy's members cannot interfere in any way with the course of events. That also means that they cannot completely reveal the subject of their visions, and more importantly their prediction, so as not to alter the course of events. If, however, a *ramla* receives a clear sign from the Immortals, he can help certain particularly important individuals, to have an idea of what awaits them, but

only with obscure hints and riddles about their future. The *ramla* are taught to accept whatever will happen in the future with saintly resignation, however catastrophic it may be, as they know that if they try to change the events planned by the Immortals, they risk altering the universal balance and triggering still greater disasters. Because of this, the second law that the *ramla* observe is to always remain free from passion, as it clouds the mind and distorts their ability to see the truth. So, daily they meditate at length to repress their own emotions, and because of this most prophets usually have a very composed, calm, passive and, almost apathetic air about them.

### SOCIETY AND CASTES

The *yavi* society openly separates those with divine powers (the *ramla*, recognizable by the symbol of Yav, a shell, which is always tied to the right wrist) from those who don't have any (the so-called laymen). Among the laymen there is another fundamental division: the *ogwambe* are those who don't have a significant role in the community's life, and so are relegated to a lower step on the social scale. The *tukufu* (literally "those who count") are people destined to influence their surroundings with their actions, and so are considered as a noble until their destiny has been fulfilled. Once this happens, they lose their noble title and become *swetanga*, who are respected men of honour who have made their contribution to history. They, however, cannot strive for positions of power as their contribution is over.

Effectively, the Divinarchy is a confederation of states governed by a Supreme Leader, the *Mokubu* (the *tukufu* who, due to his destiny, has the most responsibility). The governmental officials are all *tukufu* who were assigned their position by the *ramla*, which recruit the candidates based on their impact on the nation's history and affinity for the various departments. In practice, refusing a governmental position is a grave offence, as it opposes his destiny. The nobles are responsible for enforcing the laws, manage the country's economy, and the nation's defence, while the *ramla* create the laws, collect taxes, administer justice (a fairly easy task, as the petty criminals are quickly exposed by the prophets' divinatory powers), and advise the governmental officials on the best decisions to take, without revealing too much of their knowledge of the future.

All those who manifest divinatory powers are obligated by law to join the clergy and become a *ramla*, especially those that have had visions and prophetic dreams since childhood. The gift is usually discovered in the *kupiga ramli* ceremony, which takes place during puberty. In this ceremony, the parents take their son before an assembly of *jajis* (*ramla* who act as judges) who determines the subject's destiny based on their visions. Based on their judgment, the boy will discover if he will be a noble, a commoner, or he will be fortunate enough to become a *ramla*, if he possesses the gift of prophecy. In the latter case, after a festive celebration the chosen one is

taken from his family and enters the ramla order. The clergy directly control his education and development, so that he is very clear about a ramla's principles and obligations, and can avoid using his gift in an egotistic or destructive manner.

Many Yavi have latent or very weak divine powers, and even after training cannot perceive anything beyond minor events of a potential future. As such, they remain confined to the clergy's lower ranks, and as their visions are considered unimportant, they are allowed to share them with the population. In effect, dealing with the commoners, understanding their spiritual requirements, responding to their divination requests, and other day-to-day tasks rests entirely on the shoulders of these ramla, who carry out an important function connecting the commoners and prophets. The higher ranked ramla usually get visions about important events or people, and are much more reluctant to share their visions, following the Laws of Yav to the letter. They are allowed to intervene if the vision permits or to correct any interference that may change the expected outcome (although this type of intervention is always first discussed with superior ramla).

At the top of the Temple's hierarchy is the *Bwana Ramla* (Great Prophet) of Yavdlom. He is able to discern events that occur even tens of years in the future with great precision. However, even that the Great Prophet cannot see events regarding the Immortals and mortals destined for immortality: the result of their actions

remain constantly hidden to every prophet, although they are clearly seen as "people who will count" in history.

The Temple is tolerant of small cults dedicated to other, older Immortals that helped or protected the peninsula's population before Yav's arrival. As such, there isn't any friction between Yav's followers and the other Immortals', although to the Yavi the First Prophet is superior to all other Immortals they respect and acknowledge the other Immortals.

What the ramla cannot tolerate are prophets who do not belong to priestly orders. There are people who have innate divination powers and aren't a ramla: a few simply ignore their gift, because it has never manifested itself or because they have so few prophetic dreams that they're put down to bizarre coincidences; these are the "dormants" and don't present a problem for the ramla. However, the *muasis* (wandering prophets) are the true thorn in the ramla's side. They are soothsayers who are aware of their powers, and because they aren't subject to the Laws of Yav or ramla's judgement they wander freely using their visions for personal profit or to interfere with history. The muasis are hunted as criminals, and the more powerful their gift, the more ruthlessly they will be hunted, to prevent their interventions altering the temporal balance. Usually the muasis either emigrate from the Divinarchy or hide in the wilderness or the slums of Yavi cities, and try not to attract too much attention.

## CHAPTER 5

# PHILOSOPHIES & MOVEMENTS

This chapter describes the less formal philosophical and religious movements, i.e. those that don't have a single head (those without a High Priest that governs all the temples), or that have teachings based on the testimony of individual priests rather than on a hierarchical organisation. The list includes all the philosophies mentioned in TSR products (including the monotheistic and atheistic ones). In each case, the DM can modify each of the orders to fit his campaign, and expand on the information about their dogmas and codes of conduct.

### LEGEND

First (in bold and larger text) is the name of the philosophy or movement, whilst the line below shows where it has at least one consecrated site and representatives of the clergy or a conspicuous number of faithful (at least a hundred); the list is in descending order based on the cult's popularity and distribution.

The polytheistic faiths then have a list of the Immortals present in the faith. The first column shows the names of the Immortals worshipped in the religion, whilst below the black line the pantheon's enemies are listed (note that the pantheon's Immortal enemies don't always work together). If the cult acknowledges a supreme Immortal, this pantheon leader (or the leader's group) is shown in **bold** (along with the principal enemy), followed by the Immortals in descending order of their importance within the cult (note that the pantheon's leader is not necessarily always a "good" Immortal). Any Immortals shown in *italics* have been added, by this supplement, to the pantheon. The second column lists the associated Immortal's areas of interest.

### ASATRU

**Worshipped in:** Northern Reaches, Norwold, Helskir, Antalia (Hollow World)

Asatru is an Antalian term that signifies faith (tru) in the gods (Asa), in this case in the Aesir pantheon. Also called Nordisk Sed (Northman Tradition), Forn Sed (Ancient Tradition) or Antalian Cult, Asatru is a polytheistic faith rooted mainly in the regions where the Antalian have spread to, i.e. the Northern Reaches, Norwold, some areas of the Isle of Dawn and the land of Antalia in the Hollow World. The principal feature of this cult is that its legendary-mystic basis was revealed to the mortals directly by Odin (from which the religion is also called Odinism). The cult was passed down age after age, influencing Antalian culture and civilisation (and that of their descendents), which is now very similar to that of real world Vikings. The modern Northmen (a generic term for the Antalians and their descendents) are united

by their extremely strong faith in the cosmic order described by their sagas (mythical and religious stories) and it is through these myths that the Northmen relate to the historic events and to everyday reality.

According to the Northman mythology, life in the universe began without a creator. At the beginning, the cosmos was an enormous abyss full of magic (the Ginnungagap) that separated two opposite regions: to the north the ice and darkness of Niflheim, and to the south the fire and light of Muspell. In Niflheim there was moreover a source of bubbling and hot water, the Hvergelmir (the Bubbling Cauldron), from which gushes the Elivagar (literally "stormy waves"), or the eleven rivers which would later give rise to all the water courses (their names were Svol, Gunnthra, Fiorm, Fimbulthul, Slidr, Hrid, Sylg, Ylg, Vid, Leiptr, and Gioll). Some of these rivers were masses of foamy, turbulent waters, others were composed of pieces of dagger- and sword-like ice, others finally were masses of ice and snow, which slowly slide towards the Ginnungagap forming a frozen expanse of white snow and ice of every colour, even black, the latter formed from the poisoned foam that was formed when some warm rivers mixed with the icy rivers. Life had begun when the positive energy of Muspell was fused with the negative energy of Niflheim, or when the fire of Muspell touched the front edge of the icy desert coming from the rivers of Niflheim: from this union was born the spark of life that animated the matter, producing two primal beings: the immense Jotun and the cow Audhumla (the Great Nourisher). During his sleep, the sweat produced by Jotun's body condensed and became his offspring (the giants, or Children of Jotun). Audhumla, looking for food, began to lick Niflheim's salty ice, until she had shaped a piece that came to life due to her breath and became Odin; Audhumla then fed both Odin and Jotun and Jotun's children with her milk.

Unfortunately however Audhumla also licked the black ice infused with the poison of Niflheim and became ill. Her poisoned milk was swallowed by Jotun and his son Surt, who began to develop a hatred of Odin. When Audhumla died, her last breath froze among Niflheim's fogs to become Hel (later the Queen of the Dead). From Audhumla's tears was born Nooga, from her heart Fulla (who after her wedding with Odin was renamed Frigg), and from her womb Erda, the first Vanir. Immediately afterwards erupted a war for control of the cosmos between the Giants and Odin, which ended Odin slaying Jotun. All Jotun's children drowned in his blood, except Surt (who sheltered in Muspell) and Bergelmir (who escaped into Yggdrasil's highest branches along with his



wife Bestla). Surt then produced the fire giants, while Bergelmir and Bestla's union sired all other giants.

Odin tore Jotun's corpse to pieces and used them to create the world that he placed on the great Yggdrasil. His bones became rocks and mountains, his flesh the land, his hair grass and trees, and his blood and sweat the rivers and waters. Jotun's skull was turned upside down and positioned over the land to form the sky, with pieces of his brain to float as clouds. Odin, however, saw that the sky was gloomy and decided to illuminate it. So he took tongues of flame from Muspell and formed the stars from them. Creatures of flesh emerged as fungi and mould from Jotun's dead skin and became the first Dwarves, demanded a kingdom for themselves and Odin gave them the world of Nidavellir in exchange for the sacrifice of four of them, who were taken and placed at the four corners of Midgard to support the sky (their names are still used for the four cardinal points, that is Nordhri, Austri, Sudhri, and Vestri). Odin created the celestial vault so that it rested on the world's focus, and fixed the Pole Star to it. Later, wandering the world, Odin saw two splendid trees, which he breathed his life-giving breath on to create Ask (ash) and Embla (elm), the first man and the first woman, and the ancestors of the human race that populated Midgard.

Afterwards Odin took Fulla as his wife, renaming her Frigg, and produced the first Aesir, while Erda joined with Nooga to create the Vanir. Erda, then, left Vanaheim for Midgard, where she joined with the land, (Jotun's dead body) to make it fertile and allow the mortals to survive.

Midgard was surrounded by a vast mass of water, and to give both the giants and humans an area to inhabit, Odin decided to raise a wall between the two peoples, thus creating the mountains from the bodies of the giants who drowned in Jotun's blood. To the east he settled the giants who founded Jotunheim there, while the humans and dwarves spread out through the rest of Midgard.

Odin, the Vanir, and Hel collaborated to divide the universe into equal parts, to prevent future conflict, and so created the three levels of Yggdrasil: Odin was given dominion over Asgard; Hel was given dominion over the souls of the mortals who didn't die heroically and over Helheim (union of Helgardh and Niflheim); the Vanir were given dominion over nature, the elements, animals, and Vanaheim.

To cement this alliance and renounce any claim on the world of the living however, Hel demanded that Odin and Nooga (leaders of the Aesir and Vanir respectively) join with her to sire offspring that she couldn't do alone. Thus were born Hel's three children: from Odin she had the astute Loki, while from Nooga she had the dark Gullveig and the charming Nott. Hel later told them to live with the Aesir and Vanir as her emissaries. Nott then joined with the mysterious Annar (a traveller who knocked on her door in Vanaheim) and bred the sons Dag and Mani and the daughter Sol. When Annar vanished, Nott commanded the first-born Dag to find him, accompanied by his sister Sol on a chariot. When he also failed to

return, Nott took to wandering the sky along with her son Mani: it was thus that sun (Sol) and moon (Mani) accompanied the day (Dag) and the night (Nott) in the worlds of Yggdrasil, were always separated in their search for the missing Annar.

One day Gullveig, keeper of the secrets of witchcraft, came to Asgard invited by Loki, who wished to seize the secrets. She entered into the hall where the Aesir were gathered and began to deride them and to boast of her gifts, until the angry Aesir spurred on by Loki, seized her and decided to punish her for the offence by burning her on a pyre. Three times Gullveig was burnt alive, and twice she rose from the flames with an air of superiority. The third time however, Loki took her pulsating heart from the cinders and devoured it before Gullveig could reanimate, and thus gained part of her powers and evilness. When the fire was extinguished this time, there was no trace of Gullveig. Hel had claimed her soul, to reincarnate her in the deformed body of Angrboda, the mother of all witches and trolls, and sent her into the Wood of Iron (Jarnvidur) to further the mother's schemes. The Vanir demanded that the Aesir pay them the weregild for the offence caused, and when this was refused they unleashed a terrible war between Asgard and Vanaheim. After long years of combat without victory, Odin decided to undertake a journey to the Well of Urd to obtain the magic and knowledge necessary to stop the conflict and regain his position. Upon entering the Norns' presence, they explained to him that only with extreme sacrifice could he understand that which still eluded him. So he was tied to Yggdrasil's branches for a period of nine days. During this time he learnt the secrets of runic magic and had visions about Ragnarok (or *Götterdämmerung* – "twilight/fate of the gods"). Returning to the battlefield, he explained what had happened to all those who would listen. Before Hel could claim all their souls, the Aesir and Vanir swallowed their pride and agreed to end their conflict for Yggdrasil's good and to delay Ragnarok. During this truce there were unions of peace between the Aesir and Vanir, and the former took Vanir women as wives to cement their alliance, increasing the number of Aesir and Ásynjur. Moreover, Odin and the Vanir agreed to share the souls of the heroically fallen, to populate Valhalla and Sessrumnir with valiant warriors in preparation for Ragnarok. The Aesir rebuilt Asgard's walls to defend them from future giant attacks. To seal their new alliance, the Vanir and Aesir spat in a wineskin, which produced Kvasir, the wisest being of all creation. Unfortunately, Kvasir was later killed by two of the dwarf Ivaldi's children who had set a trap for him, and with his body they produced kvas, potent mead that gives prophetic and storytelling abilities to those that drank it. Afterwards they slew the giant Gilling in an argument, and when Suttung (the giant's son) claimed revenge, they gave him the kvas in exchange for their freedom. Suttung then entrusted the kvas to his daughter Gunnlod, who hid it in a cavern. When Odin found out about the incident,

he exiled Ivaldi and his children, and then left to recover the kvas. He craftily entered the giants' cavern in disguise, and after having slept with Gunnlod, he stole the kvas and took it to Asgard. Bragi, who became the eighth Aesir, was born from this union. Due to his eloquence and charisma, he later gained Idunn's hand in marriage. She was Nooga and Erda's youngest daughter, who gave the Aesir the secret of eternal youth (the golden apples), of which she was the keeper, becoming the eleventh Asynja.

Late, from Frey's union with Gerd (creation's most beautiful giantess, who Frey won only after giving her father his famous dancing sword) were born the light elves. The elves went to live in Ljossalfheim led by their king, the wise Dain. Some dwarves and elves, lured by Ivaldi's knowledge, left Nidavellir to settle in a region of shadow known as Svartalfheim, where they became the dark elves in the service of the shadow, headed by Ivaldi, who is Hvergelmir's guardian along with his sons, the Vatlings (Eitri, Brokk, and Sindri).

So Yggdrasil, the World Tree, began to take form (with roots that sink into the past, a trunk that exists in the present and branches that reach into the future) as a support on which all the nine worlds created by Odin were placed. Asgard, the island of the Aesir, was created on the highest point, with Alfheim to the east and Vanaheim to the west. Midgard (literally "Middle Earth", the land of the humans surrounded by an ocean in which swims the world serpent, Jormungand) rises in the middle of Yggdrasil and is linked to all the worlds, with Nidavellir to the west and Jotunheim to the east, while under it is Svartalfheim and beyond that Niflheim and Muspelheim. The Aesir live in Asgard, the Vanir in Vanaheim, the light elves in Alfheim, the dark elves in Svartalfheim, the dwarves in Nidavellir, the giants in Jotunheim, and the humans in Midgard. In the sky between Asgard and Midgard is suspended Bifrost – a bridge of air and water and enclosed in a vault of fire called. It is guarded by Heimdall, an ever vigilant deity who wears silver armour and a helmet with a stag's antlers. From Himinbjorg, his tower situated at Bifrost's highest point, he can see for thousands of leagues, at night and day, and can even hear the grass growing in Midgard.

Following the truce between the Aesir and Vanir there was a long period which the Northmen called the Age of Heroes, during which the Aesir came down from Asgard and travelled in Midgard looking for adventure. It was during this period that the Aesir's most famous legends occurred (particularly those of Thor, Loki, Frey, and Freyja), although the Northmen's most famous legend dates from a later period. It tells of Loki's imprisonment in the Isle of Black Grief, after he betrayed the blind god Hod, by making him loose a mistletoe-tipped arrow at Balder (invulnerable to everything except mistletoe), killing him instantly. In her grief, Nanna (Balder's wife) followed her husband into the Afterworld by throwing herself on his funeral pyre. Because of this act, Odin condemned Hod to death, but as no Aesir felt like killing

their own ill-fated brother, Odin joined with the giantess Rind which resulted in the of Vali, Odin's last son, whose sole purpose was to execute justice. When Vali was just a year old, his mother sent him to Odin's court, where, loosing an arrow, he pierced Hod's chest, killing him and cleansing his guilt. Vali was then welcomed into Asgard becoming the twelfth and final Aesir (according to the Northmen, it is no accident that there are twelve months in a year, one for every Aesir, and 24 hours in a day, from the sum of Aesir and Ásynjur). Later, when Loki's guilt became clear, he was captured by Thor, Vali, and Forsetta and imprisoned in the same cavern where his son Fenris the Wolf, was bound, condemned to endure eternal torture until Ragnarok.

But despite everything, Yggdrasil didn't die at Ragnarok, when the legions of the dead led by Hel and Loki and those giants led by Surt gave battle to the gods in Asgard. Before this event, the world was gripped by a terrible winter that lasted three years (the Fimbulwinter, or Great Winter). This period was marked by war (Age of the Axe), turmoil (Age of the Sword) and chaos (Age of the Wolf, when brothers killed each other) during which all humanity perished, except for one man and woman who sheltered within Yggdrasil and were saved. At the end of the Fimbulwinter, the skies became dark when the wolves Skoll and Hati (children of Fenris and Angrboda) that until now had vainly followed the chariots of Sol and Mani (causing eclipses when they get close enough) finally devouring the sun and the moon. The Well of Urd froze; a branch of Yggdrasil broke off and fell on the head of Jormungand, who enraged invaded Midgard; from Niflheim the ship Naglfar, led by Loki and loaded with the souls of the damned, sailing the waters of Hvergelmir until it arrived in Asgard. Hel and Garm followed along with Fenris, finally freed from his chains, and they were joined by Surt's evil giants, whose crossing of the Bifrost caused it to collapse. At that point, Heimdall sounded Gjallar to warn all the worlds that Ragnarok had begun, and the contenders faced each other on the plain of Vigard, where Aesir and Vanir fought together against the hosts of Hel's giant allies and of her damned souls, for the possession of the universe. Only the Norns, custodians of the universe's fate, knew what would happen then (Odin knew but carefully guarded the knowledge): Frey blinded Surt but was killed by the latter with his own dancing sword. Odin was devoured by Fenris but was revenged by Vidar, while Garm and Tyr, Loki, and Heimdall destroyed each other. Thor killed Jormungand, but then perished because of its poison, and Midgard was enveloped in flames and sank beneath the waves, while Magni (Thor's son) killed Nidhogg with an arrow. The worlds collapsed, and so Yggdrasil didn't die. From Midgard's waters rose the land, and the two mortals who sheltered within the Ash of the World (Lif and Lithrasir) were killed to give life to a new human race. The spirits of the valorous that survived went to live in Gimlé, a new palace that shone with brilliance in the middle of Asgard,

and the gods that survived disembarked from *Skipladnir* (Frey's ship) to govern the newborn world. As is shown by the cosmology, Asatru believes that the entire universe is sustained by *Yggdrasil*, the Tree of the Worlds, according to this division in levels:

- ❖ First Level: Asgard, Vanaheim, Alfheim
- ❖ Second Level: Midgard, Jotunheim, Nidavellir
- ❖ Third Level: Muspelheim, Niflheim, Svartalfheim

According to some students of the University of Uppsala in Norrvik, the three levels, that the Nine Worlds are grouped in, reflect the planar disposition of the cosmos: so the higher planes of Asgard, Alfheim, and Vanaheim are outer celestial planes, the central planes of Midgard, Jotunheim, and Nidavellir are found in the Prime Plane and in practice are regions of the Known World, while the lower planes of Muspelheim, Helheim, and Svartalfheim are found in the elemental regions etc. Others assert that only Midgard is present in the Prime Plane (*Mystara*), while all the others are regions spread among the inner and outer planes without much order, and all are held by *Yggdrasil*, an outer plane that contains gates that lead to the Nine Worlds. Finally some more extremist priests preach a vision of the cosmology, which sees *Yggdrasil* as the world of *Mystara* and so all the realms that it supports are found in its globe. A proof of this cites the neighbouring Alfheim, land of the light elves, and Rockhome of the dwarves (Nidavellir), beyond which the arctic regions in which Hel presumably dwells. Vanaheim is hidden beneath the waves of the sea, Asgard is situated above the clouds, Svartalfheim underground, and Jotunheim is the mountainous area that divides the Northern Reaches from Rockhome and *Ylaruam* (or the mountains of *Norwold*). Muspelheim's location is still unknown, perhaps between the kingdoms of Hel and the dark elves or in the fiery desert to the south of *Soderfjord*. Naturally as the truth remains far from clear, and given the Multiverse's varied nature, every philosopher remains true to his own theory.

*Yggdrasil* and the Nine Worlds of the Antalian cosmology are described below in a more detail:

**ALFHEIM:** the realm of the light elves (or *Ljosalfar*), frequently also called *Ljossalheim* (literally "home of the light elves") is a region in which the climate remains perennially balanced between spring and the milder summer. It is wholly covered by lush vegetation, majestic trees, oodles of fruit, meadows always in bloom, and crystal-clear lakes. It is surrounded by an eternal calm sea, which is populated by every type of fish, and from which rise many small, idyllic islands. Animals abound here and though wild are never hostile. The high elves (or light elves), perfect creatures of angelic aspect and ancient wisdom, live in peace enjoying the fruits of nature and their own sublime arts, ruled with justice and far-sightedness by *Dain*, the wisest of the elves. Frey and his consort *Gerd*, parents of the elven race, also live here, along with *Volund*, the mythical elven smith who together

with the dwarven smiths *Brokk* and *Sindri* have created the Immortals' most powerful artefacts. After the hunting of *Ivaldi* and the *Vatlings* (who *Volund* refused to follow, despite his stepfather *Ivaldi*'s promises), he became the Immortals' supreme metallurgist (it was him who forged *Balder*'s sword, *Mistillteinn*, the only weapon capable of sundering *Mjollnir Thor*'s dwarven-forged hammer).

**ASGARD:** abode of the Aesir and Odin, Asgard is an island in the middle of an expanse of dark and boiling water that originates from *Hvergelmir*, which runs to the first level of *Yggdrasil* from *Niflheim*. Surrounded by a high, stone wall, built by the giant *Hrimthurs* at the end of the cosmic war, Asgard is only accessed via *Bifrost*, the rainbow bridge constantly guarded by *Heimdall* from his tower of *Himinbjorg* (Guardian of Paradise). It is the Guardian of *Bifrost* who sounds his horn (*Gjallar*) to signal the Aesir of the start of *Ragnarok*, and so his role is vitally important in preventing the invasion of Asgard. In Asgard's centre is the plain of *Idavoll* (or *Ida*), where the Aesir gather to hold council and take their most important decisions: the Aesir gather here in the palace of *Gladshheim* (literally "place of joy"), a sanctuary where *Odin* sits at the council's head, while the *Ásynjur* are assembled in the palace of *Vingolf* (literally "hall of friends") led by *Frigg*; these two palaces represent Asgard's heart, the holiest place for all those that live in the lands of the Immortals. The Aesir (male and female) also gather together daily around the Well of *Urd*, situated among *Yggdrasil*'s roots. *Odin*'s royal palace is *Valaskjalf*, famous for its silver roof, in which *Hlidskjalf*, *Odin*'s sacred throne, is guarded to prevent anyone from sitting in it (an honour reserved for just *Odin* and *Frigg*) and watching any place of the Nine Worlds and *Yggdrasil*. His consort's palace, *Fensalir*, is guarded by the brave *Syn* (devoted servant of *Frigg*, who prevents anyone he doesn't like from seeing his mistress). *Frigg* lives there assisted by her three daughters: *Hlin* (charged with consoling and protecting *Frigg*'s favourites and bringing piety to *Midgard*), *Snotra* (who keeps *Fensalir* in order and administers wisdom and truth among the mortals), and *Gna* (who is *Frigg*'s messenger and agent to the other worlds). *Bilskirnir* (so vast it is possible to get lost in it), *Thor* and *Sif*'s abode, is situated in *Thrudheim* (the region ruled by the Thunderer). *Breidablik*, the palace of harmony and beauty where *Balder* and *Nanna* lived (now home to *Bragi* and *Idunn*), is near *Glitnir*, the gold and silver palace of their son *Forsetta*. Asgard's final important feature is *Valhalla* (the Palace of the Dead), where the souls of those that died heroically gather. It is an imposing place with 540 gates with armour scattered in every corner. Its roof and walls are made from large war shields with columns of huge spears supporting the roof. A wolf stands guard of the western gates, the head of a boar is hung on the palace's gable and an eagle constantly flies over it to scrutinise those who approach it: only the most worthy can pass beyond these three guardians and enter *Valhalla*. It is here that the *Valkyries* ("those that select the dead", spirits of

war and death – the souls of the bravest women who ever lived reincarnated as young warriors Freyja and Odin’s service) take half of the souls of those who fell valorously in battle, while the rest are escorted to the Folkvang (Field of the People), Freyja’s home in Vanaheim. These heroes, called Einherjar are then reincarnated into their former bodies and wait here for Ragnarok, training daily to face the hordes of Hel and the giants. Each day, the Einherjar arm for battle and, in their thousands, fight simulations on the plain of Vigard (the site in Asgard of the final battle), to stay in shape and enhance their own martial prowess. Each evening they return to Valhalla to celebrate by feasting on boar meat cooked by the gods’ cook, Andhrimnir (Thor’s only giant friend), and drinking mead and milk that comes from the breasts of Heidrun, the goat that lives on Valhalla’s roof grazing on Yggdrasil’s leaves. During the evenings, the valiant warriors can finally court the beautiful Valkyries who participate at these festivities as waitresses and maids, as well as the spirits of their wives, who are taken there by Freyja to brighten up the evening. When the battle begins, eight hundred warriors will march side-by-side out of each of Valhalla’s gates, and as many will be deployed by Freyja (legend says that there is enough space for all in Valhalla, which is much easier to enter than leave).

**JOTUNHEIM:** home of the frost, mountain, and storm giants that made the peace with the Aesir and Vanir. It is situated on the same level of Midgard as Asgard, which it is separated from by the river Iving, which never freezes. It is found in the snowy region near to the coast of the ocean that surrounds the plane of Midgard. The Well of Mimir is found here, beneath Yggdrasil’s roots. Jotunheim is ruled by Thyrn, the frost giants’ feared king, and it is the site of both Thrymheim, stronghold of the ruthless storm giant Thiazzi and the fortress of Utgard (the giants’s main city ruled by Utgarda-Loki, master of magical arts and illusion and the slyest, most heartless mountain giant).

**MIDGARD:** the world in which the Northmen live (i.e. the Known World). It is also known as Middelerde (“midlands”) or Midhgardhr (“the middle gardens”). According to Antalian cosmology, it is at Yggdrasil’s centre, surrounded by an enormous ocean – home to the colossal World Serpent, Jormungand. Jormungand is so large that it can encircle Midgard with its body. On Midgard’s level are Jotunheim, land of the giants to the east, Nidavellir, land of the dwarves to the west of the human lands, and the Rainbow Bridge (Bifrost), which connects Midgard with Asgard. Among the creatures that dwell in Midgard are the witch Angrboda, who lives in the Forest of Steel (Jarnvidur) and the monstrous Gylgarid, a creature in Hel’s service. It was born from the Immortal’s hate and anger, to wander the lands of the Northmen in search of warriors to convert to evil and violence and flood with the holy fire of ferocity (berserk).

**MUSPELHEIM:** the land of the fire giants, Muspelheim is one of the two original regions in to which the cosmos

was divided (Muspel and Niflheim). Following Odin’s killing of Jotun, the giant survivor Surt sheltered in this hell of magma, fire, and melted rock, and shaped the entire race of fire giants in his image. These giants are animated by an singular destructive and bellicose spirit, and harbour within their hearts a hatred towards all the Nine Worlds’ other living races (with the exception of their brother giants), as due to the Aesir and Vanir’s guilt they are relegated to Muspelheim’s fiery inferno. Their only aim is to bring suffering to Yggdrasil’s inhabitants and avenge their fate, an objective that they will finally achieve when Surt leads them on fiery chariots to Asgard at the start of Ragnarok. Then Surt will set fire to Yggdrasil with his flaming sword and Muspelheim’s giants will cause the Bifrost to collapse after crossing it, to bring devastation and war to Asgard.

**NIDAVELLIR:** the land of the mythical dwarves that grew from the fungi on the dead Jotun’s skin is often confused with the dark elves’ realm as large parts of Nidavellir are underground or within the mountain sides. Given of great strength and great skill, the dwarves live and work at night in the subterranean mines and are ruled by Modsognir. The dwarves are exceptional craftsmen (the most famous are Brokk and Sindri) and are the creators of the Aesir and Vanir’s most important artefacts, such as Odin’s famous spear Gugnir and ring Draupnir, Thor’s hammer (Mjollnir), Freyja’s necklace (Brisingamen), Sif’s golden hair, Gleipnir, the rope used to tie up the ferocious wolf Fenris, and the ring of the Nibelungen, capable of equally providing riches and misfortune to its wearer.

**NIFLHEIM:** this dismal realm (literally “House of the Mists”) is a expanse of ice, snow, and icy fog constantly lashed by glacial winds, hail storms, sleet and hurricanes, and comprises two regions: true Niflheim (the Land of the Mists) and Helgardh or Helheim (the Afterworld or Kingdom of the Dead). Niflheim is a place of cold and ice situated above the Afterworld, under Yggdrasil’s third root, close to Hvergelmir (literally “Bubbling Cauldron”) and Nastrond (the Beach of Corpses). It is separated from Muspelheim by the Ginnungagap (an empty abyss formed when the nine worlds split apart, to forever divide the cold Niflheim from the burning Muspelheim, the two halves of the primal cosmos). It is home to the dark Darga, an eternal being, who harvests the souls of Midgard’s damned and takes them to Helgardh or Nastrond. From Hvergelmir pour the eleven rivers (Elivagar) that feed all the water courses that flow to Midgard. Above them lives the dragon Nidhogg (literally “Corpse Ripper”), also called the Biter, who each day gnaws one of Yggdrasil’s roots and is fed the vilest and unworthy dead from Nastrond. He is helped by other monstrous serpents (Graback, Grafvolluth, Goin, and Moin) to completely devour Yggdrasil’s three main roots to cause it to fall and start Ragnarok. Helgardh is under Niflheim’s icy expanses, and can be reached via a narrow, steep path that zigzags up the side of an awful crag of black ice which is

continually battered by the winds of Niflheim. The entrance to the Kingdom of the Dead (Gnipahellir or Overhanging Cave) is watched by Garm, the giant hound, Hel's bestial servant. To reach Helheim, according to legend, it is necessary to travel for nine days on the Path of Hel, across the great forests and dark valleys of Midgard, overcome mountains and ravines, before arriving in the Port of Hel (Helgrind). There Modgud (the skeletal virgin) stands guard of Gjallarbru, the bridge across the River Gjoll (Howling), which grants access to the Land of the Dead. In Helgardh dwell the shades of gods, giants and all those who died without glory in the higher worlds (including deaths from old age, illness, and mishap): these are the restless dead. At the end of their mortal life, Darga (the angel of death) arrives with a beating of wings and a slash of a scythe to separate the shadow and soul from the body, to devour and absorb later in Helgardh. Those that have led the most impious, reprehensible lives (liars, traitors, assassins etc.) are forced to endure terrible tortures in the island of Nastrond (or Nastrandir). It is populated by serpents (Nidhogg's children) whose venom constantly drips on their open wounds and visited daily by Nidhogg (the dragon) to feast upon the more unfortunate. The queen of the damned, Hel, lives in the palace of Eljudnir. She sits on her throne of bone and is revered by her two servants, Senility the governor and Stupidity the slave. On the River Slid (Terrible – one of the eleven Elivagar made of swords and daggers of ice) that skirts Nastrond, is berthed an enormous warship called Naglfar, built from the nails of the dead. It will be on this ship that, at Ragnarok, the souls of the damned and Hel will sail to Asgard to make war against the gods along with the giants. Its captain will be eternity's greatest sinner and liar, Loki the fraudster. As such, it is particularly important for the Northmen to live and especially die in the proper manner. Those who don't will end up fighting, against their will, the forces of Good at the end of the world.

**SVARTALFHEIM:** the realm of the black elves (or svartalfar); terrible, deformed beings that inhabit the darkest caverns between Midgard and Helheim. It is said that they turn to stone if exposed to the sun and that their hearts are black due to their wickedness. The dockalfar, or dark elves, also live in Svartalfheim. They are pallid subterranean creatures similar to the elves but who avoid, at all costs, sunlight: although not as ruthless or cruel as the black elves, they are, though, dangerous and powerful. These two races, as well as the dwarves, are often confused with each other, which has made some Northmen suspicious of the dwarves. Legend says that the black elves are the direct descendents of dwarves who believing Ivaldi's promises of wealth and knowledge became Svartalfar, while the dark elves are the descendents of the light elves who settled under the earth for the same reason as the dwarves and mixed with the Vatlings, Ivaldi's children. These two races now share Svartalfheim; though there is bad blood between the two and each seek every way to humour Queen Hel to gain a better reward in

anticipation of Ragnarok. Svartalfheim's elves are powerful spellcasters as they have gained their arcane knowledge from the Aesir, Vanir, and Queen Hel via favours and dark pacts. Legend tells that the black elves, led by Ivaldi, will burn Yggdrasil's roots by overturning their furnaces when Ragnarok begins.

**VANAHEIM:** a wild-looking place where the Vanir live. This realm has an immense ocean where Nooga dwells in the submerged palace of Noatun ("pier" or "anchorage"), along with his sons Aegir and Ran and the latter's eleven daughters, the undine. Under Vanaheim's seas also lie the corpses of the Nine Worlds' drowned, who aren't in Valhalla or Helheim, but are Ran's exclusive domain based on the accords between the gods. There is also an immense continent populated by animals and plants, great mountains furrowed by rapid rivers and eternal glaciers: Vanaheim is the quintessence of nature in all its thriving and savage beauty (so its regions aren't only beautiful to observe but also dangerously extreme). The only other palace is Freyja's, Sessrumnir, built in Folkvang (the Field of the People). Here the souls of women who died with honour, and one half of the men who died on the battlefield, go after being judged by Odin and claimed by the Valkyries. During the evening then, Freyja takes some of these female souls into Valhalla, to reunite them with their husbands and give relief and joy to those fighters who train for Ragnarok.

**YGGDRASIL:** the Tree of the Worlds is an enormous ash tree that according to Nordic legend supports the universe's nine worlds, namely Asgard, Vanaheim, Alfheim, Midgard, Jotunheim, Nidavellir, Svartalfheim, Helheim, and Muspelheim. The name literally means "horse of Yggr", i.e. Odin's horse, as the Yggr ("terrible") is one of Father Odin's titles. Yggdrasil shelters all the worlds and each of its three roots is hidden in a different level of the worlds, encompassing all of them: as such it is said that it was born in the past, lives in the present, and its branches reach into the future, sustaining life in both a physical and spiritual way. Effectively, Yggdrasil's roots are bathed by three sources: the Well (or Fount) of Wisdom (Mímisbrunnr) in Jotunheim and guarded by the giant Mimir (whose wisdom is due to his constant bathing in this spring); the Well of Fate (Urdarbrunnr) in Asgard and guarded by the Norns; and the Well of Hvergelmir, the source of all rivers, in Niflheim and guarded by Ivaldi. Yggdrasil is constantly under attack by forces that seek to weaken and destroy it: in Niflheim, the dragon Nidhogg constantly gnaws one of its roots; in Midgard, four enormous harts feed on its buds and leaves, while the years corrode its bark and some of Nidhogg's serpent children crawling along the trunk trying to devour it. Fortunately the Norns bathe it every morning with water from the Well of Urd, giving it new life and repairing the damage caused by the forces of chaos. Other inhabitants live on Yggdrasil's trunk and among its branches, like the squirrel Ratatosk ("Swift-tusked"), who takes messages of malice

to-and-fro between the dragon Nidhogg and the eagle that dwells among the highest branches; Vidofnir (“serpent of the tree”), the golden rooster who sits on the highest branch and whose crowing announces each day’s sunrise; the giant eagle Hraesvelg (with the hawk Vedfolnir who sits on its head), whose flapping wings generate the winds, and who exchanges insults with the dragon Nidhogg who dwells among the lower roots; and finally Heidrun, the goat who lives atop Valhalla and feeds on the leaves of the highest branches.

For Asatru, Odin is the supreme divinity who sits at the head of a council of twelve Aesir (gods) and twelve Ásynjur (goddesses) – the Immortals who reside in Asgard (the home of the Aesir).<sup>7</sup> The council’s twelve Aesir are, with the exception of Forsetta, only comprised of Odin and his sons. Forsetta is Odin’s only grandson born from a union of one of Odin’s sons and daughters and so he is considered a pure Aesir. In order of seniority the twelve Aesir are: Odin, Tyr, Balder, Thor, Hod, Hermod (born from the union with Frigg), Loki (born from the union with Hel), Bragi (born from the union with the giantess Gunnlod), Heimdall (born from the union with the undine daughters of Aegir and Ran), Vidar (born from the union with the giantess Grid), Forsetta (born from the union of Balder and Nanna, two children of Odin) and finally Vali (born from the union with the giantess Rind to avenge Balder’s death). The twelve Ásynjur are Odin’s wife (Frigg, originally a Vanir), direct daughters, and the official wives of each of his Aesir sons. In order of seniority the twelve Ásynjur are: Frigg (wife of Odin, originally the Vanir Fulla), Sjöfn, Saga, Var, Nanna, Gefjon, Eir, Hlin, Snotra, Gna (born from the union of Odin and Frigg), Idunn (Vanir wife of Bragi) and Sif (Vanir wife of Thor). The Vanir known and worshipped by the Northmen are the following: Nooga, Erda, (ancestors of the Vanir along with Frigg), Frey, Freyja, Aegir, Ran, Uller (sons and daughters of Nooga and Erda), Nott, and Gullveig (Hel and Nooga’s daughters). Other Vanir include Frigg, Idunn, and Sif, but as they are the wives of Odin and his sons they are now considered Ásynjur. The children that Nott has had with the mysterious Annar aren’t Vanir as the father wasn’t one of Vanir’s gods, although they are considered semi-divine Vikings.

As a result, Asatru doesn’t worship a single divinity, but pays homage to all of them. It particularly worships Odin, above all the others, as he is the gods’ father and lord. Odin is lucky as he has drunk at the Well of Mimir, the well of knowledge. In fact, after being bound for nine days

and nights to Yggdrasil’s branches and learning the secret of runic magic, he had a vision in which the tree changed into a grey horse to accompany him in the search for the source of knowledge, where they were finally joined by the giant Mimir. He agreed to reveal the secret to Odin in exchange for Odin’s right eye. Since Odin drank from the Well of Mimir, he has been able to see into the future upto but not beyond the events of Ragnarok. So, to prepare for Ragnarok, Odin rallies those that die in battle through the twelve Valkyries, who conduct their souls to Valhalla to reincarnate. Odin’s ultimate aim is to try and delay as long as possible humanity and the Immortals’ inevitable fate, and so his actions are beyond the concept of good and evil. Odin is assisted by two semi-divine wolves, Geri (“ravenous”) and Freki (“greedy”), and by two ravens, Hugin (“thought”) and Munin (“memory”), which travel the worlds, on Odin’s behalf (who can see through their eyes) to examine those that approach. Odin is worshipped particularly by kings and nobles as the cosmos’s lawmaker and regulator, although he demands impartiality when they exercise their authority. As the god who gave the humans their souls he is respected and loved by the people; as the god who created the universe and maintains its balance he is venerated by rulers and leaders; as the god who had invented writing he is invoked by writers and students, and is the skalds (the Nordic bards) guardian; as sage and expert of magic and knowledge he is adored by sages and those that use the Runic Magic, which he invented. Odin is therefore the Immortal who presides over battle, judges the spirits of the dead, and inspires humans with knowledge and rune magic.

Thor is immediately after Odin, securing second place in the Antalian Cult. As the Immortal most loved by the mortals, its no surprise that he is seen as Odin’s first son and absolute champion of Good; a legendary protagonist of myths that see him defend the cosmic order and humans from the giants and creatures of Evil. He is guardian of the humans, the Giant Slayer, and the Aesir’s premier warrior. Thor aids those in difficulty; he is an Immortal lover of life, visceral and impetuous: representing the epitome of Nordic courage. He is an ardent, lover of battle, but in the depths of his heart he is guided by noble and good ideals.

Acting as counterpoints to Odin and Thor are Hel and Loki, whose cults are prevalent as they are perceived as necessary to the universal cosmology. Hel is the Immortal of the dead, but although in most cultures this divinity arouses hate and contempt, the Northmen understand that she is just part of the life cycle. However, Hel’s priests and priestesses are feared, as anything that deals with the undead is never pleasant. According to the Northmen, Hel also has the power to reincarnate the souls of her dead servants into other bodies, to give them a second chance to reach Valhalla, although this power is exercised with mischief, as Hel sometimes selects the souls of particularly cruel people to bring pain and suffering to Midgard.

<sup>7</sup> The Viking mythology often confuses the identities of the twelve Aesir and the twelve Ásynjur, as it is based on the writing of several poets from different times. So, in this Mystaran version of the Viking mythos I have chosen to incorporate some divinities (Var and Vor, Sjöfn and Lofn, Frigg and Fulla/Volla, Njord and Nerthus who becomes Nooga) and exclude others of uncertain identity (like Odin siblings, Vili, and Ve, as – like Freyja’s husband, Od – they are frequently viewed as other aspects of Odin) to have a clear definition of divinity that mostly matches the existing Mystaran one.

Loki is an ambiguous and diabolic god linked to fire and change (in fact he is a shapechanger). Astute and intelligent, Loki advises numerous gods, although he often uses his knowledge for his own personal ends, without any moral scruples. He frequently trades with the giants and other races, which he has frequently set against some of his fellow Aesir. Nevertheless, Loki is Thor's most regular adventuring companion, which, in the faithful's eyes, partially compensates for his flaws, although he remains an Immortal feared by the Northmen, mostly due to his role in the future Ragnarok. In particular, according to Nordic legend, Loki is father to creation's most frightening monsters: Jormungand the World Serpent (who swims in the ocean which encircles Midgard), Nidhogg the Dragon (who eternally gnawed Yggdrasil's roots in Niflheim), and Fenris the Wolf (who was imprisoned by the Aesir when he proved to be too greedy and uncontrollable). All three are the result of Loki's the union with the witch Angrboda, who is also mother of all Midgard's witches and trolls (from her union with the giants). After Loki was punished for his evil deeds, he spitefully caused the death of the just Balder by manipulating the blind god Hod (who was in turn killed by Vali in order to have justice), then prevented Hel from returning him to among to life with a countless trick (Hel had agreed with Odin to the return of Balder, if all the things of the world wept for him; unfortunately Loki, disguised as a giant, refused to weep, and this condemned Balder). When Thor and the other Aesir discovered that it was all Loki's fault, he was found and captured due to Odin's wisdom. Odin dragged him to the Isle of Black Grief (situated under Midgard, in the middle of the waters of the Elivagar) where his son Fenris was already bound. They imprisoned him there in the same cavern using the entrails of the children born of the giantess Sigyn (Vali and Narvi). To punish him, they fixed a serpent to his head. Its venom constantly drips onto him; only the mild and loyal Sigyn remains near to him daily attempting to collect the venom in a dish, but whenever it is full she must take it away and during those times new drops burn Loki. His writhing in pain causes the earth to shake. This torture will last until Ragnarok, when Loki and Fenris will finally escape and assault Asgard in revenge.

It is clear that, despite the followers of Asatru paying homage to all the Vanir and Aesir, each of them (and some cities) naturally have a favourite god. As such, there are some individual cults including those of Odin, Thor, Frey, Freyja, Forsetta, Nooga, Loki, and Hel. Odin is the most important Immortal worshipped in Ostland (where the patriarch of his cult acts as first councillor of the King), followed by Thor (popular among the warriors), Nooga, Frey, and Freyja (popular among the lower classes). The cults of Frey, Freyja, and Forsetta are the most widespread with the Vestlanders, more civilised and less warlike than their neighbours. In Norwold, Heldann, and Soderfjord, Thor's cult has a broad following. The

individual cults of Loki and Hel are absolutely forbidden in Ostland and practised with reserve in the other nations.

The following tables define the Immortals worshipped by the cult, along with their areas of interest.

<b>Aesir</b>	
Odin	Wisdom, equality, knowledge, authority, magic, sky, storms, winds
Tyr	War, strength, heroism
Balder	Light, joy, purity, peace, wisdom, beauty, harmony, mercy
Thor	Battle, war, bravery, honour, defend the weak and the good
Hod	Winter, darkness, magic, the weak
Hermod	Travel, messengers, courage, cleverness
Loki	Malice, deceit, change, betrayal, fire, magic
Bragi	Eloquence, poetry, skalds (bards)
Heimdall	Light, defence, sacrifice, patience, loyalty, battle, guardians
Vidar	Strength, aid, loyalty, sacrifice
Forsetta	Justice, law, peace, order
Vali	Justice, revenge, war

<b>Ásynjur</b>	
Frigg	Fertility, prosperity, marriage, motherhood
Sjofn	Love, joint peace, passion, desire, sexuality
Saga	Legends, history, wisdom, memories
Var	Justice, honesty, fidelity, just revenge
Nanna	Motherhood, family, love, moon
Gefjon	Nature, fertility, crops, virtue, virgins
Eir	Health, medicine, healing, herbs and philtres
Hlin	Keeper of souls, comfort, protection, piety
Snotra	Wisdom, prudence, virtue, temperance
Gna	Travel, messengers, adventure
Idunn	Youth, beauty, eternal life
Sif	Fertility, harvest, prophecy, Courage

<b>Vanir</b>	
Nooga	Water, winds, fortune, fertility
Erda	Nature, animals and plants
Frey	Fertility, wealth, virility, abundance, courage, felicity, beauty, nature
Freyja	Love, sexuality, fertility, beauty, Seidh (prophecy), valiant souls, battle
Aegir	Seas, prosperity, revelry, alchemy
Ran	Seas and rivers, drowning, capriciousness
Uller	Hunting, snow, forests, honour, archers
Nott	Night, darkness, creatures of the night
Gullveig	Witchcraft, greed, malice

<b>Enemies</b>	
Hel	Death, afterworld, darkness, old age, cold
Jotun	Giants, strength, oppression, power
Bergelmir	Cloud and mountain giants
Surt	Fire giants, destruction, war
Darga	Harvesting souls, death, oblivion
Angrboda	Witches, curses, trolls and giants
Ivaldi	Dwarves and dark elves, corruption
Gylgarid	Fury, violence, racism, berserkers
Altri	Mythical beings
Norns	Fate and destiny, visions of the future
Mimir	Memory, knowledge, wisdom, magic
Dain	Elves, wisdom, longevity, peace
Modsgnir	Dwarves, industry, creation, greed

Volund	Smiths, weaponsmiths, constructors
Modi	Fury in battle, berserkers, tenacity
Magni	Strength, bravery, defend the weak

It is necessary to emphasise that during the cult's first centuries (from 2200 to 1600 BC), the roles of many of the gods listed below were vacant, and Odin responded to the prayers directed to them, as the cult's supreme head. Only once Odin is persuaded that he has found an Immortal that matches one of the pantheon's missing gods, does he proposition the candidate to join the Asgardian pantheon, gain new followers, and enhance his own prestige. There are gods in the pantheon that became immortal since the cult's birth and the Antaliens' transfer into the Hollow World: these gods were already worshipped before their corresponding Immortal entered the pantheon. These Immortals have benefited from an increased following by adopting Odin's model. Thus Odin has formed the group of the Aesir, Ásynjur, and Vanir (selecting especially loyal Immortals of his Sphere), while the enemies of the Asgardian divinities have been identified both by Odin and his priests, who in many cases have associated the god to a local cult.

The following tables list the gods of the Antalian pantheon, along with their true Immortal identity and date of ascension ("–" indicates that the Immortal has existed since before recorded history and may never have been mortal, while an asterisk at the end of the name of an Immortal shows that it is one of the nine Korrigan):

Aesir	Immortal	Ascension
Odin	Odin	–
Tyr	Ixion	–
Balder	Pax	–
Thor	Thor	1750 BC
Hod	Dreaming Seer*	1640 BC
Hermod	Asterius	3200 BC
Loki	Loki	XVIII century BC
Bragi	Rainbow Singer*	1640 BC
Heimdall	Fiery Champion*	1640 BC
Forsetta	Forsetta	XIII century BC
Vidar	Halav	X century BC
Vali	Gorm	444 BC

Asynja	Immortal	Ascension
Frigg	Terra	–
Sjofn	Valerias	–
Saga	Silver Carver*	1640 BC
Var	Tarastia	2330 BC
Nanna	Thalia	–
Gefjon	Verdant Caretaker*	1640 BC
Eir	Merciful Healer*	1640 BC
Hlin	Eternal Wanderer*	1640 BC
Snotra	Maat	1520 BC
Gna	Arnelee	I century BC
Idunn	Spring Maiden*	1640 BC
Sif	Madarua	365 BC

Vanir	Immortal	Ascension
Nooga	Protius	–
Erda	Djaea	2930 BC
Frey	Frey	1660 BC
Freyja	Freyja	1660 BC

Aegir	Hymir	1720 BC
Ran	Kallala	XIX century BC
Uller	Silent Hunter*	1640 BC
Nott	Nyx	Pre-Blackmoor
Gullveig	Demogorgon	Pre-Blackmoor

Enemy	Immortal	Ascension
Hel	Hel	–
Jotun	Ouranos	–
Bergelmir	Zalaj	Pre-Blackmoor
Surt	Zugzul	–
Darga	Thanatos	–
Angrboda	Demogorgon	Pre-Blackmoor
Ivaldi	Atzanteotl	1500 BC
Gylgarid	Kiranjo	480 BC

Others	Immortal	Ascension
Norns	Urd, Verthandi & Skuld	–
Mimir	Noumena	460 BC
Dain	Ilisundal	1800 BC
Modsgnir	Kagyar	Pre-Blackmoor
Volund	Wayland	XVII century BC
Modi	Bartziluth	XII century BC
Magni	Bemarris	V century AC

**Note:** Thrym, Thiazi, Utgardaloki, Andhrimnir, and the other giants mentioned in the myths are simply titans or particularly powerful giants that became protagonists in the sagas about the battles between the Aesir and Giants. There is, however, no real comparison between these individuals and the other gods (indeed these individuals aren't even worshipped by the giants). Similarly, the legendary monsters like the wolves Fenris, Skoll, Hati, and Garm, the serpent Jormungand, the dragon Nidhogg, and his children, Heidrun the goat, Ratatosk the squirrel, Vidofnir the rooster, Hraesvelg the eagle, Vedfolnir the hawk, the wolves Geri and Freki, the ravens Hugin and Munin that serve Odin, and all the other animals that populate Yggdrasil are simply gigantic creatures created by Odin and Hel to perform these roles.

Ivaldi and the dark elves are figures from the myths of the Shadowelves and the Modrigsberg, the renegade dwarves that live beneath the Northern Reaches.

Furthermore, despite Balder, Nanna, and Hod being "dead" according to Nordic legend, they aren't completely lost, but dwell in Helheim and are its most important souls, and the only ones allowed to live in Hel's castle, and as they will return after Ragnarok, are still considered fully Aesir. As such, despite the real disappearance of Pax and Thalia who personified these figures (whose disappearance formed the basis of the myth of the deaths of Balder and Nanna), Odin decided not to replace them, as they will, according to myth, return at the end of Ragnarok (and meanwhile Odin gives power to their followers).

Given this extremely dualist view of the universe (in which the forces of Good are in an eternal battle against those of Evil), which the Asatru faith hold as decisively important and interpret this as the way in which a mortal ends his existence, as his life in the afterlife depends upon it. The Northmen judge in fact that Odin created the first two human beings (Ask and Embla) thanks to the vital



breathe that he instilled in them. As Odin is an Immortal, the cult also holds that the soul (the gift of Odin's breath which distinguishes living beings from inanimate objects,) is of immortal nature, unlike the body. Therefore when a person dies, his soul continues to live and journeys to another world, where it is reincarnated in a body similar to its former. These souls in fact go to Valaskjalf, the palace where the Hamingjur speak for the deceased so Odin may judge them. The hamingjur (hamingja sing.) are female deities; the daughters of the Norns that watch over each mortal from birth to death (not to be confused with the fylgjur, which instead are guardian spirits of a family and are represented as animals). The just and the valorous, the best combatants among the humans are housed with honour in Valhalla until the final battle of Ragnarok, while those who died of old age or without honour end up in Hel's shadowy kingdom. The criteria for where the soul is reincarnated are determined more by how a person died rather than his conduct or faith. Indeed, those who die in battle are reincarnated either in Valhalla, an enormous fortress that is found on Asgard (palace of the Aesir) or in Sessrumnir (palace of the Vanir that is found in Vanaheim). These heroes (called Einherjar) will swell the ranks of the Aesir and Vanir combatants at Ragnarok. It is Freyja who selects which of the heroes she wants in Sessrumnir, based on the accords between Aesir and Vanir: all the others go to Valhalla to join Odin and his court. Those who haven't completed any great deeds in life instead end up in Niflheim, to lead a supernatural life full of solitude and regret or to endure eternal torture on the orders of Queen Hel, the keeper of the dead; all these become part of the legions that along with the giants will fight against the Aesir at Ragnarok.

The conviction that death is only a journey, and not an end, is deeply rooted in Nordic culture. Resurrection of the dead is a strongly disliked practice, and resurrected people (including adventurers or rulers of which it is known) are viewed more or less as undead, with fear and sometimes disgust, as they have broken the cosmic laws of the Universe and upset the divine plan; indeed when they die, there is a strong risk that they will be claimed by Hel for their impiousness, as only Hel is keeper of the spirits of the dead.

Given the importance of values like courage and death in battle, it isn't surprising that the Northic culture doesn't scorn piracy, war, and is generally much less peaceful and accommodating than many other cultures. Indeed, it is worth remembering that for a truly devote Viking, it is extremely important to be brave and die in battle, rather than of old age after a good life, as only those who die in battle can increase the number of the Einherjar and contribute to the final victory of Good at Ragnarok.

A final note must be made about the Norns, the three divine figures that have wove the strands of fate of gods and mortals since the beginning of time. They are bound to the concept of Wyrð, or Destiny, and it is this concept that forms the basis of the entire Asatru faith. The three

are Urd ("fate"), Verdandi ("being"), and Skuld ("necessity") and are represented as three women (Urd old, Verdandi young, and the hidden-faced Skuld) that weave the destiny of the living: every strand on their spindle represents someone's life, and whenever a person is born, they mark on Yggdrasil's trunk a different notch to symbolise the beginning of a life in the world. It is the Norns who take care of the tree, refreshing and curing it with water from the well of Urd, and it is to only them that knowledge of the world's future after Ragnarok has been given (not even Odin can see beyond this event), therefore all the Immortals acknowledge the Norns as the representatives of the Wyrð, a higher power that serves to balance the universe. In the same way, the Northmen recognise that their life is already written and they follow an unchangeable destiny that nothing can distract them from. Indeed, as the gods accept that most of them will be sacrificed to allow the universe to continue, so the mortals accept their predetermined role in life, in the hope of being aligned to the side of Good and to be rewarded after Ragnarok. It is the concept of the Wyrð, which dominates Nordic society and mentality, according to which a person should not avoid the natural cycle of things and that the classes in which the society is divided are the only acceptable ones, as they were established by the gods as a foundation of the natural order of the world.

## AUGRISM

**Worshipped in:** Darokin, Minrothad, Hule, Thyatis, Bellissaria, Ierendi, Isle of Dawn

Augrism is the name of the cult and philosophy of the **Twelve Watchers**, the patron Immortals of the arts and crafts. It began in the IV century AC in the Republic of Darokin and later spread to the islands of Minrothad and Ierendi, the Empire of Thyatis, and even Hule, Sind, and far-off Bellissaria. Augrism takes its name from its founder Wildeye Auger, a dwarven cleric of Kagyar who had the extraordinary vision about a group of twelve Immortals that protect and inspire the world's craftsmen. Auger left Kagyar's dwarven cult to found Augrism, the cult of the Twelve Watchers, and since then his church has spread to many regions of the Known World and beyond, due to the strong push for conversion and work by the Immortal.

Augrism is a very localised practice and without a national or international structure: each city has its own Master Builder (title reserved for the patriarch of the cult, usually the highest ranked cleric) that administers the church's activities and organises the activities to help the faithful in their work. "Work is the salvation of the soul, the perfection that approaches Immortality." This is the maxim of Augrism, which preaches to its followers to constantly engage in their work as a way to perfection and earthly justice. The clerics of the Twelve Watchers are not so much interested in their followers' morals, as in their work, which is the meter to measure a person's virtue. The philosophy of Augrism teaches that the Twelve always watch over craftsmen, but rarely interfere or give

inspiration and perseverance when the faithful neither need nor deserve it. As such, Augrism urges the true followers to perform their craft with full commitment, as that is the only way to guarantee the attention and the support of the Twelve Watchers. Members of this faith can be excommunicated by the Master Builder if they cannot remain within the parameters required by their own guild or the church. Moreover, the cult demands a payment of 10% of the followers' annual profits to support the clerics' work, who travel among the communities to help with their powers any follower in difficulty. The religion's clerics always wear simple clothes of dull colours, and tend to constantly shave their own heads, and carry the symbol of the Immortal, a locket with two eyes.

## CELESTIAL COURT

### Worshipped in: Ochalea

The Ochalese belong to an ethnic group conquered by the Alphatians many centuries before Old Alpathia's destruction. They are a people extremely faithful to duty and have a strong sense of respect for the law, who once introduced to the chaotic Alpathian Empire have become progressively more isolated by adopting a mystic philosophy that allowed them to retain their own traditions. It also gives order to the universe, a scheme in which their strongly balanced mentality can be recognised. Over the centuries other Ochalese tried the path of the arcane magic by mixing Alpathian knowledge with their own traditions, but became entangled in the philosophical debate that brought about the destruction of Old Alpathia, and since then the condemnation of arcane magic by most Ochalese became unanimous.

When the Alpathian survivors landed on Mystara, the, until then, submissive Ochalese exploited the rivalry between mages during the colonisation of the Alpathian continent and during the period of maximum political and military confusion decided to emigrate to remove the yoke of the mages. So the majority of the Ochalese built a fleet and sailed beyond the southern sea finally disembarking on the island of Ochalea around 700 BC. Here they established an independent kingdom after sealing pacts with the island's natives (lupin and rakasta clans), and maintain a peaceful relationship with the Alpathian Empire, although they try to remain outside of the expansionistic aims of their ancient oppressors.

Over the centuries, after contact with the Immortals and the predications of the priests of Koryis, the first to become a guardian of the Ochalese, the philosophy of balancing opposites became a religion, which has an ordered cosmology to reflect the eternal universal balance on three cardinal axes:

Masculine/Feminine    Law/Chaos    Good/Evil

The Immortals that the Ochalese came into contact with because of the influence of neighbouring states (in particular Alpathia, Thyatis, and Thothia) and the epic

deeds of some candidates who later became immortal over time formed a pantheon, called the Celestial Court. This extremely lawful religion was formalised around the II century AC, after the annexation of the Kingdom of Ochalea (then a Grand Duchy) to the Empire of Thyatis, and it became the national cult that almost all Ochalese follow. However, there isn't any formal church structure or institution that preaches the cult of the Celestial Court. It is a philosophical religion on which the beliefs of the Ochalese are focused, although there are many priests who together serve the Celestial Court, officiating at rituals and creating ways to keep a balance between its members thanks to the prayers and offerings of the faithful. It has never created a religious institution to unite them under just one organisation or common leader.

All the priests of the Celestial Court (called bonzi) are philosopher clerics (although there are also some specialist clerics of Koryis) and recognise the supreme authority of the Teng (King) of Ochalea, as the direct representative of the Celestial Emperor (as he is obliged to be one of his priests). They give him their loyalty and respect, but every bonzo acts alone or together in a small community of brothers, without anybody seeking a synergy between the various monasteries (the places where these philosopher-clerics live and study the sacred texts pertaining to the Celestial Court, the mysteries of the universe and the legendary Ochalese figures). The bonzi always dress in extremely simple yellow clothing, shave their face and head, carry the church's holy symbol (a circle divided in two halves, one black and the other white, with two points of the same colours placed symmetrically within the opposite half), and frequently travel through rural Ochalea to celebrate the traditional rites in the smaller villages where there are no representatives of the cult present. They are very learned characters and are prepared for any philosophic debate, which however mostly embrace the ideas of balance and wisdom that weave through the Ochalese religion, and as such rarely travel armed or show aggressive intentions, entrusting themselves to the martial arts without weapons that they learn in the monasteries to defend themselves. Naturally, there are temples that venerate single Immortals (frequently members of the Celestial Court), and the bonzi are usually in accord with these priests and often request asylum in their temples. They never, however, forget to confirm their superiority as servants of the entire Court and not just one members.

The Celestial Court is a divine place led by an Emperor and Empress who embody complete opposites. The Emperor of Peace (Koryis: LG) and the Empress of Discord (Talitha: CE) govern creation led by the council of the Four Sages (all Neutral Immortals), beings who embody the four elements that make up everything:

Great One (Matter)  
Khoronus (Time)  
Noumena (Thought)  
Idraote (Energy)

Under their authority are the 14 Court Ministers, each of which presides over his given ministry and occupies himself with certain interests opposed to his counterpart. The 14 ministers are as follows:

Alphatia [creation]	LG (f)	vs.	CE (m)	Alphaks [destruction]
Ixion [light]	NG (m)	vs.	NE (f)	Nyx [darkness]
Arnelee [sincerity]	NG (f)	vs.	NE (m)	Brissard [deceit]
Korotiku [freedom]	CG (m)	vs.	LE (f)	Arachne Prime [oppression]
Valerias [love]	CG (f)	vs.	LE (m)	Loup [ferocity]
Ssu–Ma [order]	LN (m)	vs.	CN (f)	Tyche [chance]
Tarastia [laws]	LN (f)	vs.	CN (m)	Faunus [instincts]

The Ochalese use terms in their own language to refer to the Immortals of the Celestial Court, each of which is a function of each divinity's role within the universe:

Kor Yis (Koryis)	The One who Rules Equally
Ta Liu Ai–Tan (Talitha)	The One who Spreads Painful Suffering
Wei Long (Great One)	Great Dragon
Fu Shi Liu (Khoronus)	Father of the Flow of Time
Nian–Mai Si–Xiang (Noumena)	Ancient Thinker
Hen–Hao Ten (Idraote)	Source of Good Health
Yao–Lan Zi (Alphatia)	Cradle of Beauty
Hui Da–Zhi (Alphaks)	Furnace of Destruction
Xi–Yang (Ixion)	Source of Sunlight
Nu–Shi Hei–An (Nyx)	Lady of Darkness
Han Li (Arnelee)	Keeper of Sincerity
Ba Pian–Shu (Brissard)	Master of Deceit
Guan Zi–You (Korotiku)	Protector of Freedom
An–Ying Zhu Hou (Arachne Prime)	Spider Queen of the Shadows
Biao Hun Xi–Ai (Valerias)	Shining Spirit who Loves
Chai Shi Hui (Loup)	Beast that Devours with Ferocity
Ssu–Ma	Venerable Sage
Ta Qi Ming (Tyche)	The One who Weaves Fate
Ta Lai Si–Fa (Tarastia)	The One who Grants Justice
Fu Han Qing (Faunus)	Father who Stirs the Passions

As a traditional ancestor cult, dead characters of great moral sense are revered, remembered, and prayed to so that they will inspire and protect their affiliated family.

## CHILDREN OF ATRUAGHIN

### Worshipped in: Land of Atruaghin

The Children of Atruaghin are a group of tribes of Oltec-Azcan descent who live in the region to the southwest of Darokin, around the Sacred Plateau of Atruaghin. Although the five Atruaghin clans have different mores and customs, four of them (the Children of the Horse, Bear, Turtle, and Elk) share the cult of the ancestors and spirits, a mysticism that unites them all as the Children of Atruaghin. Indeed the members of these four clans firmly believe that **Atruaghin**, a legendary hero of the past, had used his own divine powers to save them from destruction or slavery, and raised the Sacred Plateau to protect them from their neighbouring nations and humanoid raiders. Before he left and was welcomed among the Immortals, Atruaghin gave their ancestors the knowledge of the Spirit World, and this knowledge is the basis that has shaped the culture and mythos of the Children of Atruaghin. According to legend, one day Atruaghin will return among his people to lead them in a great battle against the forces of evil that have corrupted their brothers in the Clan of the Tiger and destroyed their distant homeland. On that day the ancestor and nature spirits will rise up on the side of the righteous against Evil for the final victory. According to Atruaghin mythos, nothing is more important than the concept of the spiritual totem. Indeed, the Children of Atruaghin believe that each person is bound to an animal spirit and has within him both the gifts and the weaknesses of that spirit, as every living being is inextricably bound to the nature spirits. These spirits frequently shown up in the life of human beings, but only the more receptive can understand the messages and interact with them. Every person, therefore, is called to identify and respect their personal totem, and in return will be protected and aided.

Whenever an Atruaghin speaks of a totem, he is usually referring to his personal totem, which however isn't the only one to influence his life. Indeed, the Atruaghins are divided into tribes (small groups united by family ties and alliances that live together in the same area) and clans, (a union of the tribes on the basis of sharing a legendary forebear: Ahmanni Turtle-rider for the Turtle, Mahmatti Elk-runner for the Elk, Tahkati Storm-tamer for the Horse, and Hattani Stoneclaw for the Bear). As such, each Atruaghin also has a tribal totem (usually one of more common species of the tribe's habitat) and a clan totem, which should be similarly respected.

If a Son of Atruaghin respects the totem to which he is bound by right of birth it can have several benefits, and vice versa if he doesn't he attracts countless curses on himself, based on the type of totem offended:

**Personal totem:** the character has a natural affinity towards his totem animal and each time he encounters it, it will not attack him, but moves away. However, if the subject attacks the animal, he has a free attack, after which the creature will react as normally would if provoked. However, attacking his own animal totem is like assaulting his own soul, due to the mystic bond between the two. So, he loses rather than gains the creature's XP value.

Moreover any subject who makes an amulet using parts of his animal totem (fur, feathers, hair, paw, etc.) earns a +1 bonus to any Saving Throw while wearing it. This amulet, naturally, only functions for a person bound to that type of animal.

**Tribal totem:** in this case the character's affinity towards the tribal totem is minor as it is associated with an entire group of people. As such, every time he encounters the animal there is only a 50% chance that it will not attack him but flee instead. However, if the subject attacks the animal, he has a free attack, after which the creature will react as normally would if provoked. If the animal is not disturbed, it continues to do what it was doing as if the character wasn't present, until he decides to disturb it, in which case it reacts normally.

Moreover, no XP is awarded for defeating their own tribal totem, and indeed the members of the tribe consider the killing of this animal a bad omen, as it attracts misfortune over the entire tribe.

**Clan Totem:** the importance of the clan totem is due to the fact that these animals were spiritually linked to the founders of the various clans who now watch over the Atruaghin. However, while each clan member is called to respect the sacred animal of its founder, he doesn't regard it as much as his personal and tribal totems. In practice, there is no benefit in encountering a clan totem. However, it is severely forbidden to slay the animal symbol of his clan: those that perpetrate this grave crime are exiled from the clan and become wanderers: no other clan will accept these renegades and they usually become solitary hermits or join a band of travelling foresters. Foreigners that kill a clan totem instead are put to death, and the method in which they are killed is based on how they killed the animal (especially if it has suffered at length, the guilty also suffer before death, if the death was quick, then the guilty are quickly and painlessly killed).

Finally, there is another peculiarity of Atruaghin mysticism: the *totem brothers*. When two Children of Atruaghin share the same personal totem, they are called totem brothers. This tie is much more important than any blood relationship, and in the Atruaghin culture there is nothing more loyal and reliable than a totem brother. No lie, omission, or form of deceit is allowed between two totem brothers, and the spiritual bound between the two is so great that each always know if the other is lying. Obviously, betraying a totem brother is a horrible crime according to the laws of Atruaghin, and those found guilty of it deserve only death.

Among all the Children of Atruaghin only some are so in tune with nature and the spirits to correctly interpret their voice and guide a person in an encounter with their totem: the *shamans*, men of superior knowledge that act as spiritual leaders. The shamans are considered individuals blessed by Atruaghin, as they have received the gift of wisdom and empathy with the spiritual world. As such, to the Children of Atruaghin nothing has more value than the word of a shaman of Atruaghin, as he has all the knowledge used to live in harmony with the surrounding world and the spirit world.

There are two types of shaman among the Atruaghins: the spiritual shaman (see the section on *Shamanism*) and the shaman of Atruaghin. The former are individuals personally touched by the gift to communicate with the animal and nature spirits, who however haven't been instructed to become a spokesman of Atruaghin. The faithful respect him like a cleric of another clan patron, especially given their mystic tie with the forces of nature (much more marked than that the simple clerics enjoy), but no one has more power within a tribe than a shaman of Atruaghin. Who are individuals chosen by the great father of all the tribes to carry his wisdom and voice among his people, and therefore enjoy the esteem and respect of all Atruaghins, with the exception of the members of the Clan of the Tiger (who have rejected Atruaghin and are only faithful to Atzanteotl and Danel). A shaman of Atruaghin is effectively a specialist cleric devoted to him, but the powers conferred to him by the Immortal are so different than those of a normal priest to make him a sort of cross between a cleric and a spiritual shaman. The wisdom of Atruaghin runs through these shamans, who frequently judge any contest that takes place within the tribe. No higher shaman exists to whom all the others give obedience, as they believe that the only one who is higher than the shamans is Atruaghin himself, and so all his heralds have equal importance. A shaman of Atruaghin is the voice of each community's spirituality (there is at least one in each tribe, who usually surrounds himself with two or three adepts to take his place or go and carry the wisdom of Atruaghin with other tribes) and the acknowledged village chief (usually the strongest warrior or wisest elder) must bow to the advise of the shaman, believing that they come directly from Atruaghin.

A shaman of Atruaghin is distinguished from the other followers as he usually only dresses in animal skins, doesn't wear armour, only uses tools and weapons derived from nature (from wood, stone or bone), and always carries Atruaghin's holy symbol, a tomahawk with a band of feathers on the stone head.

Each clan has a different ratio of shamans of Atruaghin and other specialist clerics of the clan's Immortal patron, as explained below:

- ❖ Clan of the Elk: many shamans (80%, mostly shamans of Atruaghin), few priests (20%, all druid devotees of Mahmatti).

- ❖ Clan of the Horse: many priests (70%, devotees of Tahkati), few shamans (30%, mostly spiritual).
- ❖ Clan of the Bear: many shamans (60%, mainly devotees of Atruaghin) and some priests (40%, devoted to Hattani).
- ❖ Clan of the Turtle: many priests (60%, devotees of Ahmanni) and some shamans (40%, mainly shamans of Atruaghin).
- ❖ Clan of the Tiger: mostly priests (95%, mainly devotees of Atzanteotl and a few of Danel<sup>8</sup>) and very few shamans (5%, all spiritual shamans).

## CULT OF THE DAWN

### Worshipped in: Isle of Dawn

The Isle of Dawn was colonised by the first human beings of Neathar race around 2200 BC, and following the migratory movements of the Antaliens in 2000 BC causing both Northmen and other Neathar tribes to move onto the Isle, spreading out on the island's capes. The Antaliens settled on the northern tip, giving life to the Helska people (the current inhabitants of the Kingdom of Helskir), while the remaining Neathar spread into the surrounding area, pushing all the way to the Shadow Coast. They shared a series of original beliefs that helped to make them a unique people, with the veneration of Viuden (Odin) widespread among nearly all the people as an influence of the neighbouring Antaliens. Over the centuries, the Neathar Dawners (a term that indicates the Neathar tribes of the Isle of Dawn) started to slightly diverge in their own linguistical and cultural customs, until some legends on the creation gave life to a true split in the clans, each of which claimed a divine descendance from one of the original divinities. There however is a substantial mythological basis shared by all the Dawner clans and founded both on the ancient Neathar belief and above all on the events that have influenced the history of the Dawners and Antalian peoples of the region, which has seen the rise of several charismatic individuals among the Immortal ranks during the Age of Heroes (1900–1600 BC), and subsequently also deified by the human legends. As such, the Cult of the Dawn gathered the mythical sources that are shared by the descendents of all the Neathar tribes of the island, who however revere with varying fervour the Dawner Immortals. Indeed, each community has a divine patron who is thought to be the forebear of the clan's founder to which it belongs, and so

<sup>8</sup> The clerics present in the clan of the Tiger are mainly followers of Atzanteotl, and hold the true power over the members of this community, always being both the tribal heads and the acknowledged spiritual heads (even if each tribe is independent and no high cleric exists who governs all the clan). The few clerics of Danel always have a minor role and are deputed to the training of the men in the arts of war and hunting, and generally have tasks that concern the defence of the clan and open conflict. The clergy tolerate the presence of spiritual shamans, also given that the Children of the Tiger are profoundly bound to the mystic of the totem animals, but hunt in a ruthless manner any foreign cleric or shaman of Atruaghin who adventure in their territory.

each clan's myths promote its own patron over the other Immortals, a characteristic that has frequently caused war and rivalry between very touchy clans, which has helped to keep the Dawners separate (thus making them easier prey for the conquerors of the neighbouring empires).

The Dawner clans share the following cosmology: at the beginning of the world there were three brothers: Viuden (the sky), Bel (the sun), and Manadyn (the sea). They discovered the Land of the Dawn to the east of the continent and decided to settle there, as it was a fertile region and given of great wonder. Exploring the region, the three brothers encountered the faerie, timeless beings that had created and shaped this part of the world to indulge their desires. They were losing a fight against the giants, and asked the three brothers for aid, who used all their powers to defend this small paradise. The giants were forced back beyond the reefs of Westrouke, and to be sure that they couldn't return, the three brothers unleashed the force of the elements to destroy the stone bridge that linked the land of the faeries to the continent: thus creating the Isle of Dawn. The faeries recognised the power and wisdom of the three brothers and bowed down before them, acclaiming them their sovereigns and revealed the secrets of the Dawn. By common accord, the three decided to take wives to give life to their own lineage, which would rule over both the beings of nature and the few mortals that lived in the region and who were still ignorant and wild. Wandering the island far and wide, however only two were lucky: Viuden joined with Dun (mother of the earth and fertility), while Bel joined with Vanu (goddess of the moon and passions). Manadyn didn't find anybody who wanted him, and he retreated to the coast to weep, where his numerous tears caused the sea to become salty. Even today Manadyn wanders the island's shores and the seas in search of a wife, but when he is rejected or suffering from loneliness he plunges among the waves and fidgets on the bottom of the sea, unleashing storms and tempests.

From the line of Viuden (Odin) and Dun (Terra) were born the gods Brian (Frey), Brianna (Freyja), Donegal (Thor), and Farbautides (Loki). Naturally these divinities were inspired by the characters who accomplished truly epic actions in the nearby Lands of the North during the Age of Heroes and who are still remembered by both the Antalian and Dawner cults.

From the line of Bel (Ixion) and Vanu (Valerias) were born Silenus (Faunus), lord of the woods and sylvan races, the mythical smith of the gods, Wayland, and the patron of the arts and wisdom, Turlock (Chiron). Afterwards, Vanu gave birth to Eiryndul, when she was joined (unknown to her husband) to the prince of the faeries. From this illegitimate son was born the line of the elves, graceful creatures given of long life and magical powers with faerie and divine blood in their veins, of which Eiryndul is sovereign and who settled in the woods of the central-western part of the island (an event that saw the passage of the Shiye across the Isle around the IX century

BC and the settlement of some elven clans near the forests of Redstone and Septentriona, alongside the faeries).

So the three brothers divided the paradise (or the Isle of Dawn) with the promise of peacefully ruling over their own nation and to protect and allow their subjects to prosper: Bel settled in the central area (Redstone, Kendach, Septentriona) with his descendants, while Viuden and his children remained in the north (Westrouрке, Dunadale, and Helskir). Each Immortal chose a wife or husband from among the mortals, and joined with it to bring into being the chiefs who would then lead the human tribes in the name of the Immortals: the eleven famous founders of the original Dawner clans (to which were later added the elven clan of Eirys, considered to be of the same standard as the first eleven, and the Kendach clan followers of Halav, which has never been numbered among the major clans due to the outside origin of its founder). Each of these clans was given an artefact forged by the Immortals with Wayland's aid, a gift that allowed them to prosper and defeat any enemy without Immortal aid: the Thirteen Sacred Treasures.

Some centuries later, the little-known Nyt (Hel) arrived from the north to bring disorder among Immortals and mortals, gaining the favours of one Immortal and convincing him with sly words to make war on his brothers to conquer their kingdom (favouring the area in which the story is told, the traitor is the Immortal patron of a rival clan, or Farbautides, the most greedy among the Immortals). Thus the peace between the peoples was broken by the guilt of Nyt, and the island was bathed in the blood of the innocent. Nyt took possession of their souls and their treachery was revealed when they gave birth to horrible, deformed creatures born from a unhealthy union of the divine lover and the souls of the lamented: the fomorians (a term that the Dawners use for the humanoid specifically and more generally the monsters that infested the island). They were united under the banner of Nyt and made war on the children of Viuden and Bel, which fell divided (this part of the legend refers to the humanoid invasions from Norwold that hammered the island from 1720 BC to 1700 BC.). This period of great instability and internecine fighting lasted for some years, during which all the sacred treasures were lost or stolen due to unexpected reversals and treachery. It was in this age, according to legend, that on the suggestion of the Faerie Court, the Immortals left the island: some wanted to follow the traitors and punish them, others simply decided to abandon the Dawners, disgusted by the ferocity of the mortals, although they remained to watch until the conflict was resolved. When they saw that their children continued to not always listen to the weaker voices of their clerics, they decided to send a herald to the island to deliver new teaching and a new hope: So in the X century BC the most famous of the island's legendary heroes entered into Dawner history: the great bard Dallbard (Tiresias).

