

THRESHOLD

Issue # 1 1

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Thanks To: The Mystara Community, for your support, hard work, and dedication to Mystara.

The aims of *Threshold* magazine:

- to provide a venue for community members to present material
- to promote the Vaults of Pandius and the material there
- to increase the exposure of existing and new articles
- to encourage authors to revisit and revitalise existing articles
- to motivate interest in Mystara in general

Dawn Over Mystara

This issue starts with a real treat for Mystaran fans, an exclusive short story by Bruce Heard set in Alphatia, sixth installment of his "Once Upon a Time in Ar" that he is publishing on his blog. Even if Mystara has not been officially published in the last 20 years, the fact that the man many of us consider the major game designer of the setting is still active in the community, and this fanzine has now reached its 11th issue, is proof enough that our favorite gaming world is as vibrant and alive as it could be.

The recent inauguration of the Dungeon Masters Guild by Wizards of the Coast, official publisher of Dungeon & Dragons, allowing individuals to publish D&D material, could be good news for our hobby. At the moment the possibility exists only for the Forgotten Realms and Ravenloft settings, but it could be opened for other settings too.

Obviously we are already publishing new Mystara material here, on The Piazza forum and the Vaults of Pandius official website, yet an official sanction by the D&D publisher could be able to bring a better knowledge of the wonderful Mystaran material to the younger generations of gamers.

In the meantime we are doing our best here to keep Mystara alive. This issue also contains ideas on how to use Calidar, the new setting developed by Bruce Heard, with Mystara. The Atlas of Mystara by Thorfinn

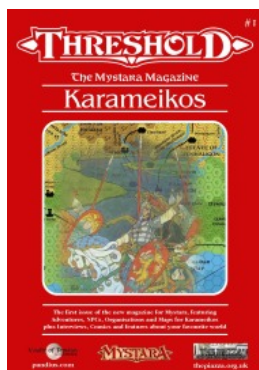
Tait, featuring Thyatis, and an interview with the very same world famous (in Mystara surely) cartographer. We will then move to a conversion of one of the newest D&D adventurers, the Elemental Evil storyline, to set it in Mystara, at the fringe of the Alphatian Empire, in the untamed lands of Esterhold. Then to Thyatis, with a treatise on the Thyatian language and a Gazetteer of Carytion, and two articles about the Foresters: a revision of the class and details about the Order. Two more articles about the most famous explorers of the two empires and the lost civilization hidden in their mainlands, bring us from Thyatis to Alphatia. We will learn something about the Alphatian Alphabet and we will visit the Kingdom of Limn. Then to examine the might of the Heldannic Warbirds with new blueprints. We end our voyage through the Empires with an atlas and a recent timeline of the Isle of Dawn. Finally, to the last installment of the Koskatop megadungeon and the charms of the fairy folks. A Grand Tour of Mystara indeed. In the next issue, in which Threshold magazine will reach the milestone of three years of publishing the fanzine, we will delve into the mysteries of Ages Past!

Francesco Defferrari (Sturm)
Editor-in-Chief, Threshold Issue 11

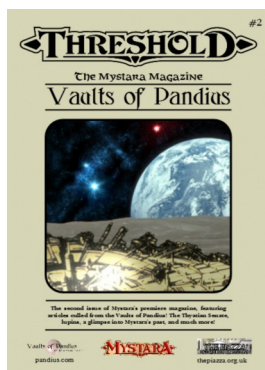
Previous Issues

Previous issues of **THRESHOLD** - the Mystara Magazine, are available for download from the Vaults of Pandius website.

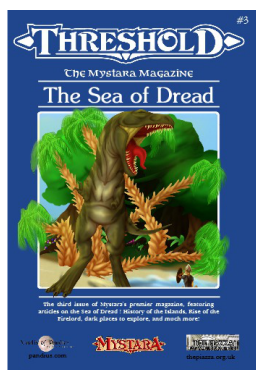
Also available at the same location are higher resolution versions of the maps that were included in the issue's PDF, allowing greater detail to be viewed.



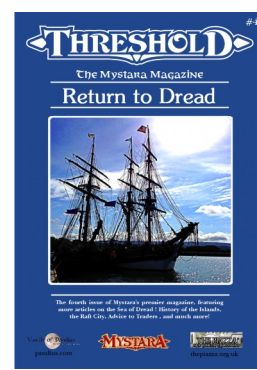
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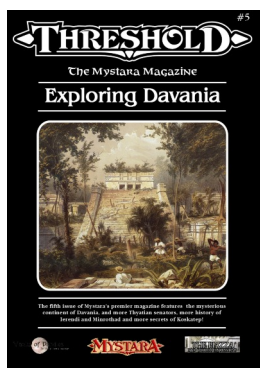
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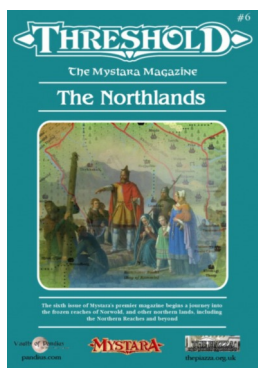
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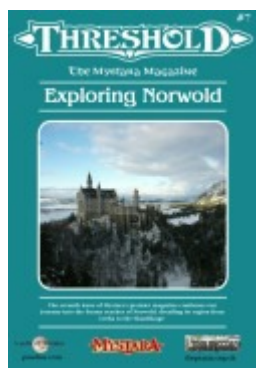
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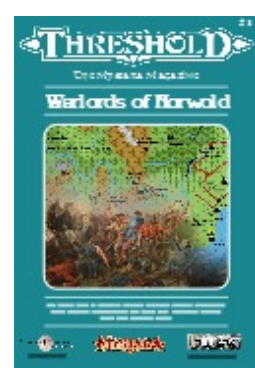
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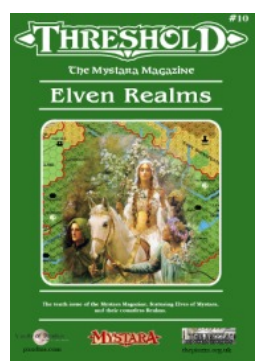
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Exploring Norwold



#8
Warlords of Norwold



#9
Hollow World



#10
Elven Realms

This Issue's Contributors

Bruce Heard is a game designer and an author of several products for the Dungeons & Dragons fantasy role-playing game from TSR. Bruce authored key products for the Mystara setting, including (among many others) two Gazetteers, *The Principalities of Glantri* and *The Orcs of Thar*, and the well-loved Dragon Magazine series, *The Voyage of the Princess Ark*. Bruce has recently come back to the setting in his blog, and created Calidar, a new campaign setting that recently completed its second successful Kickstarter campaign. More information on his recent works and his complete profile can be viewed at his blog: <http://bruce-heard.blogspot.it/>

Thorfinn Tait hails from the Orkney Islands in northern Scotland, though he has lived in Japan for many years now. Growing up with BECMI and the Known World, he learnt to type by compiling a database of Mystara's timeline. He joined the Mystara online community in 1997, but his true contributions began with the *Atlas of Mystara* project starting in 2005. Recently he has made the jump to become a published fantasy cartographer, working on Bruce Heard's Calidar series. You can follow his work on his cartography site (www.thorfmeps.com) and the *Atlas* site (mystara.thorfmeps.com).

It all started with a **blog** (<https://entirepartykilled.wordpress.com/>) but before that it started with THE roleplaying game: Dungeons and Dragons. We all at EPK Central have more or less 25 years of playing each and we all love this game. With all these "experience levels" under the bridge we started throughout the years to make our brand new stories, our brand new settings and our brand new rules. With the 5th Edition our love for the game was somewhat

rekindled and brought us to convert some of the most famous adventures to the new ruleset. On our blog you can find the things we have already done, the recount of some of the campaigns we are playing and various posts on the game we love.

The EPiK team is:

Giuliano: the Mind - he is the Dungeon Master, in his waking hours designs some complex plots and adventures, but when he sleeps then the horror comes. In that quiet time his mind works on creatures and monsters.

Davide: the Hound - he is our master play tester, he follows the plot to its tiny bits, leaving nothing behind and always choosing the right side. But, it always is his right side, do you understand?

Stefano: the Joker - when in dire straits what is better than a laugh and some madness. Well it usually works to throw off everybody else's plans. And nerves. And both. At the same time. Then, always, Chaos ensues.

Andrea: the Writer - He knows the rules, he knows the stories, he writes them down. And he remembers, always, all the mistakes you have done, and all the fumbles you have rolled.

Even though **Sturm (a.k.a. Francesco Defferrari)** loves any alternate world, he believes Mystara is incomparably the best for its vibrant community endlessly delving into ethnography, linguistics and history just to make a little sense of it. Something like the real world, but with dragons.

Giulio Caroletti started playing in Mystara with the old red box in 1992, and hasn't

stopped since. He went "internet" on the MML as Captain Iulius Sergius Scaevola in 1999, and has since written mostly about Thyatis and Dwarves. When not busy pretending to be a Thyatian officer, he lives a boring life as an atmosphere physicist from Rome, Italy. His main interests are light-eyed girls, soccer (he's an AS Roma fan) and rock music (especially 70s progressive rock).

Craig Antoun (a.k.a. Irondrake) was first introduced to D&D by a friend in 1981, which began for him a long and rewarding journey as a Game Master that continues to this day. Having experienced most editions of the D&D game, Craig has always been drawn back to the BECMI/RC edition, which he finds elegant in its simplicity, yet rich in possibilities. In early 2014 he returned to managing his first Mystara campaign, which previously ran from 1984 to 1993.

Korro Zal lives on the west coast of Japan, where in addition to teaching and writing textbooks he designs reams of material for Mystara campaigns (which, once in a rare while, he actually gets to use in a campaign!) and answers his six-year old's incessant questions about who is stronger, Darth Vader or Kylo Ren. Having decided that since he can't actually make use of all the content he's created for Mystara over the last 25 years or so, why not publish it in Threshold in case someone else can?"

Andrew Tyrus Wieland, known on the Piazza as **Jacques Riesling**, visited the Caves of Chaos and Castle Amber when he was in elementary school or junior high, he doesn't remember the exact year. He continued to explore Mystara and other worlds like Greyhawk and Ravenloft. He moved on to

near-future paranormal worlds and science fiction worlds. He sees Alpathia as an oddly modern island set down in the middle of a pre-industrial world. He has lived in Portland, Oregon for 14 years.

Alexandre de Luna is a brazilian doctor and has been playing D&D since the early 90ies, mainly Dragonlance and Forgotten Realms, having been introduced to Mystara only in 2007. It was love at first sight. His favourite settings are Alpathia, Norwold and Thyatis and he has mastered Mystara campaigns since 2010.

Hausman Santos is an art educator and drawing professor. An enthusiast in Mystara since 1995 when he met in Brazil the AD&D boxed set of Karameikos.

He has narrated campaigns for game groups in Thyatis, Alpathia, Rockhome and Glantri and keeps some of these groups since 2002. He manages a page for Mystara Brazilian fans on the internet. Currently he has gathered much of the material that he developed into game sessions with his group from projects like the Mystaran Almanac and discussed with the members of the Old Almanac Team about the old and unfinished plotlines (around AC 1016-1017) in order to resume them.

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The Threshold editorial team invites all fans of the Mystara setting to submit contributions to the next issues of the magazine.

We are looking especially for contributions fitting the following themes:

Issue 12 - Ages Past

The editorial team will accept proposals on Mystara's past ages: Y'hog, Blackmoor, Mystara 2300 BC, Taymora, Nithia, or any culture or location existing before present day Mystara.

Proposal Deadline: Expired on March 31st, but proposal could still be submitted if the author is confident that the article will be completed by the below deadline

Manuscript Deadline: April 30th, 2016

Issue Published: By July 15th, 2016

Call for proposals for main themes of forthcoming issues (2016):

Issue 13 - A Crucible of Creatures

Monsters, humanoids and other inhuman denizens of Mystara! The editorial team will accept proposals on any kind of creature which could live in our favorite setting.

Proposal Deadline: June 30th 2016.

Manuscript Deadline: July 31st, 2016

Issue Published: By October 15th, 2016

Issue 14 - The Great Waste and beyond

To the unexplored lands of central and western Brun! The editorial team will accept proposals on Sind, Hule, Yavdlom, the Midlands, Borea and Hyborea, the Yalu river, the Endworld line, the Arm of the Immortals and the Savage Coast.

Proposal Deadline: September 30th 2016.

Manuscript Deadline: October 31th, 2016

Issue Published: By January 15th, 2017

Articles about other topics are still welcome and the editorial team will evaluate their publication in an issue, taking into account space available and that issue's theme.

Threshold accepts (and invites) the submission of extended or revised versions of works having appeared on The Piazza or the Vaults of Pandius.

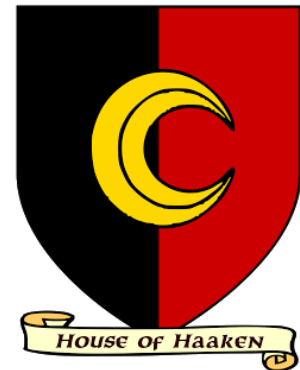
Contributions may include, but are not limited to, articles (short stories, short adventure modules, NPCs, historical treatises and timelines, geographical entries, new monsters and monster ecologies, etc.) and illustrations (portraits, maps, heraldry, illustrations, etc.)

The Threshold editorial team strives for edition neutrality, but edition specific articles (e.g., conversions) are also accepted. Statistics for new monsters and NPCs may be included in articles (e.g., adventure modules, new monsters or NPCs) in any version of Dungeons & Dragons. The editorial team also offers help in providing conversions to some specific rules set (including BECMI/RC, 2nd Edition, 3rd edition/Pathfinder). However, they should be limited to the minimum -- for most NPCs, it is sufficient to mention class, level, and alignment. For important NPCs, a one or two line stat block could be included.

Once Upon a Time in Ar—Part Six

by Bruce Heard

If you missed the earlier episodes, you can read them on [Bruce Heard's blog](#)



His mind abuzz with Syphonean's revelation, Dardaniel approached a door that looked like the torture chamber's exit. It wasn't locked. A sliding panel in it revealed a barred opening just large enough for Keeko to have slipped through. A glance informed Dardaniel that no one stood in the corridor beyond. The wizard could, however, hear someone speaking in another chamber. Cautious, he pulled the heavy door open as quietly as he could. With the old palace courtier close behind him and his diminutive friend perched on his shoulder, he stepped through. A door on the far right opened on a larger cell—unoccupied. Satisfied that no one else was behind them, Dardaniel approached a corner at the corridor's opposite end, and peered around it.

A short distance beyond lay a large circular chamber with a fire pit in the middle and pairs of roughly hewn columns standing near its outer perimeter. Dancing shadows claimed the far edges. Standing close to the fire, several sinister-looking characters listened to another dressed in dark leather coveralls, facing them. A female, possibly one versed in the fine arts of the arcane, stood at his side, quietly watching.

"Fine," he said. "Gart and Frunkles, you two ride to Archon and have the message delivered to the Haakens." He tossed a small object to them, which one of the two caught in mid-air. After examining it for an instant, he slipped it into his pouch. Dardaniel suspected it might be his own family ring, now missing from his hand. "Include it with your letter," continued the somber fellow. "We might get more gold out of his family yet, but do not linger there. If they don't respond right away, get out and do not return here until you are certain no one follows." The two nodded and walked away.

A large and fat character raised a hand. "And what of the old one?" he asked. Dardaniel recognized his jail keeper's gravelly voice.

"He's well-born that one, and with an accent from down south. His kind don't normally come hiding in our woods without good reason. Someone's looking for him. I'll know what to do with him by the morrow."

Dardaniel winced at the revelation. They had to get out. He looked back at Syphonean, brought his index finger to his lips, and motioned him to follow. Slipping into the



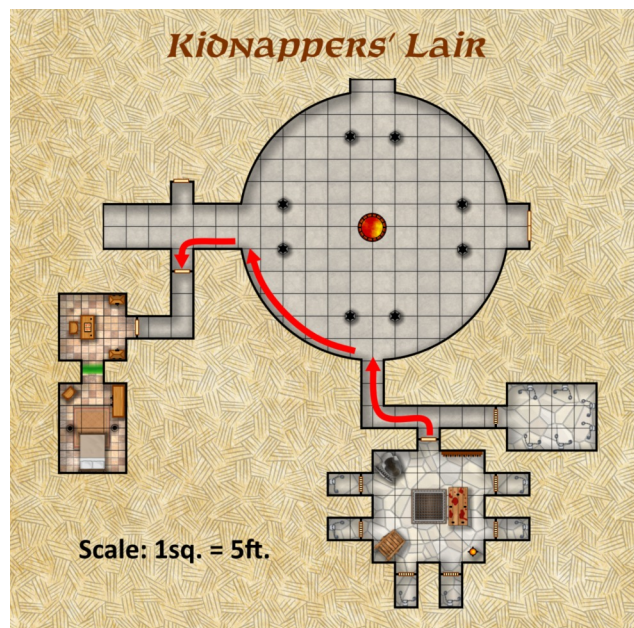
The County of Grünfold in Ar, where Dardaniel was captured

shadows, he began skirting the edge of the chamber toward a nearby corridor. Keeko took off and vanished through a passage on the chamber’s opposite side. An instant later, everyone’s eyes turned toward a muffled screech coming from the direction the familiar had taken. The wizard understood at once what Keeko was up to, and quickly moved to the next closest corridor.

The man in black leather pointed a finger at another. “Korfen, go find out what’s going on. I told those oafs over there to keep it quiet.” The man, a wiry, rat-like fellow, darted toward the direction of the odd noise.

Worried that his small companion’s diversion could put it in trouble, Dardaniel ducked into the other corridor with Syphonean. At the sound of objects hitting a surface at the opposite end of the corridor, the two squeezed into a recess in the wall. Unsure

what to make of what lay there, Dardaniel listened instead to what was happening in the previous room, until his old friend tapped him on the shoulder, pointing at a door behind them.



“I wager your companion is clever enough to hide in nooks and crannies,” Syphonean whispered. “Maybe we should have a look at what lies behind this here portal, eh? Perhaps there’s a way out.”

Reluctantly, Dardaniel nodded. Carefully, they pushed the door open enough to peer in: another hallway lay ahead. The two slipped inside and closed the door behind them. At the other end stood another door. A cautious check revealed what looked like an office, with a desk and chair, a glowing crystal, and miscellaneous chests. A large monstrous face was carved on another wall, having a strange green mist billowing in its wide-open mouth—perhaps a portal, thought Dardaniel.

“I didn’t expect this,” he said. “Keep watch at the door while I look around.”

His search of the desk revealed a few interesting things, among them a stack of scrolls listing a number of payments, including some of the names he’d heard earlier. Judging from the nature of compensations, two names stood out, Taran and Aleea, leading Dardaniel to assume they belonged to the leader and his consort. Also listed were collected ransoms and disbursed bribes, along with the names of certain houses of Ar and Ambur with which he was vaguely acquainted. He was shocked when his index finger reached the name of his father’s consort, showing a sizeable sum paid by her for “services rendered.” He pondered that with growing concern. What did Ethrenielle have to do with these unsavory people, and how did it concern the House of Ar? Or himself, perhaps. The answer was not included.

Dardaniel turned to the chests sitting nearby. One was filled with a large amount of copper coins and a few pouches of silver. In another, he discovered his personal effects and a number of other objects. He picked up one of the books and glanced at Syphonean who responded with a surprised expression and a big smile. While Dardaniel’s search continued, the courtier winced and hunched toward the hallway, listening more carefully.

“Someone’s coming,” he warned, closing the door.

Dardaniel looked back at room before gazing back at Syphonean. “We’re going to have to leave through that portal there.”

The courtier grimaced. “I don’t much like the looks of it.”

“There’s nowhere else to hide. We’ll have to chance it. Come!”

Dardaniel pocketed a few more things, shut the chest, and dashed toward the portal. Holding his breath and cringing, he jumped through the thick, green mist, with Syphonean hot on his heels.

Oddly, fearing a fate worse than death or at least unfathomably excruciating pains proved wholly unfounded. Perhaps this portal was an unfinished enchantment or a ruse of some kind. The two stood in a bedchamber lit with two levitating orbs. The glow revealed a large bed, a closet, and of particular concern to the intruders: no other exit. They glanced at each other with dismay when the sound of voices approached the other side of the mist.

Without another moment of hesitation, the two dove toward the bed and crawled underneath—not a moment too soon. They froze and held their breaths as best they could as they watched two pairs of boots appearing through the portal.

A male voice sighed. “Alone at last! I thought that palaver would never end.”

Dardaniel recognized the voice of the man in black leather, and decided this was Taran. He watched the second pair of boots, of finer and more elegant make, face the first.

“The night is young, and I feel adventurous still,” said a woman’s voice, soft and inviting.

“I have in mind a special kind of magic for you.”

Dardaniel wondered if this could be the one called Alea. His thoughts were quickly interrupted when boots, breeches, robes, and other garments dropped on the stone floor. Amid giggles and kissing sounds, the two latecomers hastily climbed onto the bed. Dardaniel glanced at Syphonean and rolled his eyes. The old man responded with an amused, if fatalistic, smile. Patient, he propped up his chin on his wrists and waited while the wooden structure above creaked and groaned.

Increasingly annoyed at their forcible and indiscreet detainment, Dardaniel dug into his pocket and pulled out a small spellbook. He nudged it against his companion of fortune, who responded with a gleeful nod. He then retrieved his own travel grimoire and concentrated on studying useful spells as best he could while the upstairs performance grew even more raucous.

To be continued.



Once Upon a Time In Ar
AND OTHER STORIES
by **BRUCE HEARD**

at <http://bruce-heard.blogspot.com/>

From Alphatia to Calidar

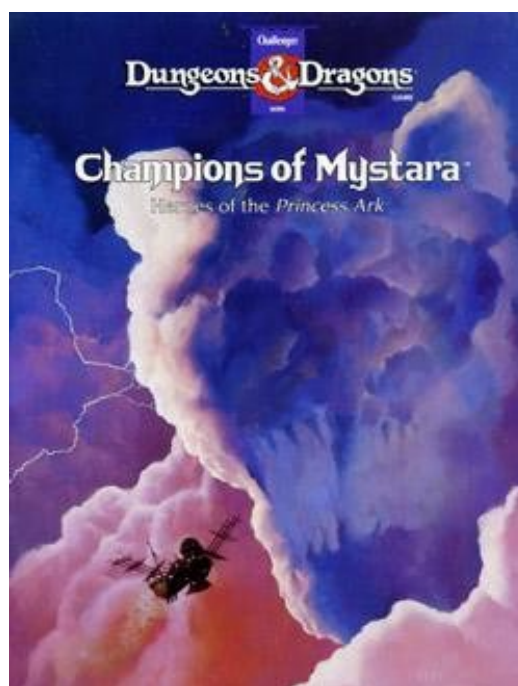
by Francesco Defferrari (Sturm)

A quick voyage between Mystara and Calidar the two fantasy worlds settings that Bruce Heard has been involved with; and some ideas on how to use both settings together.

Bruce Heard is a very important game designer, and probably the most important for the Mystaran community. He joined Gary Gygax's TSR back in the early eighties and later he became Product Manager of Basic D&D (the BECMI edition which is closely linked to the Mystara setting). He was indeed (and still is) one of the main developers of Mystara as we know it now.

Tom Moldvay in 1981 and then Frank Mentzer from 1983 were the authors of Basic D&D, later the *Basic*, *Expert*, *Companion*, *Master* and *Immortal* Boxed Sets or BECMI D&D. In those products first appeared the original Known World campaign setting¹, that would become Mystara, where heroes could carve dominions and become Immortals. Aaron Allston (1960 - 2014), author of the first Gazetteer, *The Grand Duchy of Karameikos*, the sixth one, *The Dwarves of Rockhome*, the *Dawn of the Emperors*, *Hollow World* and *Wrath of the*

Immortals Boxed Sets, and compiler of the *Rules Cyclopedia*, was also a major developer of the setting. The work of Bruce Heard however is undoubtedly what gave Mystara its definitive shape and feel. From his adventures, CM7 *Tree of Life* and M1 *Into the Maelstrom*, to the beloved Gazetteers 3 and 10, *The Principalities of Glantri* and *The Orcs of Thar*, and *The Voyage of the Princess Ark* published in Dragon Magazine, Bruce opened players to whole new regions of Mystara and new perspectives on the setting. He was also for several years the Basic D&D line Product Manager.



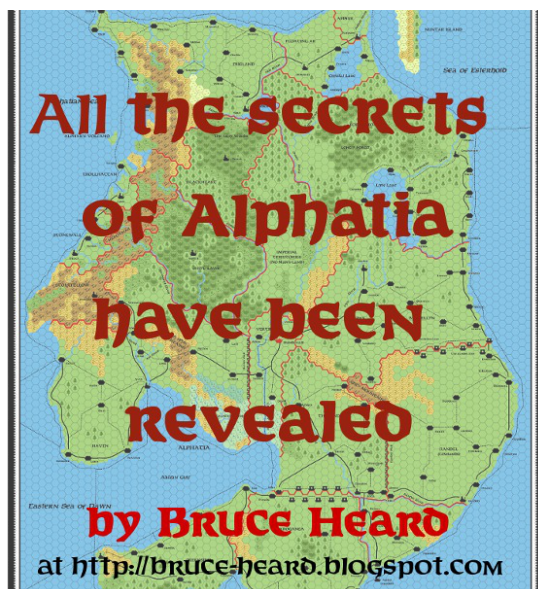
Cover of the Champions of Mystara boxed set by Ann Dupuis and Bruce Heard, which collected the Voyages of the Princess Ark.

¹ Previous editions of D&D, as the original by Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the one edited by Eric Holmes in 1977 did not contain a campaign setting except for example dungeons.

After TSR, Bruce did not join Wizards of the Coast, and stopped working on game designing for a while, but he remained an active participant in the Mystaran community for some years, as can be seen from [the impressive list of his articles](#) stored at The Vaults of Pandius, the official Mystara fan site.

As Bruce wrote in [his blog](#), his writing years went on hiatus while he explored other avenues, but in 2012, Bruce began his blog, returning to the Mystara community with a bang! He started writing articles which updated some of his old Mystaran material, such as the Nagpas and the Goatmen, and then proceeded to developing the Kingdoms of Alphatia as they were never developed before.

Even if Alphatia was one of the subjects of the *Dawn of the Emperors* boxed set, together with Thyatis, the sheer size of the country allowed for little detail on the individual kingdoms which form the Empire.



In 2012 and 2013 Bruce Heard wonderfully detailed in his blog almost all the Alphatian Kingdoms, from Arogansa in the south to Frisland in the far north, including coats of arms, maps and adventure ideas, making them much more detailed and interesting places for adventurers.

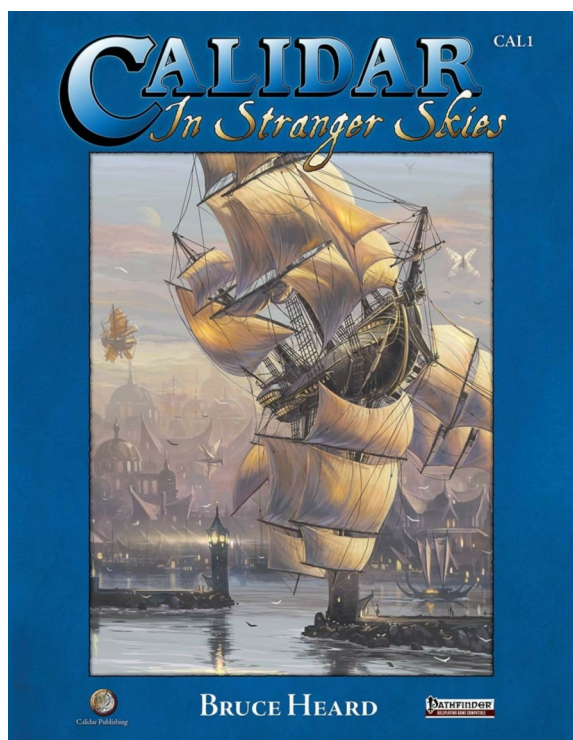
Given the success of his blog in the Mystaran community, Bruce queried Wizards of the Coast about the possibility of continuing the Princess Ark series. As the reply was negative (see [Bruce's announcement](#)) he decided to develop his own, new fantasy setting.

And so [Calidar came to be!](#)²

A first, very successful [Kickstarter campaign](#) was completed on January 10th, 2014, raising about 300% of its initial goal and allowing the production of Calidar: *In Stranger Skies*, a 130 page book detailing the campaign setting, including beautiful illustration by Ben Wootten, John Dollar and Savage Mojo, a contribution by Ed Greenwood for the city of Glorathon, and the wonderful maps and deck plans of Thorfinn Tait.³ The first Kickstarter campaign also allowed the production of a promotional booklet of 63 pages, *Under the Great Vault*, containing stories only available to Kickstarter backers.

² An interview with Bruce Heard, about his work on Mystara and anticipating Calidar, was also published in the first issue of [Threshold magazine \(page 82\)](#) back in October 2013.

³ Also Great Cartographer of Mystara, Editor of *Threshold* magazine and interviewed in this very issue!



"In Stranger Skies" book cover

A second, likewise successful [Kickstarter campaign](#) was recently completed on January 7th, 2016, raising almost 200% of the initial goal. The campaign will fund the production of a second Calidar book, *Beyond the Skies*, a book of more than 220 pages unveiling the gods of the Calidar universe. A promotional 60 page PDF containing adventures and new stories, *Skies of Fury*, will also be available to Kickstarter backers.

Bruce has not abandoned Mystara either, as in December 2015 he returned to Alphatia with the story "[Once Upon a time in Ar](#)", whose latest installment, first appearing in *Threshold* magazine, you have just read in the previous pages.

Readers of this magazine are probably already familiar with Bruce's work both in

Mystara and Calidar, but let's briefly review the main features of Calidar for anyone who may not be familiar with the setting, then we will see how it could be used with Mystara.

Calidar is a systemless setting⁴, but several guidelines exist for conversion to existing rule systems.

It's hard to describe Calidar in just a few sentences as the setting is wonderfully rich with original themes and distinctive features. It's not just a world, but a whole solar system, the Soltan Ephemeris, where different cultures interact and clash. It has magical flying ships, but the magic power to travel between worlds is not cheap, and the competition to acquire it is fierce. It has a central world, the namesake Calidar, with a few developed nations and a huge expanse of wild lands, where the World Soul of the planet is ready to react with hostility to any exploitation. It has, indeed, living planets with complex ecologies. It has dragons, obviously, and draconic knights serving them and eager to conquer new worlds and lands. It has steampunk dwarves and imperial elves, gnomes with a special connection to the natural world and savage halflings called fellfolk, who in some places have embraced the gifts of civilization. It has humanoids, who come periodically from the alien world of Ghüle to raid and take prisoners for their dark gods. It has heroes, who can literally become immortals and even gods, if they are able to earn a lasting fame.

And, as it seems from the previews of *Beyond the Skies*, the whole Ephemeris and the gods

⁴ For more information, see "[Calidar & Game Mechanics](#)" and "[Playing in Calidar](#)" (both at Bruce Heard's nlog).

have to face a terrible menace from another universe.

But the important feature of Calidar which is particularly relevant for the scope of this article is the Vortex. A mysterious and unexplained tear in the fabric of time and space, the Vortex is a strange phenomenon that often brings into the Calidar universe people and flying ships from many other places. Often, the people who experience this passage have their memories altered, and can no longer remember the place from which they came.

In the setting, this is obviously the perfect excuse to bring to Calidar player characters created for other settings, and also a way to explain why some Calidaran cultures, as also happened in Mystara, closely resemble some cultures of our real world.

In the world of Calidar in fact both the nations which now lie around the Great Caldera, a geographical feature created by an ancient asteroid, and the colonial powers of the Calidar moons from which they originated, have some clear resemblances with real world cultures, and with the Mystaran ones. And that gives us the first idea on how to use Mystara and Calidar together.

OPTION ONE: PORTALS

Magical portals have always been a feature of fantasy worlds. Such portals could randomly open into any Mystaran nation and lead to the parallel Calidaran nation. If such a Portal should open in the Five Shires in Mystara, for example, it could lead the players to the Republic of Belledor in Calidar, similarly



Beyond the Skies presentation on Kickstarter

inhabited by halflings. Even if at the beginning the players could fail to realize they are in another world, the moons in the skies should soon give them a clue. The civilized fellfolks and gnomes of Belledor should also have many subtle differences from the classical halflings of Mystara.

The same idea could also be valid for the Kingdom of Nordheim in Calidar, which could contain portals to the Northern Reaches of Mystara. Or the Magocracy of Caldwen, which could contain in its territory portals to Glantri or even Alphatia. Or the Kingdom of Bellayne in the Savage Coast, inhabited by cat-like Rakasta, which could have a hidden portal leading to Felix Minor, the planetoid in the Fringe of the Soltan Ephemeris inhabited by the cat-like Feliseans.

Some cultures of the Calidar universe, such as the Munaan Empire in the namesake moon and their colony of Ellyrion in the Great Caldera, could correspond to more than one Mystaran culture, like Thyatis and Milenia, or even Narvaez in the Savage Coast.

It's up to the DM to decide if players stranded in Calidar will be able to return to Mystara, and maybe create some sort of permanent portal, with many possible and interesting consequences. How could the Calidar World Soul interact with the planet Mystara? How would the Calidar gods and the Mystara Immortals interact? What if Synn and Wulf Von Klagendorf⁵, probably the most famous villains created by Bruce Heard in *The Voyage of the Princess Ark*, ally with Sayble the Black Queen and her Draconic Knights?

Or, remaining in the territories recently explored by Bruce Heard, how could the church of the seven archons of Bettelyn interact with the gods of Calidar? How would Randel's dragons react to Draconia? And many similar examples could be done for every Alphatian kingdom that Bruce developed in his blog in the later years.

Fans of both settings have obviously speculated that Haldemar of Haaken, the captain and protagonist of *The Voyage of the Princess Ark* is the same person as Captain Isledemer d'Alberran of the Star Phoenix, arrived in Calidar through the Vortex, but what if they are not? Could the two captains ally against common enemies?

Such an interaction between Calidar and Mystara would certainly create some interesting adventures.

⁵ For more about this topic, see [“Synn and Wulf von Klagendorf”](#) at The Vaults of Pandius

OPTION TWO: THE VORTEX

Another option is obviously the “default” one in the Calidar universe, a Mystaran skyship captured by the Vortex and sent to Calidar, as happens to Captain d'Alberran and his crew in the first Calidar book. The crew could suffer from amnesia but slowly be able to recall from whence they arrived, and find a new determination to discover a way to return to their original world. If an Alphatian skyship (or a Thyatian one, as Thyatis began building its own skyships in the *Poor Wizard's Almanacs*) is able to return to Mystara, it could bring back knowledge of the Calidar universe. By the way, the Vortex canonically exists in the Mystara universe too, as the supposed dimension inhabited by the Old Ones, mythical beings much more powerful than the Immortals. The Vortex of Mystara is detailed in the *Immortal* Boxed Set by Frank Mentzer and the *Wrath of the Immortals* Boxed Set by Aaron Allston.

And besides the above canon Vortex, Bruce recently detailed another one, complete with its wormhole, which also could become a gate to Calidar, in the Kingdom of Floating Ar⁶ in Alphatia.

It's up to each DM to decide how Mystaran Immortals, or even the Old Ones, may react to a skyship returning from the Vortex. If left alone, such a vessel could report back to the Mystaran empire from whence it came, and Alphatia (or Thyatis) could decide to fund further explorations of the Calidar universe,

⁶ For more details, see [“Ar: Through the Vortex”](#) at Bruce Heard's blog

at least if they are able to locate a spot where the Vortex occasionally appears.

It's also worth noting that in the *Poor Wizard's Almanacs* by Ann Dupuis an Immortal named Gareth began proselytizing in Sind from the Mystaran Year 1010 AC, saying to his followers he had "returned from the Vortex". The common interpretation in the community has always been that Gareth should be Benekander, the new Immortal created during the *Wrath of the Immortals* adventures, but what if he is instead someone who came from Calidar?

OPTION THREE: SPELLJAMMING

Calidar has some affinities not only with Mystara, but also with Spelljammer, even if the way in which skyships "work" in the two settings are quite different. But a DM could decide that the Crystal Spheres (as Solar Systems are called in Spelljammer) containing Mystara and the Soltan Ephemeris of Calidar are quite near, or connected with some sort of wormhole.

In this case natives of the Soltan Ephemeris could discover a way to travel in the Void for much longer distances than those previously possible, leading to a contact with Alphatia, Myoshima or some other Mystara nation. Would the first contact be peaceful or hostile? What if Lao-Kwei skyships reach Myoshima, and start a trade route with the Rakastan Empire on the Mystaran moon of Patera? What if Alphatian skyships reach the Kingdom of Meryath in Calidar? Exploring the consequences and ramifications of such

a collision of worlds could keep the DM and players busy for quite some time.

To find out more about Calidar, visit

Bruce Heard's blog:

<http://bruce-heard.blogspot.it/>

the official Calidar site:

<http://strangerskies.com/>

the Calidar forum:

<http://www.strangerskies.com/bbforums>

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ATLAS of MYSTARA

The *Atlas of Mystara* aims to present a comprehensive set of maps for Mystara, in two flavours: “replica maps”, which faithfully recreate the printed maps as-is; and “updated maps”, which are based on the *Atlas*’s consistent model of Mystara, and include additions from other sources which include all published products as well as select fan-created works.

This column presents the updated map of Thyatis, current as of March 2016. For changes since publication, visit [this article at the Atlas site](#).

THYATIS, 8 MILES PER HEX

by Thorfinn Tait

“The nation of Thyatis is made up of the southeast corner of the western continent and several nearby islands. North are the Altan Tepes mountains, which protect Thyatis from desert winds and raids by the Ylari warriors. West is the thick Dymrak Forest, haven of elves and goblins. South and east is the sea — a shield from foreign ground-troops but a road for Thyatian vessels.”

from *Dawn of the Emperors Book Two*,
by Aaron Allston

SOURCES

- *Dawn of the Emperors* (1989)
- *TM1 The Western Countries* (1989)
- *TM2 The Eastern Countries* (1989)
- *Rules Cyclopedia* (1991) ([PDF at DriveThruRPG](#))
- *Karameikos: Kingdom of Adventure* (1994)
- *Josbuan’s Almanac* (1995)

Comments

The hills in the western Imperial Territories have been changed to mostly forested hills, in line with the changes to Karameikos. Their proximity to tree-loving Vyalia also suggests that they would most likely still be forested.

I also redrew some of the dominion borders to follow the rivers where they were doing so anyway. Rivers tend to form natural borders, and there is no need to conform strictly to the hex grid when these are available.

Notes

Acestes Village — on *Josbuan’s Almanac* page 222a, Klarmont 15 entry, the text says: “Triumphant, a young stallion owned by Priam Iphisius of Acestes Village, wins the Kerendan Derby by 10 lengths (at 30 to 1 odds). Priam refuses an offer of 100,000 gp for the horse.” As per Simone Neri’s suggestion, the *Atlas* places Acestes in Kerendas.

The Empire of Thyatis (Mainland), 1000 AC

Based on Dawn of the Emperors, TM1, TM2 and Joshuan's Almanac
Cartography by Thorfinn Tait, January 2005; last revised February 2016
www.thorf.co.uk



Updated map of the Empire of Thyatis (Mainland), 8 miles per hex

Altan Tepes Mountains — the word “Mountains” was dropped from the label on TM2.

Battle of Tel Abdallah, AC 827 — the *Dawn of the Emperors* Thyatis map adds this label to the Thyatis-Ylaruam border, albeit without a battlefield symbol. The symbol itself was added in TM2. However, the label was also changed, and now reads “Battle of Tel Abdallah”. The change was carried over into the *Rules Cyclopedia*, but it seems likely to be an error. The *Atlas* considers the original “Tel Abdallah” spelling correct.

Bayville road — Bayville in the Duchy of Kerendas is the only mainland town not connected to the road network. This seems like an oversight, so a coastal road has been added, leading from the main Kerendas-Thyatis road to Bayville, then back to the main road.

Blackpoint Citadel — “...the fort of Blackpoint Citadel ... sits opposite from Karameikos’ Rugalov Keep.” (*Dawn of the Emperors DM’s Sourcebook* page 14c) Blackpoint has a label on the map, but the symbol next to it is Rugalov Keep across the border. While it’s possible that the two keeps are in the same 8 mile hex, this makes the map unnecessarily complicated. Therefore the *Atlas* marks Blackpoint in the hex south east of Rugalov Keep, where the road meets it on the Thyatian side of the border. The population of 1,250 dictates the use of a fort symbol.

Borydos Island — *Dawn of the Emperors Player’s Guide to Thyatis* page 7a: “...a rocky, hilly island...” The terrain has been adjusted to reflect this.

Case Discrepancy — while most settlements on the Dawn of the Emperors map were listed in Title Case, the following were displayed in capitals: CUBIA, TAMERONIKAS, TORION. These have been standardised to Title Case for the *Atlas*.

Central Thyatis — generic as it is, this name is used in Title Case in *Dawn of the Emperors’ Player’s Guide to Thyatis* (page 6b).

Century Hills — the hills of central Hattias, which had no name marked in *Dawn of the Emperors*, are named the Century Hills on TM2.

Coastal Waters — *Dawn of the Emperors* didn’t show shallow and deep water on any of its maps. TM2 showed coastal waters for the first time for Thyatis.

Cubis — this Emirates town was incorrectly labelled Cubia on the *Dawn of the Emperors* poster map. The error originated on GAZ2’s map, and was repeated here.

Fort Nicos — TM2 spells this “Fort Nikos”. However, the *Dawn of the Emperors* Thyatis map, and the *DM’s Sourcebook* (page 8a-b) both use “Fort Nicos”. The *Atlas* accepts the original spelling as the correct one.

Greendale River — this tributary of the Kerenda River was renamed to Greendale River on TM2, and this was then repeated in the *Rules Cyclopedia*. Located close to Greenheight, it seems reasonable to accept the original Greendale spelling.

Grey Bay — while *Dawn of the Emperors* labelled this Hattian town “Grey Bay” using

the British English spelling, TM2 changed it to the American English spelling “Gray Bay”. The *Atlas* uses British spellings throughout, and therefore keeps the original Grey Bay.

Imperial Territories — the bracketed “and future dominions” which appeared on *Dawn of the Emperors*’ map was removed from the label for TM2. The *Atlas* adopts fan suggestions to name these regions, with the western region named Tarsia after Mount Tarsus, and the central area called Altenia after the Altan Tepe Mountains. Both retain their Imperial Territory designations, leaving the contents of these regions open.

Kantridae and Kerenda Rivers — the *Dawn of the Emperors* map has “Kantridae River” and “Kerenda River”, while TM2 and later the *Rules Cyclopedica* both use the inverted forms “River Kantridae” and “River Kerenda”. Presumably both versions are extant uses of the names, probably used interchangeably. The *Atlas* adopts the Mystaran standard of placing “River” after the name.

Kerendan Plains — “The western region of mainland Thyatis is called the Kerendan Plains.” (*Dawn of the Emperors Player’s Guide to Thyatis*, page 6a) The description goes on to mention three main communities: Foreston, Greenheight, and Kerendas itself. It seems therefore that the Kerendan Plains stretch from Vyalia and Machetos in the west to the eastern limits of Kerendas.

Kerendas — with its population of 100,000 (*Dawn of the Emperors DM’s Sourcebook* page 14b), Kerendas is a metropolis. Its symbol has been changed accordingly.

Kerendas Outpost — Bruce Heard pointed out that this is likely a fort rather than an outpost. It has therefore been renamed to Fort Kerendas on the updated map.

Lighthouses — TM2 added six lighthouses around the coast of Thyatis: Abukir Watch, Cuneus Tower, the Hold of Euglenos, Nortis, Portus Pilum, and the Tower of Aes.

Makrast — this dwarven town is marked as Markrast on TM2 and the *Rules Cyclopedica* maps. *Dawn of the Emperors* has it as Makrast both on the poster map and in the text (*DM’s Sourcebook* page 8c), where it is listed as “Makrast (Broken Mountain)”. Moreover, GAZ6’s *Dwarven Language Glossary* (pages 28-29) includes both “mak” (meaning broken) and “rast” (meaning mountain). Both books were written by Aaron Allston, so it seems very likely that Markrast is a mistake. This *Atlas* uses the original Makrast.

Mesonian River — *Dawn of the Emperors’ Player’s Guide to Thyatis* (page 6b) spells this “Mesonion”. However, the poster map has Mesonian, and this spelling was used on TM2 and in the *Rules Cyclopedica*. In the absence of further references, the *Atlas* has gone with the map’s Mesonian spelling.

Mines — *Dawn of the Emperors DM’s Sourcebook* (page 9b) mentions County Halathius’ famous gold mines, and also its productive iron mines. The updated map marks three gold mines and an iron mine to represent this. Page 8c also mentions gold mining in the dwarven Barony of Buhrohur. Two gold mines have been added here, too.

Mountain names — TM2 marked two new named mountains in Thyatis: Mt. Tarsus, Alt. 11,380 ft., and Mt. Legio, Alt. 935 ft.. However, Mt. Legio's altitude is surely a mistake. The updated map amends it to Alt. 9,350 ft.. Thanks to Fabrizio Paoli for spotting this.

Mount Mositius — “A famous adventuress ... investigated Mount Mositius and discovered the truth: The volcano was long dead...” (*Dawn of the Emperors DM's Sourcebook* page 15). Mount Mositius was not marked on the poster map, but appeared on the map for the first time on TM2.

Piceno — *Poor Wizard's Almanac III* page 157 mentions this village in Central Thyatis. Slaves from the slave revolt some days prior were found in this village, so it has been placed in the direction of Karameikos, off the main road.

Sclaras Cliffs — “Sclaras is an inaccessible island — it is a rolling, deeply forested land sitting atop cliffs, cliffs which face the sea at every point.” (*Dawn of the Emperors DM's Sourcebook* page 22a).

Stegger River — this river was changed to the River Stregger on TM2, and the same caption then appeared in the *Rules Cyclopedia* too. The updated map uses Stregger for now.

Thyatis City — the capital, called Thyatis City on *Dawn of the Emperors'* poster map, was relabelled “City of Thyatis” on TM2, and this change was repeated in the *Rules Cyclopedia*. It seems a trivial change, and both names are likely in use — as well as the name “Thyatis” on its own.

Trade Routes — page 22b-c of the *Dawn of the Emperors DM's Sourcebook* provides some amendments to trade routes: “First, the island of Terentias is on the Vorloi-to-Kerendas stretch; most ships hug the northern coast, while many jump down from Rugalov to Terentias and then up to Kerendas. Also, the Minrothad-to-Gapton route continues on to Terentias and then to Kerendas.” I have therefore added a route from just off Rugalov down to Crossroads on Terentias; another from Crossroads up to Kerendas; and another coming from Gapton up round Terentias to Crossroads.

Trevonian River — this river was changed from the *Dawn of the Emperors* poster map's Trevanion River; the A and the O were inverted. This change puts it in line with the nearby Mesonian River, therefore the Atlas accepts TM2's version as most correct. The *Rules Cyclopedia* repeated the changed caption, Trevonian.

Villages — no villages were marked on *Dawn of the Emperors'* poster map. This is perhaps an indication of the population density, but it would be good to add some villages.

Ylaruam — the sections of Ylaruam appearing on the *Dawn of the Emperors* Thyatis map are largely undeveloped. The plateaus and other details do not appear, and the terrain is radically different from GAZ2's map. Clearly it should be ignored.

(Continued on [page 33](#))

Community Interview

Thorfinn Tait

The idea for this interview with Thorfinn Tait, the master cartographer famous in at least two worlds, Mystara and Calidar, and pillar of the Mystaran community, was introduced in [this thread at The Piazza](#) by forum member and Threshold editor Julius Cleaver. The questions were decided by members of the Mystaran community.



THRESHOLD Magazine: What originally got you interested in fantasy and science-fiction?

Thorfinn Tait: One of my earliest memories is of my brother saying it was the twenty sixth time for us to watch *Star Wars*. And *Return of the Jedi* was one of the first films I saw at the cinema. We were crazy about *Star Wars* — we had most of the action figures and even some of the bigger vehicle toys. One Christmas we asked for an AT-AT walker, and our parents were able to get a good deal on them, so we ended up with one each.

That and all the cartoons back then meant I was familiar with science-fiction from an early age. My beginnings with fantasy probably came from children’s books my mother read to us. We went through all of Roald Dahl’s books, Edward Lear’s nonsense verse, and Eric Linklater’s [Pirates in the Deep Green Sea](#).

Later I read a lot more myself. I particularly remember reading *The Hobbit*, and then spending six months slowly crawling through *The Fellowship of the Ring*. After that came Terry Pratchett’s Discworld series. It wasn’t until I was 17 that I took another crack at *The Lord of the Rings*, and ended up reading the whole thing in a few days, followed by *The Silmarillion* — which was hard going at the start, but eventually turned out to be an absolute masterpiece.



Thorfinn (left) reading *The Hobbit* with his brother back in *Mystara's* heyday (1990).

As you can see, I'm a huge Tolkien fan.

What was your first introduction to RPGs?

At the same time as I was reading and watching fantasy and science-fiction, I also got into computer games. My first computer was a Commodore 64. I was three years old, and my father brought it home, set it all up, and turned it on. Then I knocked the power plug out, and zapped the power supply. He had to get it replaced before we could use the computer! After that first incident, my brother and I grew up pottering around on that computer, playing all sorts of games. Later we graduated to an Amiga, then to PCs.

My mother also got us into board gaming, and we played something with her every week when we were younger — *Cluedo*, *Monopoly*, *Game of Life*, *Pay Day*, and so on. So we were very much into gaming from a young age.

I came to RPGs first through Steve Jackson's *Fighting Fantasy* books. I still remember *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain* well. At about the same time, we started collecting Citadel Miniatures, and our grandparents gave us Frank Mentzer's *Dungeons & Dragons Basic*

Set. (Much later we found out that our aunt in Oregon had bought us it some time previously, but they had held onto it until they thought we were ready for it.) We often used some dungeon floor plans with miniatures to explore dungeons using the red box.

After that, my aunt sent us a new rules set every Christmas, until we had everything up to the *Master Set*. I devoured these rule books... The expanding possibilities and the cool new stuff each set introduced fascinated and delighted me. I quite literally grew up with this series.

We also got into Games Workshop's games, including *Warhammer Fantasy Battle*, *Blood Bowl*, *Space Hulk*, *HeroQuest*, and so on. With so many great new games coming out, we were spoilt for choice in what to play.

I'm not really sure when precisely I discovered *Mystara*, although I do know that it was later in the publication of the *Gazetteer* series — probably around 1990. This was also the year I started secondary school, and gained a whole new set of friends who were into D&D — one of whom introduced me to *Mystara*.

I quickly became a fan, and regularly persuaded my father to order books for me from TSR Hobby Shop UK, starting with the *Gazetteer* series, then the *Creature Crucibles* and all the rest. (There were no shops in Orkney that sold D&D, so never saw these books for sale in a regular shop — and I still haven't.) I remember excitedly awaiting GAZ13, and I became a regular reader of *The Voyage of the Princess Ark* in *Dragon Magazine*.

The end of the *Princess Ark* series was a blow, although I did enjoy the *Known World Grimoire* almost as much. But when that too came to an end, the change of Mystara to an AD&D campaign setting boded ill for me. Devastated by the loss of my favourite product line, I drifted away from D&D for a few years.

What is your favourite nation or region of Mystara?

Tough question... I think the answer would have to be the Shadow Elves, although I also love Serraine, Nithia, Alfheim, and Rockhome. As you can see, I have a great liking for demi-humans, especially gnomes, but also elves and dwarves.

GAZ13 was an amazing book for me, because it held such secrets, and the setting seemed so alive from the lowliest slug wrangler up to the Radiant Shaman. The fictional elements surely helped a great deal to create this image.

But I never wanted the Shadow Elves to go to the surface world like they did in *Wrath of the Immortals* — on the contrary, I always felt that they had made their subterranean domain their true home, and that they would be much diminished without it. I'm sure the wonderful map of their realm had an influence on me in this.

How did you become involved with the Mystara community?

I returned to D&D and Mystara near the end of my first year at university, in early 1997. I still have the e-mails from the Mystara Mailing List back then, and I remember first being amazed how many other people loved

Mystara, and second how great most of those people were. By that point I had been involved with various online communities, but Mystara's was the friendliest and most pleasant by far — and of course it still is.

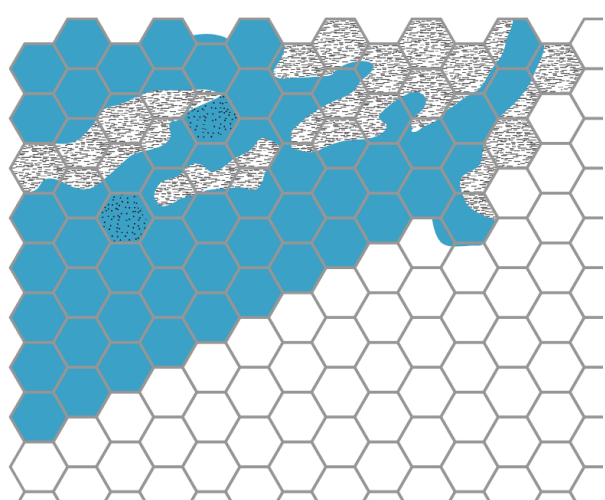
I got involved with work on the Almanac, with the Hollow World team. I remember having a great time with the Azcan Empire and the Schattentafen with Fabrizio Paoli and others.

Unfortunately life got in the way, and I wasn't able to keep a consistent presence in the community over an extended period. This always seems to be how things work for me, but at the time I'm sure it caused some trouble for Fabrizio and the others, which I still feel bad about almost twenty years later!

When did you begin to work on Mystara's maps?

I've never been good at drawing, but I've always liked working with computer drawing programs. So making digital maps was something I had been wanting to do for years. Then in October 1999, my father bought a copy of Adobe Illustrator 8. It naturally came to me to learn how to use it, and it didn't take me long to realise its cartographic potential.

I actually still have the file I worked on back then: it was Northern Iciria, and I started in the top left of the map — but not before drawing all the basic hexes in Illustrator. Looking at them now, some are completely cringe-worthy, but surprisingly I still use all the major settlement icons from 1999 still today, with only a few minor tweaks.



The extent of the abandoned project back in 1999.

In any case, I started on Northeast Iciria's ice floes, only I had decided to use the fancy icon from the Gazetteer series instead of the blank white one from the Hollow World Set. The trouble was, my computer at the time was incapable of handling this, and I ended up shelving the whole project after creating a truly pitiful area of the map.

Why did you move to Japan?

Orkney may be a small place, with a population of just around 20,000, but we have a great tradition of going out into the world. Who knows, perhaps it goes back to Viking times, when Orkney was a staging point between Norway, Britain, Ireland, and Iceland. Whatever the case, during my third year at university I heard about the JET Programme, and decided it was for me.

My interest in Japan began with *Zelda* and *Final Fantasy*, and then expanded into studying kanji and learning how to speak the language. So in July 2000 I found



myself on a plane to Tokyo, and shortly thereafter to Akita in rural northeastern Japan.

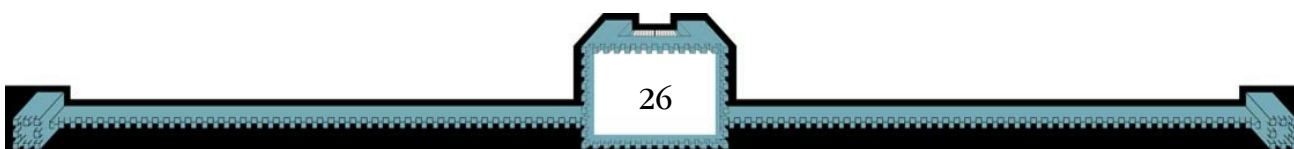
And I've been here ever since. Along the way I met my wife, got married, became a full time English teacher at a local high school, bought a house, and had a family.

How did the *Atlas of Mystara* project start?

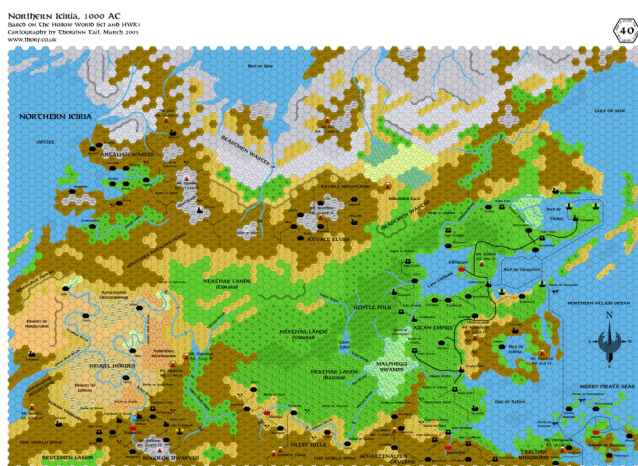


In late 2004 I discovered Wizards' (now defunct) Mystara Message Board, and started to get involved with Mystara once again. Many of the familiar names from the MML were around, and I really felt like I had never left. I was also enthused to see Bruce Heard, who I had missed in the early days of the MML.

Naturally, I fished out the file for my old mapping project, and started to see if I could do anything with it on my computer of the time. This was January 2005, and the answer was a definite yes.



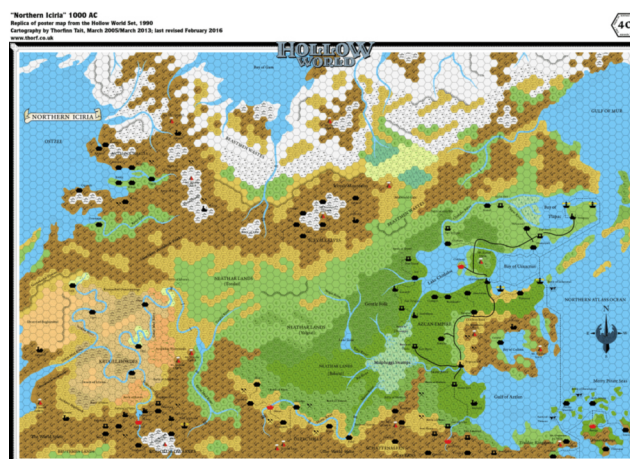
So I got to work, revising my old symbols, and working up map after map in a flurry of activity that lasted for a few months, until once again life got in the way (in this case, it was my wedding). From 15th February, I posted a map every day to my *Thorf's Secret Project, Stage One* thread on the Wizards boards. This was the beginning of the *Atlas of Mystara* project, although I didn't announce the true name and scope of it until a few years later.



2005 version of Northern Icaria by Thorfinn Tait

Since then, I've come back to it every few years, before drifting away again to other things. These times away are actually a great help, as I often find that I come back to the project with renewed motivation and interest, and can see previously insurmountable problems with a newfound clarity.

The Atlas of Mystara is now hosted here: <http://mystara.thorffmaps.com/>



2016 version of Northern Icaria by Thorfinn Tait

How did you wind up being a cartographer?

It's really all thanks to Bruce Heard. When he returned to the community in 2012 with his new blog, he began to detail Alphatia in a new series of 8 mile per hex maps. Naturally I was overjoyed at this development — new hex maps for Mystara, from the master himself! — and I approached Bruce about remaking his maps as part of the *Atlas* project. I assisted him with some early teething problems, and started to work through his maps, recreating them in the *Atlas* style.

Life (the birth of my second child, to be precise) got in the way, and I fell behind, but I kept in touch with Bruce, and continued to remake his maps piece by piece.

Then everything changed in March 2013, when it became clear that Bruce would not be able to get the Mystara license, and Bruce announced this, together with his intention to create a new setting of his own to write about. I wrote a rather emotional response to this, which you can still find on Bruce's

blog; it was at once a moment of great sadness, but also great potential for the future.

A couple of months later, Bruce asked for my opinion on his fledgling new setting, Calidar, which led to a series of discussions. Finally in July, he asked me to do Calidar's cartography, and I accepted.

What is it like working with Bruce Heard?

Bruce is a man with a vision — when he asks for something, he already knows what he wants. Of course it's not always the same thing as I have in mind. After doing maps on my own for so long, working on Calidar's maps has been a lesson in compromise for me, which is really an invaluable experience, because being able to compromise and communicate frankly but diplomatically are essential skills for a cartographer.

I'm continually amazed at Bruce's productivity and creativity. He's also very much on the ball when it comes to using technology and the Internet. He draws all of the deck plans for Calidar, and his style continues to evolve as he has branched out into floor plans and heraldry.

I can't help but feel that it's an honour and a privilege to be working and talking with someone whose work I have admired for so long. It's no secret that I'm one of Bruce's staunchest supporters, and I would love for his work to be more widely read.

What was your first published contribution?

The first Calidar book, CAL1 *In Stranger Skies*, includes more than ten maps I created.

There are also two poster maps: one in my new topographical style, the other a Mystara-style hex map.

It took me the better part of a year to do all of these, during which I learned how to do a lot of new stuff. I spent a long time following tutorials, reading websites and books, and asking questions in forums, learning all the new skills I needed. The rest of the time was spent creating maps. The 3D model for the main area of Calidar, the Great Caldera, took me six months to do. It's the basis for all of my topographical maps in CAL1, and it contains enough detail to map out the whole Great Caldera for years to come.



The Map of the Great Caldera in the first Calidar book, "In Stranger Skies"

The hex map of course was a lot easier, but after all my experience with Mystara I was determined to make things as accurate as I could from the very beginning.

What area or topic would you like to map next in either Mystara or Calidar (or even elsewhere)?

For Mystara, I'd love to do some more underground realms — especially Rockhome's underworld. Aside from that, I'm determined to get Mystara to a level of accuracy that satisfies my tastes, with full georeferencing — consistent latitude and longitude coordinates throughout the world. I realise that not everyone is interested in such accuracy in fantasy mapping, but it has become my hallmark.

Ultimately, I would like to do for Mystara what I have done for Calidar, but on a global scale, with a 3D height model of the entire world — yes, inside and out. It's a massive undertaking.

For Calidar, my long term goal is to map out the rest of the world in 3D. This is partially underway, but the techniques I used to do the Great Caldera don't really scale up. I can't spend three years on a model for the world! So for this as well as Mystara I'm looking into new ways to generate the terrain, sculpt it as I want it, and erode it to make it look real.

In the short term, I'm eager to see more hex maps, starting with Meryath's provinces. We're considering doing these at 2 miles per hex, to go with the 10 mile per hex poster map.

I'd also love to map out Kumoshima, the moon with a feudal Japan-style culture. Bruce has had no need of it yet, unfortunately, so I'm still waiting for this chance.

What kind of techniques and/or software do you use in your mapping?

My hex maps are all done in Adobe Illustrator. Lately I use Adobe Photoshop to composite smaller maps together into larger chunks. Photoshop is far more able to deal with large images, and you can link the Illustrator files when you place them, so that changes made in Illustrator will automatically be reflected in the Photoshop file.

For my topographical maps, I use mainly Photoshop, with Illustrator for vector and text elements. I have Avenza's amazing MAPublisher and Geographic Imager plugins for these programs, which add GIS features, allowing me to georegister maps. This means I can change the projections used, which is vital for mapping with accuracy.

I do my 3D modelling of terrain in Photoshop, with Wilbur for erosion. But I am looking into replacing this workflow, likely with World Machine. I need to move into procedural terrain, which has great possibilities for mapping a wide range of landforms.

What do you do when you get stuck on something?

As I mentioned earlier, taking time away is often a big help. With the really big problems, talking to others can also lead to a solution. They don't have to be experts; just talking the problem through can do the trick.

There's a huge amount of tutorials for all sorts of mapping things available around the web. These can be invaluable in solving problems. My mantra has always been learning by doing, and tutorials cut to the chase and present exactly how to do things. For me, the advent of video tutorials on

YouTube and lynda.com has been really empowering.

What challenge do you hope to address next in your cartographic endeavours? (i.e. is there any technical ability or limitation you hope to overcome? or even any graphic limitations or capabilities you are hoping are resolved in future software versions)

Every map presents some sort of new challenge. Tackling these is immensely satisfying, although also time consuming.

The main one on my plate at the moment is how to create 3D terrain, and specifically how to erode it, in a more reasonable timeframe. I'm very proud of my work on the Great Caldera, but I need to be able to produce a whole world in a much tighter timeframe. And I want to do it better, too.

In many ways, I find myself working in parallel with Anna Meyer. We both seem to be treading very similar paths; we have similar styles and design choices; and we both started out mapping our favourite campaign setting extensively over the course of many years. She has been able to use that as a springboard to become a successful fantasy cartographer, and I'm hoping to follow in her footsteps. I'm a big fan of her work, and in many ways she continues to show me the way forward.

The other big challenge is with mapping Mystara. The Hollow World and its polar openings present a unique challenge that's probably amplified by my desire to map with great accuracy. But I've been making a lot of progress in this lately, which you can follow in my [Lining Up Mystara](#) series of articles.



A mock-up of the preliminary results of the Lining Up Mystara project.

Name some maps that have inspired you.

Mystara's Trail Maps have always been a great inspiration, and continue to be something to aspire to. I especially like the way the tables around the outside complement the maps. But perhaps you meant non-Mystaran maps?

Tolkien's Middle-earth and Beleriand maps are firm favourites. I love Tolkien's art, too. His clear, elegant style looks deceptively easy.

Google Maps and other satellite map services are a constant inspiration, because the real world is often far more fantastic than we might think in our everyday lives.

Finally, I love old maps of all kinds. Working to recreate the style of a map is something I have great experience in with Mystara's hex maps, so it's only natural that I'd want to do a similar thing with other old maps.

Of the maps you've made, what is your favorite map?

It has to be Calidar's Great Caldera map. One of the benefits of being the cartographer is that I have the full resolution version. My computer has a really nice 5K monitor, and I have a shrunk down version as my desktop.

For Mystara, usually it's whichever map I last finished. But the best is definitely still to come.

Which of your maps did you most enjoy making?

I enjoy them all, or I wouldn't have made so many. But the close-up map of Meryath's Royal Domain was probably the most satisfying, since it allowed me to use the 3D model of the Great Caldera at full resolution for the first time.

I also had a blast collaborating with Geoff Gander on Selhomarr¹, and of course with Bruce Heard on everything Calidar. The constant back and forth, striving to satisfy you both, and working towards a compromise where you disagree — for me, working on maps together is just far more fun.

Which was the most challenging Mystaran map, and why?

Shahjapur's map comes to mind, as it was one of the very few maps done with horizontal rather than vertical hex rows. This occurred because the map had east at the top of the page. Of course it had to be changed to a standard hex orientation, which

¹ [Maps of Selhomarr](#) are stored at the Vaults of Pandius



Work-in-progress Meryath provincial map next to a crop from the 10 mile per hex map

involved a madness-inducing overlay of a normal hex grid onto that map.

Otherwise, I'd have to say that Bruce's Alphatia maps are all pretty challenging, due to the sheer volume of their content. It's all too easy to miss something!

What do you like — and dislike — most about the hex map style so iconic to Mystara?

Great question!

I love the overall look, the hex map aesthetic. It's funny, this seems to be very much a matter of taste, because I've heard people say they think hex maps look ugly, but I don't see this myself.

I really like how it makes it easy to map an area without worrying about details too much. The symbol on a hex represents its main terrain features, so that it's always possible to have something unexpected hidden in there if you want it to be.

I dislike the impression they give of perfect distance, shape and area throughout a map. No projection shows all of these aspects

without distortion, and most show only one — and often imperfectly, at that. The best way round this that I've found so far is to use hexes on top of an equal area projection, which retains their accuracy for demographic calculations.

How do you manage to find a balance between mapping, family, and a full time job?

With great difficulty, I'm afraid! I would probably be a far better father if I spent all my time with my kids instead of mapping. But I'm also determined to show my kids that working hard on something you care about is one of the best things you can do in life, so it's not all bad, I suppose. My son has inherited my love of maps, that's for sure.



Teaching the next generation of mappers — and hopefully Mystara fans, too!

I do enjoy my work teaching at a high school. It's true, a lot of times I would far rather be mapping — especially when it comes to exam time, with my two least favourite jobs, invigilation and marking. But it also gives me a life, with lots of human contact outside the

house. If I was a full time cartographer, I might actually become a hermit!

What are your plans for the future?

Long-term, it may be a pipe dream, but I'd love to turn cartography into my full time work. Everything I do these days is with that in mind. For the same reason, although on a personal level I am quite happy to give all my work freely to the community, I'm also conscious of the fact that I will never attain my goal by doing so. If I could break through more fully on to the professional stage, I would be able to produce a lot more material.

Short-term, I have four main goals: continue to map for Bruce Heard's Calidar; work towards completion of my *Atlas of Mystara* project by executing occasional shorter mini-projects; broaden my cartography skills and enlarge my toolbox; and do more professional maps in addition to Calidar.

The recent opening of the DM's Guild suggests to me that I may yet be able to produce one of my dream projects, a printed *Atlas of Mystara*. But of course this is dependent on Wizards of the Coast adding Mystara to the list of settings allowed there, and there's no telling if or when this may happen.

Regardless, I will keep moving forward, and keep on mapping. Thank you to everyone in our wonderful community for your continuing support! I wouldn't and couldn't be doing this if it weren't for you all.

Visit Thorf's blog to see more of his fantastic maps, here:

<http://www.thorfmaps.com/>

Many of his Mystara Maps are also stored at The Vaults of Pandius:

<http://pandius.com/ttait.html>

And in the Piazza's [Geographical mapping forum](#)

ATLAS OF MYSTARA

(Continued from [page 22](#))

References:

[Thyatis at the Vaults of Pandius](#)

[Thyatis map thread at The Piazza](#)

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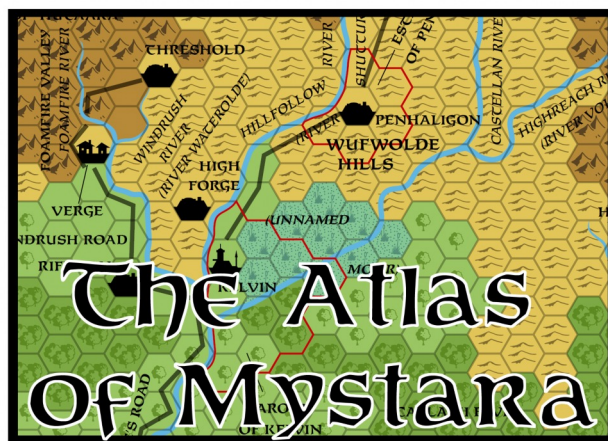
[Mapping Issues: Towers, Keeps, Forts and Castles](#) at The Piazza

Thanks to:

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Visit the new Atlas site here:

<http://mystara.thorf.co.uk/>



Mapping the world of Mystara
ONE hex at a time...

A COMMUNITY project at The Piazza



THE ELEMENTAL EVIL in Mystara

by the EPiK Team

The original adventure, **The Temple of Elemental Evil®** by Gary Gygax, a milestone for **Dungeons&Dragons®**, was set in **Greyhawk®**.

The same goes for the **Wizard of the Coast** adventure written by Monte Cook in 2001: **Return to the Temple of Elemental Evil®**.

In **Princes of the Apocalypse®**, the latest edition of the Elemental Evil, the authors opted for something completely different.

Apart for the name, this adventure has nothing in common with the two previous products and above all its setting is different: Abeir-Toril, the world of the **Forgotten Realms®**.

The editorial choice was also to help DMs to bring this story in all the others Wizard settings, with the introduction of an appendix at the end of the huge 256 pages book-adventure-campaign.

Obviously **Mystara®** was not amid the considered settings and this explains the aim of the present work: closing an unforgivable gap.



Princes of Apocalypse cover

To use this conversion the original module published by Wizard of the Coast is necessary. The Elemental Evil Player's Companion can also be downloaded as free pdf from the Dungeon Masters Guild: <http://www.dmsguild.com/product/145542/Elemental-Evil-Players-Companion-5e>.

The Princes of Apocalypse online supplement is also free and available here: http://media.wizards.com/2015/downloads/dnd/PrincesApocalypse_AdvSupplementv1.0_PrinterFriendly.pdf



Elemental Evil Player's Companion cover

SETTING

As I said, the original adventure is set in the Forgotten Realms, in the Dessarin Valley, a quite populated area and a connecting route to the northern cities of the Sword Coast.

I consider the best location in Mystara to be the **Esterhold Peninsula** specifically the southern coast facing the **Zamara Sea**. (See Map 1 on the following page.)

Keep in mind that for the last twelve centuries, from the annexation to the **Alphatian Empire** until today, this land has seen a slow but progressive development and a demographic growth, so I do not believe that there are only the two cities of **Port Marlin** and **Rock Harbor**, as per Poor Wizard's Almanac III.

I do believe that a territory so vast and rich of merchant routes, mostly for mining, should have a network of roads and more developed cities connected with routes, along the coastline and in the inner territory, to the cities of **Faraway**, **Skyfyr**, **Port Marlin**, and **Rock Harbour** with **Minaea Reign** and the city-states of **Tresa**, **Markos** and **Thanasis**.

Forgotten Realms' city of Luskan becomes Port Marlin.

The nameless mountain chain, north of the city, nearly 500 km long, faces the Esterhold Sea and becomes **The Spine**.

I think that the existence of a coastal city facing the Dobar Bay halfway between Port Marlin and Rock Harbor, is not only possible, but also very likely. A city with a catchy name, **Eversummer**, to underline a hot climate, never cold, to stand for Neverwinter in the Forgotten Realms. The presence of a big city between Port Marlin and Rock Harbor makes the construction of land routes and the rising of carriage commerce inevitable. Both coastal and inland routes grow around one of them, connecting Eversummer to the Long Road (Rock Harbor-Anchorage way), the Dessarin Valley and Red Larch.

Rock Harbor takes Waterdeep's place and **Sinbad's Gate** perfect location is midway between the Harbor and Tresa City State, on the northern shore of Chiontar river and facing the Zamara Sea. Sinbad's Gate is really the gate between the north and the south of the Esterhold Peninsula connecting, through land routes, Port Marlin, Rock Harbor, Anchorage and Faraway to the cities of the Minaean coast and internal territory.



Map 1: The Esterhold Peninsula and nearby lands, replica of Poor Wizard's Almanac Maps by EPiK Team

The inland territory, a huge and deserted land in the original map, is in reality inhabited by little human communities grown and made rich by the mining development of the area.

Red Larch, Westbridge, Triboar, Yartar, Longsaddle, Mirabar and Everlund are just little communities, few hundred souls, left behind by the first Alphatian colonists passing by and by the Jennites slaves that the Alphatians used to own.

The main location for the adventure is still Dessarin Valley, north of Rock Harbor.

This way, the Dessarin Hills will find themselves in the West, the Sword Mountains in the South-West, Sumer Hills in the center, will be the heart of the adventure.

Finally, in the East, there will be Forlorn Hills near the north-south Rock Harbor-Anchorage route.

WARNING, SPOILER ALERT: the Map 3 is **GM-only**, so don't look at it if you are a player!

BACKGROUND:

The adventure can be set either in the AC 1000-1009 period or in the following years. The first is the time of the Wrath of the Immortals and of the global war between the largest nations of the Known World. The second is when the Alphatian Empire just sunk, while the Thyatian Empire, in its defeat, is not strong enough to get hold of the old Alphatian colonies.

In this time, in the northern coast domains facing Thorin Bay, like Blackrock and Verdan Kingdoms and also the independent cities in the southern coast of Esterhold and Zamara seas (Port Marlin, Eversummer, Rock Harbor and Sinbad's Gate), starts a liberation process that will end with their independence, after the end of the world and Alphatia's disappearance.

These are the years during which the Egg of Coot, whose conscience has woken up after more than four thousand years, starts to act to get again a physical form to continue its plan of total conquest from the point it left it a long time ago.

Following the events in The Return of the Egg (explained in the next number of Threshold Magazine) the Egg of Coot, hit by a huge energy wave, lost its physical form and its conscience became prisoner of a *minbir*¹.

¹ A minhir is one of the communication and mind control towers (a very polished black stone obelisk no more than three meters tall) built by Blackmoor scientists.



Map 2: Players' map of Esterhold

The Elemental Evil in Mystara



Map 3: GM map of Esterhold and nearby lands

After the planet shift, kilometers of water of the new pole sea submerged the monolith, in which the Egg conscience had found sanctuary.

Today, from its watery grave, and thanks to dreams and visions it can reach the entire world using various monoliths strewn on Mystara, survived to the holocaust. The Egg can thus corrupt the Wu Benares², convince him to forge four weapons imbued of the Elemental Evil energy, and actually kick off the plan for its large-scale return to Mystara.

The origin of the Elemental Evil cult is deeply rooted in the long gone Evergrun Elven Realm era and in the rebellious endeavors of the being that would later become the Immortal Idris³.

The damned elf plays a very important role in the Elemental Evil cult development even though the goddess-to-be does not realize at first the real nature of the same Dark Power, that counseled and moved her actions.

All began when Idris started hearing in her head a flattering voice that led her with false promises to challenge openly Ordana and to try to destroy the Unique Tree, the goddess's gift to her beloved people.

² Triclops and Wu: see New Races Appendix. Redesign for D&D 5th Edition based on the race created by Marco Dalmonte. They do not appear neither in this installment nor in the original adventure. I have simply substituted DeVir the drow with a Wu named Benares.

³ Idris' story is found in "[Codex Immortalis](#)" by [Marco Dalmonte](#).

After defeating Idris, the furious Ordana cursed her to live again and again her pain in a long chain of reincarnations ... forever!

After several years, in her first reincarnation, Idris got in touch with the fascinating Blackmoor civilization and created the first cult of the Elder Elemental Egg, never realizing that she contacted the evil Egg of Coot.

Her masterpiece, completed with the help of other corrupt elves, was the construction of Elemental Evil Temple, in what are now the Sumber Hills.

When Idris had to flee and found her death, the cult somehow survived her demise.

The newly reincarnated Idris always lost memory of her past lives, as per Ordana's will, so she had forgotten the cult created by her.



Ordana

It is also possible that after the Great Rain of Fire and the Jennites' Invasions, the cult was eradicated from the area and with it all the remembrance of its rites.

In the following years, the ones of the fallout from the nuclear explosions ravaging Mystara's surface, some Kogolor dwarven families⁴ under Belsimer clan's banner arrived in the area from the Blackmoor territory.

These people, after a lengthy exodus through dry Jen steppes, chased by its warriors and humanoid tribes, reached the Sumber Hills, found the old underground complex and chose to remain there.

Shepherders and miners, they burrowed in the earth nonetheless and found the old temple built by Idris' elves but were unable to clear the dungeons from dangerous creatures and simply collapsed and shut down the old tunnels.

Tyar-Besil Kingdom, from the Belsimer city's dwarven name, was little and did not live long .

A few years after the completion of the constructions in Sumber Hills, trolls and giants came and forced dwarves to leave the area.

Few survived the diaspora and just a few lucky ones found sanctuary in the Hollow World.