Dallbard at that time was the most powerful spellcaster on the island and an unequalled seer. His origins are uncertain according to the Cult of the Dawn, and all the clans assert a kinship with the hero, who must certainly be the son of an Immortal, even if there isn't an agreement on who is his sire (some claim him to be the divine son of Brian, others the son of Eirys, Viuden, or Bel). Tiresias came to the island on the demand of his patron Khoronus, after having left his homeland (Milenia) to complete his journey to immortality. Here he was known as Dallbard and became strongly attracted to the local culture full of passion and love of legend, so much so that he took the Dawner cause to heart. After several years, thanks to his charisma, he was able to assemble all the heads of the Dawner clans and told them that the island would be liberated only if they could elect only one ruler to take power. When he realised that none of the clan heads were disposed to submit to the others, Dallbard persuaded them that would be up to the Immortals to choose the successor who would lead them to the rebirth and reconquest of the island, invaded by humanoids and bronzed skinned foreigners (the Nithians, arrived on the island in 1050 BC and had already started to enslave the natives and establish colonies that would later become part of the Kingdom of Thothia). With the help of the faeries, Dallbard forged the powerful sword Caledfwylch and placed it in the rock of a headland, leaving his student Finnegar to watch over the weapon: whoever could extract the sword would be the new ruler, and Finnegar would announce it to the entire island with a long trumpet blast. Dallbard then disappeared, taking himself to the seven corners of the island to recover the thirteen sacred treasures, which had aided the renaissance of the Dawners.

Numerous chiefs tried unsuccessfully to extract the sword. It was only a few years later that a foreigner with fiery-red hair arrived from the west and presented himself to Finnegar and was able to draw Caledfwylch: his name was Halav, and he would pass into Dawner history as Fulvachioma (Gruaigerua). Due to his leadership and charisma, the Redstonians and the Kendachese united to overthrow the dominion of the foreigners and forced the fomorians back into the mountains, and gained independence. Unfortunately the other clan heads didn't wish to bow before a foreigner, because of both pride and envy, and they plotted against him when he tried to gain their alliance. Halav resigned himself then from becoming the ruler of all the Dawners, and shortly after winning a innumerable battles against the humanoids mysteriously disappeared on the plateau near Kendach, and the sword Caledfwylch that he carried was lost.

When, recalled by Finnegar, Dallbard returned from his wandering he realised that his prophecy had been forgotten, and despite having recovered all the island's sacred treasures, the people were still divided. With great sacrifice, he departed once more towards the kingdom of Nyt (for some situated in the swamps of Dunadale, for the others in the heart of the Lost Plateau), to slay the queen

of darkness and free the minds of the Dawners from her nefarious influence. He was able to destroy the Throne of Bone, an evil artefact which corrupted minds and controlled her fomorian troops, but Nyt escaped his fury and withdrew to the Afterworld, where she still awaits an opportune moment to return. Sure of having resolved the problem, Dallbard returned to speak to the clan heads, and saw that the faith in the ancient divinities had nearly disappeared. He, therefore, realised that all his solitary battles wouldn't be enough if the Dawners didn't regain faith in the divinities and in their sense of fraternity, and so he gave the treasures to the thirteen clans and composed a final prophecy before joining the Immortals: only the one that had reunited the treasures and had retrieved the sword Caledfwylch could reunify the island, but only if he was able to do so together with the rightful owners of the treasures. Then the Immortals would finally return, reconciled between them and the mortals, and give the Dawners a new golden era.

In the following centuries due to the use of the artefacts the clans were able to not completely fall under the dominion of the Nithians, who later vanished by the will of the Immortals. With the turning of the years, the new invaders had the better of the arrogant Dawners, and some clans fell into disgrace, losing their relics. Many continued to search for the sword Caledfwylch, even the successive dominators Alphatians and the Thyatians, but in vain. Although he is hidden from the eyes of most, some say that Finnegar still waits on his throne of stone (Finnegar's Watch) for the moment when he can again announce that the King of the Dawn had arrived to free his people from tyranny.

According to some later legends (the work of Thyatian monks), the three brothers had help from a sister who they nevertheless exiled from the island at the beginning of time, due to jealousy and pride, judging her unworthy of receiving a part of the paradise. The sister took to herself an indomitable people related to the Dawners and led them to create a great empire, with the aim of returning to her brothers and asserting her own right to rule on the Dawn (considered a paradise on earth). The arrival of the Thyatians on the island has therefore been arranged by their patroness, Vanya, the divinity that the three male siblings had out of spite removed judging her inferior (it is no accident that according to the legend it was the brothers who chose their wife and chased away their sister, and in all the legends the women always have a secondary role, a testimony of the profoundly patriarchal nature of the Dawner society). However, seeing the state that her brother's children were in Vanya was merciful, and she changed her intentions and instead of avenger became peacemaker and unifier.

According to this version, only a true follower of Vanya will be able to find the sword and lead the Dawners to victory. Vanya has pushed her people (the Thyatians) to the reunification with their dispersed Dawners cousins: she would be the key to the Isle's rebirth. The message

that the Thyatian priests of Vanya are trying to spread is clear: the renegade sister has founded a powerful empire, and was also trying to bring the Dawners under her protection. Only her allies have the proper heritage to govern the island. As the Thyatians are particularly dominant in the west of the Isle, it isn't surprising that Vanya also has a great following in Westrouрке and Redstone, where some clans have forsaken the ancient Immortals and sworn loyalty to the Grey Lady. In Kendach, however, Halav reigns undisputed, as legend identifies him as the father of the first founder of the Kendach dynasty. The Kendach region has always been identified with the myth of King Fulvachioma and its governors have always considered themselves the true heirs of the Dawner crown. As such, they are faithful to the cult of Halav and are the most active in the quest to unite the clans under a Dawner ruler.

The list of the Dawner deities is as follows (listed in order of seniority according to the myth):

Viuden (Odin)	Good government and authority, sky, storms, winds, knowledge
Bel (Ixion)	Sun, light, fire, power, war, heroism, wisdom
Manadyn (Protius)	Water, oceans, marine creatures, unpredictability, travel
Vanu (Valerias)	Love, desire, sensuality, beauty, fertility, protection
Dun (Terra)	Creation, balance of the cycle of life, birth, prosperity, fertility, earth, herders and farmers
Silenus (Faunus)	Sylvan races, animals, sexuality and instincts, drunkenness, revelry
Donegal (Thor)	War, fighting, fury in battle, honour, audacity
Brian (Frey)	Passion, strategy, virility, loyalty, friendship, fertility, agriculture
Brianna (Freyja)	Abundance, fertility, family, beauty, love, female fighters
Farbautides (Loki)	Guile, deceit, tricks, fire
Wayland	Metallurgy, engineering, craftsmanship, magical constructs
Turlock (Chiron)	Arts, healing, knowledge, wisdom
Eiryndul	Elves, illusions and deceit, guile, jokes, adventure
Dallbard (Tiresias)	Poetry, music, legends, songs, revelations, visions, magic
Arnelee	Independent women, freedom, adventure, travel, loyalty, sincerity, wisdom, guile, messengers

It is necessary to note that while all the first thirteen Immortals are considered fathers of one of the original Dawner clans, Dallbard isn't associated to any clan, even though he is considered a divinity on par with the others. In truth the clan of Dallbard is composed of bards, troubadours, and wanderers as well as priests of the Immortal that are united in being his eyes and mouth, as well as the historic memory of the Dawner people. The clan of Dallbard is therefore formed from all those Dawners that heed the calling and practise this role, who

lose their affiliation to their original clan and become part of that which is known simply as Clan Dallbard, a group respected and feared by all.

In the epochs since his disappearance, Dallbard's cult has been added to the Dawner cults along with that of Arnelee, a heroine from the north, who completed incredible deeds and of whom the bards sang the praises of, even claiming her to be a daughter of Viuden. So, even though she isn't numbered among the thirteen Immortals who created the first Dawner clans, the cult of Arnelee as patroness of independent women, courage, messengers, and loyalty has joined the other Dawner cults, and the clan that bears her name now live in the northern part of Westrouke.

**Nyt (Hel)** instead is known by all the clans as the Immortal of discord, death, corruption, and reincarnation. She is the patroness of monstrous creatures and the humanoids (fomorian) that infest the island seeking new souls to feed to their mother to give birth to new horrible fomorian to swell their legions (indeed, according to popular belief any mortal who is killed by a fomorian and eaten by them loses his soul, which is taken by Nyt into the Afterworld and reincarnated as a fomorian). According to the Dawner religion, only the valorous and those that respect tradition can hope to join the Immortals after death in their refuge of Tir nan Og, where they prepare themselves for the final battle against the forces of Nyt and the Isle's invaders, joining with their ancestors and the Immortals on the day in which the Immortals, recalled by their faithful, arrive to finally cleanse the island, where they will return to dwell together with the mortals and the souls of the righteous.

## CULT OF THE HIGH HEROES

**Worshipped in:** Five Shires, Minrothad, Alphatia, Norwold

Brindorhin	Hin, patriotism, security, family, plenty & fortune
Nob Nar	Audacity, heroics, wanderers, adventurers, revelry
Coberham	Magic, black flame, mysteries, knowledge, hin
Raven	Good luck, fun, jokes, games, sagacity, tricks, hin
Karaash	Humanoids, battle, tactics, audacity, rule of the strongest
Bartziluth	Bugbears, fury, combat, war
Wogar	Goblins, war and tactics, conquest, despotism
Ranivorus	Gnolls, hate, racism, destruction

The hin are a people with a centuries old oral history, in which the epic deeds of the hin heroes provoke a true feeling of adoration. For that reason, some of these legendary characters, the High Heroes, are venerated as Immortals, even if this practise isn't carried out according to the ways of a typical human cult. Each High Hero has had an important role in the history of the Five Shires, the motherland of all the hin spread through the continents of Brun and Alphatia, and he embodies the classic values of the hin culture. Moreover, every one of them is opposed to a legion of demons considered the enemies par excellence of the hin, as they are the protectors of the

humanoid races that have brought most harm to the hin people, and are symbols of the perversions and the more awful vices for the hin.

The chief aim of a hin cleric is that of joining the practice of veneration of a High Hero with the tales of the deeds of these demigods, always in a way to deliver a moral and a feeling of unity to strengthen the community. For that reason, hin temples are consecrated places of large common assemblies, like plazas, arenas, theatres, large common halls, and even inns, near which the priest dwells and where he celebrates the High Heroes with songs, ceremonies, story contests, and festivity. In this sense the halfling religion is much more informal than the other human or demihuman faiths and as such it is more easily and deeply assimilated by the cheerful and free and easy hin. Thus, even if at first sight it could seem that the hin aren't interested in the Immortals, in reality their faith in the High Heroes and the principles of hope, well-being, and freedom that they represent is so deeply-rooted in the hin's way of thinking and living as to be natural to them. Thus it is invisible to the eyes of the profane, as it is expressed through a series of gestures and rituals that have little to do with the common prayers of the other cultures. For example, the ritual of reaping celebrates the abundance proffered by Brindorhin; the days of Fast and Feast celebrate the freedom won through the efforts of Brindorhin and Coberham, while the Days of Jest are a reminder and homage to cunning and exploits of the Raven. Every ballad about Nob Nar or any other Hero is a prayer to him so that he watches over those that start to sing it and listen to it, and every toast raised to the hin heroes is similarly a gesture of prayer in the hearts of the halflings, all things that demonstrate the great religiosity of a people that they have never lost sight of their own traditions and that jealousy guard them in any part of the world they are found.

## DAINROUW

**Worshipped in:** Minrothad, Wendar, Five Shires; Norwold, Savage Coast (Robrenn), Hollow World (Icevale Elves)

Dainrouw (in elven literally "Way of the Forest") is the name of the cult and the philosophy that worships **Ordana**, creator of the elves and patroness of the sylvan environment, also known as Mother Forest or Thendara. Her philosophy preaches respect for any woodland ecosystem and protection of plants and animals that are found there from those who willingly harm them. In exchange the forest and its inhabitants can provide any need to those who follow Dainrouw, sheltering, feeding and protecting them from external dangers.

Dainrouw is an extremely peaceful philosophy that the sylvan elves have embraced for times immemorial since the catastrophe of Blackmoor. It is based on the peaceful cohabitation between those that live in the woods, the gathering of forest produce, and on the selective hunting



of the older members of the animal species, in order to operate an artificial selection that strengthens instead of weakening the local fauna. Every follower of Dainrouw is well liked by the animals and sylvan peoples, as well as by the druidic orders with which they interact, and they always offer aid to a follower in need. The philosophy also preaches that those who threaten the sylvan ecosystem should be forcibly dealt with.

Ordana's relic holy is always a tree typical to the area in the vigour of its years (only the Minrothad elves have a true artefact), which the clerics protect as a sign of their eternal alliance with Mother Forest; the ceremony relating to the relic however remains a secret kept by the faithful.

Dainrouw priests (among which are both clerics and druids, largely elves, even if there are also followers among the phanatons) are specialists in spells that interact with nature. They dress only in woollen, cotton or leather clothing and use a leaf from their community's sacred tree (usually an oak) as their holy symbol.

## DRUIDISM

**Worshipped in:** all over Mystara

Druidism is a religious philosophy that began to spread in the world after the nuclear disaster of Blackmoor. Invented and sponsored by **Djaea** before she became immortal to avoid repeating the global catastrophe that resulted from the errors of Blackmoor, and spread to the four corners of the world following her ascension. Djaea became the inspiration of the first priests devoted to this cult without ever directly revealing herself but assuming the general and pervading aspect of Mother Nature. Druidism as a *tout court* philosophy doesn't recognise any higher divinity, but identifies the eternal soul of Nature as the only force to worship. The cardinal principle of druidism is maintaining the natural and universal balance through the respect of the ecosystem, flora, and fauna of each type of habitat. So the task of druidism's followers is to reject the products of the more advanced civilisations and preserve animal and plant life, looking after the habitat in which they live and confronting any type of contamination or threat that risks altering the ecosystem's balance. In particular, druidism is completely opposed to all that is considered unnatural: progress, technology, and especially magically constructed or animated creatures, first of which are all the undead races, which constitute an insult and a challenge to the natural cycle of birth and death that governs the creation. The druids (the priests of druidism) are therefore balanced individuals, frequently attuned to a simple and reclusive life, which many consider rather prohibitive. They find themselves more at home among the plants and animals, as well as with the races more linked to nature (like those sylvan), and reduce to a minimum any contact with the inhabitants of civilised settlements. The druids attempt to always be in communion with the universe, and in particular judge that nature is the most perfect form of existence, and that therefore it is a duty of the humans to live together with

the gifts that it grants mortals, taking just enough to survive, without risking the extinction of animals or the ruination of the ecosystem. As such, they only wear clothing of simple manufacture, use weapons and items made of natural materials, and they can be distinguished by the material focus used to cast magic, which is always a plant characteristic of the habitat to which they are bound.

For the druidic culture oral tradition is very important, and they rarely use writing (although they aren't illiterate), preferring to rely on their memory and word-of-mouth to pass on their own secrets (and avoid others discovering it). They also, due to this, use a very particular language, the secret tongue of the druids, an idiom coined by the first druids that is based on very simple expressions (in line with their culture) to spread any type of concept. The use of symbols and writing is limited only to the creation and sanctification of particular places and objects (like the erected stones of the druidic circles or their holy items), as the ancient power of nature flows in the druidic runes and they only use them in very special circumstances.

The majority of druids pay homage to the disembodied force of Nature, but receive their divine powers from Djaea, who has always had given the role of Mother Nature. However in some cases, druids view specific Immortals as the purest incarnation of their philosophy and so pay homage to them, and receive their powers (druidic not clerical, by their own choice) from them. The Immortals (all Neutral) who sponsor druidic orders are: **Ordana** (Mother Forest), **Protius** (Father Ocean), **Calitha**, **Zirchev**, **Chiron**, and **Mahmatti**.

### DRUIDIC ORDERS

Each druid is a specialist in the knowledge and treatment of a certain type of natural habitat, and it is the different existing ecosystems that form the basis of their differences. So there are, therefore, druids for each type of habitat: arctic, desert, forest, sea (and water courses), mountain, plain, swamp, and underground.

Moreover, each druid is part of a group of druids that control a certain region, and it is these circles that group together characters of diverse extraction and allow them to exchange ideas and knowledge and act in common for the care and protection of the wider regional ecosystem. There are essentially two types of groups to which each druid belongs: a druidic circle and a druidic order.

The *druidic circle* is formed by all those druids of the same habitat that collaborate to defend and protect a finite ecosystem (like a forest, a desert, a mountain range, etc.), which is led by an Archdruid (a druid of 10<sup>th</sup> level or higher), who watches and guides the actions of the circle's druids, presides at the most important ceremonial rituals (during solstices and equinoxes), and convenes the annual Druidic Council to gather the members of the circle (and a few other trusted individuals, like sylvan creatures, rangers, and friends of the circle) to exchange information, resolve questions, rewards, or punishments, celebrate the new members, and renew the vows of fraternity and obedience. A circle can have only one Archdruid, and so

any druid that passes 9<sup>th</sup> level is forced to leave the circle and establish a new one, take and instruct new acolytes, or become a wandering druid for an unknown time, answering for his work only to the Order's High Druids and Great Druid (see below). This is clearly an expedient to expand the power of the druids to all regions, and to introduce to new people the philosophy of nature and balance advanced by these characters. The *druidic order* instead is a much more vast ensemble, which itself is made up of several druidic circles that operate within a vast area (generally no larger than a continent), over which the order watches. The order is made up by the so-called High Druids (characters that have attained at least the 21<sup>st</sup> level of Classic D&D, the 16<sup>th</sup> of D&D 3E), to which all the druids of lower level must obey, and it is led by the Great Druid, an extremely wise and powerful individual (the only one in that geographic area to have reached 31<sup>st</sup> level in Classic D&D, 20<sup>th</sup> for D&D 3E), who performs a similar task to that of the archdruids, but on a much greater scale. He is assisted by nine Emissaries (druids of between 12<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> level), who act as his eyes, ears, and hands, and he always has the final word on any decision of the order or of the lower circles (even if he very rarely speaks in the issues of the druidic circles, unless it of interregional importance), plus deciding to place a ban on a druid who isn't behaving himself according to the rules.

Any druid that attains 31<sup>st</sup> level must challenge the Great Druid to be able to advance and fill that role: the challenge is conducted in the presence of two High Druid witnesses, in a place and time agreed by the two challengers, with rules agreed before the two witnesses ahead of time. If the challengers aren't able to agree, it is the two witnesses who decide the time and place, and the fight doesn't have any rules, except the prohibition of outside help: the loser is the one who dies or surrenders. The loser (if still alive) loses a level (to 30<sup>th</sup> for Classic D&D and to 19<sup>th</sup> for D&D 3E) and must again earn experience to challenge again; the only other possibility is to emigrate to a region in which there is no druidic circle or Great Druid already present, and found one of his own. In any case, "natural selection" allows the druids to increase their power and their knowledge, and this is all to the advantage of the world-wide balance and the prosperity of nature. This rule is based on the assumption that only one Great Druid is necessary for each large area of the world, and therefore if someone isn't worthy of the title he cannot gain any more power: respecting this dictate is meant to keep the world-wide natural balance (such that the druids are disposed to do so even at the cost of their life). Currently there are only Great Druids for the following regions of Mystara: the Known World (including the Isle of Dawn, Pearl Islands, and Ochalea), Norwold, the Midlands (including the Great Waste, Hule, and Hyborea), the Savage Coast (including the Arm of the Immortals), Bellissaria, Skothar, Davania, and the Sunlit Sea; there are currently no Great Druids present in the Hollow World.

## DWARVEN CULT OF KAGYAR

**Worshipped in:** Rockhome, Thyatis, Alphatia, Darokin, Savage Coast, Norwold, Karameikos

Kagyar the Artisan	Dwarves, craft, metallurgy, sculpture, construction, miners
Karr (Thanatos)	Death, entropy, destruction, decadence, oblivion, corruption

The religion of the dwarves is mainly based on the worship of Kagyar the Artisan, acknowledged by their legends as the creator of the dwarven race. The ancient legends claim that Kagyar created the dwarves from the earth, around 1800 BC, which is almost three thousand years ago. The first dwarf was Denwarf, who had helped Kagyar in the creation of the dwarves and who would become soon afterwards their first King.

The dwarves see the spirituality on one hand (Clerics) as a personal matter and on the other hand (Keepers of the Relic) as a matter of state. The Relic is a spiritual and political point of reference and the Keepers of the Relic are as much Lawful Philosophers as Clerics of Kagyar. Kagyar supplies the magic to create it, and keep it active; the way of using such energy nevertheless is a spiritual factor of the Clan. The Clan Relic is a happy medium between the clerical and lay visions: it is a symbol of the pact of faith between Kagyar and the dwarves.

The dwarves have no interest in Cosmogony or Theology. Firstly they think that it is silly to try to know more about the Immortals than they want to say, and even sillier to invent things when they don't have the information, as nearly all the other races have. The dwarves are simply apprehensive of the existence of higher beings to them concerning forces and powers, which indirectly influence the fate of the humans, of the planet, perhaps of the entire Multiverse. They call these creatures deities, without this inferring any adoration or submission on their part. The only Immortal the dwarves greatly respect and worship, much like they would respect a family head, teacher, and general, is Kagyar. This worship derives from what Kagyar did for the dwarven race as well as for the love he has for his chosen people. Many dwarves, even though they respect and love Kagyar, doesn't worship him as a human worships an Immortal, or say prayers or devotions. Only some among the most devout, the Clerics, pray and revere Kagyar and in return get their spells. To those who worship him thus (that is, beyond the simple respect, which resembles more ancestor worship than a religion), it is common practice to enter an apprenticeship with another (generally Buhrodar) Cleric, and learn from him the simple prayers to Kagyar, and thus the clerical spells. Among them are sages, scholars, physicians, and crusaders, who give much more weight to Kagyar's role in Dwarven life than the general populace.

Kagyar isn't an imposing or vengeful divinity. His dwarven priests, whose existence is almost unknown outside of the dwarven community and of its close allies, are dwarves first of all, and aren't kept to perform any

ritual. There isn't a dogma of Kagyar, and the priesthood has a very flexible form, so much so that anyone can leave the priesthood if they so wish (while to join a short period of training is necessary, which can be undertaken with the Buhrodar Clan or privately with another priest). The priests, simply called Clerics, have the task of spiritual guide and are the favoured vehicles of communication and aid of the divinity in the struggles of the dwarves, until their behaviour is judged adequate by Kagyar; they don't have an ecclesiastic "hierarchy", or any particular task to carry out. Certainly, some rituals like funerals or ceremonies of particular importance, are frequently held by Clerics, but firstly it isn't a rule or a written law; secondly, if this happens it is only because generally those who become Clerics are wise and worthy dwarves, certainly not because of the role that they fill, which however isn't marked by no symbol or acknowledgement. Being a Cleric is a spiritual fact that only concerns the dwarf, not a fact that the community should know. In case a Cleric comports himself in a way not appreciated by Kagyar or stops speaking to him with veneration, he simply displays his disfavour or his disapproval by depriving him of spells and benefits, but doesn't act in any other way to harm or punish them.

Besides Kagyar, another divinity greatly respected by the dwarves is Garal, brother of Kagyar in dwarven mythology and the creator of the gnome race. Clerics of Garal aren't rare, but the same rules apply. The only Immortal opposed by the Cult of Kagyar and truly feared by all the dwarves is Karr (Thanatos), as he represents death, the destruction of all achievements of life, and the annihilation of industry and creativity that characterize a dwarf during his entire life.

The institution that is closest to a true "church" in Rockhome is the Clericate, a kind of association that brings together all the Clerics of Rockhome, which regularly gets together to argue on the spiritual state of the nation, how to guide and advise the dwarves, and so on. About half of the Clergy is made up by dwarves of the Buhrodar Clan and 90% of the Clerics worship Kagyar, while the others follow Garal and Terra.

## ELENDAEN

**Worshipped in:** Minrothad, Undersea Kingdom

Elendaen (in elvish literally "Path of the Ocean") is the name of the cult and philosophy that worship **Calitha Starbrow**, the elven patron Immortal of water, the oceans, and the marine ecosystem in general. Very widespread especially in the islands of Minrothad, the followers of Elendaen believe that the ocean is the cradle of all life, as the rain that falls from the sky comes from the evaporation of the oceans' water. Its believers desire to wisely exploit the resources of the land and sea, so that they can prosper without spoiling the world in which they live. They therefore preach a growing respect for the ecosystem in which they live. The philosophy, moreover, also preaches of forcibly combating all those that threaten the aquatic

ecosystem, be they sailors, land folk, or underwater creatures that place the fauna and the inhabitants of a certain area of sea in danger.

The followers of Elendaen are always welcomed by the more peaceful marine peoples (like tritons, merrow, and kna) once that they show their belief, as well as by the druidic orders with which they interact. They always offer aid to the followers of Elendaen in need. The relics of Calitha (the Frond of Life for the aquatic elves of the undersea kingdoms and the Pearl of Power for the marine elves of Minrothad) are the central artefacts for this cult, but remain a secret that is not divulged outside of its circles. The priests devoted to Elendaen (among which are both clerics and druids, mainly elves, although there are also followers among the turtles and wallara) are specialists in spells based on water, only wear clothing made with the products from the sea, and use as a holy symbol the mother of pearl loved by Calitha.

## ETERNAL TRUTH

**Worshipped in:** Ylaruam, Ierendi, Darokin, Thyatis, Savage Baronies (Savage Coast)

The Eternal Truth is an extremely Lawful cult that worships the Immortal Guardians, along with a divinity who cannot be named or represented, which gave the mortals the ability and the teachings to be chosen, happy, and save their soul from death. **Al-Kalim** was the First True Prophet who after correctly interpreting and translating the teachings of the Guardians wrote the Nahmeh (the one true book of moral and religious conduct acceptable for respecting the Immortals). He is worshipped as the first enlightened who has joined the Guardians in their world, becoming one of them (a sort of Hindu bodhisattva, a cross between Mohammed and Buddha). As such, the priests of the Eternal Truth pay homage to the True Faith, asking the Guardian Immortals and Al-Kalim to guide them on the correct way. As a matter of principle, all other faiths are profane as they don't follow the one correct way of worshipping the Immortals, as shown in the Nahmeh. Al-Kalim however asks his own followers to be tolerant and to attempt to convert the infidels instead of eliminating them, as long as they are limited to following benevolent Immortals and don't attempt to impose their false religions on the True Followers. In the Emirates, because of this, it is possible to worship other divinities, provided that it is done privately and not publicly preached or promoted. The Eternal Truth, as taught by the Nahmeh, preaches that a True Follower should venerate the Guardian Immortals, honour their neighbour, and have faith in the wisdom that comes from reason and contemplation. The Nahmeh therefore shows the ways to satisfy these three prerequisites, collected in the so-called Articles of the Faith, which are précised here:

**Honour the Guardian Immortals:** the Nahmeh provides two rituals for worshipping the Immortals in the correct manner.

1. Prayer and Meditation: the True Followers must dedicate themselves both at the rising and setting of the sun. The violation of this rule is considered an act of extreme impoliteness among the believers of the Eternal Truth, and among the more extremist tribes it is a capital offence.
2. Fast: the True Followers must fast for 24 hours from the sunset of the first day of the full moon until the next sunset to purify their spirit and flesh, and offer the Guardian Immortals a sign of sacrifice and devotion. At the end of the fast the faithful must celebrate life with a banquet, laying aside a portion of food as symbolic offerings for the Guardian Immortals, or when it is possible (in the case of the more devout) share part of the food with the poor and the starving.

**Respect the Neighbour:** the Nahmeh provides three rituals to respect the neighbour, demonstrating confidence and solidarity both in the gestures and in the thoughts.

1. Share water: each day two True Followers meet, they must celebrate the Ritual of the Water, which marks the real or symbolic sharing of water between the two (thus symbolising the sharing of what is a follower's most precious possession, a source of life). The practical application of this ritual varies according to the situation and the people involved, from the more superficial gesture of wetting their fingers in a bowl of water or a canteen belonging to another follower, to an elaborate ceremony where the believers share coffee or tea served in special ornamental goblets, accompanied by the recitation of improvised verses or taken directly from the Nahmeh.
2. Speak with sincerity: lying is severely forbidden between True Followers, and the use of lies or untruths is a grave sin. This ritual is observed by preceding every affirmation or promise by a formula of the type: "In the name of Al-Kalim and of the Eternal Truth, swear..." or simply swear to say the truth before a priest, paladin, or other holyman of the cult. Anyone seen to be less than his word is cursed by the Guardian Immortals and driven away by the believers who are aware of it.
3. Protect the neighbour: this dictate can be fulfilled in several ways, as a formal ritual doesn't exist to fulfil it. In the simplest and less onerous way, it implies the duty for the True Followers is to give charity to the needy and lend aid to the suffering. Moreover, this obligation can be fulfilled in its purest form by answering the call to arms in a war against the Infidels. It should be noted that fighting is not permitted between members of the

Eternal Truth. True Followers have often adopted this obligation as a pretext to fight other believers by declaring them impious, traitors, or impure (frequently a proclamation of a holyman against his rival is enough to justify a call to arms, whilst at other times it is enough to induce the enemy to attack first, therefore justifying the response as self-defence before the court of the sages).

**Respect Wisdom and Learning:** the Nahmeh provides two rituals to show their faith in wisdom and reason.

1. Learn: every True Follower must know how to read, study, and cite the Nahmeh. This applies to the strongest among the warriors of the desert or of the poorest among the tramps of the city, every believer must be able to memorise the teachings of Al-Kalim and cite parables and dogmas verbatim, while the richest and most important families always have a written copy of the Nahmeh that it keeps as a precious treasure.
2. Judge: when a True Follower is called to make a judgement on an argument, which is usually a question of science, military tactics, moral conduct, religion, or law, he must always follow three fundamental rules to reach the wisest and most balanced judgement. He must firstly contemplate and observe the plaintiff's material; then examine the evidence placed before him; finally he must base his judgement on factual knowledge, and not on tradition or superstition. Making a judgement is a solemn practice for the believers of the Eternal Truth, a question of patience, wisdom, and method. An individual whose judgements are seen as wise is respected by all, while anyone who gives rash or impulsive judgements based on arrogance or anger is considered infantile and unreliable.

**Pilgrimage:** the True Followers must go on a pilgrimage at least once in his life to one of the sacred places of the Eternal Truth, although there are those who aren't capable of sustaining long journeys because of illness or physical handicap. Each pilgrim is called to symbolically travel the way of the pilgrimage of Al-Kalim to the Mountain of the Old Man of the Sea, to ask for the blessing and the protection of the Guardian Immortals for himself and his folk as does the High Prophet. Naturally for many followers it is enough to visit just one of the sacred places of the pilgrimage of Al-Kalim within Ylaruam, listening to the reading of the Nahmeh and the preaching of the students or of the more learned holymen in the places of the cult or of science. Only the more powerful and resilient believers are capable of covering the entire route of the journey of the Prophet. However, as well as being a religious obligation the pilgrimage is also viewed as a way to relax and rejoice life, and it provides good business for innkeepers and to guide the work in the sacred places of the Eternal Truth.

**Dream of Justice and Honour:** this were the first series of rules and codes of conduct that Al-Kalim gave to his followers, while still fighting for the liberation of the Alasiyan Basin from Thyatian and Alphatian forces. According to this dream, Al-Kalim forbids the True Followers from taking up arms and fighting one another (as was the custom in times past) and condemns the traditional custom of the desert nomads of raiding and proclaiming generational feuds. This dictate is imposed to unite the Alasiyans against the oppressors and prevent all that had been done by Al-Kalim to build a strong and united state from being destroyed in the future by the old tribal feuds. Naturally many believers interpret this rule as the obligation to unite to fight the Infidels, but not as a veto of raiding the herds of the rival tribes or avenging the wrongs endured, with the pretext that he only being obedient to the more important precept of “protecting the neighbour” (when by “neighbour” he only means the members of his tribe).

**Dream of the Garden in the Desert:** this doctrine was devised by Suleiman Al-Kalim at the end of the unification of the tribes, in a way that all have a common objective, a higher good to which they aspire by working together. It urges the tribal heads, students, and clergy to do their best to understand how they can bring sufficient water into the Alasiyan Basin to make it fertile and ensure that the peoples of the Emirates can benefit. This same doctrine urges the merchants to finance research to make the desert green and bloom, and impress the members of the lower classes to cooperate with their governors to manage the water resources in the most effective way possible. It is due to the universal respect of this rule that many water projects have been successful in Ylaruam, and it is also clear that this dogma is enforced and assumes a fundamental importance only for the True Followers who live in the Emirates of Ylaruam (and not for example the faithful of Ierendi or the Savage Baronies).

For the True Followers it is very important to try to convert the Infidels and combat heresy. To become a believer of the Eternal Truth (i.e. a layman who follows the precepts of the Nahmeh) it is necessary to swear that he accepts the Eternal Truth, as Al-Kalim and the Nahmeh have revealed, that he is committed to faithfully respect the Articles of the Faith as recited above, and follow the Ritual of Honesty (which is completed using the clerical spell of the same name, characteristic of the priests of the Eternal Truth). The believers who were baptised in the True Faith as a baby are always thought reliable and sincere by the other members of the cult, while converted Infidels are accepted but with reserve, while the sincerity of their word and actions is judged according to their future conduct, as, according to tradition, anyone who swears to follow the Ritual of Honesty and then transgress it have certainly been struck by a divine curse.

The followers of the Eternal Truth can be divided into two categories: the disciples or believers, and the sages or

practitioners. In practice the former are the lay members of the cult, while the latter are the priests. The disciples comprises all the faithful, from the humblest and poorest peasant to the most powerful emirs, and also number among their ranks the members of the military orders devoted to the Eternal Truth, all united by the faith and respect for the rules of the Nahmeh. The sages (or learned) instead form the clergy of the cult, although no ecclesiastic hierarchy of any type exists, or any specific responsibilities or pre-established rituals that the priests must observe (except those scripted for all the faithful by the Nahmeh). The sages are divided into three typologies:

*Spiritual Heads:* these extremely devout and learned characters are tasked with leading the daily prayers in the sanctuaries of the Eternal Truth, giving sermons, instructing the believers in the correct practices of the observance of the Articles of the Faith, and giving judgements on religious or moral questions. To become a spiritual head a follower must simply go to a sanctuary of the Eternal Truth and study with other spiritual heads (called in Ylari “Imam”). Sometimes the candidate or his fellows may notice he isn’t cut out for the role and he is removed by the other imams, or he is encouraged to pursue his studies until he is acknowledged as a spiritual head by his peers. At this point the imam has become a priest and has access to the spells granted by his faith in the Eternal Truth and the Guardian Immortals, and from then on he can continue his studies in any field of human knowledge (magic, science, arts, legends, history, etc.) provided that he continues to show respect and interest in wisdom and learning.

*Missionaries:* these are normal followers that choose to dedicate themselves to the study and spread of the teaching of the Nahmeh through their own work, converting infidels, or assisting to the communities of True Followers throughout the world. Usually a small time must pass before a missionary basically becomes a cleric, a time during which Al-Kalim evaluates if the candidate is a true example for his brothers and if his faith is pure or only a facade; after this period, the missionary becomes a true priest with divine spells.

*Dervishes:* these clerics are holy hermits who dedicate themselves to the contemplation of the natural world and to the concrete manifestation of the Eternal Truth. Rejecting the distractions of civilisation, they retreat into the more desolate areas where they lead a simple and reserved existence, living in caves, tents, or timely refuge, in total contemplation and meditation. In the contemplation of the world, nature, and the elements they attempt to attain a mystic union with nature participating in its balance and tranquillity, seeing and communicating with the animals and plants of the desert, as well as with the elemental forces that they animate with their magical powers. It is in virtue of their asceticism, that the dervishes also exercise their minds by reciting the verses of the Nahmeh and sacred prayers to the Guardian Immortals to

strengthen the spirit and sustain the body in the efforts that such a rigorous existence imposes; as such, the dervishes are famous for their unequalled physical and mental resistance. Although they wish to remain far from the comfort and from the distractions of the city, they however don't forget to protect and honour their neighbour, as told in the Nahmeh, and because of this they act as guardians of the tribes of the desert and of the Ylari settlements (and so are revered and helped by these), and can be called upon to help the travellers in difficulty or give guidance to the pilgrims and the faithful engaged in sacred quests and righteous causes, provided that they aren't too insistent or troublesome. The dervishes are peaceful and usually do not make use of weapons or armour, only rarely interfering in violent conflict, although their superior physical condition gives certain advantages to the dervishes in hand-to-hand combat (which they always fight with bare hands).

Finally, there are three factions of priests (all three are Lawful) within the cult that are distinguished according to the readings that they give from the Nahmeh: the philosopher priests (LN) who venerate the moral philosophy of the Nahmeh (many of these belong to the faction of the Preceptors, that now rule in Ylaruam); the monotheist priests (LN or LE), who identify Al-Kalim as the true guide to be venerated above all, as he is the example that they would most like to follow to ascend to perfection (mostly represented by the Faction of the Kin, descendents of Al-Kalim and religious fundamentalists of Abbashan who are trying to ascend to power); the polytheist priests (LG or LN), who venerate the Guardian Immortals (among which is the High Prophet) as a whole, a transcendent and pervasive higher force that guides and protects the mortals, and so they must not be named or distinguished but equally homaged (some dervishes share this idea, studying and honouring the elemental forces as physical manifestations of the Guardian Immortals). These three factions compete against each other to impose their vision of the word of the Prophet as the only acceptable one, and although frequently the diatribes result in localised armed conflict, up to now it has never caused a civil war in Ylaruam, as on one hand the Dream of Justice and Honour is generally respected, and on the other hand because the factions tend to leave and go to foreign counties to found new missions and convert or fight the infidels.

## **KARIMARI CULT**

**Worshipped in:** Ulimwengu (Serpent Peninsula)

The Karimari are a pigmy people hidden in the heart of the Serpent Peninsula who evolved there for millennia without contact with the outside. They have created an extremely simple culture bound to the surrounding natural environment that has always fed, protected, and hid them from the eyes of neighbouring predators. As such, the Karimari cult concentrates itself on worshipping

the land, **Ulimwengu** (which means "world" in their language), which watches over them and supplies enough to satisfy all their requirements. So the Karimari don't have any reason to worship an Immortal (and as a result none of them has ever tried to ascend among the Celestial Spheres), and the place of the Immortals in the Karimari mythos is taken by Ulimwengu.

For the Karimari, the land in which they live is alive and it is their mother, their friend, and their daughter. On one hand the land produces what they require to live and raises them as a kind mother; on the other hand they cure it and love it as they would their own children. Following the example of Ulimwengu, the Karimari seek only to achieve a balance with Creation, and to do this they respect the laws of nature and endeavour to maintain the natural balance around them. When a Karimari dies, he simply returns to the earth to recommence the life cycle, and is carefully laid down in a hole after having been exposed to the final goodbye of their beloved in a bed of petals and leaves. The moment of the separation is sad, but presupposes a new rebirth in Ulimwengu, in the form of an animal, plant, or human being. As such, the Karimari accept the death however it happens, believing that it is simply a ritual of passage to a new phase of the life cycle of which all play a part. For this reason, no Karimari priest ever seeks to return to life those who have been taken by death, as it would upset the natural cycle (the Karimari are thus bitter enemies of the undead).

The Karimari priests are all druids and acquire their powers from their land. They can achieve miracles as they are in tune with the earth, and so can lawfully alter the balance to produce the desired effects, in the best possible way. The Karimari druids don't lose their powers outside of the Karwana Mulumba (the Guardian Trees, an enormous circle of magical trees that surround the entire Ulimwengu and hide it from their enemies' eyes), as long as they remain intimately bound to nature and universal balance. The ruler of the Karimari is always a druid and usually becomes the region's highest level druid, a reference point for the entire Serpent Peninsula.

The truth about the Karimari priests' source of power resides in Kereenyaga – the Rock of Mystery, which lies at the centre of the circle of the Guardian Trees, about 5 miles south of Shani Kijiji, Ulimwengu's capital. Kereenyaga is an eons old 100 foot tall granite monolith, which instils reverence and a certain fear in all Karimari. Many of them also call it the Heart of Ulimwengu or the Son of the Thunderbolt, and according to Karimari mythos the soul of Ulimwengu is contained within it. In effect this belief corresponds to the truth.

Before the arrival of sentient species in the world, Mystara was a living creature, a monolith (an immortal being similar in to a planet) called Urt. During prehistory, a meteorite struck Urt in such a violent manner that it penetrated its protective mantle (the terrestrial crust) provoking a collapse of the core where its spirit lived. Upon Urt's request, the Immortals transferred its vital

essence elsewhere, and shaped the world in a way to safeguarding the integrity and the growth of the living races which at that moment risked extinction. So they created the Hollow World, and Urt's spirit was transferred into the monolith situated in the Serpent Peninsula. For eons Urt slept there, until the arrival of the Karimari and their animist philosophy. In the following millennia Kereenyaga served as a receptacle for all the hopes, desires and fears of the Karimari, and most of them believe that their land is alive. Kereenyaga grew, until Urt awoke and taking heed of their invocations created Ulimwengu. Even though technically it isn't an Immortal, Kereenyaga however acts as the guardian of an entire people due to the faith that they have in the land where they have lived since the dawn of time.

The Rock of Mystery has become an artefact created by the Karimari to protect themselves and Ulimwengu. The greatest of its powers is the hiding of Ulimwengu from outside eyes. It constantly projects an illusionary land over the entire nation, making it appear from above as a confused ensemble of jungles, streams, and hills without any settlements. This naturally hides the Karimari civilisation from anyone travelling above the trees, although anyone travelling through the forests normally isn't subject to the illusion. Moreover, Kereenyaga also prevents any attempt of magical divination on the area, causing any attempt to view the region to see the same illusion that they would see from flying overhead. Finally, the Rock as well as giving the druids their divine powers, has another characteristic: to all those considered friendly to Ulimwengu (certainly all the Karimari) it confers a constant blessing that grants a +1 bonus to all attack and damage rolls and to Saving Throws. The enemies of Ulimwengu suffer a -1 penalty to the same rolls (the curse cannot be removed while the enemy remains within the perimeter of the Guardian Trees).

## MINROTHISM

### Worshipped in: Minrothad

Minrothism is the name of the cult and the philosophy that worship **Minroth**, the Immortal who according to legend led his people to settle on the current islands of Minrothad, where they would find paradise and a happy land. The followers of Minrothism believe that the islands of Minrothad are a holy place touched by the Immortals, and that only the chosen can live there in happiness and abundance. To be able to reach such a state it is however necessary that the faithful live in peace and that everyone is committed to their own work, which besides gratifying them would lead them on the path of thoroughness and felicity. Moreover, the cult thinks that Minroth will return to the islands one day to reward the most deserving followers and give each the position they deserve within the Guilds. For this the followers of Minrothism feel more privileged than those who don't live in the Guilds. They are only rooted in this nation, where Minroth is patron of wealth, hope, and prosperity, and where true Minrothism

has helped to create a strong sense of unity and nationalism that unites the different Minrothaddans races. Minrothism celebrates three holy days per year: 1<sup>st</sup> of Onmun (the expected return of Minroth), 10<sup>th</sup> of Sagmon (birthday of Minroth) and 1<sup>st</sup> of Decmun (anniversary of his disappearance). The religion's clerics (that has taken root not only among the humans but also among the Minrothaddans demihumans) may only eat, wear, and use items made in the islands of Minrothad and usually carry the holy symbol of Minroth, a four feathered arrow.

## NITHIAN CULT

### Worshipped in: Nithia (Hollow World)

Rathanos	Fire, energy, power, male supremacy, pride
Pflarr	Magic, knowledge, protection, magical constructs
Maat	Justice, order, virtue, integrity, honesty, honour, loyalty, salvation
Horon/Orisis (Ixion)	Light, sun, war, heroism, fight against evil, balance and order, life cycle, rebirth
Isiris/Hathor (Valerias)	Love, passion, arts, beauty, protection, charity, fertility
Ptahr (Kagyar)	Craftsmanship, metallurgy, sculpture, construction
Amon (Odin)	Sky, storms, air, guile, knowledge, wisdom
Nithys (Protius)	Water, river Nithia, life, travel
Mut (Terra)	Prosperity, fertility, birth, earth, herders and farmers
Bastet	Fortune, wealth, instinct, protection, cats
Mahes (Ninfangle)	Hunting, battle, audacity, travel, rakasta and cats
Zephir (Asterius)	Travel, trade, guile, thieves, messengers, winds, moon
Kepher (Noumena)	Puzzles, mysteries, magic, knowledge, tactics, strategy and logic
Chardastes	Medicine, healing, health, purification
Nuptys (Nyx)	Funeral rites, necromancy, darkness and gloom, night, secrets
Thanatos	Death, oblivion, corruption
Ranivorus	Madness, destruction, hatred, gnolls
Apophis (Bachraeus)	Treachery, revenge, hatred, snakes, venom

The Nithian Cult has its origins in present day Alasiyan Basin between 1700 and 1400 BC, and it extended to all the provinces of Nithian Empire during the Imperial Age, finding followers from the eastern coast of the Isle of Dawn to the steppes of the Savage Coast. In 500 BC the Nithian civilisation was removed from outer Mystara by the will of its divine patrons, after Pharaoh Taphose and the Empire's most powerful nobles sinned against the Immortals by allying with the forces of Entropy and threatened the entire planet due to the destructive spells used in their civil war. At this point, the Immortals Rathanos and Pflarr, after purging Ranak, the Empire's capital, from Thanatos's corruption, transferring it into the Hollow World along with the deserving Nithians, and here re-founded the Kingdom of Nithia, where currently

the ancient pantheon is worshipped with the addition of Kepher (Noumena), first pharaoh of the new-born Nithia of the Hollow World.

Initially, the Nithians (a result of marriages between the Neathar tribes and the descendents of the Oltec-Azcans) worshipped different Immortals based on their tribe or region. So there were many cults and different pantheons in the Alasiyan Basin before the Imperial Age, each one a heritage of the ancient beliefs of the races that travelled to live in the region. With the advent of Pflarr (first native divinity) and later of Chardastes, the Nithians began to unite into large kingdoms and finally became a true empire, and the cults were fused together, eclipsed, or integrated by those of the ethnic group that from time to time were able to take the power. In particular, the worship of a unique and absolute principle, creator of the world and of life, is spread largely among the Nithians, who identify this entity with different names (Ra, Atum, Aton, Khepera), until the cult of Rathanos was imposed on all as the principle balance of creation and creator force of life and knowledge. Rathanos's supremacy was sanctioned by the unification of the kingdoms under Chardastes, First Pharaoh of the Nithian Empire, who was proclaimed superior to all the Kings and the Princes, as a direct descendent of Ra and his earthly herald, destined to rule by divine right. This formed the basis of the structure of imperial Nithia, which with the unification of High and Low Nithia in 1500 BC began what would later be remembered as the Imperial Age.

Chardastes was able to inaugurate a mysticism that took the ancient customs and beliefs of the various Nithian regions, reworking them to his own advantage. At that time there were five strong religious trends present within the Empire: the Enneade (which worshipped a pantheon of 9 divinities) spread among the folks of the south, particularly the descendents of the Oltec-Azcans; Ogdoad (a cult based on four universal principles, each embodied by a male and a female entity, which is therefore made up of eight divinities) widespread in the north (particularly the descendents of the Neathar); the cult of Ptahr as the only creator, which was particular strong in the west near Rockhome; the religion of Bat, sacred cow generator of the creation and associated with female fertility, worshipped in the central region; and the so-called Triad of the Delta, based on the veneration of Amon, omnipotent god of the sky, his wife Mut, goddess of the land and fertility, and their son Zephyr, god of the moon, arts, and trade. Using both political and military means Chardastes undermined Nithia's independent religions, and introduced Rathanos into each as the main figure of the pantheon, creating a unification that over his rule was assimilated by all the Nithian population. So Ra became the only creator god, the origin from which the others originated or were incarnations of. Integrating Ogdoad, the four first principles who by themselves were in disharmony and instability gave rise to Ra, the great balancer who took the dominion of the universe in his

own hands. The Atum of the Enneade (a creator force that combined with its own shadow to create the air, the land and the sky) was considered the adult incarnation of Ra (as the real creator) and is considered the father of Amon (Triad of the Delta), who joined with Mut (the earth) to give birth to creation and the other divinities according to the scheme of the Enneade (which later incorporated the figure of Isis to that of Bat in her form of Hathor, sacred mother cow of Horon). Even the cult of Ptahr was inserted into this great religious reform, and Ptahr became the great craftsman who had moulded the cosmic egg from which Ra was born.

So, according to the cosmology of the Imperial Age, at the beginning the universe was represented by four principal fundamentals, each one of which is given of a male and a female part: Nu/Naunet Water (Protius), Kuk/Kauket Chaos (Thanatos), Amun/Amunet Air (Odin), and Huh/Huhet Eternity (Ixion). From the sum of these entities was born the spark of life to balance the universe, and which Ptahr (Kagyar) enclosed in the Cosmic Egg that he moulded to give form to life. From the egg issued the scarab (Khepri), the form of Ra Rising, who straightaway became a crying baby (Nefertum), from whose tears were born the human beings (Creator Ra), and when the crying stopped, the baby grew and changed into Atum-Ra or Rathanos (Omnipotent Ra), who completed the work of creation and began to govern the universe as it had formed. From Ra's thought, Maat took form, goddess of justice and cosmic order, while from Ra's word Pflarr was born, lord of knowledge and wisdom, guardian of the living and the dead. Maat and Pflarr helped Ra to bring order to his creation, and became his advisers and the judges of mortal work. Ra was later joined to his own shadow and bred Amon the Sky (Odin) and Mut the Earth (Terra) who together gave birth to Orisis and Isis (Ixion and Valerias, who represent Huh/Huhet, the generator force of eternity), Nuptys and Thanatos (Nyx and Thanatos, who represent Kuk/Kauket, creation's destructive aspect). To divide the sky from the land, Ra created Zephyr the Wind (Asterius), who was set to hold the celestial vault above the land with his wings, and Nythis the Moisture (Protius) who enveloped Mut to preserve her from the force of the wind and created the waters and the oceans. Orisis married Isis and became the King of the mortals, but his brother Thanatos was jealous of his power, and Nuptys herself had wanted Orisis as her partner. Instigated by Thanatos, Nuptys was then presented to Orisis with the countenance of his wife and lay with him. After Orisis's departure, Thanatos abused his sister in her sleep, and from this union were born Apophis and Ranivorus, children of betrayal and envy. Thanatos therefore took his frustration out on Orisis and with Ranivorus's complicity killed him and reduced him to pieces, which he scattered over the land. Isis with Pflarr's help reassembled her husband's corpse and gave it life, helping him in his battle against their brother. Thanatos was driven away, but returned in disguise and



destroyed the amulet that held the soul of the brother in the hope of killing him. The soul however, protected by the spell of Pflarr, was reincarnated in Isis's womb and returned to life as Horon, the Living King (because of this Isis is also worshipped as Hathor, "house of Horon"), who defeated, once and for all, the usurper and castrated him, driving him from his kingdom along with his son Ranivorus. At the later request of Ra, Ptahr moulded two figures who took life, Bastet and Mahes (Ninfangle), the panther goddess and the lion god, which were sent into the world to follow Thanatos and Ranivorus to bring upon them Ra's revenge and to protect the living (they particular are considered the guardians of the Nithian nation). When Ra wanted Horon next to himself to join the other gods, the Living King chose the wisest and most virtuous among the mortals, Chardastes, and handed him the symbols of power, the hooked staff, the whip, and the crown, and along with his mother ascended to the sky to join with Ra. Apophis however, Orisis's illegitimate son and Horon's stepbrother, was resentful of the choice and for having been excluded from Ra's blessing, and thus conspired against Chardastes, and with the support of his mother and Thanatos captured Chardastes and exiled him. However, with the help of Justice (Maat) and of Pflarr, Chardastes returned to retake what was his by right, and Apophis was also chased from the kingdom, transforming into a snake and revealing his true nature. With the help of Pflarr and his immense wisdom, Chardastes founded humanity's greatest empire, passing into history as the First Pharaoh, combining the people from the place in which the sun rose to that in which it set, and thus magnifying the power of his father and of the supreme Ra on the entire world. So after him all the Pharaohs have been the earthly representatives of Ra, children of Horon and Orisis, and upon their death ascend into the sky to join with Ra.

When the forces of Chaos returned to cast their shadow over Nithia, some of the nobles listened to the promises of power of Thanatos, Ranivorus, and Apophis, and were guilty of arrogance against Ra. In particular, the Pharaoh Taphose the Mad in an attempt to silence all those that opposed his attempt to raise the cult of Thanatos above Ra's, used the secrets that had been revealed to him by Chaos to bring Death and Destruction on Nithia. It was at that point that Ra intervened to punish him and his followers. Ra commanded his children in the Empire of Nithia to separate the worthy from the unrighteous, and after he had marked with his seal all those to be saved, the divine Rathanos sent four calamities to fall on Nithia and punish the evil. Thus the land around Nithia became arid and produced scarcities that starved the wrongful; the air became hotter and caused diseases that killed the infidels by causing them to fall prey to atrocious suffering; the sun became red and burnt the enemies of Ra with tongues of fire; and finally night enveloped the world and it took away with itself the traitors between weeping and gnashing of teeth. And when the sun shone again, it was marked by

the blood of the dead and remained red for eternity, while around the River Nithia nothing remained of the ancient land. In the midst of the devastation only the city of Karnak was spared, and within it the redeemed were protected from the Immortals' fury, who gave them a new Pharaoh, Kepher the Searcher, to rebuild the empire and forge a new alliance with Ra and Pflarr, breaking once for all the curse that had made Taphose mad before again replenishing the hearts of the humans and ascending to the sky among the gods thanks to his wisdom and devotion. After his disappearance, Nithia again knew war, but Kepher's influence and the power of Rathanos prevented the Nithians from destroying themselves, and after having divided the land into the Kingdoms of High and Low Nithia, the wisest among the clerics chose a new Pharaoh to perpetuate the tradition and govern the Kingdoms of Nithia, and thus it has always advanced from that moment, with Ra's blessing. According to the Nithian culture, the gods watch the mortals and send signals and judgements to their servants, the priests to show the way outlined by omnipotent Rathanos. In particular, the clerics have the task to advise and obey the enlightened individual chosen by Ra to lead the Nithians and make them respect the dictates of the gods: the Pharaoh. The Pharaoh embodies Rathanos's authority on earth given his dual role as the Great Priest of Rathanos and King of Kings, unifying in himself temporal and spiritual power, and is a hereditary office (handed down from father to son); that can only be revoked if the dynastic line is exhausted without a male heir, or in the rare case in which all the high priests of the divinities that protect Nithia unanimously decide that the Pharaoh is unworthy to rule and no longer represents Rathanos (which becomes especially evident if the Pharaoh doesn't show clerical powers). The symbols of pharaonic power are diverse: the whip and the hooked staff (to indicate the power of Ra and Pflarr), the talisman with the open eye (symbol of Omniscient Kepher); and the double crown of High and Low Nithia, with the vulture surpassing the cobra (symbols associated with the divinities Nekhbet and Wadjet, protectors of the two regions on the surface world, later identified as the goddess Mut following the unification of the empire).

Every Nithian city has a patron of reference, although in each there are temples present dedicated to all the major divinities (the so-called Enneade, that is the first nine Immortals cited) and to some of the minor divinities. They all consider Ra as the most important Immortal, followed by Pflarr, divine son created in his image without the help of one of the ancestral gods and therefore purer than the other sons. The various temples are independent, although they worship the same divinity, and each is led by its own High Cleric. The richest temples that belong to the divinities of the Enneade form the so-called Temple of the Great Priests, which is formed from the high clerics of the first eight Immortals plus the Pharaoh as Ra's representative. These priests don't have authority outside

of their own temple, but exercise their influence over the Pharaoh and over their brothers through suggestions, loans of money or favours, and political alliances with the Kings of High and Low Nithia and with the head governors of the various cities, holding a large part of the political power of the empire.

The only three Immortals viewed as enemies of Nithia, as they have always been opposed to Rathanos, Pflarr, and Orisis are Thanatos (lord of death and chaos), Ranivorus (enemy of Pflarr as the the bringer of madness and corruption while Pflarr is bearer of knowledge and wisdom), and Apophis (patron of revenge and hate). Their cults are absolutely forbidden within the empire and their followers are captured and executed anywhere they are discovered. Unluckily, because of the presence of the two giant annelids disguised as enormous towers (the Towers of Soth and Sekhaba) in the desert around Nithia, Thanatos and his allies continue to make converts and corrupt the Nithians, threatening the stability of both kingdoms and patiently await the expected moment in which they can reveal Taphose's ancient destructive spells (forbidden by Rathanos and buried under Ranak) to the Nithians, to bring destruction in the Hollow World. Nuptys, despite being associated with night and death, isn't thought as an enemy of Ra, as she has never acted against Rathanos, although she used her arts to deceive Orisis and conceive Apophis. Because of this she was cursed by Rathanos who took from her womb the spark of life, making her eternally incapable of procreating again, and as such she is considered unlucky. The only dominion that Ra has given her is over night and darkness (and therefore secrets), and over the dead, of which he is the keeper along with Orisis, the only one to return to life by Ra's will. The result is that the clerics of Nuptys are assigned to the funeral rites along with those of Orisis, and unlike the latter, they prepare the corpses of the guardians of the pharaohs' tombs: they have the task of creating mummies, quick to animate and avenge any offense endured by the holy place. Due to this, only the priests of Orisis, Nuptys, and Ra can summon the deceased in Nithia, as only these have dominion over the souls of the dead. Naturally all the clerics of the entropic Immortals challenge this restriction by drawing on the powers of the three divinities, and as such they are despised by the population as subverters of the natural order, and are hunted by the followers of Orisis–Horon and Rathanos.

The figure of Ixion in the Nithian pantheon merits further examination. He simultaneously covers two roles: as Orisis (the Dead King) he is the patron of rebirth, the balance of the life cycle, and keeper of the afterlife, the one who prevents the souls from fleeing Maat's judgement. As Horon (the Living King) he is the patron of the sun and purity, of war and heroism, and is associated to the divine force of Ra that destroys the evil and that combats Thanatos and the legions of Death and Chaos. Horon–Orisis marks the eternal cycle that affects all the Pharaohs, who live their mortal life in Rathanos's service with the

support of Horon, and that are revived in Data (the Afterworld) to continue to serve Ra along with Orisis, lord of the virtuous souls.

According to the figurative arts and the Nithian mythos, each divinity is associated with an animal and is represented in paintings and in writing (a true art made of ideograms called hieroglyphs) with a human body and the head of the animal (zoomorphism). The animal corresponding to each divinity is viewed as sacred, and normally the faithful must respect them and avoid eating their meat (this restriction only applies to the animals linked with the Enneade). Anyone who contravenes this law is liable to be whipped, jailed, and even killed (based on the severity of the law in the province where the sacrilege happened). Naturally the animals linked to the enemy divinities of Nithia (like the snake, scorpion, and hyena) are considered impure and must be driven away or exterminated whenever the opportunity presents itself, as they are viewed as the emissaries of their respective Immortal, like those associated with the guardians of the empire (which should always be treated well, as no one can know whether it is a simple animal or an emissary of an Immortal). The animals are as follows:

Immortal	Animal
Rathanos	Phoenix or Scarab
Pflarr	Jackal
Maat	Heron
Orisis/Horon (Ixion)	Hawk
Isiris/Hathor (Valerias)	Peacock or Cow
Ptahr (Kagyar)	Bull or Ram
Amon (Odin)	Raven or Sparrow
Nythis	Crocodile
Mut (Terra)	Vulture
Bastet	Cat or Panther
Mahes (Ninfangle)	Lion
Zephyr (Asterius)	Heron
Kepher (Noumena)	Ibis
Chardastes	Cobra
Nuptys (Nyx)	Bat
Thanatos	Scorpion
Ranivorus	Hyena
Apophis (Bachraeus)	Viper

## PHANATON CULT

**Worshipped in:** Savage Coast, Isle of Dawn, Thanegioth Archipelago, Davania, Alphantia

Ui (Ordana)	Nature, protection of forests and sylvan races
Marau–Ixui (Terra)	Balance of the life cycle, earth, birth, fertility, seasons
Uatumà (Zirchev)	Hunting, survival, audacity
Night Spider (Arachne Prime)	Oppression, darkness, deceit, spiders and aranea

### HISTORY OF THE PHANATONS

The phanatons are intelligent beings similar to fat flying squirrels that have an extraplanar origin. After their home plane (an outer plane created by Terra) was invaded by the planar spiders led by the evil Arachne Prime, they

were enslaved and subsequently forcedly deported to Mystara when Arachne Prime and her followers fled from their home plane to the Prime to avoid death. The planar spiders coupled with the giant Mystaran spiders to produce the aranea, which took to viewing Arachne Prime as their great mother and goddess. They created new colonies throughout the world in which they brought their phanaton slaves, and wove an intricate web of contacts that brought about the creation of the first and only aranea empire of Mystara, the Aracnite Empire based in the city of Aran, on the Lost Plateau of the future Isle of Dawn before the Blackmoorian Age. When the Great Rain of Fire caused the world to fall into chaos however, the Aracnite Empire fragmented and the colonies became isolated from the motherland very quickly falling victim to anarchy. In this period many of the phanaton slaves rebelled against their masters, killing them and fleeing to later found independent tribes. Since then all free phanatons on Mystara have sworn revenge against the hated aranea, and particularly in the nation of Jibarù (on the Savage Coast) always practice a policy of aggression in its conflicts with the neighbouring Herath magocracy (a nation secretly dominated and populated by aranea).

#### PRECEPTS OF THE CULT

According to the phanaton mythos, Marau-Ixui (Mother Earth) created the phanatons to bring balance to the world and counterbalance to the evil aranea. Unfortunately due to the magic and superior guile of the aranea, the first phanatons were reduced to slavery and forced to serve their enemies for a long time. Only when Ui (Mother Forest) gave them the spark of intelligence did they manage to elevate themselves above their enemies, and free themselves from the yoke of slavery and devise traps and natural weapons capable of combating them. Later, due to the intercession of Uatumà (the Hunter), Ui's friend, who taught them to hunt and become true predators, were they able to survive the aranea attacks and create their own kingdom, earning the respect of their neighbours. They are therefore the antithesis of the aranea, destined from birth to hunt them to prevent their proliferation, and take this task extremely seriously.

The phanatons are fervent supporters of the triad that protects them, and all pay daily homage to the three divinities in three different phases of the day. Upon awaking they say a common prayer to Marau-Ixui, to thank her for life and ask for prosperity and balance for the day. Upon the hunters' return at sunset, the village gathers together to thank Uatumà for his assistance in the daily hunt and to help them survive. Finally, before sleeping, the phanatons give thanks to Ui for having protected them during the day, for having given them a place in which to live, work, and rest, and to invoke her protection on the village until sunrise.

Naturally, given the phanaton mythos, the demonic creature par excellence is the spider. This means that the **Spider of the Night (Arachne Prime)** is considered the enemy of the phanaton people and their Immortals.

## SAMDU

**Worshipped in:** Sind, Shahjapur (Hollow World)

Ayazi/Himayeti/Aksyri (Ixion)	Preserve balance (birth, life, death), order
Kala (Hel)	Death, entropy, corruption, reincarnation

Samdu is a religious philosophy based on the veneration of what is defined as the universal vital spirit, the samdu (literally: "higher being" or "ultimate goal"), a primordial force present in all the things of the universe and with which every individual is called to join to achieve the perfect balance. For the followers of Samdu (also called samdu), all living things possess part of this vital spirit and as such are worthy of respect. In particular, seeing that for many the samdu can be difficult to conceive without concrete reference points, the priests have used the diverse manifestations of the divinities (those who are thought to already be in harmony with the samdu) as practical references to follow and worship to become one with the samdu.

According to this philosophy, every mortal creature travels a long road of purification, and after death he is reincarnated in a new form based, more and less, purely on the actions he completed in his previous life. Thus, those who live a virtuous life and follows the teachings of the Immortals can aspire to rising in caste, until it could even become an incarnation of one of the divinities or one with the samdu, while for those that act in an evil and improper way can expect a punishment that consists of reincarnation in a lower caste or even impure animals. The samdu for that reason believe that every living creature can be the incarnation of a divinity, and as such the doctrine enjoins them to act honourably and with respect in their encounters with any living being. The cult's principal characteristic is its belief in the possibility of continuous incarnations of each/every creature aiming for a state of complete communion with the Samdu, and the social stratification of castes allows everyone to understand at what level of perfection an individual has attained.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> The caste system present in Shahjapur is similar but not identical to that of Sind, since the latter has been modified following the internecine fighting and the events that have brought about the same creation of Shahjapur in the Hollow World. Both however are agreed in accepting the castes as a divide imposed by the divinities (even if in reality it was a measure introduced by the chambahara in order to layer the Sindhi society) and in the censuring and forbidding of any type of intimate relationship (from marriage to the sharing of a meal at the same table) between members of different castes.

In Shahjapur, at the top of the social scale there is the caste of the Brahmats (the spiritual leaders), and immediately under it is that of the Shaktiri, or the nobles that occupy the positions of command in the army and in the governmental bureaucracy. In third position are found the Vasiri, which comprises craftsmen, merchants and landed classes, followed by the Sudyars (non-specialist workers, labourers and servants). Outside of this caste system are the Gajanta, the so-called untouchables or impure, which generally live in isolated quarters, don't participate in the social life or to the governing of the nation and have limited contact with members of the other castes (usually

The achievement of the samdu can be arrived at by following two different paths (equal and co-existent), based on the interpretation of the philosophy given by the two streams of thought in which the priests are divided. The more radical samdu (philosophers) believe that the spirit is everywhere and so they pay homage to a spiritual universal force, transcendent and pervading at the same time. For these followers, the way to the samdu can happen either through communion with the Immortals, through the study of natural phenomena or their own mind, and all have the same value. The samdu philosophers show a profound sense of fatalism that frequently brings about social inertia and indifference in encounters with others, as they concentrate their attention only on the spiritual and contemplative sphere.

Indeed as according to this philosophy all things are part of the samdu, every action is a form of veneration, and so the only thing that can be done is to live your own life normally without trying to change it. The only remaining way of improvement is that within, and it is on this that they concentrate, working to enhance their soul and conscience and not the surrounding reality, already full of the samdu. Frequently the priests of this philosophy spend their life in complete asceticism, pondering the mysteries of the universe and perfecting control of their spirit and body to become one with creation. This type of philosophy is well rooted in Shahjapur, which shows an extremely fatalistic culture and apathetic traits, tendencies also reflected in the static indolence of Shahjapur society.

Other samdu (pantheists) instead think that it is simpler to achieve perfect communion with the vital force by revering and following the teachings of those that have already attained this lofty state; i.e. the Immortals. So, it is to them that the worshippers actually direct their worship asking for omens and portents to guide their lives towards their own improvement and communion with the universe. For the pantheist samdu, the incarnation of the

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for reasons of labour, given that they do the jobs considered by all impure like collecting the litter and handle the cadavers).

In Sind instead, the dominant caste following the civil war has become that of the nobles, called Himaya, which has even renamed the other castes in order to impose the new social order. Under them are the Rishiya (the spiritual heads), considered by the faithful of a higher moral level even to the Himaya. In effect even the Rajadhiraja, the King of Kings of Sind, must bow before the Purohita, the head of all the Rishiya (the oldest and wisest among the Rishiya of the country), an overt legacy of the order preceding the reform. In third position appears a new caste created by those that are able to claim great power, the Jadugerya (arcane spellcasters). Craftsmen, merchants and farmers belong instead to the lower caste of the Prajaya, and closing the scale the caste of the Kuliya formed from servants, labourers and workers.

Only those that by right of birth belong to the caste of the priests or of the nobles could become clerics, and normally the priests are dedicated to this profession (in Shahjapur there are nevertheless other mages in the priestly caste) while the nobles become warriors. The druids and the mystics/monks instead usually come from the families of craftsmen and farmers. Note that many orders of mystics/monks accept members of any caste without any discrimination, such that it often allows views that members of different castes have the same importance within of a Sindhi or Shahjapur monastery.

divinity that interacts with the mortals to guide, incite, and protect them is a clear sign of power both of the mortals and the divinity to be able to modify their own destiny and the surrounding reality. As such, for the samdu, actions are much more important than thought, as the way to universal harmony is through work. While the fatalist samdu preach detachment from their desires and indifference (but not impoliteness) to the neighbour, the samdu pantheists instead urge the faithful to actively work to enhance the nation, earn honour within their caste, and satisfy the Immortals. This form of cult is very popular in Sind, where it took root following the civil war that brought about an awakening of the faithful's conscience and a better adherence to the worship of the Immortals in regard to the intimist approach of the samdu.

The samdu acknowledge the existence of no fewer than 33,333 Immortals, as can be seen by the profusion of temples, altars, and grottos consecrated to various heroes and divinities that often turn up in different forms and epochs in the histories and legends of Sind and Shahjapur, nations where this religion is widespread. However, if you more closely examine the pantheons of these two nations, it is possible to see that the thousands of worshipped divinities actually lead back to just a few true Immortals, each of which are honoured by various names and identities based on the different ways in which its manifestations and teachings have been passed down. Some of them don't have a corresponding Immortal, but are simply incarnations of ideals like love and hate, peace and war, law and chaos. However, for the samdu mythos it isn't important whether an incarnation corresponds to an Immortal or an abstract idea: as long as it involves a way that leads to perfection and harmony with creation. The faithful separately honour each incarnation of the divinity with pilgrimages to the sacred places and celebrations that includes fasts, prayers, and festivities. The priests, those with more energy, are preoccupied with mastering the mysteries of the universe and perfecting their spirit, dictate the times and ways for the correct veneration of the Immortals.

The most common creation myth among the samdu tells that the Prince of the Sun (Ixion) created the universe, which is embodied in the Trimurti of Ayazi (Creator), Himayeti (Protector), and Aksyri (Destroyer), the three souls of the divinity. Ayazi is linked to everything to do with birth, creation, and fertility. The legends relate her most famous incarnations as Valda (the mother of the first Sindhi raja) and Eta, the priest who taught the farmers how to irrigate their fields, saving the Sindhi from famine. Himayeti is the protector of life and is embodied in mortal form to defend his followers any time that they are threatened by a grave danger. There are numerous stories about the apparitions of Himayeti to guide valiant heroes to victory against the enemies of Sind or help those afflicted by plague or drought, in the form of an animal (her famous incarnations are tortoise, horse, and elephant, the three sacred animals of the Sindhi), human

and even dwarf. Aksyiri represents death, destruction, and the final judgement that precedes rebirth, and thus becomes important when the life of a living creature approaches its end. Aksyiri occupies himself with gathering the souls of the dead, evaluating their purity and reincarnating them to a new life until they are sufficiently pure to contemplate the creation along with the Prince of the Sun. Aksyiri appears only in dreams or in the brief moment in which the flame of life are extinguished in a dying person but has never appeared physically. Legend tells that only if the world is destroyed will Aksyiri appear to reincarnate Mystara along with all its inhabitants. This legend is now part of history for the people of Shahjapur, since they awoke under the red sun of the Hollow World, as they are the living witnesses of the actions and salvation brought by the Prince of the Sun.

While all the aspects of Ixion are linked to life and rebirth, Kala (Hel) embodies death and chaos for the samdu, and is the Immortal opposed to the Prince of the Sun. She occupies herself by gathering the souls of the dead and reincarnating them, but unlike Aksyiri, she does so with the sole aim of increasing chaos in the universe. Kala is preoccupied with finding the most evil creatures and at their death she takes their soul and reincarnates them in babies that could grow into positions of power (rulers or priests), thus subverting the natural order of things (advancing them in the social scale rather than pulling them back for the serious deficiencies that tarnish them) to bring chaos, pain, and suffering everywhere.

Kala is worshipped under many forms, based on the incarnations attributed to her that relate to exceptionally evil characters of Sindhi legend. Many of those that worship her do so in the hope that she will save them and their families. Others instead totally embrace her philosophy and attempt to spread hate and destruction in the world, in the hope of later being repaid with positions of command once reincarnated. In Sind the sect of the Buraiya (a cult of pitiless assassins and thieves) has worked for centuries in her service, despite the efforts over the years by several Rajadhiraja to root out and destroy them.

The cult of Samdu is spread by the caste of the spiritual heads, which are honoured and respected by all followers as saints. The members of the priestly caste act as intermediaries between the faithful and the Immortals, the bearers of the Immortals' teachings and warnings. When a follower wants to ask a favour of the Immortals, he takes his petition to a priest, who advises him on the best incarnation to ask for aid and on the best way to do so. The follower can then select if he wants to celebrate the ceremony alone to gain favour with the gods or give something to the monk and leave it all up to him; naturally the majority leave these tasks in the hands of the priests, as they are more skilled in understanding which methods of veneration must be employed to obtain the favour of the gods.

No true hierarchical organisation exists among the samdu, but all acknowledge the authority of the Purohita,

the supreme spiritual head, who is always the oldest priest (and so is thought to be the wisest), still alive within the kingdom. He doesn't have any acknowledged institutional task; it is a purely spiritual and honorific office. All the samdu pay him great respect and his word is always attentively listened to, even if ultimately it has no value in law (and nor does the word of any other priest, unless he belongs to the ruling caste). However quite often the faithful follow the indications of the more dedicated (in respect to the conduct imposed by the laws of the country) priests. The priests moreover have the ritual task of blessing the fields for the harvest, purifying the irrigation waters, celebrate the principal festivals, and advise the faithful so that they cleanse their soul and be rewarded in the new incarnation (because of this many priests act as advisers to the more important governors). Due to their role as spiritual guide, the members of the priestly caste are the only ones who can easily have contact with members of all the castes in which the people are divided, infringing even the taboo of not breaking bread with members of castes different to his own, although he must later purify himself with ritual ablutions and prayers.

Not all the members of the priestly cast are divine spellcasters: the majority (70%) are clerics, but there are also some monks (about 10%), and druids (5%), the majority of these live as ascetic nomads, wandering from one place to another and offer their services to the people in return for food. The remaining individuals (about 15%) perform the role of sages and teachers (Specialised NPC according to Classic D&D, Experts according to the Third Edition D&D). Among the clerics, there are polytheists (the majority) as well as philosophers and specialists, particularly devoted to one incarnation or honouring the entire samdu pantheon.

The priests wear a dhoti (a typical garment of male Sindhis), which is a long cotton (the richer) or linen (the poorer or the ascetics) robe neatly wound around the waist and at the ankles in a way that resembles a pair of pantaloons gathered at the ankles, and a short sleeved light shirt of the same colour in the warm periods, adding a camel-hair cape during the colder periods. Moreover they are distinguished by the headgear that they always wear, a white turban. A few wear a necklace (the richer the priest the more precious its materials) with the holy symbol of the worshipped Immortal incarnation (in the case of the specialist clerics) etched on it.

Finally, because of the particular doctrine about reincarnation, the priests take great care with spells that return the dead to life. Indeed, although it isn't forbidden by their religion, they rarely revive a devout person, as this could prevent them the chance of being reincarnated in a better and higher form (a member of a higher caste or even the mortal incarnation of an Immortal). On the other hand it is much more probable that a priest will raise a known criminal from the dead, if there is a good chance of redeeming and purifying his own soul, to avoid swelling Kala's ranks.

## SHAMANISM

**Worshipped in:** The world's backward cultures (Ethengar, Atruaghin, Jen, Norwold, Thanegioth, Yazak)

Shamanism indicates a form of mysticism among many of Mystara's backward cultures characterised by an individual's profound bond with the Spirit World and the elemental spirits of nature. Despite the term shaman being inappropriately used in many cultures to designate an individual with divine powers (e.g. shamans of Atruaghin, shamans of Rafiel, goblinoid shamans), the true shaman is the only one who alone, after a vision and a test, can forge a special bond with the natural world and that of the spirits and to freely understand what his spirit perpetually bound guide is. The spiritual shaman takes his own powers from the special bond that he has with the natural spirits around himself and particularly with the Spirit World due to his spirit guide. That which differentiates a simple cleric from a shaman is the way in which the two obtain their divine powers: a priest needs instruction, discipline and to follow a canonised path devoted to an Immortal or to an ethos (Law or Chaos), while for the shaman his power is a natural self-induced discovery, never an ability that is learnt, and derives from the bond with the Spirit World and with its entities. Also because of his symbiosis with the natural world a shaman doesn't have any interest in technology or seek to possess particularly advanced items, as he aims to remain in a peaceful relationship with the natural and spirit world.

The principle tasks of a spiritual shaman are to act as a mediator between the spirits and the mortals and protect nature and those that live within and respect its laws. It is up to the shaman to prevent animals from being brutally and needlessly killed and that the natural spirits are always protected and content. The spiritual shamans are not against hunting, but seek to regulate it to avoid the extinction of animal species' in a fixed territory, and intervene to assure a quick death to injured animals, or to avenge the spirits hurt by the acts of foolish mortals. The shaman's intimate knowledge about the Spirit World and the character of the spirits gives him the ability to establish the best place to camp or build a village without offending the spirits present and perform the right rituals to obtain their protection. Finally, they can help the common folk to identify their own animal totem, which is the spirit most closely attuned to their own soul and personality, and due to the shaman's magic can be set in contact with this particular to obtain its aid and guide. However, they do not acquire a shaman's powers, but simply reinforce a bond with a particular exponent of the Spirit World (their own animal totem) which has several physical and personality traits in common with the subject.

The spiritual shaman usually dresses in clothing appropriate to his culture so that one can immediately see what his role and his social position area; so he wears showy clothing made from the skin of his animal totem, or wears items made from parts of his animal totem (like a

horsehair headdress, or a tiger-teeth necklace, or a robe of peacock feathers, etc.); therefore making it easy to tell what a shaman's spirit guide is, just by the way he dresses. Moreover, every self-respecting shaman always carries a musical instrument (usually percussion like drums, but it isn't rare to also find wind instruments), without which he cannot cast any spell, which also serves to attract the attention of the spirits and the mortals, and to impose his voice on any discussion.

Finally, to emphasise their relationship with the spirits and inspire great reverence and fear in other individuals, now and then the spiritual shamans paint their face with brightly pigmented paints, giving the impression of having particularly inclined and deep-set eyes, hollowed cheeks, square but proud features, and even go as far as to portray fake yellow ochre coloured fangs, which run from the corners of the mouth to the chin.

### THE SPIRIT GUIDE

Each spiritual shaman is characterised by the fact of having a spirit guide (also called a totem, or totemic animal) bound to him, which is a creature of the Spirit World that resembles a common real world animal (in practice a humanoid with animal features), which is determined at the moment of the discovery of his powers (or during character creation). Indeed many spirits exist all over Mystara, some of these are animal spirits (and are usually found among the herds) whilst others are natural spirits linked to a specific plant or place (rivers, woods, fields, prairies, etc.). The presence of this spirits isn't common knowledge, and even the sages and the other more learned spellcasters are often ignorant of the existence of the spirits of nature and the Spirit World (a dimension that itself came into contact with the Mystaran Multiverse millennia ago, following the Great Rain of Fire of 3000 BC), and confuse these spirits with the fey.

When the spirit guide (it is always an animal spirit) appears for the first time, the shaman contracts a kind of malady that renders him feverish and weakens him to such an extent that he enters a comatose state, during which his soul establishes an unbreakable bond with his spirit guide and learns of his new powers. However, upon awakening, the shaman is struck by a disability (a secondary effect of the malady that took him into the trance), which, forever, marks his physical and mental state.