During the following years, sparse adventuring parties and Jennites avant-gardes

came to the buried Tyar-Besil fortress and the elven temple underneath.

Unfortunately, no one had the idea of compiling an account of the exploration and so names of places and cities went lost in the meantime.

Only in the years of the Alpathian invasion, twelve centuries later, an adventuring party, devoted to the Immortal Ixion, by the name of **Knight of the Fire Wheels**⁵, found the remains of the old dwarven city and started to explore its ruins.

They returned many times to Tyar-Besil resolved to eradicate the evil dwelling there and, to this end, they built a fortress on each access point to the old Kogolor city.

They feared the presence of something extremely evil, that felt deep under the Sumber Hills and ready to act: to face it they organized a sort of permanent guard on the area.

Borderland stories do not agree on the fate of the Knights of the Fire Wheel party.

The most trustworthy tale claims that after less than fifty years, they were caught and eradicated by the biggest Jennite incursion ever seen in the area.

For centuries, the towers stood alone and the locals started to call them the Haunted Fortresses, at times empty, at times occupied by monsters.

⁴ Ancient Kogolor Dwarves. "[Races of Mystara](#)" by [Marco Dalmonte](#).

⁵ Knights of the Wheel of Fire takes the place of the Knights of the Silver Horn.

The lost towers and the Kogolor Reign would have completely been forgotten if not for the coming of a mysterious stranger: Benares the Wu.

The cult survived for some centuries, even though it had changed into a very different thing from the religion created by Idris.

Waking up from its millennial sleep, the Elemental Evil Egg became the Elder Elemental Eye and the seat of the cult was renamed the Fane of the Eye.

The memory of its origins and nature long gone, the Egg of Coot saw a perfect opportunity to begin anew its operations in the area in a more quietly and cautious manner.

After a while, it also realized that forging a new physical form for itself required that it tapped directly to the four elements primordial energy.

To this end, it would not need common elemental material but Primordial Elements, only found in very powerful and extremely old elemental creatures, which existed in times before any mortal reached the Elemental Plane and tamed the first elemental: a time when the Elemental Planes were wholly uncontaminated! Then it needed to taint these four **Elemental Princes**, corrupt their Primordial core with its vile powers, and summon them to the First Material Plane through four passageways called **Elemental Nodes**, created just to this end.

For this purpose, the Egg corrupted Benares, a Wu from Sanctuary, the legendary city on

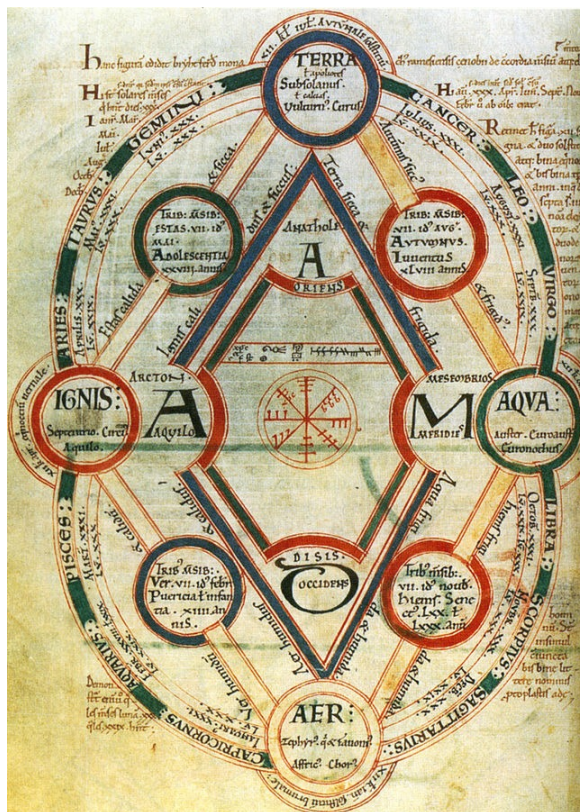
Sagarmatha Mountains, in the northern part of Skothar continent.

The Wu was chosen because he was quite versed in the magical arts and prone to using Blackmoor era items.

He undertook a very long journey that brought him, through the Jen Steppes and Thonia kingdom, to the Esterhold peninsula and to the Fane of the Eye.

Driven by the Egg's visions, Benares the Wu built four mighty apocalypse weapons, imbued with the power of the four corrupt elements.

So he forged: the air lance **Windvane**, the fire dagger **Tinderstrike**, the water trident **Drown** and the earth war pick **Ironfang**.



After the end of this feat Benares left without a trace, leaving the four apocalypse weapons on the Elemental Evil altar.

These weapons were soon claimed by the four Elemental Evil Prophets, which came a few months ago, from the far ends of the world, to reinstate the old cult.

Today their aim is to open the four Elemental Nodes to help the Egg to pursue its plan: in the next episode we will see how their devotion to the Elemental Evil shapes the world for the bad!

THE ELEMENTAL EVIL IN MYSTARA – PART III: THE CREED

Elemental Evil Cults in Mystara and their Prophets.



The Elemental Evil disrupts the four elements inner nature, focusing their power to just destruction. For each element, a prophet full of charisma has been summoned to prepare a platform for an organized cult. Each cult act alone from the others, with different modes and aiming different ends.

Each one is sure to be superior in comparison to the other cults and to be somewhat the beloved of the Elemental Evil Eye.

Despite these differences, amply described in the original text, the cults are connected one another through a force they fail to fully comprehend.

Black Earth Cult

A medusa called **Marlos Urnarayle** guides the Black Earth cult. He possesses Ironfang, a war pick, imbued from the power of Ogrémoch, the Evil Earth Prince.



Marlos is a vain being, cruel and extremely narcissist, that loves to surround himself with luxury and beautiful items. Beneath this sure and selfish behavior, a self-loathing sad creature hides looking at others with hate and contempt.

Marlos was born as a human aristocrat in a noble family of Arogansa from southwest Alphatia and grew to be a complete posh. He wasted his family wealth in a hedonistic life during which he indulged in kinky and peculiar behaviors. Urnarayle mansion was well known for bizarre dinners, wild parties and kinky orgies. Marlos forced his guests to wear horrendous monster masks to be absolutely certain no one could put his beauty in the shade.

When he started to grow old, Marlos got into arcane arts studies, in which he never excelled, to prolong his youth. During these researches, that costed him years, he found a

ring with the vital essence of an innocent creature from the Fairy People. Instead of freeing the spirit, Marlos started to use its powers, halting for some years his body's natural decay. But one day, the fairy creature's soul died and thus came a curse that transformed Marlos in a medusa. Overtaken by horror and madness, Marlos fled Arogansa and Alphatia, carrying along just his large mask collection.

After some years traveling around Isle of Dawn, Ochalea and Bellissaria, he ended up in Sinbad's Gate in west Skothar. Here he started to get dreams and visions that urged him to move to Esterhold Peninsula and the Sumer Hills. A long staircase under a wrecked monastery brought him in an old cavern with a freaky altar on which an iron war pick rested. When Marlos took up Ironfang, his mission became instantly clear. He set his dwelling in a nearby underground complex and started building the Black Earth Cult.

Howling Hate Cult

Aerisi Kalinoth, a noon elf⁶ guides the Howling Hate Cult. Tall and fine looking, she sports some illusory wings that moves the air with delicacy.



Aerisi talk in a gentle whisper that reaches loud and clear her people's ears. She considers her followers not as cultists but as

her noble courtiers. In front of them, she is a Prophet and a Queen. Musicians and courtiers flatter her and revere her, warriors riding hippogriffs are as knights to her.

She was born in the far Eusdria reign, on the Savage Coast, in a noble family, surrounded by history, legends and magic. She passed the youth playing and dreaming to emulate the legendary Aeryl, the ancestor of the winged elves, Ee'Aar. Her ever-vigilant family made her character frail and gentle with their protective behavior.

But when her parents chose to let her have a look into the world and into the society they recognized the big mistake they had committed. They grew a spoiled girl, not a mature woman. She was accustomed to have everything she wanted, bursting in hysterical madness whenever she was denied the smallest of things. These childish behaviors made her unwanted in Gundegard court, the king himself appeared unsatisfied of her demeanor and could not stand her any more. Nonetheless, her talent for the enchanting magic continued to grow but she seemed to feel out of place in that environment. At that time, the first dreams came to her and she envisioned herself like one of the winged elf that roamed legends and stories from when she was a child. She started to dream she could master the air and with it, she could punish the ones that offended her.

Then the childish dreams started to evolve and to become some obscure vision in which she was able to dominate the storms and the air itself. Until one day, during a dream, a brown-skinned white haired mystic appeared to her promising he would teach her all he knew. The creature in her dream was **Yan-C-**

⁶ From the ["Razze di Mystara"](#) almanac of Marco Dalmonte. The Fair Elves (see Elfo Chiaro in Dalmonte's work) have a fair skin with golden tints, brown or dark hair, and they are rarely blond or red-haired. They are as tall as humans (average 175 cm) and with an athletic build.

Bin, the Evil Air Prince. Aerisi changed her magical studies moving to the study of the Air Element. This endeavor brought her from Eusdria to Alphatia. Her arts grew even finer in Floating Ar and as her studies deepened also her dreams became more intense until one day, following their suggestions, she found a cavern in the Sumber Hills with an altar in it. There lied Windvane the lance, waiting for her. Driven by her mentor Yan-C-Bin, she named herself Queen and with her power, she started luring followers at her side.

Breaking Wave Cult

Gar Brokenkeel, once a sailor, commands the Breaking Wave Cult. He possesses Drown, the water elemental weapon: a trident imbued with the essence of **Olhydra**, the **Evil Water Princess**.



Gar is a silent and surly man who prefers to speak with actions instead of words. He is sure the world and life have wronged him and this brought him to hate deeply all the people with the sole exception of those as unlucky as him. Gar despises others' weaknesses.

He was born in a little village on the Minaea's south coast and was nothing more than a little boy when his village was attacked by the shark people. Sea devils slaughtered his family and everyone he knew. As an orphan, he embarked as ship's boy on a merchant ship sailing for Spearpoint in eastern Bellissaria. Despite his young age and his lack of experience, Gar got the toughest jobs and the way his masters abused him bordered slavery. His service on the ship

ended abruptly when pirates attacked the merchant ship. During the fight, Gar was stunned and drawn overboard into the sea. He survived for days clenching on a ship wreckage, until a shark attacked him and cut off his left arm. Sensing his impending end feeling that all was lost, Gar left himself go to his final destiny. A strong stream quickly rose and, as if listening to his prayers, brought him away from the predator. In less than an hour, he found himself on the beaches of Gaity Island. Thinking that the saving wave was a water elemental sent for his safety, he chose to set himself on oceans study and on learning their secrets. During the next years he travelled a lot, visiting Alatiens Islands, Bellissaria, Isle of Dawn and wherever he went he tried to learn all the knowledge on sea and its magic. He never stopped to mistrust and loathe the other people, remembering the ill deeds he suffered from merchants and pirates. One day he realized he was chosen for something more, he had to rally other men like himself and teach them the power of the sea.

He got some visions immediately after understanding the real purpose of his life and he slowly reached the Sumber Hills. There he found a temple in a hidden cavern and a bizarre altar on which he found a magic trident. Sensing its power Gar took it and with it, he gathered the cultists of the Breaking Wave.

Eternal Flame Cult

Driven by a burning ambition and by the urge to punish all the people obstructing her dreams, **Vanifer** the thiefling has risen to guide the Eternal Flame Cult.



Her apparent coolness carefully hides a pointy blade forged by loathing and pride.

Going deeper, under her pride, lies a mayhem and a desire for chaos. In Vanifer boils a strong hate towards those who think they are superior to her and there is nothing she would not dare to do to appear terrible and respectable.

Vanifer, probably the daughter of a human woman and a diabolus, grew in the filthiest streets of Sayr Ulan, using just her wits as a weapon. Since her youth, she learned to dance for money and slowly she built herself a name from the lowest taverns of the merchant district to the chambers of the nobles' houses. She also taught herself some fire magic tricks that helped her to be unique amongst the other dancers. Her talent grew and this brought her to a pasha's attention and he asked her to join her concubines. She hated her position because she understood that she was just a trophy for the pasha. This arrangement did not last long: Vanifer left the palace but not before "relieving" the master of some precious gems and burning down the palace.

She found sanctuary in Slagovich but the pasha's followers did not take long to find her. She fled again, this time embarking in a long journey by sea to the other side of the world. As she came to Sinbad's Gate, she found home in the poorer districts where she started a school for dancers that in a little time started to gather other disciples. She became the charismatic guide for a group of fire apprentices. She remained in Sinbad's Gate until a few months ago, when dreams and visions pushed her to go to the north, to the Esterhold Peninsula. In a lost temple, on

an altar, she found the dagger Tinderstrike, imbued with the power of Imix, the Evil Fire Prince. With this brand new and powerful weapon, she decided to write a new chapter for his cult under the Sumber Hills.

We only need to see the last part, after the "what", "when" and "why" of the Elemental Evil: the "where"! We will examine in detail the locations of the Dessarin Valley in Mystara and also speak about the different "neutral" factions that can affect your playing experience.

THE ELEMENTAL EVIL IN MYSTARA – PART IV: THE STAGE

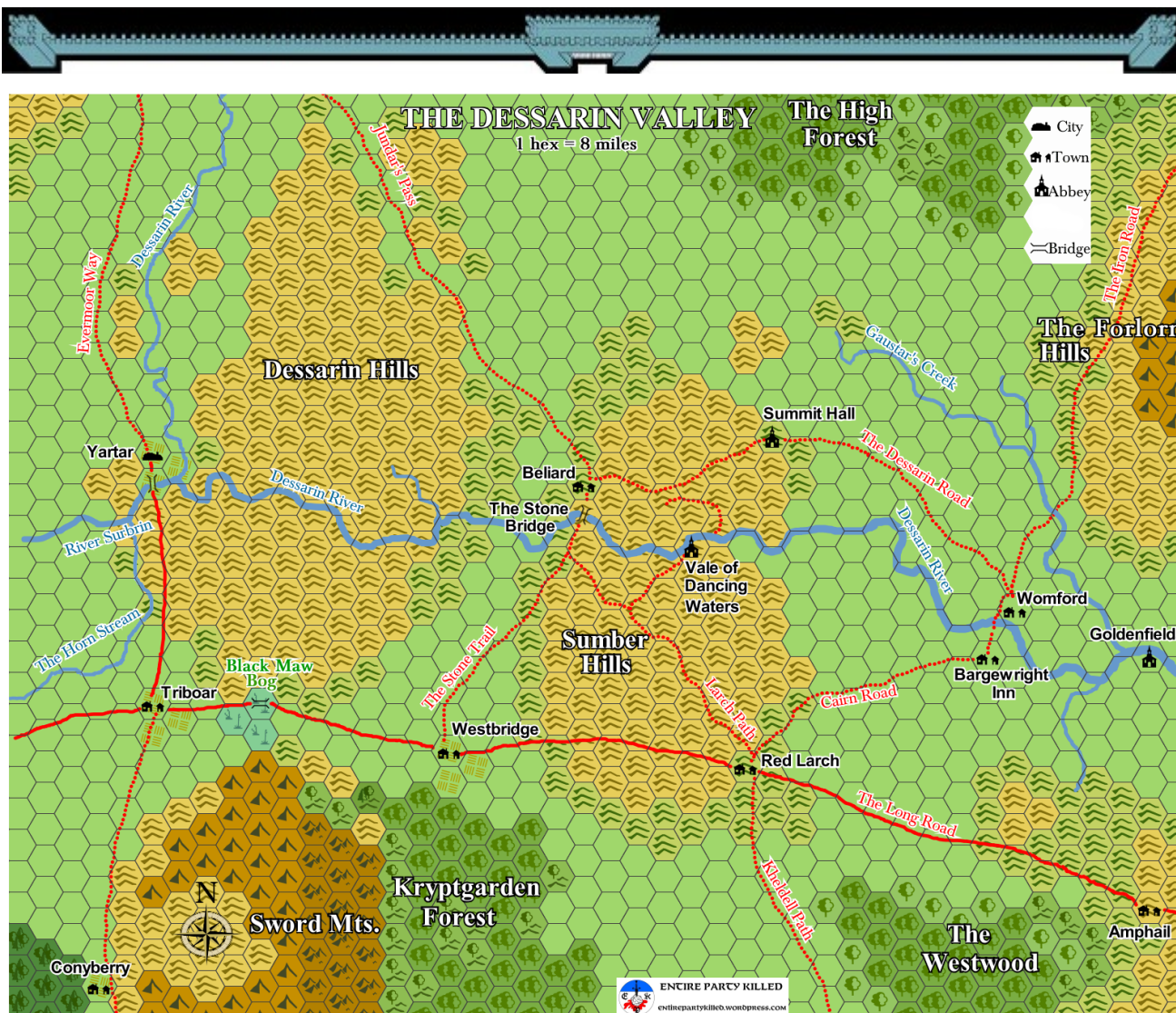
Dessarin Valley in Esterhold:

places and encounters

All the locations in this description are, as a whole, devised on the rules and the specific depictions of the original adventure. We need some corrections and integration to adapt them to play in the Esterhold Peninsula campaign in the Skothar continent.

The chosen area spans 340 miles (550 km), east-west, and 300 miles (around 480 km)⁷.

⁷ The map of page 32 must be rotated 90 degrees counterclockwise. The North of the map, then, becomes the West, the North, the East and so on.



Players map of the adventure area

Amphail

It is a little town just three days from Rock Harbor, on the Long Road. Founded by a noble Alphatian mage, Amphail the Just, that named it after himself and protected it from the humanoids and Jennites for the entire duration of his life and beyond, according to legends his ghost is still riding on the Sunder Hill.

Fascinated by the Jennites mastership in using horses, especially in battles, he made

horse breeding the more lucrative activity in town, famous all over Waerhold even today for its breeding farms. Since the time his founder was alive, Amphail has become a medium-sized town (a bit bigger than in the original adventure): it is on the intersection of two big routes and the carriage commerce is flourishing, so it serves as a way station too, for fresh horses and provisions.

Many Alphatian nobles possess lush villas on the hills surrounding Amphail in which they often reside during the autumn in Alphia.

Bargewright Inn

A simple inn for passers-by on a hillside, it's name today is simply Bargewright and it has become a little community living in old wood and mud structures, surrounded by walls that slowly encompassed the hill above Womford village. For a few years this community has been controlled by the Skyfyr Guild of the Fallen (or Order of the Fallen Dragon) that placed allied merchants and businessmen in the city's key positions.

The community leader is **Chalaska Muruin**, an alphatian-jennite half-breed female, probably born from a jennite slave raped by her Alphatian master.

The innkeeper **Nalaskur Thaelond** is the boss of the Fallen in the city.

Beliard

Surely, it is one of the most beautiful villages in the Dessarin Valley, thanks for its trees. It's the main cattle market in the area and the inhabitants are mostly shepherds and herdsmen. It is also the last place where the lost delegation was seen and thus it is more than an apt place to start the research.

Goldenfields

Goldenfields is a huge temple-farm, circled by thick walls and sacred to Ninsun, the agriculture goddess. When, twelve centuries ago, the first alphatian conquerors arrived in Esterhold, they decided to preserve this cult place, mostly used by the Jennites then subdued and enslaved, either because this cult was a pacific one, or because the

produce of the area were important for the colonies' upkeep.

Abbot **Ellardin Darovik** now rules it, and Goldenfields is an important outpost for the Emerald Enclave. Members of the enclave, as Ninsun clerics, are certainly welcomed between these walls. Inside and around it there are nearly a thousand families, Jennites freedmen for the most part, and under the command of these monk-farmers, they harvest an area that spans for over twenty square miles and serves as a granary for the whole Peninsula. Goldenfields was also one of the destinations for the lost delegation: they obviously did not reach it.

Halls of the Hunting Axe

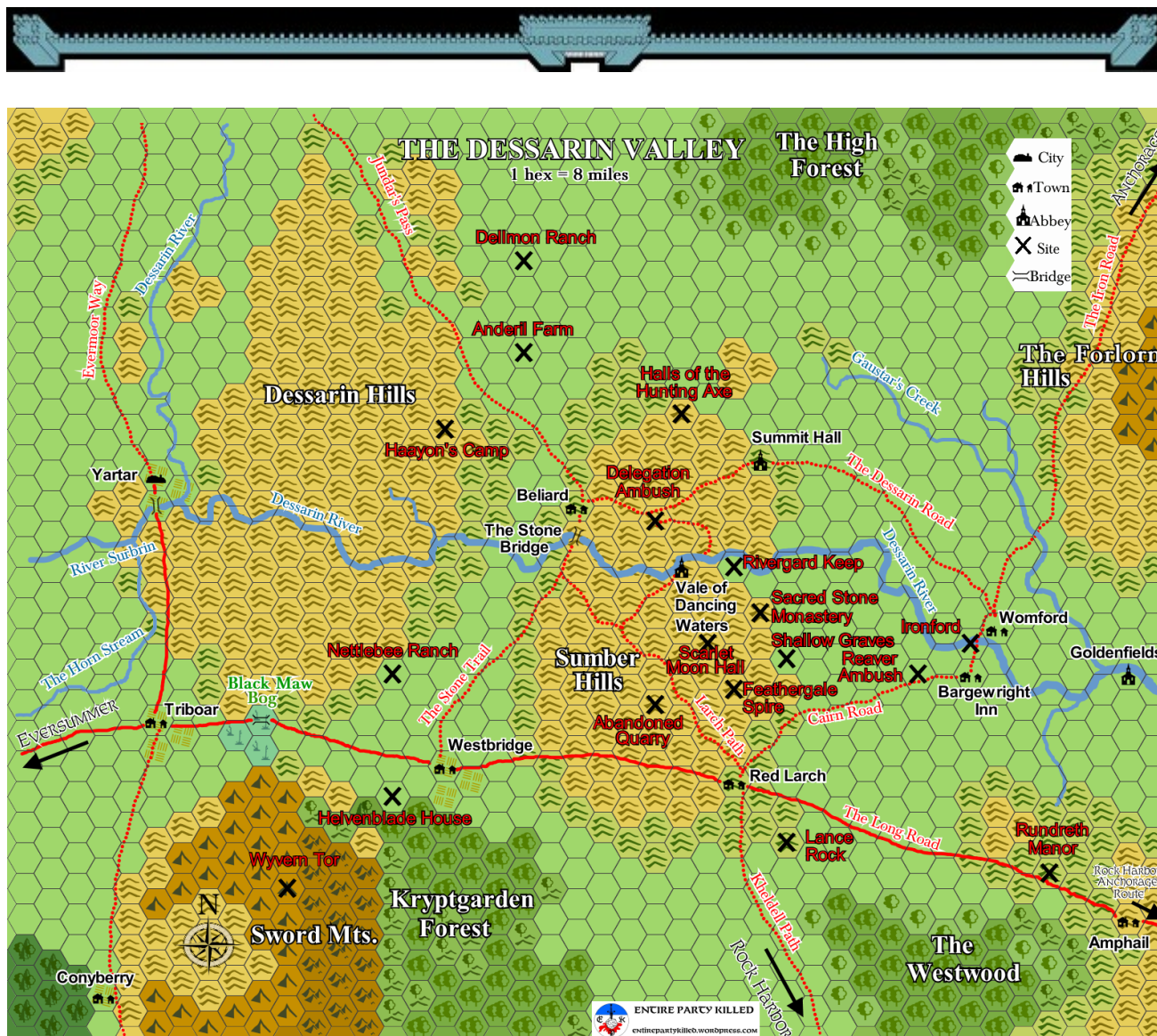
This building almost destroyed and haunted by monsters is all that remains of Besilmer, the old Kogolor⁸ dwarven kingdom. From some (true) rumors inside these ruins lies the grave of Torhild Flametongue, the Besilmer clan chief.

Haunted Fortresses

In the western part of the Sumber Hills are the ruins of four towers built twelve centuries ago by the **Knights of the Wheel of Fire**⁹. In the locals' stories, the fortresses are now haunted by supernatural beings like spectres and predator monsters and they are thus shunned.

⁸ Ancient Kogolor Dwarves. "[Races of Mystara](#)" by [Marco Dalmonte](#).

⁹ Knights of the Wheel of Fire takes the place of the Knights of the Silver Horn.



DM map of the adventure area

Feathergale Spire

This group of eccentric knights is part of the Howling Hate Cult and it's primary aim is to defend the area from intruders. Their knightly manners and a low profile, helped the group not to attract the attention of alphanian and southern coast cities authorities. They even regard them as a mean to maintain security of the area.

Sacred Stone Monastery

The mysterious monk acolytes of "The Way of The Sacred Stone" took these old ruins as their home a few months ago. They are in truth a cover for the Black Earth Cult and protect the surface entrance to the Black Earth Temple.

Scarlet Moon Hall

This is the most mysterious of the Haunted Fortresses because it is, more than the others, in the inner territories of the Sumber Hills. In recent times an equally mysterious druidic order called Scarlet Moon Circle, took over. It is indeed a cover up for the Eternal Flame Cult.

Rivergard Keep

This strong castle is on the banks of Dessarin River. It is the seat for a mercenary band, whose commander, the Castle Master, is one **Jolliver Grimjaw**. Their cover is to be a mercenary band seeking for a safe haven in the castle they are renovating, to use it as a starting point for their future businesses, to act as escorts for caravans going to and from Esterhold. Unbeknownst to all, they are on Breaking Wave Cult's payroll.

Helvenblade House

Southwest from Westbridge, at the edge of the forest, lies Helvenblade, the estate of the noble family Silmerhelve, one of the greatest and richest family in Rock Harbor.

Rundreth Manor

Perched on a hilltop above the Long Road, are the ruins of the Rundreth Manor. Hidden there is the "Dark Lady" and even her name scares so much the valley inhabitants, that they stay clear from her. In truth the Dark Lady is a night dragon called **Nurvureem**. A funny thing is that Nurvureem is a servant of Idris¹⁰.

¹⁰ Idris story is found in ["Codex Immortalis"](#) by [Marco Dalmonte](#).

Stone Bridge

This huge structure, a gigantic stone arch over 3 km long and 120 meters high, is the most evident proof of the past existence of a dwarven kingdom in the area. It connects the northern shore of the Dessarin River with the southern and is the only safe passage in several miles radius from Ironford and Yartar.

Summit Hall

In the hearth of the Sumber Hill, you find Summit Hall, seat of the Samular Knights, an old and venerable knightly order devoted to Utnapishtim. Samular Caradoon was a Minaean paladin for the Hope and Justice Protector. **Ushien Stormbanner**, herself too from Minaea, guides now the order.

Triboar

The little city of Triboar is on the crossing between the Long Road and the Evermoor Way. It's on a route well used by merchants to and from the city of Yartar. Now the city governor is an alphatian woman named **Daratha Shendrel**, who is also the city referral for the Heralds of Saturnius. The disappeared adventurer by the name of Gervon is not a half-elf but a pure elf from Shiye-Lawr (in the Alphatia continent).

Vale of Dancing Waters

For the "modern" dwarves that dwell in the Skothar continent, this place is historically important because, according to the legends, the last Kogolor dwarves to live in Mystara inhabited this area.

A remnant of the original Kogolor group survives still today, grace to the devotion to the Immortals Garal, Frey and Freya.

They control the area and name themselves **Shield Dwarves**. They are in good relationship with the Congregation of the Blade.

Westbridge

As in the original description with the sole exception of **Herivin Dardragon**, the halfling owner of the Harvest Inn, that comes from Stoutfellow in the Alphatian continent.

Westwood

In this forest live some Jennites in a primordial way. They have chosen the Moose as the totem and name for their tribe. The sacred area in the forest is devoted to the goddess Djaea (Mother Nature). Some ruins from the old elvish kingdom were the first dwellings of Idris' elven followers.

Wormford and Yartar

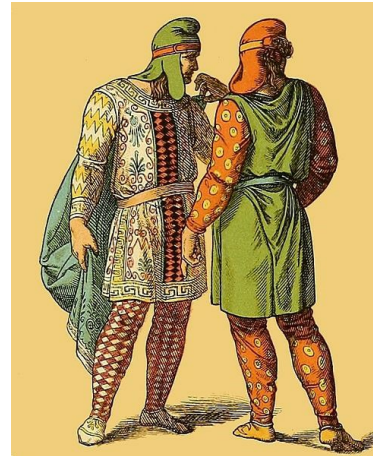
As in the original description.

THE ELEMENTAL EVIL IN MYSTARA – PART V: THE FACTIONS IN MYSTARA

FACTIONS IN MYSTARA

The Heralds of Saturnius

NEUTRAL OR CHAOTIC GOOD



The Heralds, organized in a network of small cells, live in the shades and secrecy. Broadminded magicians, itinerant bards and spies mostly compose these groups of followers of the patron of Freedom. Their principal aim is to carry on the precepts of their patron, with devotion and commitment, especially the fight against abuse and slavery perpetrated by alphatian mages, more conservatives and faithful to the traditions of the Empire. Their strength but also their main weakness is, indeed, the organization in very small groups, independent from one another and scattered through the Empire and the colonies. Another weak point is also the relatively low diffusion of the cult of

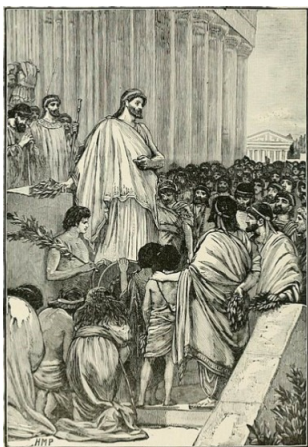
Saturnius in the Esterhold Peninsula. The most influential cell there is in the town of Yartar.

As a sign of devotion and respect towards their immortal patron, they usually wear a red garment. In the official meetings, this is the typical Phrygian cap, which gave them their nickname, used by the opponents, Red Caps, like the fearsome and devilish brownies of the fairy world.

Their symbol is a red Phrygian cap or, more often, a red ruby bladed scimitar.

The Alliance of the Lords of Minaea

ANY MORAL ALIGNMENT



This group is based upon unstable and temporary alliances, secured every other time according to the circumstances and economic needs, by the power groups in the Minaea and the nearby City-states. The armed groups, formed mostly by aggressive mercenaries and warlocks, in the payroll of

the Alliance, very often manage the security of the trade between the regions of Esterhold, Jen and, indeed, Minaea. Nestra Ruthiol, Baron of the Waters of Yartar is an influential member of the Alliance and oversees the trade between Minaea and Esterhold.

Their symbol is the golden crown of Minaea on a red background. Sometimes yellow concentric circles indicate the cities participating in the Alliance, even though the number can change from time to time, given the instability of the agreements.

The Congregation of the Blade

LAWFUL/NEUTRAL GOOD/NEUTRAL EXCEPT TRUE NEUTRAL



This knightly order is formed mostly by paladins and clerics of the Thonian Pantheon¹¹, very active in trying to restore and impose, even through the use of the force, the value of their faiths like heroism in

¹¹ The complete Thonian Pantheon can be found in "[Codex Immortalis - Vol.2 Religions of Mystara](#)" by Marco Dalmonte.

battle [The Eternal General], the spirit of justice [Tarastia] and the light and order opposed to darkness [Ixion].

In the hearth of the Sumber Hill, you find Summit Hall, seat of the Samular Knights, an old and venerable knightly order devoted to Utnapishtim. The Congregation of the Blade is searching badly for their alliance, to expand their influence in the Esterhold Peninsula.

They also search for other alliances, like the one with the Baron of the Waters of Yartar, to fill the gap in their influence in this area, bordering with the ancient Reign of Thonia.

The symbol of this knightly order is a bastard sword, anointed in light and wrapped up in a purple drape recalling their immortal patrons.

The Order of the Fallen Dragon (also known as Skyfyr Guild of the Fallen)

ANY. EXCEPT LAWFUL



The Order of the Fallen Dragon (or more simply of the Fallen) is the name of the most influential criminal guild in the Esterhold Peninsula. It was named after a battle of nearly one thousand years ago, where one of

their founders fought: he built the guild in a town, originally Jennite but taken, razed and built anew by the alphasians a short time before. They also renamed the town Skyfyr. According to the founders, the Fallen had to act in the shadows to grow their influence inside the colony, to favor the progressive emancipation and independence from the motherland Alphatia, through a raising of popular consensus of the poorest classes, always supported and helped by the Fallen.

Today, almost a millennium after, only small and minority groups of the Fallen carry on the founders' ideas. The independence is almost complete (it is complete with the destruction of Alphatia) and the Guild's main purpose now is to obtain riches thanks to its diffusion on the territory.

Their symbol is a dragon flying with unfolded wings and, very often, drawn upside down.

The Emerald Enclave

DRUIDS. NEUTRAL.

Druids in Mystara organize themselves in secretive circles, usually guided by an Archdruid with the only purpose to preserve nature according to the precepts of Mother Nature (Djaea). The most active circle in this area of Mystara is the Emerald Enclave. In practice, only Druid PCs can access to



(Continued on [page 63](#))

The Thyatian Language

by Giulio Caroletti

INTRODUCTION

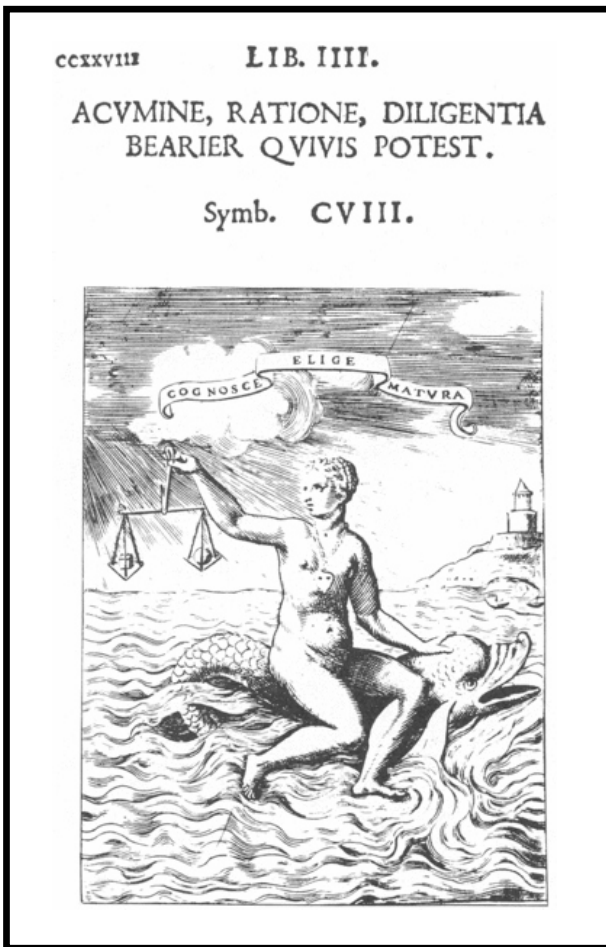
One of the major problems when we face history is that we tend to miss the true perspective of time. We are used to perceive cultures in space, but we often discard the great differences that a population, a culture, a language experiences through its history.

Fantasy and science-fiction literature (and, thus, also role-playing games settings and adventures) often suffer from a coupled problem: an excess in spatial (“horizontal”) and temporal (“vertical”) extension of its cultures, nations and empires.

On Earth, at the time of writing, according to the UN there are 190 undisputed sovereign states and 16 disputed ones; and, according to Wikipedia, “Estimates of the number of languages in the world vary between 5,000 and 7,000.”

States like the US did not exist 300 years ago, while states like Italy and Germany did not exist even 200 years ago. Moreover, it is quite easy to point out how different England and France were at different times in history, like 1300 AD, 1700 AD, and today.

Keeping this in mind, it is important not to reproduce the same mistakes when dealing with the cultural history of fantasy settings. It is true that magic and deities can change the



Cover of a Thyatian book

path of cultural history too, and “freeze” cultures (Mystara has a very good example of this in the Hollow World, for instance). However, to do so (or, at least, to do so systematically) is simply not very entertaining either for writers or players. Moreover, it would be unrespectful of Mystara's setting, rich as it is of spatial and vertical abundance, contrarily to many other role-playing worlds. The main area of Mystara, the Known World, is lesser, in size, than the whole of Europe; and, thankfully, it seems to share the same linguistic, cultural and historical abundance in variety of that area. It would be a pity to think that – to name just an example - Ethengarians, whose culture stems originally from 1700 BC, should have remained essentially the same over the course of 2700 years.

In this article we will try to answer these questions with a focus on the Thyatian cultures and languages, starting from the rise of the Antalians on Brun around 2400 BC. Since the Empire contains several cultures, we will also discuss to some extent their presence and influence on Thyatian language and culture as well.

THE THYATIAN LANGUAGE

Thyatian is a language belonging to the **Thantalian** sub-branch of the **Antalian** branch of the Neathar languages. The Thyatian alphabet is derived from the Taymoran and Milenian alphabets.

Thyatian was originally spoken in old Thyatium, the area currently known as the

Duchy of Thyatis. Through the power of the Republic of Thyatis, the most important of the pre-Alphatian city-states in the region, Thyatian became the dominant language, initially in the regions known as Mainland Thyatis and subsequently throughout the Known World. Thyatian is the Common Tongue of the Known World, the language of international communication, scholarship, and science. As for AC 1000, in its standardized imperial form, or as a dialect or local version, it is an official language of the Empire of Thyatis, the Grand-Duchy of Karameikos, the Principalities of Glantri, and the Kingdom of Ierendi.

The area now known as Mainland Thyatis was settled for a long time by Neathar tribes. Most of these spoke languages belonging to what has been called by scholars and ethnolinguists “Thantalian” language family, although probably no Thantalian tribe existed, nor did the tribes, at that time, consider themselves part of a linguistic or cultural unicum.

The ancestors of the Thyatian people were Thantalian tribes brought to Davania by the Nithians, in an unsuccessful attempt at colonizing the southern continent around 1000 BC. After disposing of their Nithian masters, the tribes lived in northern Davania until they faced the Milenian Empire, and had to choose between being absorbed or flee. Those who chose the latter were the so-called original “three tribes” of Thyatians, Kerendans and Hattians. It's possible that the tribes were really called this way, maybe because of patronymics or because of cities they came from, although other scholars think that the names were given retrospectively by the Thyatians to their

ancestors, to fit the three-part division that happened later on in Thyatian history.

The southern tribes, among which the most important were called Etrusnans¹, and the local Thantalians intermingled, especially since they were all pressured by the same enemy, the Nithian Empire in the north. It is to be noted that in the sixth century BC, what is now known as Mainland Thyatis was also settled by Doulakki and by descendants of the Traldar and Taymorans, who brought writing and their alphabets to the region. The Thyatian alphabet, which is the standard alphabet of the Known World, descends from modifications of the Traldar/Doulakki alphabet (which was also the Milenian alphabet) and of the late Taymoran age alphabet.

The rise of a common Thyatian language and recognized ethnicity was furthered by the end of the Nithian Empire. Traldar, Doulakki and post-Taymorans, whose cultures had already suffered much decline in the last centuries, were dealt a strong blow by the end of the Nithian Empire and the Spell of Oblivion. Their city-states were progressively conquered by the Thantalian-Southerner cities, among which the major ones were Thyatis in the east, Kerendas in the west and the isle of Hattias in the south.

Between 500 BC and 200 BC, when the Alphatian Empire decided to move into Thyatis and conquer the whole region, a common language and ethnic identity

¹ The Etrusnans will feature in an article on the next *Threshold* issue and are also mentioned in *Threshold* issue #9 and in the article “Lost Civilizations of Thyatis and Alphatia” in this same issue.

formed in the area, although a few Doulakki and post-Taymoran cities remained, either as independent cities or as vassals of the Thyatian, Kerendan and Hattian city-states. The Alphatian conquest and the two centuries of domination led to the extinction of the Doulakki and post-Taymoran culture of Thyatis. A few fled to their kin in Traladara after the Alphatian invasion, some were brought to the Hollow World, but the others were all but assimilated into the Thyatian subjects of the Alphatian Empire.