The spirit guide acts as the spiritual shaman's sense of right and wrong, showing disappointment if the character doesn't behave in an adequate manner and neglects or ignores his duties to the spirits and nature. The spirit guide can manifest its disappointment by interrupting its contact with the shaman, thus depriving him of its magical powers and special abilities that he gains from the spiritual bond with his totem. The powers, as happens in the case of common priests, can usually only be recovered after having completed a dangerous task or a mission to placate the anger of his spirit guide (a task set by the DM).

The spirit guide always remains with the shaman, travelling invisibly at his side: no one can see it (apart

from the spiritual shaman), not even those with more powerful spells, short of using a detection of the spirits (the *Knowledge of the Spirits* general skill only allows one to determine if a spirit is present within 20 metres, not see them, and only functions when a shaman is concentrated expressly for this reason). The spirit remains anchored to the soul of the spiritual shaman, which no one can force away (not even a *destruction of evil* dispels it, although an anti-magic field temporarily returns it to its own dimension – it reappears when the shaman leaves the anti-magic field), and accompanies his soul into the Spirit World each time that the shaman enters a trance or dies. The spirit is always immaterial whilst on the Mystaran Multiverse’s Prime Plane, and only becomes corporeal and visible when the shaman enters the Spirit World, in which case it immediately appears next to the shaman in the form of an intelligent, speaking animal, which guides him to the best of its ability through the dimension.

## TANAGOGRE CULT

**Worshipped in:** Tangor, Arm of the Immortals

The Shapechanger (Korotiku)	Astuteness, clear thinking, freedom, fun, guile, subterfuge, wisdom
Karaash	War, victory, conquest, tactics, force
Macroblan	Prosperity, trade, money, wealth, greed
Gorrziok	Oceans, extreme natural phenomena, creation and destruction
Pyrak (Ixion)	Light, sun, fire, power, magic
The Celestial Traveller (Sinbad)	Travel, exploration, adventure, courage, cross any barrier or border
Sumag (Terra)	Balance of the life cycle, earth, fertility, agriculture
The Celestial Architect (Polunius)	Architecture, arts and craftsmanship, creativity
The Infernal Judge (Masawu)	Deceit, fiction, corruption, illusion, manipulation

### HISTORY OF THE TANAGOGRES

The tanagogres are a race formed from the ogres and the Tanagoro who live in the Tangor peninsula and who founded the two colonies of Gombar and Suma’a in the Arm of the Immortals around the VII century AC (ref. Ogrekin cited in *Dragon Magazine* #200). There isn’t much on their true history, but they probably originated following a mass migration of humanoids from the western coast of Brun to southern Skothar arriving there around 700 BC. The most likely hypothesis is that most of the ogres stopped in the current Tangor Peninsula and fought there for decades under the lead of Karaash, before enslaving the native population, while some Tanagoro fled to the island of Zyxl and to the Tangor Chain more to the north. The ogres, lacking males skilled in war, lay with the enslaved humans, to give rise to the first tanagogre, as a submissive race that was superior to the humans. Over time the tanagogres acquired power by occupying themselves with the fields that before had been left to the Tanagoro slaves and that the ogres weren’t interested in, like craftsmanship, trade, and especially navigation and

exploration. With the passage of time and the decreasing numbers of the ogres, the army also fell in the hands of the tanagogres, who finally enacted a cultural revolution by achieving positions of power and prestige equal to the ogre nobles, who until then had occupied the highest social level and had based their power on the control of lands, slaves, and tanagogre subjects. When it was clear that the true economic and military power was in the hands of the tanagogres, the ogres were quick to grant them several privileges to avoid an uprising, and possibly around the I century AC ending up with them dying out however, because of the numerous interracial marriages and the decline of the species due to excessive interbreeding. Currently tanagogre society continues to practice slavery in its encounters with other races, but it has notably advanced and strengthened its cultural, religious, and economic basis by establishing trade relations with several communities in Skothar and western Brun, and has begun to explore the continent to facilitate the establishment of new colonies. There is no true kingdom but one of city-states and allied territories (some more warlike and others more dedicated to trade) among them in a sort of federation. A Council of the Kings of each territory assembles annually (one or more times per year in case of problems or important reasons) to take decisions regarding internal and external policies and especially to make new trade agreements.

### PRECEPTS OF THE CULT

The Tanagogre Cult venerates a mixed pantheon of Immortals of humanoid and Tanagoro tradition as guardians of the most important and holy areas of life. Each territory has a preferred patron, but all respect the dictates and the traditions of the cult, and follow the genesis established by this doctrine. According to legend, Pyrak (name of Ixion derived from the fusion of the gods Pyro and Tabak), Sumag (name of Terra, derived from the fusion of the divinities Yamag and Ashanti) and the Shapechanger (Korotiku’s tanagogre identity taken from the Tanagoro traditions) are the three creators of the world. Pyrak breathed about himself, creating the sky, stars, sun, and spirits, while Yamag shaped the earth, plants, and animals using her own hair and spit. The Shapechanger watched in amusement as all that had been created was still missing the divine spark of intelligence, and he decided to intervene to create a race worthy of this gift. So it was that with a subterfuge he changed his appearance and with the help of Gorrziok, lord of the storms and waves, reached the sky where he joined with Pyrak. Descending once more to the earth he therefore persuaded Samag to lie with him, and after she was lulled to sleep, he fled by riding the waves escorted by Gorrziok to beyond the immense ocean, going to hide in the bowels of a volcano. Here the fruit of his two unions grew within his womb, until the moment of birth, and thus gave light to the elite breed of the tanagogres, which have the intelligence of the Shapechanger, the strength of Pyrak, and the wisdom of Samag. Envious of his issue, Pyrak and

Samag united and created all the other races of the earth, but none of them ever achieved the height of the tanagogres, as they lacked the Shapechanger's guile. The Shapechanger's first born, the bold Karaash, led the tanagogres to conquer the populations of primitive humans that lived in the peninsula, and thus founded the Great Kingdom, whose power and splendour frequently reoccur in the current tanagoge legends. Unfortunately upon Karaash's disappearance, who left the kingdom to join the Shapechanger, his children consumed by the demon of jealousy were unable to peacefully rule, and this caused the kingdom's collapse and the division of the peninsula into its present small nations.

The Shapechanger (Korotiku) is thus the pantheon's principal Immortal, and embodies both male and female in one entity, which also symbolises the parity between the sexes in tanagoge society. He is the patron of deceit, clear thinking, cleverness, charisma, superiority, and authority, and all the pantheon's High Priests must be specialist clerics of the Shapechanger.

Second only to the Shapechanger is Karaash, the Divine Son and Supreme Leader, patron of war, tactics, and victory. His cult was that of the ancient caste of the Ogre Kings, who once led the humanoid pantheon, but was undermined by the new faith upon the death of the last noble ogre. Many tanagoge soldiers pray to Karaash in battle, and still today some particularly warlike tanagoge governors worship Karaash rather than the Shapechanger.

Macroblan, the Keeper of Prosperity, is the third most popular Immortal, a native divinity who represents the first tanagoge to establish his own trading company and subvert the laws of the Ogre Kings. The cult of Macroblan is extremely popular in the territories devoted to trade and to the god money, and rivals the ancestral cults of the Shapechanger and Karaash.

Gorziok is the fourth most important Immortal, worshipped as patron of the waves and storms. His cult derives from the marine populations and the giants who had mixed with the ogres before arriving in Tangor, and it has also remained strong in the society formed by the union with the Tanagoro. Gorziok represents the force and unpredictability of nature, and is associated to both the sea and the sky, becoming the incarnation of the most important forces in tanagoge life.

Pyrak, lord of the sun and fire as a symbol of arcane power, is linked with masculine force and ancient wisdom. Today, many of the mages of the various tanagoge communities address their prayers to Pyrak, along with the more level-headed tanagoge. Also the cult of Sumag (Terra), patroness of fertility and life, of nature and animals, no longer fills the same predominant role that it once had within the ogre community, having been ousted by the new tanagoge creed that sees her submissive to the Shapechanger and even to Pyrak her partner, so that the priestesses of Samag (a position that belongs by right only

to females) are always quick to obey but don't have great powers outside of their temple.

The Celestial Traveller (Sinbad) is an errant divinity who has frequently driven the tanagoge to adventure and explore the more remote and unknown places. It was Sinbad who inspired the first tanagogres to sail the Sea of Brun and establish new colonies elsewhere, and his cult has remained unaffected by time. He has a temple in every tanagoge city, which is only occasionally run by a priest, as (because of his doctrine) they cannot settle down and wander the world seeking enlightenment.

The cult of the Celestial Architect (Polunius) derives from the contact with the underwater populations, and it was the tritons who taught the tanagoge to build palaces and temples, as well as handing down to them the more common arts. Although they aren't a people particularly given to these arts, the cult of the Architect however maintains a certain prominence.

The Infernal Judge (Masauwu) closes the list of tanagoge deities: he is the opposite of the Shapechanger, a hellish nemesis waiting to judge the fates of each individual to decide whether he deserves rebirth or eternal damnation. The Shapechanger tries to protect his worshippers, as he knows the Judge uses any means to corrupt the living, and any trick or promise to induce them to sell their soul in exchange for power and wealth. As such he urges his followers to be suspicious of easy promises and dreams of wealth, as in them are hidden the seeds scattered by the Judge to condemn the souls of the mortals. There are very few temples to the Judge, usually hidden except on the rare occasions in which the governor of the territory approved the cult to have greater influence over his subjects or for his own inclination for intrigue, but there are always some followers of Masauwu in tanagoge communities, usually power thirsty immoral individuals.

Currently the tanagoge cult is followed by the entire race in all the provinces and colonies, and the majority of its priests (70%) are specialist clerics, which are priests devoted to only one particular Immortal (for 80% this is Korotiku). The remaining 30% belong to a group of polytheist clerics who worship the entire pantheon. All the clerics normally dress in richly decorated clothing and wear a tiara of gold or silver on the forehead that denotes their class. The specialist clerics use the holy symbol of their own divinity while the pantheists have adopted as the cult symbol a blue spiral that comes from a central point (in which appears the symbol of the Shapechanger, six red points) and ends in six offshoots, each one of which is represented by a symbol (the pantheon's other divinities), all represented on a black background (to symbolise the ever present temptation of the the Infernal Judge).



## TEMPLE OF RAD

### Worshipped in: Glantri

Despite the mage princes of Glantri forbidding the spread of any type of religion or Immortal cult within the state, branding as heretics all the clerics and persecuting those not authorised by the direct permission of the Parliament<sup>10</sup>, there is within Glantri an official philosophy that all the mages follow and that to all effects can be considered the Glantrian state religion. The respectable citizens regularly frequent the temples of Rad, as within them they are encouraged to meditate and follow the practice of concentration and relaxation that aids both the memory and the spirit, a useful thing for any spellcaster. The Philosophy of Rad is followed by these sages, and focuses them by training their minds to ponder the most abstract secrets of the universe, arriving each time to the conclusion that all the knowledge of the world itself can only be obtained through the reduction of the problems to just one answer: the **Rad**, the force that contains and sends out all the energy and the source of all illumination. In practice the philosophy's followers are trained to perform a series of bizarre rituals (vocal and gestural) that aid concentration and memory, and enable them to analyse with acute clarity any problem or situation.

The Shepherds of Rad organise the meditation and prayer sessions, and they are the temples' guardians as well as the officers tasked, by the princes, to teach Rad's philosophy. In practice this involves mages who, due to their special talismans (whose secret of fabrication is jealously guarded by the shepherds' caste), have a greater wisdom, knowledge, and perception of the universe and its mysteries. In exchange for monetary offering, they aid those who turn to them for counsel, thus collecting sufficient funds to build new temples and extend the Light of Rad. In reality, these talismans are magical receptacles through which the members of the Brotherhood of the Radiance<sup>11</sup> send visions, orders, and suggestions to the

<sup>10</sup> In 1001 AC indeed, some political transformers have approved a law that permits the practise of clerical magic in Glantri although within extremely restrictive conditions. The clerics must obtain a letter of authorisation from the ruler of the domain where they wish to practise their divine magic, and the ruler has the final word on the terms of the authorisation: imposition of taxes, type of magic permitted (merely healing etc.), expiration of the letter, and so on. The clerics are still prohibited from preaching their beliefs, despite any letter of authorisation, and merely the Parliament of the Council of Princes can grant a letter of sanction that allows a cleric to operate in the free territories of Glantri.

<sup>11</sup> The Brotherhood of the Radiance is a secret sect of Glantri to which only those that discover the existence of the magical energy that permeates Glantri and is able to channel and use it are able to approach. The Radiance emanates from the Nucleus of the Spheres, which is the remains of the FSS Beagle, that is the alien spaceship whose technology allowed the Blackmoor civilisation to quickly evolve and become a nuclear empire before the Great Rain of Fire (caused by the malfunctioning of its advanced technology) that removed it from the face of Mystara. The reactor of the Beagle was altered by the Immortals of the Sphere of Energy in order to prevent it from destroying the planet and was moved to Brun (under the territory of present day Glantri), and from that moment it was

Shepherds, who believe they are hearing the "Voice of Rad". Each brother influences the shepherds of the temples that they fund, while Etienne d'Ambreville (founder of the first temples, a fact not known to many) controls all the others. The shepherds are absolutely loyal and obedient to any order received through the talisman, but Etienne (Rad) always ensures that the other members of the brotherhood don't abuse their powers, and punishes those who take advantage of their position. Usually there are three set sessions of public prayers each day: at dawn, midday, and sunset, while other private sessions are organised on request. Naturally each shepherd can enter a trance and meditate when he feels the need (or when the Voice of Rad calls through the talisman). It is a good rule for any official who holds public office and all mages to attend at least one session per day. The other Glantrians are asked (but not obliged) to frequent the temples at least weekly, to seek inner peace, tranquillity, and the answers to their doubts and demands, from among the sound of a gong and choral vocalisations of the shepherds who lead the meditation, reflecting on the higher mysteries of the universe or on the commonest banalities of life.

In effect, zealously frequenting the meditation sessions (that is at least one hour a day) really strengthens a person's mental powers: increasing his Intelligence by 1 point, although the unending repetition of apparently absurd phrases and the maniac form of leading the meditation (banging his forehead on the gong at the end of each phrase) decreases his Wisdom by 1 point. These effects only last a day; manifesting after a week of meditation and ending the moment the subject departs from his daily meditation session.

## TORTLE CULT

### Worshipped in: Savage Coast

Mother Ocean (Calitha)	Oceans, lakes and rivers, journeys, fertility, good luck
Father Earth (Ka)	Protection of the living, prosperity, wisdom, knowledge, magic
Brother Shell (Mâtin)	Security, protection, sacrifice, guardians
Sister Grain (Ralon)	Agriculture, health, recovery

The turtles (humanoid turtles) worship the so-called Divine Family, made up of Father Earth, Mother Ocean, Brother Shell, and Sister Grain, and show a deep respect for the ancestral traditions of their own people. It is a rather informal cult, based on the respect of the two cardinal figures of the pantheon, Father Earth and Mother Ocean, and on the veneration of the ancient holy sites of the first turtle settlements. Indeed, the turtles have lived for millennia in the Savage Coast area, and had a prosperous civilisation before the arrival of the humanoid hordes that destroyed not only the turtle settlements, but

able to increase the influence of the Sphere of Energy in the universe allowing them to discover the secret of becoming Immortal without travelling one of the canonical paths.

also those of the neighbouring elves and Oltecs, causing a total regression of these civilisations. However, the turtles remember the ancient times and the ruins of their ancient cities spread between Bellayne and Eusdria, especially on the coast, are a testimony of their ancient splendour. Despite everything, they are not a warlike or vindictive people, and follow the morals dictated by Father Earth and Mother Ocean that invite them to live a life of calm and serene modesty, and to love the small things and the surrounding nature. The turtle cult is based on the teachings of the two principal Immortals, who are considered the real ancestors of the turtle race: as the turtles die immediately after having given birth, usually around fifty years, and that the children grow up in an extended family made up of aunts, uncles, and unmarried cousins, the two parents becoming ancestral divinities. The cult has shaped the mentality since the birth of the first civilisation, and has helped them survive the goblinoid invasions in the abrupt passage from prosperity to poverty. Thanks to their philosophy of harmony, solidarity, and fraternity the turtles have adapted to survive the Savage Coast's new conditions, becoming a part of the new nations that arose after 1200 BC, even though they hold firm to their own beliefs and the proper rites. The only exception has been the recent addition (after the VI century AC) to the pantheon of Brother Shell and Sister Grain, two Renardois Immortals that have shown their liking and support for the turtle race, and so have been inserted in the pantheon to form an ideal nuclear family which every turtle family can identify with.

As well as a usually private worship of icons that represent these divinities, usually sculpted from coral or stone or made with seashells, the turtles have just one collective ritual that takes place annually: the pilgrimage to one of the sacred sites of the ancient turtle civilisation. This pilgrimage to the places of the past testifies to the desire to not forget and preserve their own origins, and simultaneously a way to feel closer to the divinity and their ancestors who, according to the cult, continue to watch over their descendents and in return only ask to be remembered and honoured with prayers and with a simple but honestly conducted life.

The turtle religion is thus very private: in it every follower is called to discover in himself a microcosm that reflects the external universe. Thus, the turtle philosophy teaches that, only by obtaining inner peace and tranquillity is it possible to bring serenity and harmony to the outer world. Also due to this, there is no over all evil Immortal in the turtle cult. Instead it becomes important to recognise their own errors, and limit and temper the more savage instincts, because as the turtle philosophy teaches: "the true enemy is found in the heart of everyone". As such the more savage and brutal turtles, the so-called snappers, are cast out by the rest of the species, and considered primitives who refuse to work for the good of the community and that only listen to their animalistic instincts. The snappers represent the bogeyman of every

follower of the cult, the final stage of degradation to which a turtle can reach if he isn't able to enter into harmony with the universe through the example of the Divine Family. As such, the snappers are avoided, feared, and despised by most turtles.

The importance of the direct relationship between an individual and a divinity of the turtle cult is why there aren't many priests, as every follower is called to be his own disciple and master in his relationship with the divinity and the universal energy. The few turtles that undertake the priestly career do so to continue to pass on the ancient traditions, particularly those that serve to care for and protect the sacred places, a task that can only be trusted to a cleric of the Divine Family. So the turtle clerics are both pantheists and specialists, and are divided into three very different categories: guardians, monks, and travellers. It isn't usually possible to recognise at first sight a guardian from a monk or traveller, but by following the gestures and habits of these turtles it can be understood within a couple of days the priest's true nature.

The guardians are in the majority, and are usually sedentary clerics, stationed in certain regions with the sole aim of guarding the secrets of the ancestors, paying their homage in the appropriate manner, and prepare the site so that it can constantly receive the pilgrims that during the course of the year go there. They receive the task from the guardian who selects them as young children and are forced to go and live with him to learn all the secrets of the turtle mysticism and the magical places. The life of the guardian is extremely freer than that of the monks or of the travellers, and frequently many guardians select their own successors from members of their own family. No guardian is forbidden to mate, but when he does, he must have already chosen their own successor.

The monks instead are turtles who pursue the way to inner perfection and are the only ones to be considered true masters of life, usually even becoming a hermit. They are housed in monasteries built in inaccessible places or carved from natural grottos, and remain there in contact with nature and themselves, refining their own mental, spiritual, and physical abilities to find harmony with the universe according to the teachings of Father Earth and Mother Ocean. Most of these turtles are monks (mystics in Classic D&D), others are clerics faithful to Father Earth and Brother Shell (who get a lot of support among the newer monastic orders). These monastic turtles never mate, and on the rare occasions that they leave, it is always to restore the world's harmony. It isn't an evangelistic goal, as much as a response to requests of aid that originate from other places where their kind need help to regain the balance, frequently broken because of abuses of power or natural calamities. In these cases, the turtle monks never hang back and make their contribution where possible without holding back their strength, returning later to the monastery to finish their work.

Finally, the travellers are clerics and monks who have been called by the divinity to wander the world in an

attempt to put to right situations of uneasiness and injustice. True paladins of the balance, they only leave their own settlements after a premonitory dream, which is usually sent by the Immortals to urge them to go on a journey to a particular place to resolve the problems. From the moment of the calling, a traveller abandons any

sedentary project he may have and continues to wander from one place to another until the end of their life, with the categorical imperative of never mating. This is the destiny of the travellers, the most devout among the turtles and therefore the most respected, as they serve the Divine Family by sacrificing their own life to the faith.

# CHAPTER 6

## PANTHEONS

This chapter presents Mystara's national pantheons; grouped initially by continent and then alphabetically by nation or region (when there are no actual nations). The list of Immortals for each area includes all those that are worshipped in the given region; to be listed an Immortal must have at least one temple or consecrated site (public or secret) where rites honouring the Immortal are celebrated, at least one priest, and at least a hundred active followers. These prerequisites also include the organized churches listed in Chapter 4 (and therefore the Immortals they worship) present in each area (for example the entry on Karameikos lists all the Immortals of the Churches of Traladara and Karameikos, along with any other Immortals worshipped independently in the country). The chapter concludes with a section on the racial pantheons of Mystara.

The list has been divided into the following regions of Mystara:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <b>Brun</b> (continent subdivided by area)</li> <li>❖ <b>Isle of Dawn</b> (island–continent)</li> <li>❖ <b>Sea of Dread</b></li> <li>❖ <b>Alphatian Sea</b></li> <li>❖ <b>Bellissarian Sea</b></li> <li>❖ <b>Sea of Pearls</b></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <b>Sea of Steam</b></li> <li>❖ <b>Davania</b> (continent)</li> <li>❖ <b>Skothar</b> (continent)</li> <li>❖ <b>Hollow World</b> (subdivided by ethnicity)</li> <li>❖ <b>Patera</b> (invisible moon)</li> </ul> |
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Within each area, its nations or regions are listed alphabetically with their corresponding cults. The table in each nation/region's entry lists the Immortals in order of popularity within the region, starting with the most popular. Each Immortal's entry is made up of the name by which he is by in the region (and the Immortal's true name if different) and his portfolio of interests. This usually includes a race or creature type that the Immortal has a particular interest in and by whom he is mainly worshipped. There are usually two Immortals shown in **bold**: the first is universally considered the area's guardian, while the second (if present) is instead considered an enemy by the majority within the region. Areas with a humanoid majority, or with entropic cults, have entropic Immortals as their "guardian", while Immortals normally considered benevolent by the majority of cultures are their opponents (e.g. the Broken Lands, Hule or the Azcan Empire). Finally, any Immortal name in *italics* is non-canonical (created in this supplement) and is always followed by the Immortal's real name (in parenthesis). If the true name of the Immortal is also in *italics*, it means that the Immortal has been added in this manual to the Immortals officially worshipped in a certain region for cultural and historical reasons. Completing the region's entry is a Notes section which gives a brief history and social nature of the region.

## KNOWN WORLD

### ALFHEIM

<b>Ilsundal</b>	Protection of elves and nature, wisdom, scholarship, magic, tradition, serenity and peace
Mealiden	Alfheim, elves, protection, war, loyalty, adventurers and explorers
<i>Ordana</i>	Nature, fertility, protection of forests and sylvan races (especially treants and elves)
<i>Chiron</i>	Centaur, sylvan races, arts, healing, knowledge, wisdom
<i>Faunus</i>	Sylvan races, animals, instincts, sensuality, hedonism, drunkenness, revelry, poetry and music

#### Notes:

1. The majority of Alfheim elves are followers of **Ilsundal**, while a minority of the Red Arrow and Mealidil clans worship Mealiden Starwatcher, founder of the Kingdom of Alfheim and **Ilsundal the Wise's** right-hand man, as well as first forefather of the two clans.
2. *Ordana* is worshipped by several druidic sects, while **Faunus** and **Chiron** are followed by the non-humans (fauns, centaurs, pixies, etc.) that live within the Canolbarth.
3. There are no temples or clerics of **Rafiel** within the Canolbarth forest, but he is considered **Ilsundal's** foe in this area. The only devotees **Rafiel** in the Canolbarth are Shadowelf infiltrators who plot to overthrow the Alfheim government and supplant the surface elves.

## ATRUAGHIN

<b>Atruaghin</b>	Atruaghin Clans, diplomacy, protection, knowledge, wisdom and temperance, combat evil
Tahkati Stormtamer	Clan of the Horse, horses and cavalry, combat, revenge, fierceness
Hattani Stoneclaw	Clan of the Bear, protect Atruaghin and the Children of Atruaghin, dedication, loyalty, battle
Mahmatti Running Elk	Clan of the Elk, protect the Children of Atruaghin, wisdom, nature, magic
Ahmanni Turtle-rider	Clan of the Turtle, sea, family, sacrifice, beauty
<b>Atzanteotl</b>	Corruption (physical and moral), deceit, betrayal, destruction, humanoids
Danel Tigerstripes	Clan of the Tiger, suffering, pain, vengeance

### Notes:

1. The Atruaghins are the descendents of the Azcans who once lived on a plateau southwest of Darokin. Their shamanism is a mystic philosophy that associates the power of an animal totem to every individual, tribe and clan. They all worship Atruaghin as patron of their race, and also venerate their ancestors. Tahkati, Hattani, Mahmatti and Ahmanni are the founding Immortals and patrons of the four most powerful clans (respectively Horse, Bear, Elk and Turtle); all are devoted to the teachings of Atruaghin and submit to his will.
2. Atzanteotl and Danel are the two Immortals that are aligned against the Atruaghin pantheon. However, although the Clan of the Tiger was founded by Danel, the majority (80%) of its clerics follow Atzanteotl and are its spiritual leaders and preside over the sacrificial and funereal rites. Danel's clerics (20%) are reduced to secondary role and are mostly occupied with hunting and war.

## BROKEN LANDS

Karaash (Hong-Tzu)	Humanoids, strength, war, tactics, victory, conquest
Yagrai	Humanoids (especially hobgoblins & orcs), obstinacy & tenacity, death & necromancy
Wogar (Wong-Ah)	Goblins, ferocity, war and military tactics, conquest, predators
The Shining One ( <i>Kurtulmak</i> )	Kobolds, subterfuge and traps, tactics, guile, war, fire
Bartziluth	Bugbears, fury, battle, strength, bravery
Ranivorus	Gnolls, madness, raiding, hate, destruction
Jammudaru	Ogres, evil giants, fear, vengeance, violence, torture
<i>Nameless Mother (Cochere)</i>	Faenare, survival, liberty, family, song and music
Atzanteotl/Skorpios	Corruption (physical and moral), deceit, betrayal, destruction, humanoids

### Notes:

1. The Broken Lands is a small desert and inaccessible region in the heart of the civilized land of the Known World, famous for being inhabited by hordes of humanoids. They are divided into Superior and Inferior lands (or the World of Above and that of Below, according to the humanoid titles), and are populated by orcs (for the majority), goblins, hobgoblins, kobolds, bugbears, gnolls, ogres and trolls divided into nations. Each nation answers to its own leader, and currently all are allied to the supreme leader Thar (General of the Humanoid Legion and the self-proclaimed king of the Broken Lands). Each nation also has its own patron, based on the majority of its inhabitants:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ High Gobliny: Wogar (prohibited Kurtulmak)</li> <li>❖ Bugburbia: Bartziluth (prohibited Ranivorus)</li> <li>❖ South Gnollistan: Ranivorus</li> <li>❖ Hobgobland: Yagrai</li> <li>❖ Kol: The Shining One</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Ogremoor: Jammudaru</li> <li>❖ Red Orcland: Wogar (prohibited Jammudaru)</li> <li>❖ Orcus Rex: Karaash (prohibited Yagrai)</li> <li>❖ Yellow Orkia: Yagrai, Hong-Tzu, Wong-Ah</li> <li>❖ Trollhattan: None</li> </ul>
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2. The trolls of the Broken Lands are too primitive and stupid to even think about worshipping an Immortal. Shamans among them are rare (all of whom worship Bagni Gullymaw) and there are no public places of worship. Therefore, Bagni Gullymaw is not included in the above list, even if he has some followers among the trolls and the more brutish ogres.
3. The Nameless Mother (Cochere) is worshipped by a community of faenare within the Broken Lands and located in the highest peaks of the region.
4. Atzanteotl has many followers among the humanoids, especially those who live in the hidden city of Oenkmar (ancient Aengmor) and those he is able to steal others from the humanoid Immortals, in order to continue in his scheme of corruption and destruction of the surface civilizations, for which the humanoids are indispensable. He is also worshipped, as Skorpios, by a clan of about 200 manscorpions (humanoid scorpions) that lives in a cavern beneath the Broken Lands (see *Dungeon* magazine 20).

## CYNIDICEA

Gorm	Justice, war, storms
Usamigaras	Magic, healing, messengers, thieves, guile
Madarua	Women warriors, courage, natural cycle, fertility
<i>Demogorgon</i>	Corruption, destruction, necromancy, witchcraft, lizardmen

### Notes:

1. Cynidicea is an underground city–state near the south–western border of the Ylaruam Desert, a small distance from the mountains that lead to Thyatis and from the pass that leads to Selenica. Founded by the Traldars around the V century BC, Cynidicea became a powerful kingdom under the guide of its first king, Gorm, thanks to him acquiring an artefact which rendered the city invisible to the desert raiders. Later, during the construction of the tomb of King Alexander and the Queen Zenobia, the last rulers of Cynidicea, they discovered the ancient tomb of Zargon, an extremely evil ancient being. Once awake, Zargon began to corrupt the city. His followers captured the capital and destroyed Gorm’s artefact, causing the kingdom’s downfall, as the now visible city was assaulted by desert raiders until it finally fell in 313 BC. The survivors sought refuge in subterranean caverns, where over time they reconstructed their lost city. The descendents of the ancient Cynidiceans are divided into three sects, each of which worships one of the Immortal guardians of Cynidicea. However, although Gorm, Madarua and Usamigaras (former rulers of Cynidicea) are united in protecting their descendents, their followers are in a continual struggle for supremacy over the other two sects and domination of the city.
2. In the module B4 that describes Cynidicea, the only enemy of the Cynidiceans is Zargon, an ancient reptilian creature who lives in the Isle of Death. It is thought that he is not a real Immortal (based on the description given in the module), but simply a demonic being mandated to torment Cynidicea by his patron Demogorgon, (given her affinity with the evil reptilian creatures that dwell in the ancient temples of the Alasiyan Basin – of which Zargon could be a representative).

## DAROKIN

<b>Asterius</b>	Trade, wealth, guile, social climbing, travel, messengers, merchants, thieves, communication
Twelve Watchers	Arts and crafts
Koryis	Peace and prosperity, diplomacy, mercy and comfort, tolerance
Father Time (Khoronus)	Knowledge, history, philosophy, good government, fairness, patience
Ixion	Sun, fire, order, knowledge, power, preserving the balance, banishing darkness
Valerias	Love, passion, desire, arts, beauty, charity, protection
<i>Chardastes</i>	Healing, purification, health, medicine, life cycle, eternal life
Odin	Good government & authority, enjoying life, guile, knowledge, wisdom, sky, storms, winds
<i>Guidarezzo</i>	Arts (especially music and song), order, harmony
<i>Tiresias</i>	Visions of the future, dreams, poetry & music, astrology, revealing prophecies, legends, magic
<i>Petra</i>	Patriotism, courage, resistance, virtue, loyalty, warrior cleric, besieged settlements
Zirchev	Hunting, survival, tolerance, magic, sylvan races, nature, animals, outcasts
<i>Wayland</i>	Metallurgy, crafts, smiths, armourers, engineers, constructors, magic constructs
<i>Korotiku</i>	Liberty, non-conformism, guile, cleverness, subterfuge, clear thinking, trickery
<i>Protius</i>	Oceans and marine creatures, water, unpredictability, travel
<i>Thor</i>	Combat, fury in battle, honour, bravery, virility
<i>Karaash</i>	Humanoids, battle, tactics, bravery, rule of the strongest
<i>Wogar</i>	Goblins, war and military tactics, conquest, despotism
<i>Brindorhin</i>	Hin, patriotism, security, family, abundance, prosperity
<i>Kagyar</i>	Crafts, metallurgy, sculpture, construction, miners, dwarves
<i>Isundal</i>	Protection of elves and nature, wisdom, knowledge, magic, tradition, serenity, peace
<i>Bartziluth</i>	Bugbears, fury, war, combat
<i>Kurtulmak</i>	Kobolds, subterfuge, stealth, tactics, traps, guile, war
<i>Al-Kalim</i>	The Eternal Truth, tactics, war
<i>Turmis</i>	Bravery, arrogance, cleverness, epic deeds, adventurers and boastful thieves
<i>Jammudaru</i>	Ogres, giants, vengeance, violence
<i>Madarua</i>	Female warriors, courage
<i>Maat</i>	Justice, honour, virtue, integrity, honesty, order, loyalty, redemption, combat chaos and evil
<i>Boss Big Rat (Mrikitat)</i>	Wererats, subterfuge, thieves
<i>Old Nick (Thanatos)</i>	The end of all life forms, death, oblivion, decadence
<i>Noumena</i>	Knowledge, mysteries, enigmas, guile, tactics, strategy, logic

**Notes:**

1. The Republic of Darokin is also known as “Land of Leftovers” due to the numerous migrations that have passed through it and the various ethnic groups which have stopped to colonise the land. Because of this the Republic is a very cosmopolitan nation, populated by humans and demihumans of many nationalities united under the Darokinian flag. These immigrants have brought their previous homeland’s religions to the republic. As a result here in Darokin, as in the Empire of Thyatis, there are temples dedicated to nearly all the current Immortals of the Known World.
2. The most popular Immortal of this plutocracy is Asterius, the patron of the wealth and trade on which the economic strength and politics of Darokin are based. His philosophy, encouraging individuals to gain great wealth, is followed by the majority of the population as the true tenet of life. Next, in popularity, is the cult of the Twelve Watchers (Republic native and patron of craftsmen) that has a following among the Republic’s artists and craftsmen. Following that is the sect of Koryis, patron of peace and diplomacy, who is viewed by the Darokinians as the patron of the Darokin Diplomatic Corps.
3. Ixion, Valerias, Khoronus, Protius, and Chardastes are some of the region’s most ancient cults, dating back to the period when the Traldars and Nithians ruled the southern region (founding the cities of Athenos, Daros, Akorros and Shaliniakat). They have retained a strong following, and have successively integrated into the new Darokinian pantheon, gaining new followers from among immigrants that have colonized the Strel Plain since 800 BC. Similarly, the northmen cults (Odin, Thor, Ixion, and Wayland) were introduced to Darokin in the pre-dynastic age by a group of Antalians that migrated southwards following a thrust by the humanoids and Nithians.
4. Darokin is a nation where the arts are extremely valued and Guidarezzo and Tiresias are the favoured Immortals for the republic’s artists. Although there are very few of their clerics here, all who are passionate about art privately pay them homage. Tiresias also has some followers among the more superstitious, as she is associated with prophecy and omens. Her clerics often tell fortunes, predict miracles and visions in exchange for money.
5. Zirchev’s cult comes from neighbouring Karameikos and is popular especially in the wild areas or among the forests’ inhabitants. Petra’s (patroness of martyrs and defenders of the land) cult, also originating from Karameikos, is popular with the Darokinians of Karameikan ethnicity and some legionary companies.
6. Some demihumans cults (Brindorhin, Kagyar and Ilsundal) have been imported by the hin, dwarven and elven immigrants from Alfheim, the Five Shires and Rockhome, who have settled in the Republic over the last 15 centuries. These cults are very private and usually only members of the same race are allowed in the few sacred sites to these Immortals (Ilsundal: forests, Kagyar: forges, Brindorhin: taverns). Their religious ceremonies are held in secret, even if the Darokinians have nothing against these practises, knowing the demihumans’ honest nature and the peaceful ideas of these cults.
7. Over the last three centuries, Korotiku has gained a discrete following among the Darokinians thanks to the immigration of Thyatian and Nuari followers of his sect. Due to his extremely playful and mischievous nature, he is particularly associated with the Darokinians’ typical abilities: the gift of the gab, and the characteristic guile of both merchants and thieves (two very common professions of the Darokinians and their enemies). For the same reason, Turmis’s sect (native Thyatian Immortal) has also had success among the Darokinian copper class (poorest) as patron of enterprise, as well as those who try to achieve the impossible and the more audacious thieves.
8. The humanoid Immortals are worshipped by the humanoid tribes that live either in Orcland (mostly orcs, ogres, bugbears and, more than normally, intelligent trolls, followers of Karaash, Jammudaru, Bartziluth and Bagni) or in the Cruth and Black Peak Mountains of southern Darokin (goblin followers of Wogar and kobold worshippers of Kurtulmak).
9. Al–Kalim has numerous Ylari supporters of the Eternal Truth within the city of Selenica, on the Emirates border, which has a very large Ylari quarter.
10. The cults of Madarua, Maat and Noumena are present in the Republic. They developed from secret sects dedicated to the preservation and custody of ancient Nithian secrets and combating the rise of entropic cults. Maat is worshipped by the Keepers of the Feather, a select group of paladins and clerics of proven loyalty to the cause of Good; Noumena is the patron of the Illuminati (a group of enigmatic sages), that scrutinises world events and acts when required to resolve mysteries and recover ancient artefacts; Madarua is the patroness of the Warrior Maidens, a female only warrior order, which hands down ancient secrets and collaborates with the lawful church to maintain order and punish the wicked, especially slavers.
11. Boss Big Rat (Mrikitat) has hidden disciples within Darokinian society and in the various thieves’ guilds. Old Nick (Thanatos) seeks to destabilise the Republic’s government by corrupting the souls of politicians and rich businessmen with promises of great riches and eternal life. These corrupted individuals create secret cults, dedicated to Old Nick, and seek other powers to further their influence over the world, or simply to enjoy new pleasures and unexpected thrills. Frequently, these sects conduct human sacrifice, orgiastic rites (that, inevitably, flow with blood), and the summoning of demons to eliminate their competitors or gain invaluable information for their own affairs. Some

churches dedicated to Thanatos even acting openly, presenting themselves as cults that venerate the dead and prepare for death (these churches always worship a vaguely named entity like the Eternal or the Keeper of Souls, in order to not reveal their Immortal's real identity). While they keep their crimes secrets, they are free to act, but if discovered then the legionaries or the lawful members usually intervene to destroy the sect and unmask the members.

- The lizardmen of the Malpheggi Swamp worship two opposing Immortals: **Father Ka** and the **Lizard King** (Demogorgon). Naturally, the more aggressive are followers of the Lizard King, and the tribes fight among themselves more for their religious differences than for the control of the swamp.
- The lord of the ice **Stodos** has a small cult of humanoid and lizardkin in the Cruth Mountains on the border with the Five Shires (see adventure M1Solo).
- Recently, the first clerics of **Benekander** have begun to operate in Republic. He initially appeared to them as Gareth, The one who returned from the Vortex. Due to their small number and the cult's odd character (**Benekander** asks his clerics to keep a low profile but observe mortal and Immortal movement), his presence has yet to be noticed by the other Immortals.

## ETHENGAR

<b>Yamuga (Terra)</b>	Creation and protection of all forms of life (animals and plants), balance of the life cycle, birth, prosperity and fertility, earth, shepherds and farmers
<b>Tubak (Ixion)</b>	Sun, fire, order, knowledge, power, preserving the balance, banishing darkness
<b>Cretia</b>	Chaos, jokes and dirty tricks, subterfuge, survival through change, war
<b>Yagrai</b>	Humanoids (goblins, hobgoblins and orcs), obstinacy and tenacity

### Notes:

- The Ethengarians know that there are other Immortals in the universe and that all deserve equal respect. However they know that only Tubak, Yamuga and Cretia play fundamental roles in their lives, and limit their worship to this triad. This doesn't mean that they prevent the cults of other Immortals on their lands or that they don't respect the other faiths (provided it does not threaten the order in the steppes), and they demonstrate this spirit with a tolerant attitude.
- There are no permanent temples in the Sea of Grass (the Ethengar steppes): the clerics honour the Immortals with small portable altars that they carry during the tribes' wanderings, located inside a yurt that is transformed into a temple whenever the tribe is stationary.
- Yagrai is worshipped by the few humanoid tribes (orcs, goblins, hobgoblins and ogres) that still survive in the steppes, as the ancestor and founder of their clans (during the time of Akkila-Khan).
- Chiron** is the Immortal guardian of the centaurs that live in the Ethengarian steppes. These centaurs are nomadic and don't have any temples, although there are shamans of Chiron among them and the cult is well established.

## FIVE SHIRES

<b>Brindorhin</b>	Hin, patriotism, security, family, abundance, prosperity
<b>Nob Nar</b>	Bravery, heroic deeds, wanderers, adventurers, revelry
<b>Coberham</b>	Magic, blackflame, mysteries, knowledge, hin
<i>Raven</i>	Good luck, fun, games, jokes, cunning, tricks, hin
<b>Karaash</b>	Humanoids, battle, tactics, bravery, rule of the strongest
<i>Bartziluth</i>	Bugbears, fury, war, combat
<i>Asterius</i>	Trade, wealth, guile, social climbing, travel, messengers, merchants, thieves

### Notes:

- The Five Shires are a federal nation populated by the peaceful but indomitable hin (the name that the hin gave themselves), led by a council of five Sheriffs. The hin follow the cult of the High Heroes, (heroic hin who in the past have helped to free the Shires from foreign domination and gave the hin the tools to become a thriving and happy nation). Coberham was the discoverer of Blackflame, Brindorhin the founder of the modern Shires, Nob Nar the greatest modern yallaren hero, and Raven embodies the guile and love of fun typical of the hin.
- Some humanoids dwell in the wildest areas of the Shires, particularly near the Black Peak Mountains and Wereskalt region. These humanoids follow Karaash, the sworn enemy of the High Heroes (as descendents of the horde of Karaash, which invaded and enslaved the hin for decades) and Bartziluth (who has some bugbears in the region).
- Asterius has a temple in the city of Shireton and a number of human followers within the Shires.
- Although they have no temples or a large following, there are clerics and druids of **Ordana** and **Zirchev** in the wildest regions, and wandering priests from the Church of Universal Harmony peacefully travel across the Five Shires.



## GLANTRI

<b>Rad</b>	Radiance, magic, magical research, knowledge, order, Glantri
<b>Ilkundal</b>	Elves, protection of nature, wisdom, knowledge, magic, tradition, serenity and peace
<b>Cretia</b>	Chaos, subterfuge, war, anarchy

### Notes:

1. The Glantrian mages believe in a power called the Rad, which embodies all the mystical and magical energy that permeates the universe. When they need to concentrate to unveil a mystery or create new magic spells and items, they often invoke the light or protection of the Rad, and Glantrian law further sees that every citizen visits a Temple of Rad at least once a day to meditate. Naturally because of all this, the Immortal Rad has a large following in Glantri, and the Light of Rad law prevents other faiths from having worshippers in the Principalities. He also controls the nation's political and social life via his mortal identity of Etienne d'Ambreville, Grand Master of the Great School of Magic of Glantri.
2. The sect known as the Ten Thousand Fists of the Khan is made up of activists and clerics of Cretia sent by the Ethengars in Glantrian territory to stir up the population and overthrow the magocracy. Given their nature, they always act in secret, forming congregations in various parts of the magocracy and create hidden places of worship.
3. Ilkundal is worshipped by the Erewan elves, whose Tree of Life is a cutting of the Erendyl clan's original Tree in Alfheim. His cult is tolerated by Rad since Ilkundal is a chief ally and the elves keep the worship extremely secret.
4. The Belcadiz have a Tree of Life (a cutting from the Erewan Tree), given to them shortly after their arrival in the Highlands, to cement the alliance between the two clans. Despite the Belcadiz not being particularly religious, they have secretly kept the relic alive (guarded by two sisters) to take advantage of its powers after the schism of the Erewan.
5. A sect of worshippers has a temple in Glantri to **Cheimos** (Noumena), patron of mysteries and knowledge. Since the time the Glantrian parliament passed the law that banned the worship of any Immortal, the sect's members have hidden their cult. The temple is in the hands of the Cheiromar, the arcane keeper of the tower built on the mountain where the sect has stored its accumulated knowledge over the centuries. There are few remaining members, and the Cheiromar has spent most of his life without a successor (see events of CM8).
6. Despite the laws prohibiting preaching and the use of divine powers within Glantri, there are itinerant clerics that wander the Principalities in disguise, particularly priests of **Ixon**, **Asterius** and **Razud**, who seek to gain worshippers among the lower classes and subvert the anticlerical basis of the magocracy.

## HELDANNIC TERRITORIES (HELDANN)

<b>Vanya</b>	War, conquest, victory, pride, honour
<b>Odin</b>	Good government & power, guile, knowledge, wisdom, sky, storms, winds, creatures of the air
<b>Thor</b>	War, battle, fury in battle, honour, bravery, virility
<b>Frey</b>	Passion and strategy in battle, virility, loyalty, agriculture, fertility
<b>Freyja</b>	Women warriors, fertility, abundance, beauty, love, Seidh (prophecy), valiant souls
<b>Loki</b>	Deceit, lies, betrayal, intrigue, guile, fire
<i>Frigg (Terra)</i>	Creation and protection of all forms of life, balance of the life cycle, birth, prosperity and fertility, earth, agriculture
<i>The Norns (Urd, Verthandi and Skuld)</i>	Time, fate, divination, visions, life cycle
<b>Gylgarid (Kiranjo)</b>	Violence, fury, cruelty, massacre, berserker, minotaurs

### Notes:

1. The Heldannic Territories (initially known as Heldann Freeholds) have been controlled by the Heldannic Knights since the conquest of Haldisvall (renamed Freiburg, the new capital of the Territories) in 952 AC. By the express order of the Heldannic Order (the ruling theocracy), the only authorized religion is that of the Grey Lady, while the public worship of the ancient Asatru Immortals has been outlawed (hence why Odin is shown as an enemy of Vanya). This hasn't prevented the Heldannese from privately following the old faith and there are still many active Asatru followers and priests within the Territories, as attested by the northmen Immortals listed above.

## IERENDI

<i>Mother Nature (Djaea)</i>	Survival of the world and living races, natural balance, respect of life, druidism
<b>Old Man of the Sea (Protius)</b>	Oceans and marine creatures, water, capriciousness
<i>Nyx</i>	Night, darkness and shadow, necromancy, magic, secrets
<b>Kythria</b>	Passion, sensuality, lust, beauty, Ierendi
<i>Nob Nar</i>	Bravery, hin, adventure, heroic deeds, revelry
<i>Rathanos</i>	Fire, energy, power, male supremacy, pride
<i>Twelve Watchers</i>	Arts and crafts

<i>Asterius</i>	Trade, wealth, cleverness, social climbing, travel, communication, merchants, messengers, thieves
<i>Saturnius</i>	Liberty, fight slavery, independence, pirates, adventurers
<i>Ka</i>	Reptiles, lizardmen, knowledge, prosperity, healing, wisdom
<i>Orisis (Ixion)</i>	Life cycle, balance, knowledge, keeper of souls
<i>Al-Kalim</i>	The Eternal Truth, tactics, war

**Notes:**

1. Due to the profoundly animist religion, and based on the Makai's respect of nature and their ancestors, the triad Djaea-Protius-Nyx has been chosen to reflect the Makai belief. These Immortals grant spells to druids and clerics of the Makai tribes. Mother Nature embodies the seasonal cycle, fauna and flora, and the plenty that comes from the earth. The Old Man of the Sea is the personification of water and rain, seas and rivers, wealth and the sea's power and its inevitable dangers. Nyx is the guardian of the dead and ancestors, patron of night and secrets, and is seen simply as an inevitable power (she is particularly worshipped by the albinos and inhabitants of Elegy Island). All three of the Immortals are, in the eyes of the Makai, a universal force that performs a task.
2. Kythria is a national Ierendian heroine, due to her supporting the creation of the Crown Tournament. She was the first to win the title of Queen (a title she kept for years). Following her deeds and manifestation of divine powers and subsequent disappearance, she was revered as the Immortal guardian of Ierendi and especially Immortal of passionate love.
3. Nob Nar is the guardian of heroes, fun, and hin in general, and he therefore has a large following in Ierendi which is fascinated by the heroic deeds of its kia'i (guardians).
4. Rathanos is worshipped by the clerics present on Honour Island, while the exiled wizards follow the Fire Elemaster.
5. Saturnius is the guardian of pirates and adventurers.
6. Ka is worshipped by the few lizardmen that live hidden on the islands.
7. Orisis protects the reclusive clerics and druids that live on White Island. Devoted, although insane, followers have handed down the generations an isolationist duty of guarding a great power to prevent any return of the Nithian madness.
8. Al-Kalim is worshipped by a small sect that established a temple in the capital a few decades ago. These zealots preach the Eternal Truth to the infidels without much success, and often plot to discover the secrets of the People's Temple.
9. There are some itinerant priests of **Sinbad** present among the inhabitants of Ierendi, but despite being respected they haven't any temples or sufficient followers to justify the insertion of Sinbad in the above list.

**KARAMEIKOS**

<b>Halav</b>	War, strategy & tactics, strength & determination, arms & armour, sacrifice, battle humanoids
Petra	Patriotism, protection, loyalty, courage, resistance, virtue, warrior clerics, besieged settlements
Zirchev	Hunting, survival, tolerance, magic, sylvan races, nature, animals, outcasts
Chardastes	Healing, purification, health, medicine, life cycle, eternal life
Tarastia	Law, order, truth, justice and just revenge
Asterius	Trade, travel, wealth, guile, communication, messengers
Kagyar	Dwarves, crafts, metallurgy, sculpture, construction, miners
Ilkundal	Elves, nature, wisdom, knowledge, magic, tradition, serenity, peace
Vanya	War, conquest, victory, pride, honour
Tiresias	Visions of the future, dreams, poetry and music, astrology, prophecy, legends, magic
Patura	Women, family, children, motherhood and fertility
Garal Glitterlode	Gnomes, inventors and thinkers, science and mechanics, crafts
Brindorhin	Hin, patriotism, security, family, abundance, prosperity
<b>The Goat (Orcus)</b>	Death, wickedness, sadism, destruction, necromancy, lycanthropy, cannibalism, humanoids
Leptar (Hircismus)	Violence, pain, torture, destruction, humanoids
Jammudaru	Ogres, giants, vengeance, violence
Bartziluth	Bugbears, fury, combat
Thendara (Ordana)	Nature, fertility, protection of forests and sylvan races
Ranivorus	Gnolls, madness, raiding, destruction, hate

**Notes:**

1. The Karameikians are split into followers of the Church of Karameikos (mostly Thyatian immigrants), and the Church of Traladara (mostly native Traladarans), who form the majority and who consider Halav the supreme patron of their land.

- Garal is followed by the gnomes of the Highforge community, while Brindorhin is the most important Immortal for the hin that live in Karameikos.
- A druidic circle exists in Karameikos that worships Zirchev and Thendara.
- Orcus has been chosen as leader of the enemy Immortals of the Karameikans due to the massacres in the nation by undead creatures and lycanthropes with which he is associated.
- Leptar (Hircismus) is the most followed Entropic Immortal after Orcus, especially among the goblin tribes of Dymrak Forest and the goblinoids that infest the north-eastern mountains. Other than these, the humanoids also worship Ranivorus (gnolls), Bartziluth (bugbears) and Jammudaru (ogres and giants).
- The cult of Thendara is only worshipped by the isolationist Vyalia elves of Haven and the Lake of Dreams. The other elves of Karameikos all worship Ilsundal.
- Nyx** has a few followers among the intelligent undead of Karameikos and at least one group of cultists in Blight Swamp. However, her attempts to increase her influence within Karameikos have always been mostly countered by Orcus, who doesn't intend to give up her regional supremacy. For this reason her cult isn't in the above table.

## MINROTHAD

<b>Minroth</b>	Minrothad, patriotism, hope, prosperity, wealth, trade
Twelve Watchers	Arts and crafts
Calitha Starbrow	Oceans, lakes and rivers, travel, fertility, good luck, aquatic races, sea elves (Meditor)
Thendara (Ordana)	Nature, fertility, protection of forests and sylvan races, elves of the woods (Verdier)
Ruaidhri Hawkbane	Extermination of lycanthropes, courage, hunters, safeguarding the demihumans
<i>Saturnius</i>	Liberty, independence, pirates, adventurers
<i>Asterius</i>	Wealth, guile, social climbing, travel, thieves, messengers

### Notes:

- The Guilds of Minrothad is a multiracial nation based on trade and the Minrothism philosophy. According to this philosophy, the Immortal Minroth (the nation's founder) declared the islands and all those that lived there blessed. The Minrothians share a strong nationalist sense and the idea of superiority over all other nations.
- Augrism, founded by a dwarven immigrant, is a philosophy that preaches the worship of the Twelve Watchers as the true guardians of all craftsmen.
- Calitha is the main Immortal of the Meditor sea elves, who promotes the ethics of the elendaen, while the sylvan elves of the Verdier clan follow the dainrouw philosophy of Thendara.
- Ruaidhri Hawkbane is a Minrothian national hero. He is considered the guardian of racial purity and hunting, as well as the exterminator of lycanthropes.
- Saturnius is the patron of adventurers and pirates as well as many sailors, and has some followers and a few temples in Minrothad, even if the majority are hidden sacred places. Calitha and Saturnius are the guardians of those that travel by sea and of the whole marine ecosystem, while the Minrothians have always associated **Protius** (patron of the aquatic races of neighbouring Undersea) with the seas' wildest nature and cruelty, death and the capriciousness of fate, and as such he is considered a dangerous enemy, just like **Crakkak Sharptooth**, guardian of marine predators.
- Asterius has only one temple in the capital of Minrothad, built and financed by Darokinian merchants, and only a small following, mostly foreign merchants passing through the Guilds. This is because practically all the native merchants and craftsmen are followers of Minrothism or Augrism (many elves and all hin and dwarves). Due to the strong competition between the foreign and Minrothians merchants, Asterius is seen as Minroth's enemy and the patron of social climbers, usurers, thieves and business without scruples by the Minrothians.
- The Larril Hermitage, situated on Blackrock Island, hosts a community of six mystics and twelve clerics of **Razud**, who live here thanks to the meagre donations of the island's inhabitants. Due to the number of followers not reaching the minimum amount needed. The sect of Razud hasn't sufficient followers to be listed amongst those listed in the Guilds.
- The Keepers of the Relic of the Verdier clan secretly worship the Immortal **Oleyan**, the clan's original founder who was ensnared in the artefact by Ordana herself. His sect has secretly influenced the Verdier's lifestyle for centuries, and Oleyan's aim is to usurp the cult of Ordana once he is free from his imprisonment.
- There are some itinerant priests of **Sinbad** present among the inhabitants of Minrothad, but despite being respected they haven't any temples or sufficient followers to justify the insertion of Sinbad in the above list.

## NORTHERN REACHES (VESTLAND, OSTLAND, SODERFJORD)

<b>Odin</b>	Good government and authority, enjoying life, guile, knowledge, wisdom, sky, storms, winds, creatures of the air
Thor	War, battle, fury in battle, honour, bravery, virility
Frey	Brotherhood, honour, security, strategy, war
Freyja	Fertility, benevolence, love, family
Forsetta	Justice, law, obedience and loyalty, sincerity, Vestland
<i>The Korrigans</i>	Protection, magic, knowledge, nature, fertility, sacrifice, healing, courage
The Spuming Nooga (Protius)	Water, oceans and marine creatures, capriciousness, travel
<i>Frigg (Terra)</i>	Creation and protection of all forms of life, birth, agriculture
<i>The Norns (Urd, Verthandi and Skuld)</i>	Time, fate, divination, visions, cycles
<i>Volund (Wayland)</i>	Metallurgy, smiths and armourers, magical constructs
Loki	Deceit, lies, betrayal, intrigue, guile, fire
<b>Hel</b>	Reincarnation, corruption, death, darkness and cold energy, increase entropy and chaos in the universe, creatures of shadow and ice
Father of Demons (Thanatos)	The end of all life forms, death, entropy, destruction, decadence, oblivion, corruption
Ranivorus	Gnolls, madness, raiding, destruction, hate
Hircismus	Torture, violence, pain, destruction, humanoids
The Shining One (Kurtulmak)	Kobolds, subterfuge, stealth, tactics, traps, guile, war
Bagni Gullymaw	Trolls, violence, hunger, destruction
<i>Surt (Zugzul)</i>	Fire giants, conquest, destruction, battle, metallurgy
Gylgarid (Kiranjo)	Violence, fury, cruelty, massacre, berserker, minotaurs

### Notes:

- Asatru is the religion of the Northern Reaches (the region of Ostland, Vestland and Soderfjord), which worships Odin as father of all humanity, and his children, the Aesir, as the supreme Immortals. Among the Aesir, the most important are Odin, Thor, Forsetta, the Korrigans (who embody many characters of the court of Asgard, abode of the Aesir) and Loki, who however is considered a traitor and a fratricide. According to legend, it was him who will lead the giants against the humans on the day of Ragnarok, when the Immortals fight side-by-side with the past heroes against the giants and Hel's legions for the world's salvation.
- The northmen also worship the Vanir, (another group of Immortals who were once adversaries but now allies of the Aesir), which are linked to nature and the elements. Frey and Freyja, in particular, have a large following among the northmen, especially in Ostland (where they fought to free the islands of giants and gain independence). The Spuming Nooga is worshipped by all northmen fishermen and large number of sailors. Odin's wife, Frigg, was originally a Vanir, and the Antalian cult's main Immortal along with Odin. With time however, the cult of Freyja has taken hold among the inhabitants of the Northern Reaches, and Frigg's role has changed. Now she is patroness of childbirth and midwives, fertility, and agriculture.
- The Norns are Immortals that govern the fate of Immortals and mortals according to the Nordic traditions, and are Urd (past or birth), Verthandi (present or life) and Skuld (future or death). Actually of the three Norns only Skuld remains to guard the Multiverse's secrets (Urd and Verthandi have vanished), and it is him that supplies power to the triad's clerics (whose most famous priestesses are surely the Cronos of Crystykk in Norwold).
- Volund is the Immortals' smith, patron of craftsmen and is worshipped by some dwarves and the few magicians found among the northmen. He created the most precious and powerful artefacts of the Nordic Immortals.
- Loki, Hel, Hircismus, Thanatos and Kurtulmak are the Immortals worshipped by the kobolds that live in the Northern Reaches, and each is the Immortal patron of one of the many kobold clans. Ranivorus is followed by the gnolls that live in the hills and mountains between Soderfjord and the Emirates, while Bagni has a few followers among the trolls of Trollheim, in Vestland (more intelligent and dangerous than the Broken Lands' common trolls).
- The Father of Demons (Thanatos) is worshipped by the Modrigswerg dwarves that live isolated in the caverns beneath Vestland and Soderfjord, as it was him that gave the Modrigswerg the secrets of necromancy and magic that permits them to bind spirits into items. In Vestland, he was known as Darga (Immortal of the Afterworld that gathers the spirits of the dead, and appears as a warrior with rotten wings and with a sickle in fist) and had a small cult, until followers of Forsetta destroyed his temple (Lanquist Priory) and annihilated his sect in the IX century AC (see X13).
- The fire giants within the Northern Reaches worship Zugzul under the pseudonym of Surt.
- Gylgarid (Kiranjo) has a small following of fanatic berserkers and raiders in northern Vestland, even if his sect is mainly rooted in Heldann.

9. **Cretia** has a secret sect in the city of Rhoona, led by some of her Ethengarian clerics to bring disorder and weaken its rivals. However Cretia is not among the Immortals listed above as the cult has less than 100 adepts.

## ROCKHOME

<b>Kagyar</b>	Dwarves, crafts, metallurgy, sculpture, construction, miners
<b>Karaash</b>	Humanoids, battle, tactics, bravery, rule of the strongest
<b>Wogar</b>	Goblins, war, conquest
<b>Kurtulmak</b>	Kobolds, subterfuge, stealth, tactics, traps, astuteness, war
<b>Garal</b>	Gnomes, inventors and thinkers, science and mechanics, crafts
<b>Jammudaru</b>	Ogres, giants, vengeance, violence
<b>Zalaj</b>	Mountain and cloud giants, magic, strength, knowledge

### Notes:

1. Rockhome dwarves (and the majority of Mystaran dwarves) all worship Kagyar, creator of the dwarven race and patron of crafts and beauty (according to the dwarven canon). Kagyar represents the life concepts like work and creation. Kagyar's enemy and antithesis, according to the dwarven sect, is the Immortal of death and destruction – **Karr** (Thanatos), although he has no followers within Rockhome.
2. The humanoids that inhabit depths of the mountains and Rockhome's most inaccessible peaks worship their race's typical Immortal. Karaash is the most followed as he is considered the patron of all humanoids and, because of this, he is hated by the dwarves even more than Karr. Wogar has the next largest following, followed by Kurtulmak (whose kobold followers are most prolific) and by Jammudaru, who sponsors various communities of evil giants and ogres.
3. Zalaj is worshipped by the mountain giant communities in Rockhome, while Garal has numerous followers among the gnomish communities that live in the dwarven lands (even though many gnomes are also followers of Kagyar).

## SHADOWLANDS

<b>Rafiel</b>	Shadowelves, radiance, scientific and magical knowledge, security, order, peace
<b>Atzanteotl</b>	Corruption (physical and moral), deceit, betrayal, destruction, humanoids

### Notes:

1. Shadowlands, as the shadowelves of this kingdom call it, extends beneath the nations of the Known World, touching all except Wendar, Heldann, Thyatis and the islands of Minrothad and Ierendi. The sect of Rafiel (the shadowelves monotheist religion) is spread through all the Shadowlands. Also present is the cult of his archenemy Atzanteotl, who seeks to corrupt the shadowelves (his Shadowelf cultists worship secretly) and cause them to destroy the surface world.

## SIND AND JAIBUL

Sind is an enormous nation formed by many mumlykets, each governed by a rajah (King), who answer to the Rajadhiraja (King of Kings), a life-long, inherited position. Sind stretches westwards from Darokin and the Plateau of Atruaghin to the Great Waste (an immense desert), and northwards from the Sea of Dread to the Adri-Varma Plateau. The Kingdom of Jaibul, on the coast south-west of Sind, was once part of Sind, but later became independent from the Rajadhiraja when a group of jadugerya (magicians) organised an insurrection and took power. It is ruled by the Black Raja, who has expansionistic aims and frequently conducts acts of piracy against Sindhi merchants and the western nations. The Sindhi pantheon (also widely worshipped in Jaibul) is made up of practically all known Mystaran Immortals, with the exception of some niche Immortals (DM's choice). This culture has an extremely polytheistic religion, in which the same Immortal can appear in different forms, to show a different aspect of its personality. Immortals mentioned in the module HWR3 – *Nightstorm* (set in Shahjapur) and in the section about Sind in the *Champions of Mystara* box set include: **Ixion**, who is worshipped as Ayazi (patron of creation), as Himayeti (patron of existence), and finally as Aksyri (patron of death and the end of the life cycle); **Asterius**, is worshipped as Murtijai (patron of trade) and Kudesha (patron of wealth); **Ilsundal**, worshipped as Ayodhya, the aspect that presides with wisdom, as Sita, the female manifestation of Ilsundal associated with the contemplation of nature, and as Laksman, the incarnation that is opposed to the evil power of Atzanteotl; Ganetra (**Ssu-Ma**), elephant-faced humanoid patron of knowledge and memory; **Hel**, who is worshipped as Kala, patroness of darkness, corruption, entropy and malicious reincarnation; and finally Runar (**Thor**), patron of vigour. The novice **Benekander** has also begun to create his own worshippers in Sind, where he is known as Gareth and has gained a wide following by 1009 AC thanks to the miracles of Sitara Rohini (his most famous priestess), to whom he gave a exceptional staff artefact with amazing curative powers.

## THYATIS (MAINLAND AND ADJACENT ISLANDS)

<b>Vanya</b>	War, conquest, victory, pride, honour
Tarastia	Law, order, truth, justice and just vengeance
Asterius	Trade, wealth, guile, social climbing, communication, travel, merchants, thieves, couriers
Valerias	Love, passion, desire, charity, sexuality, protection, arts
Protius	Oceans and marine creatures, water, capriciousness, travel
Thor	Battle, fury in battle, honour, bravery, virility
Kagyar	Crafts, metallurgy, dwarves, sculpture, construction, miners
Vulcan (Wayland)	Metallurgy, engineering, constructors, smiths, armourers, magical constructs
Tyche	Luck (good or bad), chance, destiny, risk and hazard
Tiresias	Visions of the future, dreams, poetry & music, astrology, prophecy, legends, magic
Magna Mater (Terra)	Birth, prosperity and fertility, earth, agriculture
Ilkundal	Protection of elves and nature, wisdom, knowledge, magic, tradition, serenity, peace
Khoronus	Knowledge, history, philosophy, good government, loyalty, patience
Idraote	Magic, knowledge, medicine, alchemy, strategy, war
Lupercus (Faunus)	Instincts and sensuality, drunkenness, revelry, hedonism, animals
Noumena	Knowledge, guile, enigmas, mysteries, tactics, strategy and logic
Halav	War, strength and determination, strategy and tactics, sacrifice, combat humanoids
Patura	Women, family, children, motherhood and fertility
The Ambassador (Masauwu)	Intrigue, politics, diplomacy, deceit, illusions, spies, cheats
Solarios (Ixion)	Sun, fire, order, preserving the balance, banish the darkness
Madarua	Women warriors, courage
Carnelian	Tradition, nobility, patriotism, order, Mchetos
Korotiku	Liberty, non-conformism, guile, cleverness, subterfuge, clear thinking, cheating
Koryis	Peace, prosperity, diplomacy, mercy, tolerance, respect of laws
Mrikitat	Wererats, subterfuge, thieves
Odin	Authority, guile, knowledge, wisdom, winds and storms
Turmis	Bravery, arrogance, cleverness, epic deeds, adventurers and boastful thieves
Saturnius	Liberty, independence, fight slavery, pirates, adventurers
Alphaks	Destroy Alphatia and the Alphatians, hate, vengeance, massacre
Nyx	Night, darkness and shadow, undead, necromancy, secrets
<b>Thanatos</b>	The end of all life forms, death, entropy, destruction, decadence, oblivion, corruption
Mitra (Maat)	Justice, honour, virtue, integrity, honesty, order, loyalty, redemption, fight chaos and evil
Diulanna	Courage, strength of will, perseverance, hunting, liberty
Orcus	Violent death, sadism, mass destruction, undead, cannibalism, lycanthropy
Lokena	Intelligence, guile, tactics, war, magic
Liena	Thyatis, war, discipline, history, Order

### Notes:

1. The Empire of Thyatis is an enormous political and military power that dominates the Known World. Inspired by the Roman and Byzantium empires, Thyatis is known for the extreme polytheism within its borders, and it is, thus, not surprising that there are so many sects in the Thyatian hinterlands. Beside those specifically listed in the *Dawn of the Emperors* box set, others have been added based on the history of the various Immortals and their possible interest in the struggles of the empire. The cults of entropic Immortals are illegal, and operate in great secrecy and with mixed luck.
2. The triad of Vanya, Tarastia and Asterius dominate Thyatian religious life. Vanya is patroness of military strength (on which the Empire was constructed) and Thyatian national pride. Tarastia is the patroness of constitutional order and justice. Asterius is patron of wealth, prosperity and the guile of which the Thyatians are so proud.
3. Valerias is next in Thyatians preference, and she is associated with excess, welfare, passions and the arts (therefore favoured by the opulent nobility), with love (both spiritual and physical) and charity (her aspects favoured by the lower classes).
4. Thor is the most popular of the northern Immortals in Thyatis, due to the Thyatian passion for battle and heroism, and his cult dates back to when their ancestors lived in Davania. There is also a temple of Odin (although he doesn't have a particularly strong following) in the capital, founded by godi originally from Ostland and tolerated by the Empire due to the good rapport it has with the Ostlander dynasty.

5. Vulcan appears as a Thyatian Immortal present in *Specularum* in the Penhaligon trilogy as the creator of the sword Wyrmlight. As a smith and creator of artefacts, he has been associated with Wayland and inserted into the Thyatian pantheon. Along with Kagyar (Burohur dwarf patron) he is recognised in Thyatis as a patron of artisans and honest labour.
6. Tyche and Tiresias are two Immortals whose cults date back to the time of the Traldars, and that were later assimilated by the Thyatians when they landed on Brun. The Immortal of fortune, in particular, has small altars everywhere and is considered the patroness of crossroads (as every choice is a crossroad of opportunities), while Tiresias has a very important function with the nobility, as they often consult her seers (called haruspices) before taking important decisions, in order to understand what the best option is.
7. The "Sylvan Cult" is popular among the rural Thyatians. It is the faith of the Immortals that protect the harvests, game and wooded areas. The Magna Mater, Lupercus and Ilsundal are the three Immortals associated with the Sylvan Cult, and each has a different role in this mysticism: the Mater is the creator and patroness of prosperity and female fertility, Ilsundal is the guardian of peace and patron of wisdom and sylvan races, Lupercus is the patron of intuition and fun, as well as of the sexual sphere and masculine power. Each is opposed to one aspect of the others, but all three are complementary. The orgiastic rites dedicated to Lupercus are infamous, while the Magna Mater is especially loved by farmers and shepherds and Ilsundal by elves.
8. Idraote, Khoronus and Noumena are the Immortals associated with culture, knowledge and magic by the Thyatians. Idraote is patron of magic, alchemy and medicine, Khoronus is patron of wisdom, history and philosophy, and Noumena is associated with logic, divination and enigmas. Only Khoronus's cult dates back to the ancient Traldar and Milenians: Idraote gained fame due to his heroic actions in the peninsula of Tel Akbir before he became Immortal. Noumena entered into the Thyatian pantheon via the revelations of Nous Trismagis, his first and most famous priest, and founder of the esoteric sect of the Illuminati.
9. Halav also has a discreet following among the Thyatians, due to his cult being imported from nearby Traladara by the first missionaries that explored it in the V century AC. The Thyatians worship Halav as a paragon of strategy and leaders, the so-called thinking warrior, patron of heroism, sacrifice and tactics.
10. Patura is the typical Thyatian matron, patroness of motherhood, prosperity and family, and symbolises not only female fertility but also the will and resolve with which she defends domestic harmony.
11. An atypical situation is found regarding Masauwu's sect. Known as the Ambassador: he is the patron of diplomats, mediators, politics (scoundrels and cheats, according to his detractors), and is, therefore, an entirely legal religion within the Empire, without the diabolic aura that he has in other regions (a clear sign of the countless lies perpetuated by him).
12. Solarios's (Ixion) philosophy, according to the Thyatian view, is limited to its association with light, the sun, and universal balance. As such, Solarios maintains the cycles of life and the seasons; his only task is banishing the darkness and bringing light and life to the world. As such, the rituals dedicated to him are most vital during the winter, when the sun is cooler and the days shorter. These rituals are intended to gain his attention and bring about the return of spring and summer.
13. Madarua is extremely popular among the warriors and the amazons, and who finds followers especially among the Thyatian women desiring redemption, as she embodies the more authoritarian and independent side of femininity.
14. Carnelian is the founder and patroness of the Duchy of Mchetos; which is the only place where she has a large following.
15. Koryis and Korotiku are two foreign Immortals, whose cults have penetrated the empire shortly after the annexation and conquest of Ochalea and the Pearl Islands. They have also gained some followers among the metropolitan Thyatians (especially Korotiku, whose astute and irreverent character is very similar to the Thyatian spirit, while Koryis is considered too weak and easygoing). Their cults are largely based on ethnicity (Ochalese for Koryis and Tanagoro for Korotiku).
16. Mrikitat is the founder of the community of wererats that secretly live in the sewers of Thyatis, and his cult is extremely widespread among these beings (in their thousands), that prey on the Thyatians without wishing to replace them (therefore Mrikitat favours Thyatian expansion as his parasitic cult will benefit from it).
17. Turmis is a young Immortal popular both among the Thyatians and the Nuari; he is the patron of arrogance, adventure and guile. He vies with Asterius over cleverness and thieves, and he seems destined to carve out an important position in the Thyatian pantheon.
18. Saturnius is a Minrothian Immortal that the Thyatians have adopted as the patron of pirates and freedom. However, some of his clerics secretly battle to free the Empire's slaves. The Church of Thyatis considers this treason, and so he not been included among Thyatis's guardians.
19. Alphaks has a small following among the more warlike Thyatians, appealing to their hatred of Alphantians that he desires to completely destroy. However, his cult is considered dangerous by the Thyatian government and has been

outlawed. His adepts, thus, must secretly plot against Alphatia, even if he gains martial followers more easily than any other entropic cult.

20. Of all the entropic cults in the Empire only that of Nyx has been legalised by the Senate, as necromancy is considered a science and the power of the Necatori (the priests of Nyx) is secretly the government for the glory of Thyatis. However, the Necatori and advocates of the faith of Nyx are constantly watched by the Illuminati.
21. Thanatos has many worshippers within the Empire, especially among the Hattians (thanks to his mortal identity of Heinrich Oesterhaus, Count of Hattias), who are naturally very careful to not reveal their true affiliation. These cultists work to destabilize the current government, take power, and transform Thyatis into an Empire based on hate, violence and the total annihilation of enemies. The cult of Thanatos is so engrained in the Empire that it is considered Thyatis 's most dangerous enemy, even if it is yet to realise his plans of corruption.
22. The sect of Diulanna was introduced to the Empire in the last fifteen years, following the conquest of the Davanian Hinterlands where followers of her abound. It has mainly gained a following among the gladiators and slaves thanks to the enslaved Thratian clerics. Her acolytes have already allied with those of Saturnius to shake up the rigid Thyatian mentality.
23. It is thought that in Thyatis there is an ancient secret sect of (exclusively male) paladins and clerics devoted to the cause of Good and Justice that revere Mitra (Maat). The symbol of this sect (known as the Brothers of the Bull) is a bull and sect tracks down and guard ancient powerful and dangerous artefacts, preventing these forbidden items falling into the hands of the followers of Entropy. They are also active in combating any entropic cult, in particular the followers of Thanatos, and have links with other secret sects loyal to Maat in neighbouring nations.
24. Orcus has followers among the humanoids and lycanthropes within the imperial territory, as well as among obscure sects of individuals hungry for blood and fuelled by a homicidal fury.
25. Lokena's sect has only had a following for less than a century. Due to the epic deeds of the mage become Immortal. Its sect (the Owls) is a small group of mages and fighters (allies of the Brothers of the Bull of Mitra). Its members use their own strength and intelligence to acquire power and combat the forces of Chaos in the empire.
26. Liena is a heroine from the recent Thyatian past, and rose to holiness and Immortality by the handiwork of Emperor Thincol himself, the son of the Immortal. Thincol seeks to promote her cult to give him a divine aura to enhance his prestige and ultimately legitimise his house's claim to the throne.
27. There are some itinerant priests of **Sinbad** present among the inhabitants of Thyatis, but despite being respected they haven't any temples or sufficient followers to justify the insertion of Sinbad in the above list.

## WENDAR

<b>The Korrigans</b>	Wendar, elves, protection, magic, knowledge, nature, fertility, sacrifice, healing, courage
Odin	Good government & authority, enjoying life, guile, knowledge, wisdom, sky, storms, winds
Volund (Wayland)	Metallurgy, smiths and armourers, magical constructs
Thor	War, battle, fury in battle, honour, bravery
Chiron	Centaur, sylvan races, arts, healing, knowledge, wisdom
Ordana	Nature, fertility, protection of forests and sylvan races
Garal Glitterlode	Gnomes, inventors and thinkers, science and mechanics, crafts
<b>Idris</b>	Vengeance, intrigue, magic, mysteries, domination, humanoids, dragons, naga, destroy elves, creating the perfect race
Great One	Dragons and lizardkin, creation, justice, knowledge, magic

### Notes:

1. The information that the module X11, *Saga of the Shadowlord* supplies on the religion of Wendar is virtually nonexistent. The nation is strongly influenced by an elven culture whose history is different from that of Alfheim. There are secret cults of Idris, the Immortal worshipped in Denagoth and the sworn enemy of Wendar. Given the migrations that have crossed the region over the centuries, both groups of Neathar and Antalians have settled here, and have left an Asatru presence among the human population. The elves are followers of the Korrigans, the nine elves who saved and protected the Genalleth (ancient elven name of the region) during its more turbulent years following the Glantrian Catastrophe. They also gave to the Genalleth the precious Elven Star, an artefact of enormous power that aids the defence of Wendar's borders against any invasion attempt. This artefact has been a cause of conflict for centuries between the Wendarians, and their Denagothian enemies (the Lord of Shadow, particularly, has vainly tried over the last century to conquer and assimilate Wendar). The Korrigans sect is the most widespread among the Wendarians (whether elves, humans or half-elves) as it embraces all people without discrimination. The vast majority of their priests are elven (elves are also the Keepers of the Shrines – the reliquaries created by the Nine as the foci of their worldly power). The sect preaches cooperation between races and respect of nature and its inhabitants, and is so similar to the druidism and to the dainrouw of Ordana, that the various druids and the sylvan races that live in



Wendar are divided equally between the Korrigans and Ordana, without there being any friction between the two groups.

2. The mythical smith Volund (Wayland) is very popular among both human and elven craftsmen, and many of the artefacts and legendary items that appear in Wendarian ballads, or are guarded by the region's major clans are attributed to him.
3. There are clans of centaurs that live peacefully in Wendar. They are mainly followers of Chiron but also worship the Korrigans. Many of them serve as auxiliaries in the army and garrison particularly problematic places such as the western frontier, the borders with the Great Northern Wildlands, and the Dark Woods of Baamor.
4. Garal Glitterlode is worshipped by the many gnomes that live in the southern lands of Wendar, near to the Wendarian Range. They relocated to Wendar when the gnomish city of Torkyn Falls was invaded and destroyed by dragons around 500 AC. Other survivors continued towards Hule or Norwold.
5. Idris is the patroness of the nearby realm of Denagoth and the sworn enemy of the Korrigans and Wendar (especially its elves). However, a few cultist cells have infiltrated the humans of Wendar, and for decades they have preached about the inferiority of the elven race and sought to disseminate the seed of hate among the humans. This secret cult (the Claws of the Dragon) is centred in Oakwall (the realm's southernmost city), which is largely inhabited by humans and immigrants.
6. The cult of the Great One is present in southern Wendar, and particularly in the Wendarian Range and the Forest of the Gloom, where there is a secret sanctuary dedicated to the Great One, Shadowmere. He appears annually to his disciples and followers (humans, elves and dragons) who gather together to pray and offer tributes in exchange for visions and help.

## YLARUAM

<b>Al-Kalim</b>	The Eternal Truth, tactics and war
Kagyar	Dwarves, crafts, metallurgy, sculpture, construction, miners
<b>Ranivorus</b>	Gnolls, madness, raiding, destruction, hate
Apophis (Bachraeus)	Hate, vengeance, betrayal, medusas, serpents, poison
Corona (Zugzul)	Power, conquest, necromancy, fire, fire magic
Asterius	Trade, wealth, guile, communication, travel, messengers, thieves
Maat	Justice, honour, virtue, integrity, honesty, order, loyalty, redemption, fight chaos and evil

### Notes:

1. In Ylaruam, any cult, other than the Eternal Truth, is tolerated provided that doesn't conflict with the principles of Al-Kalim, is celebrated only in private, and doesn't wish to build a public temple (the cults of the entropic Immortals are all secret and hidden). The dwarves are able to worship Kagyar in their own enclave due to the extremely informal nature of his sect. Among the humans, only Asterius (patron of the numerous merchants) has managed to retain a following and that's only in the Thyatian and Darokinian quarters of the largest cities. All other faiths have for some time given up having any representatives in the Emirates.
2. Ranivorus replaced Thanatos as leader of the Immortals opposed to the Ylari when the Hierarch of Entropy lost interest in the Alasiyan Plain, immediately after having caused the fall of the Nithian Empire. Apophis is his ally in his attempt to corrupt mortals, bring to light the forbidden knowledge of the Nithian Empire, and restore the entropic cults (and as a result usurp the Eternal Truth and the faith in Al-Kalim).
3. Corona is worshipped by the Magian Fire Worshipers, an order dating back to the Nithian Empire. Its members are fire elementalists and necromancers eager to unearth ancient Nithian ruins and rebuild the Empire based on its deviant and corrupt ideals. The Magians often act independently, but conspire with the followers of Apophis and Ranivorus if aids their plans.
4. In Ylaruam, there are a small number of followers of Maat who belong to the Order of the Sands, a secret sect of paladins and clerics devoted to keeping the secrets under the desert sands hidden, garrisoning ancient Nithian ruins and preventing forbidden knowledge from falling into the hands of the followers of Entropy. They are also actively fight any flare up of the entropic cults, and have links with other secret sects loyal to Maat that act in neighbouring nations. Their presence is unknown to the followers of the Eternal Truth, although some sages have suspected for awhile that there are followers of an old cult who act to protect the Ylari and thus don't wish to oppose them.
5. **Sinbad** is mentioned in legends as a hero, guardian of adventurers and travellers, but he does not have any temples within Ylaruam, even if there are some itinerant clerics who are faithful to him.

## NORWOLD

Norwold is a region to the north of the Known World and east of the great massif known as Chain of Ice, which divides Norwold from neighbouring Borea. It is an inaccessible territory of high mountains with volcanoes and perennial ice, evergreen forests that alternate with tundra and marshes, sparsely populated with species about the high latitudes, where the tundra gives way to the permafrost and to the icy expanses of the Arctic Circle. The majority of the land of Norwold is still without any real government, even if Alphatia claims possession of the entire expanse of Norwold and installed the son of the Empress Eriadna as sovereign of this territory in 990 AC. However, he is unable to exert any real control outside of the stronghold of Alpha (which takes up most of the peninsula of Alpha, within the Great Bay). Over the last millennium, Alphatia and Thyatis have vied for control of Norwold and there have been many attempts at colonisation surges – with little luck (except Oceansend itself). This lack of success is due mainly to Ostlander pirates along the coast of Low Norwold and the intervention of the dragons that dominate the region and that don't appreciate the human presence in their land.

Asatru is extremely popular among the native populations of Antalian descent (the Norsen) and, as a result, you can find priests and sacred sites of all this pantheon's Immortals. There are various tribes of barbarians and nomads (cf. The tribe of Barkal the Red in the module CM1) scattered between the plains north of the Great Bay and the valleys to the south that have rather animistic and shamanism religions (they worship ancestor and nature spirits) which are difficult to list. This ethnic group (the Viasköda) are of Neathar–Antalian descent and has also absorbed some humanoid customs following the passage and domination of the Horde of Loark in the XVIII century BC (among which were the cults of **Tabak** and **Yamag**). There is a third ethnic group (of Slav stamp) located mainly in south-western Norwold (between the Denagothian Plateau and the Wyrksteeth) but which also includes the inhabitants of the duchies of Stamtral and Vyolstograd (see module CM4). This ethnic group (the Vatski) derives from Antalian and Slavic stock (Vantalian). Also descended from those same people are the Vandars who invaded the Traldar kingdoms after 950 BC, and who over the centuries, with the enslavement of the latter, eventually created the Traladaran ethnic group. The Vatski of Norwold religion is a fusion of that of the Antalians and that of the Neathars, with the Neathar triad (Odin, Ixion and Terra) heading the pantheon.

### ALPHA

<i>Razud</i>	Self-determination, independence, liberty, courage, strength, authority, Alphatians
<i>Thor</i>	War, battle, fury in battle, honour, bravery
<i>Frigg (Terra)</i>	Creation, balance of the life cycle, birth, prosperity, fertility, earth, shepherds and farmers
<i>Odin</i>	Authority, guile, knowledge, wisdom, sky, storms, winds
<i>Koryis</i>	Peace, prosperity, diplomacy, mercy, tolerance, respect of laws
<i>Bemarris</i>	Battle, strength, exterminate dragons, defend Norwold

#### Notes:

1. The cult of Razud is the dominate faith of Alpha. Founded by Alphatian colonists, it has also gained native followers. Razud preaching of self-determination and self-sufficiency is a teaching that the Alphans have taken as their own motto. Alpha wishes to secede from its Alphatia motherland, scrap the Alphatian caste system and attain its own place in the world, and establish more egalitarian laws. King Ericall of Alpha, son of the Empress, is a prime supporter of independence from Norwold and a great admirer of Razud's cult. The rapport between the Alphatian immigrants and native Antalians is so great that both now simply consider themselves "Alphans".
2. Asatru is also deeply engrained within Alpha, but only three of the Immortals are formally worshipped and have had a temple erected here. They are Odin (Father of Men), Frigg (his wife, Immortal of fertility) and the bold Thor, the defender of mortals, lord of battle and bane of the giants (who with pirates and winter are the Alphans worst blights).
3. Koryis has a temple and some followers in the Alphan capital, principally pacifist and wealthy Alphatians that seek to maintain the status quo. Koryis's very pacifist philosophy isn't very popular with Norwold's more warlike inhabitants.
4. In the kingdom of Alpha, clerics and followers of **Alphaks** and **Talitha** secretly act to create disorder, arrange murders, and lead revolts to destroy the Alphatian presence in Norwold. They don't have any real place of worship, and always move around in secret; mostly operating independently from each other.

### AUTUUSMAA

<i>Vainamoinen</i>	Patriotism, sacrifice, war
<i>Ilmarinen</i>	Constructs, crafts, inventions
<i>Lemminkäinen</i>	Hunting, heroism, exploration
<i>Maderakka (Terra)</i>	Creation and protection of all forms of life (animals and plants), balance of the life cycle, birth, earth, prosperity and fertility, shepherds and farmers
<i>Jumal (Odin)</i>	Knowledge, wisdom, sky, storms, winds
<i>Tapio (Ilsundal)</i>	Protection of nature, forests, knowledge, magic, serenity and peace
<i>Abti (Protius)</i>	Oceans, rivers and marine creatures, water, capriciousness, travel

<i>Hiisi (Hel)</i>	Corruption, death, darkness, cold
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**Notes:**

1. Autuusmaa is a nation composed of a union of several more or less settled Neathar clans that doesn't appear in any Mystaran supplement, but has been invented from scratch as an incarnation of the Ugro-Finnish culture (and therefore the isolated homeland of the Immortal Ilmarinen, who is mentioned in the old Immortal set). It is situated around the Landsplit River (Haljasmaa in Autuusmaa), north of the Lothbarth Forest and south of the tundra that covers the icy expanse of High Norwold. Autuusmaa ("Land of Salvation") was founded around 1720 BC by Vainamoinen (one of the three incarnations of Ilmarinen) and is inhabited by two peoples of the Neathar ethnic group: the Kansajaa (literally "people of the ice"), peasant and hunter-gatherer settlers that live in the more fertile areas near the Landsplit River, and the Vaeltajaa ("people of the road"), hunters and semi-nomadic herdsmen that prefer the southern steppe and tundra). They were forced to migrate from the Borean Valley in High Norwold following the invasion of the Horde of Loark. The Autuusmaan mythology draws from that of the Neathar cults, but has drastically changed because of the predominant role of Ilmarinen in the epic founding of the kingdom. This has led the old Immortals to be secondary to Ilmarinen in his roles of Vainamoinen (the kingdom's founder), Lemminkainen (hunter and explorer) and even Ilmarinen (creator of the Saampo – the magical mill that made the frozen land of Autuusmaa fertile and allowed the Kansajaa to prosper). The sense of national unity and patriotic spirit is strongest among the ethnic Kansajaa, (which the three ancient heroes belong to), than among the Vaeltajaa, who instead seek independence and often act without taking into consideration the decisions agreed by the Autuusmaan community.
2. Maderakka (Terra) and Jumal (Odin) are the Immortals who were worshipped by the Kansajaa and Vaeltajaa when they lived in the Borean Valley. Their cults still exist in Autuusmaa, and they are still recognised as the creators of the world (Mother Earth and Father Sky) and as the most important Immortals by the nomadic Vaeltajaa. For the Kansajaa he no longer plays the primary role; this is now taken by Ilmarinen, the one who saved them and allowed them to live in comfort Lemminkainen is the only one of the three new Autuusmaan Immortals to have a large following with the Vaeltajaa, who consider him their people's guardian, as the legends would like to have a great Vaeltajaa hunter.
3. The cult of Tapio (Ilsundal) dates back to the contact with the Shiye elves that moved into the forests of southern Autuusmaa around 500 BC. From them, the Autuusmaans have taken to worshipping Tapio as king of forest creatures and magical knowledge and mysteries, as well as guardian of peace and harmony.
4. Ahti (Protius) is an Immortal worshipped by the Vaeltajaa and Kansajaa that have long lived along the Norwold coast and Landsplit Riverside. He doesn't have many followers here because of their slight nautical interest, and chiefly as he is thought of as a fickle and wacky Immortal, who is offered prayers and offerings more to placate his anger than for worship.
5. Hiisi (Hel) governs Tuonela, the mythical land of the dead in the Autuusmaa mythos, and is worshipped only by witches and particularly ferocious and corrupt Vaeltajaa clans, that live together with groups of humanoids in the wildest areas of Autuusmaa. Hiisi is unanimously considered as the bringer of winter and darkness, and is always associated with the brutal humanoids and demons. According to legend, Tuonela is in the north, where the sun never rises. Many Autuusmaans identify the island of Frosthaven as this place. Frosthaven is a home of the frost giants, bitter enemies of the Autuusmaan. From where the heroic Lemminkainen managed to recover the Wife of Gold and Silver made by Ilmarinen, the second most precious and powerful artefact of the Kansajaa mythology after the Saampo. Currently, the automaton is hidden somewhere in the Nordic tundra, and legend says that it will awaken to help the nation in times of need.

**DENAGOTH**

<b>Idris</b>	Vengeance, intrigue, domination, destroy elves, magic, humanoids, dragons, naga, wyverns
<i>Karaash</i>	Humanoids, war, victory, conquest, tactics, strength
<i>He Who Watches (Odin)</i>	Authority, good government, fairness, knowledge, wisdom, magic, sky, storms, winds, air
<i>Frey</i>	Passion and strategy in battle, virility, loyalty, friendship, agriculture and fertility
<i>Thor</i>	War, battle, fury in battle, honour, bravery
<i>Bartziluth</i>	Fury, war, combat
<i>Freyja</i>	Women warriors, fertility, love, abundance, beauty, Seidh (prophecy), valiant souls
<i>Hel</i>	Death, reincarnation, darkness, cold energy

**Notes:**

1. The information from the adventure X11, *Saga of the Shadowlord* regarding the religion of Denagoth is fragmentary. The only certain thing is that it is a nation with a strong humanoid presence and which is dominated by the cult of the Idris. Idris is an Immortal linked to dragons (due to her symbol), revered both by humans and humanoids and devoted to the extermination of the elven race. The Church of Essuria (the Denagothians' ancient religion) has been absorbed and modified by the priests of the Cult of Idris to present Idris as the guardian of Denagoth's human and

humanoid communities. Over the centuries, the sect has instructed its followers to hate those of elven blood, to create alliances with humanoids, and to respect dragons as superior creatures. The dragons of Norwold always welcomed this philosophy and respect, until the Great One discovered that Idris aimed to create a nation of half-dragons using her own followers as guinea pigs. Since then, the Great One and the lawful dragons, particularly, of Norwold have been ruthless enemies of Idris and the Denagothians. Diamond watches the enemy's moves, while Idris and her followers have enough charisma to frequently convince the more chaotic dragons to play their part in the fight against the draconic hierarchy.

2. Due to the massive number of humanoids in Denagoth and their favoured status in the eyes of Idris's followers, the cults of Karaash, Bartziluth and Hel are widespread in Denagoth and a few humans have openly embraced their dogmas.
3. The majority of Denagothian humans are of Antalian descent and still worship Father Odin as the world's creator, even if the Cult of Idris's repressive politics have almost completely eradicated the Antalian traditions in an attempt to create a new Denagothian national identity based on the doctrine of Idris. Only the sects of Odin and the heroes, Thor, Frey and Freyja, remain as a testimony to these people's Antalian roots. They are tolerated by the Church of Essuria as they don't harm Denagothian interests but they are still closely controlled.

### FORESTHOME

<i>Ilkundal</i>	Protection of elves and nature, wisdom, knowledge, magic, tradition, serenity and peace
<i>Lornasen</i>	Beauty, perfection, elves, nature, charm, plants, spring, fertility

#### Notes:

1. Foresthome is a wooded region north of the Great Bay, until the Landsplit River, and is also called Lothbarth, (from the name of the forest that surrounds it). The only inhabitants of the Homes are Shiye elves, descendents of that clan that didn't wish to swear fidelity to the crown of Shiye-Lawr or convert to the faith of Eiryndul. Guided by Princess Lornasen, faithful to the traditions of Ilkundal, these elves emigrated from Alpathia and in 600 BC they settled in the inhospitable forest of High Norwold. However, thanks to their magical knowledge, and the aid of both Ilkundal and Princess Lornasen (who later became Immortal), they have managed to make the Lothbarth an idyllic place; a forest where it is eternally spring. The Shiye of Norwold are shy and fiercely independent individuals, and, as such, they don't have a real, unified kingdom. Each prefers to live in his own stronghold (1,000–1,200 elves per community), and only acknowledges Ilkundal the Wise as monarch, and reigning Immortal of elven blood.
2. Ilkundal is the Shiye of Norwold's principal Immortal, given that each clan possesses a Tree of life. Another sect with a strong following amongst these elves is that of Lornasen (Immortal of Beauty and Eternal Spring), who rose to Immortality after having transformed the Shiye into an oasis of beauty and fertility and risking her life to procure a bough from the Sylvan Realm's Mother Tree; which probably produced the elven relic currently present in Foresthome. The two Immortals collaborate to protect Foresthome, and according to legend Lornasen is Ilkundal's dearest daughter.

### FROSTHAVEN

<i>Hel</i>	Darkness, death, cold energy
<i>Stodos</i>	Cold, cryons, ice, storms
<i>Jammudaru</i>	Evil giants, fear, torture, vengeance, violence
<i>Hymir</i>	Alchemy, knowledge, revelry, water and liquids

#### Notes:

1. The island of Frosthaven is a small distance off Norwold's northern coast, inside the Arctic Circle. The frost giants worship Stodos and Hel as the King and Queen of Ice and Jammudaru as their General, patron of raiding, justice (or vengeance) and torture. According to the myth, the two rulers are their race's ancestors, and they gave the giants the ability to resist inclement weather and the strength to dominate weaker creatures. Frosthaven's society is based on strength: the strong dominate the weak. The giants are divided into clans, each led by a Jarl, and each clan is independent, often fighting each other with their Immortal's approval. During the harshest winters, when the channel with Norwold freezes, the tribes gather to elect a Chief, the bravest and most charismatic giant, who leads all the clans' warriors in raids against the human lands, bring home booty to be shared among all the giants.
2. Hymir is worshipped by the many frost giants who consider him the lord of sea and knowledge. In some cases, Hymir is seen as Hel and Stodos's court sage, while in other interpretations he is a rival of the pair, driven from the island and reduced to living in the middle of the sea. According to legend, Hymir isolates Frosthaven for most of the year as retaliation against Stodos and Hel, to gain his revenge on their descendents. But during the winter their power is strong enough to freeze Hymir's desire and forms a crust of ice across the sea's surface, which allows the giants to get to Norwold for their customary wintry raids. The followers of Hymir are mostly fishermen and the few sailors, as well

as those frost giants that are opposed to the ruthless rule imposed by Hel and Stodos, and who seek to bring more free will and unity among their kind.

3. The few white dragons and cryons that live on the Isle of Frosthaven are all followers of Stodos.

## GHYR

<b>He Who Watches (Odin)</b>	Authority, good government, fairness, knowledge, wisdom, magic, sky, storms, winds, air
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### Notes:

1. Ghyr is a small kingdom introduced in the module XL-1: *Quest for the Heartstone* in north-eastern corner of the Denagothian Plateau. The region was initially inhabited by Antalian herders and farmers until 2200 BC, but over the centuries it has suffered invasions of Neathar from the west and the south, and of the dena half-orcs. This lasted until the IX century AC when King Mirimar of Essuria conquered the region and annexed it to the kingdom of Essuria. Numerous nobles eager for land and power created fiefdoms in this wild area. Following the fall of Essuria they became independent and began to wage war among each other. At the end of the so-called Prism Wars (863–897 AC), Qasmar of Ghyr prevailed thanks to an artefact known as the Heartstone, and the Kingdom of Ghyr becoming the region’s principal power. Despite the theft of this sacred relic (given by He Who Watches), King Qasmar’s son Ganto was able to maintain the stability of the country’s government. Upon his death Queen Leahrah, with the aid of some adventurers, recovered the artefact, which strengthened the kingdom. Ghyr’s tightly-knit character is kept together by Leahrah’s heirs and the vigilant presence of the church of He Who Watches; the kingdom has entered into diplomatic and trade relations with Wendar, Norwold and the Heldannic Territories, and has friendly relations with some of Norwold’s barbarian tribes and some scattered potentates of the Denagothian Plateau. Internally strong, the kingdom is the most likely to inherit Essuria’s legacy by colonising the wildernesses of the northwest, or by re-conquering the unlucky Essurian lands.
2. The sect of He Who Watches (Odin) is devoted to justice and legality, and lends its divine support to the ruler of Ghyr to strengthen the Ghyrians’ national identity.

## ICEREACH RANGE, FINAL RANGE AND WYRMSTEETH

<i>Great One</i>	Dragons and lizardkin, creation, justice, knowledge, magic
<i>Karaash</i>	Humanoids, war, victory, conquest, tactics, strength
<i>Bartziluth</i>	Fury, battle, bravery, strength
<i>Hel</i>	Death, darkness and cold energy, reincarnation, corruption, evil shapechangers
<i>Jammudaru</i>	Evil giants, vengeance, violence, torture, fear
<i>Ka</i>	Protection, prosperity, knowledge, healing, wisdom, rakasta, lizardmen, stone giants
<i>White Claw (Ninfangle)</i>	Rakasta, bravery, hunting, travel, adventure, battle
<i>The Executioner (Malinois)</i>	Lupins, hunting, war, courage, just vengeance, weapons & armour, wereslayers
<i>Zalaj</i>	Cloud and mountain giants, knowledge, magic, strength
<i>Diamond</i>	Lawful dragons, order, wisdom, justice, tolerance
<i>Opal</i>	Neutral dragons, lizardmen, vengeance, perseverance
<i>Pearl</i>	Chaotic dragons and lizardmen, instinct, hunting, greed, domination
<i>Surt (Zugzul)</i>	Power, conquest, fire, war
<i>Loki</i>	Deceit, lies, betrayal, intrigue, guile, fire

### Notes:

1. The mountain ranges of Norwold, particularly Wyrksteeth, are infamous for being the refuge of an unknown number of draconic creatures since time immemorial. This so-called Kingdom of the Dragons is an enduring legend handed down by the human and humanoid populations of Norwold, but its true extent and type of government (if it has one) have always remained a mystery. The rifest rumours, and the opinions of the most erudite sages, insist that the kingdom is divided into “hunting territories”, each ruled by an old dragon that has a number of younger dragons under him. The various territories often fight among themselves, but by common accord they have never provoked an all-out civil war, to prevent their enemies from benefiting. There is a hidden site in the Wyrksteeth, a draconic city excavated within the heart of the most impassable mountains. Here, periodically, the rulers of these territories assemble to keep council on their affairs, and Norwold’s other races. It is said that this council is led by the world’s three most powerful dragons, each representing one of the philosophies to which the dragons are aligned (Law, Neutral and Chaos). They are Diamond (Dragon of the Sun), Pearl (Dragon of the Moon) and Opal (Dragon of the Stars). The Great One visits this place at least annually, on a holy day when the majority of the continent’s draconic creatures pay homage to him.
2. The numerous humanoids that live in the wild land of Norwold worship Karaash and Bartziluth closely follow an ancient martial code and the way of the berserker which is prominent among both the humanoids and humans.

3. Various humanoids worship Hel, as their races' dark mother and guardian of their refuges (shadow, personified by Hel, is considered sacred and real, and so many of them live within the heart of the mountains and are nocturnal). She brings death to their enemies and perpetuates her worshippers through reincarnation based on their life's brave actions (pillaging and killing of enemies).
4. Jammudaru, considered the lord of vengeance, incubi and torture, has a discrete following among the tribes of the more ruthless humanoids (especially ogres and orcs), and among the more brutal giants of the region.
5. Ka and White Claw (Ninfangle) are worshipped by the various tribes of rakasta (mountain rakasta, lynxmen and snow pardasta) that are found mostly in the Wyrksteeth and Final mountain ranges. Ka also has followers in the lizardmen communities and among the stone giants that live in Norwold as creator and guardian of the species.
6. Many lupin tribes of various races roam Norwold, but all pay homage to the Executioner (Malinois), the lupins patron Immortal of hunting, courage and war. His dictates allow the lupins to remain independent and survive the wild lands.
7. The majority of cloud and mountain giants that live among Norwold's highest peaks worship Zalaj as the father of their races and supreme Immortal of the land and sky.
8. Many fire giants and some humanoid tribes worship Surt (Zugzul) as the lord of fire, Immortal of destruction and war. In his name, they lead a crusade against the humans by destroying their settlements and conquering new territories. All the tribes that worship Surt answer directly to his authority. They don't cooperate very often, but do avoid fighting each other in order to avoid being engulfed by volcanic eruptions provoked by Surt; which, according to legend, is a divine punishment that has been used to punish those clans of giants guilty of fratricide wars.
9. The cult of Loki is popular both with some communities of giants (particularly fire giants renegades opposed to the influence of Surt and his followers) and with other tribes (both human and humanoid), that are usually barbarians dedicated to raiding and that only act to add to the uncertainty that already disrupts Norwold.

## LANDFALL

<i>Asterius</i>	Wealth, guile, social climbing, merchants, thieves, messengers
<i>Talitha</i>	Selfishness, egocentricity, betrayal, deceit, greed, thieves and assassins
<i>Loki</i>	Deceit, lies, betrayal, intrigue, guile
<i>Protius</i>	Oceans and marine creatures, water, capriciousness, travel

### Notes:

1. The city of Landfall was founded as a pirate lair in 930 AC and isn't renowned for its interest in Immortal affairs. Nevertheless, some sects do exist in this city of suspicious traffic and scoundrels; they have withstood the changes of leadership that the settlement it has undergone since its foundation (first Thyatian, then Alphatian). Asterius is the dominant cult, imported by the Thyatians about a century ago and he is revered both by merchants and (especially) thieves (a very popular profession in Landfall). The clerics and followers of Asterius compete with those of Talitha, an Alphatian Immortal (guardian of every type of scoundrel, pirate and assassin) who is more insidious and active in recruiting followers. For decades the streets of Landfall have been a theatre for a ruthless war between the rival bands, behind which are hidden the interests of the two cults and the fight between the two Immortals.
2. The Lodge of Loki is a criminal organisation that worships the lord of lies and sells its services to the highest bidder. It doesn't have any allies, and it only supports those it can gain the most from, never hesitating to betray any agreement if it would be to its favour. As such it is considered (as are its followers) highly unreliable. But the ability and cunning of its members remains the optimal resource for anyone wishing to secretly undertake illicit actions, without bearing any risk.
3. The cult of Protius is rife in Landfall, due to its port and the sea represents his major source of income.
4. The Temple of Vanya has kept a military enclave in Landfall since the Thyatian conquest. **Vanya's** faith is shared by some citizens and clerics who are more committed to maintaining law and order and fighting crime. These clerics, despite being Thyatian, have a good rapport with the Heldannic Knights, who never hesitate to help whenever the Temple requests their aid, as it strengthens their regional presence.

## LEEHA

<i>Usamigaras</i>	Magic, healing, guile, travel, messengers, thieves
<i>Mother Nature (Djaea)</i>	Natural balance, respect of life and the environment, survival of living races, druidism
<i>Coberham</i>	Hin, magic, blackflame, mysteries, knowledge

### Notes:

1. The hin who founded Leeha came from the Nithian Empire, to which they had been sold by the orcs that ruled Shaerdon during the age of Imperial Nithian. During its maximum expansion (X century BC) under the reign of the Pharaoh Tokoramases V (known as the Traveller), Nithia established a colony in the Great Bay, populated with hin slaves and Antalians. Due to the great distance, repeated frost giant invasions, and the entropic corruption that was

spreading through the empire's heart contact with the Nordic colony was lost at the end of the VIII century BC. The hin escaped the massacre they witnessed and settled in the (modern) area of Leeha, at the mouth of the White Bear River, and to try and survive the harsh Nordic climate they allied with the human survivors. Many centuries later, after Nithia's fall, the remaining hin slaves in Soderfjord were almost exterminated by the kobold invasion in 490 BC (which was the fate of the underground gnomes of Falun), and for over a century lived a semi-nomadic life among the Soderfjord fjords and the arid plain north of Alasiya, trying to escape the raiders from both areas. Only the arrival of Usamigaras (on his path to Immortality) again gave the survivors confidence. They united under his lead and set sail directly northwards. Following the signs of Coberham – Usamigaras's patron – who wanted to place all hin under the protection of the Blackflame, the hin arrived in the Great Bay and founded the stronghold of Leeha. They then welcomed all their scattered kin and gave them the sacred relic that would protect them in future.

2. The sect of Usamigaras is naturally the most widespread among the Leehan hin, as he represents the saviour of both groups that founded the county, the one who with guile, magic, and bravery due to its hostile climate and position managed to form a strong and lasting community at the end of the IV century BC.
3. There is a druidic cult of Mother Nature that the hin have developed since their liberation, which peacefully coexists with the cults of Coberham and Usamigaras, which the hin relied on before the appearance of the Blackflame. Some hin druids take care of all the community needs, worried with respecting their environment and not wasting the few, precious resources that are available to the seven hin communities around the stronghold of Leeha.
4. The hin of Leeha also worship Coberham as the supreme keeper of the Blackflame, the hin's most important relic.

### OCEANSEND

<i>Liena</i>	Norwold, war, history, discipline, order
<i>Odin</i>	Authority, guile, knowledge, wisdom, sky, storms, winds
<i>Frigg (Terra)</i>	Creation, balance of the life cycle, birth, prosperity, fertility, earth, shepherds and farmers
<i>Thor</i>	War, battle, fury in battle, honour, bravery
<i>Kagyar</i>	Dwarves, crafts, metallurgy, sculpture, construction, miners
<i>Magni (Bemarris)</i>	Battle, strength, exterminate dragons, defenders Norwold
<i>Frey</i>	Passion and strategy in battle, virility, loyalty, friendship, agriculture and fertility
<i>Freyja</i>	Women warriors, fertility, love, abundance, beauty, Seidh (prophecy), valiant souls
<i>Tarastia</i>	Law, order, truth, justice and just vengeance
<i>Asterius</i>	Trade, wealth, travel, guile, thieves, messengers
<i>Protius</i>	Oceans and marine creatures, water, capriciousness, travel
<i>Loki</i>	Deceit, lies, betrayal, intrigue, guile

### Notes:

1. The city of Oceansend was founded by Thyatian colonists in 900 AC. Over the decades, it has integrated Heldanner natives, and Thyatian demihuman and human colonists to become Norwold's most cosmopolitan city. It is a mishmash of Thyatian bureaucracy, Antalian traditions, dwarven architecture, and hin cheerfulness, which has created a port of great charm and incredible commercial and strategic value for all of Low Norwold. Because of this it has suffered repeated attacks by the Alphatians and Heldanners and a long period of Alphatian occupation from 941 AC to 972 AC. They won their independence only twenty years ago (although has kept good diplomatic relations and an informal alliance with the Empire of Thyatis). Due to its mixture of races and ethnicities, there are numerous temples and religions typical of the inhabitants. The principal sect is that of Liena (Oceansend's divine founder and Emperor Thincol's mother) who is now considered the patron of the city and Norwold. Her cult has eclipsed **Vanya's**, who has been unable to manipulate her few followers, as the city is hostile to her due to the conquest of neighbouring Heldann by the Order of Vanya in 955 AC.
2. The Asatru Immortals (worshipped by both the Heldanners and Thyatians) are the most popular after Liena, with Odin, Frigg and Thor at the fore, followed by Frey, Freyja and Magni (son of Thor and an incarnation of Bemarris, he is extremely respected as a patron of strength and hunter of dragons – which are a constant threat in Norwold).
3. Stormhaven is a dwarven stronghold founded in 910 AC, when intrepid dwarven explorers emigrated from Thyatis to Norwold in search of fortune and new mines, along with a small gnomish community. The dwarves and gnomes live in the strongholds among the feet of the Final Range's southern mountains and in the city of Oceansend. They brought the cult of Kagyar with them, which gained additional followers among the humans and hin. Kagyar is worshipped by the craftsmen and artists who seek the divine inspiration to produce work that brings prestige both to them and the city.
4. Asterius, Protius, and Tarastia are the only Thyatian Immortals to have taken hold in Oceansend and successfully secure the people's veneration. Asterius and Protius are particularly favoured as they represent the wealth and prosperity that comes from hard work, trade and the sea – all aspects that characterise the inhabitants' daily life.

Tarastia (also known as Var) is the patron of justice and fairness. She is often invoked both privately and publicly to gain wisdom and guidance before an important decision.

- Oceansend's only secret cult is that of Loki – lord of deceit – to whom homage is paid by the criminals who gather under the Lodge of Loki's protection. This criminal organisation has a presence in all the cities of low Norwold and is led by an individual known as the Puppet, whose hideaway and true identity is still a mystery.

### VYOLSTAGRAD AND STAMTRAL

<i>Perun (Odin)</i>	Authority, knowledge, wisdom, sky, storms, winds
<i>Dazbog (Ixion)</i>	Light, strength, sun, heroism, fire, war, banish darkness
<i>Mokosz (Terra)</i>	Creation, birth, life cycle, prosperity, fertility, earth
<i>Svarog (Wayland)</i>	Metallurgy, crafts, smiths, armourers, engineering, fire
<i>Svetovid (Halav)</i>	War, strength, determination
<i>Porewit (Forsetta)</i>	Justice, law, obedience and loyalty, sincerity
<i>Jarilo (Frey)</i>	Virility, friendship, fertility, life cycle, battle
<i>Lada (Freyja)</i>	Fertility, abundance, beauty, love, harmony, joy, art
<i>Zir (Great One)</i>	Dragons, knowledge, magic
<i>Zorya (Norn)</i>	Time, fate, divination, visions
<i>Veles (Loki)</i>	Deceit, lies, betrayal, intrigue, guile
<i>Chernobog (Thanatos)</i>	Death, destruction, oblivion
<i>Marzanna (Hel)</i>	Darkness and cold energy, evil, witchcraft, corruption

#### Notes:

- The Duchies of Vyolstograd and Stamtral are described in module CM4: *Earthshaker*, which describes them as two small fiefdoms in perennial discord situated in the Norwold hinterland and populated by the same ethnic group with Slavo–Russian traits. Therefore, the Slav mythology of the real world has been taken as the model to create the Vatski cult, as well as the cult of the ethnic group that populate the region of Norwold between the Wymsteeth and Denagoth.
- According to the Vatski cult (which takes many of its legends from the Asatru mythology) at the start of the world there was only chaos whirling around the Great Oak, the sacred tree at the world's centre. From the chaos sprang the three Zorya, also called Aurora: Utrennaya, the morning star, Vechernaya, the evening star, and Pulonochnaya, the night star. They started to gather together the strands of chaos placed brought order to the universe, separating life from death. From life Perun (the sky), Dazbog (the sun) and Mokosz (the earth) took form, from death sprang the triplets Veles (deceit), Chernobog (destruction) and Marzanna (cold and shadow). The three Zorya decreed that they would have to coexist to balance the world and avoid returning everything to Chaos, and therefore Perun (the first to have taken life) was given the task of populating the Great Oak. Perun then breathed on the higher branches, forming plains and forests, and the leaves that fell on this wet land became the first mortals – humans and animals. He later joined with his sister Mokosz, who began to give birth to a line of divinities. In answer, the treacherous Veles spat out the serpent Zmey, which killed all of Perun's first nine children and began to raid the mortals, killing and stealing their livestock for his master. Seeing what was happening, Dazbog went to his brother's aid and gained his permission, to join with Mokosz to sire Svarog, the child of fire. Svarog used the ability he inherited from his father to create a plough and magical nails, and with the help of Jarilo, Perun's tenth surviving, and their fathers, he nailed the tongue of Zmey to the plough and made a furrow in the Great Tree, thereby dividing the land of the dead from that of the living. Perun took possession of the land of the living, on the highest branches of the Oak, and relegated Veles, his brothers and his unfaithful serpent in that of the dead, in the roots of the Great Oak, dominating them from above. Later, Perun chose Zir, the wisest, dragons, and revealed to him the most potent arcane secrets, and tasked him to guard the source of life and magic and watch the moves of the triad of death. Dazbog chose to remain in the highest branches of the Great Oak, and he was entrusted with the task of bringing the sun to the world, to separate light from darkness and allow both the Immortals of day and night to visit the world of the living. In order to have other allies, Perun once again joined with his sister and sired the Immortals Lada (beauty), Porewit (justice) and Svetovid (the warrior). Svarog's song taught the mortals to use fire and iron and they learnt to forge iron arms and armour, which enabled them to control nature and fight the hordes of evil in Perun's name.
- Perun (Odin) is the supreme Immortal of the Vatski pantheon, followed by Dazbog (Ixion), Immortal of the sun, and by Mokosz (Terra), the Immortal of fertility, earth, and holy femininity, even though in Vatski culture women are defined as being subservient to men and always have a lesser rank than them, based on the cosmos's natural order. The Vatski cult lives on the basis of a dualism between good and evil, chaos and order, whereby the triad of life (Perun–Dazbog–Mokosz) have their exact opposites in the triad of death (Veles–Chernobog–Marzanna), like them two males and one female; patrons of all the monstrous creatures that threaten the Vatski. According to the cult however, as decreed by the supreme arbiter of fate, the Zorya, it is fitting that they all have their position in the



universe, and thus the triad of death's priests are tolerated in Vatski society, provided that they always submit to the authority of the triad of life's clerics. This shows the importance that the number 3 has; it is the basis of the universe's structure and often reoccurs both as a sacred religious number, and as a real number in the customs, mores, and structure of Vatski society.

4. Dazbog (Ixion), was also called Triglav, or Holy Triad (around the sacred number 3), as he has three different aspects: the rising sun, epitaph of life and light; the midday sun, the most brilliant and hottest, symbol of strength and war; and the setting sun, or death and peace in expectation of rebirth. He is the symbol of the eternal life cycle, and as the White Immortal (the meaning of his name) he is the opposite of Chernabog, the Black Immortal of death.
5. Svarog (Wayland) is extremely popular among the Vatski as he possesses the secrets of metallurgy, which is the culture's supreme art as it allows them to fight (making arms and armour), to survive (creating defences and warming themselves with fire), and to prosper (constructing tools for trade).
6. Svetovid (Halav) is an extremely popular Immortal among the warlike Vatski. His cult was the common link that allowed the northern Vandar invaders (who entered the Traldar lands several times after 950 BC) to amalgamate with the Traldar (then followers of Halav and Petra) and form the nation of Traladara after 4 centuries of power sharing. This caused the Traldar's Greek-like culture to evolve into the Slav-Romanian culture of the Traladarans.
7. Zir (Great One) is worshipped by the Vatski, as a loyal ally of Perun and the keeper of arcane knowledge. As such, the dragons that populate the nearby mountains are feared and respected as descendents of the great Zir. Although the Vatski have learnt, to their own cost, that not all the dragons deserve the honour and respect that the Vatski show, as some (the most evil and chaotic) often used their superiority to destroy or raid the Vatski settlements. The Vatski explain this hostility with the hypothesis that some of the dragons are in really the children of Zmey (the serpent created by Veles) who can disguise themselves as dragons to deceive the mortals and harm the protégées of Perun. Thus, the Vatski have learnt to be cautious in dealing with dragons: they don't attack them on sight and still honour them, but they tend to never completely trust a dragon until its good faith has been proven.

## GREAT WASTE

The Great Waste is the region to the west of the Known World, stretching from Borea to the north and the Sea of Dread to the south, and from the Black Mountains to the west to the eastern border of Great Hule. The Great Waste comprises the Plain of Fire and the Great Desert, as well as the Plain of the Urduks and the underground kingdom of Graakhalia.

### GRAAKHALIA AND THE PLAIN OF FIRE

<i>The Hunter (Zirchev)</i>	Survival, hunting, nature, animals, tolerance, outcasts
<i>Skorprios (Atzanteotl)</i>	Corruption (physical and moral), betrayal, destruction of surface life, deceit
<i>Surt (Zugzul)</i>	Power, conquest, fire, war

#### Notes:

1. The Gruugrakh gnolls fleeing Nithia sought refuge in the caverns under the Plain of Fire and, for centuries, lived a hard, contested existence. Then one of them was contacted by Zirchev, who began to guide them to ensure their survival and convert them to a less destructive practise. The sect of the Hunter (Zirchev) was also embraced by the Sheyallia elves when they entered the caverns and seeing their new living conditions chose to renounce Ordana and pray to Zirchev instead. There are many priests of Zirchev both among the gnolls (the majority) and the elves.
2. Skorprios (Atzanteotl) is worshipped by the manscorpion (humanoid scorpions) tribes that inhabit the subterranean region of Bronkhaat. This region is in the upper levels near Graakhalia's western border. They profoundly hate all surface dwellers and consider the Graakhalians a threat. They plan to destroy their enemies based on visions sent by Skorprios.
3. Surt is worshipped by the fire giants that inhabit a fortress (the Blinding Palace) at the centre of the Plain of Fire.
4. Many creatures of fire, such as elementals and fire giants, which live in the Plane of Fire, worship powerful elementals along with **Rathanos**.

### PLAIN OF THE URDUKS

<i>Father Sky (Odin)</i>	Good government and authority, sky, storms, winds, guile, knowledge, wisdom
<i>Mother Earth (Terra)</i>	Creation and protection of all forms of life (animals and plants), earth, birth, balance of the life cycle, prosperity and fertility
<i>Sinbad</i>	Travel, exploration, adventure, courage, overcome every border
<i>Simurgh</i>	Protection of living species, health, knowledge, flight, travel
<i>Himayeti (Ixion)</i>	Energy, light, sun, fire, strength, banish the darkness
<i>The Executioner (Malinois)</i>	Hunting, war, courage, just vengeance, arms and armourers, wereslayers
<i>Kala (Hel)</i>	Reincarnation, corruption, death, darkness and cold energy, increase entropy and evil, evil shapechangers

## Notes:

1. The urduk mythos derives from the Neathars' faith, which over the centuries has partially mixed with the Sindhi religion. As such, the two Immortals of greatest import with the urduks are Father Sky (Odin) and Mother Earth (Terra), the universe's creators thanks to their carnal and spiritual union. According to the urduk cult, all the living creatures live on the womb of Mother Earth (who must be respected as well as worshipped, to avoid poisoning it themselves), and on their death their souls are united on the chest of Father Sky, who then decides who are the most worthy to remain with him. The Celestial Traveller (Sinbad) escorts those people who need further purification back to Mother Earth's arms so that they may learn further lessons and redeem their sins. According to the urduks, Sinbad and Simurgh are the emissaries of Father Sky and Mother Earth, while Himayeti (Ixion) and Kala (Hel) represent light and darkness, good and evil that fight between the two worlds.
2. Sinbad's clerics present among the urduks don't have a permanent religious site, as they constantly travel with the nomads, who have great respect for them (as Sinbad is one of their most important Immortals). However, Sinbad has a holy site in Sind's Twin Oasis, a grotto where according to legend Sinbad first appeared to the desert people and which is supposed to be a portal that leads to other worlds. This sanctuary is visited annually by his followers, and is protected by an order of priests (the Silent Keepers), who are tasked to show how infidels can profane his marvels.
3. Carved into the Great Plateau's rocky wall, which separates the Great Waste from the coast, is a sanctuary dedicated to Simurgh, a divine, bird-like creature who according to myth has saved the world many times. Many urduks pay homage to this legendary creature and its priests can be found among their tribes to protect them.
4. The Executioner (Malinois) is an Immortal that the urduks have adopted from the desert lupins, and have made their own, as his ideals of war, vengeance, courage and hunting shapechangers are shared by these nomads. The Executioner is a legendary 'demigod', the child of the Sky and Earth, charged to help the urduks in their struggles against their enemies.
5. Kala (Hel) is worshipped by various humanoids that surround the desert and all the evil shapechangers that still live in this land, as well as bands of urduk raiders corrupted by her clerics.

## SERPENT PENINSULA

The Serpent Peninsula is a region south of the Great Waste that borders the Savage Coast to the west and that divides the Sea of Dread (that bathes the eastern coast of the peninsula) from the Izondian Deep (that laps against the western coast). Made up mostly of equatorial rainforests, marshes and swamps, the peninsula is inhabited by two different ethnic groups: the small, mysterious Karimars of Ulimwengu, inhabitants of the region since before the Great Rain of Fire, and the Tanagoro (who inhabit Yavdlom) who arrived in the peninsula in 2200 BC following a long migration from distant Tangor.

### ULIMWENGU

The Karimari worship their land – Ulimwengu – and look upon it as their mother, daughter, and comrade. The Karimari priests and druids gain their powers from their deep-seated faith in their land, a form of extreme druidism (see Karimari Cult).

### YAVDLOM

<b>Yav</b>	Yavdlom, seers, prophecy, protect the flow of time
Calitha	Oceans, lakes and rivers, travel, fertility, good luck, marine races
Tiresias	Visions of the future, dreams, poetry and music, astrology, prophecy, legends, magic
<i>Father Time (Khoronus)</i>	Time, knowledge, history, philosophy, good government, patience, persuasion, diplomacy
<i>Fugit</i>	Flow of time, memory, history, experience, knowledge
<i>Pyro (Ixion)</i>	Light, sun, fire, strength, banish the darkness, preserving the balance and the universal order
<i>Ashanti (Valerias)</i>	Love, passion, desire, sexuality, fertility, beauty, arts
<i>Korotiku</i>	Liberty, non-conformism, guile, cleverness, clear thinking, cheating and subterfuge
<i>Gorziok</i>	Oceans and extreme natural phenomena, creation and destruction

## Notes:

1. The Yavi are an ethnic group derived from the Tanagoro colonists who settled in the area in 2200 BC. Later, a clan of elves, the Sheyallia, also settled in Thanegia (Yavdlom's largest island), and over time the mixing of elves and Tanagoro giving rise to a racially mixed population of elves with Negroid traits and Tanagoros with elvish traits and the gift of foresight. Losing a civil war that they had unleashed against the Yavi seers, the elves fled, leaving the region to the seers and the Tanagoro. It is therefore actually possible to find among the Yavi both pure members of the Tanagoro race as well as those with elvish traits, who always possess the gift of foresight.
2. The Serene Divinarchy of Yavdlom is a nation ruled by seers, whose laws are based on the Book of Yav. The nation's founder and its greatest oracle left the book as his legacy. As a result, in Yavdlom, the future holds a particular importance and those people who show the gift of prophecy are recruited by the government and trained to fulfil their

own destiny. They become diviners and oracles, taking great care to not alter those things that have already been predetermined and they never abuse their own powers. Because, in Yavdlom, prophecy is a fundamental part of the mythos and religion, the Immortals linked to it have the largest following. There are four Immortals associated with the Yavi divination: Yav, the High Oracle; Tiresias, the blind singer; Calitha, once the elves guardian and now linked with the sea and, especially, fate and fortune; Fugit, particularly interested in preserving the flow of time and past, present and future history; and Father Time (Khoronus) the sage who watches over the stream of events and the knowledge of history.

3. Some Yavi are followers of the cult of the Tanagoro triad, Korotiku–Pyro–Ashanti, which has its roots in the modern Yavi’s original ethnicity.
4. Gorrziok’s cult is also present due to the extreme natural phenomena like tornadoes and typhoons that frequently hit the Peninsula, which the Yavi associate with Gorrziok, lord of waves and storms. He is worshipped and invoked to placate (or invoke) these natural disasters; every tribe prays to him to unleash typhoons and seaquakes against their enemies.

## SAVAGE COAST

The region of the Savage Coast overlooks the Izondian Deep and is the most civilised region of western Brun. It is delimited by the Yazak Steppes to the north, the Black Mountains to the east and the Yalu Bay to the west. It is made up of important nations like the theocracy of Hule, Los Guardianos (the Savage Baronies) once colonised by the Thyatians they gained independence during the last century, and the so-called non-human nations more to the west (Renardy, the lupin nation; Bellayne, the rakasta nation; Herath inhabited only by the mysterious aranea; Wallara the land of the chameleons; Jibarù, phanaton kingdom; Nimmur, once home of the enduks (winged minotaurs), and now dominated by the Sohktars, (humanoid scorpions); the Bayou, an area of swamps and marshes where lizardfolk live; and the Orc’s Head Peninsula, humanoids territory.

### ALMARRÒN (SAVAGE BARONY)

The Ambassador (Masauwu)	Politics, diplomacy, intrigue
Valerias	Love, passion, beauty, Arts
Milan (Mealiden)	Travel, adventure, audacity
The General (Thor)	War, courage, honour
The Judge (Tarastia)	Justice, law, revenge

#### Notes:

1. In Almarròn, religion is only fervently followed by only a few; the majority of the population are satisfied to pay lip service to this or that patron from time to time.
2. The Ambassador is worshipped by the majority of the population’s believers; he is the patron of common sense, politics and diplomacy as democratic methods of government. That’s important in a barony that has seen formidable political upheavals and popular revolts over the last century. The current Baron, Maximilian de Almarròn y Escudor, encourages the worship of the Ambassador to make his calmer and moderate compatriots more stormy and disputatious.
3. Valerias and Milan are the two most worshipped Immortals by the few Almarronese that are really interested in spiritual questions, as the Immortals perfectly embody their adventurous and passionate spirit.
4. The General is the guardian of the people and honoured by all the military and war veterans that participated in the state coup that removed the preceding dictator, Don Esteban.

### BAYOU (ATOR, CAY AND SHAZAK)

Ka’ar (Ka)	Shazak, knowledge, wisdom, prosperity, trade
Cay (Terra)	Cayma, earth, life, prosperity, fertility, order
Kutul (Kurtulmak)	Cayma, subterfuge and traps, guile, war, fire, chaos
Goron (Demogorgon)	Ator, destruction, death, bravery

#### Notes:

1. Bayou is made up of a nucleus of marshes around which prevalently swampy and forest-covered territory has evolved. The area is divided into three domains (Ator, Cay and Shazak), inhabited by species akin to lizardfolk. They worship their own patron Immortals based on unwritten shamanistic practises, and erect cairns or use natural locations as their holy sites.
2. In Cay, the chaotic cult of Kutul (associated with the warrior caste) balances the lawful of Cay (dominated by the shaman caste), creating a cosmic balance.

## BELLAYNE

Pax Bellanica (Tarastia)	Justice, peace, order, law
Felidae/Mother Ocean (Calitha)	Ocean, travel, adventure, prosperity, fertility, merchants
Belbion (Vanya)	War, pride, conquest, honour
Tawnia (Ordana)	Forests, nature, druids
<i>Father Earth (Ka)</i>	Protection of life, wisdom, prosperity, knowledge, magic
<i>Brother Shell (Màtin)</i>	Security, protection, sacrifice, guardians
<i>Sister Grain (Ralon)</i>	Fertility, prosperity, health, agriculture, healing
<i>Ninfangle</i>	Nomadism, travel, battle, hunting, epic deeds, bravery
<i>Guy d'Arêts (Guidarezzo)</i>	Arts (especially music and song), talent, harmony
Kagyar	Dwarves, miners, metallurgy

### Notes:

- Unlike neighbouring Renardy, Bellayne doesn't have a unified church, or even a properly defined state religion. The monarchy permits the activities of the above cults without particularly favouring any one. The temple of Pax Bellanica has had a significant impact on the modern Bellaynish constitution based on rigid legislative and moral codes. She is the patroness of royal house of Bellayne and presently has the greatest number of followers. The monarchy has, in the past, announced (in the name of Pax Bellanica and Belbion) a military programme to "pacify" the adjacent regions and bring order to the nomadic rakasta tribes or to hold off its belligerent neighbours (lupins, goblinoids and Herathians). Each of the kingdom's regions finally adopted one Immortals its own patron:

❖ City of Leominster (capital):	Pax Bellanica	❖ Duchy of Pawcester:	Belbion
❖ Earldom of Penwick:	Kagyar	❖ Forest Marches of Wyndham:	Tawnia
❖ Earldom of Theeds:	Felidae	❖ Bishopric of Kittings:	Belbion
- In Bellayne there are many monastic orders of elves, rakasta and especially turtles (a valued minority) that are dedicated to improving both body and spirit. They divide each day into periods of mediation, training and work. The monastic orders are independent of any religious institution and the Crown, although they respect Bellaynish law and are obligated to swear an oath of fidelity to the royal house for permission to build a monastery. Each order has a female branch and male branch, although it is expressly forbidden for members of the two sexes to speak: any message between members of the order's two branches is written down and left in front of the recipient's monastery. All the members of the Bellaynish monastic orders (both clerics and true monks) are lawful or neutral, and no monastery accepts evil individuals among their adepts. The monks swear vows of obedience to the monastery's prior, and follow a doctrine of poverty and chastity to focus their own efforts on the study of the physical (martial arts, dancing, swimming), scientific (herbalism, botany, alchemy, medicine) and mystic (meditation, arcane and religious knowledge) disciplines. Most orders follow the concept of Universal Order (so are philosophers of Law) without being loyal to a particular Immortal. The rest follow Tawnia, Pax Bellanica, or the Immortals of the ancient turtle pantheon (Father Earth, Mother Ocean, Brother Shell, and Sister Grain). Independent in their belief, the monks don't make followers or seek to spread their faith beyond the cloister's walls. Bellayne also boasts various military orders that aren't bound to an Immortal. This is an attempt to prevent a merging of state and religion as happened in Renardy (with the exception of the Bishopric of Kittings, the only Bellaynish region allowed a religious order by way of secret accords and the assets acquired on the field by the temple of Belbion in the war against Renardy). The Royal Honourguard (tasked with protecting the Royal Family) and the Defenders of Bellayne (who watch over the borders and the internal situation) are Honourbound warriors with no Immortal links. The Bellayne Heralds are reporters that gather and broadcast news (there are three principal guilds, the Heralds of the Sun, Heralds of Time, and Royal Heralds). All Bellaynish artists belong to the Company of Oldsbury. Other orders are limited to a single race: the Company of the Shell (turtles), the Red Company (rakasta), and the Friends of the Forest (elves). The Victorious Blades of Kittings are the only extant religious order, formed by Vanya's fearless followers. Each company is registered in Leominster and must gain the government's approval before it is legal.
- Felidae (an elven Immortal adopted by the Bellaynish rakasta) has over time has assumed many of the traits of the two ancestor Immortals of the rakasta, Ka and Ninfangle, and has almost completely replaced their cults. Indeed, she is patroness of travel, oceans, fertility and good luck and she is preferred to the other two Immortals, as her cult is more about order and the maintaining the balance than those of two the ancient Immortals.
- The cult of Tawnia was adopted from the elves that originally lived in the region. She is particularly worshipped by the inhabitants of the Forest of Wyndham and most rangers, which have promoted the philosophy of Tawnia and defended the sanctity of the forests and nature with drawn swords against the nobles' attempts to clear the unproductive forests to free land for fields and orchards.
- The cult of Ninfangle is particularly popular with those rakasta that have rejected modern life and adhere to a more primitive and nomadic style of life, as well as some of the kingdom's rakasta adventurers.

- Guy d’Arets (Guidarezzo) is honoured by the Bellaynish as the greatest writer, musician and poet in its history. He invented the modern Bellaynish language (about 600 years ago) thanks to his principle work, the Recital of Oldsbury, which is the kingdom’s most important lyrical and musical work. It isn’t clear if it was the work of a rakasta, elf or human, but it is certainly the work of Bellayne’s greatest composer. Today all the poets and artists pay him homage in the great cathedral of Oldsbury along with the great characters and sovereigns of Bellayne. There is a dispute with the Renardois, who insist that Guy was an apprentice of Saimpt Soubrette, who stole some of her work and translated it into Bellaynish. According to the Renardois, the Bellaynish have simply illegally copied the work of the lupin Immortals and are now trying to take control of the works of Guy d’Arets for pure demagoguery, while the rakasta claim it was Saimpt Soubrette who copied from Guy d’Arets.
- Kagyar is the Immortal revered by the dwarves who entered the area in the last century, through a coal seam. His cult is limited to dwarven and miner worshippers.
- News (Noumena)** is the lord of knowledge and investigation, and patron of the Heralds. He embodies the ideas of searching for knowledge and learning through analysis, practise of logic and learning. He has a small following among sages, heralds, bards and inventors, although he doesn’t have any proper priests.

### CIMMARON (SAVAGE BARONY)

The General (Thor)	War, courage, honour
Kagyar	Crafts, metallurgy, weapons from fire
Valerias	Love, passion, fertility, arts
The Judge (Tarastia)	Justice, law

#### Notes:

- Religion holds little importance in the County of Cimmaron. Most Cimmarons are irreverent towards the Immortals, and are self-sufficient – preferring to rely on their own skills and abilities rather than asking the Immortals for help. However, The General is recognised by most as a figure of importance; often equated to General Cimmaron, the human that unified the state and gained its independence.
- Kagyar is worshipped by all the dwarves within Cimmaron and by the majority of craftsmen, independently of their race. He is also the recognised patron of firearms and metallurgy in general.
- Valerias enjoys a large following among the gauchos and the shrewdest adventurers, while the Judge is the preferred patron of the humans of honour (the honourbound) along with the General.
- Most of the county’s inhabitants are turtles, and they follow their own religious mythos that has nothing to do with the Immortals worshipped by the other races. However, they do not have a true sacred site within Cimmaron, and prefer to hold their annual ceremonies in their ancient racial sacred sites. Not all are able to go on pilgrimage to these areas, as it involves a long and dangerous journey outside of the Savage Baronies, and so they are content to privately worshipping their guardians, **Father Earth (Ka)** and **Mother Ocean (Calitha)**. They pay daily homage to small stone idols and seashells that each turtle family keeps in their own house.

### CITY-STATES OF THE HULEAN GULF (NOVA SVOGA, ZAGORA, ZVORNIK, HOJAH, SLAGOVICH)

Halav	War, strategy and tactics, strength and determination, arms and armour, sacrifice, combat humanoids
Petra	Patriotism, protection, courage, resistance, virtue, loyalty, besieged settlements, Traladarans
Zirchev	Hunting, survival, nature, animals, magic
Eiryndul	Sylvan races, illusions and deceit, guile, jokes, fun
Faumus	Sylvan races, animals, instincts and sensuality, drunkenness, revelry, hedonism, poetry and music

#### Notes:

- The city-states of the Hulean Gulf were founded by expatriate Traladarans in the middle of the V century AC. This group of Traladarans was led by a priest of Halav who had had a vision in which the great Redhair instructed them to sail westwards. There they would find a new homeland where they could recreate their Golden Age and where, in effect, the Tomb of Halav can be found. Those who find his tomb and mortal remains would be able to reawaken him, and he would then lead them to victory and prosperity. Many ships set sail to follow this vision, and when they arrived in the Gulf of Hule the colonists, exhausted by disease and inclement weather, settled. The five families that founded the city-states of the eastern gulf each proclaimed that it had found the Tomb of Halav, and claimed the right to lead all the others. Since then, they have always been in conflict, incapable of allying due to questions of honour and bigotry. In each the Church of Halav is the national religion, with the cults of Petra and Zirchev relegated to a minor role. Now each cult presides over its Tomb of Halav, claiming that only when his remains have been assembled in one mausoleum will their great king return to lead his united people. The problem is that none of them are prepared to relinquish their relics to put them together forever with their rivals, and so the prophecy remains

unfulfilled. Naturally, the Church of Traladara is aware of this cult, but simply thinks that the relics aren't really Halav's, whose Song says are buried in Traladara, and that the separatists have simply been deceived by the ravings of an excommunicated prophet.

2. Among the Bylot Hills and Kavaja east of the city-states live Goatmen, divided into three distinct races: the Goatlings, the Ovinaurs and the Caprines. Their history is extremely strange and tormented, as they are the result of a forced magical cross between elves, hin, dryads and goats or sheep that lived in the area around 700 BC. It was the Nithians who, shortly after coming to the region in 700 BC, once again began to experiment with magical cross breeding using the elves (descendants of those that broke away from Ilsundal's migration in 2300 BC), hin (a Serpent Peninsula clan that preferred to settle rather than sail east in 1300 BC), and the region's dryads, mixing them with the herds that they farmed to create intelligent but extremely servile servants. To achieve this, a group of mages and clerics decided to summon planar creatures and use their powers to assist the fusion. Thus arrived the Dark Ones, beings from another dimension (probably lawful evil devils from the Nightmare Dimension, they are that dimension's equivalent of Mystaran demons), that created the first Goatmen. To avoid their vile destiny, most of the elven population migrated to the gulf's western side and began to settle by the Nithian border, while the remainder hid in a mountain grotto. Over time, it became clear that the Dark Ones' powers were superior to the summoners', but their numbers weren't sufficient to successfully revolt. They, thus, decided to teach their creatures some of their magical arts and with the goatmen's help the Dark Ones were able to surprise the Nithians, destroy their settlements, and drive them from the Kavaja region, which became their kingdom. The goatmen tolerated the Dark Ones' yoke for centuries, until sick of serving and after having acquired enough stolen magical knowledge from their masters, backed by the surviving elves and some sylvan followers of Eiryndul and Faunus, revolted in the I century BC. Most of the Dark Ones were destroyed, others were driven back into their dimension, and the more unfortunate ended up imprisoned in their own fortresses, which became goatmen property. Over time, the goatmen split into clans and tribes, each with different traits and customs. Most remain faithful to Eiryndul (who is also followed by the region's elves) and Faunus, although some have begun to secretly honour the Dark Ones, forgetting their ancient slavery and craving more power and forbidden knowledge (as the source of the goatmen's magic resides in their link with the Dark Ones, and for this is only used in rare, extreme cases). All these cults are outlawed in the city-states, so that the only places sacred to Faunus and Eiryndul are the wilderness's forests and stone circles. The Dark Ones are worshipped in hidden sanctuaries under mountains and in ancient fortresses, where they plot to return to Mystara and bring destruction and death to their enemies.
3. Many lupins of various races (Slagovici Gonic, Zvorniski Gonic and Borzoi) live in the city-states as integrated citizens, while others prefer to lead a nomadic life outside of the civilised territories. At Zvornik, the Zvorniski Gonic have formed a cavalry order completely devoted to Petra (the Order of the Dying Brand) and acted as citizen firemen. Later, a lupin community settled on the eastern shores of the Gulf of Hule, on the hills between Slagovich and the Crna River, which worships **Jackal Head (Pflarr)** in a temple dedicated to him. These are Nithian Errants that have kept their ancient cult since the time of ancient Nithia, but are, today, considered heretics by all those lupins that exist on the surface of Mystara.
4. The lupins that live in the wilder areas around the city-states follow Luup the Black (**Loup**) and Maleen (**Malinois**). The two groups are not enemies but do compete for the territory. Neither possesses temples or sacred sites.

## DUNWICK

<i>Calitha (Felidae, Mother Ocean)</i>	Tortles, oceans, lakes and rivers, travel, fertility, good luck
<i>Ka (Father Earth, Ka'ar)</i>	Tortles, protection of life, prosperity, knowledge, wisdom
<i>Saimpt Mâtin (Brother Shell)</i>	Tortles and lupins, security, protection, guardians, martyrs
<i>Saimpt Ralon (Sister Grain)</i>	Tortles and lupins, fertility, health, prosperity, agriculture, healing
<i>Saimpt Renard (Korotiku)</i>	Liberty, clear thinking, wisdom, guile, jokes, fun
<i>Tarastia (The Judge, Pax Bellanica)</i>	Justice, law, order
<i>The Merchant (Asterius)</i>	Trade, wealth, travel, guile, social climbing, messengers
<i>Kagyar</i>	Crafts and metallurgy
<i>The Ambassador (Masauwu)</i>	Politics, diplomacy, intrigue
<i>Bastet</i>	Rakasta, felines, capriciousness, fortune, vitality, fertility
<i>The General (Thor)</i>	War, courage, honour
<i>Milan (Mealiden)</i>	Travel, adventure, bravery
<i>Saimpt Malinois</i>	Lupin, hunting, war, courage, just vengeance, weapons and armourers
<i>Ixion (Tabak, Idu)</i>	Sun, fire, knowledge, preserving the balance and the universal order
<i>Terra (Yamag)</i>	Balance of the life cycle, earth, birth, prosperity and fertility
<i>Saimpt Clébard</i>	Lupins, patriotism, loyalty, fidelity, progress, nobility, family
<i>Saimpt Loup</i>	Lupins, death, winter, ferocity, survival of the strong, night, nomadism, clan loyalty

**Notes:**

1. Dunwick was born as an outpost founded by the Brotherhood of Order and then became a trading post when the brotherhood was transformed into the LB Trading Company, a mercantile company widespread all over the Savage Coast. Today the LB (Lawful Brotherhood) owns almost half of the city's buildings and commercial activities. Dunwick has about 22,000 inhabitants, made up mainly of turtles (about 50%). Dunwick also houses important human, rakasta and lupin communities, while lizardkin, manscorpions, goblinoids, wallara and phanatons live in the immediate vicinity. The majority of the LB's activities utilise turtles as labour and Torreóner mercenaries and Texeiran marines as trusted guards.
2. Dunwick rose on ancient, sacred turtle land, who have many sacred sites here. Therefore the normal turtle Immortals are present (only popular among the turtles); namely Father Earth (Ka), Mother Ocean (Calitha), and the more recent Sister Grain (Ralon) and Brother Shell (Mâtin).
3. The Church of Renardy has a temple in Dunwick, where all the Renardois Saimpts are worshipped.
4. The rakasta of Dunwick have erected temples dedicated to Pax Bellanica (Tarastia) and Bastet as guardian of their race. The nomadic rakasta that inhabit in the surrounding region pay homage to Bastet, ancestor of the rakasta, as well as **Ninfangle**, patron of adventurers, travellers and hunters, who however doesn't possess any sacred places dedicated to him.
5. The goblinoids that live around Dunwick (less than three hundred divided into several tribes) are less aggressive than the Yazi of the north (from which they have been separated for centuries, following the founding of the nations of Robrenn and Eusdria that has cut the contacts with the north), and all worship Tabak (Ixion) and Yamag (Terra).
6. All the lizardkin present in the Dunwick region (nearly five hundred) are followers of Ka'ar (Ka), and have built a temple dedicated to him in a sacred grotto on the coast.
7. The manscorpions that live in cities and in the desert areas around Dunwick (just over one hundred) worship Idu (Ixion), as they weren't cursed by Ixion (unlike the tribe that betrayed Nimmur). They are reserved and self-sufficient, but not openly hostile like the Nimmurians. There is an isolated, ruined Nithian temple consecrated to Idu in the region, which the manscorpions have claimed and partly restored and guard with an order of chosen priests. The faithful gather there annually pay homage to their guardian.
8. There are a few dozen phanatons and wallara in the cities who haven't built any sacred sites, but still privately worship their ancestral and racial Immortals.

**EL GRANDE CARRASCAL AND BADLANDS**

Karaash	Humanoids, war, conquest, strength, tactics
Wogar	War and military tactics, conquest, ferocity, predators
Yamag (Terra)	Balance of the life cycle, birth, prosperity and fertility, earth
Tabak (Ixion)	Sun, fire, light, knowledge, order

**Notes:**

1. The humanoid tribes of El Grande Carrascal (principally gnoll and goblin) pay homage to the above Immortals, especially the lords of war – Karaash and Wogar. The latter two inspired the goblinoid society to follow a way of life in which the strongest prevail and command the rest of the tribe. There are no temples to these Immortals, but their ceremonies are usually carried out on a site their ancestors considered holy, bound to each Immortal's nature: a cemetery or a place of death for Karaash and Wogar, a particularly fertile site (like a pond or stream) for Yamag, and a high place (the top of a hill or of a cliff) for Tabak.
2. The Long Legs tribe is particularly devoted to Karaash, while the goblins of the Black Bellies and the Flat Noses (that inhabit the Badlands to the west) are unwavering supporters of Wogar. The remaining gnolls (Chiriquis and Dead Yuccas) favour Yamag – the most bellicose Immortal.
3. Some tribes of mountain rakasta live in the area of El Grande Carrascal and nearby Terra Vermelha, and fight the goblinoids for control of the most fertile areas. Even though inferior in numbers to the goblinoid tribes, these powerful rakasta have never been beaten or driven from their hunting territories. They fight tooth and claw to repel both human and goblinoid invasions, in a state of constant warfare. These rakasta all follow **Ninfangle**, their tribes' guardian and Immortal of battle and courage. They have never built a temple or holy site dedicated to him and are largely nomadic.

## EUSDRIA

Viuden (Odin)	Sky, winds, storms, authority, knowledge
Donar (Thor)	War, honour, courage
Fredar (Frey)	Passion and strategy in battle, virility, loyalty
Fredara (Freyja)	Women warriors, fertility, abundance, love, beauty
Guntyr (Guidarezzo)	Arts, music and song, bards
Tiuz (Ilsundal)	Wisdom, law, tradition, elves
Eirys (Eiryndul)	Sylvan races, nature, magic
Kagyar	Crafts, metallurgy, dwarves

### Notes:

1. In Eusdrian mythology, Viuden is the lord of the skies and land, omniscient demiurge who created life and the mortals. He created his divine offspring by joining with the first mortal women (who the Eusdrians view as nobles that belonged to the lineage that still rule the kingdom, to legitimise their authority over the people). It was thanks to his children that the humans rose from barbarism and drove away their enemies. Unfortunately, however, two of his children, Nyt and Lokar, envious of his paternal power sought to usurp him and treacherously attacked him. They blinded Viuden in one eye, but thanks to his children's intervention he removed and cursed the two rebels. Later on, Donar and Fredar urged their descendents to hunt down the renegades, and this caused (according to legend) the ancestors of the Eusdrians to migrate to the Savage Coast. Here they discovered that Nyt and Lokar had united and created the beastmen – the goblinoids – which threatened humans, elves and dwarves alike. The Immortals intervened once more to save Tiuz and Eirys, the elven monarchs, from Lokar and his son Wogar's machinations. In exchange for their help the elves accorded the humans hospitality in their land, creating the nation of Eusdria. Later on, they entered into an alliance with the lord of the dwarves, Kagyar, who supplied the weapons to drive the humanoids from Eusdria. Therefore, the elves and humans, united under Viuden's direction, now fight to bring order to the Coast's wildernesses, and try to destroy Lokar and Nyt's evil children wherever they lurk (understood as humanoids and enemies of the nation broadly speaking). This mythos has forged a multiracial society (in Eusdria are found elves, dwarves, humans, and even half-elves, a race created by the same Immortals) dedicated to heroism, bravery in battle, and loyalty to the royal line and the nation, which has formed the modern feudal Eusdria. The Eusdrians are a fierce, brave people, who believe that dying on the battlefield is the best death to have and a guaranteed way to ascend to paradise and join the Immortals. This belief is a heritage of the ancient cult that they followed when they led a semi-nomad existence in the region to the north of the Yazak Steppes. Following their migration to Eusdria and the fusion with the elven culture there, their impetuosity has been mitigated by the elven love for calm and order, which have helped to transform the barbarians' savage aggressiveness into the normal bravery and noble willpower that is typical of the Eusdrians.
2. Eusdria doesn't have a unified church, but has many religious and military orders that belong to the various nobles. Each order serves one of the Immortal guardians of the kingdom's many provinces. These orders initially began as groups of honourbound humans loyal to a governor. Later, many of them embraced the faith in the Immortals, thus becoming holy champions. The Eusdrians have learnt to use their natural aggression and love of physical conflict to defend their beliefs and gain glory and power for their nation. The Eusdrian knights include paladins and defenders, as well as fighters, rangers, fighting clerics, and even seamen. The most famous knightly orders are as follows: Order of the Immortals (admit divine followers of an Immortal), Knights of Eusdria (fighters and paladins), Company of the Wolf (rangers), Order of the Unicorn (elves), Company of the Bear (dwarves), Knights of Niedergard (skilled cavalymen) and Warriors of the Sea (skilled sailors).
3. Ilsundal is worshipped among the Eusdrians as Tiuz, an elven king of great wisdom and virtue without his right hand, patron of knowledge and reason, as well as acknowledged lord of the elves. Eiryndul is Eirys, Tiuz's younger brother, more raffish and wild, student of nature and occult knowledge. It was to save him from the jaws of the Great Devourer (Wogar), that Tiuz sacrificed his right hand.
4. The cult of Kagyar dates back to the dwarves that settled in Eusdria along with the elves, before the arrival of the modern Eusdrians about 500 years ago. Surprised by their metallurgy knowledge and skill, the humans enthusiastically welcomed the alliance with the dwarves. Since then the cult of Kagyar was integrated into the County of Harstal, along with the dwarves, who also boast their own knightly order (Company of the Bear). In Eusdrian mythology, Kagyar is the father of the dwarves and the Immortals' craftsman, who with his children forge the weapons to destroy the hosts of Nyt and Lokar.
5. Guntyr (Guidarezzo) is worshipped, by the Eusdrians, as the greatest of poets and singers. It was his famous composition, The Eusdria of Guntyr (written about 5 centuries ago) that formed the basis of Eusdrian mythology. It tells the tale of the bold, divinely inspired warrior Eusdria who founded the nation, after overcoming a thousand



dangers and sacrificing his own life. As bards are very eminent in the kingdom, his clerics have a vast following among the population and nobility.

- According to the Eusdrian mythology **Lokar** (Loki) and **Nyt** (Hel) are the two rebellious children of Viuden, who attempted to betray and kill him to seize his power. They were beaten, though, driven from paradise, and forced to wander the world of the dead until the day of the final battle. Lokar is the lord of deceit and betrayal (his symbol is fire), while Nyt is the Immortal of death, darkness and reincarnation (associated with ice). Later, from their union was born the Ravenous Beast, **Wogar**, lord of predators, ferocity and goblinoids. They incite Eusdria's enemies are opposed to religious justice and. Their clerics are persecuted and act in secret, gathering just once a year in a secret, mountain refuge south of Trika. As they have insufficient followers, Hel and Loki have not been included among the Immortals worshipped in Eusdria.
- The goblins all worship **Wogar** (patron of war, ferocity and predators) and contrarily to the Eusdrian belief are not allies of the priests of Nyt and Lokar, but act independently of them, on the orders of their own shamans and tribal leaders. They have a secret place of worship, in the forest on the north-western Eusdrian border with the Plain of Dreams.

### GARGOÑA (SAVAGE BARONY)

Valerias	Love, passion, fertility, arts
Milan (Mealiden)	Travel, adventure, bravery
The Ambassador (Masauwu)	Politics, intrigue, diplomacy
Ixion	Sun, wisdom, passion, strength
Al-Kalim	Knowledge, tolerance, honour
The Judge (Tarastia)	Justice, law
The General (Thor)	War, courage

#### Notes:

- The Gargoñans aren't known for their piety. Indeed, Gargoña is one of three nations known as the Enlightened States, along with Almarròn and Saragón, and many of their inhabitants are scholars and artists that consider religious faith a puerile form of ignorance. They tolerate the different cults, preferring to approach religion for artistic (as a source of literary, musical, or painting inspiration) or academic reasons (studying history and the symbolism of the various faiths). Despite this, some think that the Ambassador deserves respect and worship, as like Milan (who symbolises the daring to challenge the conventional to learn that which is secret) he has a small following among the sages and wiser Gargoñans. Gargoñans of all social classes worship Valerias as patroness of love, art, passions that inflame the heart and fertility.
- In the past few decades some temples devoted to Ixion and Al-Kalim, patrons of wisdom, knowledge and learning, have started to appear and have attracted a great deal of attention from agnostic Gargoñan students. Despite being young orders, their worship is already widespread, outnumbering the remaining followers of the Judge and the General. The latter two are now considered minor Immortals and are almost forgotten by the majority of Gargoñans.

### GUADALANTE (SAVAGE BARONY)

Valerias	Love, passion, fertility, arts
The General (Thor)	War, courage, honour
The Judge (Tarastia)	Justice, law, loyalty

#### Notes:

- The Guadalantans are not a religious people, preferring to rely on themselves and on their own strength rather than pray to the Immortals for help. The few believers are followers of Valerias, who inflames the hearts of the Guadalantans with the passion and vitality that identifies them. Other followers are split between the faiths of the General (preferred by the honourable humans and by the more bellicose gauchos) and the Judge (worshipped by nobles and honourable humans).

### HERATH

Yehm (Korotiku)	Clear thinking, wisdom, liberty, guile, cleverness, cheating, jokes, fun, spiders
Eneeban (Masauwu)	Diplomacy, intrigue, deceit, fiction, corruption, spies and thieves
Negyavim (Iliric)	Magic, knowledge, ambition, greed, egotism
Shaibuth (Eiryndul)	Sylvan creatures, adventure, illusions and deceit
Shaya (Valerias)	Love, desire, passion, arts
Asharya (Arachne Prime)	Oppression, obscurity, deceit, spiders and evil aranea

#### Notes:

1. The magocracy of Herath's population consists of a minority of immigrants (elves, humans, shazak and rakasta) from neighbouring nations, and a majority of aranea that pretend to be other races thanks to their shapechanging ability, to prevent being attacked by their immigrant neighbours who consider the aranea a sort of mythical bogeyman. Because their lives are based on, deceit, guile and lies, the Immortals most important in the Herathian culture are Yehm (Korotiku), chief aranea patron, Eneeban (Masauwu), patron of diplomacy, politics and lies, who ranks after Yehm in the aranea pantheon, and who has made lying an art form) and Shaibuth (Eiryndul), lord of illusions and sylvan creatures.
2. Yehm is also worshipped as patron of the Weavers, a group of neutral druidic aranea whose only aim is the preservation of arachnid races and the Herathian ecosystem. These are the only druids allowed in Herath, obviously focusing on protecting all spiders and the forests that nurture and protect all the Herathians.
3. Negyavim (Iliric) is the patron of magic and greed, common characteristics of the majority of the Herathians.
4. Shaya (Valerias) has always been attracted by the aranea's ability to overcome the interracial barrier and relate with other creatures with feelings of love and desire, and has managed to gain followers among the Herathians.
5. Asharya (Arachne Prime) is worshipped by a small minority of aranea that remember their ancient traditions and oppose the actual ruling nobility, in an attempt to promote expansionism and slavery in Herathian society.

## HULE

<b>Bozdogan (Loki)</b>	Hule, guile, deceit, intrigue, lies
<i>Bath (Tyche)</i>	Luck (good or bad), chance, destiny, risk and hazard
<i>Ilneval (Karaash)</i>	War, strength, conquest, tactics, victory, humanoids
<i>Inuus (Faunus)</i>	Drunkenness, revelry, nature, instincts, fertility, sensuality, arts
<i>Hruggek (Bartziluth)</i>	Bugbears, fury, battle, bravery, strength
<i>Aravjuk (Harrow)</i>	Illusions, dreams and diaboli
<i>Vaparak (Jammudaru)</i>	Ogres, giants, vengeance, torture, fear, violence
<i>Maglubiyet (Wogar)</i>	Goblins, war and military tactics, conquest, ferocity, predators, wolves and lycanthropes
<i>Iliric</i>	Magic, knowledge, social climbing, greed, egotism
<i>Ecel (Hel)</i>	Corruption, death, darkness and cold energy
<i>Yeenoghu (Ranivorus)</i>	Gnolls, madness, raiding, destruction, hate
<i>Garal</i>	Gnomes, inventors and thinkers, science and mechanics, crafts
<i>Yemekershey (Bagni)</i>	Trolls, violence, hunger, destruction

### Notes:

1. The cults of Ilneval and Hruggek aren't just popular among the humanoids, but thanks to the work of the holy men (on the Master's orders), they have been adopted by the Hulean population and army as patrons of war, battle and heroism.
2. Maglubiyet (Wogar) is worshipped by the goblin wolfriders of the Hulean army as well as by some hobgoblins and werewolves, who consider him the lord of ferocity and conquest. The temple of Hule tolerates this practice as long as it doesn't create unease within the army.
3. The cult of Garal was introduced to Hule by gnomes that were transferred here. The Master has accepted that they could continue to revere their Immortal after they swore, en mass, an oath of fidelity to the Hulean nation. Over time, Garal is also becoming the main Immortal for all Hule's craftsmen, and as his creed doesn't endanger the state religion, the Master tolerates its presence.
4. **Eiryndul** is the Temple of Bozdogan's main enemy as he has never forgiven Loki and Harrow for stealing many of his elven followers that lived in the forest surrounding Lake Rockwater. He sends spies and agitators to Hule to foment insurrection against the bureaucrats and holy men. He doesn't have any true holy sites, and thus is not listed above.
5. **Loup** is worshipped by some nomadic lupins and Huleans as Luup the Black, patron of ferocity, winter and death. He is the principal enemy of Maglubiyet and werewolves. However, he doesn't have any true sacred sites within Hule, as his ceremonies are always secretly held in the open, at night, seeing that his cult is outlawed in the Sanctified Lands.

## JIBARÙ

<b>Ui (Ordana)</b>	Nature, protection of forests and sylvan races
<i>Marau-Ixui (Terra)</i>	Balance of the life cycle, terra, birth, fertility, seasons
<i>Uatumà (Zirchev)</i>	Hunting, survival, bravery

### Notes:

1. According to the phanaton mythos, the phanatons are the antithesis of the aranea, destined from birth to stop their proliferation. Given that the hated shapechanging spiders hide among the Herathians, the Jibarù take their task

extremely seriously and catch any intelligent creature entering Jibarù via the Herathian border, and subject it to special tests to discover if it is an aranea or an innocent being.

- Naturally, given the phanaton myths, the demonic creature par excellence in Jibarù religion is the spider, or the patron of the Herathians. As such both **Korotiku** and **Arachne Prime** are seen as enemies of the phanatons and their Immortals.
- Knowing that the Herathians are extremely skilled in the arcane arts and can change their looks with ease, the phanatons particularly fear and distrust the forester spellcasters that use arcane magic. The phanatons don't discourage their own kind from becoming a wizard, and to the contrary value the arcane knowledge learnt from the wallara, as it allows them to more easily oppose the aranea. In fact, the phanaton wizards (there are no sorcerers) are held in great esteem and often command war bands. There are no Jibarù specialist wizards as their culture is too primitive.