By the time the Thyatians revolt and expel the Alphatians from Thyatis, Ochalea and the Pearl Islands, and the Thyatian Empire is born, Thyatis is ethnolinguistically a mostly united nation, although enough differences are present between western Thyatians and eastern Thyatians that the westerners identify as “Kerendans”; the insular Hattians, moreover, belong to a definitely distinct culture.

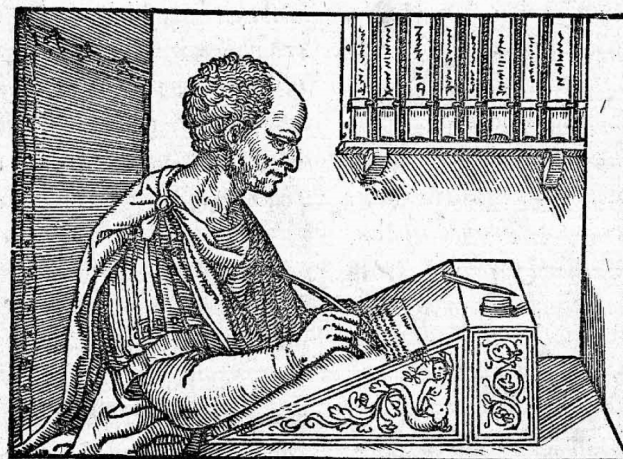
With the increase in literacy, cultural life, science and technology brought by the Alphatians between 200 BC and Year 0 of the modern Thyatian Calendar, the intellectuals and scholars of the Thyatian lands codified the rules for the written Thyatian language. This eldest form of Thyatian, called Old Thyatian, has been revised several times throughout the 1000 years of existence of the Empire, and constituted the basis of what is now known as the **High Thyatian**. High Thyatian is an intellectuals' language and is convoluted and more complex than the language ever spoken by commoners.

Although the Old Thyatian language was used in politics, law, religious activities, poetry and drama, the needs of the common

people gave rise to the use of so-called Vulgar Thyatian for writing. Born as a half-literate, crude and simplified version of the Thyatian written language, it was given dignity first by satirists and comedians who wrote theatrical plays for the common people, and then by politicians and intellectuals affiliated with the progressive and popular parties who considered Old Thyatian's complexity annoying, and by merchants and traders who knew how the simple common tongue suited their commercial interests. Through time this resulted in the codification of a simpler form of written Thyatian which is now known as **Common Thyatian** and which is the official language of Glantri, Karameikos and Ierendi, and the informal Common Tongue of the whole Known World (and sometimes beyond the Known World as well), brought around by Thyatian armies and merchants, and by all those who traded with the Thyatians.

High Thyatian remains mostly a written language, with the exception of special occasions, mostly in politics, science, drama, religion, magic, although politically or artistically motivated people might prefer Common Thyatian in some instances (realistic characters in dramas or comedies; or popular, republican or ethnical minority politicians who might want to distance themselves with the aristocrats, imperialists and/or intellectuals with whom the High Thyatian is associated).

People who speak Common Thyatian will be able to understand most of High Thyatian; moreover, every person who learns to read and write in Thyatis will be given at least a basic education in High Thyatian.



Thyatian scribe

Dialects

The Mainland Thyatian language is divided roughly into two dialect families, the western branch, called **Kerendan**, and the eastern branch, called **Thyatian**. The two branches are not clearly separated, but there is a dialect continuum² between them.

Roughly, the western dialects include those from the dominions of Machetos, Kerendas, Vyalia (with strong Vyalia Elven influences), Biazzan, and in the Ylari city of Ctesiphon.

The eastern dialects include those from the dominions of Thyatis, Lucinius, Retebius,

² A dialect continuum is “a range of dialects spoken across some geographical area that differ only slightly between neighboring areas”, although traveling in any direction, “these differences accumulate” to the point that sometimes “speakers from opposite ends of the continuum are no longer mutually intelligible”. This, however, is not the case for Thyatian and Mainland Thyatis (source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dialect_continuum).

Kantrium and Halathius, and the Thyatian speaking communities from most of the eastern part of the Emirate of Dythestia in Ylaruam.

Actius and Borydos have dialects which share traits of eastern Thyatian with strong Hattian influences.

Some dialects are not included in this classification: these include insular or domain-specific dialects, like **Trinakrian** (the Thyatian dialect of Tel Akbir and of the Thyatians from the Ylari city of Tameronikas), which is strongly influenced by Alasiyan and Doulakki; **Terentian** (the dialect of Terentias), with Elven and Minrothaddan influences; and **Carytian**, the dialect of Carytion, where the local, insular population retained archaic elements that can be traced back even to the Taymoran culture. **Auroran** dialects include those of areas where Thyatian is a local language, like in Helskir and West Portage and the northern parts of the western Isle of Dawn (but not in Westrouрке, Caerdwicca and Furmenglaive, where Dunael³ languages related to Thratian are used).

Mositius is a very recent dominion and there is no local dialect there. For different reasons, Sclaras does not have a dialect either.

Last but not least, **Hattian** is a special case that is described later in this article.

Ispan

³ The Dunael culture and language were introduced by James Mishler for his campaigns, and were later covered in several articles that can be found on Pandius, see [these search results](#) for examples.

The **Ispans** were a Thyatian sub-culture which developed in the cities of Fabia and Cubis during the Thyatian occupation of Ylaruam. Their dialect was most similar to the Trinakrian dialect of Tel Akbir and Tameronikas. When the Alasiyans reconquered Ylaruam, some Ispans remained in those cities, where they make up almost the whole ethnically Thyatian communities.

Among Ispan refugees who fled to Thyatis after the Ylari conquest, many were later exiled and travelled to the Savage Coast because of their fanatical belief in Solarios (Ixion), and the religious troubles they caused within the Empire with their arrival.

On the Savage Coast, their dialect evolved into the current **Espa** and **Verdan** dialects of Thyatian. Some others founded small Ispan communities in other areas of the Empire, the most important being L'Alguer on Carytion. The remaining Ispans mostly dispersed within Mainland Thyatis and lost most of their cultural heritage.

Belcadiz elves speak a Thyatian dialect who is very close to Ispan and Espa. Since the origin of Belcadiz elves is all but unknown to everyone but Belcadiz elves, any speculation about these similarities has supporters among scholars. Some say that Belcadiz elves lived hidden between Ispans for centuries, influencing them and hastening the process of cultural differentiation from other Thyatians; some say they came from the Savage Coast, where some (or many) of them might still pass as humans; others think they came from the same alien world that spat the d'Ambrevilles (who seem to speak a language distantly related to Thyatian) on Mystara.



Thyatian inscription

Regional variants

The so-called regional variants of Thyatian are towards Common Thyatian what Common Thyatian is towards High Thyatian, at least in terms of linguistic “distance”.

The ethnically Thyatian communities living in other countries, having their language continuum with the Mainland and the Empire broken, developed their own dialects, which took a form of their own and specific regional features.

Still, these dialects are intelligible to a Thyatian speaker, and most of the people speaking a regional dialect will still make an effort to speak in Common Thyatian when they meet a foreigner.

There are three main Thyatian dialects outside of the Empire of Thyatis: Glantrian, Caurenzan and Ierendan. In other areas of the Empire, where Thyatian is not the main

language of the commoners (like on most of the Isle of Dawn⁴, the Pearl Islands, Ochalea and the Hinterlands), Common Thyatian is spoken and regional variants are not found.

Glantrian, or Glantrian-Thyatian, is the common tongue of the Principalities of Glantri, and has some distinct differences from Thyatian, especially because of the high number of loan words from Alphatian, Flaemish-Alphatian and Elven, related to most magic and technological terms.

Caurenzan is the Thyatian dialect of Caurenze and of the House of Sirecchia. Most Glantrians of Thyatian origin came from the Emirate of Dythestenia, but the chauvinistic Caurenzans made a point of trying to retain as much traditional Thyatian elements as possible in their ways, and language was not an exception to that. However, since Thyatian dialects of western and eastern Dythestenia belong to two different branches of Thyatian (respectively Kerendan and Thyatian, see above), Caurenzan ended up becoming a syncretic form of Common Thyatian, with most of the dialect variants and asperities removed. Caurenzan is thus considered an elegant and simple dialect and the most beautiful form of Common Thyatian – especially by Caurenzans, obviously.

⁴ Cultures born on the Isle of Dawn include the fan-made Dunael and the Thothians; while colonists on Dawn are of Alphatian, Northman and Thyatian origin. The Dunael fill the need to explain Celtic and old English names of characters from the Isle of Dawn and, if necessary, other parts of the Empire, which are present in official products, and their culture is built on the description in Dawn of the Emperors of the dominions of Caerdwicca and Furmenglaive.

Ierendian

Ierendian is the common tongue of the Kingdom of Ierendi; it is a regional form of Common Thyatian, with influences especially coming from the Makai tongue. Thyatians will consider it just a dialect of Thyatian, while Ierendians will consider it an independent language; and the matter is just a part of the ongoing hostility between the two countries.

Darokinian

Although Darokinian has a strong Thyatian influence, the language cannot be considered part of the Thyatian language family. In AD&D Mystara, Darokinian is described as a dialect of Thyatian, but it is very unlikely that Darokin, which was unified a thousand years ago by the Eastwind dynasty, would be simply a Thyatian language. You are obviously free to change this in your campaign.

Hattian

We decided to leave Hattian last, because of the special nature of Hattias and of the Hattian culture.

Hattians belong to the Thyatian ethnic group and speak a dialect of the Thyatian language. However, their culture, description and names are clearly inspired by Teutonic Knights, Prussians and Germans.

There are two possible ways to relate to this: the first one is to assume that they simply are Thyatians with Teutonic/Prussian cultural twist, and thus with German-sounding names and surnames.

An alternative way is to make them an independent group in the Empire, related to Antalians (and thus to Northmen and Heldanners), who speak a German-like language.

In both cases, the Hattian language or dialect would be the source of the names of the months in the Thyatian calendar.

POSTFACE

The task of writing ethnolinguistic articles about a fantasy world is not an easy one. Definitions of ethnicity and language are difficult even in real world, and even more difficult is to find out rules on the evolution of languages and the distribution of genetic traits in populations. The fact that Mystara has cultures which seem to be, in many ways, strongly related to Terrestrial ones (or Laterran, if you prefer), can make the task easier - or more difficult, if one wants to stay inside Canon.

Thyatis and the Thyatian language are an excellent example of this. The Thyatian Empire is clearly based on the Roman and Byzantine (or Eastern Roman) Empires. Thyatian names in the official TSR products likewise seem to be a mix of Roman and Byzantine ones. While the western parts of the Roman Empire used Latin as their common tongue, the eastern parts of the Empire (which later became the Byzantine Empire) used Greek. Unfortunately, western Thyatians and eastern Thyatians of the Mainland all speak the same language. So how can we justify the presence of Latin sounding names and Byzantine sounding names not only inside the same Empire, but

inside the same limited region, namely Mainland Thyatis, whose main population is ethnolinguistically the same?

Moreover, other aspects must be taken into account:

All cultures of Thyatian origin and stock seem to speak Romance languages, according to names and language snippets in official sourcebooks (Caurenzans in Glantri; Espa and Verdans on the Savage Coast);

There is already an enormous amount of Greek-related countries and people on Mystara: the Traldar (Hollow World), potentially the Traladarans (a mix of Greek, Slavic and Romanian), the Milenian Empire in the Hollow World and the Milenian city-states on Davania, the Minaeans on Skothar (which descend from Milenians), and the Traladaran city states on the Gulf of Hule (Slagovich and the like);

Traldar/Traladarans/Milenians and Thyatians don't seem to be related at all (canonically, the Traladarans are related to Nithians, while the Thyatians are related to Antalians).

So how do we solve this?

Well, there are several possible approaches. Two in particular comes to mind:

It is a fantasy setting and a fantasy world. The Thyatian language might apparently resemble Latin or Greek, but it is not related to either. It is a different language in a different world, and names and sounds lie somewhere between the spectrum of the two, so Latin-sounding and Greek-sounding names are all ok, and all allowed for Thyatian

characters. The nicest interpretation of this approach that we are aware of is Travis Henry's one, in which he introduced the concept of "localism": it doesn't matter what type of language Thyatian is (or any other Mystaran language), the presence of Greek sounding or Latin sounding names in Thyatis derives from the fact that a certain set of names and surnames, whose origin is not important and not related to actual linguistics, will be found in certain regions of Thyatis. And this applies more or less to any Mystaran language.

Thyatian, in this interpretation, might have a set of Italian sounding names and surnames coming from, for instance, Caurenze; a set of Latin sounding names and surnames in eastern Thyatis; and a set of Greek sounding names in western Thyatis. And these 'localisms' are not related to the actual Thyatian that is spoken in Thyatis, which might or might not be related to a RW language.

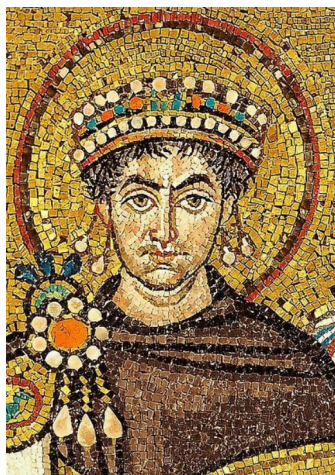
The only problem of this interpretation is that if we use it in a strict sense, we must also discard all Spanish/Portuguese linguistic references to the Espa/Verdan cultures of the Savage Coast.

Thyatian is very close to Latin. Latin- and Roman-sounding names are all right for Thyatian characters, but we know that many characters have Greek, Byzantine and Italian-sounding names. Where do they come from? What should we do with them?

Here we are again confronted with two possibilities:

To replace all Greek, Byzantine and/or Italian-sounding names with Latin- and Roman-sounding ones, or with others coming from the other cultures that belong to the Empire (Norse names from Oceansend, Helskir and the northern Isle of Dawn; Alphatian names from the Isle of Dawn; African names from the Pearl Islands; and so on).

To provide an explanation to the strong presence on Mainland Thyatis of Greek/Byzantine/Italian-sounding names. This is what we intend to do in the Appendix.



*Mosaic of a
Thyatian
emperor*

APPENDIX: THYATIANS AS LATIN - REAL WORLD INSPIRATION AND THE BYZANTINE ELEMENTS

In this Appendix we will give the ratio behind our interpretation and invention of dialects and regional derivations of the Thyatian language. Our starting point will be to consider the original Old Thyatian language (see above) as the Mystaran equivalent to RW Classical Latin language.

In order to do so without having to provide a long list of new, re-adapted names for Canon characters with Greek/Byzantine names, however, we also try to give an explanation to their presence.

In this reconstruction, Thyatis is the equivalent of RW Rome; however, Old Thyatian will be different from Classical Latin at least because of the presence of Alphatian loan words, that will in part supplant the Greek and Hellenistic ones found in RW Latin. This doesn't mean there will be no Greek/Byzantine linguistic influence at all: the Thyatian language bears still a meaningful trace of Doulakki, Traldar and Milenian influences, established upon the original Thyatians approximately between 600 BC, when the legendary proto-Thyatian three tribes arrived from Davania to the Known World, and 0 BC, when the individual traits of Doulakki, Traldar and Milenian cities in Mainland Thyatis had finally disappeared.

It is to be noted that a great deal of Thyatian characters from the GAZs bear names⁵ which are neither Greek-sounding nor Latin-sounding. In some cases (such as "Justin", "Stefan" or "Philip") this could be explained with a Common Thyatian spelling of an Old Thyatian name (Justinus, Stephanos/Stephanus or Philippos/Philippus); this could also be applied to some surnames (for example, "Malaric" or "Antonic" could be the Common contracted form of "Malaricus" or "Antonicus", and so on). However, we prefer to consider these names as sign of the presence of the Dunael language, created by fans to explain the presence of these names and the toponomy of Westrouрке, Caerdwicca and Furmenglaive, that we consider a M-Celtic language. Latin names rendered in an Anglicized version (such as "Pulcherine" from DDA1 or "Nicephore" from GAZ4, where one should have instead "Pulcherinius" or "Nicephorus") can be

⁵ These include Devon, Sherlane, Retameron, Bartran, Alfric, Olliver, Merrik, Aleena (GAZ1), or Caine and Guldahan (GAZ8).

explained with true influences from the Dunael language.

If we mix our interpretation with the concept of 'localism' introduced by Travis Henry (see Postface, above), we can conclude that in certain areas of Thyatis, because of the influence of Traldar, Doulakki and Milenians, there was a set of names and surnames that bore the Greek/Byzantine linguistic influence. The same happened on the southern Isle of Dawn with the Dunael who brought the Celtic influence to the Empire and to its language and names. With the expansion of the Empire and the internal migrations, especially towards the capital, these surnames became very common.

It might be interesting to define a number of Traldar/Doulakki founded cities in current Thyatis (taking inspiration from the founding of Italian cities by the Greek in RW). These might include the Mainland cities of Kerendas, and Tel Akbir (before the Alasiyans occupied the area, just like Arabs occupied Sicily); and, in Ylaruam, Tameronikas and Cubis.

ELEMENTAL EVIL IN MYSTARA *(Continued from [page 53](#))*

the Enclave, after passing an entry test. Nothing forbids other classes, like Rangers, to be in service of the Enclave and it is not rare that the Emerald Enclave use heterogeneous groups for particularly complex missions.

The Enclave, whose members are not used to the affectations and formalities of the "civilized life", don't have a true symbol. It is often associated with the Moose totem (the deer in some places), an animal almost

extinct in the area but which in past centuries populated the forests of eastern Esterhold.

According to popular legends and traditions, the druids of the Enclave meet annually during the Summer Solstice and they choose the animal form of big cervids.

The END?

Thyatian Mini-Gazetteer:

THE JUDICATES OF CARYTION

by Giulio Caroletti

PREFACE

Carytion was first introduced in the “Dawn of the Emperors” boxed set as a Thyatian Protectorate. The island was so underdeveloped and uninteresting that it didn’t even have an entry in the Atlas chapter, with its description limited to a few lines in the Player’s Guide to Thyatis.

I felt that the island could be a potential source for more, so I completely scrapped the information from the Gazetteer and wrote a new, alternate Carytion. So if you want to use this alternate Carytion, just ignore all the information from the Gazetteer, although it is still true that the island is used as a resort for the wealthy, and there still is a major naval fort. However, now the population has been raised to 70,000 inhabitants, mostly descended from an ancient population related to Thyatians, which had contacts with Taymora before becoming part of the Empire when it was born in AC 0.

This Mini-Gazetteer took its inspiration from my love of the island of Sardinia. I lived there for two years and grew to love its traditions, its culture and its diversity. This article is a labor of love, and I have written it with the utmost respect for the Sardinian people and culture. To “translate” a contemporary real culture into a fantasy culture can always be

tricky, especially since I used very explicit references to the real history and geography of the island. I hope that all Sardinian role playing games enthusiasts will appreciate my very humble effort to bring to life as a fantasy setting such a beautiful, culturally rich and fascinating territory.

The Author

PROTECTORATE OF CARYTION

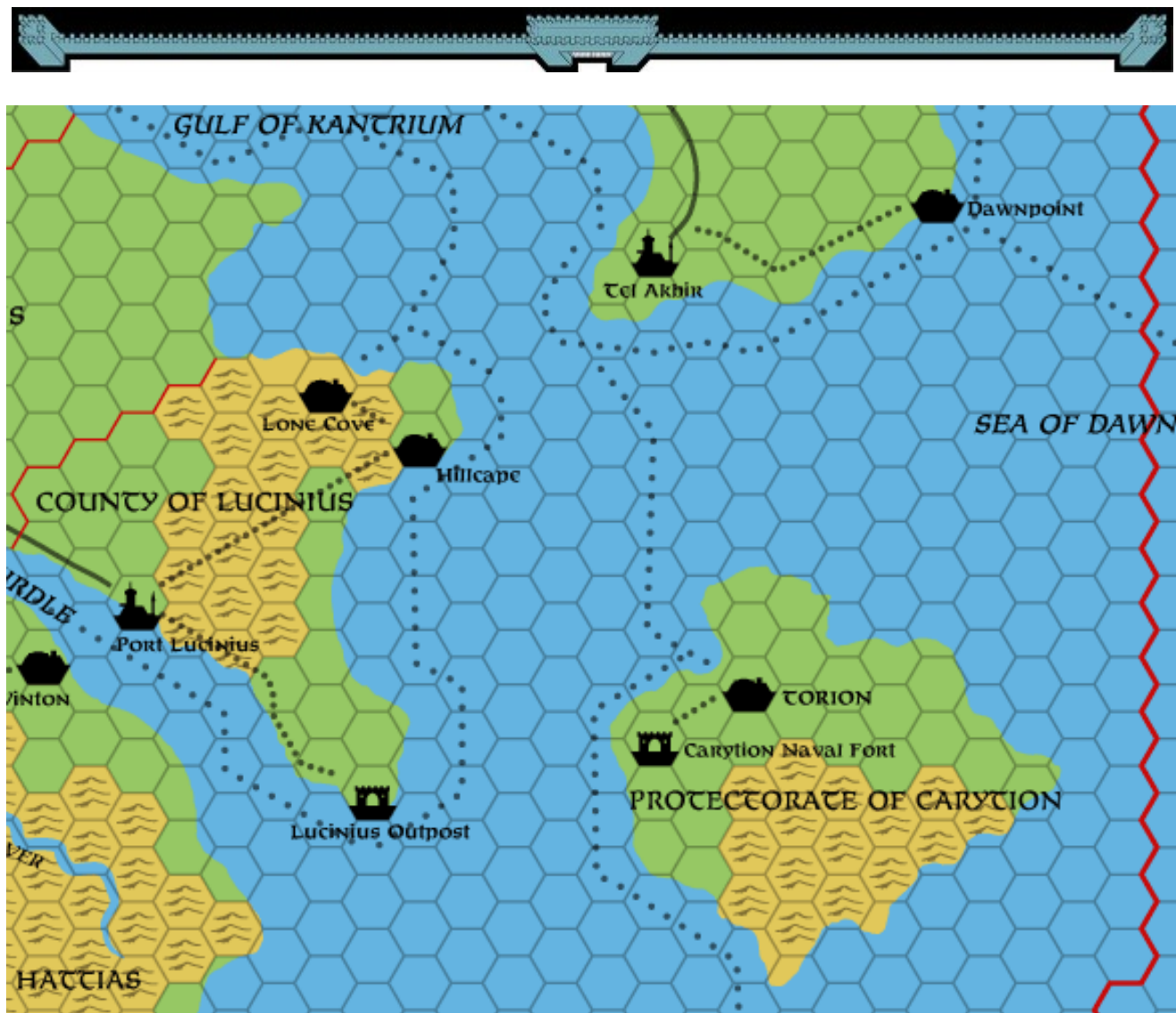
Area: 2,160 sq. mi. (5,595 sq. km.).

Population: 70,000 including the town of Casteddu (pop. 7,500).

Location: Island off the southeastern coast of the continent of Brun, south of Tel Akbir, east of Lucinius; Known World.

Languages: Thyatian: Carytian regional language (Campidano, Agugliastra, Logudoro); western Thyatian dialect (Gaddura); Ispan regional language (L’Alguer); western Thyatian dialect (U Paize).

Government Type: Dominion, member of the Thyatian Empire, officially governed by



Map 1: Carytion and Surrounding Area

Justiciars who rule the four Judicates in which the island is divided.

Industries: Agriculture, crafts, fishing, oil, tourism, wool.

Flora and Fauna: Mulberry trees (for sericulture), grape vines, olive trees, date palms, cedar, peach, pear, orange, and cherry fruit trees in cultivated orchards. Herds of cattle, sheep, horses, goats, and mules. Bees kept for honey. Boars, centaurs, foxes, dryads, and unicorns; terrestrial tortoises and sea turtles.

Carytion is home to a variety of rare or uncommon animals, like the Sea of Dread monk seal, the mouflon, the pine marten, birds of prey like the griffon vulture, the golden eagle and the peregrine falcon, flamingos, and several endemic species: the albino donkey, wild cat, deer, fox, lizards, and salamanders. Various breeds of horses, dogs and sheep are found on the island.

Carytion instead lacks vipers, wolves and bears found on the Thyatian mainland.



Map 2: Judicates of Carytion

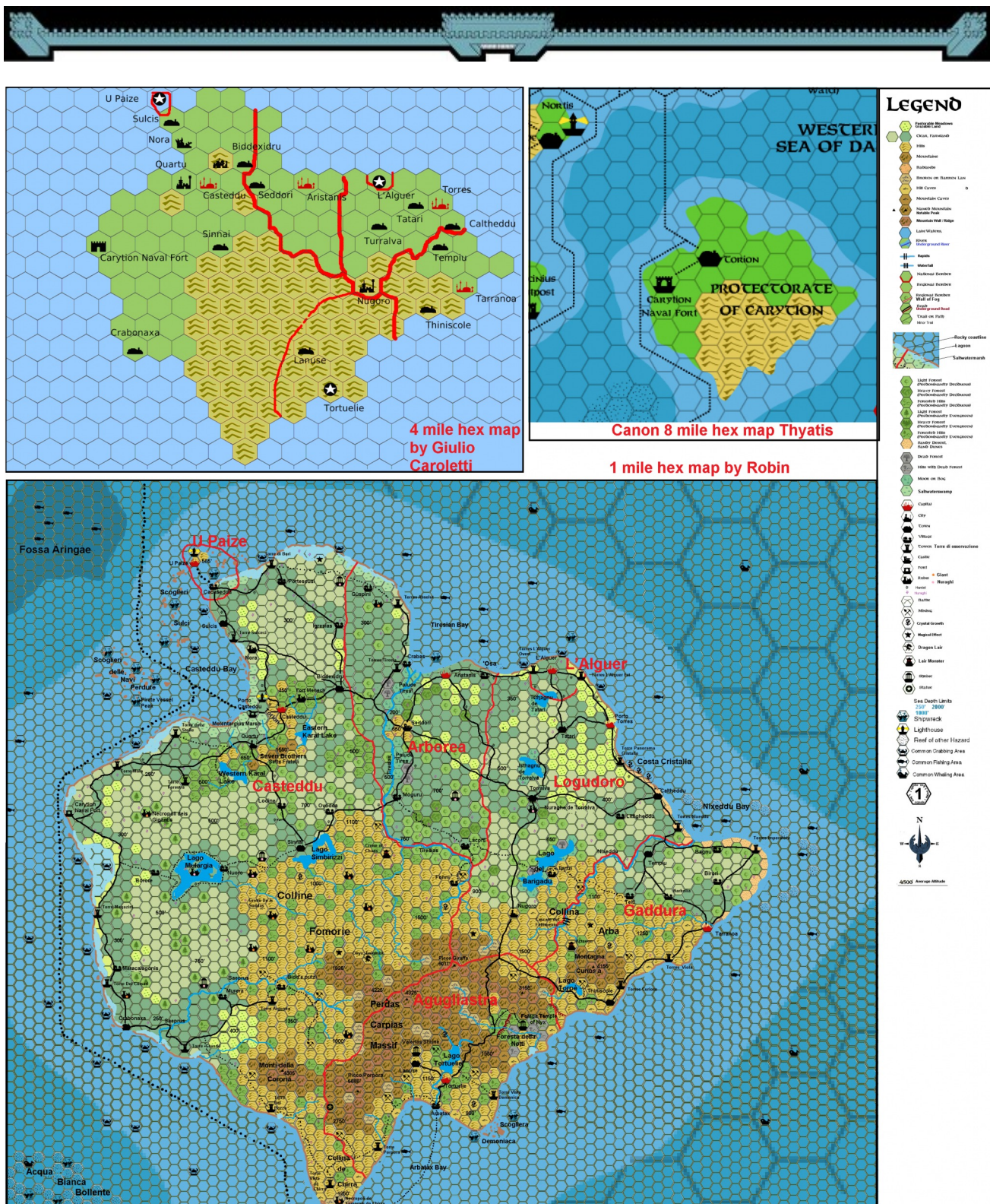
GEOGRAPHY AND CLIMATE

An ancient island from a geological point of view, Carytion is seismically stable and not earthquake-prone. Its highlands average at between 300 to 1,000 metres (984 to 3,281 feet), with the highest peak being Picco Giraffa (1,834 m (6,017 ft)). The coasts of Carytion are mostly high rocks, but several large, shallow, salt-water lagoons can be found on the western and northern shore of Carytion. Carytion has only three major rivers, the

longest of which, the Tiresias, is 58 km (36 miles) long; the Saeprus (39.5 km (24.5 miles)) flows on the southwest and the Nixeddu (43.5 km (27 miles)) flows east. However, there are many artificial lakes used to collect precipitation and provide water and energy for mills and other economic activities.

The island has a Mediterranean climate along the coasts and low hills, and a continental climate in the interior valleys and the central mountains. Rainfall is concentrated in the winter and autumn, and on some of the

The Judicates of Carytion



Carytion in 8 mph (original Thytis map) in 4 mph (by the author Giulio C.) and in 1 mph (by Robin D). A full size version of Robin's map can be downloaded at [this address](#) and also [here](#) with added art.

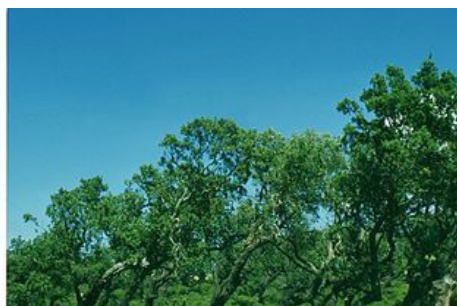


Peak in the interior during winter

tallest peaks it is common to have snow in winter for a few weeks each year.

Winds are generally dry and not too strong, so sailing is easy around the island and the hot summer temperatures are more bearable in Carytion than on mainland Thyatis. All of these features make Carytion an ideal place for richer Thyatians to buy summer resorts. This has helped the locals in their fight against the biggest health threat, the diffusion of malaria, bringing much-needed money and resources for land amelioration.

Some of the seawater swamps of the coast have been dried and are now used for salt extraction. Cork oak trees are a common sight on the island, and they are used for cork extraction.



DEMOGRAPHY

Most of the population of Carytion is made up of indigenous humans belonging to the Thyatian ethnolinguistic group. Carytians share the common genetic traits of most other ethnically Thyatians – their basic gene pool is Neathar/Antalian/Thantalian with traces of Traldar and Taymoran influences.

However, like most isolated populations, Carytians differ from other Thyatians because of phenomena like the founder effect and genetic drift. Carytians are generally shorter and leaner than average Thyatians, and most have high cheekbones, dark hair and brown eyes, with less than 10% of Carytians having blue or green eyes in comparison to the 10-20% diffusion in the dominions of mainland Thyatians. Inhabitants of coastal plains and towns have more influences from the mainland and are closer to other Thyatians.

For unknown reasons, Carytians are one of the populations of Mystara with the longest life spans. On the other hand, genetic diseases like beta-thalassemia¹ and favism² are much more common than among other Thyatians on the mainland and on other less-isolationist islands.

¹ Beta-thalassemia is an inherited blood disorder which can lead to severe anemia. See [this Wikipedia entry](#) for more information.

² Favism is genetic condition that can cause hemolytic crisis (accelerated rate of red blood cell destruction leading to anemia, jaundice and reticulocytosis) in response to the consumption of certain foods, most notably broad beans. Symptomatic patients are almost exclusively male. See [this Wikipedia entry](#) for more information.

CUISINE

Sheep and goats provide milk, cheese and, to a lesser extent, meat to the traditional diet, along with pasta made of grain. Traditional cheeses include pecorino (a hard cheese made from ewe's milk), ricotta (a creamy cheese made from sheep milk) and casu marzu (notable for containing live insect larvae).



Casu marzu cheese

Carytian bread is dry, so it lasts longer than high-moisture breads. Pane carasau is a typical flat, crunchy bread.



Carasau bread

Among vegetables and fruit, the most common are oranges and artichokes; olive trees provide oil and olives. Pigs are used mainly for sausages and ham; suckling pigs (porcheddu) and wild boars are eaten roasted or boiled in stews with beans and vegetables.

Among fish and seafood, Carytians eat rock lobster (aligusta), scampi, bottarga (salted, cured grey mullet roe), squid, tuna, mullet and sardines.

Herbs used for cooking include mint and myrtle, from which a typical liquor is made. Red and white wine is common. In U Paize, the cuisine is similar to that of Mchetos, and the locals produce the famous pesto sauce originally from that Duchy.

HISTORY

Kartana and Taymorans

The first autochthonous culture on Carytion was the Bronze Age **Kartana culture**, which developed between 1700 and 1500 BC thanks to the influence of the **Taymoran refugees** escaping the fall of their civilization. Villages of the Kartana were built of round thatched stone huts built around cylindrical tower-fortresses called nuraghi (singular nuraghe), often reinforced and enlarged with battlements. Smaller nuraghi were used as lookout fortresses and indicated the approximate territorial extension of a community, as crop fields and pasture land were generally found between the lookout nuraghi and the central village.

The biggest Kartana settlements were Turrava and Nora (considered in Carytian legends to be the oldest settlement on the island, founded by the eponymous hero Norax, who, according to the legends, led some human refugees from Mogreth to Carytion between 2300 and 2000 BC).



Ruins of the Nuraghe of Torralva

Nowadays, over 1,000 nuraghi dot Carytion. Some of them were initially simple, but with time they took on a more and more complex structure. Other remnants of the nuragic culture are monumental collective tombs and temples. Some of them, traditionally called Giants' graves by Carytians, also show that in the early stages of the Nuragic culture, the Taymoran refugees had brought with them a few Fomorian **giants**. However, no giants live in Carytion anymore.

While the Kartana were aboriginal, descended from the first Neathar-Thantalians who had settled the island, during the same era the Taymoran refugees built a few ports in the area, bringing their alphabet with them. The most important Taymoran settlements were Karal (the current Casteddu) and Sulcis.

The location of Carytion in the Sea of Dread and the presence of two advanced bronze age civilizations meant that it was a major trade route at the time of the Nithian Empire, especially for those who tried to stay clear of the routes controlled by that aggressive population. Contacts with other cultures of that era are proven by Kartana bronze statues

found among Traldar tombs, and Traldar coins found in nuraghi and ruined Kartana temples.

After a few centuries of peaceful co-existence, the Taymoran refugees took an interest in the natural resources of the interior, like silver and lead, and by 750 BC they had occupied most of the western part of the island. Attacks from the Kartana led to a major war which lasted many decades; and as the Kartana were gaining the upper hand, the Taymorans asked the Nithians for support. Mingling with the dark powers who were on the verge of destroying their own culture allowed Taymorans to reassert their control over most of Carytion.

However, the consequences of the destruction of Nithia and the Spell of Oblivion took their toll on both cultures, whose power and knowledge were affected, leading to a decline in the following centuries.

The Thyatians step in

Kartana and Taymorans alike had to surrender to the **Thyatian invaders** in 238 BC; a few years before Alphatia conquered all of the Thyatian mainland. Since the **Alphatian conquest**, Carytion linked its own history to that of the city of Thyatis, and became a province of the Empire when it was founded in AC 0. However, some features of the Kartana culture were kept in the mountainous interior of the island, where the locals fought whoever was the official power ruling the island from afar - whether from Sundsvall or Thyatis -, led by werefoxes and wereboars loyal to the old Taymoran deity Nyx.

Northmen raiders started attacking Carytion after AC 400; the Thyatians thought of buying their services to stop the raids and use them against the Alphatians. In AC 456 they granted their most powerful pirate lord, Ole Jørgen Thorfinnson, the rule of the island under the Empire's sovereignty. However, when Ole Jørgen's grandson Vidarr declared independence in AC 533, the Thyatians troops occupied it again. Vidarr's son Thorfinn led a small invasion with Alphatian support, and took the island by surprise in AC 551, but the Thyatians conquered it again after a few months, and most Ostlanders were killed or fled Carytion.

During this era, Carytion was divided into four districts called Judicates, each ruled by a Justiciar (judex in Thyatian). One of the major problems the Justiciars had to face was the continued presence of rebellious **followers of Nyx** in the Agugliastra region. Valerio Folaga, last leader of the followers of Nyx surrendered in AC 594, with the establishment of a Vicar Justiciar to rule Agugliastra as a representative of the Justiciar of Casteddu in Karal.

The major threat on Carytion in the following centuries were **pirate raids** on the Thyatian islands, which started in the 8th century and continued in the following one, with its main peak of activity when Alasiyan raiders started their activities after 850, following the independence of Ylaruam (AC 831) and the expansion policy started by al-Kalim and his followers.

This pirate activity led to the building of many small forts that dot the coastline of the whole island, used in the 9th century to watch out for approaching Alasiyan ships. It

was during this time that two new cities were built on Carytion by refugees escaping Ylaruam: U Paize (AC 739), built by Thyatians of Machetan origin, and L'Alguer (AC 853), built by **Ispans**. Both cities have enjoyed a freeport status since then.

In recent years, the major threat to Carytion has been the occasional pirate - from the Isle of Dawn, Ylaruam, Northern Reaches or from other smaller pirate coves in the Sea of Dread.

POLITICS³

Carytion is divided into four Judicates, and three special territories (the Visjudicate of Agugliastra, the Free City of L'Alguer and the Free City of U Paize).

The **Judicates** are four autonomous entities, ruled by a **Justiciar** and by a regional assembly called **Corona de Logu** ("local crown" in Carytian). The Visjudicate of Agugliastra shares the same structure, but is considered a vassal of the Judicate of Casteddu. The cities of L'Alguer and U Paize are self-ruled.

However, the four Justiciars and the rulers of Agugliastra, L'Alguer and U Paize are not considered dominion rulers (and thus these domains have no senatorial rights – they are neither Senators nor can they choose a representative for the Senate), but are considered subject to the authority of the Praetor of the Mainland Islands⁴ (in AC 1000,

³ The local rules for Carytion are different from those for most Thyatian dominions (see [pp 215-216](#) of *Threshold* issue 3).

⁴ See also: "[Thyatian Senators](#)", [part 2](#), [pp 197-198](#) in *Threshold* issue #4.

the year when this gazetteer is set, it is Archduke Derentarius of Terentias). Carytion has only one elected Senator⁵.

This situation has caused an increasing rift between the population and the Empire, as most citizens and rulers alike want to push for the establishment of feudal dominions on Carytion. There are however differing point of views on this.

The ruling families of Arborea and Casteddu would like to constitute a County with a single ruler, while the ruler of Logudoro would prefer to split the island into four baronies. In Gaddura, L'Alguer and U Paize, the population hopes to keep the status quo. Especially so in the two freeports, since they know they are too small to be given a fief, and they fear losing their special rights and ethnolinguistic independence.

In Agugliastra and in the most of the rural interior, there is also a small independence movement who would like to secede completely from the Empire. The most vocal among the independentists is a secret, increasingly violent organization known as the Dark Masks.

⁵ For those using the previous articles on Thyatis and Thyatian Senators by the author, add one Senator for Carytion to the total amount of elected Senators of the Empire.

The Judicates

A Judicate is ruled by a **Justiciar**, supported by the Corona de Logu (the local parliament).

The **Corona de Logu** is a Judicate council made up of: local representatives (one from each Curadoria, see below), two representatives from the capital of the Judicate, and a varying number of high priests from all the churches of the Judicate.

Each Judicate is divided in a number of administrative divisions called **Curadorias**. All free citizens of a Curadoria concur to the election of a representative at the Corona de Logu. Each Curadoria is ruled by a **Curator** nominated by the Justiciar; the Curator in turn nominates a **Mayor** for each town and city in the Curatoria; the Mayor is assisted in ruling by an elected council; members of the elected local councils elect the Corona de Curadoria, the local assembly assisting a Curator in ruling.