### LAND OF THE WALLARA

<b>Agundji, the Rainbow Serpent (The Great One)</b>	Life, creation, heavens, colours, knowledge, dragons
Barramundje, the Great Mother (Calitha)	Rivers, water, billabong, fertility
Genjoo, the Crocodile Spirit (Ka)	Earth, healing, wisdom, magic
Warruntam, the Spirit Eagle (Ixion)	Hunting, war, fire, bravery, quickness
Spirit of the Sun (Diamond)	Sun, light, justice
<i>Spirit of the Stars</i> (Opal)	Stars, travel, perseverance
<i>Spirit of the Moon</i> (Pearl)	Moon, night, instinct, death

#### Notes:

- The wallara are humanoid chameleons (distantly related to dragons) with a strong mythos (similar to the Australian aboriginals). They worship the Immortals as nature spirits that act only to bring balance to the world. They consider themselves the heirs of these spirits, and the guardians of the natural world and the traditions of a now forgotten age. In reality, it's because of a millennia old Herathian spell that removed their memory that the wallara have reverted to a stone age, losing their knowledge, and past, and gaining a distorted version of the truth. Only the Immortals, dragons and aranea know the truth, and it is only thanks to a pact between Korotiku (Herathian patron) and the Great One (wallara patron) that the Herathians been saved from draconic vengeance.
- The *Night Spider* (**Arachne Prime**) is the sworn enemy of the wallara pantheon, seeing as he embodies all the worst flaws and vices of the wallaras' Herathian enemies (oppression, deceit, destruction and greed). It was due to the paranoia provoked by the words of the priests of Arachne Prime that the most powerful aranea mages invented the spell of oblivion to remove from the wallaras' minds the knowledge of the Herathians' true nature. The spell was successful and completely removed the wallaras' memories, returning them to a primitive state.
- Among the wallara, wizards and sorcerers both enjoy great respect, as well as the priests of the various Immortals, and often act as medicine men (mendoo), as well as commanders in times of war.

### NARVAEZ (SAVAGE BARONY)

<b>Ixion</b>	Sun, wisdom and knowledge, power and passion, balance
The Inquisitor (Vanya)	Patriotism, pride, revenge
The Judge (Tarastia)	Justice, law, order
The General (Thor)	War, courage, honour
The Ambassador (Masauwu)	Politics, intrigue, diplomacy
Valerias	Love, passion, fertility, arts
Milan (Mealiden)	Exploration, travel, adventure

#### Notes:

- Among the Savage Baronies, Narvaez is the only one where religion is truly a state affair. In effect, the regime is a theocracy, where the temporal and spiritual powers are fused, and the citizens are obliged by the government to follow the Church of Narvaez's dictates and believe in the supreme power of Ixion. In effect, the Church has penetrated all social layers since Narvaez's foundation due to the efforts of the first Ispan colonists (when the barony included all the Los Guardianos lands), thus almost all Narvaezans are firm supporters of Ixion's faith and their nation's superiority over all others. In their religion's name, the Narvaezan government has often backed the holy quests to retrieve ancient relics (one of which is constantly displayed in the Grande Catedral de Ciudad Quimeras and the focus of incessant pilgrimages), and Baron, Hugo de Narvaez y Montoya, a while ago, instituted an Inquisition to hunt down all the traitors and unbelievers within his barony, and threatened to send the Inquisition to the other baronies, an act that would unleash a true holy war. [The war will start in 1005 AC, and see the states of Narvaez, Texeiras, and Torreòn ally to conquer the remaining baronies. Fortunately, an attack backed by Hule in 1008 AC will force the peoples of the Los Guardianos to join their forces and forget their differences to repulse the invasion and maintain their independence.]

- The reason for Narvaez's progressively worsening religious politics is found in the increased power that the cult of the Inquisitor has gained over the last fifty years. Vanya's priests, on her urging, have acted to foment the passions and pride of their congregations, pitting them against the non-believers and those that profess different faiths, until the latter two become true enemies of the state. The Inquisitor's followers have thus assumed the important roles of guarding national security and executioners, gaining the powers to pursue and sentence anyone who is suspected of disloyalty to the state religion and thus to the government, usurping some of the duties of the Judge's priests. Thanks to this movement, Vanya has gained great power within Narvaez, transforming the complaisant barony into a belligerent and intransigent nation, unpopular with all its bordering states (with the exception of Texeiras and Torreòn). In this way, Vanya plans to alienate the cult of Ixion from the barony's other inhabitants (which has nearly succeeded) until, with a surprise attack, she will thrust her followers to power both in Narvaez and nearby Torreòn, unleash a new war, and annex as much land as possible to the two states, in the hope of a final fusion between the two baronies. [This strategy was put into effect in 1005 AC, when the Inquisition declared holy war on the other Savage Baronies, it failed when Hule attacked the Los Guardianos forcing them to ally together for survival.]
- The General, Judge and Ambassador are considered minor figures by the Church of Narvaez, and their cults are permitted within the barony, although they are constantly watched by the Inquisitor's agents. These three figures are presented by the Church of Narvaez as servants of Ixion, and they are paid a minor veneration as simple vassals.
- Valerias and Milan's cults are now restricted to a few, resolute Narvaezan followers, mostly adventurers and country folk. Even though the Church doesn't oppose them, they are not particularly liked and, thus, have gained little favour with the population. Initially the Ispan viewed Valerias as Ixion's wife and, as such, her cult was very popular with the population. However, since the Inquisitor's rise, she has been reduced to the role of Ixion's servant, losing most of her importance. The Inquisitor's followers sought to finally beat Valerias's faith by linking some of her fertility practices with blasphemous witchcraft rituals, in an attempt to expel from the Narvaezan pantheon the only other female Immortal besides Vanya. [This attempt produced friction within the nation, which ended in open, bloody conflict. To resolve the situation, the Baron pointedly declared war on the other Baronies, to focus the people's attention on an external enemy and heal the fractured social and internal politics before it is too late.]

## NIMMUR

<b>Menlil (Atzanteotl)</b>	Vengeance, war, protection, deceit
Nin–Hurabi (Nyx)	Fertility, darkness, underground, security
Nin–Agar (Kagyar)	Crafts, metallurgy, weapons
Namtaru (Masauwu)	Messengers, diplomacy, corruption
Naabu (Khoronus)	Knowledge, wisdom, history
<b>Idu (Ixion)</b>	Sun, light, fire, destruction
Erel (Hel)	Beyond, death, cold, reincarnation

### Notes:

- The Nimmurians are sohktars (humanoid scorpions), that in 700 BC migrated en mass from the Savage Baronies' region, driven out by the recently arrived Nithians. They arrived in Nimmur, where the enduks (the region's original winged minotaur inhabitants) took them as allies to force back the Dark Jungle's warlike humanoids. Initially, the sohktars were friends with the enduk as they both worshipped Idu, the sun god and supreme creator. With time however a new circle of priests devoted to Menlil, lord of vengeance, of war and intrigue, managed to take power and convince most sohktar to rebel against the enduks and reclaim Nimmur. Around 600 BC, the sohktars ousted the enduks with deceit and forced them to emigrate to the Arm of the Immortals, and remained to control their native land. Because of their betrayal, Idu cursed the sohktar race, condemning them to be burnt alive by the sun's rays. It was Menlil who showed them an elaborate method to avoid this ominous fate, by using body paint to protect their translucent skin and dressing in clothing that limits exposure to the sun (sohktars who venture on to the surface always carry a conical hat and a mask that filters out the solar rays, as well as peasant tunics and armour that shield the rest of the skin). As such, in the sohktars' cult Menlil (Atzanteotl) covers the roles of saviour, guardian, and patron of the Nimmurians, while Idu (Ixion) has become the demon of the sun – bringer of death and destruction. Menlil has promised his followers that one day they will find Gilmun, the sunny land where they can walk freely without fearing the sun's fiery rays. Until then, the sohktars are forced to fight to defend Nimmur (that the enduks seek to reconquer) and expand their own domains and Menlil's cult.
- Since they settled in Nimmur, the sohktars live mostly underground and shelter in the ancient Nimmurian cities. They have entered into dealings with the Herathians and foreign merchants, but are very attentive to preserve their secret. They have therefore demolished most of the ancient inscriptions and enduk representations, replacing them with their own and have completely adopted the Nimmurian language and writing to deceive foreigners. Furthermore, they have taken the enduk pantheon and have adapted it to suit their own vision of the universe, in which the Immortals are always represented on flying vehicles that speed through the sky. The Nimmurian manscorpions' faith

reflects the dualism of their existence: on one hand the darkness of the underground where they live is a benefit, on the other hand the surface world and sun which they yearn for represents instead destruction and corruption. The death from the sun's light represents the closure of a mystic circle starting with the rejection of Idu and a return to him through the sun's purifying flames. Some extremely powerful manscorpions, if killed by the sun's light, return as undead creatures called Children of Nimmur (Spawn of Nimmur). They are greatly respected by the sohktars, as the latter think that they have within them such a great power and iron will to survive Idu's curse. The Children of Nimmur live in ziggurats and preside over those holy places as guardians, leading a troop of dead sohktars animated by the priests as zombies (horrors of the ziggurat).

3. Every Nimmurian city has a ziggurat, which is heart of the settlement and religious belief. All the ziggurats are consecrated to Menlil, the surface sohktars' most important Immortal. The pantheon's other Immortals have a secondary role and, as a result, are represented by few priests. They must obey the will of the city's prince and the local Great Priest of Menlil. The priestly caste is quite distinct from the nobles who rule Nimmur (due to the different pigments and decorative motifs of their masks and body tattoos, which allow the two castes to be told apart). In some cases, the roles of city prince and great priest coincide.
4. Nin-Hurabi is one of the Immortals of the sohktars pantheon, who has taken to heart the manscorpions fate as inhabitants of the shadowy depths of the earth. She embodies the idea of security that derives from the subterranean darkness, and she is the symbol of fertility that the sohktars only find in the darkness, which is contrary to what the followers of her surface cult believe. The queen of Apsur (subterranean Nimmur) is the Great Priestess of Nin-Hurabi, and she has tried to gain independence from the King of Nimmur's control. As a consequence, in Apsur Nin-Hurabi's priests are of greater import than those of Menlil, unlike the surface communities. The queen has used the rivalry between these two Immortals in Apsur for her own political aims.
5. Idu is worshipped as a kindly Immortal by the enduks and some sohktar rebels who have retaken the north-eastern city of Um-Shedu and defend it against sohktar incursions, and plan to use it as a forward base to retake the rest of the territory.
6. Erel (Hel) is the Immortal of the Afterworld, a cold place where spirits wait for their reincarnation in the service of Menlil. According to the sohktars belief, Erel judges the dead and decrees the duration of their wait in the darkness and cold of the Afterworld based on their life deeds and their devotion to the Nimmurian cause. Erel represents the negation of Gilmun (land of the beneficial sun) and Apsur (kingdom of the pleasant, fertile shadow of Nin-Hurabi) and is, thus, a place of hardship and incredible agony. As such, even though they don't enjoy the people's sympathy, the few priests of Erel are feared and respected by the sohktars, and are charged with officiating ceremonies to calm the hunger of the Immortal's spirit and killing the criminals condemned by the priests of Namtaru or Menlil.
7. Namtaru (Masauwu) is considered the consort of Erel, Immortal of the Afterworld. He is the messenger who allows the Immortals to communicate (for this he is the patron of messengers, travellers and diplomacy), as well as the guardian of the gates of the Afterworld and keeper of disease. He also has the responsibility of selecting those that are destined for death and judgement of Erel.
8. Naabu (Khoronus) is the keeper of knowledge and history according to Nimmurian mythology, the wisest among all the Immortals, to whom the others go to receive advice. His priests often perform the role of councillors for governors, and keepers of Nimmurian historic and magic knowledge.

## ORC'S HEAD PENINSULA

Karaash	War, strength, victory, conquest
Crakkak	Predators, sharks, strength, ferocity
Na'al (Nyx)	Darkness, obscurity, night
Oruguz (Orcus)	Lycanthropes, destruction, death
Ait-tha (Talitha)	Deceit, greed, thieves, assassins

### Notes:

1. The humanoid that live in the Orc's Head Peninsula are not excessively religious, but all recognise the authority of the patron of their tribe and appeal to him in difficult times. Furthermore, although the power is firmly in the hands of the strongest and most ruthless warrior, the shamans have the rest of the tribe's respect, although they only act as their leaders' counsellors and act as intermediaries for requests of divine aid. All the peninsula's humanoids are led by Pyre, an ancient vermilion dragon, who fled Robrenn centuries ago after having been blinded by a Robrennian sovereign. Pyre united all the tribes under his banner and is now considered the region's ruler.
2. The Tribe of the Silent Death is the most numerous (about 4,100 orcs and over 500 lizardmen). They inhabit the north-eastern part of the peninsula by the border with Herath and worship Karaash; who they consider the symbol of fierceness and orcish superiority. Many warriors devoted to Karaash are true fanatics who lead raids and holy wars to demonstrate their strength and supremacy (both to their enemies and subordinates).

3. The Tribe of the Lords of the Storm is mainly composed of orcs with a few hundred ogres as well. They live in the southeast area of the peninsula and have a predilection for sharks, which they consider the embodiment of ferocity and strength. Because of this, they worship Crakkak, lord of the sharks, who has given his shamans the power to control those creatures and evoke storms on all their enemies or calm the sea to aid navigation. They are the most skilled sailors among the humanoids of the peninsula, feared even by the Marine Powers.
4. The tribe of Green Assassins is formed by orcs that prefer subterfuge and poison to brute strength, and by about two hundred trolls who are sufficiently intelligent to ally themselves with orcish shamans. They live in the northern-central swamps of the peninsula and worship Na'al, patroness of darkness who lives in the region.
5. The tribe of the Sea Plague live in the southwest area of the peninsula and is composed mainly of orcs and a few hundred snappers (more savage and aggressive than normal turtles). They worship Oruguz, patron of destruction and the devilswine that have ruled the tribe for generations. They are bitter enemies of the Lords of the Storm, which competes with them for the naval supremacy.
6. The tribe of the Black Orchid is the least populous (about 1,500 orcs and over 300 troglodytes). They dwell in the peninsula's north-western region by the border with Nimmur, and are renowned for their use of poison and black orchid paste. The latter is used to dominate their victims' minds by obscuring their memories and implanting hidden orders that make them to act as ignorant pawns. This is their strategy to survive among their stronger neighbours; it was suggested by the shamans of Ait'tha (lady of deceit) that know the secret of creating the black orchid paste.

### RENARDY

<b>Saimpt Renard (Korotiku)</b>	Clear thought, wisdom, guile, cleverness, instinct, cheating, jokes and fun, liberty
Saimpt Clébard	Patriotism, loyalty, family, fidelity, progress, nobility
Saimpt Ralon	Life, health, trade, agriculture, wealth, food, joy
Saimpt Mâtin	Security, protection, guardians, fortresses, sacrifice and martyrs
Saimpt Malinois	Hunting, war, courage, just vengeance, weapons and armourers
Saimpt Loup	Death, winter, ferocity, survival of the strongest, night, nomadism, clan loyalty
<i>Saimpt Soubrette</i>	Arts, talent, illusions, persuasion
<i>Pflarr</i>	Knowledge, magic, protection

### Notes:

1. The Renardois religion worships the Immortals as a series of charismatic figures that played a fundamental importance in the kingdom's creation and the lupins' past. Saimpt Rénard is the founder of the lupin race for the orthodox Renardois, the guardian of the nation (which gained his name) and the dynasty of nobles that he created. The other Immortals are saints (Saimpts) worthy of worship, who ascended to the heavens due to their merits and epic deeds and are now guardians of all lupins and Renardy. The more revered saimpts are true Immortals, but others only exist in Renardois legend, even if they do enjoy a certain following (like Saimpt Vezy, a dead winemaker famous for saving an entire cellar of valuable wines and who has a town named after him). According to the state religion, anyone can become a saint if they show unwavering faith in their nation's cause, places himself in service to the monarchy or a previously consecrated saimpts, and accomplishes heroic and epic deeds for the lupin people.
2. The wilder lupins, mostly nomads and herdsmen, are fervent supporters of the cult of Saimpt Loup (also called Luup the Black). They support a return to the tribal and nomadic beliefs of the ancient lupins. This goal often brings these extremists into conflict with the Church of Renardy's priests over the true interpretation of Saimpt Loup (who according to the Church is patron of death, night and ferocity in battle).
3. There is a dispute with the Bellaynish regarding Saimpt Soubrette. For the Renardois she is the greatest artist to ever appear in the Savage Coast; a captivating woman who by her versatile talents, was able to produce Renardois's most important artistic works (in all the artistic fields) and created modern theatre. The rakasta instead believe that Saimpt Soubrette copied many works conceived by Guy d'Arêts (their patron of the arts) and therefore her fame is undeserved, an insinuation that drives the proud lupins crazy.
4. Some lupins follow the Pflarrian Heresy, which says that Pflarr is the lupins' creator, and that the true lupin nobles are those that have blood of Pflarr's descendants in their veins. Indeed, they have passed down a second custom since the kingdom's dawn that only those who are shown to have Pflarr's mark in a mystical ceremony can gain a noble title and rule over the lupins with complete authority. Since the current monarchy began, the nobility has instead developed an appreciation for good wine: in practice the sovereign confirms tributes (leaves) on skilled winegrowers and raises them to the nobility (as wine production is the basis of Renardy's commercial wealth). The Pflarrians accuse the Renardois church and the current monarchy of perverting the truth for pure opportunism and demand a return to their origins and the cult of Pflarr, to subvert the established false order of nobility and pay to the creator his due honours. As such, the order of Pflarr – supporters of the "blood nobility" – is considered an enemy of the country and is persecuted by both the monarchy and church, which instead support the "bourgeois nobility".

## RICHLAND

<i>The Merchant (Asterius)</i>	Trade, wealth, guile, social climbing, travel, messengers
<i>The Judge (Tarastia)</i>	Justice, law, order
<i>The Ambassador (Masauwu)</i>	Politics, diplomacy, intrigue
<i>Kagyar</i>	Crafts and metallurgy

### Notes:

1. Richland is a city founded and governed by the LB Trading Company as a freeport, and numbered among its inhabitants are humans, turtles and shazaks. Situated to the north of the Colony of the Horn, in Trident Bay. It is a self-sufficient city, of about 2,000 souls, that is used as a frequent port of call by the Texeiran ships in this remote area of the Savage Coast. Due to its position in the Haze lands, it is also in the optimal spot to not suffer the deleterious effects of the Red Curse. There is only one temple in the city and it is dedicated to the LB Trading Company's chief Immortals, (the Judge, Merchant, Ambassador and Kagyar).
2. In the city there are followers of the turtle and shazak pantheons, but no temples dedicated to their Immortals.

## ROBRENN

<b>Breig (Ordana)</b>	Nature, life, fertility
Cernuinn (Faunus)	Forests, sylvan creatures, drunkenness revelry, arts (music and poetry)
Tuatis (Thor)	Battle, courage, honour
Arduinna (Diulanna)	Hunting, will, courage
Belnos (Asterius)	Travel, trade, healing
Leug (Zirchev)	Wisdom, tolerance, demihumans
Taranos (Odin)	Sky, storms, winds
Belsamas (Kagyar)	Crafts, metallurgy, construction, dwarves

### Notes:

1. The Robrennians worship several Immortals, but all pay respect to Breig (also called Mother Forest, Great Oak or Spirit of Eyf) as supreme Immortal. Indeed, according to the Robrennian mythos, all life descends from her and she sits at the head of the pantheon of Immortals that watches over the Confederated Kingdom of Robrenn. Based on an accord between Ordana and the rest of the Robrennian pantheon, with the exception of Belsamas (Kagyar), they only admit druids to their service. Their divine tasks are based on their main patron:
  - ❖ **Breig:** Leading the order, advising nobles and protecting the forests.
  - ❖ **Belnos:** Act as mediators between foresters and Robrennians, as itinerant priests, messengers and healers.
  - ❖ **Arduinna:** Hunting, fighting in defence of Robrenn (women only).
  - ❖ **Cernuinn:** Occupied with animals, arts and legends, and rites concerning fertility and sensuality.
  - ❖ **Taranos:** Controlling time, the ephemeral and omens of the future.
  - ❖ **Tuatis:** Fighting in defence of Robrenn (men only).
  - ❖ **Leug:** Protecting demihumans and sylvan creatures
2. All the druids gather annually in the Hallowed Forest of Carnuilh, an enormous forested region within the heart of the Confederation of Robrenn. This is a holy place that none can violate, land that only the druids and those affiliated to their order (like Druidic Defenders) can enter. At the centre of the Carnuilh is an ancestral holy site where on mid-summer's eve the region's druids (not just Robrenn's) meet to discuss religious issues, report on the state of the ecosystem, receive omens from the Immortals, resolve internal disputes, and discuss anything regarding the Order under the watchful eye of the Great Druid Maud, daughter of Trestana (half-elven follower of Breig). The Great Druid of Robrenn is tasked with watching and protecting the region from the Gulf of Hule to the Orc's Head Peninsula.
3. The druids hold the spiritual power and part of the temporal power within the confederation of the Robrennian states, having the right to issue laws and sentence common criminals. Even the nobles that rule the many regions must listen to the advice and obligations of the druids, who are the direct voice of the Immortals. It is the druids who crown the sovereign of Robrenn, which every twelve years must undertake a quest to demonstrate his right to rule or leave the position to his successor and give his life to Breig to allow his essence to be absorbed by the land and fertilise the nation (according to the laws of nature). If the king doesn't accomplish his vital quest the druids would remove him from Robrenn, while if the royal bloodline doesn't leave an heir, it is the druids' task to select a new sovereign to lead the confederation from among the nobles (as they had originally crowned Robrenn I). Moreover, no noble can make war on other populations without first gaining druidic permission, and they can even declare a holy war via Grand Druid Maud's lips (according to the local laws, in fact, only a woman can be the Robrennian druids' leader). The druids also arbitrate the meetings between the regions that comprise the Robrennian federation, and are the only ones that can authorise civil war when the disputes between nobles cannot be peacefully resolved. Considering the respect

and the reverential fear that Robrennians hold for the druids, they all think those that disobey the druids' orders a heretic, and those guilty of such a crime become an enemy of every good Robrennian, probably resulting in a manhunt or civil war (which has yet to occur).

4. In Robrennian mythology, Asterius is associated with the moon, which besides symbolising change and travel, is also the symbol of prosperity and health, given that in the plains of the Barony of Sedhuen (sponsored by Belnos and Breig) grow the flowers known as "moon buds" (as they only bloom during a full moon), with great curative properties. For this reason, Belnos is also associated with healing in Robrenn, as well as travel and trade.
5. The cult of Kagyar was already present in the region when the ancestors of the Robrennians settled there. However, given dwarven nature and their strong aversion for the naturalist practices of the followers of Breig, Kagyar has never been numbered among the Immortals of the Robrennian cult. Belsamas's faith is tolerated as the dwarves have contributed greatly to Robrenn's economic development (Breig's followers have always shied away from technology). The priests of Belsamas therefore do not belong to the druidic order and must follow any order given by a druid. They are viewed in the same way as free humans (commoners) and their liking for metallurgy is alien to the druidic faith, although Belsamas's few devotees (including all the dwarves) listen carefully to the his clerics' advice and give them the same respect as the druids.
6. The priests of **Nyt** (Hel), patroness of death, darkness and an aberrant form of reincarnation (the exact antithesis of Breig), aren't well received in the Robrennian confederation. They hide in the wildest areas, plotting on their Immortal's behalf to bring chaos and corruption to the world. The druids recognise the importance of balance in the natural forces, and permit the existence of the cult of Nyt. They, however, oppose the cultists' efforts to corrupt the region's ecosystem or alter, in any sense, the natural order of things.
7. The Carnax and Cassivellonis orcs that infest the northern Robrennian border all worship **Karaash**, while the Pictis goblins are followers of **Wogar**, but the two Immortals' holy sites are outside of the borders of Robrenn, in the middle of their plateaus.

### SARAGÓN (SAVAGE BARONY)

Valerias	Love, art, passion, fertility
Al-Kalim	Knowledge, tolerance, honour
Milan (Mealiden)	Travel, adventure, bravery
The Judge (Tarastia)	Justice, law
The General (Thor)	War, courage, honour
The Ambassador (Masauwu)	Politics, intrigue, diplomacy

#### Notes:

1. The Saragóners are famous for being a race of students, thinkers and scientists. As such they don't give great importance to religion, viewing it as blind devotion towards higher life forms. They prefer to concentrate their resources on studying the mysteries of the universe. They, however, acknowledge the Immortals have a more enlightened state than simple mortals, and they respect the Immortals and allow anyone to increase their knowledge or embrace a faith. Because of this extreme religious and social tolerance they are often criticised by Narvaezans fanatics.
2. The Saragóners believe all Immortals are equally important and deserve their respect, without any being above the others. The cults of Ixion and Vanya have been excluded to prevent dissent and excessive dogmatism, as is happening in the baronies of Narvaez and Torreòn. Al-Kalim in particular, despite his cult's relative newness, has assumed equal status and importance with the Saragóners as his priests have made a notable contribution to the state's development and civilisation over the last thirty years. He is considered the patron of learning and tolerance – classic Saragón characteristics. Al-Kalim's worship in the Savage Baronies is less tied to Ylaruam's orthodoxy (the Dream of the Garden in the Desert and the cult of the Immortal Guardians) and more modelled on the figure of Al-Kalim as master of life and centre of the cult, as well as on his Dreams of Justice and Honour.

### TORREÒN (SAVAGE BARONY)

Faña (Vanya)	Patriotism, pride, victory
The General (Thor)	War, courage, honour
The Judge (Tarastia)	Justice, law, order
Milan (Mealiden)	Travel, adventure, bravery
Valerias	Love, passion, fertility, arts
Ixion	Sun, wisdom and knowledge, strength and passion, balance
The Ambassador (Masauwu)	Politics, intrigue, diplomacy

#### Notes:

1. Torreòn is a martial state based on strength of arms and, thus, the dominant cult is Vanya's (called Faña in the local language). Most of the population has a strong attachment to the religion, in which Faña represents the population's



guide to code of ethics imbued with their national pride, love of battle and the show of strength in general. For the similar reasons, the Torreóners second favourite is the General (although he is linked less with the nation and more with the ideals of honourable conduct and courage in war). The Judge finishes the Immortal trinity worshipped the most Torreóners. He embodies the divine law and sense of order that exudes from the nobility and permeates all Torreóner classes.

2. The cults of Valerias, Milan, and the Ambassador are considered minor in Torreòn but tolerated. As a result of the military and political relationships with Narvaez, the cult of Ixion is also popular in Torreòn, strengthened by the conversions performed by missionaries and Narvaezan fundamentalists, intent on unifying the two nations under just one faith.

### VILAVERDE AND TEXEIRAS (SAVAGE BARONIES)

Milan (Mealiden)	Travel, adventure, bravery
<i>The Merchant (Asterius)</i>	Trade, wealth, travel, guile, social climbing, messengers
Faña (Vanya)	Patriotism, pride, vengeance
Valerias	Love, passion, fertility, arts
The Ambassador (Masauwu)	Politics, intrigue, diplomacy

#### Notes:

1. Vilaverde and Texeiras (the Marine Powers) are two nations based on sea trade and control the sea-lanes. As such, they act as the preferred channels through which pass most of the Savage Coast's maritime trade. Both are renowned for their navies' strength and, especially, their explorers' great skill. As such, they only deem some of the Los Guardianos' typical Immortals worthy of worship; the ones that best embody their abilities and character. Milan, thus, is the most worshipped Immortal as patron of sailors, along with the Merchant, patron of trade and guile (of which the Vilaverdians are so proud). Valerias and Faña embody the ideals of passion, strength of spirit, will and pride that flows in the blood of Texeirans and Vilaverdians. They complete the quartet of Immortals that these nations are raised to honour. The Ambassador has a minor role compared to these Immortals, but is numbered among the cults present in the two states.
2. There are several Texeirans and Vilaverdan colonies scattered through the Savage Coast, each with different popular cult.
  - ❖ **Bastião das Tartarugas** (coastal Vilaverdan colony on the cliffs south-east of Robrenn, inhabited by humans and turtles): where the turtles pray to their Immortals, while the Vilaverdians have only one temple to Milan.
  - ❖ **Colony of the Horn** (Texeirans territory, north of Jibarù, which consists of Bom Jardim, a settlement founded by missionaries to cure the Afflicted, and the Fortaleza da Boa Vista, a penal colony in Trident Bay): the missionaries of Bom Jardim worship Valerias, while in Boa Vista there is a temple dedicated to Faña.
  - ❖ **Porto Escorpião** (Vilaverdan trade port on the Nimmurian coast, ruled by the son of the Barony of Vilaverde): The Ambassador and the Merchant are the only two cults present in the colony.
  - ❖ **Porto Maldição and Mato Grande** (Vilaverdan ex-colony of dubious reputation now independent, situated on the eastern coast of the Arm): a temple dedicated to the Merchant has been erected in the former, and most of both colonies worship him as patron of guile, theft and subterfuge.
  - ❖ **Protectorado da Presa** (Texeirans colony, south of Renardy and bordering Eusdria, which recently sought to gain independence via a bloody war, but only obtaining devolution of powers): Faña is the only Immortal tolerated in the colony.
  - ❖ **Terra Leãoça** (Vilaverdan colony on the border between Bellayne and Herath): a temple has been constructed in order to gain favour with all the Vilaverdan Immortals, with a chapel dedicated to each Immortal. The majority however follow the Ambassador, Milan and Faña.

## ARM OF THE IMMORTALS

This region comprises a great peninsula situated west of the Savage Coast and surrounded by sea (the Izondian Deep to the east and south, the Far End Ocean to the west), that makes up the western- and southern-most part of Brun. High mountains and thousand year old forests form the landscape of the Arm. It is inhabited by humanoids, winged elves and minotaurs (ee'ar and enduk), faenare clans (devoted to the Nameless Mother (**Cochere**)), tribes of mysterious rakasta and some dragon clans (followers of the **Great One** that hate the presence of the humans and love to boss around the humanoids). No empire or kingdom is predominant in the Arm of the Immortals, and the various races try to remain independent, fight for control of some areas (especially the humanoids of the west), or ally together to pursue common ends (ee'ar and enduk).

## AERYL

The Guide (Ilsundal)	Wisdom, knowledge, magic, tradition, serenity, peace, nature
The Guardian (Mealiden)	Loyalty, protection, war
The Adventurer (Eiryndul)	Liberty, guile, jokes, fun, curiosity, adventure

### Notes:

1. The Ee'ar pursue a lifestyle that identifies two types of individuals: those that are dedicated to improving their own body through battle and a warrior code, and those that are dedicated to improving their spirit via the arts and philosophy; even though every ee'ar advances in both disciplines, they always pursue one above the other. As such, the Guide and the Guardian are the main Immortals of the ee'ar, who are very religious without, however, being pedants or zealots.
2. The Adventurer is the patron of those ee'ar who oppose the traditionalists, and look for innovation and adventure, or that are simply lovers of fun, and pursue a path different from their ancestors' beliefs. Despite not being seen as a negative figure, the Adventurer is, however, a patron that holds little appeal for the clan elders, and he often taken as a role model and patron by the young and adventurers. To them, he embodies the sense of freedom and self-determination that guides their choices; dictated more by instinct and passion than by thinking things out and the lessons of the past.

## CITY-STATE OF JAKAR

Atzanteotl	Destruction, deceit, vengeance
<i>Ka</i>	Prosperity, protection of life, magic, healing, knowledge

### Notes:

1. The rakasta that live in the southern forests of the Arm of the Immortals are mostly followers of Atzanteotl. Inspired by their patron, they have formed some city-states similar to those of the Azcans, with a great stone ziggurat at the centre as a temple consecrated to Atzanteotl, constructed in imitation of the area's Oltec ruins. The rakasta belong to the Jakar and Jakarundi breeds and each city is controlled by the Great Priest of Atzanteotl, who has the power of life and death over everyone. In the past, a group of rakasta tried to rebel against the corruption whispered by Atzanteotl, but were cursed and changed into the modern Ocelasta, forced to wander the world in search of a cure to their curse.
2. There are a few followers of Ka, ancient patron of the rakasta, who are opposed to the tyranny of the priests of Atzanteotl. However, they move warily among the Jakar, weaving a complex web of intrigues and alliances to create an extensive organisation to deliver, at the right moment, a hard blow against the city's priesthood caste. The Children of the Jaguar (as the sect is known among the conspirators) have many members among the poorest classes and Jakar craftsmen, as well as various Jakarundi mages and priests. Also members are the Ocelasta cursed by Atzanteotl and expelled by the Jakar who still secretly live in the southern forests and plot to overthrow the government of Atzanteotl.

## ESHU

Idu (Ixion)	Fire, sun, balance, power, wisdom, knowledge
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### Notes:

1. The enduks (winged minotaurs) of Eshu, migrated to the Arm of the Immortals' central plateau in 600 BC thanks to the help of friendly ee'ar, after the evil sohktar manscorpions betrayed them and chased them from Nimmur. Since then, suspicious of the wingless races, they have tried to reconquer Nimmur with the ee'ar's help and the sohktars that still worship Idu. Led by the legendary Gildesh, who due to Idu's intercession is returned to life every 300 years to lead his people (the first incarnation being in 500 BC, the last in 1000 AC). The enduk are fervent supporters of Idu, lord of the sun and universal balance, and are extremely religious individuals bound by tradition. By their outlook, any Immortal who is opposed to the sun and light of Idu is an enemy, even though there isn't a specific demon that embodies this role in their mysticism (despite this **Menlil** is at the top of their list of Idu's enemies).
2. According to legend, Minoides was the enduk who, in 800 BC, rebelled against Idu, killing his earthly representative Gildesh, and sought to usurp his position as ruler of Nimmur. For his insolence and the harm to the chosen of Idu, the Immortal of the sun cursed him along with his supporters. He lost his wings, becoming the first minotaur, and fled from Nimmur. The enduks view him (due to his brutality, betrayal and violence with) as the converse of Idu's wisdom and greatness. Although he is not an Immortal, he is a mythical figure who frequently crops up in stories as a symbol of the destructive and evil side of enduk nature, from which all true followers must turn away from to gain Idu's blessing.

## GOMBAR

<i>Macroblan</i>	Prosperity, trade, money, wealth, greed
<i>The Shapechanger (Korotiku)</i>	Liberty, clear thinking, guile, cleverness, wisdom, cheating, subterfuge, fun
<i>The Celestial Traveller (Sinbad)</i>	Travel, exploration, adventure, courage, overcoming any barrier and border
<i>Pyrak (Ixion)</i>	Light, sun, fire, strength, magic
<i>The Celestial Architect (Polunius)</i>	Architecture, arts and crafts, creativity
<i>Karaash</i>	War, victory, conquest, tactics, strength

### Notes:

1. The inhabitants of Gobar are the tanagore (ogrekin), a race formed from ogres and Tanagoro that lived in the Tangor Peninsula and who founded the two colonies of Gobar and Suma'a in the Arm of the Immortals around the VII century AC. They are a people devoted to trade and wealth, a true plutocracy led by a Merchant-King. The majority of them worship Macroblan, patron of wealth and trade and the city's guardian. There are also temples dedicated to the Immortals of the tanagore cult that are considered particularly auspicious and important for the city's welfare or history: the Shapechanger (Korotiku), the Celestial Traveller (Sinbad), Pyrak (Ixion), the Celestial Architect (Polunius) and Karaash.
2. The **Infernal Judge** (Masauwu) is the Shapechanger's rival, a nemesis who quickly judges an individual's fate to determine if it deserves rebirth or eternal damnation. He uses every means to corrupt the living and any trick or promise to induce them to sell their souls in exchange for power and wealth. Masauwu doesn't have temples in Gobar, but some followers of the Judge are found in the city.

## SUMA'A

<i>Sumag (Terra)</i>	Creation and protection of all forms of life, balance of the life cycle, prosperity, fertility, earth
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### Notes:

1. The Great Temple of Sumag is the only religious institute in the city-state of Suma'a, an anomaly compared to the normal Tanagore mythos. It is a monotheistic cult devoted to the Immortal Sumag (Terra), with none of the other Immortals of the Tanagore pantheon. This order numbers within itself both clerics and monks, and its philosophy was born during a period of fusion between the ogres and the humans but was relegated later into second place in the Tangor motherland. The cult (both human and ogre) rejected all other Immortals, viewing them as persecutors of specific interests, and violence as an offensive weapon. It views Sumag as the creator and keeper of life in all its forms and the keeper of universal balance to which the faithful must aspire. It also proposed a personal search for balance and perfection beyond any pre-established aims (this during the ogre-human fusion served to ensure a concept of perfection that went beyond the two races social mores). Over time the motivations that birthed this life philosophy were lost and replaced by the Shapechanger's (Korotiku) cult and legend, and so Sumag's cult remained in the shadows for centuries, only enjoying a small following. The opportunity for its revival occurred during colonial expeditions in the Arm of the Immortals, when the priests from the Temple of Sumag took control of one of the two cities founded by tanagore explorers. They, along with their followers, have moulded the inhabitants of Suma'a using their doctrine as the model. This philosophy teaches it adepts that the way to enlightenment is not through teaching, given the uniqueness of each person's enlightenment, but through example. Some monks feel that they have a personal quest to lead an exemplary life and wander the world as missionaries to help the non-believers, even though it's not prearranged or organised by the temple.

## WESTERN ORCLANDS

<i>Karaash</i>	War, strength, victory, conquest
<i>Zugzul</i>	Fire, war, power, conquest
<i>Ait-tha (Talitha)</i>	Deceit, greed, thieves, assassins

### Notes:

1. Ghonam, Sulkar and Yamekh are the three tribes that live in the north-eastern area of the Arm of the Immortals, between the sea to the east and the mountains and Eshu Plateau to the west. They are the humanoids that fled from the Orc's Head Peninsula to escape being dominated by the region's great tribes, and continually fight each other for territory. Each tribe worships a different patron: the Ghonam (the most numerous, about 3,000 orcs and half-orcs) are followers of Karaash. The Sulkar (about 1,000 orcs ruled by its few females, who are considered vital for the tribe's survival and therefore respected) honour Ait-tha. The Yamekh (about 2,200 orcs) pay homage to the volcano that dominates their territory as if it was an Immortal, sacrificing prisoners to placate its fury. Zugzul responds to the requests for divine intervention by the Yamekh orcs.

## MIDLANDS

Nothing is known for certain about the populations that live in the so-called Midlands, which extends from the western ocean to the mountains of Norwold and comprises the Yazak Steppes, the Borean Valley, Hyborea and the Great Central Forest (which from Hule stretches back almost to the western coast of Brun). The Midlands is inhabited by the descendents of the Neathars and Oltecs, and by the descendents of the humanoid tribes that migrated far and wide over this region several centuries ago. There are tribes of other humanoids in this land, particularly rakasta, lupins, minotaurs, centaurs and even the mysterious cryons in the icy land of Hyborea. The Sylvan Realm is found on the western Brunian coast, many kilometres north of the Arm of the Immortals. It was conquered in 600 AC by Moorkroft “Scourge of the Elves”, a ruthless mage who was quick to perform genocide for his ambitions and obsessions. It is likely that Moorkroft worshipped **Iliric** or **Pharamond** (if he was an Alphatian mage), while the Realm’s sylvan creatures are devoted to **Ilsundal**, as are the elves of the Tarlyon clan (see *CM5: Mystery of the Snow Pearls*) who probably live on the western side of the Black Mountains, a little to the north of the northern Hulean border. These elves arrived in the area after being forced from the Sylvan Realm by Moorkroft’s invasion in 610 AC: they travelled first to the Great Waste, and following a traumatic meeting with the Graakhalian elves (see *Champions of Mystara*), some reverted to their past and settled in the area mentioned above and planted a branch taken from the Mother Tree. Near to Hule, in the Great Central Forest (Midland Forest), there is thought to be an elven kingdom founded by **Eiryndul** and devoted to him, while the nature Immortals like **Chiron**, **Djaea**, **Ordana** and **Zirchev** have numerous followers among those that live in this great wooded expanse. A clan of faenare lives in the virtually inaccessible windy peaks and some tribes of **Cochere** following gyerian (humanoid birds) live in the central prairies above Hule and move around in continuous migrations.

### BOREA

<i>Hel</i>	Reincarnation, death, darkness and cold energy, corruption
<i>Karaash</i>	Humanoids, strength, war, victory, conquest, tactics
<i>Ninfangle</i>	Rakasta, hunting, travel, bravery, adventure, travel, battle
<i>Luup (Loup)</i>	Lupins, death, winter, ferocity, survival of the strongest, night, nomadism, loyalty to clan
<i>Ka</i>	Protection of life, knowledge, prosperity, wisdom, magic, lizardkin, stone giants
<i>Wogar</i>	Goblins, war and military tactics, conquest, ferocity, predators
<i>Kiranjo</i>	Minotaurs, greed, violence, fury, cruelty, massacre
<i>Great One</i>	Dragons and lizardkin, creation, justice, knowledge, magic

#### Notes:

1. The Borean Valley houses the ancient humanoid centre of Urzud, a Blackmoorian colony ruin that saw the proliferation and transformation of beastmen into the modern humanoid races. Urzud is a settlement that has been devastated by the tribal wars. The various humanoids that live in the surrounding land are followers of Karaash, Hel and Wogar. The lupins are supporters of Luup, while the rakasta worship Ninfangle and Ka; the latter also has followers among the stone giants and lizardkin settlements. Kiranjo is worshipped by minotaurs, some humanoid tribes and human raiders, while the Great One has worshippers among the draconic communities in the mountains and the ancient Blackmoorian ruins.

### HYBOREA

<i>Zugzul</i>	Fire and creatures of fire, power, war, necromancy
<i>Stodos</i>	Cold, ice, storms, creatures of cold
<i>White Claw (Ninfangle)</i>	Hunting, travel, bravery, adventure, travel, battle
<i>Hel</i>	Reincarnation, death, darkness, corruption
<i>Garal</i>	Inventors and thinkers, science and mechanics, crafts

#### Notes:

1. The qauriks are descended from the Blackmoorian and Neathar survivors of the Great Rain of Fire. They live in the icy Hyborean lands in great cities each protected by an enormous, magical crystal dome, which holds back the ice and bad weather. These cities and domes were constructed on ancient Blackmoorian settlements whose technology was converted to run on magic thanks to the collaboration of dwarven engineers and human mages. They are ruled by a caste of mysterious individuals called Lords of the Flame. These mage-priests, devotees of Zugzul, have the knowledge to operate the cities’ heating systems and tyrannise the qauriks that live there. There are about 15 qaurik cities scattered through the Hyborean region, all in contact with each other.
2. Zugzul is the qauriks’ principal Immortal. His cult was forcibly imposed by the Lords of the Flame, and is distinguished by daily rituals and even human sacrifices (secretly performed by the priests in their tower). Zugzul tyrannises the qauriks as a personal revenge, as the qauriks’ ancestors (the Blackmoorians) were responsible for the

annihilation of his beloved Afridhi. He also has followers among the Hyborean humanoids, who consider him the most powerful Immortal and associate him with the source of life and the ultimate power: fire.

3. Stodos, the King of Ice, is considered a demon by the qauriks and doesn't have any followers in their cities. However, he is worshipped by many tribes of humanoids, cryons and frost giants that live in the Hyborean region. He is opposed to the Zugzul controlled settlements, and urges his acolytes to constantly fight the qauriks and the tribes subject to Zugzul, in order to chill the entire region.
4. White Claw (Ninangle) is worshipped as the patron of hunting, travellers and heroes by all the rakasta (snow pardasta and lynxmen) tribes present in Hyborea, as well as by some of the region's humanoid communities. His cult dates back to the Blackmoorian Age, and has been passed on the orcs and bugbears via their contact with the arctic rakasta.
5. Hel is worshipped by some humanoid tribes as the mother of their race. She carved the first humanoids from the eternal ice and breathed shadow energy over them to give them life. For the humanoids, Hel is the source of life and the one to whom all return, and only she can decide how each individual is reincarnated. The humanoids have only one goal according to this faith: to increase Hel's power by spreading death and corruption in the world, as every humanoid that dies takes the spirits of those he slew to the Afterworld as tribute to Hel. The greater the number of souls he gives Hel, the better his social position will be in the afterlife.
6. Garal is worshipped by most of the population – those that the dwarves taught how to alter Blackmoorian technology to stabilise it. Unfortunately his followers were crushed by Zugzul's followers, and the stolen dwarven secrets are now in the hands of the Lords of the Flame. Garal's cult is considered lesser and permitted, although few qauriks dare to secretly gather in Garal's name to engineer a revolt, against the despotic Lords of the Flame, to gain their freedom and knowledge.

### YAZAK STEPPES

<b>Yamag (Terra)</b>	Balance of the life cycle, birth, prosperity and fertility, earth
Karaash	Humanoids, strength, war, victory, conquest, tactics
Tabak (Ixion)	Sun, fire, light, knowledge, order
Wogar	Goblin, war and military tactics, conquest, ferocity, predators
Wotan (Odin)	Sky, winds, storms
<b>Hel</b>	Reincarnation, death, darkness and cold energy, corruption

#### Notes:

1. The ancient humanoid cult derives from the Urzud mythos, but its beliefs have changed with the passing of time. It has replaced the original creator figures of Hel and Wotan with Yamag and Tabak, who have, respectively, become the mother of life and the keeper of the universal order – symbols of the eternal and unchanging life–death, day–night cycle, which marks the slow unrelenting flow of time. The cult of Karaash was added later, and he took over from Tabak as their patron of war. Karaash embodies the warrior and mercenary ideals that have always inspired the humanoids, and he therefore has a high position in the Yazak pantheon, even if not its head (that privilege has been given to Yamag).
2. The cult of Wogar has become particularly popular among the tribes of Yazak goblins since the XII century BC. Wogar is seen as an important Immortalised ancestor, the patron of the goblinoid races, ferocity and superiority in battle. His sect is frequently in conflict with Karaash's followers for the veneration of all humanoids. However, his cult is currently confined to the goblin tribes of the steppes.
3. Wotan remains in the Yazak mythos as the lord of the skies and Immortal of storms and rain, and he is especially worshipped for his importance in sheep-rearing and agriculture.
4. According to Yazak mythology Hel is the queen of the afterlife and reincarnates the spirits of those unworthy of becoming one with Yamag and Tabak. In the great cosmic cycle. Hel is seen by some as the antithesis of Yamag: while the latter symbolises fertility, life and nature, the former embodies death, darkness, sterility and the icy breath of corruption. Other shamans simply consider her an innate part of the great cosmic cycle, without an overtly negative value, the one who presides over death as Yamag does life, charged with rejecting those aren't able to enter into harmony with creation and to give them a new chance via reincarnation. Thus according to the Yazak mythos, only those who live by following the path traced by Tabak, Yamag and Karaash can hope to join them and the spirits once dead. Those that don't are condemned to be reincarnated in a form chosen by Hel until their spirits have been purified.

## ISLE OF DAWN

The Isle of Dawn is an island continent situated between Brun and Alphatia; it acts as a border between the Alpathian and Thyatian Empires. The island is lapped by the Western Sea of Dawn to the west and north (which divides it from Brun) and by the Eastern Sea of Dawn to the east (which divides it from Alphatia), while the southern coasts are bathed by the Bellissarian Sea. The Dawn is an island divided into various fiefdoms and regions, and contested by the two most powerful empires of the world: Thyatis controls the eastern part, while Alphatia controls the north–western. The only kingdom that remains independent, although allied to Alphatia, is the Kingdom of Thothia on the isle’s south-western point, a nation founded by descendents of the Nithian Empire and ruled by a pharaoh (a priest-king). Settled initially in a sporadic manner by groups of aranea, phanatons and stone giants that still found in the south (the Lost Plateau, a wild and unexplored region), the island was systematically colonised about 2000 BC by Neathar and Antalian tribes arriving from Brun, and three hundred years later by some of the humanoids that had split from the Horde of King Loark in order to find new lands in this part of the world. The Nithians discovered the isle in the X century BC and established colonies everywhere, enslaving many of the native Dawners until the Thothian revolt against its motherland and the fall of Nithia, which cleared the way for initially Alphatia and later the Empire of Thyatis to colonise the isle, in a contest that still continues.

### CAERDWICCA

<i>Farbautides (Loki)</i>	Guile, deceit, intrigue, fire
<i>Manadyn (Protius)</i>	Water, oceans, marine creatures, capriciousness, travel
<i>Viuden (Odin)</i>	Authority, sky, storms, winds, knowledge

#### Notes:

1. Caerdwicca is a barony, of just over one thousand inhabitants, situated on the island’s southern coast, and a protectorate of Thyatis governed by Thane (local Baron) Uthgaard McRhomaag. It survives almost exclusively by piracy that ravages Alpathian, Alatian, Minrothian and Thothian shipping, and this guarantees their relative independence from Thyatis, which is content to use the Caerdwiccans as a disrupting element in the south of the Isle of Dawn that threatens the trading routes of its adversaries and draw advantage from it without exposure.
2. The cultural heritage of the Caerdwiccans lies in their Neathar roots: they are the descendents of a small group of Neathar that reached the island in 2000 BC. They advanced along the Shadow Coast until they reached the Isle of Dawn’s southern coast, cutting themselves off from the rest of the clan that settled in the central-northern region. The great distance and hostile creatures in between made trade impossible with the rest of the island. The ancient beliefs of the Dawners’ cult still form the basis of the Caerdwiccan mythos. Despite not being extremely pious, the Caerdwiccans are nevertheless superstitious, and have erected in their small settlements three temples to the Immortals that they consider the most important in an attempt to please them: Viuden (Odin), the creator and lord of the skies and storms, extremely important for a seafaring culture; Manadyn (Protius), the lord of the sea and marine creatures, patron of travellers and sailors in general (as important as Viuden but more hostile and hence less supported); Farbautides’s (Loki), the lord of deceit and guile, patron of pirates and thieves, Caerdwiccan sect dates back to the birth of Caerdwick – the clan’s founder. Farbautides in Caerdwiccan culture doesn’t have a negative connotation, but represents the guile with which they can deceive and overcome an enemy, a mentality the enduk of this nation’s pirates.
3. According to Caerdwiccan belief, the one who opposed to the Great Father Viuden is the dark sister **Nyt (Hel)**, lady of the kingdom of the dead, cold, and darkness. There are no priests of Hel or temples dedicated to her in Caerdwicca, and any of her followers discovered by the Caerdwiccans are immediately hounded, burned alive and their ashes scattered in the sea to prevent misfortune falling upon their settlements.

### DUNADALE

<i>Dun (Terra)</i>	Creation, balance of the life cycle, birth, prosperity, fertility, earth, shepherds and farmers
<i>Viuden (Odin)</i>	Good government and authority, sky, storms, winds, knowledge
<i>Dallbard (Tiresias)</i>	Poetry and music, legends, dreams, revelations, visions, magic
<i>Brian (Frey)</i>	Passion, strategy, virility, loyalty, friendship, fertility, agriculture
<i>Brianna (Freyja)</i>	Abundance, fertility, beauty, love, women warriors
<i>Donegal (Thor)</i>	War, battle, fury in battle, honour, bravery
<i>Manadyn (Protius)</i>	Water, oceans, marine creatures, capriciousness, travel
<i>Mother Nature (Djaea)</i>	Survival of living races, natural balance, respect of life, druidism
<i>Arnelee</i>	Independent women, liberty, loyalty, adventure, travel, sincerity, knowledge, guile, messengers

#### Notes:

1. The more powerful Dunadalian clans can trace their descent directly back to Dun. Who according to legend dwelt in the region before the arrival of the three brothers Viuden, Manadyn and Bel, and gave birth to these people. She is

considered the mother of the Dunadalians and is the most worshipped Immortal. Immediately following her is her husband Viuden and their children Brian, Brianna and Donegal. Bel and his relatives don't have followers, as they are seen as enemies (due to old tribal feuds) of some of the southern Dunadalian clans that worship these Immortals.

2. The Dawners have great respect for Dallbard's clerics; who often travel the region as judges and advisors of the clan heads.
3. The Neathars formed a druidic cult upon their arrival in 2000 BC. It is handed down from father to son. Many Dawners worship Mother Nature, and they consider her a force that permeates the isle rather than as a being like the ancient Immortals. Thus, Djaea has many followers and various priests, who have been educated to preserve and respect the land in which they live.
4. Arnelee also enjoys a small following in Dunadale. Her mortal deeds have passed into legend and she now is considered one of the Immortal daughters of Viuden, and the patroness of courage, travel and liberty.
5. **Nyt** has some followers among the humanoid that infest the swamps and hills of Dunadale (especially troll and kobolds). The cult of **Talitha** is secretly popular among some thieves and unscrupulous profiteers, while **Alphaks** reaps approval among the more extreme fringes of Dunadalian natives that seek to overthrow the domineering Alphatians.

### EAST PORTAGE

<i>Koryis</i>	Peace, prosperity, diplomacy, mercy, tolerance, respect of laws
<i>Razud</i>	Self-determination, strength, independence, courage, authority
<i>Twelve Watchers</i>	Arts and crafts
<i>Protius</i>	Oceans and marine creatures, water, capriciousness, travel
<i>Valerias</i>	Love, passion, desire, sexuality, charity, fertility, arts
<i>Talitha</i>	Selfishness, egocentricity, greed, deceit, discord, betrayal, immorality, thieves and assassins
<i>Alphaks</i>	Destroy Alphatia and Alphatians, hate, vengeance, massacre

#### Notes:

1. East Portage – twin city of West Portage – was founded by the Alphatians in around 490 BC as a trade station for all goods coming from the Alphatian continent and headed westwards. Because of this, it is an extremely affluent city – the port through which all westward, and a large part of eastward, traffic passes. East Portage enjoys a certain law-making autonomy, although there are more Alphatian troops stationed there than a dominion of its size would normally warrant. This is a sign of the strategic and commercial interest that the Alphatians maintain in East Portage (or Hillvale).
2. Koryis is the Immortal with the most followers among the peaceful East Porters, as he embodies the ideals of peace, legitimacy and prosperity that the city's inhabitants have pursued for some time. East Portage is not known for its weapons or for its military campaigns, but remains a rich city and relatively independent thanks to the efforts of its politicians and merchants. They thanks to the dictates of Koryis place diplomacy before coercion, deceit and double play.
3. Razud is another great favourite of the Porters, the incarnation of the ideals of independence and self-sufficiency that every inhabitant of the Alphatian colony feels in an even more pronounced manner in regard to the mainland Alphatians. Furthermore, the integrity and passion of his priests have helped to make his temple of Razud the second most popular among the citizens. They frequently address their requests for aid to him regardless of the type of problem.
4. Augrism come to the region via some dwarven clerics of the Twelve Watchers. They established a temple at the start of the V century AC and gained a rather broad follower base to guarantee the monies and support in order to prosper.
5. Given its nature as a seaport, there is a small cult of Protius present in East Portage, although the Immortal doesn't enjoy the following that he has in the other maritime areas of the island. Perhaps this is because the community's wealth is attributed more to the intercession of Koryis rather than from the protection of Protius.
6. Valerias is worshipped by the East Porters mostly due to the efforts and patronage of the current "Baron" Lornce M'Jozee. Lornce is an artist and womanising hedonist who took her as his own Immortal patron in an attempt to become part of his province's bourgeois, with an equal taste for art, hedonism, and romanticism due to the influence of Valerias's cult.
7. The cults of Alphaks and Talitha secretly act from East Portage to influence the Isle's Alphatian controlled regions. They foment disagreement and anarchy, hate against the motherland's elitism, and the colonists' desire for independence until they became true terrorists. The Order of Silence (the Isle of Dawn main Talitha cult) has temples in the other colonies, while Alphaks's clerics prefer to orchestrate their moves for the island from a central point, send their adepts on missions at the right time and maintain a link with the Black Cavern (the secret cavern consecrated to Alphaks in the hills near to East Portage). The Black Herald is the patriarch of Alphaks's cult on the island and works independently to the King and Queen of the Volcano of Alphaks. The Order of Silence has several leaders, one for

each temple on the island, who don't answer to a single authority, though they try and coordinate their efforts when possible.

## EKTO

<i>Ptahr (Kagyar)</i>	Crafts, sculpture, metallurgy
<i>Razud</i>	Self-determination, liberty, independence, courage, strength
<i>Rathanos</i>	Fire, energy, power, male supremacy, pride

### Notes:

- Ekto is renowned for the skills of its craftsmen, particularly its master metallurgists (the College of Metallurgy is an institution famous in all the Known World). Their secrets descend from a belief that has its roots in ancient Thothia, and are passed down the generations by the priests of Ptahr only to its most skilled followers. Thus, Ptahr's is the most powerful and richest of the entire city's temples, and he enjoys great renown among the Ektans, and he was chosen centuries ago as the city's patron.
- The cult of Razud dates back to the time of the Alphatian conquest of the city and the progressive Alphatianisation of Ekto. Its politics of self-determination and independence are very appreciated by the city-state's politicians and merchants, who've always given monies and information to the cult receiving, in exchange, protection and support in their endeavours to remain as independent as possible from the Alphatian Empire and the other local powers.
- Rathanos is worshipped by the Cult of the True Flame, which has had a temple in the city and some followers of Thothian extract since time immemorial. The cult has sympathisers and affiliates in Trikelios and Thothian, where it acts covertly. Indeed its primary objective is to overthrow the Spider of the Night controlled Thothian government and reinstate the rule of Thothia's true guardian (keeping to the order's philosophy), or Rathanos. Frequently, Rathanos's followers have sought to implicate the Alphatians in their plans, but after some failed coups, the governors of the Isle's city-states have distanced themselves from them, but still however give them asylum and protection. The Cult's members are currently divided between those that secretly wish to ally themselves with the Thyatians and seek their aid to conquer Thothia, drive the Alphatians from the island, and gain control of its south-eastern region, and those that prefer to concentrate their efforts on physically eliminating Pharaoh Ramenhotep XXIII and his diabolic consort, and later declare Thothia's total independence from both the Alphatian and Thyatian Empires.
- The Order of Silence has gained numerous proselytes among the bureaucrats and swindlers of Ekto. Although she doesn't have any real public temple because of opposition by the Temple of Razud (who enjoys a great following and power in the city), **Talitha** receives her portion of worship and tributes from the more corrupt, egocentric and greedy Ektans.
- The followers of **Vanya** (Thyatian Immortal of war and conquest) are rare here and are disliked by Ektans as they are linked with Thyatis, whose expansionistic aims have led them to try and annex Ekto to their empire. The Alphatian guards constantly seek out followers of Vanya in order to jail and torture them, convinced that they are spies or investigators.

## FURMENGLAIVE

<i>Vanya</i>	War, conquest, victory, pride, honour
<i>Viuden (Odin)</i>	Sky, storms, winds, authority, good government, knowledge

### Notes:

- Furmenglaive is a barony with just under one thousand inhabitants. In reality it is a protectorate of the Thyatian Empire established in 500 AC and situated on the island's southernmost point. The dominion has been governed (and takes its name) since its foundation by the area's most influential family, Furmenglaive, who sworn loyalty to Thyatis when the Empire was here in 500 AC actively combating the proliferation of lycanthropes and undead that threatened the settlements of the Provincia Septentriona and those of the nearby Ochalese coast. In exchange for Thyatian military support and a noble title, Furmenglaive united some clans of previously independent (for centuries) settlers under its protection and rules this lost corner of the island.
- The Furmenglaives' cultural roots are similar to the Caerdwiccan's: descendents of the Neathar that arrived on the island in 2000 BC. The two most numerous groups settled in the areas of Redstone, Westrouke, and Dunadale, while a third group advanced into the Shadow Coast until it reached the Isle's southern coast. This latter group became cut off from the rest of the tribe and was slowly decimated due to both the distance and hostile creatures that lived in the forests or descended from the Lost Plateau, which made trade impossible with the rest of the isle. However, to the opposition of the neighbouring Caerdwicca, the Furmenglaives have favourably welcomed the encroachment of Thyatian social practices and religion. Besides the ancient cult of Viuden, the temple of Vanya is also present, which seems to be preferred by most of the population. Given the martial and brave nature of Vanya's cult that appealed to the Furmenglaives' more archaic beliefs, and the constant protection offered by these warrior clerics against the attacks by the creatures of darkness that live in the Shadow Coast, it has been greatly welcomed by the natives. Indeed, each



year many youths, on reaching adult age, embark for the continent in the hope of receiving Vanya's glory in battle, as her priests promised them. Even the barony's rulers have been persuaded of the legend's veracity (the handiwork of Vanya's clerics to gain the natives' support), of her as the exiled sister who reappeared to give the islanders power and glory, that they had allied with the Thyatians. They have sided with the Immortals, in an attempt to gain great prestige and recognition in the future.

## HELKIR

<i>Odin</i>	Good government and authority, guile, knowledge, wisdom, sky, winds, storms
<i>Thor</i>	War, battle, fury in battle, honour, bravery, virility
<i>Nooga (Protius)</i>	Water, oceans and marine creatures, capriciousness, travel
<i>Frey</i>	Passion and strategy in battle, virility, loyalty, agriculture, fertility
<i>Freyja</i>	Women warriors, fertility, love, abundance, beauty, Seidh (prophecy), valiant souls
<i>Loki</i>	Deceit, lies, betrayal, intrigue, guile, fire
<i>Stodos</i>	Cold, ice, storms, lizardkin

### Notes:

1. Helskir is a kingdom founded by several waves (from 2000 BC until the VII century AC) of northmen migrants to the island, and therefore its popular cult is archetypal Antalian. Odin is the Immortal who has gathered the most followers, followed by the warrior Thor and by Nooga, lord of the sea to whom numerous pirates and fishermen say prayers and give offerings to calm the water and aid their deeds (it's not unusual to find clerics of Odin or Nooga on pirate ships to have a favourable voyage). Frey and Freyja are particularly popular in the Helska hinterlands with the farmers (where they have replaced Frigg) and the more intelligent warriors. Loki is worshipped by both the pirates and more established rogues.
2. Stodos, the lord of ice, has a following among the lizardmen that live in the cold swamps in the north of the island.

## KENDACH

<i>Halav</i>	War, strategy & tactics, strength & determination, arms & armour, sacrifice, battle, humanoids
<i>Vanya</i>	War, conquest, victory, pride, honour
<i>Magna Mater (Terra)</i>	Birth, prosperity and fertility, earth, agriculture

### Notes:

1. Kendach is a small fortified domain in the centre of the Isle of Dawn, governed by Thyatis for several centuries and where the Thyatian culture has had a greater impact than in the other Dawner provinces. Formed from natives descended from the Neathar who arrived on the island in 2000 BC, Kendach is now a fusion of local culture and Thyatian mentality. Thyatian Cults, habits, technology and martial customs have been adopted by the native Kendachs to improve their own standard of life and social status. The Kendachs are the most fervent supporters of the Thyatianisation of the Isle and Thyatis's imperial machine, as opposed to their cousins of the Isle's neighbouring western province.
2. Contrary to what may be thought, the cult of Vanya isn't Kendach's dominant religion. That role falls to Halav, he is viewed as the ruling family's guardian and the one who taught to the Kendachs the art of war that allows them to combat the humanoid hordes that live along the dominion's borders. Kendach's rigid military traditions are derived from the tactics and strategy learnt from Halav, who according to legend landed on the Isle's coast centuries ago, well before the Thyatian arrival. At that time, the humans faced a great danger and he led them to the victory by reforming the army and taught it tactics to defeat their humanoid enemies. The legends go on to say that (possibly based on his last deeds before finishing his path for Immortality), Halav married one of the more courageous matriarchs and brought into being the clan of Kendach, which still rules the land with the blessing of its divine ancestor. The current Countess has simply Thyatianised her real surname (from Julia Kendach to Julia Kendasius), even though her firstborn Marie (who by right of birth will inherit the domain) doesn't seem as intent to follow her mother's example.
3. The cult of Victorious Vanya is naturally present in Kendach, as an example of the glory and imperial strength of Thyatis that the Kendachs made their own. It has an open and friendly rivalry with the ancient Order of Halav for religious supremacy of the domain, and exploits any chance to assault the neighbouring humanoids to gain prestige and followers.
4. A small group of followers of the Magna Mater is present within Kendach, mostly female farmers who identify the Thyatian Immortal with ancient tribal fertility rites and the Neathar Immortal of nature.
5. **Nyt** (Hel) is worshipped by the goblinoid tribes that infest the hills around Kendach as the patroness of darkness, reincarnation and death. She has many shamans who plot to bring destruction to the Thyatian dominion, as well as some powerful lycanthrope followers, and as such she is considered the chief enemy of Kendach.

## LOST PLATEAU

<i>Ui (Ordana)</i>	Nature, fertility, protection of forests and sylvan races
<i>Uatumà (Zirchev)</i>	Hunting, survival, bravery, sylvan races, animals, nature
<i>Marau–Ixuì (Terra)</i>	Balance of the life cycle, earth, birth, fertility, seasons
<b>The Night Spider (Arachne Prime)</b>	Deceit, oppression, obscurity, aranea and spiders
<i>Ilkundal</i>	Protect elves & nature, wisdom, knowledge, magic, tradition, serenity & peace
<i>Ninfangle</i>	Rakastas, bravery, adventure, travel, battle, hunting
<i>Bastet</i>	Rakastas, felines, capriciousness, fortune, fertility
<i>Ka</i>	Protect life, prosperity, magic, healing, wisdom, rakastas, stone giants

### Notes:

1. The region known as the Lost Plateau (also called the Thothian Plateau as nearby Thothia claims the area – on paper) occupies all the southern part of the Isle of Dawn, stretching between Thothia to the east and Shadow Coast to the west. Its southern face borders the Bellissarian Sea in a series of escarpments and cliffs that don't permit any landfall (this area is also called the Great Escarpment). Within it abound subtropical vegetation and abundant animal species, as well as many intelligent creatures like aranea, phanaton, rakasta, elves and stone giants (in descending numbers).
2. The phanaton tribes that live in the forests of the Lost Plateau share the Jibarù pantheon and therefore worship Ui (Ordana), Uatumà (Zirchev) and Marau–Ixuì (Terra), the phanatons' racial Immortals. These phanatons are the descendents of those enslaved by the aranea, and who successfully rebelled when Korotiku caused the collapse the Empire of Aran and forced Arachne Prime to flee into the depths of the Mystaran Shadowlands. Since then, the phanatons have always remained fiercely independent and the sworn enemies of the aranea. The only people with which they have held an alliance are the Trueflower elves and the forests' treants (who share their veneration of Ordana).
3. Arachne Prime is worshipped by the aranea (who arrived here millennia ago from another plane) that infest the region's forests (that was once the centre of their vast – now ruined – empire). Until the events of M5 (1003 and 1004 AC), she lived under the city of Aran, at the centre of the Lost Plateau, and from there ruled her subjects and nearby Thothia.
4. The Trueflower elves were part of the Shiye's migration to Alpathia and arrived on the island by chance, after being left alone during the travel on the Rainbow Bridge and having taken a wrong exit. Left to their own devices, they have found a favourable cooperation with the phanatons and share their religion as well, which is very near to their own lifestyle. It is likely that these Elves had one of the nine original seeds [of the tree of life] created by Ilkundal for Mealiden's migration, and therefore possess one of the two lost Mother Trees (the one from the Shiye's seed, which Eiryndul probably deliberately took from the clan in order to control its leaders better and convert them to his own cult). Therefore, they are likely followers of Ilkundal.
5. There are several tribes of nomadic Fast Runner rakasta who settled centuries ago in the Thothian Plateau's forests (*Dragon* 247), and who make it difficult to colonise the plateau with their acts of sabotage and guerrilla warfare. They are followers of Ninfangle, patron of hunting, battle and the nomadic lifestyle of the ancient rakasta. They have taken the cult of Bastet from their Thothian neighbours (and via contact with their cousins that live in Thothia). She is the mother of the rakasta race and lady of fortune and fertility and is identified with the rakasta's more instinctive aspects.
6. Ka is worshipped independently by the clan of hunakoi giants (stone giants with reddish skin) that live along the course of the Aurora River and on the southern slopes of the Great Escarpment.

## REDSTONE

<i>Bel (Ixion)</i>	Sun, light, fire, strength, war, heroism, knowledge
<i>Vanu (Valerias)</i>	Love, desire, sexuality, beauty, fertility, protection
<i>Dallbard (Tiresias)</i>	Poetry, music, legends, magic, prophecy, visions
<i>Vanya</i>	War, conquest, victory, pride, honour
<i>Turlock (Chiron)</i>	Sylvan races, arts, healing, knowledge, wisdom
<i>Wayland</i>	Metallurgy, engineering, crafts, magical constructs
<i>Mother Nature (Djaea)</i>	Survival of living races, natural balance, respect of life, druidism
<i>Silenus (Faunus)</i>	Sylvan races, animals, revelry, sensuality and instincts, drunkenness
<i>Manadyn (Protius)</i>	Water, oceans, marine creatures, capriciousness, travel
<i>Farbautides (Loki)</i>	Guile, deceit, intrigue, fire
<i>Eiryndul</i>	Elves, illusions and deceit, guile, jokes, adventure
<i>Bartziluth</i>	Bugbears, fury, battle, bravery, strength

### Notes:

1. The sects of Bel, Vanu and their children are well rooted in Redstone, as its inhabitants consider themselves, for the most part, their descendents. Turlock, in particular, is greatly respected and he also has followers among the centaurs and sylvan races that populate Redstone.
2. The Temple of Vanya has successfully converted many Dawners to her cause, altering their mythology in its favour to present Vanya as the Immortal that brings them glory and riches. As well as the natives, practically all the Thyatians within the region (mostly soldiers) are followers of the Grey Lady, and this has given her order great importance and power.
3. The Neathars formed a druidic cult upon their arrival in 2000 BC. It is handed down from father to son. Many Dawners worship Mother Nature, and they consider her a force that permeates the isle rather than as a being like the ancient Immortals. Thus, Djaea has many followers and various priests, who have been educated to preserve and respect the land in which they live.
4. Eiryndul has many followers among the elves that live in the Redstonian forest. They are descendents of a group of Shiye who preferred to remain in the area after coming into with the fey that live there, instead of searching for another land to colonise. These Shiye still follow Eiryndul, but don't have much in common with the Alphatian Shiye and are avoid the humans' struggles, preferring to live with the fey.
5. Farbautides is worshipped by the goblins south of Redstone, while Bartziluth is worshipped by the bugbears to the north.

### SHADOW COAST (PROVINCIA SEPTENTRIONA AND MERIDIONA)

<i>Tiresias / Dallbard</i>	Visions of the future, dreams, poetry and music, astrology, prophecy, legends, magic
<i>Solarios (Ixion)</i>	Sun, light, strength, knowledge, opposing evil
<i>Vanya</i>	War, conquest, victory, pride, honour
<i>Valerias</i>	Love, protection, charity, fertility
<i>The Black Prince (Orcus)</i>	Violent death, mass destruction, undead, sadism, cannibalism, lycanthropy
<i>The Lady of Darkness (Nyx)</i>	Darkness, obscurity, night, magic, undead, necromancy, secrets

#### Notes:

1. Tiresias enjoys a large follower base in the Shadow Coast as he can count both on those who worship him as Dallbard (native Dawners) and on the particularly superstitious Thyatian colonists who have settled in the Provincia Septentriona. His clerics enjoy a notable influence especially among the Thyatians, for their apparent ability to predict and influence the future. Particularly, Sibilla the blind prophetess (who lives in a sacred grotto in the woods, south of Laticea, and writes her predictions on sheets of parchment that she jealously guards) who also has a certain renown on the Thyatian mainland. Thus, many of her priests (and many fake clerics of Tiresias) make the most of her superstitious followers to gain favours and obedience; frequently challenging the supremacy and authority of the governors and the other Immortals' priests.
2. The Shadow Coast is difficult to colonise due to its infamous monsters, dragons, undead, humanoids and sects of demon worshippers. Among its inhabitants, the cult of Solarios (Ixion), King of the Sun and lord of light, is more popular than in the motherland as its priests can banish the darkness caused by the cultists and their demonic creatures. At his side is Valerias, lady of charity and love and guardian of those that defend the hearth. She represents the feminine half of light and Ixion's perfect wife. The Cult of the Wife of the Sun has also gained followers among the natives, who have linked the two Immortals with Bel and Vanu, Immortals from the Dawners legend.
3. The Brotherhood of the Grey Lady (Vanya) has a strong presence in the Shadow Coast. It is used by the governors as an armed branch to help the Thyatian troops to drive away the beasts and monsters that all too frequently leave the forests to attack the villages and peasantry. Because of their role as defenders of the Thyatian population, the priests of Vanya have made many followers in the two provinces, and many clerics attract the faithful with promises of glory and wealth for those that fight in the Thyatian Army or in the circus games. Vanya's popularity is equal to that of the Wife of the Sun's.
4. The Shadow Coast has had to face the interference of secret cults devoted to the Black Prince (Orcus) and Our Lady of Darkness (Nyx) since the start. They are worshipped by the monstrous creatures that live in the depths of the region's forests and by groups of outcasts and necromancers. These were mainly lycanthropes and vampires that, in the V century AC, with the help of Minrothian ships were responsible for the spread of vampirism and lycanthropy chiefly in Meridiona (nearly destroying Furmenglaive, which was later conquered by the Thyatians to restore order to the region).

## THOTHIA

<b>The Night Spider (Arachne Prime)</b>	Obscurity, deceit, oppression
<b>Rathanos</b>	Fire, energy, male supremacy, power, pride
<i>Bastet</i>	Fortune, fertility, wealth, felines

### Notes:

1. Arachne Prime is to blame for the corruption of the Thothian Pharaohs over the last fourteen generations. She has subjected the entire country to her faith (centred on the glorification of slavery and darkness as the bringer of revelations). She controls the government through her adepts and installed her daughter Aketheti on the throne alongside the legitimate Pharaoh, since the times of Ramenhotep X (who now serves her as a vampire hidden in the Temple of the Dawn). Following the events described in the module M5, *Talons of Night* (1003 or 1004 AC), Arachne Prime was unmasked and banished from Thothia. Rathanos returned as the kingdom's patron and his cult ousted the Aranea religion.
2. The ancient Nithian Immortals cults are no longer present in Thothia, due to the Spell of Oblivion's effects and the false memories which had been given them by the ancestors of the hated Thothians. There is a deep-seated belief that Thothia has been cursed by the lost Immortals known only as the Ancient Guardians. The latter turned their backs on the Thothians due to their rulers' guilt. The Thothians since Nithia's fall have either become agnostic or devotees of the Rathanosite mythos, a more refined form of Rathanos's cult that identifies pure energy and the element of fire as the cornerstones of life and power. They venerate fire as a purifying and reinforcing power and their discernment of the secrets that fire encapsulates revolve around a series of magic-religious practices, which form the basis of Rathanosite rituals. Rathanos maintains a sect, in Thothia, known as the Cult of the True Flame (which worships the Flame, Rathanos's philosophical incarnation), which has some adepts mainly in the neighbouring cities of Ekto and Trikelios. The movement covertly seeks to overthrow the Thothian government and restore the ancient Rathanosite mythos that the aranea.
3. The Order of the Square Web sect rules Thothia's religious life and has manipulated the Thothians' conscience and customs for about the last three hundred years. Through a progressive campaign of intolerance and subtle blackmail, the Order relegated Rathanosite mysticism into second place, and finally banned this philosophy, considering it destabilising and chaotic. The Aranea mysticism preaches a total separation from the passions as the way to enlightenment and a life without worry, and this separation can be achieved by meticulously observing the precepts of the Canon of the Square Web, which the Thothian mystics follow to the letter. These teachings reduce an individual's will, for the benefit of his rulers and clergy, asking him to not resist their orders and let himself be guided by those who have been invested with power by divine fate. Moreover, the mythos preaches respect and worship of the darkness, which hides the secrets of ultimate knowledge, contrary to the Rathanosites' (only a small circle of mystics know of the Spider of the Night's existence, all the other faithful follow the Square Web's impersonal philosophy) ancient worship of flames and light. For the aracnites, darkness is the embodiment of tranquillity and balance, and the annulment of will (and thus any earthly problems). Therefore, they consider that night is the holiest time, during which the true faithful are obliged to remain at home and meditate until they fall asleep, attaining the peace of the senses through their disconnection from the world and gain the answers to their problems through dreams and meditation. Because of this, at sunset few still wander Thothia's streets, usually criminals or guards tasked to watch that all observe the law and prevent any disturbance to the sanctity of night. This also means that the night is dominated by the creatures of darkness and Arachne Prime's followers, which have free rein to pursue any dark affair.
4. A small number of followers (particularly those fast runner rakasta that were assimilated into the Thothian kingdom generations ago) secretly worship Bastet, ancient Nithian Immortal, as guardian of fortune and fertility.
5. The cult of the Ancient Guardians (the Immortals of the Nithian pantheon) is not permitted by the araneas' mythos and its followers are persecuted if discovered practising rituals to honour these decadent Immortals. The places of worship (temples, obelisks and pyramids) linked to these Immortals have, for awhile, been forbidden by the Pharaoh and clergy, even if nobody has dared destroy them to avoid provoking the Immortals' ire. They are ruined, abandoned, and lack keepers. Its few followers [no more than one hundred in the entire kingdom – mostly clerics of **Maat**, **Horon** (Ixion), **Isiris** (Valerias), **Amon** (Odin), **Zephyr** (Asterius) and **Mut** (Terra)], who secretly pass down their Immortals' precepts, are united in the Order of the Phoenix, mythological creature symbol of the hope that the cult of the ancient Immortals will one day will rise from the ashes.

## TRIKELIOS

<i>Protius</i>	Oceans and marine creatures, water, capriciousness, travel
<i>Talitha</i>	Egocentricity, greed, deceit, betrayal, thieves and assassins
<i>Ptahr (Kagyar)</i>	Crafts, sculpture
<i>Razud</i>	Self-determination, courage, strength, independence, authority
<i>Rathanos</i>	Fire, energy, power, male supremacy, pride

### Notes:

1. Trikelios was originally a Thothian city–state that was conquered about 15 centuries ago by Alphatia. It is famous for its builders and carpenters, who are deemed the best on the Isle of Dawn. Given the sea’s vital importance to the Trikelians, the ancient cult of Protius is the city’s most prominent sect. Protius, lord of the sea and marine creatures, is considered the settlement’s patron.
2. Trikelios is also infamous for being a corrupt city, where crime is rampant. As such, the Alphatia cult of Talitha has many followers and the Order of Silence has a position of political power and intimidation and its dictates are followed by both the merchants and governors. The Order is also active in Ekto, but has its main temple, which is open to the public, in Trikelios. Its followers and officers don’t make a secret of their own affiliation (unlike other parts of the empire). Given its power, the Order also receives some, essentially, legal donations, which helps to sustain its wealth and criminal operations.
3. The Temple of Ptahr (Kagyar) is third most important and wealthy after those of Protius and Talitha, because Trikelios’s carpenters and joiners are the richest on the island. They enjoy respect and donate a part of their wealth to the cult to gain favours and support.
4. Razud embodies, for most Alphatian colonists, the ideals of independence and resolve necessary for freedom, and he has some followers in Trikelios, although the cult of Talitha’s coercive influence has severely weakened the need for the presence of the Razudians there. There is open warfare between the Order of Silence and Razud’s followers who wish to eliminate Talitha’s corruption, and naturally the Order uses its position of superiority to gain the favour of the totally neutral cults (like Protius and Ptahr) and respect for its plans, and is also more or less openly hostile to its rivals. Razud still has many followers, but Alphatia’s temple has been totally eradicated from the city.
5. The Cult of the True Flame has a small temple in Trikelios and some followers of Thothian extract (a legacy of the city’s former Thothian domination). Rathanos’s followers within this small Alphatian dominion have tried for some time to gain the Alphatians’ support to overthrow the Thothian government (controlled by the Spider of the Night’s sect) and reinstate Rathanos as Thothia’s lawful guardian (so they say). Unfortunately Trikelios’s Alphatians don’t like interfering in the internal politics of other states and have never openly supported the insurrectionists’ actions (but continue to grant them asylum and protection). The cultists of Trikelios collaborate closely with those of Ekto and the secret Thothian resistance to depose Ramenhotep and his evil consort, attempting both to hire skilled assassins and foment the population against its rulers (and have found useful collaborators among the members of the Order of Silence), in an attempt to awaken the Thothians from the apathy into which the Spider of the Night’s mysticism has made them sink.