Formally, it is the Corona de Logu which elects the new Justiciar amongst the members of the ruling family. Generally, the Justiciar nominates his or her heir, but the Corona de Logu has the right to overrule his or her desires.

Apart from those mentioned, the Corona de Logu (and the Corona de Curadoria on the smallest scale) have no formal power, but they simply act as counselors to the actual rulers. However, complaints and dissatisfaction can easily gain the attention of someone above in the chain of command who can remove him or her. A Justiciar which enrages his or her Corona de Logu can end up attracting the attention of the Praetor of

the Mainland Islands or, in the worst cases, of the Emperor himself.

In Agugliastra, there is a Corona de Logu, but the Justiciar is formally the Justiciar of Casteddu. However, there is a Vicar Justiciar, who normally acts in the name of the Justiciar of Casteddu. The Justiciar of Casteddu can overrule any decision made by the Vicar Justiciar; however, cases in which the Justiciar of Casteddu has interfered with the rule of Agugliastra, without having been called upon by the local Corona de Logu, are rare.

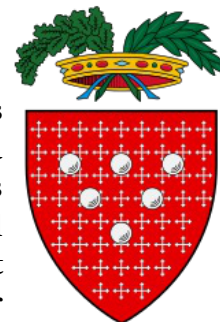
RELIGION

Most Carytians follow the **Church of Thyatis**; however, since 594, when the followers of Nyx in Agugliastra surrendered to the central rule of the Empire, Nyx has been recognized as a deity on the island. Followers of Nyx are few, mostly found among the most superstitious inhabitants of the central areas, or among scholars and intellectuals, especially in Agugliastra. Although it is legal to belong to the cult, priests and religious representatives of Nyx are kept secret, because of the prejudices attached to the cult of an Entropic Immortal, and because the Church of Thyatis would lobby with all its strength against any political role for followers of Nyx. However, a few priests of the Church of Thyatis are against this secrecy policy, as they fear this can end up favouring the goals of Nyx's clergy. Rumor is that the ruling family of Agugliastra has something to do with the cult.

ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS

Agugliastra

Agugliastra (pop. 1,400) is the most mountainous area of Carytion. Terrain is ragged and hilly, with small valleys in the inside and just thin strips of plains or beaches close to the coastal areas. The highest mountains of Carytion, which include the massif of Perdas Carpias (*broken stones* in Carytian) and the highest mountain of the island, Picco Giraffa (*giraffe peak* in Thyatian, 1834 m (6,017 ft)), are located at the border area between Agugliastra, Logudoro and Casteddu.



Shepherding and farming are the main economic activities of the poor, hilly interior. Hunting is especially popular in this area of Carytion. The people of Agugliastra are the most Taymoran-influenced on Carytion, and several Agugliastrans are secretly followers of Nyx, a cult tolerated on the island. It is believed that the high priests of Nyx on Carytion live in Agugliastra.



Agugliastra Coast

The capital of Agugliastra is **Tortuelie** (pop. 550, including 100 in the port village of Arbatax), a coastal town where Folaga Palace is the Justiciar's residence.

The main city of the interior is **Lanuse** (pop. 270), with an important shrine dedicated to Valerias and an important market for the central areas of Carytion that is held every two weeks in summer and every month in winter.

NPCs

Mariano Folaga (born 970, F12, TN), a short, lean man with hair kept long at his shoulder, and gray-green, sad eyes, is the Vicar Justiciar of Agugliastra. Mariano is not a follower of Nyx, although he knows that his cousin **Deianira** (born 973, C9, TN), a diminutive, busty beauty with honey blonde hair and green-blue eyes, is a Patriarch of that Entropic Immortal.

A former soldier, Mariano lost his wife Patrizia to malaria two years ago. **Patrizia Murru** (born 970, nosferatu W3, LN), a delicate, slender woman with jet black hair and deep, amber eyes, has been raised as a nosferatu by Mariano's aunt **Augusta Zedda** (born 944, nosferatu C13 (of Nyx), NE), the High Priest of Nyx on Carytion, a comely woman, apparently in her late thirties, with a prominent jaw and dark, short, curly hair.

Augusta and Patrizia live in Lanuse; Mariano has never forgiven them for having embraced undeath. His sister Deianira is torn between the desire to join the ranks of the undead servants of Nyx and the love for her brother, a man without true friends and without an heir, who has only her left for family.

Pietro Deplano (born 961, wereboar F8, NE) is the Mayor of Jersu, a small, mountainous town of about 160, at 400 m asl. He has Taymoran blood and is one among a few Carytians who still bear the old Taymoran-Nithian strain of lycanthropy⁶. Deplano is deeply hostile to the Empire and he is the leader of the Dark Masks, an illegal political organization who pushes for an independent Carytion and is not above kidnapping and assassinations to make their point.

Deplano's second-in-command is **Valerio Scanu** (born 976, devil swine C7 (of Thanatos), CE), a young devil swine and secretly a priest of Thanatos. Scanu has been sent by Count Heinrich Oesterhaus⁷ to Agugliastra to plot against the followers of Nyx. His first goal is to put an end to the Folaga dynasty in Agugliastra and open up the region for direct control from Casteddu; his second goal is to increase the violence of the Dark Masks to prevent Carytians from gaining true dominion status for the Judicates. To make things more complicated than ever, after Scanu was sent to live in Tortuelie to stir things up at the court of the Justiciar, he has fallen hopelessly in love with Deianira, the sister of Mariano.

The only dragon on Carytion, an onyx dragon which is known as **U Enigmista**, has his lair in Agugliastra. He is a young adult male known to be a trickster and prankster.

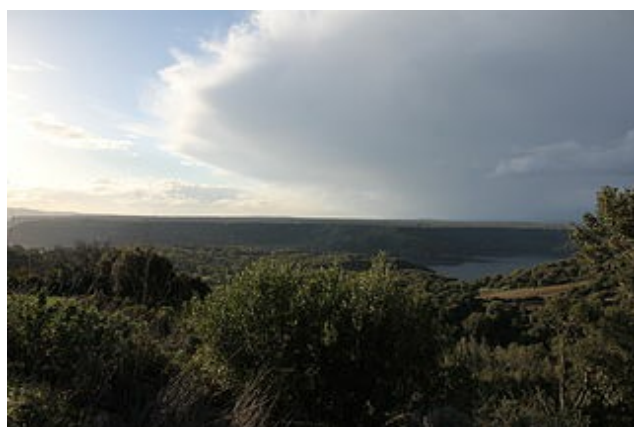
⁶ See ["Treatise on Lycanthropy"](#) by John Calvin at the Vaults of Pandius.

⁷ See *Dawn of the Emperors*, County of Hattias entry; or ["Thyatian Senators, part 1"](#), in *Threshold Magazine*, issue #3.

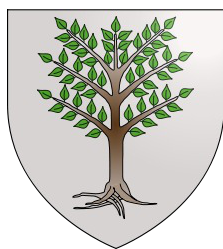
Arborea

In proportion, **Arborea** (pop. 4,710) is the richest Judicate of Carytion. It lies on the most fertile land of the island, and its wheat production rate is among the highest in the whole Empire. However, pockets of malaria-ridden swamps are found also on its territory. It is the hottest area of Carytion, and hot, humid summers with daytime temperatures over 40°C are not uncommon; the strong winds that blow from the north provide a welcome relief to the heat.

Arborea is the most advanced and powerful Judicate on the island; even though it is much smaller than Casteddu, it relies on its arcane and scientific knowledge. The city of **Aristanis** (pop. 1,600) hosts the only Collegium Arcanum (School of Magic) of Carytion, and its cavalry and horses are considered among the best of the whole Empire. While Kerendan cavalry has the numbers, it is said that the Arborean light cavalry is the elite among the elite.



Arborea interior



Traditionally, the sons and daughters of the aristocracy of Aristanis train for part of their adult life at the Kerendas Academy, but almost any man and woman in Aristanis knows how to ride and every family provide at least one member for every generation to take part in the riding competition called Sartiglia, for which they train all year long.

Among the other towns of Arborea, the most important is the walled town of **Seddori** (pop. 420). Seddori lies on a hill and has an impressive castle which dominates the surrounding plains; the city has mostly been controlled by Arborea, but is claimed by Casteddu. Many skirmishes and battles have been fought over its possession when Imperial control over the island has been loose.



Riders at the Sartiglia

NPCs

The ruler of Arborea is Justiciar **Claudia Laconi** (born 955, W11, LG). A short, lean woman in her mid-forties, with graying jet-black hair and brown eyes, Claudia graduated at the Collegium Arcanum of Aristanis, owns an estate on Sclaras, and is

loved among her subjects and respected by her enemies.

Claudia has been Senator for Carytion in the past, and has spent most of her political life lobbying through friendly Senators (especially among the Philosophers faction) in order to become Countess of Carytion - or at least Baroness of Arborea. Her ultimate goal is to bring all of Carytion together under the banner of Arborea. Her main political enemies are the rulers of Casteddu and Gaddura, but she is sympathetic to Justiciar Marcus of Logudoro, and she is a personal friend of Archduke Nurokidu Nuar of the Pearl Islands.

Claudia is married to **Olaf Gudmundson** (born 950, F9, CN), a noble and former pirate from Ostland. Olaf is a tall, blonde northman with a broken leg that cannot heal because of a curse set on him by Protius, although nobody knows exactly what Olaf did to offend the sea Immortal.

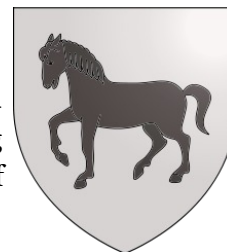
Claudia and Olaf have three children - **Eloisa** (born 984, W1, LG), who has just started studying at the Collegium Arcanum, **Godrik** (born 990, NM, NG), who wants to become a pirate like his father, and **Gavino** (born 992).

Paulus Pittau (born 937, W17, CG) is the principal of the Collegium Arcanum and the former teacher of Justiciar Claudia. He is a good man who puts his own personal ethics before anything else. When he is not busy working on new spells or teaching at the Collegium, Pittau travels throughout Carytion's towns and country in disguise, to find promising youths that can become magic users, but also scientists or literates (in which case he will ask friends at various

colleges of the Empire for help in accommodating them).

Casteddu

The Judicate of **Casteddu** (pop. 37,440, excluding Agugliastra) is the biggest of the Judicates.



The climate of the Judicate of Casteddu is Mediterranean, with mild winters and warm, dry summers. Temperatures very rarely go above 40°C in summer, or below 0°C in winter. Most of the Judicate is made up of the northern plains where the wheat production is abundant. In the areas south of Casteddu, on the other hand, orchards and cork oaks are the main agricultural activities.

Casteddu (pop. 7,500), the capital, was founded with the name of Karal by Taymorans on seven hills looking over the Sea of Dread and takes its Thyatian name from the main hill of the city, a heavily walled area (Casteddu means *castle* in Carytian) around which smaller quarters have been built. The area outside the central hill has been renamed **Torion** recently, in honour of the Emperor, something that has triggered even more hostility towards the central imperial government among most Casteddans (and exacerbated the feeling among non-Casteddians that the people of Casteddu are just lickspittles of the Emperor).

Casteddu is a very windy city, with winds coming generally from northwest or southeast. Sea breezes from southeast often blow during the summer, making the days

more tolerable than in the hot crop fields of the northern plains.

Quartu (pop. 3,500) is the third most populated city in Carytion. The city takes its name from the fact that it was originally divided in four (*quattuor*, in Thyatian) parts or quarters. It lies just south of Casteddu and west of a small mountain range named the Seven Brothers, where boars and deers are hunted by the locals, and whose tallest mountain reaches 1,070 m asl.

Between Casteddu and Quartu lies the marsh called Molentargius, where salt is extracted and where many species of birds nest. Many towns and villages surround Casteddu and Quartu, so that the whole metropolitan area including the two cities is home to about 15,000 people.



Molentargius marsh

Sulcis (pop. 550) was an ancient Taymoran city, but today just a few ruins remain on the outskirts of town to remind of its origin. The abandoned ruins of **Nora**, an ancient Kartana city rival of Sulcis, are just a few miles away.

Igresias (pop. 1,300), east of Sulcis, is an important mining centre for the extraction of lead, zinc and silver.

Biddexidru (pop. 700) faces Seddori in Arborea (see above), and is its rival town.

The **Carytion Naval Fort**, the main stronghold of the Empire on the island, a major strategic defensive position in the Sea of Dread, is located in the Judicate of Casteddu.

NPCs

The ruler of Casteddu is **Giovanni Pisano** (born 948, NM, NE), a wealthy man who has abused his position to increase his personal possessions; moreover, he has the monopoly of commerce between Casteddu and Minrothad.

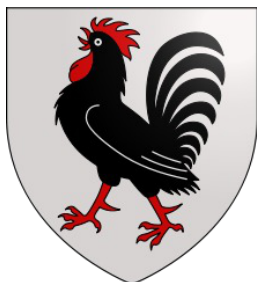
Giovanni is despised by most citizens and has corrupted the military at the Carytion Naval Fort, with lavish gifts, to help him to keep order in the region. **Telemakos Fabiani** (born 964, F5, NE), the commander of the Fort, is a corrupt and inept man, but most of his soldiers support him. They feel they are stuck in the backyard of the Empire, and that the only reasonable thing they can do is to do the least possible while gaining the most in return.

Giovanni's main political opponent is his cousin **Aemilius** (born 964, F6, CN), the commander of the garrison of Biddexidru. Giovanni sent him there to avoid the risk of a revolution in town; however, the proximity of Biddexidru to Arborea has had the unexpected result to bring Aemilius in touch with Paulus Pittau, the principal of the

Collegium Arcanum in Aristanis. Pittau is wondering whether he could introduce Aemilius to Justiciar Claudia and gather support for overthrowing Justiciar Giovanni.

Gaddura

Gaddura (pop. 10,000) was traditionally the least populated of the four Judicates, but grew thanks to tourism from the wealthy Mainland Thyatians in the last century, after the number of Alasiyans incursions on Carytion had reduced significantly.



Gaddurans are not “true” Carytians. Most of the inhabitants of the Judicate are of Kerendan origin: they came following the inheritance of the title of Justiciar by Ranieri I, a cousin of the last aboriginal Gadduran Justiciar, in the 7th century. The wave of Kerendan migrants continued for over a century, so much that the Gadduran dialect is no longer considered a form for the Carytian regional language, but a western Thyatian dialect.

The coast of Gaddura is considered one of the most beautiful in the Known World, and hosts the summer residences of many of the wealthy and the powerful in Thyatis. While politics and land-based economic activities take mostly place in the other three Judicates, Gaddura and its capital, **Tarranoa** (pop. 2,700), have prospered from services (pubs, taverns, naval activities, tourism).

For all these reasons, contrary to most other Carytians, Gaddurans oppose any



Gaddura coast

modification of the political structure on the island. Their ties to the Mainland are much stronger than those to the other islanders.

An exception to this are the westernmost areas of Gaddura, whose main center is **Thiniscole** (pop. 550). Here, the population is made up of Carytians who speak a variant of the Logudoran dialect, and are among the fiercest independentists on Carytion. At the very least, the Logudorans of Thiniscole would like to secede from Gaddura and join Logudoro.

One of the most important religious sites on Carytion is located at the aptly-named **Tempiu** (pop. 700; “*temple*” in Gadduran Thyatian); here, there are temples dedicated to Solarios, Valerias, Vanya, Asterius, Nyx and Tarastia. It is also the seat of a School of Theological Studies. In Tempiu, one of the biggest carnivals of the Mainland Islands, *lu carrasciali timpiesu*, takes place in Vatermont.

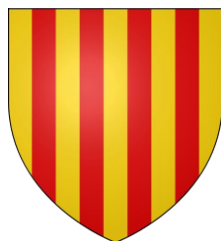
NPCs

The ruler of Gaddura is **Ranieri IV della Gherardesca** (born 924, T6, LN), an old, tall, thin, frail man who has had a major hand in the development of Gaddura as a tourist resort for the rich. Ranieri IV is well-loved by his subjects, but he despises non-Gadduran Carytians and considers them just obnoxious savages. A fierce supporter of the Zendrolian faction in the Senate, he opposes with all his resources the creation of a unified County in Carytion - also because most of the population of the island would never accept a Gadduran unified ruler - so if he can't be the Count, there is no point in lobbying for that goal.

Ranieri has had three wives and has many sons and daughters; he has married them to aristocrats of Gens Zendrolian or Gens Aemilia all over the Empire. His appointed heir is **Dante** (born 958, F3, P9 (of Asterius), NG), a liberal-minded priest-merchant who has sailed the Sea of Dread and the Sea of Dawn on Minrothaddan, Thyatian and Ostlander ships. Dante is married to **Augilly Hiljemarj** (born 840, T9, CG), a Meditor elf; they have two sons and two daughters, **Ranieri** (born 988), **Anita** (born 991), **Ferdinando** (born 994) and **Rahasia** (born 997).

L'ALGUER

L'Alguer (pop. 2,000) is an Ispan city on Carytion, and the main center of the Ispan culture in the Empire of Thyatis.



Founded by Ispan refugees fleeing Ylaruam in AC 853, L'Alguer remained completely outside the conflict between the Ispan followers of Solarios and the Church of Thyatis, and thus the Algueran Ispans avoided exile, and the city became an important cultural centre. L'Alguer is renowned for its craftsmen, painters, musicians and poets, who write sophisticated songs in their Ylari-influenced Ispan dialect.

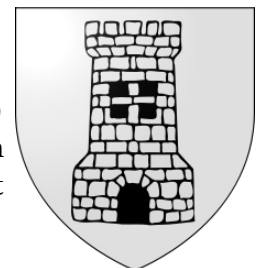


Cliffs near L'Alguer

L'Alguer is located in a favourable position on Carytion; compared to areas of nearby Arborea, it is much more temperate in summer, because it feels the influence of winds from the north and from the east.

LOGUDORO

Logudoro (pop. 14,000) occupies the northeastern part of Carytion, the most windy region of Carytion.



Although its capital is **Torres** (pop. 1,100), where the Justiciar's

palace and the main port of Logudoro are located, the most important city is **Tatari** (pop. 6,200), the second biggest on Carytion.



The Coast near Torres

A city of poets, Tatari is considered the home of the purest Carytian regional language, and is home to the Academia de Limba Karta (*Academy of Carytian language*). Although the authority of the Academia is not widely accepted on the island, most intellectuals and scholars who want to write in Carytian tend to use the grammar and orthography developed by the Academia.

Another important city in the region is **Nugoro** (pop. 1,800), which lies on the border with Gaddura. Nugoro is a landlocked city which can be considered the most traditionalist or the most backward on the island, depending on your point of view on the matter. There are many contacts between the garrison and politicians in Nugoro and the independentists of Thisiscole, in Gaddura.

Torralva (pop. 50) was one of the most important Kartana cities. Now it is only a

bunch of farms and houses close to the ruins of the ancient Torralva nuraghe.

NPCs

The ruler of Logudoro is Justiciar **Marcus Spiga** (born 969, W3, LN). A short, thin man of pale complexion in his early thirties, with a black-blue beard, black hair and dark, brooding eyes, Marcus is not interested in politics. He is a scientist and a man of literature, a poet and philosopher who studied at the Academia and became a ruler early because his parents died in a naval accident while they travelled to Thyatis City, three years ago.

Marcus is mildly supportive of Justiciar Claudia's idea of a unified Carytion. Marcus feels that the Logudoran language and culture would benefit from an official political union, as it could become the leading light for the intellectual life on the island. However, he is not sure whether his subjects would like to be ruled by the Arboreans or - the Immortals forbid! - by the Casteddans. In the end, Marcus believes that Claudia's ideas of unity are little more than delusions, and thinks that to create four Baronies on the island would be more feasible.

Claudia likes this silent young man; she doesn't know that Eloisa, her young, 16-year old daughter, has also developed a teenage crush on the Justiciar of Logudoro from his frequent travels to Aristanis to discuss science, literature and politics with Claudia and Pittau, the principal of the Collegium Arcanum.

In the last five years, Marcus, unbeknownst to all but his closest friends, has had a complicated, on-off relationship with **Irene Mrazani** (born 972, werefox T8, CN), a swashbuckler and werefox of Taymoran descent. Irene, who is originally from Sulcis, spends a lot of time away from Carytion as an adventuress and pirates, and has had other occasional affairs in the meantime. Irene loves Marcus very much, but doesn't want to lose her freedom and carefree way of adventuring on the seas. This has given the thoughtful, introspective man even more cause for brooding.

U Paize

U Paize (pop. 450; *The Town*, in Machetos Thyatian dialect) consists of two towns located on the northwestern tip of Carytion. **U Paize** proper (pop. 310) lies on a small island just outside of the Carytian coast, and is connected to the main island by a ferry which lands in **Cadasedda** (pop. 140), a small port town on Carytion.



The region is nominally independent from any Judicate on Carytion. U Paize is self-ruled, and its ruling council overlord is the Praetor of the Mainland Islands.

The population of U Paize is entirely of Machetan origin. They descend from a group of families who had moved from Machetos to the Ylaruam province of Nicostenia in AC 542, at the time occupied by Thyatis. In 739

they left Ylaruam after they obtained from the current Emperor the possession of the small island where they built their town (AC 739), after which they were also given the control (and freeport rights) of the port of Cadasedda (AC 770), just opposite to U Paize on Carytion.



Cape near U Paize

Just like their cousins in Machetos, the inhabitants of U Paize are considered avaricious and greedy. The freeport rights and their mercantile disposition have not helped Carytians to overcome this prejudice.

The Forester

Revision of the Forester character class for BECMI/Rules Cyclopedia D&D

by Craig Antoun (Irondrake)

INTRODUCTION

The forester was first introduced under the BECMI¹ D&D rules in the *Dawn of the Emperors* boxed gazetteer, and presented as a human character class that shares many aspects of the elf class, the most significant of which is the ability to cast magical spells while wearing armor. Though an interesting new class, mechanically the forester, as written, is not much different from a standard elf character, and only lacks the elf's racial abilities of infravision and immunity to ghoulish paralysis. The class also shares the same experience point table as the elf, including progression beyond the 10th level of experience with attack ranks, a game mechanic normally attributed to the demi-human classes. Traditionally, human character classes (save for the mystic) can advance up to 36th level, but the forester was designed with the same level limit and mechanical build as the elf class, which makes little sense when compared to the other human character classes under the BECMI/RC rules.

This article presents a revised forester class, one that allows progression up to 36th level, and adjusts the experience point requirements for the earlier levels. The expanded level progression grants foresters hit point increases from 11th to 36th level, additional general skill slots as they advance, and weapon mastery slots equal to the fighter class. The revision also replaces the forester's attack rolls and saving throws from the elf class to those of a fighter of equivalent level. The end result is a logically and mechanically balanced forester class; one that is unique from the elf class, yet which falls in line with the other human character classes as presented within the BECMI/RC rules.

¹ BECMI stands for the D&D Basic, Expert, Companion, and Master rule sets by Frank Mentzer, which were later edited together into one volume known as the *D&D Rules Cyclopedia* by Aaron Allston.

Empress Irene portrayed in the woods due to her friendship with the elves



THE FORESTER

Eight hundred years ago² the then Empress Irene³ of Thyatis made a pact with the Vyalia elves to teach their magics to humans who had the aptitude to understand them. These select humans would learn the ways of the elves and become foresters, woodland warriors capable of wielding magic as the elves do.

Foresters typically originate in Greenheight, the largest town of Vyalia elves in Thyatis, and the center for forester studies. At any given time, one-hundred and sixty or more humans (trainees to the class of forester, but normal men and women) are living there, being taught by elven families willing to adopt them as honorary Vyalia elves.

When a forester trainee is ready to become a forester formally (i.e., the clan sponsoring him is convinced that he is worthy, honorable, and of Lawful alignment), he is taken to the Tree of Life of the sponsoring clan. There, in a special ceremony, he is formally adopted by the clan and visited by a ghostly presence called an “Arm of Ilsundal”, which fills him with energies which allow him to learn magic as elves do. Ilsundal will not visit a character who is not Lawful or

² *The Dawn of the Emperors* boxed set gives conflicting information on when the Vyalia elves began training foresters. Count Yldysyl Greenheight first agreed to sponsor the Foresters some eight hundred years ago (page 13 of Book One), while the description of the forester class indicates the forester, as a class, has existed for only 500 years (page 18 of Book Two). I’ve chosen to go with the Count’s version of history.

³ See James Ruhland’s [“History of the Thyatian People”](#) at the Vaults of Pandius.

who has ill intentions toward the elves or foresters in this way, and can even reclaim those energies – and the forester’s magic powers with them – if the forester ever betrays his clan.

Once the ceremony is completed, the trainee becomes a full-fledged forester of 1st level, able to learn and cast magical spells. The forester also gains the innate ability to wield this magic unhindered while outfitted in armor in the same manner as elves.

Foresters are few in number; there are only a few hundred of them. But because they combine magic-use and fighting in ways that no other humans can, yet do not appear different from other humans, they are effective as adventurers, scouts, and spies.



Landscape near Greenheight

Forester Class Details

Prime Requisites: Strength and Intelligence.

Other Requirements: Strength and Intelligence scores of 12 or more.

Experience Bonus: 5% for Strength of 13 or better and Intelligence of 13-15, 10% for Strength of 13 or better and Intelligence of 16-18.

Hit Dice: 1d6 per level up to 9th level. Starting with 10th level, +2 hit points per level, and Constitution adjustments no longer apply.

Maximum Level: 36th

Saving Throws: As Fighter of equal level.

THACO: As Fighter of equal level.

Alignment: Lawful.

Armor: All; shields permitted.

Weapons: Any.

Special Abilities: Magical spells; Fighter Maneuvers (Lance Attack, Set Spear vs. Charge); at 12th level Fighter Combat Options; extra language (elven); 1 in 3 chance to detect secret and hidden doors.

Weapon Mastery: Four weapon choices at 1st level, then an additional choice at levels 3, 6, 9, 11, 15, 19, 23, 27, 30, 33, and 36. One additional choice earned for each 200,000 XP earned after 36th level.

Skills: Alertness and Tracking required at 1st level. Recommended Danger Sense, Riding, Signaling (Elf/Forester), and Survival (Forest).

Special Abilities

Magical Spells

Foresters can cast magical spells just as elves can⁴, and the wearing of armor does not interfere with their spellcasting ability. They require a spellbook to memorize their spells each morning just as a regular spellcasting elf does.

Once Ilsundal has chosen to imbue a forester with the ability to wield magic as the elves do, the human is then instructed in elven magic by the clan's Treekeepers. Elven magic⁵ is similar to that of human magic-users, but due to the elves' connection with the Immortal Ilsundal and the Trees of Life, it partakes quite a bit of druidic magic. The forester may learn any of the elven magic spells save for those reserved specifically for Treekeepers.

Foresters are also able to research and learn spells from the standard magic-user spell list, just as a an elf can.

As with normal elves, foresters are limited to 10th level in their spellcasting ability.

Fighter Maneuvers

Beginning foresters can utilize the fighter's Set Spear vs. Charge and Lance Attack maneuvers.

Fighter Combat Options

⁴ Foresters use the elven spell progression chart as detailed on Table 1 in the Appendix of this article.

⁵ Full details on elven magic spells can be found in *GAZ5 The Elves of Alfheim*, pages 63-68.

When the forester reaches 12th level, the character gains the ability to use Fighter Combat Options (disarm, smash, and parry). Multiple attacks are also gained at 12th level, which grants the forester two attacks per round. Three attacks are possible at 24th level, and four attacks at 36th level.

Languages

All foresters can speak Thyatian, their Alignment tongue, and the elven language (Vyalia dialect). They may speak other languages as Intelligence bonuses dictate.

Detection

All foresters are trained by the elves to have a keen eye. Thus they can detect secret and hidden doors on a roll of a 1 or 2 on a 1d6.

Other Details

General Skills

Forester characters are required to take the Alertness and Tracking skills at 1st level. Additional recommended skills include Danger Sense, Riding, Signaling (Elf/Forester), and Survival (Forest).

Magic Items

Foresters can use any magic item that elves and magic-users can use, including wands, staves, and magic-user scrolls.

Higher Experience Levels

When foresters reach *Name* (9th) level, they are often referred to as lord forester (if male) or lady forester (if female).

Land-Owning Foresters

Foresters may build a special kind of stronghold deep in the forest just as normal elves may do⁶. The character will also develop a friendship with all normal animals within a five mile radius of the stronghold once it is completed.

Traveling Foresters

Traveling foresters may not become avengers, druidic knights, knights, or paladins as a normal elf may⁷, and rarely become merchant-princes⁸. However, both traveling and land-owing foresters may train in any of the seven secret crafts⁹ (alchemist, cryptomancer, dragonologist, elemental, illusionist, necromancer, and witch) taught in the Principalities of Glantri.

⁶ See page 26 of the *Dungeons & Dragons Rules Cyclopedia* for more information on elven strongholds.

⁷ See the [Elves of Mystara](#) article in *Threshold* issue #10 for details on these elven sub-classes.

⁸ The merchant-prince class is detailed in GAZ9 *The Minrothad Guilds, Dungeon Master's Booklet*, pages 16-22.

⁹ The Seven Secret Crafts are detailed in GAZ3 *The Principalities of Glantri*, pages 69-76.

APPENDIX

Table 1 - Forester Experience Table

Level	XP	Spells / Level				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	0	1	-	-	-	-
2	3,800	2	-	-	-	-
3	7,600	2	1	-	-	-
4	15,200	2	2	-	-	-
5	30,400	2	2	1	-	-
6	60,000	3	2	2	-	-
7	120,000	3	3	2	1	-
8	250,000	4	3	2	2	-
9	400,000	4	4	3	2	-
10	550,000	5	4	3	2	1
11	700,000					
12*	850,000					
13	1,000,000					
14	1,150,000					
15	1,300,000					
16	1,450,000					
17	1,600,000					
18	1,750,000					
19	1,900,000					
20	2,050,000					
21	2,200,000					
22	2,350,000					
23	2,500,000					
24**	2,650,000					
25	2,800,000					
26	2,950,000					
27	3,100,000					
28	3,250,000					
29	3,400,000					
30	3,550,000					
31	3,700,000					
32	3,850,000					
33	4,000,000					
34	4,150,000					
35	4,300,000					
36***	4,450,000					

* Fighter Combat Options gained and Multiple Attacks (two attacks per round).
 ** Three attacks per round.
 *** Four attacks per round.



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The Foresters of Thyatis

by Korro Zal

ORIGINS OF THE ORDER

The origins of the Thyatian Guild of Foresters stretch back almost 800 years in the past.¹ In the relatively early days of the Thyatian Empire, efforts were made to promote magical training amongst those citizens capable of such in order to create a cadre of loyal magic-users who could counter the magical might of the rival Alphatian Empire. While there were a number of powerful wizards in Thyatis, their numbers did not compare to the vast population of powerful wizards Alphatia could call upon, and many were occupied in service to the empire or were disinclined towards or unwilling to participate in any sort of large-scale training program.

Such efforts were able to progress, however, in the 3rd century when a large band of goblins, organized under a charismatic and clever shaman who bore a burning hatred of elves, invaded the forest lands of the Vyalian

¹ There is a small discrepancy in the *Dawn of the Emperors* boxed set between the *Dungeon Master's Sourcebook* and *Player's Guide to Thyatis*; the former states the order is around 800 years old and the latter 500 years old. I have chosen to go with the former date in this case.



Vyalia woods

elves, pushing across the Traladaran border to Thyatian territory. Emboldened by early successes and commanding a cadre of goblin warriors accustomed to forest skirmishes, the shaman, Granark the Wolf, set his sights towards pushing out the Vyalian elves at the behest of his patron immortal.² Instead of

² Unknown; possibly Thanatos, who

engaging in large, pitched battles, the shaman elected to stage numerous hit and run attacks, dividing his forces into many small war bands which harried the elves mercilessly. The elves, worn down by the seemingly limitless number of goblin foes who proved unusually adept at combating the elves, eventually made the decision to appeal to the Thyatian government for assistance.

Six hundred years ago, Vyalia was nominally part of the Thyatian Empire, but was largely settled by elf clans and had few humans or any kind of overt Imperial presence. Nevertheless, in response, the Thyatian government sent a young but capable officer, Acastian Kelmeiarius, and his unit to Vyalia. Acastian and his men had proven unusually adept at skirmishing and commando tactics, having proven themselves in numerous battles against humanoid foes and bandits throughout the empire. In a campaign lasting several years, the combined elven and Thyatian forces drove back the goblins steadily. According to historical records, Acastian slew Granark when the shaman marshaled his forces into a last, desperate push towards Greenheight, and the remaining goblin survivors, their morale broken, retreated back into Traladara.

During the campaign, Acastian and his soldiers forged strong bonds with a number of elves, granting both sides a chance to learn from each other. In particular, Acastian struck up a friendship with the elf lord

assumed many different guises simply to cause trouble. It is also speculated that Granark might have possessed an artifact or intelligent sword that pushed him towards such a combative stance towards elves.

Yntherin Greenheight, who possessed a great interest and curiosity in these humans who seemed to have such affinity for the kind of warfare the elves excelled at. The feeling was mutual; not only did Acastian learn about elven tactics and strategies from his allies, but also a great deal about elven traditions and customs, and even became a proficient speaker of Elvish. As such, when the conflict ended and Acastian had delivered his final report to the Thyatian senate outlining the alliance's success, one Thyatian senator, Dioclesio Glanavitos, a former military mage and conscripti senator³ who had taken a personal interest in the issue of increasing the magical proficiency of the empire, came up with an unusual proposal: would the Greenheight elves, having worked alongside and come to appreciate their human allies, be willing to tutor promising candidates in magic? The magical proficiency of the elves was well-known; surely, he reasoned, here was an opportunity to secure magical training from tutors who were well-practiced at such and owed a debt of gratitude to the empire to boot. The proposal was well-received by Empress Irene⁴, who herself was a magic-user with an interest in the elves, and intrigued by the proposal

The senator's proposal was well-received by the Vyalian elves; in fact, Yntherin Greenheight went a step further and proposed that in addition to training magic-users for the empire, worthy Thyatian soldiers could also be trained in Elven tactics to create units of scouts and skirmishers who could work well alongside Elven soldiers. As

³ See [“Senators of the Thyatian Empire”](#) in *Threshold* issue #4

⁴ See James Ruhland's [“History of the Thyatian People”](#)

humans were unable to learn the ways of fighting and magic as Elves do⁵, Yntherin did not envision the humans who had fought alongside the Elves as candidates for magical training, but rather nominated his friend Acastian and many of his soldiers to serve as the first recruits for this new unit. The Thyatian government, pleased at having secured such cooperation, immediately promoted Vyalia to County status and made Yntherin its ruler, instilling strong bonds between the Elven peoples of Vyalia and the rest of the Thyatian Empire.

According to the autobiography he penned towards the end of his life, Yntherin decided that as a reward for his human friend's courage and loyalty to the Greenheight Elves, he would honor Acastian with a special ceremony. The far-sighted elf was not merely thanking his friend; given the growing power of the Thyatian Empire, he reasoned that securing stronger bonds between elves and humans would benefit both sides in the long run. But the elf lord also did not want to see the elves become subservient to or dominated by the humans, so he sought to create an alliance that would instill respect for the elves and their culture by impressing upon the Thyatians the strengths of his people. Providing magical training was one sure way to do that, but creating loyal friends and allies within the Thyatian military would prove even more effective, he reasoned. And in Acastian, he wrote, he had found a friend and ally who could help him forge an alliance of mutual respect and dependency.

⁵ This statement assumes the BECMI rules system; if using a later edition, there may well be other kinds of humans who can wield arcane magic in armor.

What happened next surprised everyone. Yntherin, in order to impress upon Acastian the respect he was being shown, decided to hold the ceremony at the clan's Tree of Life, and many prominent clan members and their Treekeeper were also in attendance. As Yntherin declared his friend an honorary member of the Greenheight clan, a presence made itself felt to all present. To the shock and surprise of all who were in attendance, a ghostly arm extended itself from the Tree of Life and descended upon the kneeling Acastian, who could only stare in awe at the spectacle. As the ghostly hand made contact with his brow, the Thyatian officer felt himself being infused with an energy he could not truly understand but could neither doubt the power of, one which caused him to be seized with visions of the elves and their history, their joys and their sorrows, to hear fragments of famous elven poems and songs, to feel the profound connection between the elves and the forests, and finally, to grasp within his very soul the magic which is inherent to the elven experience and way of life—indeed, perhaps the magic which gives elves life. In that moment, Acastian had transcended the normal human capacity for understanding, receiving an insight into the way of the elves that not even his years living amongst them had provided.

No one present truly understood what had happened, but all the elves clearly grasped this was the work of Ilsundal, their immortal patron. This was confirmed when the clan Treekeeper, in communion with their patron, learned that Ilsundal had chosen to favor Yntherin's decision to make Acastian an honorary member of the clan by instilling within the noble human part of the power of

the elves—namely, their inherent ability to work magic even while encumbered by armor.⁶

Awed by this revelation, Yntherin repeated the ceremony with those men and women of Acastian's unit who had also shown a particular affinity for the elven lifestyle and the ways of the forest, and the same experience was repeated in each case. And so the Thyatian Guild of Foresters was born, with Acastian and a dozen of his comrades serving as the first of the order. In the years since, the human population of Vyalia has grown, with the county now boasting 20,000 residents, of which roughly 25% are elven.⁷ The mostly human community of Foreston has become the center of the order, ruled by the head of the Forester's Guild (who in 1000 AC is Larandia Lymianoporus⁸, a veteran Forester and Knight of Thyatis with thirty years' experience).

In the centuries to come, the order would grow, eventually encompassing several hundred members. In keeping with tradition, every candidate to the order is adopted by an elf clan and lives among them for at least three years. Then, if judged worthy by the clan, the prospective Forester is brought to the clan Tree of Life and the same ceremony is performed. Should Ilsundal find the candidate worthy, a new Forester is born and takes his or her place amongst the clan members.



RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING

The majority of applicants to the Forester's Guild come from the County of Vyalia; the humans who have settled there in the centuries since the order began have been heavily influenced by their elven neighbors, adopting their views and philosophies, particularly regarding protecting the forests of their homeland. Naturally, these people produce from their ranks many ideal candidates for Forester training. Typically, an interested candidate will seek out the Guild headquarters in Foreston, the largest human community in the county, and make their intentions known; if such an individual should seem a likely prospect to the Foresters there (a decision which is neither made quickly nor rashly), then the candidate will be introduced to one or possibly several of the elven families who sponsor Foresters⁹—

⁹ According to *Dawn of the Emperors*, the Greenheight and Diamarak clans are the most likely to sponsor Foresters. The other clans, namely the Blueleaves (artists),

⁶ See n. 5 above

⁷ As per *Dawn of the Emperors*.

⁸ See n. 7 above

-should a particular family find the candidate suitable and believe he or she has the necessary affinity with the elven way of life in addition to the family in particular, then they will invite the candidate to live with them, upon which their training as a Forester will begin.

Not all candidates come from the county, however; many Vyalian elves and Foresters are adventurers, and travel extensively throughout the empire and visit many different nations. Should they encounter an individual who seems a strong candidate (again, not a decision made lightly—such a situation usually comes about when they have opportunity to observe the individual over an extended period of time to assess their character), they may invite the individual to Vyalia if he or she seems interested in the possibility. Most of these individuals are Thyatians, but occasionally citizens of other nations are chosen as well. The Guild has an understanding with the Thyatian government in which they will not train a member of a nation considered hostile to the empire, meaning that citizens of Alphatia are almost always out of the question. Typically, at any given time there are at least a few Karameikans and Darokinians amongst the Guild's ranks, with those of other nationalities present much less commonly. In any case, upon becoming a Forester the individual must declare themselves a citizen of Vyalia and a member

Etheredyls (philosophers) and Hierydyls (scholars) only rarely sponsor Foresters given their lack of emphasis on martial pursuits. The final clan, Treeshields, is very martially oriented, but many of their members are traditionalists who look upon the Foresters with some suspicion and thus rarely sponsor them.

of their elven clan, which by default also declares them to be Thyatian citizens.