### WEST PORTAGE

<i>Asterius</i>	Trade, wealth, guile, social climbing, communication, thieves, travel, merchants, messengers
<i>Protius</i>	Oceans and marine creatures, water, capriciousness, travel
<i>Twelve Watchers</i>	Arts and crafts
<i>Vanya</i>	War, conquest, victory, pride, honour

### Notes:

1. West Portage is a city founded by the Thyatians as a trade port with the Isle of Dawn. It later became a real dominion due to the flourishing traffic that passes through its wharfs. The most popular cult is Asterius’s, patron of trade, travel, and those individuals that make smuggling and illicit traffic a real trade that is very profitable for West Portage. The Temple of Asterius is the city’s grandest and richest, built with the donations of the merchants and, especially, thieves who have been enriched thanks to divine benevolence and now operate behind a façade of respectability to continue their traffic undisturbed with the local governor’s support.
2. Protius is the city’s second most popular Immortal, and there are numerous small altars dedicated to him along the coast, where the sailors and their families are able to pray for successful expeditions by sea.
3. Augrism is the city’s third most important sect, and the Twelve Watchers are worshipped by those workers that have at least a modicum of interest in the spiritual side of life. Most West Portage inhabitants wish only to make a living without revering any particular Immortal. Despite this, the Twelve’s clerics have always helped and supported all craftsmen and honest workers, so much so that their religion has gained favour among these classes has given birth to a strong sentiment of gratitude and affection towards this Immortal – patron of hard work and pragmatism.
4. The Temple of Vanya in West Portage has few adepts, mostly the army’s clerics and soldiers, as the vast majority of West Porters try to avoid conflict, preferring to resolve their disputes by guile or deceit, and thus it isn’t a good place for Vanya to gain followers.

## WESTROURKE

<i>Viuden (Odin)</i>	Good government and authority, sky, storms, winds, knowledge
<i>Donegal (Thor)</i>	War, battle, fury in battle, honour, bravery
<i>Brian (Frey)</i>	Passion, strategy, virility, loyalty, friendship, fertility, agriculture
<i>Brianna (Freyja)</i>	Abundance, fertility, beauty, love, women warriors
<i>Vanya</i>	War, conquest, victory, pride, honour
<i>Dallbard (Tiresias)</i>	Poetry, music, legends, magic, dreams, prophecy
<i>Wayland</i>	Metallurgy, engineering, crafts, magical constructs
<i>Arnelee</i>	Independent women, liberty, adventure, travel, loyalty, guile, sincerity, knowledge, messengers
<i>Manadyn (Protius)</i>	Water, oceans, marine creatures, capriciousness, travel
<i>Nyt (Hel)</i>	Corruption, death, reincarnation, darkness and cold energy
<i>Karaash</i>	Humanoids, strength, war, tactics, victory, conquest

### Notes:

1. The cult of Viuden is predominant in the region, along with those of his divine children. The cults of his supposed wife, Dun, Bel, and Vanu don't appear as they are considered guardians of enemy clans by the dominant tribe of Westrouрке (Brianna replaces Dun and Vanu as patroness of love and fertility among the Westrourkites).
2. Vanya has a large following in Westrouрке, due to the large presence of Thyatian military and clerics in the southern area, and their constant engagements against the orcish tribes that threaten the southern settlements.
3. Dallbard has some followers among the lower classes. The clerics of Dallbard are particularly respected by the community and frequently travel from one part to another of Westrouрке acting as judges and advisers to the clan heads. In Westrouрке, the village bard has a very important daily task: at the end of each day, he intones Dallbard's Song of Thanksgiving, as it is believed that this protects the village from the wrath of the Immortals.
4. Nyt is patroness of the orcs that live in the hills and southern plateaus, even if her ancestral control over them has had competition over the last centuries from Karaash, who has tried to steal her followers via tribal wars and twisted dogma.

## SEA OF DREAD

The Sea of Dread is the enormous ocean that divides the Known World from northwest Davania. In it are many islands of all sizes including the exotic Thanegioth Archipelago, the far-off Ochalea ally of Thyatis, and the kingdoms of Minrothad and Ierendi, (the latter two have already been covered in the Known World section). Beneath the waves are the undersea region of the Sunlit Sea and the Abyss of Dread.

### OCHALEA

<i>Kor Yis (Koryis)</i>	Peace, prosperity, diplomacy, mercy, tolerance, respect of laws
<i>Ssu-Ma</i>	Knowledge, memory, books, education, history, order, tests
<i>Ta Lai Si-Fa (Tarastia)</i>	Law, order, truth, justice and just vengeance
<i>Nin Fang-Le (Ninffangle)</i>	Rakasta, bravery, travel, battle, hunting, impossible deeds
<i>Mao You-Li, Powerful spear (Saimpt Malinois)</i>	Lupins, hunting, war, courage, just vengeance, arms & armour, wereslayers
<i>Wei Long (Great One)</i>	Creation, justice, cosmic order, magic, dragons
<i>Chai Shi Hui (Loup)</i>	Death, ferocity, winter, night, survival of the strongest
<i>Heng Shang (Eternal General)</i>	War, battle, discipline, loyalty, victory, soldiers, pragmatism
<i>An-Ying Zhu Hou (Arachne Prime)</i>	Spiders and aranea, deceit, oppression, obscurity
<i>Pharamond</i>	Power, magic, ambition, deceit, cleverness, stealth

### Notes:

1. The Ochaleans are mostly followers of the so-called religion of the Celestial Court and respect all those that belong to this great universal organisation. Below are the names of the Celestial Court's, along with their translation from the Ochalean:
  - ❖ Kor Yis (Koryis): He who thinks and rules
  - ❖ Ta Liu Ai-Tan (Talitha): She who sows bitter suffering
  - ❖ Wei Long (Great One): Great dragon
  - ❖ Fu Shi Liu (Khoronus): Father of the time that flows
  - ❖ Nian-Mai Si-Xiang (Noumena): Ancient thinker
  - ❖ Hen-Hao Ten (Idraote): Font of good health
  - ❖ Yao-Lan Zi (Alphatia): Cradle of beauty
  - ❖ Hui Da-Zhi (Alphaks): Furnace of destruction
  - ❖ Xi-Yang (Ixion): Bringer of daylight
  - ❖ Nu-Shi Hei-An (Nyx): Lady of darkness
  - ❖ Han Li (Arnelee): Keeper of virtue/reason
  - ❖ An-Ying Zhu Hou (Arachne Prime): Spider Queen of shadows

- ❖ Ba Pian–Shu (Brissard): Master of deceit
- ❖ Guan Zi–You (Korotiku): Guardian of freedom
- ❖ Biao Hun Xi–Ai (Valerias): Shining spirit that loves
- ❖ Chai Shi Hui (Loup): Ravenous beast that devours

- ❖ Ssu–Ma: Venerable sage
- ❖ Ta Qi Ming (Tyche): The Weaver of Fate
- ❖ Ta Lai Si–Fa (Tarastia): The Giver of Justice

2. Fu Han Qing (Faunus): Father that stirs passions. Some of the most popular of the Celestial Court are followed as individual Immortals by the Ochaleans, they are: Koryis (Immortal guardian of Ochalea), Ssu–Ma (patron of knowledge and civilisation) and Wei Long (the Great One, patron of cosmic balance and wisdom).
3. Tarastia is one of the few Thyatian Immortals whose individual cult has a strong grip among the more principled Ochaleans and the island’s Thyatian residents.
4. Malinois is the guardian of all the Ochalean lupins, except for the scholarly Chow–Chow who are committed to Ssu–Ma and the warlike Shar–pei, who are devoted to Heng Shang (Eternal General). Nearly all the lupins and some Ochaleans also fear and respect Chai Shi Hui (Luup), patron of death, ferocity and winter.
5. Many tribes (most of which are isolationist) of pardasta rakasta live in the wildest areas of Ochalea (particularly in the forests and in the few areas of foot hills). They are all devoted to the cult of Ninfangle.
6. Arachne Prime is worshipped by a sect of evil assassins led by aranea disguised as humans.
7. Pharamond has been selected as the original patron and guardian of Ochalea’s remaining ogre-mages.

### TEKI–NURA–RIA

Tapu and Arna ( <i>Gorrziok</i> )	Creation and destruction, extremes
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#### Notes:

1. The island of Teki–nura–ria (see module X8, *Drums on Fire Mountain*) is several kilometres east of the island of Hattias. It is inhabited by olive-green skinned half-orcs called Kara–kara, who live as herders (raising wild boar), fishers and especially pirates (raiding the merchant ship cargoes of gold and exotic foods). The kara–kara worship, in a very primitive way, two Immortals, who according to their mythology created the sea and the sky, gave them a land to live in, and taught them the secrets of navigation and war (to make them stronger than the foreigners). Tapu is the lord of the land and sky, the one who gives warriors strength and who created life in the world. Arna is the lady of the water, patroness of the sea, storms, nature’s destructive side, and marine creatures. In reality, the kara–kara worship the same Immortal – Gorrziok – under two names, given his strongly dualistic nature as creator and destroyer. The kara–kara were created by the Nithians by interbreeding orc and Tanagoro slaves, and used them to colonise most of the Sea of Dread’s northern islands. Following the fall of Nithia, the only kara–kara to survive were those of Teki–nura–ria, who however forgot their masters and think they had landed on the island once inhabited by a people known as the Old Ones. Two storm giants appeared one day from the sea and the kara–kara were so frightened by them that they began to worship them. These giants, Tapu and Arna, taught the kara–kara to navigate, build watercraft, control the spirits of the wind (the kal–muru, Tapu and Arna’s children according to myth), and later to worship the Lord of the Waves (Gorrziok). When the two giants disappeared in the III century BC, the kara–kara believed that they had left them as they had nothing more to teach them. They put their knowledge to use by raiding the neighbouring islands and passing merchant ships, and kept their island’s location secret thanks to the kal–muru. They continue to worship Tapu and Arna, although it is Gorrziok who answers their prayers.

### THANEGIOTH ARCHIPELAGO

<i>Manwara (Protius)</i>	Oceans and marine creatures, water, capriciousness, travel
<i>Korotiku</i>	Wisdom, guile, subterfuge, liberty, clear thinking, aranea, jokes, cheating, fun
<i>Pyro (Ixion)</i>	Light, sun, strength, knowledge, war, balance and order
<i>Crakkak</i>	Sharks, shark-kin, predators, hunting, strength, ferocity
<i>Ninfangle</i>	Rakastas, bravery, adventure, travel, battle, hunting
<i>Rakhnee (Arachne Prime)</i>	Evil aranea, deceit, oppression, obscurity
<i>Ui (Ordana)</i>	Nature, protection of forests and sylvan races
<i>Marau–Ixui (Terra)</i>	Balance of the life cycle, terra, birth, fertility, seasons
<i>Uatumà (Zirchev)</i>	Hunting, survival, bravery
<i>Gorrziok</i>	Sea and storm giants, oceans, extreme natural phenomena, creation and destruction
<i>Slizzark</i>	Kopru, domination of the weak, power, corruption
<i>Oloron (Odin)</i>	Sky, storms, winds, authority, knowledge, wisdom

#### Notes:

1. Manwara is worshipped both by the natives and by the Twaelar, the merrow that live in the waters of the Thanegioth Archipelago. The Twaelar believe they are the chosen of Manwara, the only ones who are able to control the southern seas. They practice a strongly aggressive policy in confronting the ships that cross their territorial waters, frequently attacking them and making the direct route from Brun to the Archipelago extremely dangerous. Travel via canoes and

boats between the Archipelago's islands is monitored by the Twaelar, who allow the natives to travel freely in exchange for offerings and gifts, with whom they have better relations.

2. Korotiku is worshipped by the majority of the inhabitants of the Archipelago; aborigines of Tanagoro blood who are descendents of the explorers who arrived millennia ago, and a minority of Makai who stopped on the island during the Makai migration from Davania to Brun over two thousand years earlier. The strong Tanagoro imprint of the Thanegiothians is evident in the predomination of the cult of Korotiku in the villages, followed by those of Manwara and Pyro (Ixion), which is typical of Tanagoro culture.
3. Crakkak is worshipped as Sharp-Tooth by the natives in his aspect as patron of sharks and predators. As the majority of the Thanegiothians are fishermen, many pray and make offering to placate Sharp-Tooth before going fishing. The fear that the natives have in the battles of Crakkak is reverential: he is considered a benign though unpredictable Immortal, the embodiment of the strength of the shark – the greatest marine predator. In his honour they perform sacrifices and ceremonies to invoke Sharp-Tooth's strength on their warriors or raiders before a battle.
4. Ninfangle is worshipped by the savage rakasta that live within the forests of the Archipelago's larger islands.
5. The aranea present in the thickest jungles of the Thanegiothian islands are split between worshippers of The Rakhnee (Arachne Prime) and Korotiku, with a slight percentage favouring the former. They are extremely primitive aranea, who abandoned their destiny after the fall of the Empire of Aran millennia ago, and prey upon weaker creatures for survival. They only use their shapechanging ability when they must enter into peaceful exchanges with the natives (which are extremely rare, as the majority of the aranea have adopted an isolationist and xenophobic policy).
6. On the Archipelago's islands, there are phanaton communities; descended from those enslaved by the ancient aranea. These phanatons have forgotten their past history, but nevertheless hate and fight the aranea as instructed by their race's Immortal patrons, Mother Forest, Mother Earth and the Hunter.
7. The cult of Gorziok is present both among the natives and the sea and storm giants that live in the Archipelago and in the Sea of Dread. Extreme natural phenomena like tornados and typhoons are common, and the humans associate them with Gorziok, lord of the waves and storms. He is invoked to calm the natural disasters or to ask for them – some tribes pray to him to send typhoons and seaquakes against their enemies.
8. Slizzark is worshipped by the few kopru that remain hidden in the heart of the Isle of Dread and in the sea surrounding it. They are the last descendents of a large empire that encompassed all the Sea of Dread and that had collapsed millennia ago. These individuals are sly and ruthless, greedy and tyrannical, and constantly conspire to gain new slaves and once again dominate the islands' humans and the aquatic merrow.
9. Oloron (Odin) is worshipped by the villagers of Mantru, situated on the shores of a volcanic lake in the north of the Isle of Dread. They are descendents of an almost extinct Neathar tribe that was once dominated by the kopru. They are able to survive here thanks to their isolation, the presence of an abundant source of sweet water (the volcanic lake), and fertile soil. Oloron represents the only memory of their ancestral past, he is associated with the most powerful and volatile elements, and the wisdom as mysterious knowledge directly handed to them by the Immortal (which gives Oloron's cleric a position of great power in the village of Mantru, second only to the village chief).

## UNDERSEA

<b>Manwara (Protius)</b>	Oceans and marine creatures, water, capriciousness, travel
Polunius	Tritons, architecture, magic, arts and crafts, creativity, tradition
Malafor	Sailors, dolphins, protection and prosperity of aquatic races and marine ecosystem
Tallivai (Calitha)	Sea elves and aquatic races, oceans, lakes and rivers, travel, prosperity, fertility, good luck
Sharpcrest	Kna, prosperity through trade, underwater hunting
Crakkak	Sharks, shark-kin, predators, hunting, strength, ferocity
Kallala	Aquatic spirits, seduction, malice, cleverness, femininity
<b>Saasskas</b>	Destruction, conquest, oceans, necromancy, devilfish
Gorziok	Sea and storm giants, oceans, extreme natural phenomena, creation and destruction
Slizzark	Kopru, domination of the weak, power, corruption
<i>The Silver Hunter (Ruaidhri)</i>	Extermination of lycanthropes, courage, hunters

### Notes:

1. Undersea is an underwater kingdom that extends under the nations of Ierendi and Minrothad and an the area known as the Sunlit Sea, which stretches from the Known World's southern coast to the undersea terraces that mark the oceanic trench known as the Abyss of Dread (in which dwell devilfish, undead beings in Saasskas's service, and creatures of the abyss of frightful size and form). Undersea is made up of many fiefdoms and regions, each inhabited by a different race that makes up the Sunlit Sea's population. Queen Tarovra (a triton) rules both the fiefdoms and the council of nobles with wisdom, firmness and justice, in Manwara's name.
2. Besides Manwara's worship (lord of the depths and patron of all aquatic races), every race has a specific hero who became an Immortal due to its deeds, and who symbolises that aquatic race's traits. Polunius is the wisest architect and



sage, patron of the tritons; Calitha (called Tallivai by the aquatic elves) is the creator of the Frond of Life and inspiration for the principles of pacifism and the way of the sea (the elendaen); Malafor the Dolphin Friend is the guardian and hero of the Sunlit Sea's merrow, he taught them the dolphin language and forged an eternal pact of brotherhood with the dolphins; Sharpcrest initiated the economic underwater empire of the kna, taught them the art of trade, and opened the way to transoceanic travel; Crakkak is the opposite of Malafor, the hero who has killed the most dolphins, forged an eternal alliance with the oceans' supreme predator – the powerful shark, and gave the shark-kin their abilities; Kallala was the first nixie (aquatic fey) and, after gaining siren powers from Manwara, gave birth to the nixie race; Slizzark is the founder of the kopru empire, the first to develop the power to dominate the weak and the highest of the kopru; Gorrziok was the first giant to unite the powers of water and air, he taught the sea giants how to live together and prosper.

3. Saasskas is the only Immortal who is opposed to the prosperity of the races in the Sunlit Sea. She constantly seeks allies among the more voracious and disloyal members of the subaquatic races, to convert to her cause and transform into velya (aquatic vampires) or weresharks to better control them. All the devilfish that live in the Sunlit Sea's depths worship her, along with the undead that she creates in her palace in the Abyss of Dread. She is amassing a horde of undead to unleash once her invasion begins.
4. Many underwater creatures worship Ruaidhri, who was responsible for saving Undersea from the lycanthropy plague (brought there by the trade with the surface world during the last millennium) thanks to the Night of the Long Knives.

## ALPHATIAN SEA

The Alphatian Sea bathes the northern and western coasts of Alphatia (one of the Mystaran continents) and the eastern coast of the Norwold region (part of Brun). Within it are the islands of Qeodhar and Yannivey (protectorates of the Alphatian Empire) as well as a few other small islands too arid or cold to be inhabited by man (although they are occasionally used as refuges for ruthless Nentsunian and Qeodharian pirates or ravenous monsters).

### ALPHATIA

<b>Alphatia</b>	Arts, beauty, peace, order and harmony, protect Alphatia and confront Alphaks
Razud	Self-determination, independence, liberty, courage, strength, authority, Alphatian
Eiryndul	Intelligent sylvan creatures, magical creatures, elves, illusions and guile, jokes, curiosity, deceit, fun, adventure
Terra	Creation and protection of all life forms, balance of the life cycle, birth, prosperity and fertility, earth, agriculture
Palartarkan	Magic regarding gravity, air and flight, astronomy and astrology, elemental plane of air, Alphatia (Floating Kingdom of Ar)
Kagyar	Crafts, metallurgy, dwarves, sculpture, construction, miners
Zirchev	Hunting, survival, animals, tolerance, magic, sylvan races, nature, outcasts, lycanthropes
<i>Ixion</i>	Light, sun, strength, knowledge, oppose entropy and evil
<i>Pangloss (Ssu–Ma)</i>	Memory, books, education, saggi, history, knowledge, order, scribes
<i>Valerias</i>	Love, passion, desire, arts, charity, fertility, protection
<i>Pharamond</i>	Power, magic, ambition, cleverness, stealth, deceit
Protius	Oceans and marine creatures, water, capriciousness, travel
<i>Eternal General</i>	War, battle, discipline, loyalty, victory, pragmatism, soldiers
<i>Maat</i>	Justice, honour, virtue, integrity, honesty, order, loyalty, redemption, fight chaos and evil
Asterius	Trade, wealth, travel, guile, social climbing, couriers, communication, merchants, thieves
Koryis	Peace, prosperity, diplomacy, mercy, tolerance, respect of laws
<i>Garal</i>	Gnomes, inventors and thinkers, science and mechanics, crafts
<i>Ka</i>	Protection of life, wisdom, preservation of knowledge, prosperity, healing, magic
<i>Brissard</i>	Domination, slavery, oppression, intrigue
<i>High Spider (Korotiku)</i>	Spiders and aranea, clear thinking, wisdom, guile, cleverness, liberty, cheating, fun
<i>Spider Queen (Arachne Prime)</i>	Spiders and aranea, deceit, oppression, obscurity
<i>Raven</i>	Good luck, fun, games, jokes, cleverness, tricks, hin
<i>Brindorhin</i>	Hin, security, family, abundance and prosperity
<i>Karaash</i>	Humanoids, strength, war, victory, conquest, tactics
Talitha	Selfishness, egocentricity, immorality, deceit, discord, betrayal, greed, thieves & assassins
<i>Nyx</i>	Darkness and obscurity, undead, necromancy, night, secrets
<i>Marwodyn</i>	Necromancy, death, magical research, capriciousness

<i>Shaper</i>	Peace, charity, equality, justice, tolerance, fight injustice, protect the weak
<b>Alphaks</b>	Destroy Alpathia and the Alpathians, hate, vengeance, massacre
<i>Great One</i>	Dragons and lizardkin, creation, justice, knowledge, magic

**Notes:**

1. Alpathia is a land of magic par excellence, a large continent to the east of the Known World ruled by a council of a thousand archmages and by an emperor elected by the Council of a Thousand. The Alpathians are divided into two classes, each of which has different rights and legal responsibilities: the aristocrats (all those able to cast spells) and the commoners (all the rest of the population, about 90%, excluding the slaves, who aren't in either class and don't have any rights). Alpathia is a continent where magic permeates every aspect of everyday life. Its nobles, however, typically have a chaotic, egotistic, and maverick spirit which often prevents them from collaborating to pursue a common end. As such, despite its potential, Alpathia is an empire that is constantly victim of isolationist and autonomist tendencies. Its most powerful mages try to avoid any responsibility of rulership or political appointment, even though they draw the greatest advantage from their position to continue to conduct arcane research and experiments, or to simply enjoy a wealthy life and forget their worries and problems via the effects of increasingly sophisticated drugs. For the Alpathian nobles, the Immortals are beings that have achieved ultimate power and have transcended their mortality: more than an object of worship, it is a model to which they aspire to achieve the same level of power. Faith in the Immortals has set root in the commoner class, who worship the Immortals in the hope of an improvement of their life conditions; although most Alpathian commoners have inherited the aristocracy's agnosticism and they aren't even slightly interested in religion, preferring to concentrate on their everyday problems or on the best way to gain wealth and live decently.
2. The native Alpathian Immortals are varied: Razud (the oldest and most powerful), Alpathia (guardian of the empire and the established order), Pharamond (ancient patron of magic and the privileged noble class), Palartarkan (young patron of air magic), Koryis (patron of pacifism and prosperity), Alphaks (ancient emperor that destroyed the Alpathians' original world due to a philosophical dispute, and who now seeks to eliminate all the survivors), Talitha (patroness of egotism, deceit, and theft), Brissard (patron of slavery and intrigue), and Marwdyn (patron of Blackheart and necromancy). Alpathia (appeared after the Alpathians' arrival on Mystara) has a following among most of the Alpathians and is the patroness of the arts, although her pacifistic and lawful philosophy is a little too strict for those nobles more marked by chaos and the delirium of omnipotence, who have turned to Pharamond as their patron and inspirer. Razud (was already an ancient Cypri Immortal on Old Alpathia) is equally popular among both nobles and commoners, and is considered the patron of the Alpathian spirit of independence and indomitable will, which allows them to achieve any goal. Palartarkan is the patron of Floating Ar (the kingdom of flying islands that he created as part of his testimony to become Immortal) and is worshipped by the air elementalists. Koryis (also ascended only after the arrival on Mystara) is becoming the patron of the nation's more moderate and pacifist wing, and enjoys a good following only in the outer regions, as the mainland Alpathians consider him too moderate and easygoing. They prefer instead the more enterprising and shrewd Asterius, patron of non-evil thieves and the greedier and sly merchants. Marwdyn is the patron of Blackheart and all those mages that prefer to conduct bizarre magical experiments rather than enter into politics. The young Brissard, although entropic, isn't considered negatively by the population, since as patron of domination and intrigue he represents the Alpathians' sense of superiority and authority over the conquered peoples. Talitha and Alphaks are the only two to be firm enemies of the Alpathians: the former is associated with everything that is amoral, corrupt, and dark within the empire, guardian of traitors, assassins, and thieves; the latter is the embodiment of destruction and wicked, author of the many attempts to destroy the empire and massacre its citizens and is adored only by madmen or individuals full of hate and rancour towards the Alpathian nobles.
3. All the other Immortals within the empire have been worshipped by the Alpathians since their arrival on Mystara and are worshipped solely by a specific race or within a single nation. Eiryndul is the patron of the Shiye elves; Kagyar and Garal are worshipped by all dwarves and the gnomes of Stoutfellow, and by most of the continent's craftsmen and engineers; Raven and Brindorhin are followed by a good part of the continent's hin (the rest follow local cults); Karaash is adored by the humanoids, along with Terra and Ixion; Nyx is the Immortal valued by the necromancers, along with Marwdyn; Protius is seen as the guardian of the underwater kingdom of Aquas; Ssu-Ma is worshipped as Pangloss (an Alpathian imposed change to distinguish it from the Ochalese cult – which they view as inferior). He is seen as the creator of writing and knowledge, and, therefore, holds great import for the nobles; Ixion has followers mostly in the kingdom of Stonewall; Maat is the patroness of Greenspur, the continent's most lawful kingdom, where justice and nobility are solid values; the Eternal General is revered by almost all of the Alpathian military (both spellcasters and commoners) and protects the militaristic kingdom of Randel; Valerias is the patroness of passion, love, and the arts for all Alpathians; the aranea hidden within the Foresthorne and Blackheart populations (the original inhabitants of these Alpathian nations) are split between supporters of the High Spider (Korotiku) and those devoted to the evil Queen Spider (Arachne Prime), who urges them to use any means, however inhumane, to impose their own

will upon the Alphatians and sylvan creatures. The multiracial nation of Limn is home to several sects devoted to the Great One, the Shaper, Zirchev, Ka, Terra, Ixion, and Karaash.

### QEODHAR AND YANNIVEY

<i>Wotan (Odin)</i>	Authority, guile, knowledge, wisdom, sky, storms, winds
<i>Nooga (Protius)</i>	Oceans and marine creatures, water, capriciousness, travel
<i>Tyr (Ixion)</i>	War, heroism, strength

#### Notes:

1. The islands near to arctic polar circle, to the extreme north of Alphatia, are known as the Yannivey Chain. They are populated by the descendents of the Alphatian continent's original inhabitants, the Yanifey (people of Neathar stock and the Antalians' ancestors), who were driven from their homeland by the Alphatians arrival. Most of the Yanifey were taken as slaves, but some managed to escape by taking to sea and arrived in the northern islands, where they were left in peace for centuries (given the island's low value). The largest island is Qeodhar, a true kingdom that allied with Alphatia in the VI century AC in the hope of improving its position, but it has always been considered an unimportant Alphatian dominion. Qeodhar is governed by the Kjavik ("Scourge") Norlan, and is mostly populated by poor farmers, fishermen, pirates and mercenaries. The rest of the Yannivey Chain is made up of small barren islands which have, for centuries, been refuges for the Alphatian Empire's outcasts and criminals that wish to disappear without leaving a trace. Yannivey's few inhabitants are mostly fishermen that live an anarchic, hard life, subject to the inclement climate and chicanery of the more powerful criminals who they must obey to not make things worse. There are few fugitives that stay in Yannivey for any length, these are usually individuals without scruples and no other means, who seek to impose their will with their strength. Yannivey is a brutal, barren land, nominally under Alphatian control but in practice without any interest to the Empire, which has abandoned it to itself. Because of the Yanifey and Qeodharians' tough lifestyle, the two peoples now hold themselves separate (in particular the Qeodharians are the purest descendents of the Yanifey), there isn't alas much time for the development of the spirit and religion among them.
2. The Qeodharians have an extremely limited pantheon of Immortals: Nooga (lord of the oceans and travel), Wotan (patron of storms, authority and knowledge) and finally Tyr (patron of strength and war). The religion is an extremely primitive version of what would later become the Antalian cult, and the three Immortals honoured represent what for the Qeodharians are the most important forces that govern their world: sun, sky and water. The fact that they are all male also shows the clear machismo of Qeodharian society.
3. For the Qeodharians, the Immortal who embodies death, cold, and darkness (the three most frightening things for the inhabitants of these latitudes) is **Hel**, who in this case isn't a female Immortal. The women of the Qeodharian society are therefore viewed with suspicion, especially if unmarried and advanced in years (who are considered Daughters of Hel, witches from a barren womb who reject the known order), and must be dominated and submit to a man to give them a sense of security and control of the community.
4. Most of Yannivey's criminals are amoral individuals that are preoccupied with their survival and don't have time to think about their own soul or the supernatural. Some fishermen pray to the Immortals to gain protection and help against these criminals, while some pirates have their own beliefs (usually in dark, entropic Immortals) that they keep to themselves or use their strength to impose it on others. Only a couple of clerics are present on the island, and they are followers of the **Shaper**, indomitable evangelists who have chosen to live in this inhospitable region due to their sense of charity. Their work is recent (the cult only arrived during the last century), but their actions gained them the support of some inhabitants who they now try to protect against the abuses of power.

## BELLISSARIAN SEA

The Bellissarian Sea includes Bellissaria (one of the Mysteran island-continent, south of Alphatia and west of Skothar) and the nearby Alatian Islands, subject kingdoms of the Alphatian Empire.

### ALATIAN ISLES (AEGOS, AERIA, GAITY, NE'ER-DO-WELL)

<i>Alphatia</i>	Arts, beauty, harmony, peace, order, protect Alphatia, oppose Alphaks
<i>Koryis</i>	Peace, prosperity, diplomacy, mercy, tolerance, respect of laws
<i>Terra</i>	Creation & protection of life forms, balance of the life cycle, birth, success, fertility, nature, agriculture
<i>Tourlain</i>	Perseverance, cleverness, sacrifice, luckless, anarchy
<i>Palartarkan</i>	Magic regarding air and flight, astronomy and astrology, elemental plane of air
<i>Valerias</i>	Love, passion, desire, sexuality, protection, arts
<i>Rathanos</i>	Fire, energy, power, male supremacy, pride
<i>Talitha</i>	Self-gratification at the expense of others, egocentricity, deceit, betrayal, greed, thieves, assassins

<i>Alphaks</i>	Destroy Alphatia and the Alphasians, hate, vengeance, massacre
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**Notes:**

1. There are four Alatian Islands: Aegos, Aeria, Gaity and Ne'er-do-well. Each island is populated by second class Alphasians (with the exception of Aeria) and is considered a subject kingdom of Alphatia. Their inhabitants aren't renowned for being devote worshippers, but any cult is able to set roots in the Alatians.
2. Aegos was the centre of a great zoo that was closed when its "guests" escaped spreading panic on the island. Now it is a small, simple farming community, where Alphasians with no magic ability try to lead a peaceful life. Terra is the Immortal patroness of this community and together with Koryis and Alphatia has many followers on the island.
3. Aeria is the most Alphasian of the four islands, the site of an important college of magic (the University of Aeria) that studies the power of air and gravity, in competition with the School of Floating Ar. The students that populate Aeria aren't very religious, like most Alphasian aristocrats, although there is a temple dedicated to Palartarkan. Those that seek insight in resolving any mystery of the arcane arts often turn to him for help. The rest of the common folk on Aeria (the minority) instead follow Koryis.
4. Gaity is a real paradise where the wealthiest mages and humans can relax and enjoy life for a time. Its economy is based on tourism and satisfying its customers' pleasures by both magical and mundane means. Valerias is the island's patroness, and she is extremely loved by its inhabitants and valued by its visitors for the philosophy of pleasure that her clerics preach. Alphatia has some followers and a temple dedicated to her, frequented by those that seek serenity and harmony with creation rather than the instinctive impulses and the stirring of passions offered by the adepts of Valerias.
5. Ne'er-do-well was founded with the name of Artesia as a centre for the development of new craft techniques to compete with the continent, but this wasn't a success due to its remote position. It eventually became a truly anarchic kingdom, enriched through suspicious racketeering and clandestine smuggling activities. Few Ne'er-do-well inhabitants consider themselves religious. Those that do are divided between worshippers of Tournalin (a native Immortal who protects the anarchists, clever, and outcasts) and Talitha (a much more ruthless and egotistic Alphasian Immortal, whose cultists have always tried to gain control of this kingdom of thieves). Ne'er-do-well is also home to a small sect of cruel worshippers of Alphaks that exploit the kingdom's reigning illegality to advance plans of destruction and revenge against the Alphasians of every race and social class in Alatian territory.
6. On the islands of Aeria and Aegos are communities inhabited by the descendents of those Thothians that once ruled the two islands (which were part of the Kingdom of Thothia before Alphatia captured them). These Thothians aren't followers of their motherland's aranea mythos, but have remained linked to the Cult of the True Flame (Rathanos), and collaborate with the other adepts of Rathanos that live on the Isle to overthrow the aranea dictatorship.

**BELLISSARIA**

<i>Koryis</i>	Peace, prosperity, diplomacy, mercy, tolerance, respect of laws
<i>Razud</i>	Self-determination, independence, liberty, courage, strength, authority
<i>Terra</i>	Creation & protection of all life forms, balance of the life cycle, birth, prosperity and fertility, nature, earth, agriculture
<i>Ixion</i>	Light, sun, strength, knowledge, preserving the balance and the universal order
<i>Utnapishtim</i>	Survival, protection of living species, travel, justice
<i>Twelve Watchers</i>	Arts and crafts
<i>Protius</i>	Oceans and marine creatures, water, capriciousness, travel
<i>Ninsun</i>	Magic, fertility, agriculture, prosperity, knowledge
<i>Alphatia</i>	Arts, beauty, harmony, peace, order, protect Alphatia, oppose Alphaks
<i>Ka</i>	Protection of life, prosperity, knowledge, wisdom, magic
<i>Pangloss (Ssu-Ma)</i>	Memory, books, education, tests, history, knowledge, order, scribes
<i>Tournalin</i>	Perseverance, cleverness, losers, sacrifice, luckless, anarchy
<i>Eternal General</i>	War, battle, discipline, loyalty, victory, pragmatism, soldiers and mercenaries
<i>Ninfangle</i>	Bravery, adventure, travel, battle, hunting, impossible deeds, rakasta
<i>Talitha</i>	Self-gratification at the expense of others, egocentricity, deceit, betrayal, greed, thieves, assassins
<i>Alphaks</i>	Destroy Alphatia and the Alphasians, hate, vengeance, massacre
<i>Great One</i>	Dragons and lizardkin, creation, justice, knowledge, magic

**Notes:**

1. Bellissaria is a small continent (about the size of Alphatia), which was claimed by the Alphasians in the IX century BC and settled by those subjects with a meagre aptitude for magic, and those mages that do not wish to be involved in Alphasian politics. The continent was already inhabited by the descendents of the Oltecs and Neathar fleeing the disaster of Blackmoor and several tribes of rakasta: they were assimilated by the Alphasian colonists both peacefully

- (like in the northern region) and through conquest. The rakasta, particularly, have always sought to retain their independence, and are never completely subject to the new rulers. Later, other colonists arrived from distant lands in small numbers, particularly Milenians and Tanagoro, but were quickly absorbed by the locals without influencing the culture or society. Bellissaria is split into five nations (Dawnrim, Notrion, Lagrius, Horken, and Surshield) firmly ruled by aristocratic sovereigns that over the centuries have always tried to promote a lawful culture and respect for the known order (Surshield is an exception – an anarchic kingdom populated by mixed races: Alphatians, Tanagoro, and rakasta). The Bellissarians are divided into aristocrats and commoners (the slaves are not even seen as a class), like on the mainland, but the spellcasters, although they still have noble titles and, in theory, enjoy great privileges, usually leading a less wealthy existence to their equals in Alphatia, as the wealth and the power is concentrated in the hands of the governors. The Immortals have a great following among the Bellissarians than in the rest of the empire.
2. Koryis is the most revered Immortal in Bellissaria, and has followers in all the kingdoms of the Bellissarian continent with the exception of Surshield: the Surians are extremely anarchic individuals and aren't found of the ordered and peaceful philosophy of Koryis, and keep his followers well away from the region (in the south of the continent).
  3. Razud is another of those favoured among the Alphatian emigrants in Bellissaria, as the universal patron of all the Alphatians, not just the aristocratic classes. Given his ideals of liberty and resolve, Razud's cult has taken root in all the Bellissarian kingdoms, with a particular following in anarchic Surshield, where self-determination is an inalienable right.
  4. Terra is worshipped by most inhabitants of Bellissaria as the Immortal patron of the harvest, nature and fertility. As most Bellissarians are farmers or shepherds, it is easy to understand that hers is the continent's third most popular cult (particularly in the kingdoms of Horken, Lagrius, and Dawnrim).
  5. The kingdoms of Notrion and Meriander are mostly inhabited by the descendents of the ancient Oltecs, who have retained several ancestral cults. In particular, the veneration of Ixion, Utnapishtim, Ka, and Ninsun is well rooted in these kingdoms. Ixion and Utnapishtim have several temples spread throughout Bellissaria: the former is considered the lord of balance and knowledge, while the latter is the patron of justice and guardian of the Bellissarian natives (on the basis that the natives' legends are drawn from the Bellissarians' Neathar and Oltec ancestors that survived the Great Rain of Fire). Ninsun is an Immortal associated with fertility, botany, and agriculture, and has a particular following in Notrion and Meriander, given that in the other states the cult of Terra don't leave room for the spread of the philosophy of Ninsun. Ka and Pangloss (Ssu–Ma) are frequently invoked by the mages and sages of the Meriander as patrons of knowledge and magic (based on the region's ancient Oltec faith), while Ka is also patron of the rakasta of the southern forests.
  6. It's no surprise that Augrism has penetrated as far as distant Bellissaria. Indeed, Known World merchant vessels have brought the adepts of the Twelve Watchers to Bellissarian since the VI century AC, and thanks to their extremely pragmatic philosophy and active worship, these evangelists quickly popularised the cult of the Twelve with the lower classes and the craftsmen particularly in the regions of Horken (famous for its shipwrights), and Lagrius (known for the quality of its carpenters and wood-carvers).
  7. Protius has followers in several coastal Bellissarian cities, especially in Dawnrim.
  8. Alphatia's followers are mainly found in two states: Meriander (a kingdom dominated by sages and alchemists, where the more bizarre experiments are carried out without, however, any intention of harming the inhabitants – the lawful version of Blackheart), and Notrion (the northernmost kingdom which has the most contact with the mainland). In the other kingdoms she is considered too square for the Alphatian aristocracy and the privileged mages, and Koryis is preferred.
  9. Tournalin has a large following among many Surians as the patron of anarchy and outcasts, and also among many thieves that live in the other Bellissarian kingdoms.
  10. The Eternal General is the patron of the dominant class of Surshield (the continent's most militarised and belligerent nation) and receives the prayers of most of the soldiers stationed in Bellissaria. His cult isn't very popular in the other kingdoms, but in Spearpoint (capital of Surshield) there has been a great temple built in his honour.
  11. Along with Ka, Ninfangle is the patron of the rakasta tribes (arboreal pardasta) that live in the mountains and forests of Surshield. They have refused to submit to the Alphatian Empire, and survived due to hunting and forays against the human settlements (which in Surshield are always small and easy prey for the organised rakasta tribes).
  12. Talitha and Alphaks have various affiliates all over Bellissaria, especially in chaotic Surshield, where Alphaks's followers incite the natives to revolt and organise armed bands to put to iron and fire not only the Surian settlements, but also those of neighbouring Horken. Talitha acts in more subtle ways, threatening, blackmailing, and taking influential people hostage in the continent's larger communities, in an attempt to extend anarchy to all the kingdoms and incite revolts against the mainland. Naturally the followers of Koryis, Razud, and Alphatia are the first line of defence against the strategies of these two Immortal enemies of the Alphatians.
  13. The Great One has a number of draconic followers in Lagrius's centuries-old forests and on the peaks or in the caverns of the Surkarian Range.

14. There are some itinerant priests of **Sinbad** present among the Bellissarians, but despite being respected they haven't any temples or sufficient followers to justify the insertion of Sinbad in the above list.

## SEA OF PEARLS

This tract of sea contains the Pearl Islands and the islands of Cathos and Vacros, and extends from the southern coast of Ochalea to the northern point of High Arypt, bathing North-eastern Davania, while to the east it borders with the Bellissarian Sea.

### CATHOS AND VACROS

<i>Asterius</i>	Trade, wealth, guile, social climbing, communication, travel, merchants, thieves, messengers
<i>Protius</i>	Oceans and marine creatures, water, capriciousness, travel
<i>Khoronus</i>	Knowledge, history, philosophy, good government, patience, diplomacy

#### Notes:

- The islands of Vacros and Cathos are found to the west of the Pearl Islands and east of north-eastern Davanian. They were colonised by a group of Traldar during their migration to Davania in 999 BC. Chased by a behemoth, part of Milen's fleet was separated from the expedition and landed on the two islands situated between the Davania and the Pearl Islands (only just discovered by the Tanagoro). Milen's expedition travelled up the first river it found, penetrated the Davanian hinterland, and lost contact with the other group, which they believed had been eaten by the monstrous marine being. Over the following centuries there were weak attempts to regain the sea, but the behemoth continued to frustrate the Milenians, who thus remained stuck on Davania. The Traldar of Vacros and Cathos were able to establish contact with the nearby Tanagoro colonies, starting a profitable trade based on the judgement that they no longer appeared to be oppressed by the behemoth, which limited its incursions to the stretch of the sea near Davania. Vacros and Cathos grew in commercial power, and managed to also trade with the Ochalese Nithian colonies. Later, about the V century BC, when Nithia was destroyed and the behemoth disappeared, Vacros contacted the Milenians and it was proposed as the only outlet to the western markets. This enormously enhanced its power and wealth so much that, in 200 BC, Cathos was annexed by the newly formed Kingdom of Vacros when the Vacrosian sovereign married the prince of Cathos's daughter. In 100 BC, the Vacrosians ferried a group of Milenian exiles to the distant Minaea, and these new colonies helped to establish a new trade route. Following Milenia's fall they lost a large part of their revenue, and the rise of the Minrothad Guilds in maritime commerce began to slowly erode the Vacrosians' trade routes. It was in this period, in the II century AC, that the cult of Kiranjo took root among those unscrupulous merchants, who imported it from Minaea, and led the way to the emergence of the piracy. In the V century AC, a priest of Kiranjo became king of Vacros, and since then the kingdom began to import minotaurs from the far-off land and maintain a more aggressive stance to its trade partners. This led to the organisation of true acts of piracy and squadrons of corsairs against those that didn't submit to the kingdom's proposed conditions. It was only in 600 AC that the Cathosian subjects, sick of the Vacrosians' abuses of power and the rumours about their brutal practices, finally recruited enough supporters among the Nuari and Ochalese to organise an armed revolt led by Lady Durnsay, a princess of Cathos who was destined to marry the Great Priest Kandros (a minotaur devoted to Kiranjo). The invasion was successful and the Vacrosian army, without the support of its fleet blockaded by the Nuari, was swept away. The minotaurs were largely exterminated (Kandros, who died in the labyrinth under Kiranjo's temple was among these), and the survivors fled via the sea along with the humans, dispersing to the four winds. So the Kingdom of Vacros was removed from Cathos's maps, which gained independence and took Vacros's vacant position in international trade. The last descendent of the ancient Vacrosian rulers, a human mage called Oltham, has recently returned to the island to restore Kiranjo's cult.
- Vacros is a rather large island, mountainous and of volcanic origin. The mountains (several mountainous peaks rich with obsidian and raw gems) are concentrated at the island's centre, while a series of hills occupy the north side. On this side was once the city of Vacros, with its port and it's still standing, great lighthouse, while other structures are found in the island's interior. The jungle covers the entire island and the city's ruins, alternating with very arid land, of volcanic origin. On Vacros is also an oracle of Kiranjo. The oracle is made up of three stone slabs, on which are three empty containers. Once a week, a priest of sufficiently high level can question the oracle by placing the demand before the three slabs and fill the three containers respectively with food, raw gems, and a large fragment of valuable looking obsidian. The answer arrives the next morning: during the night four pocket dragon servants of Kiranjo carry away or spill the contents of one or more pots. Based on which containers are empty or over-turned, the priest can decipher the Immortal's reply. If all three containers are empty, the sign is normally interpreted as the imminence of a severe disaster. The four pocket dragons live in the jungle in the ruins of the ancient capital's temple, and tend to remain out of sight. No one knows where they take their treasure.
- Cathos is situated to the north-west of Vacros, and is currently ruled by King Trueon. The capital is a coastal city that gave its name to the kingdom and the island has at least one other coastal settlement. The above pantheon shows the

Immortals worshipped by the Cathosians (heritage of the Traldar), as Vacros is currently semi-deserted (its few inhabitants worship **Kiranjo**). The Cathosians all honour Asterius, patron of trade, travel, and wealth – the fundamentals of Cathosian society. Next is the cult of Protius, Immortal of the sea and guardian of sailors, to whom every ship’s captain makes an offering before he sails. Khoronus is revered by the nobles, diplomats, and the men of science and culture. The rulers, chosen by Khoronus for their wisdom, are invested by his sect with the authority to rule.

## PEARL ISLANDS

<b>Korotiku</b>	Liberty, non-conformism, guile, cleverness, clear thinking, positive cheating and subterfuge
Pyro (Ixion)	Sun, fire, order, knowledge, strength, preserving the balance, banish the darkness
<i>Ashanti (Valerias)</i>	Love, passion, desire, sexuality, charity, fertility, arts
<i>Father Ocean (Protius)</i>	Oceans and marine creatures, water, capriciousness, travel
<i>Mother Nature (Djaea)</i>	Survival, natural balance, respect of life, druidism
<i>Turmis</i>	Bravery, arrogance, cleverness, epic deeds, adventurers and boastful thieves
<i>Calitha</i>	Oceans and water, prosperity, sea elves, fertility, travel, fortune
<i>Nicktu (Nyx)</i>	Darkness and obscurity, undead, night, necromancy, secrets
<i>Masauwu</i>	Intrigue, deceit, fiction, illusions, mind control, corruption, thieves, spies, cheats
<i>Sharptooth (Crakkak)</i>	Predators, hunting, strength, ferocity, sharks

### Notes:

1. The Nuari’s principal cult is that of the triad Korotiku–Pyro–Ashanti – the world’s creators. Nevertheless, there is a small cult that worships the “dark” Immortals like Masauwu (Korotiku’s dangerous and jealous brother), Nicktu (Pyro’s dark sister who presides over death and night), and Sharptooth (embodiment of marine predators and ferocity, counterpart to Ashanti). This attitude is explained, according to the Nuari belief, by the need to satisfy both the positive and negative Immortals to maintain the universal balance. There are thus priests devoted to these three dark Immortals present among the Nuari. The Nuari offer the dark Immortals gifts to avoid offending them, while passionately following and worshipping the good Immortals.
2. The cult of Mother Nature (Djaea) is present among the Nuari along that of Father Ocean (Protius). Together they embody the two fundamental aspects of islander life: life on land and in the sea, two inseparable ecosystems governed by these enigmatic entities, who must be satisfied with sacrifices, prayers, and the respect of natural laws to gain their favour.
3. Given the epic deeds that he completed in the Pearl Islands before gaining immortality, the cult of Turmis is very popular among the Nuari, who consider him a demigod and patron of bravery and guile.
4. Some sea elves live in the Pearl Islands. Originally from the Minrothad Guilds (see *Dawn of the Emperors*), they settled here after their first contact with the Nuari to create a trading station administered by the Guilds. Among them the worship of Calitha, patroness of the sea elves is popular.
5. There are some itinerant priests of **Sinbad** present among the Nuari, but despite being respected they haven’t any temples or sufficient followers to justify the insertion of Sinbad in the above list.

## SEA OF STEAM

Bathing the islands of Cestia and Oceania and the Isles of Steam (southeast of Oceania, small and mostly inhabited by animals of every type and size), and Davania’s south-eastern coast. It is described in *Dragon* 153, 154 (Oceania), and 155 (Cestia).

### CESTIA

<b>Pyro/Ixion</b>	Light, sun, fire, strength, war, knowledge, preserving order
<i>Protius</i>	Oceans and marine creatures, water, capriciousness, travel
<i>Oloron/Viuden (Odin)</i>	Storms, sky, winds, authority, knowledge, wisdom
<i>Astanti/Valerias</i>	Love, passion, desire, arts, fertility, sexuality, protection
<i>Korotiku</i>	Wisdom, guile, liberty, jokes and fun, cheating
<i>Ninsun</i>	Fertility, agriculture, prosperity, knowledge, magic
<i>Mother Earth (Terra)</i>	Creation and protection of all forms of life (animals and plants), balance of the life cycle, birth, prosperity and fertility, earth, shepherds and farmers
<i>Ka</i>	Protection of life, prosperity, healing, knowledge, rakasta
<i>Varellya (Vanya)</i>	Victory, war, conquest, pride, honour, strength
<i>Spider Queen (Arachne Prime)</i>	Aranea and evil planar spiders, deceit, oppression, obscurity

### Notes:

1. The island was initially colonised by some Neathar in 1500 BC. Followed by a mass influx of Oceanians in 1200 BC, the two groups sought to live peacefully together on the island; sometimes successfully, sometimes not. Cestia is divided into four kingdoms: Morovay and Ambiroa are populated by a mixed Neathar–Oceanian race and make up the island’s northern coast; Manakara is positioned in central Cestia, extends from the east coast to the west bordering all the other kingdoms, and is home to the Oceanians’ descendents; Androkia, the oldest kingdom, makes up all of the island’s southern region and is home to the Neathars’ descendents – who settled there in 1500 BC.
2. Morovay and Ambiroa are two peaceful kingdoms dedicated to trading with the Pearl Islands and the small kingdom of Cathos in the north of the Sea of Pearls. Due to their proximity to Oceania, they are often the victims of night dragon attacks, which they try to counteract with lookouts on several observation towers all along the northern coast and continually illuminated by the Sacred Flames (magical braziers created by Pyro’s priests). The Sacred Flames can project a long, adjustable beam of solar light at any hour of the day and night, and are used to observe the sky, land, and sea, send signals from one position to another, and repulse the assaults of the dragons that hate the light. Due to the light’s importance, the cult of the sun and Pyro (Ixion) has the most support in these two nations, followed by those of Korotiku and Oloron (Odin), lord of the skies and storms. In addition, there are also followers of Protius (lord of the seas), Ashanti (Valerias), and Ninsun, the former is worshipped in Ambiroa and the latter in Morovay.
3. 90% of Manakara’s population are pure Oceanians, who kept faith with their ancient beliefs. The cult of Pyro is also strong there, where he is viewed as lord of strength and war (this has been helped by the proximity of the belligerent and xenophobic Androkians). Besides him, the Manakarans also pray to Korotiku, patron of liberty and guile; Ninsun, the great mother patroness of magic and fertility; as well as Ka, patron of knowledge, health, and the tribes of pardasta rakasta that live in the Manakaran Forest.
4. Androkia is a nation whose Neathar majority has always refused to mix with the Oceanian refugees or any other dark-skinned race. They are often in conflict with Aryptian and N’djatwa merchants, as well as with the Oceanians and the current inhabitants of the other three Cestian kingdoms. In Androkia the ancestral Neathar cult is strong with devotees to Viuden, lord of the skies, Protius, lord of water, and Mother Earth (Terra), as well as Ixion, Valerias and Varellya (Vanya), which were imported over the last millennium from the Davanian Milenia and Varellya Empires (which fell centuries ago).
5. Cestia’s forests are infested by many aranea that follow Arachne Prime and were once members of the Arachnid Empire. Since its collapse, they abandoned their motherland and have regressed to a primitive state and now live in the heart of the Cestian forests. They prey on unwary Cestians, who believe that they have been assaulted by another kingdom’s raiders, by using their shapechanging powers, to not reveal their presence.

## OCEANIA

<b>Thanatos</b>	Death, entropy, destruction, decadence, oblivion, corruption
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### Notes:

1. Oceania is east of Cestia and is composed largely by mountains in the central part, with fertile coasts covered by tropical vegetation. Colonised by the Oltecs via the Rainbow Bridge in 3000 BC, its inhabitants remained isolated after the Great Rain of Fire, judging themselves safe in their new motherland. Between 1600 and 1200 BC, the island was discovered by some Tanagoro explorers who colonised it. The local Oltecs mixed peacefully with the new arrivals (starting the Oceanian race), gained information about the surrounding world, and began to trade with distant Tangor. In 1200 BC, the Oceanians’ life was disturbed by a sudden, brutal invasion, the work of a multitude of Night Dragons sent by Thanatos and led by Synn. The survivors of the massacre immediately fled to nearby Cestia and settled there, trying (without much success) to peacefully coexist with the Cestians. Since then, Oceania has become the night dragons’ abode. They are entropic beings that serve Thanatos and guard a precious secret for their patron in the island’s heart (the nature of this secret is unknown). The night dragons prey on any ships sailing close to the island and, now and then, venture into the Cestian coast in search food and slaves. These raids, however, are rare, as the Cestians have learnt to defend themselves and Thanatos gives the dragons the entropic energy they need to survive.

## DAVANIA

Davania is an immense continent characterised by the absence of true feudal states like those that are found in nearby Brun. It saw the rise and fall of the lizardmen civilisations that ruled Mystara before the advent of the humans, but now the lizardkin are scattered in small groups in the savannahs, tropical jungles, and deserts that form Davania. The rakasta are extremely widespread in Davania’s eastern regions, as is seen in the article that appeared in *Dragon* 247 – any reference to them here is based on that article. Davania’s recent history only mentions two great empires, Milenia and Varellya, both rose and fell over about a millennium. The Milenian Empire was founded around 990 BC by Traldar fugitives from Brun and lasted until 200 AC; it ruled north-eastern Davania (particularly the Meghala Kimata plain). The Varellyan Empire (300 BC – 570 AC) at its height made up the entire Vulture Peninsula and neighbouring Low Arypt (now reduced to two great arid deserts due to the curse).



Northern Davania is divided into several areas: the region known as the Jungle Coast occupies the north-eastern area near the coast, within which is found the Thyatian Hinterlands and the Kingdom of Emerond, and which is characterised by the presence of a thick equatorial jungle. Northwest of the jungle is the Green Coast, an expanse of fertile plains that faces onto the western Sea of Dread and that is inhabited by the Milenians' descendents. The region of steppes and flat valleys in the hinterlands behind the Green and Jungle Coasts is the aforementioned Meghala Kimata; it is home to tribes of nomadic humans and rakasta and many Milenian city-states that survived their empire's collapse. West of the Meghala Kimata is Addakia, an inaccessible area known for its humanoid populated mountains, its lowland kingdoms of tribes of savage lizardmen, and the Addakian Sound, a gulf that divides eastern Davania from western Davania. Moving south, the Meghales Amosses desert splits eastern Davania into two; the humanoids and lizardmen tribes that inhabit it prevent any attempt to travel through the desert. The Meghales Amosses ends in the Lower Arypt, a desert basin divided by High Arypt (the northern part, which faces onto the Sea of Steam and bordered to the north by the Jungle Coast) by a strip of steep, broken hills. The Vulture Peninsula (south of Low Arypt) faces onto Green Bay, which takes its name from the Green River that empties into the gulf. The river begins in imposing Ice Peaks, Davania's highest mountain range that dominates the entire southern region (Vulcania), with its numerous, active volcanoes. Vulcania is home to the ice gnomes, survivors of the Blackmoorian cataclysm, many humanoids, and the mysterious N'djatwa, a half-ogre half-elf race that dominate the coast and southern mountains that face onto Green Bay.

The western part of Davania begins with the Izonda region to the north, a fertile, hilly land that faces the Izondian Deep. It is bordered by the Addakian Sound to the east and the Izondan Desert to the south, a vast expanse of rocks and scorching sand that prevents communication with the southern regions. To the south of the Addakian Sound, between Eastern and Western Davania, and between the Brasol Range and the Izondan Desert is Brasol, a fertile, prosperous region that house the descendents of the Varelyans and Milenians. To the west of Brasol stretches the Pelatan plain, mainly inhabited by tribes of both nomadic and settled Neathar, among which is the Amazon matriarchy. The Pelatan plain ends, to the south, in the hilly plateaus that eventually become the Ice Peaks.

## ADDAKIA

<i>Yagrai</i>	Humanoids, obstinacy and tenacity, death and necromancy
<i>Lizard King (Demogorgon)</i>	Reptiles and lizardmen, destruction, necromancy, corruption
<i>Jammudaru</i>	Vengeance, violence, torture, fear
<i>Ka</i>	Rakasta, protection of life, prosperity, healing, magic, knowledge, wisdom

### Notes:

1. Addakia is a mostly mountainous region to the west of the Meghala Kimata and the Hinterlands. It faces north to the Sea of Dread and west to the Addakian Sound, which divides it from western Davania and Izonda. Along its northernmost coast is the so-called Amalur Lowlands, an area of marshes and swamps populated by tribes of fierce lizardmen that have enslaved the local troglodytes and fervently worship the Lizard King (Demogorgon). To the south stretch the Addakian Mountains, the abode of fierce humanoid tribes that arrived in Davania from the Serpent Peninsula when a number of tribes, after fighting Wogar's loyal tribes, abandoned their migration and headed south passing through the peninsula, until they arrived on the Davanian coast. Centuries later they were driven from the Milenian Empire, and settled in the Addakian Mountains and the desert of the Meghales Amosses.
2. The term Addakia was coined by the Milenians, and derives from the name of the most powerful humanoid tribe that were driven from the Green Coast by the arrival of the Milenians, and were forced to shelter on the mountains of the interior. These humanoids are mainly goblins and hobgoblins worshippers of Yagrai, which live in cavern complexes among the mountains, and clans of orcs and hill giants that worship Jammudaru.
3. On the eastern coast of the Addakian Sound and on the lower slopes of the Addakian Mountains live tribes of courageous Simbasta rakasta, who compete with the humanoids and lizardkin for territory and the more fertile areas. Once allies of the Milenians, these simbasta live apart from the rest of the rakasta tribes of eastern Davania, and among them the veneration of Ka, patron of the rakasta and creator of the universe, is popular.

## ARYPT

<i>Ka</i>	Rakasta, protection of life, prosperity, healing, magic, knowledge, wisdom
<i>Ninfangle</i>	Rakasta, bravery, adventure, travel, battle, hunting
<i>Bastet</i>	Rakasta, felines, capriciousness, instinct, vitality, fortune, fertility, wealth
<i>Vanya</i>	Victory, war, conquest, pride, honour, strength

### Notes:

1. Arypt is an extremely vast area that faces onto the Sea of Steam to the east, touching the Jungle Coast to the north, the Ice Peaks to the south and the Meghales Amosses to the west. It is commonly divided into High Arypt and Lower Arypt, which are divided by the arid Aryptian Basin. High Arypt was once home to the powerful Katapec kingdom (a mixed Neathar-Oltec race that lived in the region from 2000 BC), which ended in ruins when Atzanteotl and

Bachraeus's cults provoked a strong, internal dispute and a bloody civil war. It is inhabited by several tribes of tabi and pardasta rakasta, which protect some of their ancient allies' secrets in the mysterious and imposing crystal pyramids hidden in the jungle and more luxuriant hills. Lower Arypt was a fertile plain ruled by the Varellya Empire; it was burnt by the demon that Prince Abatu summoned to overthrow his brother and win the civil war. The demon later devastated Varellya and cursed its survivors by transforming them into nagpa. It is now a desert region mainly inhabited by Simbasta rakasta, who have also settled in the coastal savannah that faces onto the Gulf of Mar, and by groups of nomadic nagpa that search the region for a cure to their condition and the secret knowledge that was lost with the fall of Varellya.

2. Among all the races that inhabit Arypt, only the rakasta (both pardasta and simbasta) live in cities and fortified villages both in the forests and along the coast. They have an ancient civilisation, with many traditions and knowledge taken from the vanished kingdoms of Arypt and Varellya, and although they aren't formally allied, all the rakasta cities and villages communicate via a network of messengers that carry monthly news from one region of Arypt to another. All the rakasta worship the great father Ka and the valiant Ninfangle, and over recent centuries they have added the cult of Bastet, nicknamed the Lost Mother to the two traditional rakasta Immortals.
3. On the coast, facing the Gulf of Mar is a fortress of the Heldannic Knights known as Vanya's Rest (see *Dragon* 156). It was built on the site where some of the Order's explorers discovered their holiest relic, the Star of Vanya. Taken by the Order's priests and a maniple of brave, potent warriors, Vanya's Rest receives constant reinforcements and aid from the Heldannic Territories via the flying ships that are created and maintained due to the Star of Vanya's miraculous powers (the artefact cannot be removed from its current position and so it is constantly guarded by the Heldannic Knights).

## BRASOL

<i>Finidel</i>	Brasolia, family, patriotism, hope, justice
<i>Brindorhin</i>	Hin, patriotism, security, family, abundance, prosperity
<i>Raith</i>	Just vengeance, honour, order, truth
<i>Ixion</i>	Light, sun, fire, strength, war, knowledge, preserve order
<i>Valerias</i>	Love, passion, desire, arts, beauty, protection, charity
<i>Ordana</i>	Protection of forests and sylvan races, nature, fertility
<i>Paarkum</i>	Order, justice, virtue, fidelity, loyalty, sincerity
<i>Viuden (Odin)</i>	Good government, authority, sky, storms, winds, guile, knowledge, wisdom
<i>Ninfangle</i>	Rakasta, bravery, adventure, travel, battle, hunting
<i>Varellya (Vanya)</i>	Victory, war, conquest, pride, honour, strength
<i>Karaash</i>	Humanoids, war, victory, conquest, tactics, strength
<i>The Shaper</i>	Peace, charity, equality, justice, tolerance, combat disorder, protect the weak

### Notes:

1. The region of Brasol is squeezed between the Kenathon River to the northeast, the Ice Peaks to the south, the Addakian Sound to the north and the Brasol Range to the west. It is inhabited mostly by humans of Neathar descent that live grouped together in villages and some nomadic clans that wander the plains with their herds and flocks. The other race that shares the Brasolian valley is the hin, who originate from the area and were once its only rulers. Some of them were later (1500 BC) forced to emigrate, while those that remained ended up living near to the mountains following the human and humanoid invasions (1500 and 900 BC). The lynxmen rakastas are Brasol's third most numerous race, settled on the mountains, and in the mountain passes that humans and hin find most difficult to reach. These areas are, therefore, solely ruled by the lynxmen and the few humanoid tribes that compete with them for the territory.
2. Brasolia is a state founded by the hero Finidel and inhabited by the Neathar that lived in the Aryptian Basin around the year 1000 BC, migrated southwards over the preceding millennium in several waves. Some of these Neathar would later travel across Brasol and reach Pelatan in 800 BC. The foundation of Brasolia was after this last migration, and dates back to the V century BC, when Finidel united the Neathar clans and the hin survivors, freeing the Brasolian hills and valleys from the green dragons that had settled there over three centuries ago. After building the capital Five Hills in the centre of Brasol, he named the new kingdom Brasolia, in acknowledgement of the old hin kingdom on which it was founded, and due to Brindorhin's support, he was able to become an Immortal. Brasolia isn't all of Brasol's flat regions, but all the hin and most of the human population live in Brasolia and worship, as well as Finidel and Brindorhin: Raith (a local hero – patron of just vengeance and truth), Ordana (whose cult dates back to the ancient hin faith), Ixion and Valerias (patrons of love, good, beauty, and the arts), Paarkum (Varellyan patron of virtue, order, and justice), and the Shaper (a benevolent, peaceful Immortal who only entered the Brasolian pantheon a few centuries ago, by the intercession of the clerics of Paarkum who made his missionaries welcome). The rest of the humans that live in Brasol venerate Ixion and Valerias (whose faiths are well-rooted in these Neathar tribes), Viuden

(Odin, elemental Neathar Immortal, guardian of nomads and shepherds), and Varellya (Vanya, patroness of victory and war – followed by the more belligerent Brasolians and a heritage of their contact with the old Varellyan Empire).

3. Ninfangle has numerous followers among the lynxmen rakasta that live scattered throughout the Brasol Range, while Karaash is honoured by all those humanoids that live in the mountains surrounding Brasol.

## EMEROND

<i>Mother Forest (Ordana)</i>	Protection of forests and sylvan races, nature, fertility
<i>Mother Nature (Djaea)</i>	Survival of the world and of living races, natural balance, respect of life, druidism
<i>Father Sun (Ixion)</i>	Light, sun, fire, strength, war, knowledge, preserving the balance and order

### Notes:

1. The Emerondians are green-skinned alien humanoids with a metabolism extremely similar to that of plants, simply requiring the sun's light and a series of salty liquids for survival. They settled (sometime in the past) in the Davanian tropical forests, a little to the south-west of the current Davanian Hinterlands, after being stranded on Mystara with their flying ships following the explosion of their native planet. Here they established their new homeland, and succeeded to acclimatise to such a point by creating a sort of empathic and symbiotic bond with the forest. Their technology is so advanced that it allows them to create living buildings, giant domesticated insects, and hidden cities in the undergrowth.
2. The Emerondians are an extremely shy and equally religious people: they venerate the forest as an Immortal and the elemental forces as their ancestors. According to Emerondian myth, Father Sun joined with Mother Nature at the dawn of time, giving light to their daughter Forest, who later became the mother of the sylvan races, parent and guardian of the Emerondians, elevated above the other races due to their intelligence and obedience. The Emerondians felt that they had a divine task to protect the kingdom that Mother Forest had given them, and all the life (animals and plants) that lives there, and to teach all those that venture into their territory to respect the laws of nature. Because of this the Emerondian priests are all druids in the service of Ordana (who responds to their prayers and is considered their most important Immortal), Djaea (patroness of life and the natural balance), or Ixion (patron of light and strength, and associated with war in the rare cases in which the Emerondians are forced to fight, an activity they usually consider too animalistic and barbaric).

## ICE PEAKS AND LOST VALLEY

<i>Hel</i>	Darkness and cold energy, corruption, death, reincarnation
<i>Terra / Yamag</i>	Creation and protection of life forms, balance of the life cycle, birth, prosperity, fertility
<i>Idris</i>	Domination, vengeance, intrigue, magic
<i>The Shaper</i>	Peace, equality, justice, combat disorder
<i>Garl Glittergold (Garal)</i>	Gnomes, inventors and thinkers, science and mechanics, crafts
<i>The Celestial Traveller (Sinbad)</i>	Travel, exploration, adventure, courage, overcome borders
<i>Ka</i>	Wisdom, protection, healing, prosperity, knowledge, magic, rakasta, stone giants
<i>Zalaj</i>	Cloud and mountain giants, knowledge, magic, strength
<i>Great One</i>	Dragons and lizardkin, creation, justice, knowledge, magic

### Notes:

1. The Ice Peaks is the highest mountain range of Davania, and stretches from Pelatan to the Vulture Peninsula, bordering Brasol to the north with and Vulcania to the south. The region is inhabited mostly by all of monster, like humanoids (mostly orcs and ogres), giants of all types, draconic clans that periodically fight each other, snow apes, and sasquatch that live in small family groups. East of the Ice Peaks, separated from them by the narrow Emerald Valley (the valley through which the Green River flows), is the Diamond Ring, a mountain range that surrounds the Lost Valley on three sides. The Lost Valley, whose only exit is a rocky coast opening on the Green Bay to the north, is so-called as it is guarded by terrific, monstrous creatures, which kill anyone that tries to enter the valley and often leave it to raid the N'djatwa communities (which have fortified the passes around the valley because of this). As well as dinosaurs, dragons, and unidentified bestial beings, there are also the legendary mek, magically animated mechanical creatures that have protected their creators' tomb (within the valley) for centuries, which blindly follow their last order.
2. The wooded area near Green Bay and south of the Vulture Peninsula is the most populated area. It (along with southern Low Arypt) was once the homeland of the native Davanian elves, among which are the Hatwa clan (who were later mixed with the Nunjar ogres to give birth to the N'djatwa) and the Belcadiz clan (that migrated northwards along with the second expedition that left Grunland in 2500 BC). Green Bay is now ruled by the N'djatwa, half-elf half-ogres who established a rather prosperous and powerful kingdom (N'Djatwaland) there. They live in both tree houses based on the ancient elven style, and in massive cyclopean fortresses built on the highest points and in the strategic passes including the capital, M'Banyka), and follow a warped version of the ancient elven faith – the Way of

the Forest. Indeed, they are considered the rulers and guardians of their environment, and as such they hunt the weaker animals for food, and protect the younger, stronger animals to help the local fauna prosper and raise young. Extending the term “game” to any species living in N’Djatwaland, the N’djatwa don’t have any scruples in hunting and enslaving the other human and humanoid races, besides the animals, taking care, however, to kill only the weakest members (who become food for the N’djatwa), and enslaving the healthiest and youngest. The N’djatwa respect their slaves as a precious resource, and assigned them the more menial jobs (cultivating the harsher lands, gather the fruits of the forest, fishing, and guarding the herds). The slaves (mostly gnomes, along with rakasta, humanoids, and humans) are subject to N’djatwa rule and always try to remain efficient in hope of being able to escape before being judged too old and become food for their jailers. The N’djatwa traded with Varelyya before its fall, and have recently renewed contact with distant Cestia, after the island’s Androkian inhabitants had repulsed and virtually exterminated their colony about one thousand years earlier (*Dragon* 158).

3. The N’djatwa are dutiful followers of Idris and Hel, thanks to their intercession they were able to survive the extinction by uniting the two races to which they initially belonged (Hatwa elves and Nunjar ogres) around VII century BC. Hel is seen as the patroness of darkness and cold, the one who presides over the cycle of death and reincarnation that governs creation, but she doesn’t necessarily have an evil reputation: she covers the role of the dark side present in everything, which needs to be embraced and fulfilled to be complete, according to the N’djatwa philosophy. Idris is the patroness of the N’djatwa nation, the one who enabled the fusion by creating the Altar of the Stars (holy relic guarded in M’Banyka) and guided the N’djatwa’s progress and domination of the area. She is an Immortalised heroine, the N’djatwa version of Ilsundal, patroness of deceit as a weapon to crush enemies and gain supremacy. She is associated with vengeance, domination, and magical experiments. However, despite the two entropic Immortals’ influence, the N’djatwa society isn’t excessively chaotic or evil, as it is extremely taken with the naturalist and neutral philosophy of the elves, even though they’ve partly distorted it. The N’djatwa also worship Yamag (Terra), who, according to the N’djatwa mythos, is part of the so-called Sphere of the Balance. Yamag (ancient heritage of the Brunian humanoid cult brought by the Nunjar ogres) embodies the universe’s positive and vital side, the creator, and parent force that opposes the death and devastation brought by Hel. Yamag is the nature that gives fertility, the cosmos’s balancing power, and is considered guardian of the N’djatwa and their lifestyle, as much as Idris and Hel. In the last five centuries, to the cult of Yamag has been joined by the Shaper’s, lord of peace, harmony, and justice, imported from Vulcania by orcish priests on missions of evangelisation and modified by the N’djatwa to their own ends. The N’djatwa view the Shaper as Yamag’s son, like Idris is Hel’s daughter, and all are gathered in the philosophy of opposites that is the basis of the Sphere of the Balance.
4. On the Ring of Diamonds mountains are many ice gnome settlements. These gnomes were created by Garal, in 2900 BC, to be able to live in the extreme climatic conditions of that region of Davania. They are all followers of Garl Glittergold, even if they are divided between two factions. The Progressives (who seek to exploit the fire and gas spouting from the natural geysers as a resource and as a source of power for their inventions) and the Conservatives (who prefer not to use the energy of fire – highly unstable and harmful, but that of the sun – easier to deal with and less dangerous, even if rarer in these latitudes). The gnomish settlements stretch to the N’djatwa ruled southern region and due to this are often attacked and enslaved when the N’djatwa manage to storm their villages (usually carved in the mountain walls). As such, Garal’s cult is present in N’Djatwaland, imported by the enslaved gnomes and willingly adopted by their lords.
5. Among the Ice Peaks’ highest summits, it is rumoured, is a great nation populated by various giant species, led by a ruling caste of mountain giants. They are feared by the N’djatwa, and worship the cults of Zalaj (supreme patron) and Ka.
6. There are some clerics of the Celestial Traveller (Sinbad), the patron of travel, adventure, and exploration, among the N’djatwa. However, as the Traveller’s philosophy prohibits the building of temples and having stationary homes, his priests constantly travel between the N’djatwa settlements and accompany the caravans and the expeditions headed northwards. His sacred sites are simple milestones placed along roads or at the centre of crossroads.
7. The cult of Hel is popular with creatures of cold and darkness, particularly the frost giants, snow apes and the humanoid tribes that survive among the grottos and mountains that never abandoned the ancient traditions of Urzud. Various tribes of sasquatch instead worship Terra, while Ka enjoys a following among the region’s few clans of stone giants and rakasta (snow pardasta). Finally, the Great One is worshipped by the region’s draconic creatures and lizardkin.

## IZONDA

<i>Korotiku</i>	Liberty, wisdom, guile, cleverness, subterfuge, cheating, jokes, fun, clear thinking
<i>Pyro (Ixion)</i>	Sun, fire, war, knowledge, strength, preserve order
<i>Ashanti (Valerias)</i>	Love, passion, desire, beauty, arts, charity, fertility
<i>Father Ocean (Protius)</i>	Oceans and marine creatures, water, capriciousness, travel
<i>Mother Nature (Djaea)</i>	Survival, natural balance, respect of life, druidism
<i>The Dark Lady/Lizard King (Demogorgon)</i>	Reptiles, lizardmen, necromancy, destruction, corruption
<i>Oruguz (Orcus)</i>	Humanoids, violent death, sadism, mass destruction, undead, cannibalism
<i>Ka</i>	Rakasta, protection of life, wisdom, healing, prosperity, knowledge, magic
<i>Ninfangle</i>	Rakasta, travel, adventure, bravery, battle, hunting
<i>Ilsundal</i>	Protection of elves and nature, wisdom, knowledge, magic, tradition, serenity and peace
<i>Thendara (Ordana)</i>	Nature, fertility, protection of forests and sylvan races
<i>Wogar</i>	Goblin, war and military tactics, conquest, ferocity, predators

### Notes:

1. The region known as Izonda (literally “our salvation” in ancient Tanagoro) comprises all of north-western Davania. It is bordered to the north by the Izondian Deep, to the west by the Far End Ocean, to the east by the Addakian Sound, and to the south by Pelatan and Brasol. Northern Izonda is a flat, fertile region inhabited by humans, humanoids, elves, rakastas, and by some lizardmen in the more swampy coastal areas. In the north-east, close to the Addakian Sound, rises an imposing mountain range called Izondan Wall, in which live for the most part humanoids. Central and southern Izonda is known as the Izondan Desert, a vast desert area that isolates the northern community from the rest of the continent. It is inhabited by lizardkin (who are thought to be the real natives of Izonda) and a particular race of humanoids. The most populous area is naturally the north, in which live the Izondans, descendents of the first Tanagoro colonists who settled there in 2000 BC. They migrated from the island between the Arm of the Immortals and Davania due to the violent natural phenomena that led to a scarcity of resources. Later, they were joined by the region’s other inhabitants: first the humanoids in 1000 BC, and later the Ocelasta rakasta in about the VI century BC, fleeing from the Arm of the Immortals to escape the persecution of Atzanteotl’s rakasta followers and in search of a cure for their curse. The Izondan Desert is quite populated despite its size, as both the lizardkin (including the infamous sis’tthik), and the humanoids have adapted to the diurnal life in the surface’s torrid heat and in the underground caverns during the cold nights. The desert’s humanoids and lizardmen compete for resources, but both commonly prey on the human (Izondan and Pelatan) settlements.
2. The Izondans worship the ancient Tanagoro pantheon (Korotiku, Pyro, Ashanti and Father Ocean), and number druids and priests of a spiritualist faith that see Mother Nature (Djaea) as the dispenser of life and balance in creation. The Izondans also include many elves (mostly disciples of Ilsundal or Ordana), descendents of a clan that remained on Davania when Ilsundal sailed to Brun, and groups of orcs that have either integrated into the human communities or preferred isolation in their well fortified enclaves. The Izondans are divided into more or less extended tribes, some of which have formed real nations led by monarchs or spiritual leaders that seek to extend their own hegemony over their neighbours. None of these nations has ever managed to completely control the hinterlands or the Izondan coast, and many of them have been at war for generations because of ancient disputes and tribal feuds.
3. All the lizardmen adore Demogorgon, although those that live in the swamps to the north know her as the Lizard King, while those of the Izondan Desert called her the Black Lady. The lizardkin are (probably) descended from the ancient carnifex or of their servants, who in ages past dwelt in this area of Davania, before the devastation of the Great Rain of Fire transformed it into a desert.
4. Oruguz (Orcus) is the patron of the desert humanoids – a quite unique race. When these humanoids arrived from the Western Orclands around 1000 BC, they were orcs, ogres and bugbears inspired by priests of Oruguz to complete the dangerous, southwards journey from the Arm of the Immortals. Over the course of a century, however, Orcus united these tribes and created a powerful humanoid kingdom that swept away its rivals. After acquiring an ancient carnifex artefact that was jealously guarded by the lizardmen the humanoids used it in a ceremony designed to eradicate their enemies. Unfortunately, the ritual didn’t go as expected and decimated the humanoids transforming the survivors into a horrible mixed race, which exhibits orc, bugbear and ogre traits (see the caption “Humanoid mixed race BC 900” in the maps of the *Hollow World* box set). Currently the orguzi are fighting the lizardkin for possession of some sacred caverns beneath the desert, as Orcus wishes to remove his eternal rival Demogorgon from the region.
5. All the Ocelasta that live in Izonda worship Ninfangle (especially the nomads) and, especially, Ka, the father and guardian of their race, and who saved them from Atzanteotl’s tyranny and who promised them liberation and salvation.

- Wogar only has worshippers among the humanoids (mostly goblin and hobgoblin) that infest the Izondan Wall, the eastern mountain chain.
- There are also several itinerant clerics of the **Shaper** in the Izondan region, although none have yet built church or recruited a sufficient number of followers to constitute an important presence in the area.