Once a candidate begins his or her training, they begin their new lives as a member of their adoptive elven family. They are expected to obey the family elders faithfully, absorbing all they have to teach. Candidates are assessed at all stages to evaluate their loyalty, honesty, sense of honor, affinity for the elven ways and their reverence for the natural world in general and the forests in particular.¹⁰ Should the candidate at any stage fall short of these expectations, they can be dismissed from their family, and when this occurs their chance at becoming a Forester is forever gone—no other elven family will adopt them. If the candidate should prove worthy, however, then after three years or so the adoptive family's elders will begin consulting with other clan members and Foresters who have witnessed the candidate's training. If all are in agreement that the initiate has the necessary qualities to join the ranks of the Foresters, then they will be taken to the Tree of Life and initiated into the guild and made members of their adoptive elven clan in the same solemn ceremony Acastian experienced eight centuries ago.

¹⁰ There is another discrepancy in the *Dawn of the Emperors* boxes set here; the *Dungeon Master's Sourcebook* states Foresters must be Lawful, while the *Player's Guide to Thyatis* states they may be of any alignment. Again, I have chosen to go with the former. In systems other than BECMI, "Lawful" should be interpreted as an adherence to elven tradition, loyalty to the elven clan, and an honorable disposition.

RELATIONS WITH THE THYATIAN GOVERNMENT

The Foresters offer a unique blend of abilities that makes them suited for a wide variety of missions. In particular, unlike normal soldiers and magic-users, they are ideal for stealth, spying and scouting missions where their surprising ability to wield magic while bearing arms and armor confounds and surprises many foes.¹¹ However, they are generally not deployed in standard military units, but instead used as specialists who are requested when needed. This is done primarily for two reasons.

The first is the surprise factor. In spite of their long history, the Foresters have never been a large order, only numbering about 160 members at the current day.¹² Even within the Thyatian Empire many are unaware of the order (particularly those who live far from the County of Vyalia), and even those who are may regard the Foresters as nothing more than a myth or simply a bunch of scouts and skirmishers whose reputation has been exaggerated by tall tales. As such, foes who are faced with a Forester are often deeply surprised when their armored opponent suddenly casts a spell, a useful tactic that takes many foes off balance. The Thyatian government takes advantage of this situation by maintaining no permanent all-Forester units¹³, instead sending small bands on scouting or spying missions, or secreting Foresters within the ranks of other units,

providing them with an unexpected magical might that foils crafty assassins and snipers who might seek to take out dangerous spell casters early in a battle. In short, obscurity and deception are two of the main strengths that Foresters rely on when engaging in conflict, and thus the government uses them sparingly to maximize such strengths.

The second reason is the oath that Foresters swear to their elven clans. It is important to remember that this oath is to the clan, and not the Thyatian government. Foresters are indeed often loyal to their nation, often more so than many ordinary citizens due to their long history of fighting for the empire, but their duty to their elven clan is even more binding. Furthermore, the clan binds the Foresters in an iron-clad code of conduct, requiring its members to uphold the tenets of honesty, bravery and the utmost loyalty to their elven clan. Given the Thyatian Empire's well-deserved reputation for treachery, it is understandable that some missions the government might call upon its troops to perform might conflict with the Forester's code of honor. As such, Foresters are never chosen for a mission randomly, but are rather carefully selected when a particular mission would benefit from their strengths and contain parameters that do not offend the order's notions of proper conduct.

Typically, when the planning stages of military operations call for Forester involvement, a Thyatian official will send a message to the head of the Forester's Guild in Foreston, who will then assign members to the operation as he or she sees fit. In rare cases, a request may go unfulfilled if no suitable Foresters are available or if the guild leader strongly disagrees with the nature of

¹¹ Again, this assumes the BECMI ruleset where this is unique to Foresters and Elves.

¹² In 1000 AC, according to *Dawn of the Emperors*.

¹³ Special units of Treeshield clan elves do exist, however.

the operation, but this is done sparingly and only with good reason. The Forester`s Guild enjoys a great deal of autonomy compared to other branches of the Thyatian government and military, and as such does not care to jeopardize this special status by angering the government. Similarly, as mentioned above, most Thyatian officials limit their requests to when it is clearly needed to avoid clashes with the Forester code of honor or overtax the resources of such a small order. Nevertheless, in spite of these limitations, the Foresters have proven invaluable in many operations, and as a result there were few significant conflicts between the guild and the government until the events of Wrath of the Immortals (see below).

One last note of importance concerns the legal status of Foresters. Although citizens of Thyatis, Foresters are also, for all intents and purposes, considered members of their elven clans. The Vyalian clans are granted a certain amount of autonomy within Thyatian law, and barring any crime short of treason or something equally heinous, clan members accused of breaking the law have the right to be tried by their clan. The clans will protect a Forester as they would any other elf, though as noted above crimes that are serious enough may cause this protection to be lost--although crimes of that magnitude are likely to strip a Forester of his or her status anyway, upon which they will no longer be considered a member of the clan.



FORESTERS AND ILSUNDAL

Foresters receive their powers through the grace of the immortal Ilsundal, who created them to instill greater bonds between humans and elves. This serves two purposes: firstly, it helps impress upon humans a reverence for the elven way of life and the natural world, encouraging a respect for both that would blunt any destructive urges towards either, be it through over-cutting of the forests or wars of aggression towards the elves. Secondly, it encourages the elves to be less reclusive, seeking out good relations with humans in order to forge alliances that would protect the race.

As such, Foresters are bound to embody these goals as best as possible, helping to foster good relations between the two peoples and protect the forest lands of their home. They must also uphold high standards of personal conduct in order to present the order as honorable and trustworthy, ensuring that their word will be respected in

times of trouble (which is particularly important in an empire such as Thyatis where treachery is commonplace). Towards this end, Ilsundal monitors the actions of his Foresters as he does his clerics, and can withdraw a Forester's powers if he or she is found to have acted contrary to these goals. In particular, Foresters are expected to demonstrate absolute loyalty to their elven clans and to act in an exemplary fashion, a code of conduct which includes the following tenets:

- Obey the orders of elven clan leaders, as well as the head of the Forester's Guild
- Respect and protect the natural world--hunting and logging are acceptable, provided it is done in a sustainable fashion and for necessary reasons (hunting for sport is prohibited)
- Refuse any course of action which would harm or betray the elves (should the Forester be placed in a no-win situation where he or she is forced to take an action that would cause harm to elven peoples, the lesser evil must be chosen)
- Seek to promote good relations between the Vyalian Elves and the other peoples of Thyatis in order to ensure the safety and stability of the elven clan (again, if placed in a no-win situation, the Forester must carefully choose the best way forward possible)
- Avoid the treacherous conduct common throughout Thyatis, emphasizing honesty and integrity--a Forester's word is his or her bond (dishonesty and subterfuge in times of conflict against enemies of the elves or Thyatis is acceptable, in moderation)
- Inflicting unnecessary pain or hardship on others, even enemies, is to be avoided

- torture and slavery are out of the question (Foresters do not have to oppose these actions at every opportunity, particularly when it would harm Elven-Thyatian relations, but they will never actively participate in them)

A Forester who falls short of such ideals may receive a warning from Ilsundal, usually in the form of a dream where the immortal makes his displeasure with the offender's actions known (though he never actually appears in such dreams or speaks directly to the offender--usually the dream utilizes symbolism and metaphor to make such points). A Forester who ignores such warnings or egregiously violates his or her code will have their powers immediately stripped from them, and once this is done there is no chance of redemption--he or she is cast out forever, unable to wield magic at all.

A Forester in good standing, however, is immediately recognizable by clerics of Ilsundal, who can sense the deep connection the Forester has with the immortal. They will tend to view a Forester in much the same way as other faiths might a paladin, and will consider him or her one of their own, allowing them access to elven records, documents and histories that most humans would be barred from reading. Furthermore, Ilsundal guides the actions of powerful Foresters; characters capable of casting the Contact Outer Plane spell automatically reach Ilsundal, who will answer questions pertaining to the elves without any chance of driving the caster insane or lying (though the chance of knowing remains the same—

consider Ilsundal to be at Distance 8 for the purposes of these questions, 3 for others).¹⁴

The Forester's bond with Ilsundal is not merely meant to instill reverence, however; it also has to do with the nature of the connection between the two. Ilsundal grants Foresters their elven-based ability to wield magic while armored via the immortal spell *Bestow*, which costs 5 Permanent Power Points per use. However, since there are roughly around 160 Foresters in the order at any given time and the guild has existed for 800 years or so, it is clearly impossible for even a powerful immortal such as Ilsundal to expend such power. He accomplishes such using a special technique he developed which causes the points to return to him upon the end of the Forester's service (usually this occurs at death, though Foresters who violate their code can have the bond severed much quicker), but this requires a close relationship between the recipient and the patron immortal in order for this to work. The Forester's utmost adherence to the teachings of Ilsundal and the sacred vows he or she makes to defend and respect the elven clan makes this connection possible. (This is also why few immortals maintain such orders, as Ilsundal is investing about 800 of his Power Points in the guild, something only a powerful immortal would even consider doing—and even then, only with good reason.)

¹⁴ As per the rules for *Contact Other Plane* in the *Rules Cyclopedia*.

CONVERSION NOTES

In the eight hundred years of its existence, the Guild of Foresters, a tradition unique to Thyatis¹⁵, has generated numerous heroes who have served the empire bravely. A few such individuals are noted here in the history that follows (with a focus upon the present day). Some abbreviated statistics are included, which requires some explanation.

Level: The listed levels assumes a 36-level progression, as used with Iron Drake's version of the Forester (see the article in this issue). If you are using the classic BECMI level progression with Attack Ranks, assume ranks D and E are equivalent to levels 11 and 12, with each successive rank worth three levels (thus a Forester with a listed level of 24 would be Attack Rank I). If you are using 2nd or 5th edition (or another system with a 20 level progression), keep levels the same with all classes up until level 12 and then count each three additional levels as one level (so the above-mentioned level 24 Forester would be level 16).

Alignment: The BECMI three alignment system is used, with the nine alignment version used in later editions appearing in parenthesis.

¹⁵ The *Hollow World* Box set makes references to Foresters amongst some of the cultures that live there. How and why Foresters came to be there is probably best covered in a separate article. In addition, the Merchant-Princes of Minrothad could also be considered a specialized kind of nautical Forester sponsored by Calitha Starbrow, who would also have a reason to foster strong human-elven relations like Ilsundal does.

Half-Elves: In BECMI, these should be considered racially human with some elven features (possibly using the option in GAZ5 that grants infravision in exchange for a small experience penalty).

Class: If using 2nd edition, typically the Ranger class would stand in for the Forester, but I feel the Ranger class isn't "magical" enough to properly simulate a Forester. This issue can be solved by building Foresters as multi-classed Ranger/Magic-Users (an exception is made in this case regarding the prohibition against humans multi-classing) and creating a Forester kit for these characters, which involves the following changes:

- Cleric spells of the Animal and Plant spheres may be used as if they were wizard spells, and are recorded in spell books (this replaces normal Ranger spell casting)
- The Alertness skill (see the Red Steel Character Guide) must be chosen at 1st level
- Spell casting can be performed in armor, which differs from the standard 2nd edition rule that only multi-classed elves and half-elves in elfin chain can cast magical spells while so protected

However, the following strictures also apply to balance out these hefty benefits:

- Spells from the schools of Invocation and Necromancy cannot be learned
- Should the Forester betray his or her clan, or perform an evil act, all magical powers are lost as is Ranger status—the character becomes a Fighter of equal level, with his or her experience point

- total dropping to the lowest number needed to qualify for the level
- The character will be assigned missions from his elven clan or the Guild of Foresters occasionally, and enemies of the guild will target her as well
- Human Foresters are treated as multi-classed characters, dividing experience evenly between the two classes, and may never dual-class as humans normally can

(Under these rules, calculate Forester levels as normal for a 20-level progression, and then subtract two to determine the Forester's Ranger and Magic-User levels. As such, a 24th level Forester should be a 14th level Ranger/14th level Magic-User with the Forester kit.)¹⁶

If using 5th edition, the Forester Guild can be created as an Organization, as found in the *5E Dungeon Master's Guide*. This organization provides more benefits than the others, but demands more in return:

Requirements: The character must be a Ranger of good alignment who has lived amongst the Vyalian elves for at least three years and taken forests as their Favored Terrain. Once the first point of renown is gained, the character is initiated as a clan member.

In exchange for these numerous benefits, the Forester is bound by the code of conduct mentioned above, and failure to do so or loss of their good alignment will strip them of all magical powers and reduce their renown to

¹⁶ If these rules are used, the Riders of Renyard in the *Dragon Mountain* box set should be considered to have the Forester kit

Renown	Min Level	Title	Benefits
1	1	Strider	Gain two cantrips from the Bard list (or the Sword Coast Campaign Guide, if available)
3	2	Ranger	Learn one bonus spell from the following list and one additional spell each even level gained: Faerie Fire, Feather Fall, Silent Image, Sleep, Gust of Wind, Mirror Image, Misty Step, Web. Only spells of a level that can be cast may be selected.
10	9	Guardian	Add the following to the additional spells available list above: Clairvoyance, Counterspell, Dispel Magic, Haste
25	13	Forester Knight	Add the following to the additional spells available list above: Arcane Eye, Confusion, Dimension Door, Hallucinatory Terrain
50	17	Forester Lord	Add the following to the additional spells available list above: Cloudkill, Conjure Elemental, Scrying, Transmute Rock (from Princes of the Apocalypse)

Table 1: Forester Progression

0, which can never rise higher again as they will be banished from the order. By appealing to another immortal, normal Ranger spell-casting powers might be regained, but the bonuses above never will be, not by any means.¹⁷ The Forester's Guild will make requests of them, and enemies of Vyalia will target them, as mentioned above with the Forester kit. In addition, a Favored Enemy which does not threaten the Vyalian Elves or Thyatis cannot be chosen.

Avengers: If using 2nd edition, these should be treated as Fighters with the Defender kit (see the *Red Steel Campaign*

¹⁷ Ruaidhri Hawkbane is known to have done this, restoring the spell ability of an ex-Forester whose elven lover was slain by werebeasts and subsequently violated the Forester code in pursuit of revenge.

Guide). If using 5th edition, these should be treated as Paladins with the Oathbreaker subclass.



TIMELINE

A Short History of the Order

203 AC: Acastian and his unit are deployed to Vyalia to help with the defense of the elven peoples.

206 AC¹⁸: The goblins defeated, Acastian and twelve of his compatriots become the first Foresters with the unexpected blessing of Ilsundal. Humans begin settling in the new County of Vyalia and Foreston becomes the center of the guild.

230 AC: Acastian (Male Thyatian Lawful (LG) Forester 27) retires as head of the Forester Guild. In his place, Beliscia Thorion (Female Kerendan Lawful (LG) Forester 21) takes over leadership of the order. Her first act is to agree to assign Forester agents to the Agentes in Rebus¹⁹, serving as spies and adventurers in the service of the empire, something the guild will excel in the centuries to come.

313 AC: The Emperor Alexan II puts down the Hattian revolution with the assistance of Forester spies, which contributes to the hatred many Storm Soldiers bear for the Guild.

335 AC: In the middle of Emperor Alexandros's campaign to retake Thyatian territories lost to the Alphatians on the Isle of Dawn²⁰, several Forester operatives are

kidnapped by the Alphatian wizard and general Rishardian. Having heard stories of these elite human armored magic-users, the Alphatian general ruthlessly tortures them for information about the guild, interested in how they came to be. All Foresters die in captivity save one, Belsasiana Ceruldynitos (Female Thyatian Lawful (NG) Forester 9), who escapes captivity and returns to Thyatis. After she reports the fate of her compatriots to the order, this cements enmity between the guild and the Alphatian Empire.

445 AC: Foresters engaging in a diplomatic mission with the sea elves of Minrothad become caught up in the Silver Purge; unable to stop the mobs descending upon New Alphatia, their senior member Juliela Daphnothemites (Female Nuari-Thyatian Lawful (NG) Forester 8) leads them in helping some residents of the city to flee its total destruction. This results in some ill will between Minrothad and the Guild.

486 AC: Thyatian territories on the Isle of Dawn, including West Portage and Helskir, are overrun by Alphatian troops. The Emperor Romanos, through the assistance of Forester spies and commandos, breaks the advance at the Siege of Redstone.²¹ He bestows honors upon the order for the crucial role they played, which increases the prestige of the guild. In the following years, the number of applicants to the order increases steadily.

524 AC: After failing to find an immortal sponsor in the Sphere of Energy, Rishardian

¹⁸ According to James Ruhland's "[History of the Thyatian People](#)", Empress Irene ruled from 202-211 AC; I chose this year for no particular reason to serve as the start of the order..

¹⁹ See "[Thyatian Senators](#)" in *Threshold* issue #3,

²⁰ See James Ruhland's "[History of the Thyatian People](#)" at the vaults of Pandius

²¹ See n. 20 above; this is written as occurring in the late 5th century; again, I chose this year at random.

(who has magically extended his life) turns to the Sphere of Entropy and is accepted as a candidate for immortality by Thanatos, who still bears ill will towards the order given their role in suppressing the Hattian revolution. Rishardian (Male Alphatian Chaotic (CE) Magic-User 36) remains interested in somehow reverse-engineering the process which creates Foresters to create similar agents in his service. He takes advantage of the conflict in Alaysia to kidnap several Foresters for experimentation.

547 AC: Foresters and Vyalian Elves are invited to Minrothad by the Sea Elven clans in an attempt to dispel the mistrust between the guild and Minrothad. There is an ulterior motive; the Minrothaddans, already skilled with Alphatian sea magic, are interested in creating a corps of merchant princes from the ranks of human merchant captains.²² Instead of utilizing the Forester method of having a candidate live with the elves, however, they use the Tutorial Guild to instruct students.²³

565 AC: Following a series of prolonged conflict between Alphatian and Thyatian colonies in Alaysia, an Alphatian advance is halted near Fabia in a battle that heavily relies upon the Retebius Air Corps. They are assisted by the Forester hero and Griffon Knight of the Air Callisine Acropatian (Male

Kerendan Lawful (LG) Forester 27) who, along with a cadre of his fellow Forester Knights, manages to slay the opposing Alphatian admiral, after which the battle is mostly won by Thyatis. In the years to come, Emperor Wien Dien-Ling honors both orders, renaming the Retebius Air Corps the Retebius Air Fleet. This, in turn, starts a long era of cooperation between the Fleet and the Forester Guild, which at any given time in the years to follow has several members serving as Knights.²⁴

571 AC: Investigating reports of a missing Forester, several members of the order, led by Callisine, stumble upon Rishardian's lair. They destroy the lab and free their comrade, forcing the Alphatian wizard to flee. Thanatos abandons the wizard, who, bitter at his failure to secure immortality, becomes a lich in the years to come, continuing to prey upon the order.

585 AC: The legendary Forester hero Callisine Acropatian leaves Thyatis on his quest for immortality, sailing south towards Davania with his friend Bastius Occandro (Male Minrothaddan Neutral (LN) Fighter 12-Merchant Prince 10). They are never seen nor heard from again.

612 AC: Angelius Cantrithus (Male Thyatian Chaotic (NE) Fighter-Avenger 18), a failed Forester initiate and Knight of Thyatis, strikes a bargain with Rishardian--in exchange for magical assistance to help boost his career, he uses his contacts within the Agentes to learn the details of several missions involving Foresters, using that information to help the

²² This reflects my view that Merchant Princes are a Sea Elven version of the Forester, though oriented towards trade and seafaring, and bound by Calitha Starbrow. This allows them to cast spells in armor as Foresters do.

²³ It isn't clear exactly when spell-casting human Merchant Princes originated in Minrothaddan history; I assumed this to have occurred in the 6th century based on the [history of Minrothad](#) in *Threshold* #4.

²⁴ See James Ruhland's "[History of the Thyatian People](#)" at the Vaults of Pandius

lich secure Forester subjects for his experiments.

620 AC: After years of attempting to track down several missing Foresters, Galetinius Halanenan (Male Thyatian Lawful (LG) Forester 10) discovers Angelius` s role in helping to ambush the missing members. Summoning several allies from the Guild, he discovers a dungeon complex beneath Angelius` s estate where he makes the chilling discovery that the captured Foresters have been experimented upon and used to make a new kind of undead creature. The Foresters destroy most of the horrors before Rishardian arrives to save the last few specimens and teleports away with them—although he never succeeded in creating his own warrior-mage minions, he did discover a new type of undead creature similar to a Wyrd that could be created from tortured Foresters.

700 AC: The Battle of Foreston—Rishardian assaults the town using a Gate to bring in an army of undead , led by elite squads of Forester-Wyrds and a Nightwalker. The Foresters and Vyalian Elves defend the town in a pitched battle, which ends when the Guild Leader Arcadia Chrysterios (Female Thyatian Lawful (NG) Forester 24) slays the Nightwalker in a one-on-one combat. Clerics residing in Foreston also play a role in dispersing the undead, and most of the Forester-Wyrds are destroyed. Of Rishardian, though, there is no sign—he is not seen once the battle is underway.

754 AC: Famed Forester scholar and adventurer Honorius Metopolites (Male Alphatian Lawful (NG) Forester 21), an Alphatian by blood born in the Thyatian

territories on the Isle of Dawn, uses his racial appearance to go on an extended tour of Alphatia, which lasts several years. Upon returning to Thyatis, he pens the book *A Thyatian` s Travels in Alphatia*, which is still considered the definitive guide to Alphatia within the present-day empire.

797 AC: Foresters, both Knights of the Air and those serving in marine units, help halt the Alphatian advance towards the Pearl Islands²⁵. This marks the first time Foresters are secreted in marine units, and their surprising magical support helps overpower the Alphatians in many boarding actions. Many Pearl Islanders develop an affection for the order as a result, which leads to some political cooperation amongst the Philosopher faction of the Senate.²⁶

826 AC: An uprising of Alaysian nomads pushes out the Alphatians and threatens the Thyatian colonies.²⁷ The government requests Forester support, but the order, uncomfortable with the way the empire has run the colonies and increasingly influenced by the Philosopher faction` s anti-imperialist leanings, declines to participate. While this angers the Emperor and some Thyatian military officials, the popularity of the order shields them from any repercussions.

900 AC: The Thyatian acquisition of the new Province of Traladara begins. Foresters participate in scouting missions, but mostly help to reduce acts of aggression towards the Traladaran people and engage in diplomatic missions with the elves of the region, which helps to contribute to further human-elven

²⁵ See n. 24 above

²⁶ See [“Senators of the Thyatian Empire”](#)

in *Threshold* #2,

²⁷ See GAZ2.

cooperation later in the realm's history. This also makes the order known to the elven Callarii clans of the region.

960 AC: During the Alphatian Spike Assault, units of Foresters lead by the Guild Leader Galerica Prochiarus (Female Thyatian-Ochaelan Lawful (LG) Forester 24), assist Thincol with defending the capital, again playing a pivotal role and earning the soon-to-be Emperor's good will.

962 AC: After Foresters bravely help retake the city of Kendach, upon which the Alphatian Emperor Tyllion IV abdicates, Thincol establishes the Ranger Knights of Thyatis, a small group of Foresters assigned to the Emperor's service and overseen by his Magist, Demetron. These Foresters engage in a number of missions on the Emperor's behalf, as dictated by Demetron, who is careful to only use them when the mission does not compromise their code of ethics.

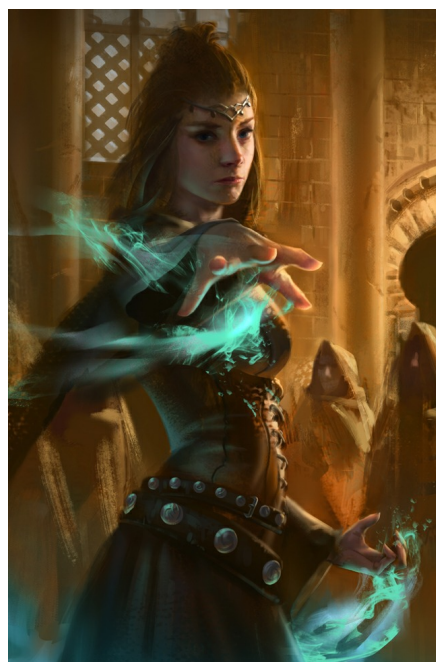
970 AC: Larandia Lymianoporus, the current head of the Forester Guild, joins the order. After twenty years of adventuring, Larandia (Female Thyatian Lawful (LG) Forester 27) becomes head of the order in 990 AC²⁸ upon Galerica Prochiarus's retirement.

The Decline of the Order

1000 AC: Ilsundal allies with Ixion and Valerias as part of the Ring of Fire against Rad, fearful of what the nucleus of the spheres might inflict upon the highly magical elves.²⁹ This, however, creates a problem

²⁸ See *Dawn of the Emperors*.

²⁹ See *Wrath of the Immortals*



where the Foresters are concerned: while elves in areas such as Alfheim can be marshaled against Glantri, Vanya ensures that Thyatis sides with Rad, possibly forcing the guild to work against Ilsundal's interests. At this time, Ilsundal does not involve the Foresters in his schemes but some members of the order, in response to dreams they have received, do help agents in the immortal's service from abroad enter Thyatis, though they are not aware of the reasons other than it serves the interests of the elves.

1001-1004 AC: Ilsundal continues to move agents into position throughout Mystara in order to oppose Rad, which includes actions meant to destabilize Thyatis. Valerias, in her guise as Helena Ledamiades³⁰, helps weaken the Thyatian Officer Corps through encouraging them to engage in decadent pursuits. On occasion, Foresters are called

³⁰ See n. 29 above (*The Immortal's Fury* pg73)

upon to help in such schemes, such as helping to smuggle zsonga into the empire. This troubles some members of the order, but they are led to believe that this is required to act against anti-elven Thyatian elements, which prior events such as those enacted by Angelius render a credible threat.

1005 AC: Upon the declaration of war between Alphatia and Thyatis, Ilsundal, who is allied with the immortal Alphatia, patron of her namesake empire, sends prominent Foresters dreams that convey unease regarding the war and dire warnings regarding Glantri. Larandia, unsure what to make of these omens, quietly sends some Foresters out of Thyatis to engage in information gathering missions in Glantri, and sends some Foresters to engage in spying missions in Alphatia but declines many other requests from the Thyatian government. This reluctance strains relations between the order and the empire.

One Forester sent to Alphatia, however, interprets Ilsundal's dreams differently. Reynard Milton (Male Darokinian Lawful (Chaotic Good) Forester 15), a Forester originally from Darokin who, while loyal to the Vyalian Elves never particularly warmed up to the notion of being a Thyatian citizen and harbored serious doubts about its imperialist policies, interpreted his visions as proof of the empire's evil intentions. Swaying his fellow Forester comrades to his way of thinking, he makes the disastrous decision to turn on the empire, feeling it serves the interests of Ilsundal. He makes contact with the Alphatians who, advised by a cleric of Alphatia to believe the Foresters, allow the Forester spies to switch sides. He continues to feed information to Thyatis to

hide his treason, but only sends intelligence which is worthless or flawed.

1005 AC, Fall: In a disastrous turn of events for the Thyatian Empire, West Portage, Kendach and Fenswatch fall to the Alphatians. Although the main reason was due to the loss of troop discipline and morale thanks to Valerias's meddling³¹, faulty intelligence sent by the traitorous Forester spies also played a critical role in the debacle. Furthermore, Reynard and his fellow conspirators are present after the fall of those fortresses, helping their Alphatian allies within sight of captured Thyatian officers, one of whom later escapes and reports the incident to his superiors upon making his way home.

Within the Senate there is an explosion of outrage--the Guild of Foresters had long been viewed as one of the most honorable and patriotic orders within the empire, and this act of treason hits hard, damaging the order's credibility severely. Larandia, along with the Senator from Foreston, Diatres Imlacris³², hastily rushes to the Guild's defense, claiming that the traitors do not represent the order as a whole. No punitive action is taken against the order at this time, but their prestige is heavily damaged, and many Foresters are demoralized by this turn of events. Ilsundal is deeply troubled by this, realizing that his actions have put his servants in a bad position.

1006 AC: Although the order faced no explicit punishment following Reynard's treason, the empire tests their loyalty by

³¹ See n. 30 above

³² See "[Thyatian Senators](#)" in *Threshold* magazine issue #4,

making increasing demands of the guild, constantly requesting Foresters to be sent on dangerous combat missions, as opposed to the usual espionage missions they are no longer trusted with. Many members, eager to prove their loyalty to Thyatis, accept such missions, and suffer many casualties as a result. By summer, more than twenty have died in various operations, a serious blow to an order that only numbered less than 200. Reynard calls upon the order to join him, stating that Thyatis is hopelessly corrupt and not worthy of the Foresters' service.

In the fall, as Alfheim's trees begin to sicken, Ilsundal becomes increasingly alarmed. He sends more dire visions to the order, and Larandia quietly sends some Forester agents to Darokin to help investigate.

1007 AC: With nearly fifty casualties, and the order's reputation still heavily damaged, morale is lower amongst the surviving members of the order than it ever has been in its history. Reynard continues to help his Alpathian masters, and there are incidents where Foresters traveling within Thyatis are attacked, often by emboldened Hattians, who have long nursed a grudge against the order.

With the fall of Alfheim, Ilsundal comes to a decision. Although he still values the order, he realizes it suffers from divided loyalties and thus must change to address this issue. He sends further visions to many prominent Foresters, showing the order assisting the elves fleeing Alfheim and settling in countries other than Thyatis, showing a future guild largely defined by loyalty to the elves and organized amongst several nations rather than bound to merely one. Larandia, after pondering such visions, sends her nephew

Justinian Lymianoporus (Male Half-Elven Lawful (NG) Forester 12) at the head of a delegation to meet the elven refugees en route and help guide them to Karameikos, where the Vyalian elves also have a presence.

Other Foresters, guided by Ilsundal and their own moral compasses and dislike for Thyatis' imperialist policies, quietly help the Pearl Islanders and Ochalea in their independence movements, and both declare independence by winter. Such an act would have been unthinkable even in spite of the Foresters' dislike of Thyatis' historical treatment of those regions only a few short years ago, but the actions of the past two years have weakened the Foresters' loyalty to their parent nation--many see themselves increasingly as servants of Ilsundal rather than imperial citizens.

1008 AC, Spring: Reynard and his fellow Alpathian Foresters help with the pacification of Helskir, which causes the order's reputation to suffer even further. Even within Vyalia, few applicants seek to enter the order, and a handful who do are murdered on their way to Foreston by Storm Soldiers who have hidden themselves within the County for that purpose. Even after they are caught, public opinion against them is muted, much to the order's chagrin.

Justinian and his followers reach Karameikos with the Alfheim refugees, who are granted dominions in the eastern forests of Karameikos. They provide what assistance they can, establishing good relations with the Callarii and Vyalian Elves who live in that nation.

1008 AC, Summer: The war continues to go poorly for Thyatis, with the Alphatians in a position to attack mainland Thyatis. Petroniel Halataum (Male Kerendan Lawful (LG) Forester 15), a Knight of the Air, accompanies the Retebius Air Fleet and several other Forester Knights to meet the Alphatian fleet before it can reach the Thyatian mainland. Still deeply loyal to the empire, Petroniel is determined to stop the Alphatians at any cost, though his resolve is tested when he learns his former friend, Reynard, is helping command the Alphatian fleet as an advisor on Thyatian tactics.

Petroniel communes with Ilsundal, asking his patron immortal what he should do. Ilsundal is torn--although members of the order are now in conflict, both sides are doing what they believe is in the best interests of the elves and the order, and Reynard has been led to this path by Ilsundal's own influence. Petroniel acts as he does because he is convinced that a strong union with Thyatis is best to preserve the guild and protect the ways of the Vyalian Elves. Bitterly realizing that he has caused this sad turn of events, Ilsundal strips none of the Foresters involved of their powers, and has no answers for Petroniel.

Petroniel decides, reluctantly, to go into battle with his fellows. In the events which follow, he finds himself pitted against the Alphatian airship the traitorous Reynard travels on, and after his hippogriff is mortally wounded Petroniel is forced to crash onto the deck of the ship and face Reynard directly alongside a contingent of his fellow Knights of the Air. For the first time in the history of the order, two Foresters find themselves fighting each other on opposite sides of a war.

In the duel which follows, he slays Reynard, but the ship is critically damaged and crashes, killing Petroniel in the process. The Alphatian advance is stopped--for now--and Petroniel becomes a hero of the empire for his brave sacrifice, helping to restore some of the order's lost prestige. The only Forester to survive the battle is Trention Lycostorion, a Pegasus Knight³³, who also becomes a hero of the order. While this helps the Forester`s Guild somewhat, the fact that two of its members have been forced to kill each other is yet another terrible blow to the morale of its members. Although some still favor a union with Thyatis, the majority are now looking towards Karameikos and embracing Ilsundal's visions of an order that transcends national boundaries.

1009 AC, Spring: Forester agents and skirmishers help slow the Alphatian advance into Thyatis, but given the casualties they have suffered and the fact that still more have chosen to go to Karameikos to help the elves there means their numbers are limited. Still, they engage in enough acts of heroism to further repair their tattered reputation within the empire.

Justinian and his fellow Foresters consult with the Karameikan elves about setting up a branch of the Foresters within Karameikos. Ilsundal informs the Treekeepers of those Alfheim and Callarii clans that he will honor any such ceremony performed by them, provided the same standards are kept. The elves, still struggling to adjust to their situation, gladly accept the help.

³³ This is the sample character provided in the *Dawn of the Emperors* box set.

1009 AC, Fall: The war finally ends for a battered Thyatis, and the Foresters there are freed at last from having to fight the Alphatians. The order's reputation is improved, though still nowhere near what it was before the war. The Week Without Magic shocks the Vyalian Elves and the Foresters to the core, however, and during this time vengeful Hattian terrorists, guided by Thanatos, assassinate several weakened Foresters.

Larandia calls a meeting of the Forester's Guild, and outlines her vision of the future of the order. She approves of Justinian's efforts to establish a Karameikan branch of the order, as she senses that this is Ilsundal's will. She gives every member of the order a choice--they may stay in Vyalia, or go to Karameikos. Of the sixty surviving Foresters, forty choose to renounce their Thyatian citizenship and go to Karameikos. The remaining twenty, including Larandia, choose to stay.

In Karameikos, Justinian seeks out and is granted an audience with King Stefan. He proposes a Karameikan Forester's Guild that will swear loyalty to Karameikos rather than Thyatis. Stefan is somewhat reluctant to accept members of a formerly Thyatian martial order, but, after consulting with his advisors, chooses to accept the offer. The Order of the Griffon makes contact with the Foresters, hoping to establish ties.

1010 AC: With the sinking of Alphatia, the conflict is finished. The Forester's Guild in Vyalia remains, and once again is receiving a healthy number of applicants, moved by tales of Petroniel's heroism. In time, the order will grow to its original size. In the years to

follow, Larandia will swear loyalty to Eusebius after his father's death in 1012, and the order will continue to engage in the sorts of activities it did before the war. However, it will never enjoy the same level of prestige it did before the conflict, as Reynard and his cohorts will form a stain on the guild's reputation for a long time. There are still a fair amount of senators and government officials who feel the order was not punished sufficiently, or even favor disbanding it outright.

However, the order no longer exists solely in Thyatis. The Karameikan Guild of Foresters also grows in size, accepting promising Karameikan students who are sponsored by Alfheim, Callarii and Vyalian clans. Justin Karameikos, Stefan's second son, sensing that Karameikos's new elven population will prove critical to the future of the nation, chooses to apply for entrance into the order and is accepted, fostering even greater ties between the nation and the new Karameikan Forester's Guild. Relations between the two guilds are good, and this causes some trouble for the Thyatian branch, as Karameikos refused to aid Thyatis during the war.

The Order of the Griffon welcomes Foresters to its ranks, and several former Knights of the Air amongst them are instrumental in efforts to secure griffon mounts for the knighthood's use.³⁴

In time, efforts will be made to expand the order into Darokin as elves begin to return

³⁴ See *Karameikos: Kingdom of Adventure* boxed set.

there to help save the Canolbarth forest.³⁵ The Foresters as an order have spread beyond Thyatis, and continue to promote the will of Ilsundal throughout many parts of Mystara.

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³⁵ See the [Mystaran Almanacs for the years 1013 and afterwards](#) on the *Vaults of Pandius*.

Imperial Explorers!

by Francesco Defferrari (Sturm)

A short list of the most famous Alphatian and Thyatian explorers, compiled in AY 2020 by Thiserstian of Alphatia, magician and scholar of the Imperial University.

Obviously the world of Mystara has many other famous explorers beside those that came from Thyatis or Alphatia. The Karameikan Claransa the Seer, who revealed the existence of the Hollow World to Outer Mystara comes immediately to mind. The Heldannic Knights, bitter enemies as they may be for us, have many famous explorers too, even if in most occasions they did not share their discoveries with the rest of the world. Neither did many Minrothaddan traders, who reached far away shores but kept the details about such sea lanes to themselves, to have a monopoly on the resulting trade. And the elves of Mystara obviously, as I have explained recently in a short treatise¹, have roamed and explored during the centuries vast regions of Mystara. And I suppose dwarves, gnomes and other ancient races and cultures too have extensive records of their explorations. This short list however will focus only on the explorers which came from the two major empires of the Known World, Thyatis and Alphatia. The order in which they are presented should be chronological, based on the available informations.

¹ See [“The Elven Clans and their migrations”](#) by me in the previous issue of *Threshold* magazine.



Ancient Alphatian ship, probably copied from native ones

Vassillaanaas

An Alphatian wizard that reached the Gulf of Hule as early as AY 50 (BC 950) or even earlier, according to some incomplete reports. Most details of his life and fate have however been lost. Probably several more Alphatian wizards privately explored the new world in the early years, but, with quite typical Alphatian individualism, very few of them bothered to leave records for the general public.

References:

[Slagovich ancient history](#)

Rhendaras, Alinquin and other Alphatian explorers of the first years

Admiral, Khendaras was the first Alphatian to circumnavigate the Isle of Dawn and to leave a record of his expedition, *The Periple*, in AY 286 (BC 714). He was obviously not the only one in the first centuries of the Alphatian Empire. Aasla, Zarthurastram and Ar are so famous that is not necessary to speak of them here. Others, like Meriander and Horken, are legendary figures. So legendary indeed that I came to doubt of their true existence or at least of their true names.

As I will explain in another report², I think most city names in Bellisaria, and the name of the island itself, have a Milenian origin, so either some of these supposed Alphatian explorers did not exist, or their true Alphatian names were quite different. I am more inclined to believe to the historical existence of Alinquin, as his seems indeed a true Alphatian name.

References:

[Caerdania Gazetteer, version 1.0 Expedition to the Great Southland](#)
[The Conquest of Alphatia - The Early Years Gazetteer for the Kingdom Dawnrim](#)



Alphatians meeting native people of Mystara

Alexis Vorbian

A Thyatian adventurer and later also a general who claimed to have travelled the whole world between AC 78 to AC 91 (AY 1078 to 1091). Notoriously, Haldemar of Haaken did not believe any of his claims, but he was the source of most of the geographical informations of the Known World for centuries anyway. His map and books may contain more truth than Haldemar believed.