## JUNGLE COAST

<i>Karaash</i>	Humanoids, war, victory, conquest, tactics, strength
<i>Atzanteotl</i>	Deceit, betrayal, vengeance, destruction, corruption
<i>Kalaktatla (Ka)</i>	Protection of life, prosperity, healing, magic, knowledge, wisdom
<i>Bachraeus</i>	Hate, vengeance, betrayal, serpents, poison
<i>The Dark Lady (Demogorgon)</i>	Lizardmen, corruption, necromancy, witchcraft, disease
<i>Wei Long (Great One)</i>	Dragons and lizardkin, creation, justice, knowledge, magic
<i>Guan Zi–You (Korotiku)</i>	Liberty, wisdom, guile, cleverness, jokes and fun, subterfuge, clear thought, spiders
<i>Chai Shi Hui (Loup)</i>	Ferocity, survival of the strongest, night, death, loyalty to clan
<i>Kirranjo</i>	Minotaurs, greed, violence, fury, cruelty, massacre

### Notes:

- This region comprises the north-eastern coast of Davania (along with Emerond and the Davanian Hinterlands) up to High Arypt, and is mostly equatorial jungle and subtropical forests. Within its interior live all types of creature, but from the canonical sources (PWA2–3) we know that in particular humanoids, humans and dragons dwell there.
- The Bogdashkan are jungle orcs that live in the northernmost region, near the Hinterlands. They frequently threaten both the Thratians and the Thyatians with their raids, although they avoid the Emerondians, due to the latter's tremendous natural powers. The Bogdashkan are the descendents of the humanoids who migrated to Davania and decided to explore the Meghala Kimata. After repeatedly clashing with the rakasta that lived there, they finally settled in the Jungle Coast. They are split into various tribes that constantly fight each other (prevents this orcish horde from uniting and becoming a greater threat to their neighbours), but all worship the sect of Karaash.
- The Manacapuru are copper-skinned humans that live in a city from which they took their name, situated within the jungle between the lands of the Bogdashkan and those of the Yasuko. They have a more advanced culture than their neighbours, are masters in the use of poisons, and worship serpentoid Immortals. They are the descendents of the Oltec tribes of High Arypt that emigrated northwards centuries ago, possibly because of their kingdom's fall or their imposed. They ended up settling in this isolated part of the jungle and built their own city (with typical Oltec architecture and a pyramidal temple at the centre). They alternate trade and border wars with the neighbouring tribes, and have enslaved a large part of the survivors of the fallen Milenian Empire that still live in the Jungle Coast. They worship Atzanteotl and Kalaktatla, both linked to the serpent in the Oltecs myths of the Hollow World, in a dualistic contrast between Law and Chaos. As they are renowned for their poison use (a not completely legal action), it is likely that Atzanteotl's priests influence is dominant in Manacapuru society.
- Ka is also worshipped by the many pardasta rakasta tribes that live in the Jungle Coast's southern area, near the border with High Arypt.
- The Yasuko are humans with typical Ochalese features, members of an expedition that left Ochalea to colonise the nearby Jungle Coast and abandoned to its fate some centuries ago, possibly believed exterminated. The Yasuko, who due to their extremely united tribal structure are considered no longer Ochalese, share with Bogdashkan and Manacapuru a Bronze and Iron Ages technology, and venerate some of the Celestial Court's Immortals who have major significance for them, without holding to the mystic traditions followed in Ochalea. In particular, they could honour Wei Long (Great One), lord of the dragons and reptiles that abound in the area; Guan Zi–You (Korotiku), associated with the spiders (another very common species) and the freedom which the Yasuko hold particularly dear; and Chai Shi Hui (Loup), the "Ravenous beast that devours", symbol of the indomitable spirit and aggressiveness which the Yasuko are so proud of.
- According to the journals of Prince Haldemar, in the Jungle Coast there are tribes of tattooed humans (masters in poison use) that live to the north of the Manacapuru and to the south of the Yasuko, with a remarkable fondness for snakes. They are descendents of the ancient Milenians who retained their freedom, and follow Bachraeus, the lord of snakes and poison according to Milenian mythology. They fight their neighbouring tribes (Manacapuru, Yasuko and Bogdashkan) for control of territory and the acquisition of slaves. They number amongst their ranks some medusas, the earthly representatives of Bachraeus's will.
- The Jungle Coast is famous for its tribes of lizardkin and green dragons since time immemorial. The lizardkin are perhaps the descendents of the ancient carnifex and most worship the Black Lady (Demogorgon), although a few lizardmen tribes and most dragons are faithful to the Great One. The other dragons are renegades and follow the Black Lady, and are backed by the lizardmen who they rule over like true Immortals.

8. Among the most dangerous (although less numerous) of the Jungle Coast's inhabitants are tribes of minotaurs. They were once slaves of the Milenians and have, for centuries, roamed free through the forests and the plains of the Meghala Kimata bringing disorder and raiding each community, without distinction of race. They all follow Kiranjo and live in crude, spartan villages within the hidden grottos on the slopes of the jungle-covered hills.
9. Finally, there are numerous tabi (small, extremely intelligent, winged apes) that live in the jungle, even though they aren't organised into proper tribes – just enlarged families. They are frequently nomadic and don't possess a unified cult or pay any particular attention to religious questions. They are both explorers and lovers of curiosity and mystery.

## MEGHALA KIMATA

<i>Ixion</i>	Light, sun, fire, strength, war, heroism, knowledge, banish the darkness, oppose entropy and evil, preserving the balance and the universal order
<i>Asterius</i>	Trade, wealth, travel, guile, social climbing, merchants, thieves
<i>Valerias</i>	Love, passion, desire, fertility, beauty, arts, protection
<i>Khoronus</i>	Knowledge, history, philosophy, good government, patience, diplomacy
<i>Pater (Kagyar)</i>	Crafts, metallurgy, sculpture, construction, miners
<i>Protius</i>	Oceans and marine creatures, water, capriciousness, travel
<i>Tyche</i>	Luck (good or bad), chance, destiny, risk and hazard
<i>Tiresias</i>	Visions of the future, dreams, poetry and music, astrology, prophecy, legends, magic
<i>Faunus</i>	Sylvan races, animals, sensuality, instincts, drunkenness, revelry, hedonism, poetry and music
<i>Ninfangle</i>	Rakasta, bravery, adventure, travel, battle, hunting
<i>Ka</i>	Rakasta, protection of life, wisdom, healing, prosperity, knowledge, magic
<i>Korotiku</i>	Wisdom, guile, cleverness, liberty, clear thinking, jokes and fun, cheating and subterfuge
<i>Bozdogan (Loki)</i>	Guile, deceit, intrigue, lies
<i>Ilneval (Karaash)</i>	War, victory, conquest, tactics, strength, humanoids
<i>Varellya (Vanya)</i>	Victory, war, conquest, pride, honour, strength
<i>Chiron</i>	Centaur, sylvan races, arts, healing, knowledge, wisdom

### Notes:

1. Kastelios, Mivosia, Ilioloosti (the most populous), Cyclonia, Hrissopolis, Kalavronti and Polakatsikes are city-states of the Meghala Kimata plain. They are the remains of the ancient Milenian Empire that once dominated the central-northern region of Davania, and which vanished during the III century AC due to the collapse of its government and the army. Each is mainly inhabited by descendents of the Milenians, although some border communities (particularly Cyclonia and Hrissopolis) also have important communities of Davanian hin and elves, who remained behind during the migrations that took them to Brun. Each city has a temple dedicated to an ancient Milenian Immortal – its local patron:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Cyclonia: Pater (Kagyar)</li> <li>❖ Hrissopolis: Tiresias</li> <li>❖ Ilioloosti: Asterius</li> <li>❖ Kalavronti: Valerias</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Kastelios: Protius</li> <li>❖ Mivosia: Khoronus</li> <li>❖ Polakatsikes: Ixion</li> </ul>
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Cults of other Milenian Immortals are popular in all the city-states, where there is usually a temple (called Pantheon) where statues that represent the Immortals and where altars are erected dedicated to individual Milenian Immortals, such as Tyche (patroness of luck and fate) and Faunus (patron of forests, instinct, and arts).

2. Taksidhi was originally a Tanagoro settlement established by inhabitants from the Serpent Peninsula. It was later conquered by the Milenians who renamed it Telos Taksidhi, and it marked the vast Milenian Empire's western border. When Milenia began to fall, Telos Taksidhi was the first to declare its independence before the central government could remedy the secession. The city is a crucible of mixed races, mainly half-blood Tanagoro and Milenians called Taksidhians. The two ethnic groups set aside their former rivalry and decided to collaborate for their mutual survival. They managed to transform the city into a prosperous, fortified settlement on the border with the Lowlands of Amalur. The cults of Ixion, Korotiku and Valerias receive great tributes from the citizens, and are the trinity that watches over the Taksidhians' security and prosperity.
3. Garganin is a former Hulean colony on the Davanian coast that lost contact with its motherland centuries ago. The city (one of the region's most important four) is inhabited by Huleans, families of caracasta rakasta, and enslaved humanoids. They worship some typically Hulean Immortals: Bozdogan (Loki), Bath (Tyche), Ilneval (Karaash) and Inuus (Faunus).
4. Meghala Kimata is inhabited by many nomadic human and rakasta (the majority, split between servasta and fast runner) tribes. The rakasta jointly worship Ninfangle, patron of the ancient rakasta values (hunting, nomadism,

honour, courage) and Ka the Guardian (as the creator and the patron of wisdom). The humans are descended from the Milenians, Varellyans and their Neathar slaves, and are devotees of Varellya (Vanya), Ixion and Tiresias.

- Centaur tribes live in Meghala Kimata and defend their hunting grounds from rakasta and human incursions. These centaurs, once members of the Milenian Empire, have an extremely sophisticated culture and are devoted to the cults of Ixion, their spiritual father, and Chiron, the wisest centaur.

### MEGHALES AMOSSES

<i>Karaash</i>	Humanoids, war, victory, conquest, tactics, strength
<i>Yagrai</i>	Humanoids, obstinacy and tenacity, death and necromancy
<i>Lizard King (Demogorgon)</i>	Lizardmen, corruption, necromancy, witchcraft, disease
<i>Bachraeus</i>	Hate, vengeance, betrayal, serpents, poison
<i>Kiranjo</i>	Minotaurs, greed, violence, fury, cruelty, massacre
<i>Rathanos</i>	Fire, energy, power, male supremacy, pride
<i>Ixion</i>	Light, sun, strength, knowledge, strength, balance, oppose evil

#### Notes:

- The Meghales Amosses is a desert south of the Meghala Kimata that occupies nearly a third of Davanian's entire eastern region. It is inhabited by tribes of ferocious orcs, hobgoblins and ogres (followers of Karaash and Yagrai), dangerous sis'thik (followers of Demogorgon), tribes of medusas and lizardmen (followers of Bachraeus), clans of seasoned minotaurs (followers of Kiranjo), and the descendents of the Oltecs and Neathars who survived the collapse of their respective civilisations. These humans are divided between followers of Rathanos (especially Oltecs), Bachraeus (Milenians) and Ixion (both ethnic groups). Some of these races live underground in hidden cave complexes to shelter from the desert's daytime heat and night time cold. In particular, a sect of Bachraeus's followers (humans, medusas and lizardmen) has moved underground, and it is in constant conflict with Kiranjo's minotaur followers and Yagrai's goblinoid followers.

### PELATAN

<i>Diulanna</i>	Courage, strength of will, perseverance, hunting, liberty
<i>Mother Earth (Terra)</i>	Balance of the life cycle, birth, prosperity and fertility, nature, earth, shepherds and farmers, protection of all life forms
<i>Tarastia</i>	Law, order, truth, justice and just vengeance
<i>Valerias</i>	Love, passion, desire, fertility, protection, charity, arts
<i>Madarua</i>	Women warriors, courage, natural cycle, fertility
<i>Varellya (Vanya)</i>	Victory, war, conquest, pride, honour, strength
<i>Karaash</i>	Humanoids, war, victory, conquest, tactics, strength
<i>Great One</i>	Dragons and lizardkin, creation, justice, knowledge, magic

#### Notes:

- Pelatan is a predominantly flat region in south-western Davania. Pelatan borders Izonda to the north, Brasol to the east, Vulcania to the south-east, and the Far End Ocean bathes its western shores. Pelatan is mainly inhabited by the human descendents of the many Neathar tribes that arrived in the region in 800 BC from Brasol, and by some humanoid and draconic creatures. The latter mainly claim a mountainous area by the Vulcania and Brasol borders. Pelatan is a nation divided into matriarchal tribes (i.e. ruled by Queens and in which the line of descent is down the female side) that moved there from Brasol many centuries ago because of the open conflict with the very aggressive, patriarchal tribes that live there. Led by priestesses of Diulanna, the Pelatans' ancestors struggled across the Brasol Range and finally saw the great green expanses of their new country open up before them, which they named Pelatan ("Our Land" in their language). Diulanna's priestesses hold the balance of power in their hands creating a true matriarchy, in which a man's role is subordinate to a woman's decision, who hold the positions of power and fight alongside the men, according to Diulanna's dogma (which the male followers have learned to accept and respect). Each tribe has its own Queen who inherits her throne from her mother. Each year all the Queens gather in the Sacred Circle of Diulanna (a megalithic formation on the mountain on the west coast, called the Shield of Pelatan) to thank their Immortal and seal political and trade treaties between the various tribes. The Pelatans survive thanks to their agricultural products and barter economy. The Pelatan Amazons are famous in Izonda and Brasol for their bravery and natural cavalry skills. They are a select group of holy warriors devoted to Diulanna that comprise a sort of intertribal national guard, which patrols the region, keeps down intertribal skirmishes, repulses foreign invaders, drives out and destroys humanoids and dragons, and maintains order. The Amazons are led by the Chosen, who is nominated by common accord by the council of the Queens (during their meeting at the Circle of Diulanna) and whose office is reviewed yearly based on her competence and health. The Chosen has the power to gather the tribes



and lead the warriors in cases of grave, imminent danger, by issuing a call-to-arms via the dispatch of Amazons to all Pelatan regions, and lead them to war until the Queens' council gathers and decides otherwise.

2. The Pelatan's faith revolves around the cults of female Immortals. At the head is Diulanna, the great inspirer of the migration and guardian of the tribes. Diulanna's clerics can be either male or female, but only the priestesses can aspire to the positions of command (village head, Queen or military commander) and every male priest must obey their demands (as long as they're not absurd or oppressive, in which case the cleric must inform his own Queen). Below her is Mother Earth (Terra), the one who creates life and renews the seasons, protect the plants and animals and gives the fruits of the earth to the humans to sustain them. The cult of Madarua (limited to female clergy) is linked to those of Mother Earth and Diulanna. She is, effectively, viewed as the daughter of both Immortals, a figure who unites the ancient matriarchal cult of the woman as a fertility symbol (Mother Earth) to that of the woman as guide and heroine who never surrenders (Diulanna). Tarastia, patroness of justice and righteous wrath, is very valued. She is chiefly worshipped by males who consider her the Immortal of equality and impartiality. Related to her, is the Immortal of love and passion, Valerias, whose frequent orgiastic rites many Pelatans considered too uninhibited. Especially when they aren't performed for reproduction but with the sole aim to induce ecstatic trances in the celebrants, as this tends to corrupt the spirit and lead to madness if it is allowed to. As such, although Valerias's cult is very popular, especially for her role as patroness of female fertility (which forms the basis of Pelatan's matriarchal society), it is watched closely by the Amazons and Queens, who view its practices as potentially dangerous to their stability and order. The final cult of the Pelatan's faith is Varellya's (Vanya), Immortal of war and victory. It is an imported sect that has gained favour with the more belligerent Amazons since the II century BC.
3. The humanoids that live in Pelatan's eastern regions all follow Karaash, while the dragons worship the Great One. Despite the many clerics of the **Shaper** who wander Pelatan they are unable to convert many Pelatans to their belief (mainly because the Shaper is a male Immortal, and despite his peaceful teachings, he is disliked by the Pelatan Queens).

#### THYATIAN HINTERLANDS (FOUR KINGDOMS)

<b>Diulanna</b>	Courage, strength of will, perseverance, hunting, liberty
<i>Mother Nature (Djaea)</i>	Survival of living races, natural balance, respect of life, druidism
<i>Brian (Frey)</i>	Passion, strategy, loyalty, friendship, virility, fertility
<i>Donegal (Thor)</i>	War, battle, fury in battle, honour, bravery
<i>Viuden (Odin)</i>	Good government, authority, sky, storms, winds, guile, knowledge, wisdom
Vanya	Victory, war, conquest, pride, honour, strength
<i>Protius</i>	Oceans and marine creatures, water, capriciousness, travel
<i>Tarastia</i>	Law, order, truth, justice and just vengeance

#### Notes:

1. The Thyatians know this area as the Thyatian Hinterlands, the Davanian Protectorate, or simply as Thratia (as its original inhabitants are the Thratians). The natives call it "the Four Kingdoms", as the Davanian coast was originally divided into four territories, each controlled by one of the major clans that live there.
2. Each Thratian clan worships one particular Immortal as its patron, who they consider the parent of the clan's founder. Donegal is associated with the Wolf clan, Brian with the Horse clan, Viuden with the Raven clan (the only one conquered by the Thyatians) and Diulanna with the Lion clan. Some tribes belonging to the Raven clan, however, (bound to a totem acquired following their arrival in Davania) left the clan when its chiefs decided to surrender to the Thyatians. They now fight a daily guerrilla war to recover the sovereignty of their own territory and drive away the invaders. These tribes (all faithful to Diulanna and associated with the Lion clan) are known as the Rhinoceros, Leopard, and Jackal clans, and have sought to regain their lost freedom and supplant the Raven clan to dominate this region of the Davanian coast.
3. The native Thratians also follow a druidic philosophy, which stems from both the Neathar philosophy of the isle and contacts with the neighbouring and mysterious Emerondians. As such, Mother Nature (Djaea) has followers in all the Thratian tribes, where her druids act as the guardians of the hunting lands, and are treated with the same respect as the priests of Viuden, who function as advisers, prophets and judges.
4. Based on what is said in *Dawn of the Emperors*, many elves live in the northern region of the Jungle Coast along with the Thratians. It is plausible that the majority worship Mother Nature, and some worship Brian (Frey). They are probably the descendents of a group of elves who during their migration along the Rainbow Path left it, either purposely or by accident, and ended in the Jungle Coast. Where they settled among the Thratians and adopted their lifestyle.
5. The fortified city of Raven Scarp was built on the ancient meeting point of the Raven clan – the only clan to be successfully subdued and warped by the Thyatians during their colonization of the Davanian coast. In the Thyatian community, Vanya is worshipped by the majority of the colonists (as many of them are in the military). Protius has an

island temple in the Sea of Dread, and as ocean travel is the only thing that connects Davania to the motherland, as well as a source of food through the fish, the prayers to Protius from seamen and fishermen are not wasted. Tarastia is invoked to bring order and peace to the region which is often the victim of attacks by the unpredictable and resolute Thratian rebels.

## VULCANIA

<b>Garl Glittergold (Garal)</b>	Gnomes, inventors and thinkers, science and mechanics, crafts
<i>Korotiku</i>	Wisdom, guile, subterfuge, liberty, jokes, fun
<i>Pyro (Ixion)</i>	Sun, fire, light, strength, war, knowledge, preserve order
<i>Brandan Earth-mover</i>	Progress inventions, conquest, fire, technomancy, Snarta
<i>Ashanti (Valerias)</i>	Love, passion, fertility, arts
<b>Surt (Zugzul)</b>	Fire, power, conquest, war
<i>Hel</i>	Darkness and cold energy, death, reincarnation
The Shaper	Peace, charity, equality, justice, tolerance, combat disorder, protect the weak
<i>Ordana</i>	Nature, fertility, protection of forests and sylvan races
<i>Paarkum</i>	Order, justice, virtue, fidelity, loyalty, sincerity
<i>Great One</i>	Dragons and lizardkin, creation, justice, knowledge, magic

### Notes:

1. Vulcania is a mountainous land blanketed by great forests in its central and northern regions, and tundra and pack ice in its polar and subpolar regions. It comprises all of southern Davania, and is bordered to the north by the Ice Peaks and with the Sea of Steam (in the east), to the west with Pelatan (marked by the Wall of Ice mountains), while to the south it enters the polar region, sinking into the opening that leads into the Hollow World in the region known as the Pit of Ka, perennially enveloped in the gloom of the Darklands. The gnomes are the most numerous of Vulcania's population, followed by the Tanagoro of the eastern region, fire giants, and humanoids.
2. In 2900 BC, Garal placed many gnomish communities in the region, and these became the ice gnomes, expanding and surviving despite the adverse climate conditions due to their talent and the working technology. The ice gnomes – all followers of Garl Glittergold – are divided into clans which often collaborate. There is a nation of so-called fire gnomes (see point 3), who are much more warlike and expansionist and devotees of Brandan, lord of fire, conquest and progress. The Snartans are at war with the other gnomish communities, some of which – opposed to Snartan imperialism – have stolen the secrets to build the powerful Earthshakers and have built their own to counter the Snartans' on the battlefield.
3. In central-eastern Vulcania is the large Empire of Snarta, an isolationist and warmongering gnomish militocracy ruled by the Supreme Dorfin IV. The Snartan Empire is famous for its military strength, which derives from their numerous Phalanxes of fearless and disciplined warriors, and especially their construction of great self-moving machines called Earthshakers, operated from inside by the gnomes and used as terrible weapons against their enemies. The capital Snartapolis in which the emperor resides was built on one of these machines and is almost impregnable, as it is able to move along and resist any siege. At the start all the Vulcanian gnomes belonged to the same race, the ice gnomes, created by Garal after the Great Rain of Fire (2900 BC) and placed near the Grunlander elves to get hold of the technology. Over the centuries, the gnomes split into clans, and the Snartans' ancestors became great explorers, travelling to Davania's remotest places. In doing so, the Snartan explorers met the Milenians at the height of their empire, and some remained to live in Milenia for a generation. After acquiring knowledge and the Milenians' philosophical notions, the gnomes returned home to spread among their kind a new doctrine, called the Philosophy of Similarity, based on a quest for physical and moral equality as a way to achieve perfection and remove social disparities. Thus, over a century the "hoi gnomoioi" (that is the Similar in the Milenian language, as the initial Snartans were called) movement managed to gain a following among the gnomes, and its exponents united and declared the founding of the Republic of the Similar around the IV century BC. Over the following centuries, it became necessary to replace the deficiency of soldiers due to the continuing war with their neighbours, their extremely belligerent nature, and their constant quest to improve and homogenise the gnomish race caused the Snartans to develop a technology to produce clones, which over the generations removed all the gnomes' physical differences. It was one of these soldiers – General Dorfin – who led the expedition that discovered the ancient Grunland ruins where the gnomes found Blackmoorian knowledge that both enabled them to secretly plan and design the first Earthshaker called Proboscidaemon (the P is still the empire's symbol), and to acquire the fire elemental larvae (that live in volcanoes) that power the colossal machines. Dorfin led his soldiers to their first great victories against the neighbouring gnomes and fire giants. Later, he proclaimed the abolition of the republic and the Old Ones, instituted the Empire of Snarta ("victory" according to the new Snartan gnomish language), and proclaimed himself Emperor Dorfin I around the VI century AC. Now that the Snartans are all physically identical, their next step is the removal of personal identity. The Snartans are followers of Brandan Earthshaker, lord of fire, strength and progress, patron of

science and technology. It was Brandan who revealed to Dorfin the secret of the fire elemental larvae, and was the Proboscidaemon's creator, according to legend. The Snartans continually try to invade the other gnomish communities to capture other gnomes and convert them to the Philosophy of Similarity. However, due to their belligerent nature and constant need for new fire elemental larvae, they are constantly fighting not only the other Vulcanian gnomes, but also the fire giants, who consider the elemental larvae sacred and oppose the expansion of the Snartan imperialists into their territories.

4. In the Vulcanian region are several fire giant clans, all fanatic followers of Surt (Zugzul), that live mostly in the Vulcanian Line, the southernmost mountain range near the pole, and in the easternmost part of the Fire Cape peninsula, because of the fortresses built by the giants where they perpetually burn sacred pyres dedicated to Surt. A Tanagoro colony once existed here (around 1200 BC), but it was conquered by fire giants from the Vulcanian Line around the V century BC. The Tanagoros' descendents are still enslaved by the fire giants and secretly worshipped Korotiku, Immortal of guile and liberty, while waiting for the liberator that will lead them according to an ancient prophecy. The fire giants are the bitter enemies of Vulcania's ice gnomes, and particularly the Snartan Empire that extends into the region's centre, with who they are constantly at war for control of the volcanic areas where the fire elemental larvae, (sacred to the giants) live.
5. The Tanagoro who escaped the conquest of Fire Cape have settled along the Coast of Fire (Vulcania's northern coast). They live in villages hidden within the forest's tangle, always vigil and alert against incursions by both the giants from the south and east, and the N'djatwa from the west. These Tanagoro worship the ancient tribal Tanagoro Immortals, who are Pyro, Immortal of the sun, justice and order, Ashanti, Immortal of life, love and fertility, and Korotiku, the great master of deceit that allows them to survive by using their guile against their enemies great strength and physical presence.
6. The central Vulcanian forests were inhabited by the Evergrun elves escaping the Great Rain of Fire who had founded the nation of Grunland there. Following the severe earthquakes, the continuous eruptions, and the progressive malfunctions of Blackmoorian technology, the area became dangerous and many elves followed Ilsundal northwards, in search of a safer land. Those that remained very quickly became isolated and regressed to a barbarous state after the fall of Grunland in 2400 BC, following the destruction of the Blackmoorian machines and the worsening of the environmental conditions. These barbaric elves live in the Polar Regions with no memory of their ancient splendour, and worship Hel, lady of ice and darkness, like the humanoid tribes that live in the northern Vulcanian mountains.
7. The Shaper has established a very important church in the so-called Enlightened Kingdom, the only small unified humanoid nation present in Vulcania, after having pacified them in life and having converted his followers to a tolerant, nonviolent existence. The nation also worships Paarkum, patron of justice and virtue. He freed their ancestors from a Varellyan mage's tyranny and showed them the path to probity and redemption. This small humanoid paradise is hidden in a forested valley that faces onto Fire Bay, from where the Shaper and Paarkum's followers leave annually to convert the rest of the region's humanoid tribes that still remain faithful to the ancient blood-thirsty and crude customs, as well as Davania's other populations. Unfortunately they frequently end up as sacrificial victims on the altars of Hel.
8. Ordana is still honoured by the sylvan creatures that inhabit the endless evergreen forests that cover nearly the entire Vulcanian peninsula (mostly dryads, fauns, treants and actaeons).
9. The Great One and the dragon lords have followers among the draconic population that infest Vulcanian, which however are in perennial conflict against each other for control of their hunting territories.

## **VULTURE PENINSULA**

This peninsula faces onto the Green Gulf and is bathed by the Sea of Steam. According to the *Voyages of the Princess Ark (Dragon 157)*, it was once the heart of the Varellyan Empire, but it was devastated by the civil war unleashed by Prince Abatu in 565 AC following the assassination of his father. Later, a demon summoned by Abatu broke from his control and transformed the region into a barren desert. The survivors of the devastation wrought by the demon were transformed into nagpa (vulture headed humanoids with strange magic powers) and condemned to wander the world in search of the key to break their curse. The peninsula is inhabited by the surviving nagpa, who wander among the ruins of the, once magnificent, Varellyan cities in search of ancient treasures and magic items. These finds are then in the centre of the capital's ruins, where for over four centuries they have performed an annual ceremony in an attempt to break their curse and finally achieve peace. No nagpa has ever undertaken a priestly vocation and few have any confidence or faith in the Immortals given what happened in the past. Those few either worship the darkest Immortals (like Masauwu and Demogorgon) or the wisest (like Noumena and Pharamond) in hope of receiving aid and power in exchange, or have put aside the lessons that history taught them about their curse.

## SKOTHAR

Skothar is Mystara's second largest continent and is east of the Sundsvall meridian. It is bathed by the Far End Ocean to the south, and by the Sea of Brun to the north and to the east, while to the west are both the Bellissarian and Alphantian Seas. The northern point of Skothar, called the Peninsula of Nentsun, reaches into the arctic icecap before sinking into the opening of the North Pole that leads to the Darklands and the Hollow World. Skothar is characterised by a great grassy plain at its centre (the Jen Steppes), and by a large mountain chain that forms its eastern backbone from north to south (the Nentsunian Plateau is the northern part; the Tangor Chain is the southern). Skothar is the cradle of human civilisation, as the three primitive human ethnic groups (Neathar, Oltec and Tanagoro) all originate from Tangor Man, the first example of Homo sapiens who saw the light in the southern part of the continent. Later on Skothar was also populated by the elves created by Ordana and by the dwarves produced by Kagyar, and later saw the rise of Mystara's first great human empire, the Thonian Empire. Even the most devastating event in Mystaran history had its origins in Skothar, when the small stronghold of Blackmoor, got hold of the alien technology from the damaged ship F.S.S. Beagle, that landed in the wilderness close to the city of Blackmoor in 4100 BC. The Kingdom of Blackmoor rebelled against the Thonian Empire and thanks to their superior technology ended up conquering it, forming the Empire of Blackmoor in 4000 BC. This was the largest human empire in Mystaran history – made up of all northern-central Skothar and parts of western Brun. The prosperous Blackmoorian civilisation however came to a sudden end in 3000 BC, when a series of explosions of the Blackmoorian nuclear engines (probably due to a reaction with the Mystaran magical field, extremely incompatible with the technology) provoked the Great Rain of Fire and shifted the planet's axis. Blackmoor became the new North Pole and was swept away when the Immortals created the polar openings to the Hollow World, and large parts of the Mystaran races regressed to Stone Age technology. Since then, the focus of Mystaran history moved from Skothar to Brun, and today nothing remains of the ancient splendour of Blackmoor and Thonia. Skothar is, now, mainly inhabited by the human descendants of the three original ethnic groups (Neathar to the north, Tanagoro to the south, Neathar–Oltec–Tanagoro in the centre), and a minority of rakasta, giants and humanoids scattered everywhere.

### ESTERHOLD

<i>Razud</i>	Alphatia, self-determination, independence, courage, strength, authority
<i>Utnapishtim</i>	Survival, justice, travel protection of the living
<i>Brissard</i>	Domination, slavery, oppression, intrigue
<i>Rathanos</i>	Fire, energy, power, male supremacy, pride
<i>Eternal General</i>	War, battle, discipline, loyalty, victory, soldiers and mercenaries
<i>Ninfangle</i>	Rakasta, battle, bravery, hunting, adventure, travel
<i>Alphaks</i>	Destroy Alphatia and the Alphantians, hate, vengeance, massacre

#### Notes:

1. Esterhold is a largely deserted, but rich in minerals, peninsula, which protrudes westwards from the western coast of Skothar. It is surrounded on three sides by sea (the Bay of Thorin to the north, the Alphantian Sea to the west, the Sea of Zamara to the south), and its only land border is to the east, where its southern half touches the Jennite Hills and its northern half extends to the Mountain of Thorin. Esterhold is mainly inhabited by Jennites, who were enslaved by the Alphantian minority, when they invaded and conquered the region in 200 BC. The Alphantians view Esterhold as one of their more under developed territories along with Norwold (the two extremities of the Alphantian Empire). It is divided into two kingdoms, Blackrock and Verdan, each ruled in a despotic manner by Mage Kings, who put their own interests before those of the imperial crown. One of Esterhold's more profitable trades is slavery, as half of all Alphantian slaves originate from here. Thus, the sect of Brissard (patron of slavery and intrigue) is very popular among the Alphantian colonists, who consider the Jennites as beasts of burden and inflict every type of stress and intolerance on them. This, naturally, makes the Jennites even more rebellious and edgy, and there is large number of escaped slaves who now live in the wildernesses and by the border with Jen. They have organised an armed resistance and make continued assaults on the Alphantian citadels, with the hope of forcing the invaders back overseas.
2. The Alphantians that pursue their spiritual side mostly worship Razud, who also has worshippers among the humanoids and Jennite slaves (as he is the patron of self-determination). Many colonists follow Brissard, which helps to keep order and the Alphantian colonists' sense of superiority. The Eternal General is popular among soldiers and mercenaries, as well as the humanoids that infest the land of Esterhold.
3. The Jennite rebels are mostly followers of Rathanos, patron of the Jennites, supremacy and freedom. Most slaves follow the cult of Utnapishtim (patron of justice and survival) as it preaches and works towards an end to slavery. As the cult doesn't seem aggressive, the Alphantians haven't done a lot in order to hinder its spread, preferring instead to fight the more violent one of Rathanos. Furthermore, among the Jennites there have been many converts to the cult of Alphaks, Immortal, due to its devotion to destroy the Alphantians. Alphaks's clerics frequently manage to transform the

fight for independence into an excuse to bring death and bloodshed among the Alphatians, and immolate its own followers for the glory of Alphaks.

4. Ninfangle is worshipped by the pardasta rakasta that live in the wildernesses along the borders with Alphatian and Jennite settlements. The pardasta have learnt to distrust the humans since the Alphatian arrival and tend to steer clear of their regions, for fear of ending up as slaves or of being destroyed on the whim of some archmage.

## JEN

<b>Rathanos</b>	Fire, energy, power, male supremacy, pride
<i>Mother Nature (Djaea)</i>	Survival, natural balance, respect of life, druidism
<i>Utnapishtim</i>	Justice, survival, travel, protection of living species
<i>Ka</i>	Life, healing, knowledge, prosperity, wisdom, magic
<i>Idu (Ixion)</i>	Light, sun, strength, knowledge, war, balance, oppose evil
<i>Ninsun</i>	Magic, fertility, agriculture, prosperity, knowledge
<i>Eternal General</i>	War, battle, discipline, loyalty, victory, pragmatism
<i>Bartziluth</i>	Fury, battle, bravery, strength
<b>Tarastia</b>	Just vengeance, justice, truth

### Notes:

1. The region known as Jen (“green” in Jennite) is the continent’s largest, and is mainly a great flat area covered by prairies and steppes, low gently sloping hills and sparsely wooded areas. It comprises the Nentsunian Plateau to the east and north (the continent’s eastern border), the Jennite Blade mountain chain to the south, and the forests of Minaea to the south-west, with only a narrow coastal strip that faces westwards to the Sea of Zamara. The area also gave its name to its inhabitants, a people of mixed Oltec-Neathar blood who escaped from the disastrous Great Rain of Fire. It is thought they were born from a union of the surviving Peshwah (a fierce equestrian people) and the Oltec, who settled in the hinterlands in 3000 BC, which resulted in a mixing of traditions and blood that allowed them to survive. Over the centuries, the Jennites became a strong and powerful people (thanks to their Oltec knowledge and their Peshwah combat ability), which gave them complete domination of central Skothar. However, before creating a true empire, the Jennites rushed headlong into anarchy and complete chaos, due to a civil war (in the XVII century BC) caused by the religious motives of the followers of Rathanos and Tarastia. At the end of the century-long conflict, the Jennite civilisation suddenly reverted to the Stone Age. Over time, the dominant cult of Rathanos took control of the Jennite culture and organised its rebirth, although the tribes are no longer able to unite and live in a semi-nomadic and independent state in the vast prairies of Jen.
2. The Jennites are divided into various clans unified by blood ties and common belief. The majority of the Jennites follow the doctrine of Rathanos, while others have returned to other ancient Oltec Immortals: Idu (Ixion), Ka, Ninsun, and even Tarastia. The latter’s cult is followed by groups of independent Jennite amazons that contest the male domination.
3. The cult of Mother Nature (Djaea) is the most widespread after that of Rathanos, deeply-rooted in Jennite culture since its golden age. Her priests (druids) have always remained neutral both politically and in the clans’ religious questions. Their only aim is to prevent the Jennites from destroying themselves or the environment in which they live and, as such, often act as peacemakers and as mediators between the rival clans. The druids have the most respected of all the tribes and enjoy the esteem and consideration of all Jennites. They live outside of the tribal structure and at the fringes of the clan, and only answer to the Grand Druid of Skothar, who lives in the middle of the steppes.
4. Utnapishtim is another of the more popular Immortals, as practically all Jennites know his legend as the world’s saviour. They worship him as the Immortal patron of justice and life. This dogma has been encouraged by Rathanos’s priests in an attempt to usurp Tarastia’s position and replace her cult with that of a male Immortal that’s not belligerent to Rathanos.
5. Tribes of fast runner rakasta live in the steppes. They arrived on Skothar with the Milenians who later colonised Minaea in the I century BC. These rakasta are nomadic and worship Ka and **Ninfangle**, although they don’t have any temples or holy sites, and often live close to the Jennite tribes that respect their great bravery and ferocity.
6. The Eternal General and Bartziluth vie for the worship of the many humanoid tribes (mostly orcs, ogres and bugbears) that have settled in the steppes. These humanoids are the descendants of tribes that escaped Alphatian control during the invasion of Esterhold, which settled in the wilder areas of Jen.
7. Among the races that live in the steppes of Jen are the gyerian, a nomadic and migratory people (and therefore with no temples or permanent religious sites) that worship the great mother **Cochere**.

## MINAEA

<i>Asterius</i>	Wealth, trade, travel, guile, thieves, messengers
<i>Protius</i>	Oceans and marine creatures, water, capriciousness, travel

<i>Utnapishtim</i>	Survival, travel, justice, protection of living species
<i>Rathanos</i>	Male supremacy, pride, power, fire, energy
<i>Ninsun</i>	Magic, fertility, agriculture, prosperity, knowledge
<i>Valerias</i>	Love, desire, fertility, arts
<i>Khoronus</i>	Knowledge, history, philosophy, good government, patience, diplomacy
<i>Pater (Kagyar)</i>	Crafts, metallurgy, sculpture, construction, miners
<i>Ixion</i>	Light, sun, strength, knowledge, war, balance, oppose evil
<i>Karaash</i>	Humanoids, war, victory, conquest, tactics, strength
<i>Kirranjo</i>	Greed, violence, fury, cruelty, massacre, minotaurs
<i>Ka</i>	Wisdom, protection, healing, prosperity, knowledge, magic, rakasta, stone giants
<i>Ninfangle</i>	Rakasta, hunting, bravery, travel, adventure, battle
<i>Ranivorus</i>	Gnoll, madness, raiding, destruction, hate

#### Notes:

1. The Minaean Coast is found in a temperate area made up mostly of narrow beaches with deep sea floors, which form bays and very secure landing points. The region's interior is a thick evergreen forest, with small deforested areas used for cultivation and pasture. Minaea is found south-southwest of Jen and stretches from the Sea of Zamara in the north, to Tangor Bay in the south, bathed by water on three sides (the Sea of Zamara to the northwest, Bellissarian Sea to the south-west) and bordered by the great Jennite plains to the east. The Minaean Coast is mainly populated by a mixed ethnic group of Jennites and Milenians, who arrived in Skothar following a long migration from decadent Milenia between 100 BC and 0 AC. The Milenians brought their own advanced knowledge and mixed with the local population of Oltec descent to produce the Minaeans, who have a darker complexion than the Milenians' olive but whose language and culture is not too dissimilar to that of ancient Milenia. The innermost regions of the Minaean Forest are populated by groups of primitive and savage Tangor, who arrived from southern Skothar in the centuries following the great volcanic eruptions that formed the Tangor Peninsula; tribes of rakasta (pardasta and cloud pardasta) who originate there; minotaurs and humanoids (orcs, gnolls, goblins and hobgoblins) who arrived around 700 BC, after a long migration from Brun.
2. Minaea is a democratic monarchy, with a sovereign who administers and monitors the territory and enjoys the support and the vassalage of the region's scattered communities. The King of Minaea (whose office is hereditary) has the power to control the national militia and govern the territories that aren't part of the various provinces (the so-called wild lands). He also imposes taxes on the local governors and adjudicates their actions. The sovereign lives in the capital, Minaea, a great fortified city with splendid palaces and a modern system of aqueducts and sewers (heritage of Milenian knowledge), which was built on the coast, near the mouth of the Minos River, by the first Milenians who arrived in 100 BC. For their part, the nobles are free to make laws in their province and must maintain a citizen militia for the inhabitants' protection. Every province is made up of many independent settlements: the smallest are governed by an assembly of all eligible citizens (adult males that practice a profession or own land), while in the more populous communities (over 1,000 individuals) the inhabitants with the right to vote elect an assembly of representatives to rule it, to which is added a supervisor (appointed by the monarch) who controls the direction of the political, social, and economic life and reports to the King (his vote in the assembly counts just like one of the others). Minaea is especially renowned for its pirates, but piracy is not the Minaeans' chief profession, just one of the ways that the coastal communities have chosen to fill their coffers and increase their prosperity. No King of Minaea has ever spoken out against the acts of piracy, as it constitutes a good source of income and helps to fill their coffers. Minaea pursues an aggressive and despotic foreign policy, which the Minaean king does nothing to prevent, against their Bellissarian and Alphantian neighbours – who largely put up with it.
3. Asterius is the Kingdom of Minaea's principal patron, and he is considered the Immortal who gives wealth to those that have shown enough subtlety and resolve to merit it. In this sense, many pirates and thieves openly worship Asterius, who enjoys great fame in many of the most important cities and is viewed as the royal dynasty's guardian. His cult, along with those of many other Immortals, was imported by the Milenians who arrived here in 100 BC and who subsequently became the dominant ethnic group that formed the basis for the kingdom's foundation.
4. The cult of Protius is extremely popular in the coastal cities, as the sea is the Minaeans' principal source of income, not only for the pirates but also for the fishermen and merchants, who form the backbone of their economy. It is thus necessary to gain his favour and pray to him to bring wealth and protection to those that adventure in the domain.
5. Utnapishtim and Ninsun are two Jennite cults that have been assimilated into Minaean society, and that enjoy a large following mostly in the hinterlands as the patrons of justice, salvation, fertility, and magic. Rathanos also belongs to the Jennite faith and has found a certain following in Minaean society, as his followers can heavily influence the country's political order (the reins of power are held exclusively by the men). Over recent centuries, Ninsun's

priestesses have created an opposition to the Minaean society's prevailing machismo, but their battles haven't produced great results except the creation of some priestess ruled communities.

6. Valerias, Khoronus, Pater (Kagyar) and Ixion are other Milenian Immortals that have found roles in the Minaean pantheon. Of particular importance are Valerias (Immortal of love, fertility and the arts) and Pater (Immortal of crafts and the arts) who infuses his deserving followers with talent.
7. Karaash, Ranivorus, and Kiranjo are the guardians of the humanoid (orcs, gnolls, goblins and hobgoblins) that live in the Minaean Forest and fight the Minaeans. They retain their independence by raiding the merchants along the main routes that connect the cities. Kiranjo is also the minotaurs' patron, a race that occupies the southernmost coastal region. There they built a fortified enclave from which they launch naval attacks against the coastal cities of Skothar and Bellissaria.
8. Ka is the racial Immortal worshipped by all the pardasta rakasta that live within Minaean society. However, most of the Minaean rakasta (cloud pardasta and Harimau–Belang sherkasta) live outside the kingdom, and visit the human villages to trade and barter. The pardasta are followers of Ninfangle and Ka, while the sherkasta are renowned for their ferocity and the raids that they stage by both land and sea, and are considered a great threat by the Minaeans and tanagogres, as much their pardasta cousins. The Harimau–Belang have altered Ninfangle's cult in a more belligerent and markedly racist manner (hunting all those that show themselves to be weak). Rumour has it that the most ruthless pirates worship Kiranjo.
9. The savage Tangor of the Minaean Forest follow a spiritualistic religion and worship nature and ancestors' spirits. Their mythos is, thus, a mix of shamanic and druidic principles, and they sometimes consider at the same level (i.e. with divine rank) the Faerie People that regularly visit their settlements.
10. The Minaean pirates don't have much interest in moral or religious questions, but those that pray usually chose **Korotiku, Saturnius** or **Kiranjo** (due to their more or less evil morals) as their patron.

## NENTSUN

<i>Hel</i>	Reincarnation, corruption, death, darkness & cold, evil shapechangers, creatures of ice & shadow
<i>Orcus</i>	Violent death, sadism, mass destruction, undead, cannibalism, evil lycanthropes
<i>Bartziluth</i>	Bugbears, fury, battle, bravery, strength
<i>Jammudaru</i>	Ogres, evil giants, vengeance, torture, fear, violence
<i>Ka</i>	Wisdom, protection, magic, healing, rakasta, giants
<i>White Claw (Ninfangle)</i>	Rakasta, hunting, bravery, travel, adventure, battle
<i>Surt (Zugzul)</i>	Power, conquest, fire, necromancy, darkness, war
<i>Wotan (Odin)</i>	Authority, sky, storms, winds, guile, knowledge, magic
<i>Tyr (Ixion)</i>	War, strength, heroism
<i>Frigg (Terra)</i>	Creation and protection of all life forms, balance of the life cycle, birth, prosperity, fertility
<i>Zalaj</i>	Cloud and mountain giants, knowledge, magic, strength
<i>Nyx</i>	Necromancy, undead, darkness and obscurity, night, secrets
<i>Gorrziok</i>	Storm and sea giants, oceans, extreme natural phenomena, creation and destruction
<i>Great One</i>	Dragons and lizardkin, creation, justice, knowledge, magic

### Notes:

1. In ancient times the Nentsun region was inhabited by the Thonians, and was comprised of fertile, temperate valleys and thriving forests. After the Great Rain of Fire, the planet's rotational change, terrible earthquakes, and the shift of latitude has modified not only the shape of the land (which sank the fertile Thonian valleys and changed the eastern coast) but also the typical climate of the region, which has largely become barren and mountainous. Nentsun comprises the central northern part of the eastern Skotharian coast, and runs from the North Pole to central Skothar, reaching the Tangor Chain at its southernmost point. There is no other certain information on Nentsun, other than it is the homeland of ferocious pirates that hunt in the Skotharian waters. Nentsun is largely uninhabited and wild – especially in the north (the region in the polar circle, and bordering lowlands, i.e. the area nearest to Blackmoor) which remained uninhabited for about a thousand years after the catastrophe due to the deadly radioactive fallout absorbed by the land. The Great Rain of Fire's few survivors (humans, giants, and rakasta), that lived sufficiently far from Blackmoor, built refuges in the mountains and innermost valleys for survival, where they lived isolated for centuries until the arrival of Brun's great humanoid hordes. In 1700 BC, these humanoids left Urzud and moved west in search of land to colonise and rule. They crossed the arctic polar cap to penetrate into Skothar's cold northern regions, and later moved south into a less hostile environment. There, they competed for centuries with humans, giants, and rakasta for survival, unable to expand southwards due to the presence of the belligerent Kingdom of Thonia, and the mountains inhabited by the tagh rakasta and a powerful clan of white dragons. Thus both before and after the humanoids, the human clans resorted to piracy and raiding for their own survival. The situation is still

completely unstable and anarchy reigns in Nentsun, where the daily struggle for survival drives hundreds of creatures to kill each other in turn.

2. The rakasta population is spread both in the Polar Regions (snow pardasta and lynxmen) and in the southern area, where tribes of tagh sherkasta live near the Tangor Chain. All the rakasta worship White Claw (Ninfangle) and to a lesser degree Ka, patron of security, healing and knowledge.
3. The humanoid tribes (orcs, ogres, bugbears and trolls) are divided and constantly fight each other. Each worships one of the patrons listed here: Hel (who has the majority of the followers), Orcus, Bartziluth, Jammudaru and Zugzul.
4. The tribes of Nentsunian giants number frost giants devotees of Hel, cloud and mountain giant followers to Zalaj, storm giants worshippers of Gorrziok, while the fire giants lean towards Surt's (Zugzul) sect.
5. The human Nentsunians are the descendents of the Skandaharians and the ancient Peshwah who fled southwards but never passed beyond the Nentsunian Plateau. The Nentsunians' principal cults are those of Wotan (Odin), Tyr (Ixion), Frigg (Terra) and Hel (this last among the most ruthless and cruel raiders).
6. A large, white dragon clan has lived (for millennia) in the heart of the northern Nentsunian mountains, which no one since the fall of Blackmoor has been able to scale. These dragons have created a very advanced civilisation and have collected some ancient Blackmoorian and Thonian artefacts, which they guard in their cities of ice (a legendary place where it is said are gathered priceless treasures). The dragons fiercely protect their territories; have an extremely lawful social structure and all worship the Great One.
7. The Nentsunian Plateau and the Nentsunian Lowlands (the tundra in Skothar's north-easternmost region, where the Plateau descends near the Arctic Circle) abound with undead, wandering spirits that date back to the Great Rain of Fire and the subsequent radiation. They often spill into nearby regions (Thonia, Jen, and Thorin) in search of sustenance or simply by a purely destructive instinct. This has helped to give the region its nickname "Land of the Dead" (a popular epithet with both the Thonians and Jennites), and because of this there are lines of defence prepared by the neighbouring civilisations to face these incursions (the Infernal Keepers with the Thonians and the Guardians of Death among the Jennites). The majority of undead have an animal intelligence and simply follow their own instincts, but their movements are always watched by both Nyx and Hel, who use them for their own purposes.
8. Many creatures of the ice, among which are a large number of cryons, inhabit the northern land of the Nentsunian Peninsula and are devotees of **Stodos**, lord of the ice, even if they haven't built temples to worship him in.

## TANGOR

<i>The Shapechanger/Korotiku</i>	Liberty, guile, cleverness, wisdom, cheating and subterfuge, fun, clear thinking
<i>Gorrziok</i>	Oceans, winds, natural phenomena, creation and destruction
<i>Karaash</i>	Humanoids, war, victory, conquest, tactics, strength
<i>Macroblan</i>	Prosperity, trade, money, wealth, greed
<i>Pyrak (Ixion)</i>	Light, sun, fire, strength, war, magic, balance
<i>The Celestial Traveller (Sinbad)</i>	Travel, exploration, adventure, courage, overcome any barrier and border
<i>Ka the Guardian</i>	Rakasta, stone giants, wisdom, healing, prosperity, knowledge, magic
<i>Sumag (Terra)</i>	Balance of the life cycle, nature, fertility, agriculture
<i>The Celestial Architect (Polunius)</i>	Architecture, magic, arts and crafts, creativity, tradition
<i>Surt (Zugzul)</i>	Fire, power, conquest, war, necromancy, darkness
<i>Zalaj</i>	Cloud and mountain giants, knowledge, magic, strength
<i>Nicktu (Nyx)</i>	Darkness and obscurity, night, necromancy, secrets
<i>The Infernal Judge (Masauwu)</i>	Intrigue, deceit, fiction, thieves, spies, illusions, manipulation of minds, corruption
<i>Mother Nature (Djaea)</i>	Survival, natural balance, respect of life, druidism

### Notes:

1. Tangor is divided into two different regions: the northern region is the Tangor Chain, a predominantly mountainous area; the southern part is the Tangor Peninsula, similarly mountainous but with fertile areas (from the volcanic soil) and wooded valleys. In prehistoric times, the first true homo sapiens were born in Tangor, and later spread to the rest of the continent, and later still to the rest of the world. During the Age of Blackmoor, the Tangor Peninsula was an archipelago (see the maps of the *Hollow World* box set): the Tanagoro that lived in there became skilled sailors and founded a flourishing civilisation based on exploration and control of the sea to fix the problem of their natural isolation. Over time, the maritime Tanagoro civilisation established colonies in northern Tangor, Oceania, Vulcania, Izonda, and the Serpent Peninsula. Finally colonising the Pearl Islands in 1000 BC, with the last large migration to leave the archipelago before the civilisation's collapse. The decline of the Tangor archipelago was probably due to natural causes, when between 900 and 800 BC the entire region was shaken by earthquakes and volcanic eruptions that caused the mountain chain that ultimately connects the Tangor archipelago with Skothar to emerge from the sea, forming the Tangor Peninsula. In 700 BC, the arrival of hordes of humanoids and minotaurs helped to destroy the remnants of an advanced, prosperous civilisation, plundering the villages and enslaving the natives who were unable to



flee. The ogres remained in the Tangor Peninsula and they took some of the Tanagoro knowledge and technology, to form a new nation and give life to a race of half-ogres – the tanagogre – which later took control of the region, deposing the ogres, to become an ambitious and prosperous people. They began to trade with Brun and with Skothar’s northern regions and found trade ports far from their motherland, as had happened thousands of years before the Tanagoro.

2. In the Tangor Chain are communities descended from the Tanagoro survivors who escaped the conquering humanoids. Many of these Tanagoro were later enslaved by the more ruthless giants that live in the mountains or by the humanoids that joined them later, and their isolated descendents were oppressed for generations. Others managed to gain the protection and the aid of the communities of rakasta (pardasta and tagh sherkasta), faeries, and peaceful giants that lived in the region, and have led an independent and free life. However, due to the hardships and continued dangers (they are threatened by the clans of giants in the mountain chain, the incursions of the more warlike tanagogres and Nentsunian raiders, and all kinds of monster), they live hidden in the most remote mountain valleys and subterranean complexes. The cult of Korotiku is common with all the Tanagoro of the mountain chain, along with those of specific racial Immortals (like Ka, Zalaj, or Djaea). The subterranean Tanagoro also worship Nicktu (Nyx) as patroness of the darkness that hides them and allows them to survive, and have adopted very strange rituals, often grotesque and macabre, to lead a life marked by the adoration of the darkness and night.
3. In the Tangor Peninsula, dominated by the tanagogre civilisation, the tanagogre cult that places the Shapechanger (Korotiku) above all the other Immortals is popular. This stems partly from the ancient humanoid beliefs and partly from the ancestral religion of the conquered Tanagoro, which have been assimilated and revised by the ogres over the centuries. The tanagogre civilisation is very prosperous and the most powerful of southern Skothar, and has colonies both in the Arm of the Immortals (Gombar and Suma’a) and in the eastern coast of the Tangor Chain. Its control of the Sea of Brun is constantly threatened by the raids of the Nentsunian pirates from the north, who use any opportunity to pillage the tanagogre merchants and storm their coastal forts, to carry away food and precious minerals extracted from the Tangor Chain, to later sell to the Alphatians and Thonians in the north.
4. Giants of every type live in small, scattered fiefdoms along the Tangor Chain. They vie for control of the more prosperous regions and fight each other and the area’s other populations. These giants follow race-based Immortals: Zalaj (cloud and mountain), Gorziok (sea and storm), Zugzul (fire and hill), and Ka (stone).

## THONIA

<i>Ixion</i>	Strength, war, heroism, sun, light, fire, preserve order
<i>Eternal General</i>	War, discipline, loyalty, victory, pragmatism, soldiers and mercenaries
<i>Tarastia</i>	Law, order, justice
<i>Khoronus</i>	Good government, knowledge, history, philosophy, patience, diplomacy
<i>Valerias</i>	Love, passion, beauty, arts, fertility, protection, charity
<i>Mother Earth (Terra)</i>	Creation & protection of all life forms, balance of the life cycle, birth, prosperity, fertility, nature
<i>Kagyar</i>	Crafts, metallurgy, sculpture, construction, miners
<i>Hel</i>	Reincarnation, corruption, death, darkness and cold energy

### Notes:

1. The Kingdom of Thonia (also called New Thonia) is a human dominion founded by survivors of the Blackmoor disaster, who fled from ancient Thonia by sea. They settled on the plateau in a peninsula to the north of Esterhold and just south of the arctic polar circle. The area is understandably extremely cold, a vast plain rich in pasture and horse herds, bordered by a series of mountains to the northeast (Superstition Mountains) and volcanoes to the southwest. However, due to a warm current that comes from the Bay of Thorin and bathes Thonian’s southern coast, the kingdom’s southern region enjoys a milder climate, is effectively the most fertile, and is where most of the population live, while the north of the peninsula is much wilder and dominated by some very warlike humanoid tribes that follow of Hel and live in a swampy area known as the Thonian Marches. New Thonia is a monarchy ruled by a King (see adventure IM3), which frequently supplies mercenaries (heavy cavalry and pegataurs) to the Alphatian Empire and Qeodhar (see adventures CM1 and M2). It doesn’t have its own fleet (or at least have a significant navy, as its troops always travel on foreign ships). It has a church (IM3, where it is cited that the two cities of Glevum and Serison each has an Archbishop) and a state religion that is possibly the heir of the High Church of Thonia of 4000 BC (which would make it one of the oldest human sects still in existence). It is a kingdom at a similar level to Karameikos, which is most advanced than its neighbours and, as such, it can combat the humanoids and prevent their expansion.
2. The choice of attributing the cults of Ixion, Tarastia, and the Eternal General as Thonia’s principal religions is purely arbitrary and based on the little information given above (in particular Ixion would be the patron of the nobility and the numerous pegataurs that live in Thonia, while Tarastia is tasked with protecting order and justice, and the Eternal General would be the emblem of the nation’s martial spirit). It is also probable that there are other Immortals in the

pantheon of the Church of Thonia that date back to the Age of Blackmoor, and because of this the cults of Khoronus (ancient patron of Blackmoor), Valerias, Terra, and Kagyar have also been included.

## THORIN

<i>Garal</i>	Gnomes, inventors and thinkers, science and mechanics, crafts
<i>Mother Earth (Terra)</i>	Creation & protection of all life forms, balance of the life cycle, earth, birth, prosperity, fertility, nature
<i>Great One</i>	Dragons and lizardkin, creation, justice, knowledge, magic

### Notes:

1. Thorin is mostly mountainous and is enclosed by the Bay of Thorin to the west, Thonia to the north, Nentsun to the east and Jen to the south. It is comprised mainly of a spiky mountain chain and a forested valley between the Thorin Mountains and the Jennite Mountains. Before the Great Rain of Fire it was the birth place of the Valemen, who were later conquered by the Afridhi during their march against Ancient Thonia. It has been colonised by groups of gnomes, placed there by Garal after the Great Rain of Fire, who are able to survive due to their skill and exploitation of the mountains' resources and the underground contests with the region's intelligent and monstrous creatures (mostly dragons). Other gnomes inhabit the wooded valleys to the south of the Thorin Mountains, in a difficult co-existence with some green dragon clans of which they are enemies or slaves. Over the last few centuries, the Thorin gnomes have come into contact with groups of Denwarf dwarves from Alphatia that seek to colonise the Esterhold region.
2. The garls (primitive giants) that lived in this region during the Age of Blackmoor managed to survive by hiding in the mountains' subterranean caverns. After millennia in the bowels of the earth, perhaps partly affected by radiation, they have mutated and constitute a constant threat to the gnomes and dwarves that live in the mountains and underground. The garls are particularly primitive and can follow any cult that is linked to their natural habitat. Because of this it is very likely they are followers of Terra and Kagyar or Immortals linked to darkness and destruction like Hel and Thanatos.

## ZYXL

<i>Pyro (Ixion)</i>	Strength, magic, balance, light, sun, fire, war
<i>Mother Nature (Djaea)</i>	Survival, natural balance, respect of life, druidism
<i>Father Ocean (Protius)</i>	Oceans and marine creatures, water, capriciousness, travel
<i>Ashanti (Valerias)</i>	Love, passion, desire, sexuality, beauty, arts, fertility, protection, charity
<i>Korotiku</i>	Liberty, guile, cleverness, wisdom, cheating and subterfuge, fun, clear thinking
<i>Zugzul</i>	Power, conquest, fire, war, necromancy

### Notes:

1. Nothing certain is known about Zyxl, a rather large island that is found to the south-east of the Tangor Peninsula, except a passage in *Dragon 153* that hinted to a would-be queen "Zyxl", who could have given her name to the region. It is a volcanic island that was once thought too inhospitable and unstable, and so it was only colonised by the Tanagoro in 700 BC when they were invaded by humanoids and minotaurs and forced to flee overseas for survival. The Tanagoro that arrived on the island were led by Queen Zyxl, who quickly imposed a stable, centralised government and a forced cooperation between the families that set aside continuing grudges and ancestral feuds to ensure the fugitives' survival. After having personally led the suppression against some leaders who had sought to contest her role, her subjects sworn their loyalty to her and under her leadership the Zyxlans repulsed first tanagore assaults that occurred several years later. Moreover, thanks to her arcane knowledge, Zyxl identified an ingenious system to defend the island without mobilising the entire population. Gathering together the island's most skilful sculptors, the queen had built many cyclopean stone statues, all with her features and in a fighting pose, and had them placed along the island's coastline, transporting them with her magic and enchanting them to animate in case of invasion or by command. Thus in about a decade, subsequent tanagore expeditions met firm resistance by the Zyxlans, and Zyxl's towering Guardians of Stone. These latter became infamous among the tanagore, who began to fear them and spread legends about the Zyxlans' arcane power to the other Skothar peoples. After nearly sixty year of uncontested rule, Zyxl abdicated in her daughter's favour and disappeared (probably in search of a path to Immortality). The families most loyal to the crown, which had received the most fertile and richest lands to administer becoming particularly powerful by virtue of their control of these prime materials. They became a caste of nobles, and upon the premature deaths of Queen Zyxl II and her consort, the lack of a heir helped to create an awkward, violent contest between the nobles, priests, and Herald caste (instituted by Zyxl I as an elite of mages and sorcerers faithful to her) for the throne. After a century of civil war that increased Zyxl's vulnerability and consumed some of its scarce resources, the Heralds prevailed, due to their knowledge of the methods to build and control the Giants of Stone. By common accord, the parties, to avoid further attrition, decided to divide Zyxl into four regions, three controlled by the most important noble families and the fourth, with the Royal Palace, would be the Heralds direct responsibility.

All the rulers would have to listen to the Councillor's (member of the priest caste) advice before taking any decision. Those decisions that affected the country's defence or foreign policies would be left entirely to the Heralds. This has helped Zyxl to resist both the tanagore and Nentsunian incursions for centuries, even though their land's scarcity of resources has forced the Zyxlans to depend on trade and magic for their survival. In particular, over the generations the Heralds have used up most of Zyxl's mineral resources to create precious jewels and feed the Giants of Stone (as they are linked to an artefact hidden in the heart of the Royal Palace, which must be fed with a rare mineral to activate the Giants' powers). Over the last few centuries, the magical mineral has been exhausted and the Heralds can no longer build new Giants. They prefer to use the existing ore to feed the active Giants and ease Zyxl's grave situation and not encourage any enemy incursions. Currently they are seeking other deposits of the mineral in the surrounding regions, and as such they have increased trade with Tangor and Minaea. This trade always takes place on floating platforms built a few kilometres offshore to keep foreign merchants off the island.

2. Most Zyxlans worship Pyro as the island's guardian, patron of magic, strength, and the sun (the Heralds are, effectively, followers of Pyro). In addition, all families have at least one ancestor that is viewed as its guardian Immortal, and who they always pray to. There are other cults that stem from the ancient Tanagoro faiths, like those of Korotiku, Ashanti (Valerias), Father Ocean (Protius), and Mother Nature (Djaea). The only sect that is hostile to Pyro is Zugzul's, who has taken under his wing some particularly powerful and greedy sorcerers and merchants in an attempt to gain control of the island. Zugzul's followers are gathered in the island's eastern most dominion, but as yet none have been able to wrest control out of the hands of the priests and Heralds, as only these latter two know the secret to use the Stone Guardians which makes them indispensable to the island's population. Zugzul's followers are however always watched with suspicion by most Zyxlans, even though none of the other cults' priests has yet to start a war against them, as the Zyxlans have few resources and it would be suicide to unleash a civil war that would benefit their enemies (Tanagore and Nentsunians).

## HOLLOW WORLD

Mystara isn't solid, but hollow, and houses a series of populations magically transported into this protected place by the Immortals, with the intent of preserving them from extinction. The Hollow World was discovered by Ka during his exploration of the planet, even if initially it was simply an enormous gloomy and cold grotto at the centre of the world. With the passing of time, and with the help of Ixion, Ordana and Korotiku, Ka made the interior of Mystara habitable and decided to use this secret place as a living museum where he could conserve any race that risked extinction on the surface. The Hollow World is constantly illuminated and heated by a red sun, created by Ixion through a permanent vortex that draws pure energy from an Outer Plane allied with the Sphere of Energy. The temperature in all the areas is that of a constant Spring, even though the Immortals have artificially replicated in each area a microclimate that corresponds to the typical climate of the surface civilisation (for example, the Antaliens live in a rather cold region, while the Azcans, at the same latitude, live in tropical forests). The Hollow World is made up of four continents and a multitude of islands: Icaria is the central continent and largest, in which live the majority of the saved civilisations. Jomphur is the western continent (east and west are inverted in the Hollow World), separated from Icaria by the Atlasan Ocean, and its only known civilisation is Shahjapur, positioned on a large island at the end of the Anathyan Archipelago (close to Jomphur's eastern coast). The eastern continents are Aerial (the northern, in the Sea of Eadh) and Suridal (the southern, in the Sea of Rax), linked to Icaria by the Wintilian Islands (a vast mountainous archipelago). In the Hollow World, furthermore, are the so-called Floating Islands, enormous largely inhabited landmasses that orbit around the sun and cast their shadows on the surface below. These shadows make it possible to divide the eternal day into periods of gloom and light and give the world monthly periods based on the continents' passage. The presence of the World Shield in the Mystaran crust (a layer of highly magical liquid lava and fused matter) generates an anti-magic field that prevents any attempt to magically penetrate in the Hollow World and also prevents any Divination spell from working. Moreover, the World Shield gives to Mystara a dual gravity field, orientated inwards from the surface, and towards the exterior from in the Hollow World. The two main entrances to the Hollow World are the polar opening, created by the Immortals to permit passage into the Hollow World. There are a few other entry methods (like the Mystical Conveyor of Atruaghin hidden in the forests of Atruaghin, which leads directly to a ruined Azcan city in the Hollow World; and naturally all the cavern complexes and tunnels that link the surface with the world's centre, passing through the World Shield region of solidified lava). The Immortals that monitor the Hollow World (Ka, Ordana, Ixion and Korotiku) have furthermore created a planetary effect, The Spell of Preservation that protects the Hollow World's civilisations by negating some schools of mortal magic (Evocation, Enchantment, Divination and curative and resurrection magic, as well as other individual spells). It also makes it more difficult to learn magic (by requiring high minimum scores to be able to take an arcane or divine spellcaster class), and prevents them from evolving and developing new technology or spells. Indeed, making them unchangeable both in substance and belief over the centuries (even though an alteration of power balances or the birth of new subraces or ethnic groups is possible, this however doesn't affect the original culture's immutability).

The list shown below are not only divided based on region, as they were for the outer world, but also on the civilisations that inhabit the Hollow World, as each civilisation has its own region and pantheon.

### ANTALIANS

<b>Wotan (Odin)</b>	Authority, sky, storms, winds, guile, knowledge, wisdom
Donar (Thor)	War, battle, fury in battle, honour, bravery
Fredara (Freyja)	Fertility, plenty, beauty, love, Seidh (prophecy), valiant souls, female warriors
Fredar (Frey)	Passion and strategy in battle, virility, loyalty, agriculture, fertility
<i>The Spuming Nooga (Protius)</i>	Water, oceans and marine creatures, capriciousness, travel
<i>The Norn (Urd, Verthandi and Skuld)</i>	Time, fate, divination, visions, cycles
<b>Lokar (Loki)</b>	Deceit, lies, guile, betrayal, intrigue, fire

#### Notes:

1. The Antaliens (of Neathar stock) live in north-eastern Icaria, between the Icevale elves to the west, the beast-men to the north, and the Krugel orcs to the south. Antalia is a largely mountainous territory, full of fjords and forests and with just one great coastal plain that faces onto the Ostzee (the Eastern Sea). The Antaliens follow the Asatru mythos, which views Wotan (Odin) as the father of humanity and the supreme lord of the universe, surrounded by other divine figures called Aesir (his children), Asinye (the consorts of the Aesir), and Vanir (the Immortals allies of the Aesir associated with nature) [see Chapter 5 (Philosophies and Movements), for a more detailed description of the Asatru]. However for the Antaliens of the Hollow World Ragnarok (the Twilight of the Immortals) has already occurred (in 1722 BC – the date when Odin transferred them into the Hollow World). For this race, the Immortals have already fought their war and the mortals who heroically remained at their side have been rewarded by salvation in Neumidgard, the new world in which they now live. However, not everything happened as the prophecy had predicted, and now the Immortals that protect them are the only ones to survive Ragnarok. All the surrounding races are similarly descended from the survivors of those who previously lived in Midgard. To the west of them are the elves, to the north the surviving giants and the reincarnated spirits of Hel and Lokar's evil followers (the beast-men), and to the south the brutal trolls (the orcs) that now live in the light of the sun. Elsewhere live the dwarves (Kogolor) and the dark elves, even though the Antaliens have yet to meet them. They believe that the Vanir dwell in the thriving western land (the land of the Neathar), and the Aesir live beyond the fogs of the Ostzee, in the wonderful palace of Gimlè – on a hidden isle that only the most daring explorers can find, and where they receive the gifts of Immortality and eternal youthfulness.
2. Wotan (Odin) is the supreme lord of the world and head of the surviving Aesir. With him live his son Donar (Thor) and the three Vanir survivors, Nooga (Protius), Fredar, and Fredara (Frey and Freyja). Hidden somewhere is Lokar (Loki), Wotan's rebel son who caused Ragnarok along with the ruthless **Hel**. According to the Antaliens of the Hollow World, Hel dwells with the damned (beast-men) and giants of the icy north, while Lokar travels in search of new adepts to corrupt and turn into servants of the dark mother, to rebel again against the Aesir and mortals and usurp their dominion on Neumidgard. Because of this, Lokar's few followers don't openly manifest their faith, preferring to act through subterfuge and deceit to bring to complete their plans and satisfy their patron's demands. According to their belief, the fate (Wyrd) of the world is still in the hands of the Norn, the only great Immortals who watch over events and continue to weave the past, present, and future of mortals and Immortals.

### AZCANS

<b>Atzanteotl</b>	Corruption, deceit, vengeance, betrayal, destruction
<b>Quetzalcoatl (Atruaghin)</b>	Diplomacy, wisdom, balance, temperance, combat evil

#### Notes:

1. The Azcans (modelled on the ancient Aztec civilisation) are a race, derived from the Oltecs, which gained its independence in 3500 BC, after five centuries of difficult coexistence in which war alternated with trade (start of the Age of Conquest). Because of the devastation caused by the Great Rain of Fire in 3000 BC, and the imminent threat of extinction due to the earthquakes and climate changes, the Immortal guardians of the Oltecs and Azcans (Ka and Ixion) decided to transfer a large number of these tribes into the Hollow World to preserve them. They placed the Azcans on the western Icarian coast, on the shores of the Northern Atlassian Ocean (beginning the Age of Preservation or Age of Destruction, when the Immortals destroyed the ancient world saving only a chosen few). Centuries passed and the Azcans expanded to establish an empire, and wage war against the Neathar and, sporadically, the distant Oltecs, whose rivalry has never diminished. At the end of the XVI century BC however, the influence of the evil Atzanteotl (a surface elf who had discovered the Hollow World and became fascinated with the Azcan culture) changed the empire's power structure, and with the hunting of the just King Atruatzin (who later became Atruaghin) Atzanteotl's followers began a new epoch (Age of Revelation). Atzanteotl became the one Immortal that could be worshipped, superior to all other Immortals, the one who would lead the Azcans to world domination (the Age of

Great Conquest, according to the prophecy of the Azcan priests, which would close the cosmic cycle which began with a similar Conquest). It was thus that the Azcan priests rewrote some of their history, to make Atzanteotl appear as the Azcans' saviour and the only Immortal that can rule them. Any other cult that still endured was tarnished and controlled by the ruling clergy, to prevent any chance of an insurrection. Atzanteotl's domination of the Hollow World Azcans lasted for over two millennia, but the Azcan civilisation is cyclical (not affected by the Spell of Preservation) and so as the future changes, Quetzalcoatl will rise again as a natural part of Azcan history.

2. The Azcans are ruled by the Tlatoani (Emperor), who is always also the High Priest of Atzanteotl (Coatl Atzanteotl Tlamacazqui). The Azcan Empire is a powerful theocracy divided into provinces, each led by a Tecuhtli (a noble or a administrator elected by the emperor), and usually a cleric of Atzanteotl. Beneath the noble caste is the bureaucrats' (Calpixqui), which forms the state's apparatus of control and administration, and the priests' (Tlamacazqui), most of whom are faithful to Atzanteotl. Beneath the priests and bureaucrats are the commoners, who comprise the majority of the Azcans (even if they use personal wealth as the basis to differentiate themselves): this class doesn't have rights, only duties, and the only difference between them and the slaves is that that they cannot be killed at the pleasure of the nobles, but only if they either injure priests or nobles or commit crimes against the state. At the lowest step of the social scale are the slaves, mostly foreigners captured in the Azcan raids of the neighbouring regions or individuals so poor that they cannot pay their debts and are enslaved by their creditors.
3. The pantheon of Azca (culture described in the module HWA1, *Nightwail* and in the supplement HWR1, *Sons of Azca*) comprises practically all of Mystara's Immortals, as within it every Immortal can appear under different forms, each to show a different aspect of his personality, therefore they aren't included here. The Azcans are a strongly religious people with often brutal and violent practices (like tlachtli, a popular national team sport), because of Atzanteotl's influence, who demands ritual human sacrifice to satisfy his need for blood and bring prosperity to the empire. His cult, also called the Winged Viper, is the state religion, which all the Azcans and their slaves must observe. Hundreds of other Immortals exist, but, according to the current philosophy, none are as important or as powerful as Atzanteotl.
4. The ancient cults of **Otzitiotl** and **Kalaktatla** (Ixion and Ka, who were once the Azcan's ancestral patrons), lost their influence when the Azcans entered into what according to their mythos is the Age of the Fifth Sun (which started with the destruction of the ancient world that ended the Age of the Fourth Sun), and which is dominated by Atzanteotl. The ancient cults survived in the worship of the Four Hundred Rabbits, a term that indicates the numerous ancient Immortals, among which are Kalaktatla and Otzitiotl. Atzanteotl's priests closely watch the actions of the cult's members and are very skilled at controlling their moves and orchestrating "fatal accidents" to prevent any of them from attracting too much attention and threatening the power of Atzanteotl's clergy.
5. For nearly a millennium, a new religious philosophy has been secretly spreading. It has gained many followers in every layer of society, even among the official clergy and nobles. The sect of the New Way has been declared illegal by the clergy's will, as it negates Atzanteotl's supremacy and incites the people by claiming that the promises of Atzanteotl and his priests are false and fraudulent. The followers of the New Way pursue such a radical creed that they are considered heretics and punished with ritual sacrifice. As such the identities of the sect's members is secret, and when they meet they have always wore masks that hide their real faces and use nicknames initially represented by the glyph relating to their own day of birth. These faithful act to free Azca from Atzanteotl's tyranny and believe that only the return of the chosen, Quetzalcoatl (Atruaghin) will bring peace and justice in the world. The New Way teaches that the ancient Immortals abandoned the Azcans the day after the world's destruction and that the void they left was useful to Atzanteotl, who usurped their place and locked the Azcans in a great illusion that still endures (the modern world). So they impatiently await the rise of a new Sun (the Sixth), and this sacrifice will be the last to assist the Azcans, as its blood will satiate Atzanteotl's hunger and destroy him, giving rise to a new age of peace and prosperity. The New Way identifies this epic saviour as Quetzalcoatl, who according to their mythos was a just and benevolent king who reigned over the Azcans shortly after the end of the old world. He doesn't demand human sacrifice, loves his folk, and tries to justly protect them. Atzanteotl however was envious of his felicity, and when Quetzalcoatl refused to listen to his promises, he used his black magic to set the priests against the King and usurp the throne. Quetzalcoatl was hunted by the Azca but escaped Atzanteotl's assassins, becoming more powerful to rival his ancient enemy, and now wanders the world, in search of the way home. When he returns, Quetzalcoatl will displace the usurper Atzanteotl (his evil twin and nemesis) and again free his people.

## BEASTMEN

<b>Ka</b>	Protection of life, wisdom, healing, prosperity, magic
<i>Karaash</i>	Humanoids, war, victory, strength
<i>Hel</i>	Death, reincarnation, corruption, darkness and cold energy

Notes:

1. The Beastmen are humanoid creatures with bestial features, each of which can be physically very different to their parents, both in appearance and height (they range in height from 90 cm to 4 m). They live in the cold expanses near the polar opening, which is similar to their ancestral lands on the surface which were created by Hel and where they lived for centuries before the Great Rain of Fire. Their land is bordered to the east by the mountains of the Antalians and giants, to the south by the mountains of the Icevale elves and the plains of the Neathar, and to the west by the mountain range that divides them from the Azcan Empire, while the northern border is made up by the opening of the North Pole. The beastmen were transported by Ka into the Hollow World, when the Immortal realised that they had begun to assume regular physical characteristics and the species would become extinct by giving life to a series of humanoid races with definitive traits (the goblinoids). So he sent prophetic dreams to the leaders of the different tribes and led them on a long migration to the polar opening, until they arrived in the northernmost areas of the Icirian continent, where they settled in 2400 BC. Ka later found a way to arrest the genetic convergence that was occurring in the outer world, which allowed them to continue to reproduce without duplicating physical characteristics to safeguard their species' uniqueness.
2. According to the *Hollow World* box set, the beastmen worship Ka above all, as he is the only Immortal to pay heed to them. It is, however, possible that Karaash, patron of humanoids, battle, and strength, also enjoys a certain following among them, seeing as the beastmen's most important obsession is demonstrating their own strength and greatness in battle. Hel has also been included among the worshipped Immortals as she was the race's creator and it is thought that several tribes are still faithful to her and her ideals of death and destruction.

### BRUTE-MEN

<b>Ka-gar (Kagyar)</b>	Crafts, sculpture, construction
<b>Tha-to (Thanatos)</b>	Death, destruction, oblivion

#### Notes:

1. The Brute-Men are primitive humans (*Homo sapiens*) who live in the caverns and use simple stone tools and fire. They were saved from extinction by Kagyar (who once belonged to this race), who in 6000 BC transferred them into the Hollow World when the last brute-men were at risk of dying out due to the internecine war unleashed by Thanatos. The war re-ignited suddenly in 5300 BC and lasted for centuries in Hollow World, until the Immortals discovered that it was the great annelids (sent by Thanatos) that had made the brute-men mad. In 5000 BC the Counsel of the Hollow World cast the Spell of Preservation to safeguard the brute-men's culture and reduce all the great annelids to a comatose state. Since then the brute-men have successfully re-established the peace between the tribes and have spread across the great plain that borders with the land of the Hutaaka to the west, the Kogolors to the north and the Nithians to the south.
2. The Brute-Men are all followers of the great Ka-gar, guardian of life, dispenser of fire and the skills to create items that improve their lives. Some of the more violent tribes secretly follow the precepts of Tha-to, lord of death and destruction. They are bent to his will because of the weak though present influence of his clerics and the messages that some great annelids send in dreams to those brute-men that live near their graves.

### DWARVES, KOGOLOR

<b>Fredar (Frey)</b>	Passion and strategy in battle, virility, loyalty, agriculture, fertility
<b>Fredara (Freyja)</b>	Women warriors, fertility, love, abundance, beauty, nature
<b>Garal Glitterlode</b>	Gnomes, inventors and thinkers, science and mechanics, crafts

#### Notes:

1. The Kogolor dwarves belong to the first generation of dwarves created by Kagyar before the Great Rain of Fire. Following this cataclysm, Kagyar noted that the dwarven race was slowly disappearing due to the Blackmoorian radiation and their incapacity to adapt to the new climatic situation. So, in 1800 BC, he took the healthiest clans, and altered them to make them more resistant to radiation and magic. He then transported the new dwarven race (Denwarf) into the region of modern day Rockhome and Vestland and abandoned the few survivors of the old race (Kogolor) in the central-eastern mountains of Iciria (Hollow World's central continent). Kagyar lost interest in these old dwarves, and they found themselves abandoned in a strange, new world. After over a century of hardship and fighting for survival, in 1680 BC the Antalians heroes Fredar and Fredara arrived among the dwarves, and thanks to their intervention the dwarves were able to free their mountains of threatening giants and beast-men that threatened their survival. The two heroes supported the efforts of the largest clan (the Kogolor) in creating a safe, secure nation. The two siblings' epic deeds and love for the remaining population impressed the dwarves, who immediately after the heroes ascension took to worship them as Immortals, on the Kogolor clan's intercession (who later gave their name to the entire race). They were joined a century later by Garal's cult, another unique Immortal who has shown fondness for the Kogolor and an interest in their struggles. In 1400 BC, the dwarves repulsed a Schattenalfen invasion that appeared from underground, and were successful due to the intervention of Denwarf dwarves, ordered to help by

Kagyar at Garal's request. Afterwards they had to fight with the Krugel orcs, and at the moment maintain guard posts in the mores exposed passes in order to pinpoint and eventually block invasions of Krugel and Schattenalfen (their sworn enemies). The Kogolor are more open and friendly than the Denwarf, and don't have the latter's obsession for jewels and gems, but do share the modern dwarves propensity for crafts. They don't particularly like fighting, although all dwarves are trained in the use of at least a spear and a polearm (they don't use the typical weapons of the Denwarf dwarves like battleaxe, warhammer or other racial weapons). They are particularly expert yodellers, and can make their voices resonate from one peak to another (as a way of sending messages between the various communities), and producers of beer and spirits.

### **ELVES, BLACKLORE**

The Blacklore Elves are an anonymous clan that live in an isolated valley in the south of the Hollow World. They don't worship any Immortal (they are agnostics), preferring to trust to science and technology to resolve their physical and spiritual problems. They are the last descendents of the Grunlander elves who refused to follow the Way of the Forest preached by Ilsundal and remained faithful to Blackmoorian science. They began to die out when their technological devices ceased to function. In an excess of magnanimity, in 2410 BC Ka decided to preserve this culture by transferring it into the cold lands of the Hollow World's south pole, in a hidden valley among the mountains, and to isolate it he created a magical barrier that allows their technological devices to function only and exclusively within the valley (although they function magically, unbeknownst to the elves). This has assured that the Grunlander elven civilisation continues to exist and, at the same time, that the Blackmoorian technology (that could constitute a threat to the rest of the world), would cease to function if it was taken outside of the magical barrier. Currently the Blacklore elves (a very peaceful people with little inclination for physical conflict) that are left have the automatons to operate the machines and carry out the more onerous or harder work, while they are dilettantes who occupy their time with the arts, philosophy and culture, even if they have a rather bizarre and extremely peculiar taste.

### **ELVES, GENTLE FOLK (TRUEDYL)**

The history of the Truedyl began with Ilsundal's expedition to Brun. The Truedyl clan decided to stop and colonise the High Lands of Glantri, and peacefully lived there with the neighbouring elven clans until a disastrous nuclear explosion, in 1700 BC, devastated the area and forced the elves to flee underground to survive the radiation. The Truedyl were thus separated from the rest of the elves, and started a long subterranean journey full of hardship and danger in the search of a place where they could again see the sun's light. During these gloomy years, the strongest and wisest clan chiefs died, many of their young were eaten by subterranean beasts, and the cruel Thanatos guided their dreams, convincing them that they had been punished for actions committed on the surface and for learning forbidden and dangerous knowledge. Finally, many years later, when they resurfaced in the northern forests of the modern Five Shires, then completely uninhabited, the Truedyl were a broken and declining people. They saw the beauty of nature around themselves, but could no longer enjoy it, burdened by a sense of guilt and desperation for the tragedy caused by their race. So, they became increasingly apathetic and began to follow a philosophy of extreme pacifism, the Way of Immobility. According to this philosophy, every elf must do the least possible, limiting himself to only doing the least necessary for daily survival, live peacefully with the other living creatures, and without planning for the future. The rest of his time is spent reflecting on what happened in the past, his own life and errors, and on the ways to correct the past wrongs, in this way he will find the wisdom needed to gain the Immortals' forgiveness. The Truedyl lived in this mild and modest way for centuries, and when the hin also arrived in the region around 1300 BC and met these peaceful elves (who they nicknamed the Gentle Folk), their philosophy of life didn't change. In 1000 BC, when the humanoids invaded en mass the Five Shires, the Truedyl's pacifism and the extreme submissiveness resulted with them facing extinction, and so Ilsundal, aware of their situation, transferred them into the Hollow World, in an unexplored forest among the lands of the Neathar. Here the Spell of Preservation has prevented the Truedyl' nature from changing, who have over the centuries continued to pay no heed to life and to remove sentiments and urges, have sought refuge in meditation and in a state of artificial semi-consciousness from the consumption of somnastis (an addictive plant). Among the Truedyl no warriors exist, and those few that have knowledge of magic must be constantly pressed by the Immortals to remember it and to teach it to their decreasingly numerous descendents, to not lose their ancestral legacy. The more nonviolent Immortals (**Alphatia, Koryis, Ilsundal, Lornasen** and the **Demiurge**) have taken the Gentle Folk under their protective wing, even if the latter don't show a great regard for religion, limiting themselves to recognise the presence of the Immortals and to constantly plead forgiveness for their past wrongs. Due to their intervention, the woods of the Gentle Folk is becoming a reserve rarely visited by the Neathar, which, because of the strange runes spread around the perimeter of the woods of the Truedyl, believe that powerful forest spirits dwell in those woods, and prefer to not venture inside, only going to the tree line limit to bring gifts and offering of food to gain the "spirits" protection.

## ELVES, ICEVALE

<b>Fredar (Frey)</b>	Passion and strategy in battle, virility, loyalty, agriculture, fertility
<b>Fredara (Freyja)</b>	Fertility, abundance, beauty, love, Seidh (prophecy), valiant souls, women warriors
<b>Wotan (Odin)</b>	Good government and authority, guile, knowledge, wisdom, sky, winds, storms
<b>Donar (Thor)</b>	Battle, honour, bravery
<b>Ilkundal</b>	Protection of elves and nature, wisdom, knowledge, magic, tradition, serenity and peace
<b>Thendara (Ordana)</b>	Nature, fertility, protection of forests and sylvan races

### Notes:

1. Like the Truedyl and the Schattenalfen, the elves of Icevale (also known as elves of the ice) their outer world history began with Ilkundal's migration to Brun and ended with the colonisation of the Glantrian High Lands. After centuries of peaceful life, the explosion of a Blackmoorian device created the Broken Lands and caused a toxic cloud and nuclear radiation to devastate the Glantrian valleys. This forced the elves to find an underground refuge, and led by the Antalian heroes Fredar and Fredara on their path to Immortality, they travelled through the terrestrial crust in search of a new home, until they emerged in the Hollow World, in a mountainous area between the Antalians and beastmen to the north, and the fertile plains of the Neathar to the south. Here the migration's survivors decided to stop, as the region closely resembles the High Lands from which they had fled. Over the centuries they have rebuilt their own civilisation devoted to the cult of Wotan (Odin) and, especially, his divine children Fredar and Fredara (Frey and Freyja), his proxies on Mystara that saved the clan during the major crisis. There are also some followers of Ilkundal and Thendara (Ordana) among them – a peaceful minority that is tolerated – as the elves of the ice don't consider these last two Immortals as true patrons. The elves of Icevale are sylvan elves more accustomed to the cold climate and living in places where snow, evergreens, and conifers abound. They follow the code of Fredar that imposes clan loyalty, bravery and solidarity. They love to hunt and live in the woods, but aren't fanatics of battle and don't seek personal glory. These elves (who are ignorant of the names of the clans they belonged to) are civil and open with strangers, adore festivals and competitions (especially skating, archery and competitions of local crafts), but don't permit anyone to abuse their hospitality or natural resources.

## ELVES, SCHATTENALFEN

<b>Atzanteotl</b>	Corruption (physical and moral), deceit, betrayal, vengeance, destruction of surface life
<b>Rafiel</b>	Security, order, peace, scientific and magical knowledge

### Notes:

1. The elves of the Schattenalf clan (called Schattenalfen) were part of Ilkundal's migration, and settled in the Glantrian hills around 2200 BC. They lived there peacefully along with other elven clans until the Glantrian Catastrophe, when some elves discovered a Blackmoorian artefact and attempting to use it made it explode, causing a nuclear explosion that forced the survivors to shelter underground. The Schattenalfen were among these, and in their underground odyssey they finally come across the Shadowelves, who they told what was happening on the surface. After centuries in the caverns, the Schattenalfen sought a new way to the surface, in an attempt to show that it was habitable. Unfortunately they took the wrong path and arrived in the Hollow World, where the red sun's radiation devastated them. The few survivors of this first expedition told of how the outer world had changed and had become deadly, so the Shadowelves forswore new surface explorations. In 1400 BC, inspired by Atzanteotl (a subterranean elf who became Immortal), some Schattenalfen nobles attempted a new expedition, and arrived in the lands of the Kogolor. After a bloody war, they were driven out and ended up settling in the caverns to the south of the lands of the Malpheggi and Azcans and west of the Oltec hills. Here they built an Azcan style city inspired by Atzanteotl, who they started to worship as the only true Immortal. Since then the Schattenalfen haven't attempted to find the way back to the Shadowelves ancient caverns, and have lived ruled by their own sovereigns (who are always priests of Atzanteotl, like the Azcans). Blinded by Atzanteotl's hateful faith of, they are in constant conflict with the neighbouring humans and dwarves, and Azcans, whose similar civilisation and architecture they consider an eternal mockery of their lifestyle and desire to live on the surface that is frustrated by the red sun's deadly rays.
2. The Schattenalfen are dominated by Atzanteotl's cruel cult, but only 40% are fervent believers. Most Schattenalfen prefer to not think about religion and live as much of their life as possible without getting involved with the faith or their nobles' crusades. A minority (10%) secretly follow Rafiel's (patron of the Shadowelves) ancient doctrine, and plot to overthrow the nobles' government when Rafiel gives them the signal to begin a new era of peace and fairness.

## GNOMES, OOSTDOKIAN

<b>Garal Glitterlode</b>	Gnomes, inventors and thinkers, science and mechanics, crafts
<b>Vanya</b>	Conquest, victory, strength, honour, pride, war

### Notes:



1. The Oostdokians belong to two gnomish clans (the Valoin and the Flamaeker) that for many reasons and were forced to share the same floating island. They finally united and formed the modern nation of Oostdok. The Valoin lived among the Soderfjord gnomes when the kobolds invaded the Falun Caverns in 490 BC. When the massacre threatened the civilisation's extinction, their patron Garal decided to transport the only remaining living clan, the Valoin, onto one of the Hollow World's flying islands, in such a way that they could continue their experiments and lives in peace. Centuries later, the Serrainian gnomes of the Flamaeker clan developed a new technology to power the flying city's engines, and to direct its route. During a control test, a tremendous explosive reaction caused their quarters to separate from the rest of the city and sent the Flamaeker literally into orbit, which found them in outer space, outside of the Skyshield and lacking oxygen. Only due to Garal's intervention, was their stronghold able to miraculously fall towards the planet, threading through the northern polar opening and land on one of the Hollow World's flying islands in the V century AC. The two gnomish nations continued to conduct experiments unaware of each other, until a fault in the design of a system to control their homeland's orbit caused the Flamaeker's island to collide with the Valoin's. All the two clans' flight control mechanisms went haywire and both the Flamaeker and Valoin remain prisoners of their new common home's orbit, renamed Oostdok from a gnomish onomatopoeia that reflected the sound the two bodies made when they collided. In 970 AC, a squadron of Heldannic Warbirds discovered the existence of the peaceful Oostdokians, and the Great Priest ordered the conquest of the island to exploit the gnomish technology. Since then, Oostdok has been under Heldannic control and the gnomes have been unable to organise a resistance movement capable of freeing them from their Heldannic conquerors and gain their independence. This is also because the heads of the trading houses (that ruled the island social, political, and economic life before the invasion) refuse to ally themselves with the Fifth Column, a secret organisation of rebels, outcasts, and terrorists that has always sought to cause the collapse of the houses' oligopoly and provoke a forced uprising on the island.
2. The only two cults present on the island are Vanya's, imposed by the Heldannic Knights but not shared by the gnomes, and Garal's, which is tolerated by the Knights to prevent making the atmosphere any tenser and because it isn't considered dangerous to the protectorate's security or contrary to Vanya's doctrine.
3. The Heldannic Knights have another outpost among the Hollow World's floating islands, called Stonehaven. There they built a stronghold, a berth, and a building site for their flying navies, with the intent of exploring the Hollow World and conquering the most backward and wealthy civilisations (see the series "Voyages of the Princess Ark" in *Dragon* and in the *Champions of Mystara* box set).

## HUTAAKA

<b>Pflarr</b>	Magic, knowledge, protection, magical constructs
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### Notes:

1. The Hutaaka are thickly furred, jackal-headed humanoids, created by the Immortal Pflarr to make a race of servants and heralds of his word. Greatly respected in the Nithian Empire, they created a kingdom in the lands of the Traldar and ruled over them until the invasion of the gnolls, which upset the region's balance. To survive, the Hutaaka retreated into their hidden valley along with their more loyal Traldar slaves, and lived there in total isolation for the next 500 years. When the Nithian Empire was destroyed by the Immortals, Pflarr disgusted by the about-turn of his followers transplanted a few Hutaaka into the Hollow World along with the worthiest Nithians. He is only interested in these Hutaaka, and has abandoned the few remaining Hutaaka hidden in the Lost Valley to their inevitable decline. The Hutaaka of the Hollow World are instead at the height of their civilisation. Their pride in being the direct emissaries of an Immortal has given them a certain arrogance. The Hutaaka live in a valley north of the Nithians, on the western shores of Lake Menkor (a few kilometres from the land of the brute-men to the north). Although Nithia is very close, the Nithians haven't dared to profane the Hutaakas' valley, considering it sacred and inviolable by Pflarr's will. The Hutaaka are peaceful and extremely erudite, their communities are independent and each is ruled by a caste of noble priests. They lead their people along the road to correctly worship their patron and rule the Hutaaka in his name. All the other Hutaaka, independently of their trade, are considered equal and subordinate to the priests' authority. The Hutaaka often serve Pflarr as messengers and oracles, and he chose them to undertake long journeys to the rest of the world as his heralds. This is the Hutaakas' most ambitious and noble task and, because of this, they consider themselves superior to all other species.

## JENNITES

<b>Tarastia</b>	Law, order, truth, justice and just vengeance
<i>Idu (Ixion)</i>	Light, sun, strength, knowledge, war, balance, oppose evil
<i>Ninsun</i>	Fertility, prosperity, agriculture, magic, knowledge, wisdom

### Notes:

1. The Jennites are exceptional horsemen that live a nomadic life, moving with their enormous herds of aurochs (ancient bison) from pasture to pasture and carrying all their assets on horseback or wagons. In the outer world, The Jennites rose from central Skothar, shortly after the Great Rain of Fire. An Oltec colony settled on the Skotharian coast (in the present day Minaean region) shortly before the cataclysm and during its first generation the colonists divided into coastal farmers, and herdsmen of the interior. When the Blackmoorian catastrophe caused the axis of Mystara to tilt, the Oltecs survived, but the coastal farmers lost contact with the herdsmen, who sought to escape the earthquakes and seaquakes by retreating ever more inland, following their herds in search of new pastures. Over the generations, the two ethnic groups diverged due to the mixing of the Oltec herdsmen with native Skotharian tribes (probably Peshwah exiles fleeing the nuclear disaster), who taught the herdsmen their horse skills and mounted combat techniques. From the fusion of these two groups (Neathar and Oltec) came the Jennites, who began to raid the coastal communities, which to survive isolated themselves further. The Jennite civilisation, split into clans led by strong, charismatic leaders, and very rapidly became rich, powerful, and the Steppes of Jen undisputed ruler, until (in 1600 BC) a religious civil war brought disorder to Jen and caused the fall of the Jennites' structure. Some clans abandoned their traditional religion to devote themselves to the Rathanosite movement, which preaches, among other things, the absolute male supremacy as a natural right and submission to Rathanos, his priests and any other male Immortal and clergy. Tarastia, the Jennites' Immortal patroness, could not accept this challenge, and so the two philosophies' followers transformed the religious debate into open war. But what could have been an easy victory for Tarastia instead became the beginning of the end, as Rathanos's followers were extremely seasoned and, expecting the Tarastians, had already deployed. After a century of civil war Jen in upheaval and Tarastia knew that she must save her faithful or they would inevitably disappear. Therefore, at the end of the XVI century BC, she transferred several clans that still followed their ancient pantheon into the Hollow World, placing them in the southern Iciria, between the Nithians and the Tanagoro. Over the next six hundred years, the Jennites of the outer world were in turn destroyed, by the Alphatians' arrival. No memory of the ancient Jennites' power remains, as its survivors regressed back to the Stone Age. In the Hollow World the Jennites continue to peacefully prosper, following Tarastia's teaching and worship the ancient pantheon without however Rathanos's subversive philosophy, which is considered a heresy that belongs to their distant past. The Hollow World Jennites continue to be a proud, warlike, and nomadic Iron Age people, with no central government but divided into clans, in which men and women have the same legal rights and the same chance of gaining important positions based on their own ability. The Jennites are lovers of horses and the art of war, and regularly raid their Tanagoro and Nithian neighbours, in search of booty and prisoners to take back home and execute in Tarastia's name, to prove their strength and individual valour (the Jennites keep slaves). The Jennites are particularly valued for the skill of their horse wranglers, goldsmiths, and smiths, who frequently produce goods for which they are paid very high prices by the neighbouring Nithians and distant Milenians, beyond the Sea of Yr.
2. Tarastia is the patroness of all the Jennites, the one who gave order to the universe and set everyone's place in the world. As such, the Jennites understand that their duty is to ride and conquer the weak, and their tribal laws are a legacy that Tarastia gave them to continue to prosper. Given Tarastia's importance, the Jennites have strong legislative codes and extremely complex judicial procedures, and the clan chiefs also hold the role of supreme magistrates that never give hurried judgements during prosecutions. Idu (Ixion) is the Sun, and shines eternally by Tarastia's will, giving strength and vitality to the humans. They invoke war in his name and due to his holy fire the Jennites are able to forge weapons and jewellery for which they are also known among their neighbours. Finally, Ninsun is the land, patroness of fertility and knowledge; linked with femininity like Idu is the symbol of masculinity (Tarastia is independent of both). Magic and healing are areas given to Ninsun and her priestesses, who have the same importance as the other two Immortals' clerics.

## KUBITTS

Vanya	Victory, strength, honour, pride, war, female power
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### Notes:

1. The Kubitts are a race of 40cm tall humanoids, a cross of wood imps and pixies created by the Alphatian mage Korubazunth in the year zero as assassins. Unfortunately, Korubazunth made the Kubitts far too aggressive and clever, so much so that when he ordered them to kill at his command, the Kubitts revolted en mass and assassinated him, gaining their freedom. It was then that Vanya noticed them and admiring their fighting spirit, she took them under her protection and transported all of them into the Hollow World, to prevent them from being discovered and executed by the Alphatians because of their crime. Here the Kubitts managed to carve out their own territory due to their courage and cooperation. They live in a small wooded valley in the southern part of Iciria (between the lands of the Traldars and Milenians), where they have built their own kingdom on the branches of the trees, to shelter from terrestrial predators. They prey on creatures (animals and humanoids) that come too close to their hiding places. No civilisation, as yet, has discovered them, and their wood enjoys an ominous fame among the neighbouring Traldar and Milenians, who try to avoid it whenever possible. This is due to the clever deceits perpetuated by the Kubitts, who

constantly dig enormous footprints in the earth and leave warning messages in many languages, in an attempt to make foreigners believe that the land is inhabited by ferocious giants. The Kubitt society is matriarchal due to Vanya's influence: it is ruled by a Queen who selects her husband based on his physical appearance and courage on the battlefield. The Kubitt women occupy the key positions both in the army (where they are the only officers who have the right to negotiate with the strangers) and in the various cities' councils, without offending the men.

## MALPHEGGI SWAMP

<b>Ka</b>	Reptiles, lizardmen, protection of life, knowledge, healing, prosperity, wisdom, magic
<i>Lizard King (Demogorgon)</i>	Reptiles and lizardmen, necromancy, corruption, destruction

### Notes:

1. The Malpheggi are lizardmen that lived in the southern area of the Known World (present day regions of Darokin and Ierendi) from the age of the Great Rain of Fire. Due to the upheavals caused by the earthquakes and volcanic eruptions from 2000 to 1700 BC, the Malpheggi found themselves split between those isolated in the newly formed Ierendi islands and those on the mainland (in the area today known as the Malpheggi Swamp). The continental Malpheggi survived rather well until 1000 BC, when the arrivals of the humanoids and Traldar caused continual danger and drastically reduced their number. The Malpheggi of Ierendi were able to establish a peaceful relationship with the Makai natives that shared the islands, but this came to an end in 900 BC, when the Nithians forcefully conquered the islands. Unfortunately, the Nithians brought with them a parasite deadly to the lizardmen, who began to die generation after generation. When they realised that the Nithians were the cause, the Malpheggi cursed the Nithians and, in 500 BC, revolted against their rulers in a bloody war (intended by the Immortals to punish the Nithians) that destroyed both races. At the last minute, Ka rescued a dozen Malpheggi, cured them of the parasite, and placed them in a swampy region in the forests between the lands of the Gentle Folk, Oltecs and Azcans. It took centuries for the Malpheggi to populate the area, but thanks to Ka's protection and their secretive and cautious existence, they once again became a numerous and respected race. They don't allow anyone to enter or settle in the swamp without their chiefs' explicit consent, and often act as guides or mercenaries for their Azcan and Schattentalfen neighbours.
2. Almost all the Malpheggi worship Ka, as the guardian and divine patron of their species, the one who has given life to the world and the knowledge to control the swamp. They are extremely territorial and Ka's philosophy has taught them to always be cautious. Therefore, the Malpheggi observe and study the movement of their enemies or intruders before confronting them, and always attempt to show no fear or hesitation. Some tribes, however, have been converted to the cult of the Lizard King (Demogorgon), listen to the corrupting promises of his priests, and act in a hostile and warlike way against any entry into their territory, as well as remorselessly raiding the neighbouring lizardmen, Azcan and Oltec communities, in the name of the Immortal of destruction.

## MERRY PIRATE SEAS

<b>Korotiku</b>	Guile, cleverness, subterfuge and cheating, liberty, clear thinking, fun, non-conformism
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### Notes:

1. The Merry Pirates belong to many ethnic groups, all gathered together by Korotiku in the Anathyan Archipelago, by the western Icirian coast. The civilisations from which Korotiku took them to create this piratical civilisation are known for their piracy and are: Traldars of 1000 BC, Thyatians of 200 BC, Ostlanders of 500 AC, and Ierendians (humans and hin) of 700 AC. Over the centuries, the pirates have made numerous raids along the Icirian coast and captured a large number of prisoners, which in some cases became slaves and allies in others. Because of this, there are now fierce Azcans, rebel Milenians, robust Tanagoro, Neathar of many tribes, and even some mysterious Nithians among the Merry Pirates. The Merry Pirates don't have one government – each community follows its own Pirate King, who gained fame on the battlefield and the pirates' respect due to his booty rich, piratical deeds, and the cruelty with which he keeps his men in line. Every year the pirate communities grow, compete against each other, and in some cases are destroyed by internal fights or by the punitive expeditions of the other nations, but the pirates have learnt to not pay much heed to the future and to live their life (which is a transient and undependable thing.) by fully enjoying every moment and seeking satisfaction in as many pleasures as they possibly can, also at the expense of others.
2. The Merry Pirates aren't known for their religiousness, thus it is unsurprising that the only temple present on the island is the one in the centre of Baraga (the most populous city) dedicated to Korotiku, the patron of guile and liberty (as well this pirate community's creator) according to the local beliefs. However, numerous other faiths exist in the pirate islands although they have few clerics and no holy sites. The Merry Pirates don't visit them often, show them much respect, or show deference to one cult in particular. Their religious questions are less formal and more personal, as the pirates are interested only in their own pleasure and saving their own skin and aren't interested in others. Those who pray Immortals do so mostly to call for help in extreme danger or to gain a blessing before a dangerous

undertaking (like attacking an enemy ship or raiding a hostile port). The names that are most frequently heard from the pirates' lips (more associated with profanity than prayer) are typical of the civilisation from which the Merry Pirates came, like the Northmen **Odin**, **Thor** and **Loki** (the latter particularly), or **Halav**, **Saturnius** and **Protius** (Traldars and Milenians), **Vanya** and **Nob Nar** (Jerendians and hin) and even **Sinbad** (a mythical hero of the Merry Pirates' legends).

- For the Merry Pirates, the sea is a wild animal to tame: sometimes friendly, but is frequently unfaithful and treacherous. As such the Old Man of the Sea (**Protius**) is seen as a hostile Immortal, along with **Crakkak**, and there aren't any of Protius's clerics among the pirates, who instead struggle to impose their own will on the sea and storms, resisting and defying Protius. On the other hand, there are followers of Protius and Crakkak among the aquatic creatures who live in the Atlass Ocean and that frequently engage the Merry Pirates in battle for control of the waters and islands.
- There is a civilisation of extremely peaceful Makai, saved by Korotiku from the tremendous earthquakes that devastated south-eastern Brun and the Sea of Dread between 2000 and 1700 BC, before the violent seaquakes that sank it. These Makai were transplanted to a rather large island of the Anathyan archipelago, and their existence is only known to the Merry Pirates, who have never raided them. To the contrary, the Makai's extremely friendly and pleasant nature, and the area's abundance of fruits, plants, fauna and fish, makes the island a preferred port for all the Merry Pirates that seek a shelter, a place where they can repair or careen the ships in safety, or simply where they can find provisions and aid. There is a tacit accord among the Merry Pirates to respect the sanctity of Anathy (which took its name from the archipelago that stretches from Iciria to Jomphur). Any who violate it know that the entire fellowship of the Merry Pirates would never give him respite until he is captured, flayed, and tortured before being fed to the fishes. The Anathyans worship **Oloron** (Odin), Lord of the Skies, **the Old Man of the Sea** (Protius), and **Mother Nature** (Djaea).

## MILENIANS

<b>Halav</b>	War, strategy and tactics, strength and determination, arms and armourers
Petra	Defence of the homeland, protection, courage, resistance, warrior clerics, besieged settlements
<b>Matera (Vanya)</b>	Women, childbirth, fertility, revolt, pride, victory
Protius	Oceans and marine creatures, water, travel, sailors
Zargos (Nyx)	Night, darkness and obscurity, necromancy
Asterius	Trade, wealth, travel, guile, thieves, messengers
Pater (Kagyar)	Crafts, metallurgy, sculpture, construction
Tarastia	Law, order, truth, justice and just vengeance
<i>Tyche</i>	Luck (good or bad), chance, destiny, risk and hazard
Koryis	Peace, mercy, tolerance, slavery, respect of laws
Valerias	Love, beauty, arts, fertility
Khoronus	Flow of time, knowledge, history, philosophy, diplomacy
Ixion	Sun, fire, light, harvest, universal balance
<i>Tiresias</i>	Visions of the future, dreams, poetry and music, astrology, prophecy, legends, magic
<i>Taroyas</i>	Milenia, nobility, authority, power, order, good government
Faunus	Animals, instincts, sensuality, hedonism, drunkenness, revelry
<i>Grammaton (Odin)</i>	Knowledge, guile, wisdom, magic, sky, storms, winds, air
<i>Palson</i>	Tactics, arts, passion, versatility
<i>Noumena</i>	Enigmas, mysteries, magic, tactics, knowledge, strategy and logic
Zirchev	Sylvan races, forests, nature, hunting, survival, outcasts
<i>Thanatos</i>	Death, oblivion, destruction, corruption

### Notes:

- The Milenians live in the south-western region of the Icirian continent, on the coast bathed by the Southern Atlassan Ocean, south of the Traldar and Kubitts and west of the Sea of Yr. The Milenians descend from the Traldars, as in 1000 BC, after the invasion of the Traldars' lands by some of the gnoll fugitives from Nithia, a Traldar King called Milen decided to lead his people overseas to escape the devastation brought by the beast-men following the prophecy that had been received by the clairvoyant Tiresias. After a long, dangerous journey in the Sea of Dread (probably following the Nithian trade routes eastwards, skirting the Isle of Dawn and the northern Ochalese coast), Milen's expedition sighted the Davanian coast. But just before it was able to safely land, it was attacked by a terrible, colossal sea creature (the Behemoth), which sank numerous ships; including the one that Milen sailed in. The survivors scattered, but most were able to flee up river and disembarked in Davanian's interior, in the Forbidden Hills region to the south of the present day Thyatian Hinterlands. Here the Milenians led by General Androsar managed to

reorganise themselves, and after their attempts to return to the sea were quickly frustrated by the behemoth's appearance, Androsar decided to lead his into in the centre of the Meghala Kimata. There, in 995 BC, they founded the Kingdom of Milenia in honour of their dead king. The Milenians created an extremely powerful and prosperous civilisation, which became the longest-lived and largest empire in the southern continent's recent history. Unfortunately, their great prosperity became a disadvantage, as over the centuries the emperors and senators became more and more corrupt and disinterested in their population's welfare, and the military campaigns became disastrous fiascos, with the consequence that most colonies and more distant protectorates declared their independence, which the empire was unable to prevent. In 100 BC, the Immortals Halav and Petra decided to save the Milenian civilisation from extinction and they transferred into the Hollow World the villages inhabited by the more valorous, integral and virtuous Milenians, who still remembered and respected their ancient traditions. The Milenia of the outer world ultimately fell at the end of the I century BC, destroyed by the invasions and assaults of their more barbarous neighbours. Now, only a few Green Coast city-states remain as witness of the ancient Milenian splendour. In the Hollow World, the Milenians returned to a more democratic political system, and the new emperor, Titanion I, quickly strengthened and expanded the borders of the fledgling Milenian Empire to the detriment of its eastern neighbours – the Tanagoro and Jennites. Moreover, with their open access to the sea, the Milenians had to relearn ship design and navigation (things they had forgot in the outer world, given their empire's location), and finally became a powerful naval power due to their clashes with the Merry Pirates and the neighbouring Traldar, from which they took the techniques to build fast and sturdy coastal ships and the best tactics to engage other sailing-ships at sea. The Milenian Empire is divided into a hundred provinces, each of which enjoys great autonomy but remains loyal to the central government of Corisa. It is from here, Milenia's capital, that the Emperor and the 200 Senators (two per province) decide its political, economic, and military direction. Under them are the Citizens (all those that own land or a home), next are the Commoners (those that although free do not have real estate), and finally the Slaves (individuals obligated by law to serve for life other Citizens – usually prisoners of war), in a stratified society governed by rigid laws and by an elaborate, practical though bureaucratic apparatus. Milenians pay great interest to the arts, sciences, and arcane practices, as well as to their body's treatment, and athletic disciplines, pursuing the motto "healthy mind in healthy body" that make them among the wisest and most civilised people of the Hollow World.

2. The Milenians worship many Immortals, and in some cases pay divine honour to past heroes or emperors, even if these aren't true Immortals. At the head of its pantheon are the divine consorts Halav and Petra, responsible for Milenia's rebirth in the Hollow World and therefore considered the new Milenia's guardians. In the outer world Khoronus, Ixion, and Valerias were the principal Immortals, and Halav and Petra were seen as little more than former heroes. They have, since the time they acted to preserve the Milenian culture, been recognised by the Milenian priests as the Milenians' true patrons and have replaced the old cults at the pantheon's head (the old cults still have a presence in Milenia). The cults of Matera (Vanya), Protius, and Zargos (Nyx) along with those of Halav and Petra constitute the Sacred Pentagon, which is the group of the Immortals with major followings in Milenia. These five have at least one major temple in each city, and many of them have also personal oracles that occasionally relate their Immortal's will to the Milenian followers.
3. Matera (Vanya) has a dual identity with the Milenians. For the men, she is simply the guardian of childbirth and fertility and the patroness of midwives, while for the women she is the patroness of female strength and the quiet revolt against the men. She aims to weaken the Milenian Empire's power from within (as, in her mortal life, she was a Milenian slave), so that the women can assume the reins of government due to the charm ability that she grants her adepts. Given this, her cult is organised like a secret society, with a friendly façade to outsiders that hides a compact network of conspirators that promote Vanya's ideals of revenge and quiet conquest.
4. The Zargosians worship Zargos (Nyx) as a divine prophet of a new age, in which night dominates day. The Zargosians believe that the strength of magic is linked to the darkness, as taught by Zargos, and that the red sun of the Hollow World hinders magic research and the development of new spells. This is an attempt to create magic which will hide the sun or prolong the darkness, to augment their magical potential. The Zargosians are all mages and clerics faithful to Nyx and for the most part obsessed by necromancy. Due to their occult studies, they are feared by most Milenians, and in some provinces they are hounded and executed for their dark practices. However, as they haven't yet acted against the Senate or the Empire, and frequently hold funereal positions (take care of the dead and officiate at funerals), they are normally allowed to continue in their studies and avoided by most Milenians, even if the other cults and the Senate constantly keep their eyes on them.
5. HWR3: *The Milenian Empire* proposes the Twelve Watchers as patrons of arts and crafts in Milenia, but it is clearly an error as they didn't exist for all the period in which the Milenian Empire was present in the outer world. They have therefore been replaced by Pater (Kagyar), who was already the Immortal patron of the arts with the Nithians, ancestors of the Milenians, with the name of Ptahr (mutated later into Pater by the Milenians).
6. Asterius (patron of trade and prosperity) is the most followed Immortal of the minor orders, along with Tarastia (patroness of law and justice) and Pater (Kagyar), as they embody the principal values on which the Milenian Empire

is based, in a self-sustaining virtuous cycle: order allows the work that generates the wealth that is kept thanks to the justice.

7. Tyche was introduced as the patroness of chance and fortune, and she enjoys a large following among the Milenians, a people for which luck is very important (especially the lower classes).
8. Koryis is the Milenians' patron of peace and social harmony, and is also viewed as the patron of slaves. The Milenians permit his cult as its philosophy urges tolerance and the respect of law, thus though it calls for mercy and kindness to slaves, it also exhorts the slaves to not rebel against their masters or the established order, and await the time when they are judged worthy of freedom and their fair work is repaid. A small group of slaves – the Kleonites – don't follow Koryis's peaceful philosophy, and have organised a secret resistance network ready to rise and fight against their tyrannical masters. The Kleonites pray to **Saturnius** (patron of liberty and rebellion) and **Bachraeus** (patron of vengeance and hate), who however don't have any temples within the Milenian Empire's borders (as both cults are outlawed) and whose philosophies frequently cause violent quarrels within the resistance. Bachraeus also has some followers among the rebels of every social class, including some of the thirteen members of the King of Milenia's sect, which plots to overthrow the Senate and take power, as a way to restore the ancient dynastic Traldar traditions of the kingdom's dawn.
9. Khoronus, Ixion and Valerias are the three Immortals that greatly resent the entrance of Halav and Petra as principal patrons of the new Milenian Empire. While on the outer world it was them that occupied the pantheon's zenith, in the Hollow World their cults weren't able to carve out the same position. Khoronus and Valerias enjoy a good following only among the more erudite citizens, artists and academics, while Ixion (associated with the seasons, time, harvests, and fire) has a stronger base among the commoners and the farmers.
10. Taroyas and Tiresias have a large following among the Milenians as they were still remembered for their legendary deeds in the outer world: the former is the patron of the empire, nobility and the governors, while the latter is associated with oracles, fate and magic.
11. Despite the information in HWR3, we have removed Palartarkan as the Milenians' patron of magic and knowledge since he is normally an Alpathian Immortal with no followers outside of Alpathia. His replacements, inevitably, are Grammaton (Odin), a member of the Nithian pantheon from which the Milenians' originated, Tiresias, whose prophecy formed the basis for the Kingdom of Milenia's foundation in Davania, and Noumena. While Noumena and Grammaton are associated with academic magic, that is the arcane art learnt by studying at the Academy of the Arcane, Tiresias instead is the patron of peasant mages, who have either spontaneously discovered magic (sorcerers), or who follow the teachings of local wizards, without entering the Academy.
12. Over the last centuries, Palson has become a national hero. His cult (very similar to Valerias's) has acquired numerous followers, mostly among the artists and rich hedonists. Of similar nature is Faunus's cult, which is much more popular among the lower classes as the patron of the herdsmen, as well as sensuality, fertility, and drunkenness.
13. Zirchev is the patron of outcasts, woods and those that live in contact with nature. This explains why his cult is less popular in Milenia, despite being an ally of Halav and Petra: as he is normally associated with the poorest classes and outcasts and his cult only finds adepts among the commoners that live in the wilder areas.
14. Besides those of Bachraeus and Saturnius, the cult of Thanatos is also outlawed in Milenia. This, however, has not prevented his priests from founding a sect that works in utmost secrecy within the empire. From time to time, it allies with different factions in the struggle for power, to spread destruction and chaos within Milenia. The Thanatosites have a hidden temple in the empire's wilderness and periodically perform horrible rituals that precede sacrifices of blood. They also profane the other Milenian Immortals' holy sites, crimes that they later try to blame on others to inflame hatred.
15. The minotaurs that live in underground and among the ruins of the Milenian city worship several entropic Immortals; among which are Thanatos, **Kiranjo** and **Jammudaru**.

## NEATHAR

<b>Wotan (Odin)</b>	Government, authority, storms, sky, guile, knowledge, wisdom
<i>Tyr (Ixion)</i>	War, strength, light, sun, fire, heroism, balance and order
<i>Frigg (Terra)</i>	Creation and protection of all forms of life, birth, prosperity and fertility, nature, earth

### Notes:

1. The Neathar are one of the three primal races from which all the human civilisations on Mystara have originated. They were the most numerous and spread out (along with the Oltecs) all over the world. The Neathar have Caucasian features (pale or tanned skin, eyes and hair of many colour varieties) are a Stone Age civilisation. The first Neathar tribes were transported by Ka and Odin into the Hollow World in 3500 BC, when they realised that the original groups had begun to disappear as their inevitable progress was transforming them into diverse ethnic groups. Placed in central Iciria, they spread through the continent's centre, taming the herds and fighting dinosaurs and ferocious wild animals. They were later surrounded by the other races that the Immortals transported into the Hollow World over

the subsequent centuries. The Neathar compete with them to remain independent and the masters of their own lands. The Neathar are divided into hundreds of settled tribes, each with their own social, religious, and martial customs. Most the Neathar tribes are patriarchal, although there are some matriarchal communities where the female Immortals predominate. In all the Neathar tribes the warrior is the predominant figure, capable of turning the environment and society to his will, protecting his people from danger, and leading them to prosperity. The Neathar speak hundreds of different dialects, and no tribe has a written form of the Neathar language. The Neathar civilisation is much more backward (Stone Age) than its neighbours, and because the tribes haven't united, but remain fiercely independent (or in the worst cases enemies), the Neathar haven't become Icaria's predominant civilisation, although they are the continent's most numerous ethnicity.

- As the Neathar have so many sub races and independent tribes, it is obvious that the Neathar Immortals number nearly all those actually present on Mystara, even if the above list only shows the triad that was worshipped by the first Neathar. The *Hollow World* box set moreover lists **Thor, Loki, Diulanna, Faunus** and **Palartarkan** as Neathar Immortals, and shows Immortals who appeared after the admission of the Neathar into the Hollow World could become part of the pantheon and gain followers without going against the Spell of Preservation. Only a few of the Thousand Neathar Tribes have been named in official sources, they are (along with the acronym of the Mystaran supplement they appear in):

- |                                     |                   |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| ❖ Alatians (DotE)                   | ❖ Toralai (HW)    |
| ❖ Balarai (HW)                      | ❖ Valgrai (HW)    |
| ❖ Hiakrai (HW)                      | ❖ Valemen (DA1–4) |
| ❖ Makai (HW)                        | ❖ Yanifey (DotE)  |
| ❖ Proto–Ethengarians (HW and GAZ12) |                   |

- The Afridhi (DA4), Antalians (HW), Dravi (X9), Peshwah (DA1–4), Taymora (GAZ1 and PC3) and Varelyans (*Dragon*) are also pure Neathars, but have been separated from the Thousand Tribes as they are the only civilisations that advanced to the Bronze and Iron Ages and, thus, have become truly separate from the other Neathar tribes in the Hollow World. These six civilisations have, almost certainly, been saved by the Immortals and placed in some unknown area of the Hollow World (probably one of the continents not described in the *Hollow World* box set).

## NITHIANS

<b>Rathanos</b>	Fire, energy, power, male supremacy, pride
Pflarr	Magic, knowledge, protection, magical constructs
<i>Maat</i>	Justice, order, virtue, honesty, integrity, honour, loyalty, redemption
Horon/ <i>Orisis</i> (Ixion)	Light, sun, war, heroism, fight evil, balance and order, life cycle, rebirth
<i>Isiris/Hathor</i> (Valerias)	Love, passion, arts, beauty, protection, charity, fertility
Ptahr (Kagyar)	Crafts, metallurgy, sculpture, construction
Amon ( <i>Odin</i> )	Sky, storms, winds, air, guile, knowledge, wisdom
<i>Nithys</i> ( <i>Protius</i> )	Water, river Nithia, life, travel
<i>Mut</i> ( <i>Terra</i> )	Prosperity, fertility, birth, earth, shepherds and farmers
Bastet	Fortune, wealth, instinct, protection, felines
<i>Mabes</i> ( <i>Ninfangle</i> )	Hunting, battle, bravery, travel, rakasta and felines
<i>Zephyr</i> ( <i>Asterius</i> )	Travel, trade, guile, thieves, messengers
<i>Kepher</i> ( <i>Noumena</i> )	Enigmas, mysteries, magic, tactics, knowledge, strategy and logic
<i>Chardastes</i>	Medicine, healing, health, purification
<i>Nuptys</i> ( <i>Nyx</i> )	Funeral rites, necromancy, darkness and obscurity, night, secrets
<b>Thanatos</b>	Death, oblivion, corruption
Ranivorus	Madness, destruction, hate, gnoll
<i>Apophis</i> ( <i>Bachraeus</i> )	Betrayal, vengeance, hate, poison, serpents

### Notes:

- The Nithians are a mixed Neathar–Oltec group that lived in the modern day Alasiyan basin from 2000 to 500 BC. From simple Bronze Age tribes, in just under 500 years, the Nithians managed to advance technologically to the Iron Age. Benefiting from the guidance of great charismatic leaders who were able to unify the tribes until they became an empire under Chardastes I. The rise of the Nithian civilisation as such began in 1500 BC, and the age of its maximum expansion was between the XI and VIII centuries BC, when the Empire of Nithia had colonies that stretched from the far-off Savage Coast in the west to the Isle of Dawn in the east, and from Norwold in the north to the Davanian coast in the south. Unfortunately, the enlightened kingdom of the Pharaohs provoked the envy of the entropic powers, which increased the more powerful nobles and priests' thirst for power to corrupt their minds and bring hate and dissent among the rulers of the Nithian provinces. Thus, Nithia was devastated by civil war during the VI century BC,

and to deal with all his critics at once, Pharaoh Taphose completely converted to entropy, which gave him enough power to unleash terrific tragedies against his enemies. It was at this point that Rathanos and Pflarr, disgusted by the betrayal of the empire's more highly placed bureaucrats, chose to prevent Taphose's madness from causing a new world-wide cataclysm, and along with the other Nithian Immortals caused the empire's collapse with the use of pestilence, climatic changes, invasions, and internal revolts, saving only the Isle of Dawn's Kingdom of Thothia, which had remained true to Rathanos. When Nithia was on the point of collapse, Rathanos and Pflarr preserved the city of Ranak (the dead Taphose's stronghold), removing any inhabitant infected by Entropy, and transferred it into the Hollow World to preserve the Nithian civilisation. Later, in accord with the Immortals that formed the group of the Guardians of Nithia, any memory of the Nithians was magically removed from the minds of all those that had had anything to do with the Empire and over time the Nithian ruins were lost or were attributed to other civilisations. In the Hollow World, the first Pharaoh of the new Kingdom of Nithia, Kepher, faced serious internal dissidence, but was finally unified and brought order to the nation after discovering and destroying an entropic artefact that threatened to bring chaos and destruction to the Nithians. Later, due to his epic feat Kepher became an Immortal (Noumena) and his successor, Tut-Ah, continued with the way mapped out by Kepher. He colonised the surrounding regions and returned the Kingdom of Nithia to its ancient splendour. Unfortunately, the successors of the first two Pharaohs weren't as enlightened, and Nithia again found itself faced with a civil war when Thanatos provoked the Pharaoh Kifara and Prince Hathep of the northern city of Dashur into a silly fight for power. At the end of the civil war, Ranak was reduced to such ruin, that the capital was moved to the new city of Tarthis, and Nithia was divided into two kingdoms, the Delta Kingdom (Lower Nithia) and the Kingdom of the South (High Nithia). By common accord, the nobles decided that the Pharaoh (as the Immortals' representative) would continue to rule over the two Kingdoms of Nithia, but would now be elected by a council of priests from both kingdoms. Once again Rathanos and Pflarr had to intervene to prevent Taphose's ancient magic from causing major disasters in the Hollow World's future, and therefore completely blocked access to all the highly destructive spells of the old Nithian Empire. Nithia is now a powerful and prosperous nation divided into county-like regions called nomes and ruled by the nomarchs, who must firstly obey the Pharaoh and then their own King. The Nithian nation is found in Iciria's south-eastern corner. Its borders are constantly patrolled to prevent invasions by the neighbouring Jennites and Tanagoro to the west, while to the east the massive mountain range that separates it from the Sea of Rax is a natural barrier to any danger. The northern border instead is made up by the Lake Menkor, which separates the northern brute-men and the sophisticated Hutaaka from Nithia, forming another natural barrier that really defends the Nithian Kingdoms. The Pharaoh holds the most important office and has absolute power over both of Nithia's kingdoms and their sovereigns, as the earthly representative of the divine powers that watch over Nithia (particularly Rathanos and Pflarr). The population is divided into castes: Nobles (5% of the Nithians, subdivided into Priests, Governors, and Military), Commoners (40% of the population, made up of landowners or businessmen, the richest of which can manipulate even the nobles), Peasants (the half of the Nithians is composed of serfs tied to the land they work, only a rank above the slaves), and Slaves (of two types, Captives or Hereditary: the former are all those that have been captured in war, the latter are children of slaves; both the types don't have rights and are viewed as a family's possessions, and could therefore be sold or put to death by the master without anyone objecting).

2. The Nithians worship an extremely large pantheon of Immortals, at the head of which is Rathanos (or Ra), absolute lord of the universe and creation, and Pflarr, lord of magic and knowledge. All the other Immortals are subject to the will of these two (mostly worshipped by nobles) but have found numerous followers among both Commoners and Farmers. In particular Ixion, Valerias, Amon, Ptahr and Maat are valued by all the castes. Ixion is worshipped as both Horon (the lord of the sun, balance and war) and as Orisis (patron of the dead and eternity). Valerias assumes the dual roles of Ixion's wife and mother as Isiris (Immortal of beauty, love and the arts) and Hathor (Immortal of fertility, protection and charity). Ptahr (Kagyar), Immortal of mysteries and construction, has followers both among the middle classes and nobles, as his knowledge is linked with the construction of both pyramids (vehicle for Immortality) and monoliths (artefacts of great power among the Nithians). Amon (Odin), lord of the skies and knowledge, and Maat, Immortal of Justice and Virtue, are extremely loved by all social classes, and have great temples in the kingdom's major cities.
3. Bastet, catlike patroness of wealth, fortune and guardian of the Nithians, and Mahes (Ninangle), lion-like patron of both the Nithians and rakasta, and linked with battle and hunting, are considered the guardians of the living and the greatest enemies (after Horon and Rathanos) of the Immortals of chaos. They were created by Ra to hunt and hold at bay the servants of chaos, and receive equal regard from each social class. As such, the Nithians frequently build statues or obelisks dedicated to the two Immortals particularly in the wilderness or at city gates, and place statues with their features in their own tomb to scare away evil creatures and keep them away from their homes (both living and dead). Likewise, cats and great felines are considered holy and powerful talismans to keep at bay misfortune, negative energy and the undead.



4. Nithys (Protius), lord of water and patron of the Nithia River (which is the Nithians' source of life), Mut (Terra), Mother Earth, patron of harvests, animals and fertility, and Zephyr (Asterius), patron of travellers, messengers, merchants and thieves, only have followers among the Farmers and the Commoners.
5. The cults of Kephher and Chardastes (patrons of knowledge, learning and medicine, and the royal line) are limited to groups of sages and nobles.
6. Nuptys (Nyx), Immortal of darkness and necromancy, has an overt cult, as she is not viewed as an intrinsically evil Immortal. Her priests have the tasks of performing funeral rites along with those of Orisis and of completing the ritual of mummification to eternally preserve the corpses of the most important nobles (plus the Pharaoh).
7. The cults of Thanatos and Ranivorus are prohibited in the Kingdom of Nithia, even if, despite past purges, they continue to find followers, due mostly to the influence of the Towers of Sekhaba and Soth – two powerful great annelids paralysed by the Immortals. Their extremities jut out of the Nithian deserts and emanate a psychical lure that attract unaware victims to the towers where they are converted to follow the mad plans of Thanatos and Ranivorus. The cult of Apophis (Bachraeus) is also outlawed in the kingdom, and his cultists have already suffered a scorching defeat at the famous Battle of Apophis, when thousands of Nithians, corrupted by the entropic power of Apophis and led by his clerics, attempted to ambush the southward travelling Pharaoh, but were stopped by the elite imperial guard.

## OLTECS

<b>Otzitiotl (Ixion)</b>	Sun, light, fire, strength, war, heroism, knowledge, preserving the balance & universal order
Kalaktatla (Ka)	Protection of life, healing, preservation of knowledge, prosperity, wisdom
<i>Ninsun</i>	Fertility, agriculture, prosperity, magic, knowledge, wisdom

### Notes:

1. The Oltecs are the second of the three original civilisations from which all modern humans evolved. They have Amerindian traits (copper or dark skin, prominent cheek bones and dark hair) and originate from Brun. Due to their discovery of copper and bronze, the Oltec managed to differentiate themselves from the other Brunian tribes and quickly formed alliances that allowed them to control a large area of present day Sind (then a richly wooded, fertile plain). Later, the Oltecs founded a kingdom and conquered the tribes of a similar ethnicity that lived by their borders, shared their artistic and technological discoveries with them, and established a more cultural than military assimilation. Only one tribe remained particularly intolerant of the Oltec domination, the so-called Sons of Azca (the name that this Oltec tribe gave to Otzitiotl, King of the Sun): over the five centuries that followed their conquest, which they opposed with such a gruelling resistance that in 3500 BC they finally gained their independence from the Oltec Empire and founding the Azcan Kingdom, constantly vying with the neighbouring Oltecs. Furthermore, the Oltecs were the first among the civilisations of the Blackmoorian period to become explorers, founding colonies in every part of Mystara without being skilled navigators, probably by using magical portals created by the more expert Oltec spellcasters and the Rainbow Path, a magical phenomenon of planetary capacity that is thought to have been created by the greatest mage of Oltec history in his journey to Immortality – Ninsun. Among its most important (remembered) colonies are those of the Savage Coast (ancestors of the modern Los Guardianos), Oceania (from which sprang the Oceanians that now live in Cestia), Arypt (that gave life to the glorious Katapeca civilisation, which later became extinct and is probably conserved somewhere in the Hollow World – see PC2: *Top Ballista*), and Skothar (ancestors of the Jennites that arrived in western Skothar shortly before the cataclysm). In 3000 BC, the Great Rain of Fire threatened the Oltec civilisation among others. To protect their favourites, Ixion and Ka magically transported them into the Hollow World, placing them in a rich area of wooded hills to the south of the Neathar plain and near to the northern mountainsides of the World's Spine, the imposing mountain range which divides the Hollow World's two hemispheres. Here the Oltecs have continued to live peacefully and prosper, despite the pressures and the Azcans' (that live beyond the forests and the swamps of Malpheggi) sporadic raids. They are an extremely advanced bronze age civilisation (from both a cultural and magical point of view), which bases its prosperity on agriculture and on both internal and external trade (with the Kogolor and Neathar) of the precious minerals extracted from the hills and mountains, both manufactured and finished with the mastery of the Oltec craftsmen. The Oltecs are governed by a monarch called simply the Oltec, who lives in the capital Manac, and is assisted by the Great Priest of Otzitiotl. Each community is ruled by a Prince (an inherited noble title), who enjoys great autonomy and also acts based on the advice of Otzitiotl's priests, and who have pledged to annually send to the Oltec as a sign of submissive their tributes, labour, and citizens to perform their national service in the royal army. The power is in the hands of the Oltec men, although women aren't treated as inferiors and can rise to prestigious positions as nobles, priestesses, or mages (a career for which they are extremely regarded and valued).
2. **Pax** (called perhaps Paxculli) was once present among the Oltec Immortals and formed a triad with Otzitiotl and Kalaktatla, but following her disappearance her cult perished. Her functions were split up between Kalaktatla, Ninsun,

and mostly Otzitiotl, who then became the leader of the Oltec religion (these Oltecs don't consider themselves the Sons of Otzitiotl, i.e. Sons of the Sun – the same title that was given to the first Azcans).

## ORCS, KRUGEL

<b>Karaash</b>	Humanoids, war, victory, conquest, tactics, strength
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### Notes:

1. The Krugel orcs derive from a band of orcsish cavalry that managed to survive the defeat of Sardal Pass where the horde of Queen Ubdala of the Broken Lands was routed by the dwarves in 492 BC. The orcs led by the fearless Krugel were the final survivors. Karaash was impressed by their military preparations and bravery so, just before the dwarves' final attack, he chose to save them and transported them into the Hollow World, in a flat, semi-arid area to the east of the Neathar, Oltecs and Icevale elves. Here the orcs, led by Krugel, used their knowledge to create a society based on the raising of herds of livestock and horses, and on raiding their human neighbours. Following their leader's death, these humanoids became the Horde of Krugel, and are now known as Krugel orcs by all the region's cultures, as well as by the distant Azcans and the Schattentalen. They frequently enter into dubious trade relations with the latter two (these two peoples pay the orcs to raid their enemies). The Krugel orcs are very faithful to Karaash's (who they see as the saviour of humanoids) dogma and live in constant symbiosis with their horses, which they look after and protect as if they are their most precious possessions. The Krugel are surrounded by enemies: to the north the Antalians, to the south the Kogolor, to the west the Neathar and Oltecs, but all this does is kindle their pride and desire for victory and conquest.

## SHAHJAPUR

Shahjapur (a culture described in the adventure HWA3, *Nightstorm*) is a state that is found on the island closest to the continent of Jomphur. This civilisation developed from the Sind of the V century AC, when the Chambahara (shapechangers) took power and threatened to dramatically change the structure of the Sindhi civilisation, so much so that the Immortals decided to preserve some of the Sindhi by moving the half of the population uncorrupted by the Chambahara into the Hollow World. Here the Sindhi were ruled by the noble caste, which nominated their most powerful and richest member as the first Great Moghul (High King) of the nation of Shahjapur. Ever since, The Great Moghul has always reigned in complete solitude, firmly holding the sole political power and control of the country's major riches. Shahjapur has become a strong, united nation (unlike the outer world Sind), even though full of extreme contradictions. The Shahjapuri civilisation is rigidly divided into castes, just like that of the Sindhi from which they derive. At the top is the noble caste, rich individuals who obey the Moghul's will and live in luxury, trying to remain in the sovereign's good graces without renouncing their own lifestyle, vices, or advantages granted by belonging to the superior caste. Beneath the nobles is the priestly caste, which is divided among the pantheist, philosopher and specialist clerics, whose economic condition derives from their type of philosophy or the order to which they adhere (although the richest never attain the nobles' opulence). The rest of the population (commoner and pariah) is instead gripped by misery and try to survive despite the hardships and abuses of power. They follow the philosophy of the samdu (see Chapter 5: Philosophies and Movements). The Shahjapur nevertheless are much more fatalistic than the Sindhi of the outer world, as their living conditions are worse and don't give them the optimism to deal with their present and future problems. The pantheon of Shahjapur comprises practically all the existing Immortals in the Multiverse, with the exception of a few niche Immortals; so they have not been listed here. This civilisation has an extremely polytheistic religion, in which one Immortal can appear in several forms, each one to show a different aspect of its personality.

## TANAGORO

<b>Korotiku</b>	Liberty, nonconformism, guile, cleverness, wisdom, subterfuge, cheating, clear thinking
<i>Pyro</i> (Ixion)	Sun, fire, order, knowledge, strength, preserving the balance, banish the darkness
<i>Ashanti</i> (Valerias)	Love, passion, desire, beauty, arts charity, fertility
<i>Djaea</i>	Survival, natural balance, respect of life, druidism
<i>Nicktu</i> (Nyx)	Darkness and obscurity, night, necromancy, secrets

### Notes:

1. The Tanagoro are an ethnic group of Negroid traits (black skin, usually frizzy black hair), the most direct descendants of the so-called Tangor Man, or the first example of Homo sapiens that lived on Mystara millennia ago. They appeared in central Skothar over ten thousand years ago, and spread out and prospered mainly in the continent's southern region (modern day Tangor), becoming a prolific civilisation. During the Age of Blackmoor, the Tanagoro had no contact with the more evolved Blackmoorians, separated from them by the great mountain chains of central Skothar. Due to this they remained free to colonise the southern coast and islands. However, following the Great Rain of Fire, the Skotharian continent was so devastated by eruptions, seaquakes and earthquakes that the Tanagoro died in their millions. Worried for their survival, their patron Korotiku and his ally Ka transported numerous Tanagoro communities into the Hollow World, into an uninhabited plain – full of forests – in southern Icaria, on the coast of

the Sea of Yr. On the surface world the Tanagoro survived, but their civilisation changed and became a powerful nation of explorers and skilled sailors, so Korotiku and Ka are perfect choices. The Tanagoro of the Hollow World are a race with a relatively backward technology (Bronze Age), especially in respect to their neighbours (the Jennites to the south-east, Nithians to the east and Milenians to the west are all Iron Age cultures with great magical knowledge), nevertheless they have gained the respect of their warlike neighbours due to a mix of courage and strength that stems from the numerous warriors present in each community. They withdraw in the face of the invaders' advances only to strike en masse while they are marching or distracted while pillaging or in battle with other enemies. The Tanagoro aren't warlike by nature, but are proud and extremely skilful warriors and given of great resistance and tenacity, and feared by the other civilisations for their indomitable character. They like to lead a simple life in contact with nature, have a subsistence economy based on agriculture and farming, and are ruled at a local level by noble village heads, who answer to the Great King of the Tanagoro. The position of Great King is hereditary, while the nobles are raised to nobility based on the worthy actions of their family or the individual concerned in the service of the Great King. They can be stripped of their title and power by the King if they are proven to be corrupt or weak.

- All the Tanagoro are followers of their great patron Korotiku, leader of the pantheon. He is part of a holy triad along with Pyro and Ashanti (the Tanagoro names of Ixion and Valerias), who represent the most holy aspects of Tanagoro spiritual life and myths: freedom, strength and fertility. In Tanagoro society, the males dominate the females like the two male Immortals dominate Ashanti, even though the women are recognised to hold the power of procreation, which is held sacred and vital to humanity's survival. As such, the men hold the positions of power in Tanagoro society, while the women remain at home to carry out more menial and less demanding tasks, according to the custom that would like the man to be the thinking mind that should rule the family and the nation to promote the prosperity and security of the woman and future generations.
- Among the Tanagoro the cult of Mother Nature (Djaea) is popular, given the importance that they hold in communing with nature and the holiness of their environment.
- The Tanagoro cult views Nicktu (Nyx) as Pyro's twin sister, who represents the sun's exact opposite, i.e. darkness, cold, and death. She deserves respect, according to the Tanagoro, as she presides over death and guards the damned spirits. Thus, her priests are feared by the Tanagoro, kept at arm's length, considered bringers of misfortune, and forced to live on the villages' margins, near to the burial areas where they pay homage her to satisfy her thirst for spirits. Nicktu is the pantheon's negative figure who balances those positive. Her priests are given protection and aid by some of the Tanagoro as long as they don't do anything bad. However the cases aren't uncommon in which these necromancers have kept an entire village in check with strength and coercion, due to their own powers and, especially, their control of undead – reanimated by their Immortal's negative energy.

## TRALDAR

<i>Ixion</i>	Luce, sun, fire, strength, war, heroism, knowledge, balance
<i>Valerias</i>	Love, passion, desire, beauty, arts, fertility, protection
<i>Halav</i>	War, strategy, tactics, strength, determination, weapons, sacrifice, combat humanoids
<i>Petra</i>	Homeland defence, protection, courage, resistance, virtue, warrior clerics, besieged settlements
<i>Khoronus</i>	Flow of time, knowledge, history, authority, good government, patience, diplomacy
<i>Grammaton (Odin)</i>	Guile, knowledge, wisdom, magic, sky, storms, winds, air
<i>Gorm</i>	Justice, war, storms
<i>Madarua</i>	Women warriors, courage, natural cycle, fertility
<i>Saturnius</i>	Liberty, independence, adventurers, pirates
<i>Mother Earth (Terra)</i>	Creation and protection of all forms of life (animals and plants), balance of the life cycle, nature, birth, prosperity, fertility, earth, shepherds, farmers
<i>Tyche</i>	Luck (good or bad), chance, destiny, risk and hazard
<i>Protius</i>	Oceans and marine creatures, water
<i>Asterius</i>	Travel, trade, guile, merchants, thieves, messengers
<i>Pater (Kagyar)</i>	Crafts, metallurgy, sculpture, construction
<i>Zirchev</i>	Hunting, survival, sylvan races, animals, nature, outcasts
<i>Faunus</i>	Sylvan races, animals, instincts and sensuality, drunkenness, revelry, hedonism, poetry and music
<i>Chardastes</i>	Purification, medicine, health, healing, life cycle
<i>Thanatos</i>	Death, destruction, oblivion, decadence, corruption

### Notes:

- The Traldar live in the south-western region of Icaria, on the coast between Azca to the north and Milenia to the south, a few kilometres from the Anathyan Archipelago and the forests of the Kubitts. The Traldar are a people who originate from a group of Nithians that colonised the area of present-day Karameikos at the start of the age of Imperial

Nithia (1500 BC). After a generation, numerous calamities had fallen upon the Traldar, which remained cut off from the heart of the Empire and unable to effectively face the problems of scarcity, thunderstorms, revolts, and pestilence that were present. Over a century, the Traldar Nithians regressed so far they faced extinction, but with the intervention of the nearby Hutaaka, they recovered, even if they became ruled by the more advanced (although numerically inferior) Hutaaka. Therefore, by 1300 BC the Traldar civilisation was transformed, progressively losing its Nithian characteristics and assuming instead those of the Taymora (the region's original inhabitants) and Neathar slaves with whom they mixed. The Traldar divided the region into autonomous kingdoms, each of which must, nevertheless, obey a Governor sent by the ruling Hutaaka, who renamed the region Traldaras. The Traldar became a fierce, cultured people, and began to explore the surrounding regions, found colonies, and trade with the Nithians. They developed a true reverence for heroic figures and myths about the epic deeds of both mortals and Immortals. Unfortunately, when in 1000 BC the gnolls fleeing Nithia invaded the Traldar land en masse, they were unable to stop the formidable humanoid's advance, and were abandoned by the Hutaaka, who preferred to lock themselves away in their valley and isolate themselves from any invasion attempt. In the desperate fight that followed, many kingdoms capitulated, and while the resistance led by the heroic Halav, Petra and Zirchev tried to organise the defence of the remaining cities, some of the Traldars patrons (Ixion and Khoronus) transported many Traldar cities into the Hollow World in 990 BC to avoid any risk of the civilisation's annihilation. Since then, the proud Hollow World Traldar have stubbornly rebuilt their civilisation, cherishing the myth of the Hero as the inspiration for all their life, and have created a society in which there are no castes, and in which only those who demonstrate true valour and bravery can become a respected leader. This unwritten rule is the only way that, in effect, permits women to become leaders and gain rank equal to that of the men, as normally Traldar society forbids the fair sex from owning land and ruling without a husband. All Traldar (male and female) have martial training from a young age to become skilled warriors and to defend themselves and homeland (considered holy and inviolable) and due to this, the Traldar have more trained citizens and superior weapons than any other Hollow World civilisation. However, the fact that the Traldar lands are split into independent kingdoms, which are frequently rivals and at loggerheads with each other (as happened in the outer world), has prevented the civilisation from becoming a true empire and imposing their military superiority on the neighbouring nations (Milenia to the south and Azca to the north). It also exposes the coastal Traldar cities to the continual plundering of the Merry Pirates, which exploit their naval superiority in the high seas and the Traldar's inferior naval technology to their advantage. Now and then, a charismatic leader is able to unite the kingdoms and react to a grave danger that threatens the entire region, but the rise of a High King is a rare event that is seen only at desperate times (about once every 300 or 400 years) and currently the Traldar are not in this situation. The Traldar trade with the Milenians (who they respect) and with the Schattentalfen (who they're suspicious of). They are in open conflict with the Azcans (who they despise) and the Merry Pirates, who represent the only serious and constant threat to their cities.

2. Before they came into the Hollow World the Traldar pantheon didn't include Halav, Petra and Zirchev among its ranks. These three forcefully entered into their legends, and their surface descendants' memories (Traladarans and Darokinians) only following they hunted down the gnolls in 940 BC and the trio's ascension to Immortality due to their exploits. Halav, Petra, and Zirchev have become known to the Hollow World's Traldar since becoming Immortal: the first two have gained great recognition due to their heroic exploits, and their sects became more important than those of the more ancient and familiar Immortals, that the Traldar had taken from the Nithian and Taymora pantheons (ethnic groups from which they descend), while Zirchev's cult has remained centred on the inhabitants of the wildernesses and sylvan creatures. According to Traldar mythology, it was Ixion (the pantheon's head) who inspired the trio's deeds that let them to be a match for the beast-men, and lead the Traldar in the new world where they rebuilt their strength (this is how the Traldar explain their passage from the outer world to the Hollow World).
3. There are thirteen Immortals that make up the original core of the surface Traldar's pantheon. Ixion (associated with the sun) is viewed as the universal creator, as well as the patron of strength, war and heroism, and he is the husband of Valerias (associated with the moon), lady of life, love and courage. The divine couple have many relatives that make up the rest of the original pantheon. Khoronus is Ixion's wise father who has gave his son the dominion of the sky when he became too old, he is a symbol of the flow of time and the passage from the old Taymoran pantheon, which Khoronus commanded, to the new Traldar pantheon. Grammaton is Ixion's younger brother; an Immortal associated with the sky, magic, and storms (of Nithian and Neathar derivation). Terra, sister of Valerias, is Grammaton's wife, associated with fertility, ctonian cults, the seasons, nature, and the life cycle. Protius (another Taymoran Immortal) is the third son of Khoronus, and brother of Grammaton and Ixion, who (according to legend) when he saw that his father had given Ixion the rule of the land and mortals, and to Grammaton the rule of the skies, chose to take part in the division of creation: he was given sovereignty over water and marine creatures, and dwells in the ocean depths from where his voice is heard. Thanatos, Khoronus's fourth and final child, remained outside of the division of creation and, out of spite, hid in the bowels of the land and became the lord of the Afterworld. His father gave him

dominion over the spirits of those who died from cowardice, or without having paid sufficient homage to the other Immortals. Tyche is the mother of the ancient Immortals, Khoronus's wife, and the only one capable of determining the fortune or ruin of mortals and Immortals. Because his judgements did not favour his sons, Khoronus was in a sense blind to justice, so that he could judge with his mind rather than his heart, and for this Tyche has never forgiven him and now lives apart from the rest of the Immortals, sitting on the highest mountain of the world from where she weaves the fates of all creation's inhabitants. Pater (Kagyar) is Valerias's crippled brother, disfigured but with great artistic and creative skill, and as such became the Immortals' Craftsman. Saturnius, Asterius, and Chardastes are Ixion and Valerias's children: the first (a Taymoran Immortal) is linked with freedom and independence, is cherished by the Traldar, and represents the youthful urges of rebellion, adventure and opposition to order; Asterius is associated with the night, travel, guile and both merchants and thieves as two sides of the same coin; Chardastes (of Nithian derivation), is the Immortal of healing, purification, and medicine. Completing the list is Faunus, son of Grammaton and Terra, lord of animals and instinct, grand master of pranks and drunkenness, the one that entertains both mortals and Immortals.

4. It is possible that Gorm and Madarua (heroic Immortals and patrons of warriors and fighters) have a following among the Traldar after transporting a group of Cynidiceans (descendents of the ancient Traldar) into the Hollow World before the fall of their culture, and that in virtue of their predilection for heroes, the Traldar culture has added them to the pantheon as they did with Halav and Petra, probably as children of Terra and Grammaton whom they closely resemble.

## PATERA

Mystara has two satellites that orbit it: Matora (corresponds to the moon of the real world) and Patera, the invisible moon. Patera is much smaller than Matora and its soil and atmosphere is infused with a material that refracts the solar light making it invisible to the human eye. Only the eyes of some species (like cats and rakasta) are able to see the emanations of the magnetic field of Patera, which for them assumes the outline of a great halo similar to the aurora borealis, which crosses the sky without illuminating it. Because of this the first people to discover the existence of Patera were the rakasta, who then sent expeditions to colonisation the moon. The Pateran cultures were briefly mentioned (but never expanded on) by Bruce Heard in *Dragon* 160, in the series dedicated to the Voyage of the Princess Ark. The article mentioned the names of the following nations, all inhabited by rakasta. These nations have been linked to a real world nation to give a firmer idea of the settings styles:

- ❖ Myoshima (Empire governed by samurai and daimiyo rakasta, based on feudal Japan of the Tokugawa era).
- ❖ Rajahstan (Rakasta empire based on colonial India with Buddhist and Hindu based spiritualities).
- ❖ Kompor–Thap (Land of the Thousand Pagodas with a strong mysticism inspired by Burma).
- ❖ Selimpore (Commercial matriarchy reminiscent to Singapore at least in name).
- ❖ Malacayog (Land of head-hunters, based on the pre-Hispanic Philippines).
- ❖ Surabayang (Pirate nation based on Malaysia and Indonesian Borneo).

Kompor–Thap is thought to be the homeland of the pachydermions (humanoid elephants), a highly mystical and meditative people who have influenced the evolution of nearby Rajahstan and who welcomed the rakasta migrants from Mystara immediately following the Great Rain of Fire. In theory the nations of Southeast Asia present on Patera must have developed from the descendents of the Skotharian rakasta (pardasta and sherkasta) migrants on Patera thanks to a magical gate following the world-wide cataclysm of 3000 AC. The Myoshimans instead developed from the rakasta refugees of the Yazak Steppes (Plaktur culture) who fled to the moon during the humanoid invasions of 1700 BC. This is why the rakasta of Brun (a mix of pardasta and mountain rakasta that has produced the common rakasta) have a Japanese-like language, while those of Skothar (pardasta and sherkasta) have a Thai-like language (which is partly influenced by the Tibetan-like culture of the pachydermions of Kompor–Thap that have produced the nation of Rajahstan).

## RACIAL PANTHEONS

This section deals with the pantheons of specific races. These pantheons are venerated by the specific races throughout Mystara, and they are the only examples of immutable pantheons present on Mystara (because they are few). Each pantheon has a group of Immortals who are worshipped by that race wherever they live on Mystara (independent of their culture or nation), and who have that race's survival at heart or who try to influence the race's history. The Immortals are listed in order of popularity with these peoples, and the any Immortal highlighted in **bold** is unanimously recognised both by mortal followers and allied Immortals as the race's patron and leader of the pantheon. Next to each Immortal are also listed their portfolio. The Immortals listed in *italics* are non-canonical additions by the author of this manual.

### DRACONIC PANTHEON

<b>Great One</b>	Dragons and lizardkin, creation, justice, knowledge, magic
Diamond	Lawful dragons, order, wisdom, justice, tolerance
Opal	Neutral dragons, lizardmen, vengeance, perseverance
Pearl	Chaotic dragons and lizardmen, hunting, instinct, greed, domination

### GIANT PANTHEON

Zalaj	Cloud and mountain giants, knowledge, magic, strength
Gorziok	Sea and storm giants, oceans, extreme natural phenomena, creation and destruction
Hymir	Sea giants, water and liquids, alchemy, knowledge, revelry
Surt (Zugzul)	Fire giants, power, conquest, necromancy, war
<i>Hel</i>	Ice giants, death, darkness and cold energy, reincarnation, corruption
<i>Wayland</i>	Metallurgy, crafts, smiths and armourers, engineering and constructors, magical constructs

### GOBLINOID PANTHEON

Karaash	Humanoids, war, victory, conquest, tactics, strength
Yagrai	Humanoids (especially hobgoblins & orcs), stubbornness and tenacity, death & necromancy
Wogar	Goblins, war and military tactics, conquest, ferocity, predators
Ranivorus	Gnolls, madness, raiding, destruction, hate
Bartziluth	Bugbears, fury, strength, battles, bravery
Kurtulmak	Kobolds, subterfuge, traps, guile, tactics, war, fire
Jammudaru	Ogres, evil giants, vengeance, torture, fear, violence
Orcus	Violent death, sadism, mass destruction, cannibalism
Hircismus/Leptar	Humanoids, violence, pain, torture, destruction
Bagni	Trolls, violence, hunger, destruction

### PHANATON PANTHEON

Ui (Ordana)	Nature, protection of forests and sylvan races
Marau-Ixui (Terra)	Balance of the life cycle, earth, birth, fertility, seasons
Uatumà (Zirchev)	Hunting, survival, bravery

# CHAPTER 7

## IMMORTAL GROUPS OF POWER

As well as grouping themselves in pantheons, being associated with a specific race or civilization on the Prime Plane in order to protect or influence it, and belonging to a specific Sphere of Power, the Immortals tend to also form various Groups. Each group has a common objective for all its members, which each of whom agrees to undertake. Not all the groups of Immortals are known by all Immortals, as they tend to have secret aims, and certainly most of them are unknown to mortals. Others are official organizations recognized by the five Spheres, and often (particularly the Councils) have power over all the Immortals, as their decisions are binding in all the Immortal Spheres.

Below are the most well-known and active (secretly or openly) groups of power at the start of 1001 AC, referred to in official Mystara products of TSR/WotC (particularly *Wrath of the Immortals*). The tables give the name of the group, its type (shown in **bold italics**), and from left to right the columns list the members in order of importance (the leader is shown in **bold**), their Sphere, their level and Immortal grade, and below is a summary of the group's objectives.

### BROTHERHOOD OF THE SHADOW

*(Secret Temporary Group)*

Member	Sphere	Level	Grade
<b>Hel</b>	Entropy	36 <sup>th</sup>	Hierarch
Atzanteotl	Entropy	31 <sup>st</sup>	Hierarch
Alphaks	Entropy	20 <sup>th</sup>	Empyrean

Only active during The Immortal's Fury (1001–1009 AC), it tries to increase the conflict between the factions of Ixion and Rad and between the nations of the world, taking the side of the faction losing at that moment, or causing new problems to arise.

### COUNCIL OF HOLLOW WORLD

*Official Permanent Group*

Member	Sphere	Level	Grade
<b>Ka</b>	Matter	35 <sup>th</sup>	Hierarch
Ordana	Time	31 <sup>st</sup>	Hierarch
Ixion	Energy	36 <sup>th</sup>	Hierarch
Korotiku	Thought	32 <sup>nd</sup>	Hierarch
Hel	Entropy	36 <sup>th</sup>	Hierarch

This group, active since the creation of the Hollow World, works to save races and civilizations from extinction on the outer world by transferring them into the Hollow World, and protect the stability of the Hollow World from outside influence.

### COUNCIL OF INTRUSION

*Official Permanent Group*

Member	Sphere	Level	Grade
Khoronus	Time	36 <sup>th</sup>	Hierarch
Ixion	Energy	36 <sup>th</sup>	Hierarch
Noumena	Thought	34 <sup>th</sup>	Hierarch
Djaea	Matter	34 <sup>th</sup>	Hierarch
Nyx	Entropy	33 <sup>rd</sup>	Hierarch

This group, active since time immemorial, is formed only from neutral representatives of the hierarchy of the five Spheres (who rotate control). Its purpose is investigating any intrusion into the Multiverse from creatures or peculiar effects (from other dimensions or realities), and take measures in case of real threat.

### COUNCIL OF MYSTARA

*Official Permanent Group*

Member	Sphere	Level	Grade
<b>Djaea</b>	Matter	34 <sup>th</sup>	Hierarch
Ilkundal	Energy	33 <sup>rd</sup>	Hierarch
Khoronus	Time	36 <sup>th</sup>	Hierarch
Korotiku	Thought	32 <sup>nd</sup>	Hierarch
Hel	Entropy	36 <sup>th</sup>	Hierarch

This group has been active since the time following the Carnifex Tyranny and in it, the Immortals of Hierarch grade rotate control between themselves. It controls the events that happen on Mystara, elect observers to report any transgressions of the Immortal's directive in the Prime Plane, and identifies and punishes all the Immortals who endanger the planet.

### FELLOWSHIP OF THE STAR

*Informal Temporary Group*

Member	Sphere	Level	Grade
<b>Rad</b>	Energy	22 <sup>nd</sup>	Empyrean
Vanya	Time	23 <sup>rd</sup>	Empyrean
Rafiel	Energy	21 <sup>st</sup>	Empyrean
Asterius	Thought	25 <sup>th</sup>	(Eternal)
Korotiku	Thought	32 <sup>nd</sup>	Hierarch
Rathanos	Energy	28 <sup>th</sup>	(Eternal)
Ka	Matter	35 <sup>th</sup>	Hierarch
Eiryndul	Energy	20 <sup>th</sup>	Empyrean

Only active during The Immortal's Fury (1001–1009 AC), the fellowship is made up of those Immortals who believe it right to protect and continue the studies on the Radiance's power and the effects of other sources of magic within the Multiverse. Many of its Immortals also seek to oppose the current top hierarchs of the various Spheres and change the rules and Immortals traditions that they believe are too antiquated and stagnant.

### RING OF FIRE

*Informal Temporary Group*

Member	Sphere	Level	Grade
<b>Ixion</b>	Energy	36 <sup>th</sup>	Hierarch
Valerias	Matter	31 <sup>st</sup>	Hierarch
Ilkundal	Energy	33 <sup>rd</sup>	Hierarch
Alphatia	Energy	16 <sup>th</sup>	Celestial

Only active during The Immortal's Fury (1001–1009 AC), it is composed of those Immortals who, after the Radiance's discovery, wish to prevent the draining of the Multiverse's magical energy (and stop the undermining of the Sphere of Energy power). They also want to interrupt the Radiance's exploitation and stop Rad's (and his known allies) experiments.

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# CODEX IMMORTALIS

by Marco Daimonte

The creature contorts itself, trying in vain to free itself from the magic pentagram that imprisons it. Exhausted and sore, the entity slumps back to the earth, defeated. Its violent efforts have succeeded only in bringing screaming agony to overtaxed muscles and now, finally, it's resistance ebbs.

Out from the shadows steps a hooded individual, who to this point has silently observed the creature's torment. Candlelight touches the figure lightly, seeming almost to be devoured by the dark fabric of his clothing. The light is captured by the ruby inset in the head of his staff and reflects back, a crimson tint washing over the scene, accentuating the livid bruises that mar the creature's smooth skin.

A moment more of satisfied study and the hood is snatched back, revealing a sneering individual, who addresses his prisoner with an evil hiss.

"And now that you understand who is in command, tell me all that must be done in order to gain Immortality."

The Codex Immortalis is a completely free online manual, containing all the, until now, hidden secrets that pertain to the divine powers of the Mystaran Multiverse. Within these pages are revealed:

- ❖ The five paths of 'Immortality' for each of the Spheres of Power.
- ❖ The history of all the Immortals mentioned in the official Mystaran supplements.
- ❖ The rules for managing the priests and followers of each Immortal, both for the Classic D&D and 3E systems.
- ❖ A list of Immortals worshipped in each region of Mystara, including the Hollow World.
- ❖ A chapter wholly dedicated to the close examination of the religions and churches found throughout the Known World and the rest of Mystara.
- ❖ Dozens of summarising tables and appendices useful for researching any information relating to the Immortals.

So without further delay, leaf through the learned pages of this tome and remember: knowledge is power!