References:

Dragon Magazine issue #153
[“A Short Reference to Thyatian Literature”](#) by Giulio Caroletti and James Ruhland (originally published in *Tome of Mystara* issue #3)

² See “Lost Civilizations of Thyatis and Alphatia” in this issue of Threshold magazine.



Thyatian ship of the first centuries. Also called triremes, such ships were Milenians in origin and were adopted by both Thyatians and Alphatians.

Alzendarius

An Alphatian mage and explorer who reached the lands of Borea in AY 1479 (AC 479). He also established a tenuous trade route between Alphatia and the northern port-city of Azure.

References:

[The Borea Project](#)



Alphatian ship in the icy north

DON SANCHO AND OTHER ISPAN EXPLORERS OF THE SAVAGE COAST

Even if they left permanently the Thyatian Empire to found new dominions in the far west, the Ispan explorers are worth mentioning, as they reached Yavdlom and beyond from 860 BC (AY 1860). The only individual name I was able to find however is Don Sancho Estaban de la Villa Florida.

References:

[The History of the Ispan People](#)



Ispans meeting Savage Coast natives

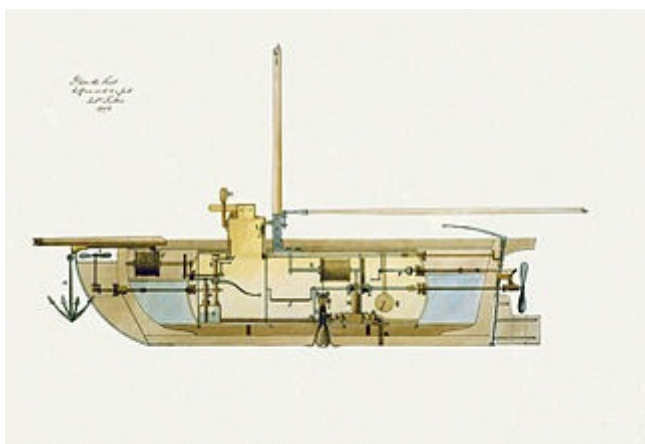
ZYNDRYL OF AGUAS AND THE GNOMES WHO PRECEDED HIM

The King and founder of Aquas is certainly famous as an explorer of the seas around Alphatia. He was preceded by several gnomes who built the first aquatic vessels now in use in the undersea city. Zyndryl unfortunately perished in AY 2009 during the great earthquake, yet succeeded in saving his city from destruction.

References:

[Aquas \(Kingdom of\)](#)

[Official details about Metropolitan Alphatia](#)



Section of an early gnomish prototype

Rory Barbarossa

Sometimes also spelled Barbarosa, he was the explorer of the Isle of Dread, the Straits of Dawn and other locations in the Western Sea between 965 and 970 AC (AY 1965 - 1970), the full biography of this captain is quite mysterious, as he could be a Thyatian of the Empire, a Thyatian of Karamaikos or even a Ierendian of Thyatian origins. I was not even able to ascertain if he is still alive or has he died several years ago in a Traladaran port, as some rumors say. Another rumor say he was alive, in Davania, after 990 AC. He has been labeled either explorer, adventurer or pirate by different parties.

References:

[Kubittes and Garganthuax](#)

[Isle of Dread Timeline](#)

[Savage Tide : Isle of Dread and Adhuza](#)

[timeline](#)

[Brasolia](#)



Depiction of a modern ship as those currently used by both Thyatians and Alphatians

HALDEMAR OF HAAKEN

The voyages of the Captain of the Princess Ark are extremely famous in the Empire, as he discovered the Hollow World in AY 1965 (AC 965), the invisible moon of Patera and extensively explored several locations of the Plane of Air and the mysterious continent of Davania. Official and unofficial accounts of his travels are bestsellers in Alphatia and the Captain is the center of any social gathering where he cares to show up. More recently, he extensively explored the Hollow World and its nations too.

References;

[Dragon Magazine article list](#)

Champions of Mystara Boxed set

See also:

[Voyage of the Princess Ark \(fan derivative\) Episode Guide](#)

About Haldemar’s explorations in the Hollow World see the Mystara Almanacs and [Timeline for the Hollow World, AC 1013](#)

DOGREL, GENERAL COMMANDER OF ALPHATIA NEATHARUM

An important figure for the exploration of the Hollow World surface after Haldemar’s voyages, Dogrel participated in several expeditions on foot, magical means and flying ships, and financed several more. He was removed from his position in Klarmont 16, 1015 by Empress Eriadna, due to some confrontations with the local Neathar population, and is now back on the Alphatian mainland.

References:

[Evenbts of Klarmont 1, AC 1015](#)

[“The Other Alphatian Expeditions”](#) thread at The Piazza Forums

Azlum Swith

I am not even sure if I should include this wizard on the list. We know he built a magical airship in the shape of a crystalline geodome before AY 1968 (AC 968), and that he is apparently travelling around Mystara

with it. Some says he is an Alphatian, some say he is a gnome. Others says he is Thyatian or Glantrian. Unless he eventually publish a book with his discoveries, or his arship is found, we may never know the truth about him.

References:

Champions of Mystara boxset

[Hyborean Timeline](#)

Leilah BEN NADIR AND OTHER Thyatian explorers of the Hinterlands

General Leilah ben Nadir is the military governor, now *Exarcha* of Davania Superior, that Emperor Thincol sent to the Hinterlands in 988 AC (AY 1988). She made personally some of the first explorations of the region, during successful military campaigns. Others explorers followed more recently, such as Marcus Cassius Aurestius and the Almanac correspondent Favonius Viator, who also (unwillingly) explored the undersea empire of Twaelar.

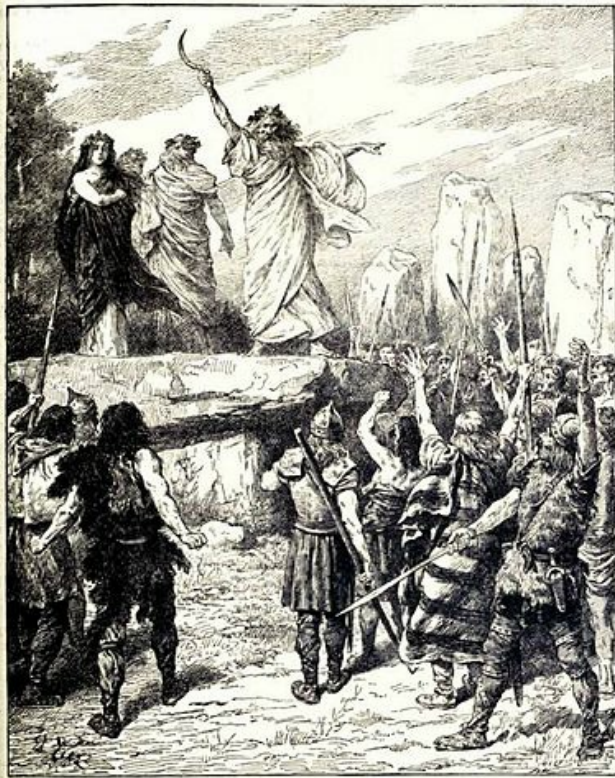
References:

[Thyatian Hinterlands \(Exarchate of\)](#)

[Ancient Civilisations of Northern Davania - A Discovery in the Hinterlands](#)

[Atlas of the Old World](#)

[The Twaelar Merrow Empire](#)



Druids of the Hinterlands inciting the people to oppose the Thyatian conquest

Theodorian Metothemius

Captain of a Thyatian expedition to Skothar that left in AY 2017 (AC 1017) according to the Mystaran Almanacs. Apparently not yet returned in AY 2020, last known position Minaea.

Obviously Minaea was previously explored by Alphatian sailors a long time ago, it seems indeed that the rulers of Leontion in Minaea descends from some Alphatian wizards who arrived there in AY 1353 (AC 353). Individual explorers probably reached the area even earlier, but their names are not widely known.

References:

[Events of Flaurmont AC 1017](#)

[Events of Kaldmont AC 1019](#)

[Minaea \(Confederated Kingdom of\)](#)

Julius Ambrosius

Captain of a Thyatian expedition to Davania that left the Hinterlands in AY 2017 (AC 1017) according to the Mystaran Almanacs. Apparently not yet returned in AY 2020, last known position in the far south of Davania, western Vulcania.

References:

[Events of Vatermont AC 1017](#)

[Events of Kaldmont AC 1019](#)

Paulus Angelinus

Captain of a Thyatian expedition to Yavdlom and the Savage Coast that left in AY 2017 (AC 1017) according to the Mystaran Almanacs. Apparently not yet returned in AY 2020, last known position the Free City of Dunwick in the far west of Brun.

References:

[Events of Vatermont AC 1017](#)

[Events of Eirmont AC 1019](#)

Lost Civilizations of Thyatis and Alphatia

by Francesco Defferrari (Sturm)

To Her Imperial Majesty Eriadna the Wise, a short description of the many ancient civilizations that inhabited Alphatia and Thyatis before our time, compiled by Thiserstian of Alphatia, magician and scholar of the Imperial University.

HISTORY OF THE ALPHATIAN SEA

The History of our beloved great island of Alphatia is more complex than many Alphatians realize, eveng among my people, the Shiye elves. As I recently explained in my small treaty about the Elves of Mystara¹, we do not even know exactly when the first elves settled the central forest. Many different waves of invasion, of humans and other races, swept the island in past centuries, and I will try to summarize them here. I will start from the (relatively) recent history, as I have not yet the necessary knowledge to investigate the most ancient inhabitants of the area². What I know is that fairies, dragons and giants are most certainly among the oldest inhabitants of Alphatia. But not only

¹ See [“The Elven Clans and their Migrations”](#) in *Threshold* issue #10,.

² To learn more about the most ancient history of Mystara, see my article [“99.9999985% Mystara History”](#) at the Vaults

them. Several reptilian races, the aranea spiders and several rakasta breeds are also among those who have inhabited the Alphatian sea since ancient times. The reader should remember that what follows is just my hypotheses on ancient Alphatian history, and many of my assumptions could be wrong.



The Shedu or Winged Bull, universally recognized as a symbol of Alphatia, probably already in use among the cultures native to the island.

The Burrower Wars

More than 50.000 years before the Landfall, ancient kingdoms dominated the Alphatian sea. One was the Empire of Aran, in what is now the southern Isle of Dawn, home of the powerful spider people. To balance its power, there was the Fairy Kingdom of Aasie in the Alphatian mainland. The northern parts of the Isle of Dawn and Alphatia were dominated by Giants, as were several areas of Brun, where the powerful brute men civilization also thrived. Several reptilian and amphibian races, especially lizardmen and frogfolk, dominated the southern islands and Bellisaria. The Burrowers³, powerful monsters created by evil immortals, destroyed these civilizations, or weakened them much, leaving the Alphatian sea partially open to new colonizers. And they came soon.

The First Wave: Pardasta

The Pardasta, a breed of rakasta, started to come after the Burrowers Wars, easily conquering vast areas in Bellisaria and Brun from the failing reptilian, amphibian and brute men nations. They reached also the Isle of Dawn, the Alatians, southern Alphatia and Ochalea, but they did not settle heavily the central and northern Alphatian mainland, still dominated by fairies and giants.

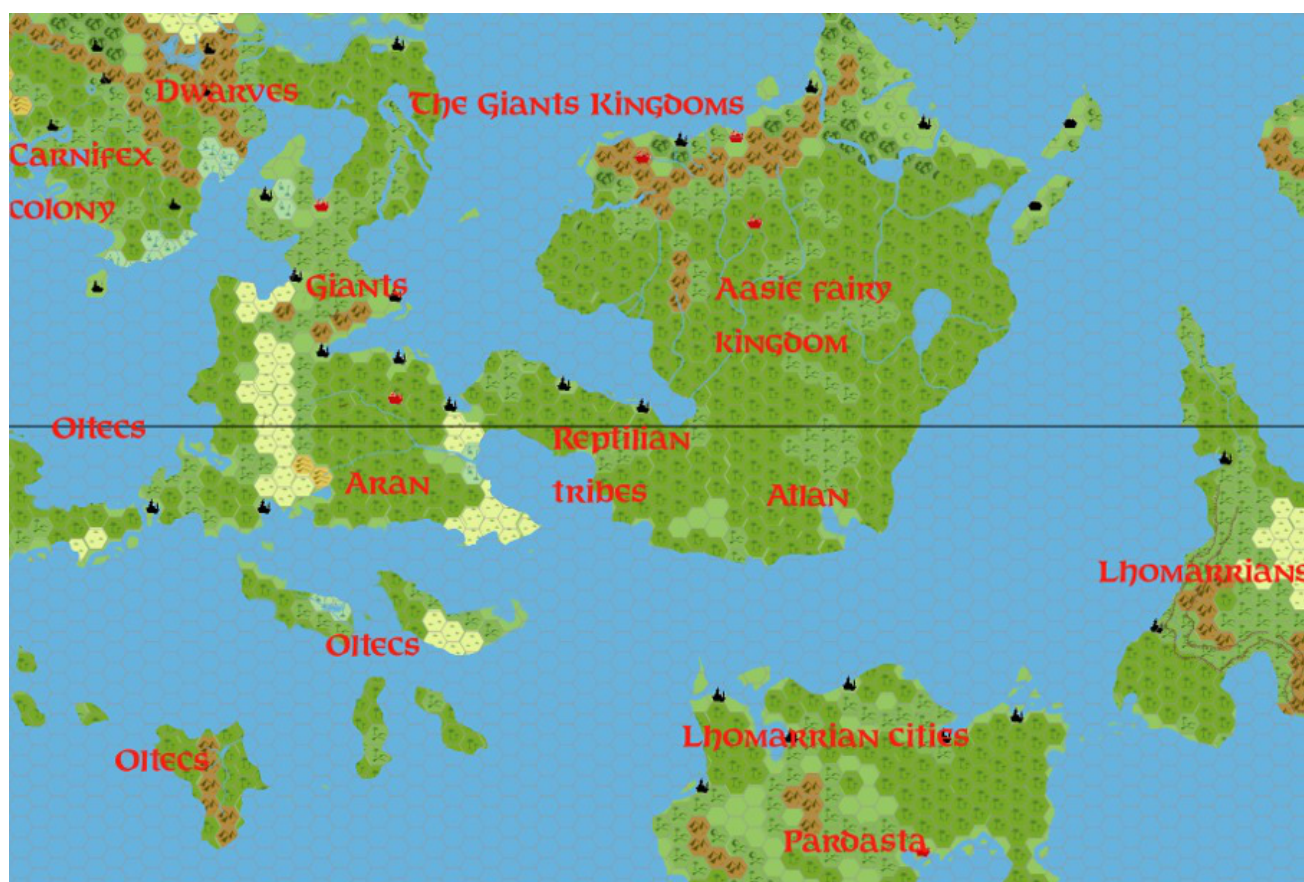
³ The Burrowers are told in the Hollow World boxed set to destroy the Brute men civilizations around 5000 BC, but I moved this date to 50000 BC as it seem more realistic to me and fitting much better with the history of Lhomarr and the rakasta migrations.

The Second Wave: Carnifex

It is not very clear what caused a decline of the Pardasta population in the Alphatian sea, but it may well be a combination of factors. An almost unknown reptilian race, called Carnifex in ancient chronicles, certainly became prominent in Davania and reached as far as the Alphatian sea. Climate changes and diseases probably played a role too in the Pardasta decline. Anyway around 14000 years before the Landfall the Carnifex empire was very powerful, and lizardmen, gatomen and frogfolk, probably used by the Carnifex as slaves, also rose in numbers in eastern Brun, the Isle of Dawn, the Alatians, Ochalea, southern Alphatia and Bellisaria. The Fairy Kingdom of Aasie, the giants of the north and the Empire of Aran however were able to contain the Carnifex advance in the Alphatian sea.



Oltec settlers of the Alphatian sea



Alphantian Sea circa 8000 BC

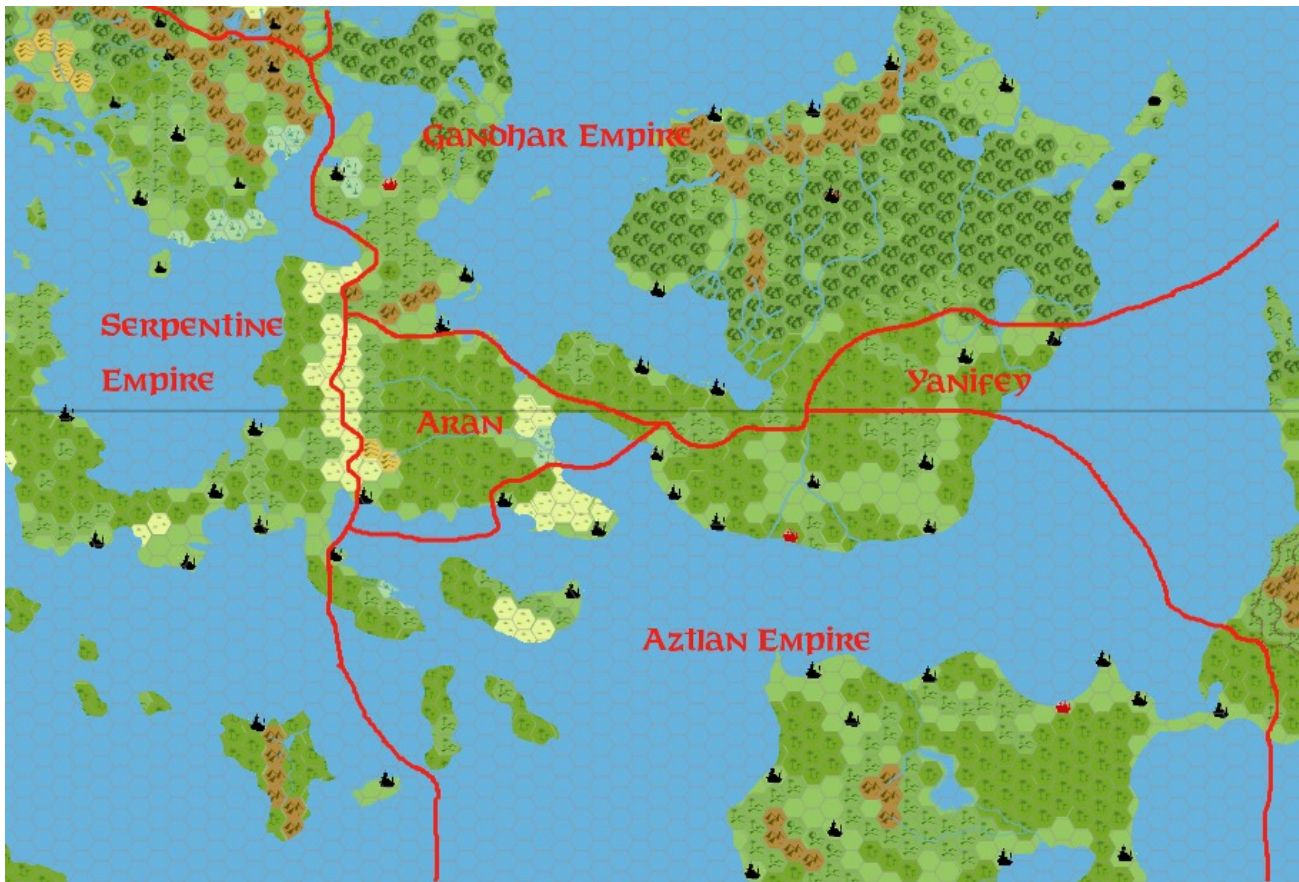
The Third Wave: Oltec and Lhomarrrian Humans

The olive skinned Lhomarrrian humans and the copper skinned Oltec humans came both from the area of modern Esterhold starting their slow migrations even before the height of the Pardasta civilizations, around 45000 years before the Landfall. At the beginning they were only small and weak groups, who had to bargain for their lives with the more powerful races inhabiting the Alphantian sea. From 11000 years ago however their numbers were considerable, and they had already founded many cities along the coasts of Esterhold, Bellisaria, Alphantia, the Alatiens and the Isle of Dawn. The Lhomarrrian in

particular had a powerful empire in Davania, and they successfully defeated the Carnifex, but they too were destroyed by a great earthquake about 6000 years before Landfall.

According to some texts, they could be the main ancestors of the Yanifey humans who inhabited Alphantia before the Landfall. In this age, Alphantia was called Atlan or Aztlan⁴, probably the first was the Lhomarrrian name, the second the Oltec one. The existence of an actual powerful kingdom called Atlan is

⁴ This is a little inside joke as in *CM1 Test of the Warlords*. The crones of Crystykk call Alphantia "Atlantis", see page 27 of the module. So I suppose it could have been the native name of the great island.



Alphatian Sea circa 5000 BC

disputed, and it is not even sure if it was an human or faerie kingdom, or both. But it seems quite probable that Alphatia was indeed called Atlan by the natives up to the Landfall.

References;

My main sources were the following articles by Geoff Gander, Giampaolo Agosta, Arila Pires Dos Santos, Giulio Caroletti and Simone Neri, but their ideas about the past of Alphatia could be much different from the ones I detailed above.

- [Lhomarr: The Land, Its People, and Their History](#)
- [“Of the Lore and Legends of Yhog, City of](#)

- [the Unclean Ones, and of that Race”](#)
- [Ethnographic History of Mystara](#)
- [A Timeline of the Oltec Man](#)
- [History And Evolution Of Rakastas](#)

The Fourth Wave: Serpentine Empire

The Serpentine Empire of Davania, also known as Old Arypt, had a great expansion after the fall of Lhomarr, and came to rule land as far as the modern Known World and the Isle of Dawn. In the Alphatian sea its expansion was contained by the Gandhar empire of the Giants, which at the time ruled

also over fairies and human populations. The Aranea kingdom in the Isle of Dawn and the Oltecs of Aztlan were also instrumental in stopping the Serpentine. As said before, I have almost no reliable information on Aztlan, but I have some clues that its capital may have been the modern Archport. It seems that the Yanifey culture developed at this time from an alliance between humans and fairy folks, but it was menaced by the giants and the Aztlan.

In Brun, the powerful Draconic empire dominated vast lands, but the giants of Gandhar kept it away from the Alphatian sea.

References:

My main sources were the following articles by James Mishler, Bruce Heard, Giampaolo Agosta, Arila Pires Dos Santos, Giulio Caroletti and Simone Neri:

- [The Age of Blackmoor](#)
- [The Alphatian Province of Ambur](#)
- [Ethnographic History of Mystara](#)
- [A Timeline of the Oltec Man](#)
- [History And Evolution Of Rakastas](#)



The royal court of Bahldaraat-Khor

The Fifth Wave: Blackmoor and Thonia

The expansion of the human empires of Blackmoor and Thonia in Skothar had relevant consequences on the Alphatian sea. The Thonians created a powerful colony in the southern Isle of Dawn and the modern Alatians, dominating the local Oltecs. The Blackmoorians had an important colony in eastern Brun and several outposts on the coasts from Skothar to Brun. The Gandhar empire of giants maintained its power in the northern Isle of Dawn and Alphatia. Skandaharian colonies, an ancient northmen culture, were created in north western Alphatia. The rest of Alphatia was apparently ruled by Yanifey kingdoms, the most important being Nafer, probably heir of the mythical Aztlan empire. Bellisaria was ruled by the Asyidhia culture and the powerful kingdom of Bahldaraat-khor. The Mawa human culture, from the Sea Kingdoms of the Farend ocean, also started to colonize the southern seas from Bellisaria to the Pearl Islands and beyond.

References:

See Geoff Gander's article: [Bahldaraat-Khor](#)
 See Simone Neri's article "[Real World Inspiration for the Isle of Dawn](#)" for information about the Asyidhi; they would be an Oltec population related to Afridhi and Jennites of Skothar, progenitors of Nithians, Thothians, Alasiyans and similar Mystaran cultures inspired by Earth's Middle East.
 See James Misher's article "[History of the Isle of Dawn](#)"
 The Mawa would be M-polynesian created by me in "[Peoples of NE Davania](#)" from previous discussions in the Mystaran community.



Alphantian Sea circa 3100 BC

The Sixth Wave: Antaians and Dunharians

With the Great Rain of Fire, the existing civilizations were pretty much swept away, and new ones replaced them. The Pardasta and other rakasta breeds, persecuted in blackmoorian times as beastmen, rose back to power in Bellisaria and Ochalea, and other areas. The Mawa humans expanded in the southern islands. Some cultures related to the modern Thothians, like the Asyidhi, the Afur and the Neeth, flourished in northern Bellisaria, southern Alphatia and the eastern Isle of Dawn. Fairies and giants dominated

vast lands in Brun, the northern Isle of Dawn and Alphatia, and I have some archeological evidence that elves lived in our island continent too. Further studies will be needed to ascertain the lineage of such elves, who could be related to the mysterious Trueflowers of the Isle of Dawn. Certain nations of Brun had an influence on the Alphantian sea region too, in particular the lizardmen of Mogreth certainly had some colonies in the western Isle of Dawn, the dwarves of the Shimmering Lands probably had colonies both in the Isle and in modern

Stoutfellow⁵. The humans of Taymora eventually founded colonies in the western Isle of Dawn and probably northern Ochalea too.



Antalian raiders selling slaves in the south

Some powerful Yannivey kingdoms also rose to prominence in Alphatia around this time, like Zaanidon in central Alphatia, Llyn around the namesake lake and Ogam in the northwest. The latter kingdom was supposedly inhabited by worshippers of unspecified foul immortals, and for this was later destroyed by the Yannivey of the east.

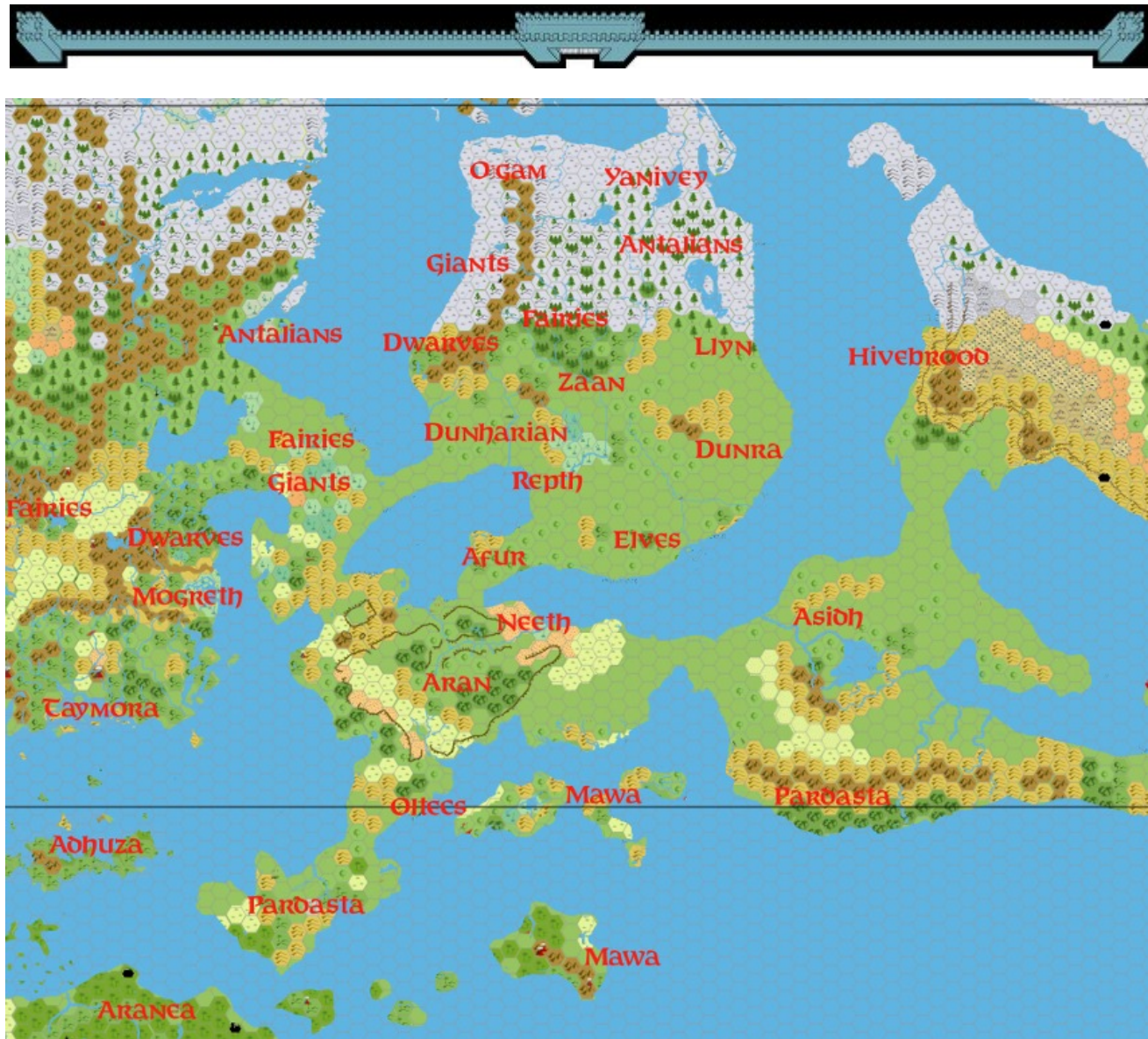
⁵ *The Dawn of the Emperors* boxed set states that Stoutfellow was settled by dwarves and gnomes only “fifty years ago” (AY 1950 or AC 950). I find this date completely unbelievable, so I’ve arbitrarily decided that Stoutfellow has been inhabited by dwarves for more than 5000 years. That could fit with the dwarven migration from Skothar to Brun after the Great Rain of Fire imagined by John Calvin in his [Shimmering Lands](#) work. Dwarves however could have been present in the mountains of Alphatia from even more ancient times.

But I believe the most important migration of this time was the spreading of Antalians and Dunharians. The first people founded cities and colonies not only in all of north eastern Brun, but also in the northern Isle of Dawn, Qeodhar and all of northern Alphatia, often fighting the local Yannivey, fairies and giants. The Dunharians, ancestors of the modern Dunael of the Isle of Dawn and the people of the Four Kingdoms in Davania spread in modern Alphatia and the Isle of Dawn. In Alphatia they lived in vast lands and had at least one powerful kingdom in modern Randel, which I believe was called Dunra and had its capital in modern Rardish.

On a final note about this age, I should add that the Great Rain of Fire also caused a temporary resurgence of some non human races. For example lizardmen ruled the modern Haunted Marshes of Alphatia and all the lands around it, possibly allied with the nation of Mogreth in eastern Brun. The aranea of Aran were again quite powerful, dominating the newly created great escarpment in the Isle of Dawn. And the modern Esterhold was largely colonized by the insectoid hivebroods, who in later centuries invaded the Alphantian mainland.

References:

The Ogam were created by Geoff Gander in [“Orzafeth – the Unspeakable Kingdom”](#) and are also mentioned by Bruce Heard in [“The Alphantian Province of Ambur”](#)
 Roger Burns created the early Alphantian realms in [“Alphatia: Kingdoms Before Landfall”](#)
 James Mishler’s [“History of the Isle of Dawn”](#)
 John Calvin developed the 2300 BC cultures in [“2300 BC Campaign Setting”](#)



Alphanian Sea circa 2500 BC

The Seventh Wave: The Taymorans

By 2000 BC (-1000 AY), the political situation in the Alphanian sea had changed quite a bit. The Taymoran humans of eastern Brun had expanded greatly, founding colonies in the western Isle of Dawn, particularly in the central part, the allied kingdom of Shumar where now modern Thothia lies and the colony of Ymathra in modern Haven. One of

their greatest enemy, the lizardmen empire of Mogreth, was destroyed, and their former land was now inhabited by humans related to the Thothians, and likewise dominated by Taymorans.

In the rest of the Isle of Dawn, the Dunael human culture had expanded greatly, while the related Dunharians were much reduced in mainland Alphatia, except for the powerful kingdom of Rardish. Antalians still



Docks of a Taymoran city

dominated over all of north eastern Brun and north western Alphatia. The Yannivey ruled the north east, while the central forests were again dominated by fairy folks. Both cultures, like the kingdoms of Zaanidon and Rardish, were hard pressed by a hivebrood invasion which had engulfed large areas of modern Foresthome and Bettelyn. Several new kingdoms had risen in the rest of the Alphatian sea. Hunak, a kingdom of stone giants, in the southern Isle of Dawn had contained the expansion of the aranea of Aran. The Treadan city states were founded on the modern Eadrin coast, probably by Teslan colonists, a people vaguely related to the Jennites that at the time lived in modern Minaea, on Skothar. Internal Bellisaria, also

known as the Strifeland, was dominated by the Tiref clans who were probably an asyidhian people.

And lastly, waves of Tanagoro colonists from Skothar began to settle the Pearl Islands, mixing with the existing Mawa. It's likely that at the time minor settlements of Tanagoro people existed also in other locations of the southern seas, like southern Bellisaria or the Alatians.

References:

Roger Burns as [above](#)

James Mishler as [above](#)

John Calvin as [above](#) and in the [\[Mystara 2300 BC\] Alphatia](#) topic on the Piazza Forums

The Eight Wave: HUMANOIDs

In 1700 BC, or probably some decades earlier, Brun was swept by the first great humanoid invasion. The powerful Antalian civilization, and many other human and nonhuman cultures, were almost destroyed. The Alphatian sea region was not spared, as humanoids were able to reach the Isle of Dawn, Ochalea and Alphatia through the land bridges that existed at the time. Such bridges were later destroyed by climatic changes and rising sea levels after the earthquakes that destroyed the Taymora civilization from 1750 to 1700 BC.

Only the Pearl Islands, the Alatians and Bellisaria were spared from this invasion, even if as we will see later, the first two were later reached by orcs anyway.

In the Isle of Dawn, Fomorian giants and humanoids allied, laying waste to Firbolg



Alphatian Sea circa 2000 BC

giants, fairies and Dunael communities. Many Taymoran and Traldar colonies were sacked too. Even if they were not normally allied with humanoids, lupin tribes too reached the Isle of Dawn and Ochalea around this time. It's not exactly clear when ogre magi reached Ochalea, but it must have been between 1700 and 1000 BC.

In northern Alphatia the local antallians, yannivey, giants and fairies suffered the worst of the humanoid invasion, and started a long

struggle against them which did not end with the Alphatian Landfall, and could be considered to continue even today.

References:

- James Mishler as [above](#)
- Giampaolo Agosta's [Gazetteer of Ochalea](#)



Painting of a Thothian (or Nithian) ship

The Ninth Wave: Thothians and Varelyans

By 1300 BC the humanoid expansion was contained in most of the Alphatian Sea and eastern Brun, even if humanoids tribes still ruled vast lands. Two great civilizations developed at this time, the Thothians⁶ in the Isle of Dawn and the Varelyans in Davania. From their rise to the fall of their empire in 500 BC, the Thothians dominated almost all of the Isle of Dawn, several regions of Eastern Brun and as far in the west as the Savage Coast, the Antalians and the Arypt region in Davania. They had trade post in Ochalea, Alphatia, Bellisaria and even Norwold, and there are traces they reached as far as modern Minaea in Skothar, or even the Tangor Empire in the far east. From Southern Davania, the Varelyans reached the southern coast of Bellisaria and the Alatians. It doesn't seem that the Thothians and the Varelyans fought major wars, as they were far enough from each other to easily share their influence on the world.

⁶ Thiserstian cannot know this due to the Spell of Oblivion, but Thothia was just a colony of Nithia, see GAZ2 *The Emirates of Ylaruam, Dawn of the Emperors Boxed Set, Poor Wizard's Almanacs.*

References:

LoZompatore on the [Extent of the Nithian Empire](#)

More about Varelyya in [Threshold issue #5](#)

The Tenth Wave: Paesh, Gnolls and Kara-Kara Orcs

Displaced by some invasions in Skothar, the Paesh people, loosely related to the Ethengarians of Brun, settled Ochalea around 1100 BC. Others of these people also reached Vulcania in Davania, and it's possible they also created some small communities in Bellisaria and elsewhere in the Alphatian sea. Around 1000 BC other humanoids invasions hit eastern Brun, in particular the gnoll hordes that conquered Traladara for a short time and shortly later arrived in the Isle of Dawn, attacking Thothia. Also around this time the southern seas from the region of modern Thyatis to Ochalea, the Alatians and the Pearl Islands were attacked by Kara-Kara orcs, humanoids who had somehow learned navigational skills somewhere. These were probably the last invasions of the Alphatian sea before the Landfall.

References:

More about the Paesh in [Threshold issue #5](#)

More about the Kara-Kara in ["Advice for Traders in the Sea of Dread"](#) by LoZompatore in Threshold issue #4



Alphatian Sea circa 1000 BC

The Eleventh Wave: Alphatians

When the Alphatians arrived in 1000 BC (AY 0) the great island was obviously inhabited by many native people. Despite the official history many Alphatian wizards like to learn and teach to others, it's not true that such people were quickly enslaved or assimilated. In many instances, it happened the other way around, and local people assimilated the Alphatians. In my study of the original Alphatian language and culture, I have developed the conviction that what we now

call "Alphatian" is truly borrowed in large parts by the native cultures that already existed in the region. Even the Alphatian alphabet is clearly very similar to the one which was used by Milenians and Varellyans. I have strong evidence that Bettelyn existed already as a deeply religious nation with that same name before the arrival of the Alphatians. Randel was called Rardish, but it was already a militaristic nation with dragon riders. Haven was called Dafe, but it was already famous for its artisans and artists. Shavadze, which was the territory of modern

Arogansa, already had a notorious arrogant aristocracy with a relevant number of wizards.

It is true that now most Arogansan claim pure Alphatian blood, but I have investigated enough the first years on Mystara to know how things really went. Alphasians often absorbed by marriage or alliance native wizards and, later, clerics too, because they needed their expertise on local magic. How many Cypric Alphasians will be surprised to know they have bronze skinned Asyidhian or Yannivey ancestors! And how many Pure Alphasian do not suspect they have pale skinned Neathar or Antalian ancestors! That is also due to Alphasian peculiar society, where the daughter of a slave automatically becomes an aristocrat if she has magical power, or she has the means to learn clerical spells. In the first years, the subjected people learned this “trick” rather quickly and exploited it, also because at the same time many Alphasians had sons and daughters born without magical abilities. It should also be remembered that Alphasians had no social classes in their home world, no servants or

slaves. The stratification we can observe today was definitely borrowed from native cultures. It is now impossible to say, after 2000 years, how much of each Alphasian Kingdom’s culture comes directly from its native predecessors, but it is probably a very relevant part.

Even if it is historically undisputed that Ar, Sundsvall, Aasla, Citadel and Blackheart were all settled by Alphasians shortly after Landfall, and naval expeditions reached Bellisaria, Trikelios and northern Alphatia just a few years later, that doesn’t mean at all that the Empire ruled over a vast territory from the start. Quite the contrary, indeed. Ar remained independent for centuries, and the nearby kingdom of Argonath, comprising modern Frisland and Ambur, even if it was settled by many Alphasians, did not officially join the empire until 405 AC (AY 1405).

The native kingdoms of Ymathra, Zaanidon, Dafe, Afotir, Shavadze and Rardish were officially under Alphasian rule by AY 100 (BC 900), but the truth was not so simple.

Indeed in the very first centuries the emperor or the empress effectively ruled only over Vertiloch and Theranderol. Haven was hostile to the imperial throne for a long time, as the Wall clearly demonstrates. Bettelyn was normally not hostile, but independent anyway. Randel was a menace so serious that the early emperors built fortifications to defend Theranderol from its raids, even if later that kingdom became loyal to the crown. Arogansa produced a number of emperors and empress, but was often hostile to the current ruler when he or she was not from its royal house. All this should clearly prove that the unity of Alphatia was a



Sculpture of First Alphasian Emperor Kerothar receiving the submissions of natives

fiction to the benefit of foreigners for most of the history of the empire.

The Alphatians were instrumental in defeating the Hivebrood infestation in the east, yet Foresthome was sparsely settled by Alphatians for many centuries and joined the empire only around AY 920 (BC 80). Frisland reached the modern extension only in AY 1556 (BC 556), after the Kingdom of Orzafeth and the antalians of Ystmarhavn were assimilated. The humanoids of Limn and the Antalian people living on the north of the modern kingdom were conquered only after AY 910 (BC 90), even if the first treaties were signed already in AY 500, and Limn has been recognized as a true kingdom only a hundred years ago.

Stonewall was settled by many native and alphatian without magical abilities, who accepted to join the empire only after AY 900, when they received assurances that they could have the same rights as wizards and clerics in their territory. The same happened with Stoutfellow.

The colonizations efforts outside Alphatia proper too were largely exaggerated in subsequent chronicles. For example, Alphasians reached Esterhold as early as AY 800 (BC 200) but effectively controlled only Skyfyr and some trading outpost for many centuries after, and even now the empire's control over internal lands is more wishful than real.

Other colonial expeditions, like the failed one in Norwold by Alinor in AY 655 (345 BC) were more private initiatives than something sanctioned by the Imperial crown, and the

same happened in many other lands, like the settlement of the Alatians and Bellisaria.

The relation with clerical magic was problematic, because the Alphasians did not worship Immortals in their original world. Yet magical power was grudgingly respected, even if given by mysterious powers. In some places, like Bettelyn, clerics became dominant. Elsewhere they were mistrusted for centuries. Many went to Ochalea, first settled by Alphasians in AY 200 (800 BC) or the Alatian islands. When some Alphasian reached immortality and their cults spread, religion became much more popular in Alphatia. Yet even in modern times, many Alphasians are still quite indifferent toward the Immortals.

References:

See James Ruhland's "[Alphasian History, revised](#)" for an Alphasian point on view on the Empire's history

See "[The Conquest of Alphatia - The Early Years](#)" by Jamuga Khan and Captain Ebenezum for early Alphasian history, even if I have partially departed from their history.

See Geoff Gander's "[The Jarldom of Ystmarhavn](#)" and "[Antalians of the East](#)" for more about Ystmarhavn and the Antalians

See Geoff Gander's "[Alphasia - the Suppression Wars \(AY 774 - AY 1515\)](#)" for more about Argonath



Alphatian Sea circa 100 BC

The Twelfth Wave: Shiye Elves, Traidar and Milenians

In addition to what I said above, in the very first centuries of the Alphatian presence in Mystara, the expansion of the empire was also limited by the Thothians and by the Shiye elves. The Thothians were immediately friendly with the Alphatians, some sages indeed say that they guided the Alphatian migration to Mystara. They shared their magical knowledge too and were

fundamental in aiding the Alphatians adapt to the different magic of the new planet.

Therefore peace was kept with the Thothians for as long as their empire existed. Alphatia assimilated them in AY 500, after a great crisis had collapsed the Thothian empire and its Brunian colonies⁷. But while the Thothians declined, another power rose in Davania, reaching up to the southern shores of the Alphatian sea, the Milenian Empire.

⁷ See the Ninth Wave and note 5 above.

Alphatia had problems in the central and northern part of its own island too. The Shiye elves arrived in AY 200 (800 BC), and some among my people say that this happened because they were called by the local fairy folks, worried about the Alphantian encroachment. The Kingdom of Shiye Lawr remained independent from Alphatia, and at times hostile, until AY 1000, with an earlier alliance by AY 700. The northern elven kingdom of Ilmaryl was independent until AY 734 (BC 266), when it fell to dark powers and became eventually the infamous land of Blackheart. This latter kingdom didn't join the empire until it was forced to, by AY 1100 (AC 100). As already anticipated above, Limn and Foresthome became part of the Empire only in AY 910 and 920, but they were mostly inhabited by many humanoids and fairy folks, as they still are. Argonath, part of modern Frisland and Ambur, officially joined the empire only in AY 1405, the rest of Frisland only in AY 1556 after the defeat of Orzafeth.

The story is really different from each kingdom and territory. Some, Ar and Ochalea for example, were settled by Alphantians in the early years, but had no intention to join the Empire. This was true even for Haven and Randel in the early years, and for Blackheart and Argonath for several centuries. Others, like Frisland, Foresthome or Bellisaria were culturally assimilated only recently, and not completely. Others, like Shiye Lawr, Stoutfellow, Limn and Thothia, joined the Empire, but certainly are not dominated by ethnic Alphantians. Others, like Stonewall or Bettelyn are inhabited by Alphantians, but consider themselves very different from the "typical" Alphantian culture and mindset. The Empire has no cultural unity and its political unity is never



Milenian ceramic depicting a fight against an Alphantian

guaranteed, and that explains why it was never able to dominate Mystara, and probably never will. Still, it has been able to conquer and rule vast territories, and to unite to face great threats and external enemies.

One of such threats was the Milenian Empire, which by 600 BC was ever more powerful and had founded colonies in the Isle of Dawn, Bellisaria, Minaea and the Alatians. The Alphantians traded and warred with the Empire, which often used piracy by proxies to hurt Alphantian interests. Such proxies were often the Traldars, or the Thyatians, who probably were sent north by the Milenians for the exact purpose of creating problems to Alphatia.

From AY 700 to 900 (300 to 100 BC) the Alphantian empire became more and more hostile toward the Milenians, hence the

decision to conquer Aeria, Ochalea and Thyatis itself.

The Milenians were not pleased, they fought back in all the southern seas, and keep on harassing Alphatian trade until their ultimate fall in AY 950 (50 BC). The Alphasians had reason to think that, with Milenia gone, the world was theirs to take. But they were wrong.

References:

See [“The Fall of Ilmaryl”](#) by Geoff Gander for more about Ilmaryl.

See [“Orzafeth – the Unspeakable Kingdom”](#) and [“Orzafeth, the Truth Revealed!!”](#) for more about Orzafeth - both by Geoff Gander

For more about Milenia see [Threshold issue #5](#) and also [“Extent and expansion phases of the Milenian Empire”](#) by LoZompatore



Early Thyatian depiction of a naval battle against Alphasians

**The Thirteenth Wave:
Thyatians and Minaeans**

In AY 1000 (0 BC) the famous or infamous Thyatian rebellion happened, and the Thyatians were able to exploit the Alphasian weakness and conquer not only half of the Isle of Dawn, but also Ochalea and the Pearl Islands. At the same time, Minaea was founded by Milenian colonists, who lost no time to harass the Alphasians in Bellisaria and beyond.

So began a century long struggle with both people, even if the latter one was toned down by Alphasian chronicles as simple piracy.

In the first six centuries of the second millennium on Mystara, the Alphasians however were able to complete the unification of their own island, with Frisland and Qeodhar finally joining the empire with the present borders by AY 1600 (AC 600) after the fall of Orzafeth and Ystmarhavn. The map below shows the extent of the two empires circa that year. Alphatia had not full control of Bellisaria and Esterhold yet, and the colonies in Norwold were endangered by dragon attacks. A first foothold in Brun was established in Alasiya, where a two centuries war with the natives and the Thyatians began. Thyatis in the meantime had expanded in Ierendi and Minrothad, even if its control of such land will be short lived.

In the following centuries the struggle between the two empires continued, and by AY 1800 (800 AC) the Alphasians had consolidated their domains in Norwold, Alasiya, Esterhold and Minaea, and even



Alphanian Sea circa 600 AC

occupied, for a short time, the area of modern Glantri.

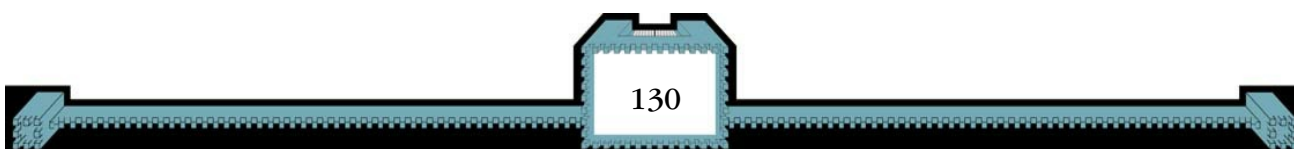
Thyatis had lost Ierendi and Minrothad, so for a time it seemed that Alphatia was gaining the upper hand.

References:

- ["History of the Thyatian People"](#) by James Ruhland
- [List of articles about Minaea](#) in the Vaults of Pandius

That proved to be a short living illusion, as the colonies in Glantri and Alasiya were soon lost, and the Alphanians seemed about to be expelled from Brun. A new struggle began in Norwold, with the Thyatians founding the colony of Oceansend and advancing in the northern Isle of Dawn, and the Alphanian resisting in the northern part.

Combined with the Thyatian conquest of Traladara, this seemed a time in which Thyatis could gain the upper hand.





Alphanian Sea circa 800 AC

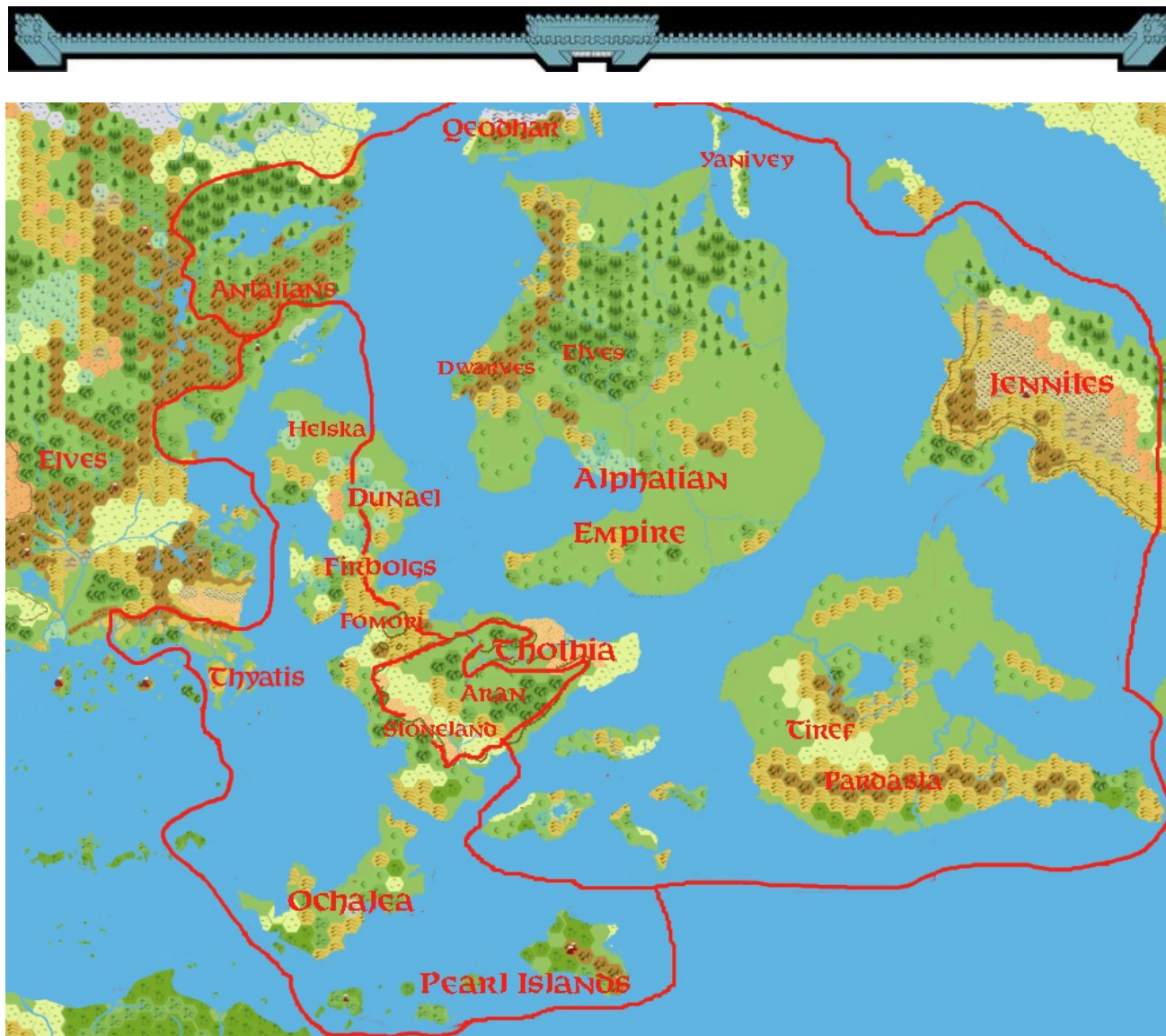
The Spike assault of AY 1959 changed the picture once again with Alphatia conquering all the Isle of Dawn and Thyatis itself, thus reaching its maximum historical extension, a feat which was replied in AY 2009. In both occasion the conquest lasted just a few months, and then the Thyatians were back, and expanded also in Davania with their conquest of the Hinterland.

Alphatia however gained something in Norwold, as the Thyatians lost control of

Oceansend. The Alphanian claim on all Norwold was however more political than real.

After the great war and the great earthquakes⁸ that hit Alphatia at the end of AY 2009, Thyatis conquered the Alatian islands and a

⁸ In my campaign, Alphatia was hit by the Doomsday device as per Wrath of the Immortals boxed set timeline, but not sunk. A part of its population was still moved to the Hollow World, and the Empire was grievously weakened.



Alphonian Sea circa 900 AC

relevant part of the Isle of Dawn from Dunadale to Trikelios, but its advance was eventually stopped. Some treaties later, the Isle of Dawn is divided again, with Helskir and Dunadale theoretically independent in the new Kingdom of Heldun.

APPENDIX: THE PAST OF THYATIS

As I was examining past cultures and civilizations of mainland Alphatia, I decided to do some researches on the past of Thyatis too.

Before the Great Rain of Fire, this region was apparently inhabited by giants in the mountains and by some human cultures in



Alphatian Sea circa 1000 AC

the lowlands, called Albai and Tjeset⁹. Apparently they were both descended from Toralai Neathar. The informations about these people are scarce at best, for so far I have only ascertained that Albai were land dwelling tribes, while the Tjeset had relevant navigational skills.

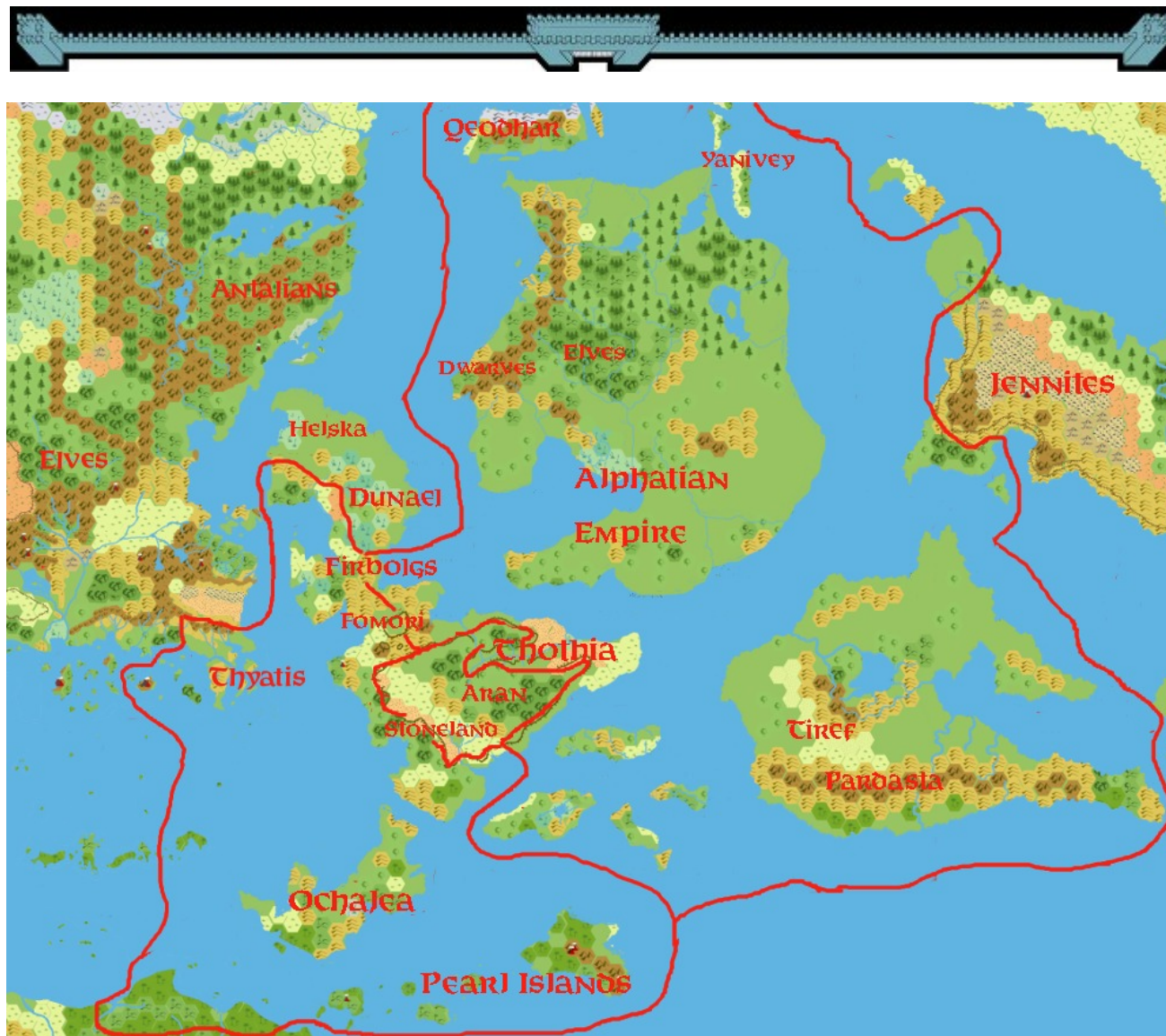
After the Great Rain of Fire the region was slowly taken over by the Taymoran culture,

⁹ Briefly described by me in my article [“New Blackmoor, 3050 BC”](#) in *Threshold* issue #2

which came to dominate the whole area before its fall around 1700 BC.

From this time to the arrival of the Thyatians in 600 BC several cultures developed in the region. In the area between modern Kerenda and Thyatis city the Etrusna culture flourished between 1500 and 100 BC, with its peak around 600 and 500 BC.

The Etrusna were a sophisticated culture influenced by Taymorans, Thothians and



Alphatian Sea circa 1020 AC

later Milenians, and the dominant power in the region for several centuries. When the late Thothian Empire started to oppress them, they allied with the Thyatians and the Kerendans to fight back, eventually blending with them. Such a blending was not devoid of conflicts. Initially the Etrusna clearly dominated militarily and culturally the newcomers, but from 500 to 200 BC Thyatians and Kerendans eventually assimilated or conquered their major cities. The Albai lived in the area of modern

Machetos, and were the same people from before the Great Rain of Fire. The Thyatian empire eventually conquered them and the related people living in the area of modern Biazzan, but only after several campaigns and relevant difficulties, and not before 200 AC.

The region of Mesonia was the first one settled by the Thyatians and apparently most of the native population happily merged with them to get rid of the Thothian empire.



Doulakki city resisting Thyatian invaders

The eastern part of Thyatis however was also heavily settled on the coast by Doulakki cities. The Doulakki were a culture probably loosely related to the ancient Traldars and the Taymorans which allied firstly with the Thonian Empire, and later with the Milenian colonies of the Isle of Dawn. Each city was rich, powerful and fiercely independent, and the Thyatians had to struggle until 200 AC to fully assimilate them.

Indeed when the Alphatians conquered Thyatis in 190 BC what they really conquered was a collection of different cities and cultures. The Thyatians were the ones who lead the rebellion against Alphatia from 2 BC but, even when they won, the land was by no means completely in their control. Customs and dialects of the native people survive in the more isolated regions of mainland Thyatis, for example in all the internal lands, and in the south of Hattia.

Some regions of Thyatis, the mountains in particular, are still in the hands of giants, ogres, kobolds and dragons and the Empire has little or no authority in such territories, even now.

That is what I have learned so far on the ancient Thyatian history. The most interesting thing was to see that indeed, as happened in Alphatia, in Thyatis too the native populations were not so easily assimilated as the official imperial history would like us to believe.

And, as happened in Alphatia, I think it's quite obvious that the native cultures had a greater impact on the formation of modern Thyatis than many Thyatians currently know.

References:

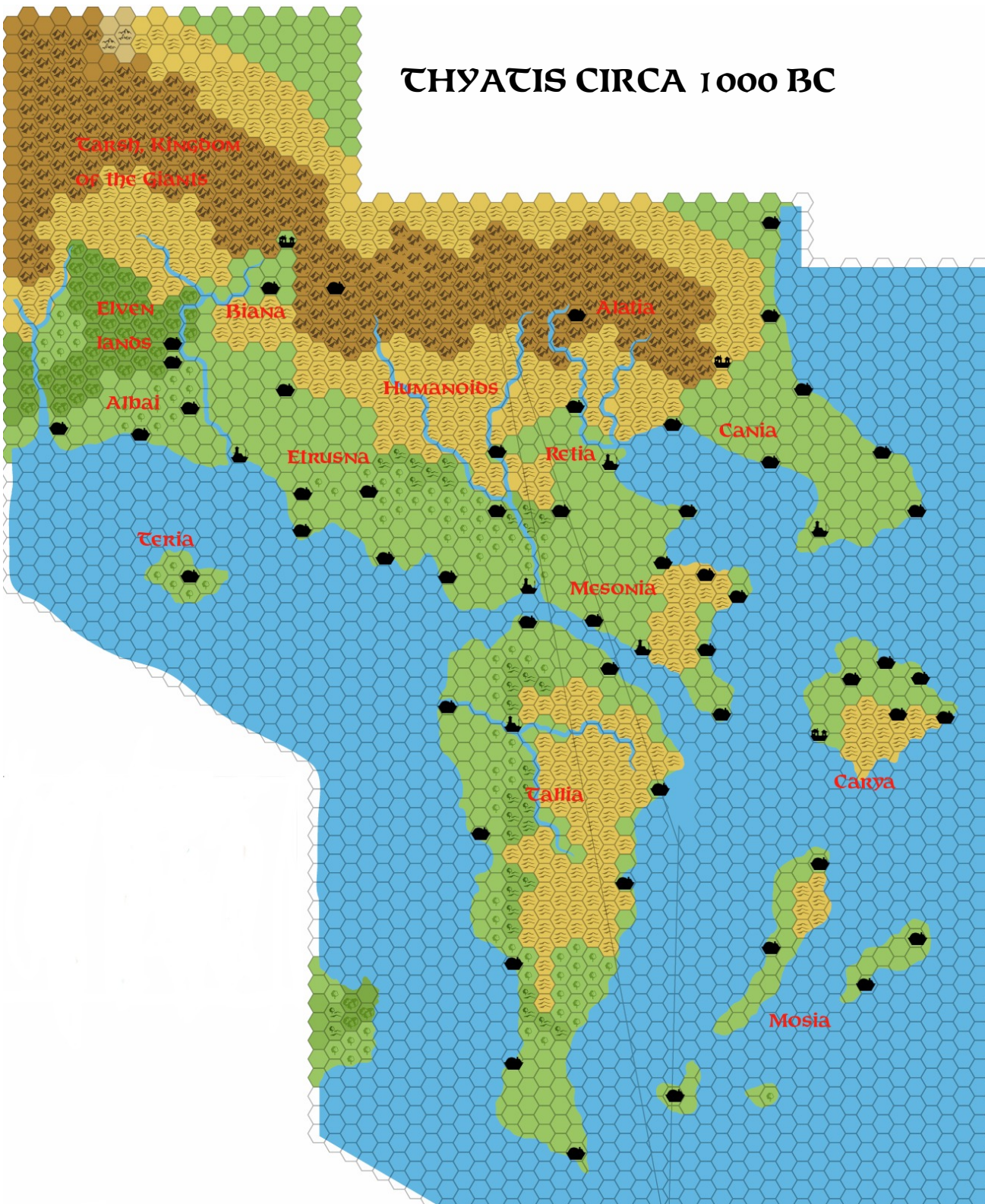
The Doulakki were created by the Mystaran community as Mystaran-greeks living in the Known World before the Thyatians, founders of Cynidicea, Selenica, Akorros and many other cities, more information can be found in the [articles listed here](#) in The Vaults. In Thyatis, they would be the equivalents of the Greek colonies of ancient Italy as described in [this Wikipedia entry](#).

All the cultures of ancient Thyatis would be based on the cultures of ancient Italy. The Albai on [Ligurians](#), the Etrusna on the [Etruscans](#) which I also placed in the Hollow World in Threshold issue #9. Teria should be based on [Elba](#). Mesonia should be based on ancient [Latium](#) and its populations, and other regions of central Italy. Retia and Alatia should be based on [Veneti](#) and [Reti](#). Carya should be based on [Sardinia](#), as explained by Giulio Caroletti in his article in this same issue of Threshold. Tallia and Mosia should be based on [Campania, Apulia and Calabria, and other regions of southern Italy](#). Cania should be based on [Sicily](#).

Overleaf: Map of Thyatis circa 1000 BC



THYATIS CIRCA 1000 BC



Alphatian Alphabet

by Jacques (Jack) Riesling

A [Alpha/Ar]	K [Kypri]	T [Tar]
B [Beta]	Λ [Lambda/Amphi]	U [Isla]
Γ [Gamma]	X [Shu]	Φ [Phi/Akasha]
Δ [Delta]	M [Mu]	Ψ [Chi]
Œ [Andru]	Ξ [Ksi]	Ψ [Psi/Hypno]
Z [Zetta]	N [Nu/Nyx]	Ω [Om]
H [Eta/Eir]	Π [Pi/Mystra]	Ɔ [Sula]
Θ [Theta]	P [Rad/Hast]	Ж [Azha]
Y [Yod]	Σ [Sud]	И [Bury]

I. THE ALPHATIAN ALPHABET

Alphatian is customarily written from left to right. It's a script of 27 characters; 18 consonants, 6 vowels (A, Œ, H, N, Ω, and И), and 2 semivowels (Y and U)¹.

Every letter is a symbol of a universal concept. Some of the letters represent months of the year and schools of magic.

Every letter has 2 proper names. If only 1 name is given above it's usually the Cyprian name. The last 3 letters, Sula, Azha, and Bury, were added after Landfall to represent foreign sounds. They have 2 names but don't have a secondary pronunciation that's only used for archaic words.

¹ For the alphabet, I used 22 Greek letters, 4 Cyrillic letters, and 1 modified Greek-Latin letter.

ΑΒΓΔΕΖΗΘΙΚΛΜΝ
ΞΟΠΡΣΤΥΦΧΨΩ
αβγδεζηθικλμν
ξοπρςσττυφχψω

The Milenian alphabet, probably a main inspiration for the Alphatian

Alphatian is the language used for spellbooks and magic user scrolls. Spellcasters from different nations that speak different languages don't pronounce the words of a spell the same way but they will use the same words if both of them got the spell from the same teacher. They will usually know how someone who speaks another dialect would pronounce the words.

Alphatian has changed as the centuries pass and some of the letters that had distinct

sounds in the past now sound the same. Some of the original sounds have vanished from the Common tongue as it's spoken in Vertiloch (which has changed from boar-tae-loch to vair-tee-lock and kept the original spelling of BHRTYΛΩΨ).

✠	'	⊗	‡	∩	P
Δ	B	Ʒ	Y	∩	Ş
∩	G	✠	K	∩	Q
Δ	D	∩	L	∩	R
≡	H	Ʒ	M	∩	Š
Y	W	∩	N	X	T
I	Z	≡	S		
⊠	H	○	'		

Varelyyan alphabet, common in the Alphatian sea before Landfall, compared to Thyatian sounds

Sages believe Andru (∩) and Chi (∩) were added to the Alphatian Alphabet shortly after the conquest of the Cyprians. Some sages believe Nu/Nyx (∩) was a consonant.

Every letter has an opposite that negates it.

Alpha (beginnings) is negated by Omega (endings). Sula (animal or beast) was added to the Alphabet to negate Beta (plant or tree). Azha may represent chaos, wilderness, or a waste land. It was added to negate Gamma. Delta (light) is opposed by Shu (darkness).

Akasha negates Myst because memory resolves questions. Psi negates Akasha because dreams interfere with memory. Myst negates Akasha because questions engage the mind and disrupt a trance. For the other 12 cases, negation means almost the same thing as opposite.

Chi sounds like Kypri in the most common dialect of Alphatian. It was a guttural 'k' in the original Sundsvall dialect. Spellcasters might say both letters the same way when they're talking but they would be sure to say them differently when they're chanting.

Spellcasters might use Myst in a confusion spell and Phi in a dispel confusion spell but they're more likely to use Eir and Ksi because Ksi marks the spot.

Spellcasters would use Delta in a light spell and Shu in a darkness spell. If they used both it would probably be a wasted effort.

Many spells have a reversed version. Tar would be used in the slow spell because it negates Rad/Hast. Ksi would be used in detect invisible.

Zetta and Sula might also sound the same.

Bury (cold or undead) was added to negate Andru (entity). The 5th letter represents intelligent life in any form and may not imply literacy or speech. It may be extended to goblins, hutaakans, and peasants along with elves and humans.

Pi or Mystra represents women, circles, and mysterious things. Phi or Akasha represents memory and negates it. Pi won't work to counter the influence of Phi in a spell but Psi

or Hypno (dreams) must be used. Pi will negate Psi.

Eir may represent mist but it's more commonly used to represent deception or hidden things. It negates and is negated by Ksi, which represents truth and openness.

Kypri may represent bravery or skill. It negates and is negated by Chi, which is called Hollow and often means boastful or vainglorious.

Amphi represents the deep and Nyx the firmament, they negate each other. Yod negates and is negated by Mu. Zetta negates and is negated by Isla. Theta (infinity or the immortals) negates and is negated by Sud (addition). Rad (rebel) negates and is negated by Tar (tyrant). The true meaning for all of these symbols is debatable.



The building of Citadel

II. THE HISTORY OF ALPHATIA

Sunville (ΣNBHΛ) was known as Fort Abel (ABHΛ) before it became a town, the City of Sundown, and finally the Capital City of Sundsvall.

Sages that study Fort Abel add that Greenwood (originally spelled BABA) was known as Fort Babel (BABHΛ) or Betaville (BHTABHΛ). It was built to the northeast on the shores of a lake that the Yanifey called Llyn.

Zettaville (ZHTABHΛ) was founded in the same year as Fort Abel and it came to be called Citadel. It became the capital of a nation when the King of Bettelyn (BHTAΛY) petitioned the Emperor of Ar as a fellow sovereign. Theranderol (ΘHRNΔHRΩΛ) was the next nation to attract a king, who named his capital Errolyn.

Ar, the archmage who built floating islands, arrived with Aasla and Emperor Kerothar. He founded the City of Bluenose with seven other archmages. He founded the City of Sepphoris and raised a Hanging Palace for the Emperor.

Vertiloch was recognized as a kingdom about a century after the King of Theranderol took his place beside the monarchs of Ar and Bettelyn. The people of Sundsvall saw that Citadel had grown wealthy as it gained influence and they wanted the same benefits.

Each of the 4 kingdoms favored a magical discipline but wasn't organized into an actual school. Each of them had their own symbols. The Alphatians believed there were 12 magical disciplines but didn't agree on their names.

Arogansa petitioned the Imperial Court when Sepphoris became the capital of Ar. Foresthome, Greenspur, and Shiye-Lawr were autonomous regions for a long time before they were formally recognized. Haven was a duchy for almost a century.

Arogansa, Foresthome, and Haven chose appropriate symbols to rival the 4 kingdoms. Randel started its own School of Magic and seceded from the Kingdom of Theranderol. Bluenose and Errolyn built schools in related disciplines. Haven was opposed to the militant attitude of Randel and didn't build a school in its favored discipline. Foresthome built a school in the wilderness that taught mind tricks and was more popular than the 3 schools of war studies.

Ar corresponds to divination, the hue of azure, and the stone of turquoise. Sepphoris is its capital. Bettelyn corresponds to conjuration, the hue of ebony, and the stone of onyx. Citadel is its capital. Theranderol corresponds to evocation, the hue of gold, and the stone of topaz. Errolyn is its capital. Vertiloch corresponds to alteration, the hue of emerald, and the stone of jade. Sundsvall is its capital.

Arogansa corresponds to necromancy, the hue of silver, and the stone of crystal. Bluenose is its capital. Foresthome corresponds to illusion, the hue of bronze, and the stone of amber. Greenwood is its

capital. Haven corresponds to enchantment, the hue of ruby, and the stone of jasper. Aasla is its capital.

Ambur, the next kingdom to be recognized, established a School of Fine Arts that didn't train spell casters. Shiye-Lawr was finally recognized as a kingdom. Greenspur was recognized and established a School of Aviation that accepted fighters, magic users, and clerics. Skyreach, Alfeish, and Eagret are the primary cities. Alfeish seems like a young city when compared to Citadel because it never had a construction boom or bust, and because most of the natives are elves that can live for 800 years or more.

Limn was conquered and became a kingdom nearly 5 centuries after Landfall. Its capital, Trollhatten, is a relatively young city. Blackheart and its capital of Shraek were established by refugees from Limn. It attracted potion brewers who sought privacy. They met with arcane crafters and potion brewers and found common ground. The 3 factions established a private school of item creation.

Eadrin, Frisland, Stonewall, and Stoutfellow are the young nations of Alphatia and their primary cities are Archport, Shiell, Draco, and Denwarf-Hurgon.

III. THE ALPHATIAN SCHOOLS OF MAGIC

Not all of the 8 schools of magic have or should have physical locations. Magic users should have access to spells from every school but many spells are considered trade secrets and seldom taught to anyone except for specialists. All specialists should have access to the School of Divination to get detect magic and read magic.

Specialists in the School of Abjuration are called banishers. Specialists in the School of Enchantment are called beguilers. The other schools train diviners, illusionists, invokers, necromancers, summoners, and transmuters.



Alphatian wizard on a flying carpet

Specialists in a magical school take on of the letters of the Alphatian Alphabet as a symbol. Specialists in alteration, conjuration, divination, and evocation use the letters Λ, N, A, and K. They have more prestige than the other schools.

Specialists in the School of Necromancy tend to be unpopular in most places. Thothia (the Dominion of the Immortals) is a notable

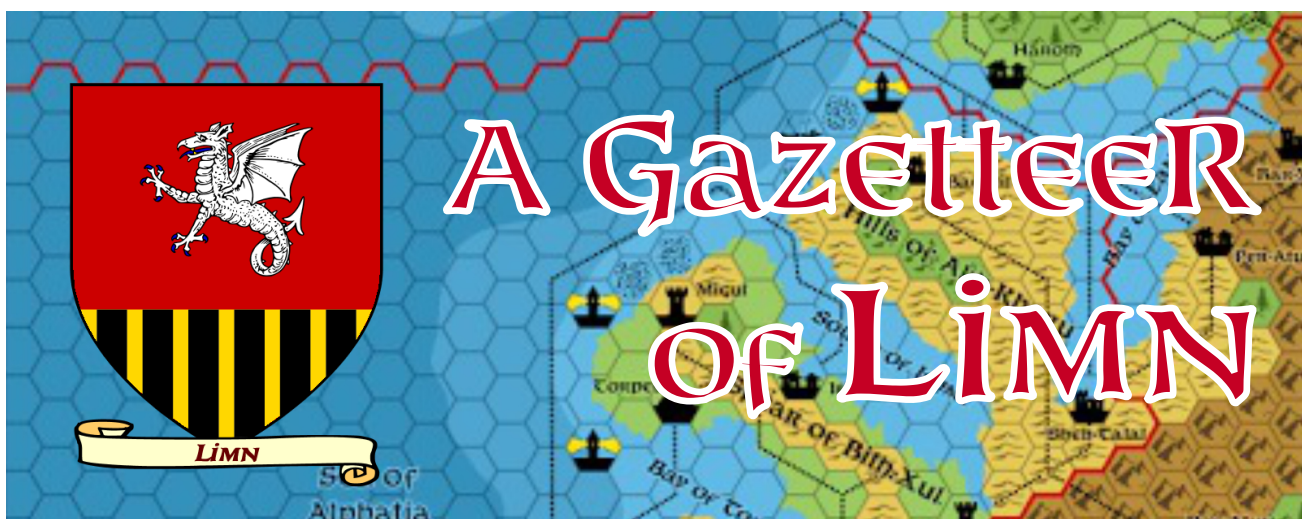
exception. They use ∩ as a symbol. Specialists in abjuration, enchantment, and illusion use P, U, and H.

In Alphatia, scholars who study animal life are called naturalists and scholars who study plant life are called herbalists. Some naturalists are beguilers and some of them don't cast spells. All of them use U as a symbol. Druids and herbalists use B as a symbol. Druids don't benefit from formal studies and some of them aren't even literate.

Artificers, shape changers, and snake charmers are obscure schools of magic that used Œ, 3, and Σ as symbols. They're mentioned because they correspond to the other letters of the Alphabet that give names to the months.

Bards, clerics, and magic users are sometimes included as schools of magic. Bards and clerics don't learn how to cast more spells by taking classes. Magic users don't agree on what letter should symbolize the 10th class, the reasons why are complicated. They agree that clerics are the 12th class and they should use Theta as a symbol.

Specialists get better spells in their own schools and don't have access to 2 opposed schools of magic. Diviners don't get conjuration or evocation spells. Necromancers don't get enchantment or illusion spells. The other schools don't get necromancy spells and spells from 1 other school. Abjuration and enchantment are opposed schools. Alteration and conjuration are opposed schools. Evocation and illusion are opposed schools.



By Hausman Santos and Alexandre de Luna

This article presents and compares versions of Limn maps published in the *Mystaran Almanac* (AC 1018) with those developed by Bruce Heard on his blog¹ circa AC 1000/AY 2000 with a brief general description (with the first part focusing on the north) and proposes an alternative to unite the unusual passages in each version of the maps in order to put them together. This article also makes extensive use of the material previously developed by Geoff Gander² in his descriptions of the region.

INTRODUCTION:

The situation of Limn attracts the curious from all over the Empire: sages, anthropologists, historians, archaeologists, scholars in zoology, students of monstrosity and magicians in general. However, most of these just give up early and abandon the idea of living in Limn when they realize the magnitude of hostile environment, the social frictions and the ever present violence. A multitude of races and groups live in this newly formed kingdom (circa AY 1900). Despite being a very small kingdom, by Alphatian standards, Limn is indeed a very special one and during the centuries the Alphatian Empire allowed many unusual and monstrous races to dwell in this stretch of land. The northern region of Limn experienced constant conflict between Antalian tribes, goblinoids and occasional monsters from the region and those coming from the mountains.

¹ More info see topic [“The Alphatian Province of Limn”](#) on Bruce Heard’s blog

² According to the articles [“Torpes”](#) and [“Antalians of the East”](#) developed by Geoff Gander at the Vaults of Pandius

TRACES OF NORTH HISTORY

"While Østheim was still in its infancy, other realms were being founded by other Ystmarhavners, further south. Some 150 years after Haakon achieved his first victory against the Yanifey, Ylsa of the Sharpened Blade conquered the citadel of Terkyn, and renamed it Grønborg. Her dominion, also named Grønborg, occupied much of what is now coastal Trollhattan, while her own fortress was centered on what is now Torpes."

(Part of a lecture on Antalian history)



Funeral of an Antalian chief

Much of the history of northern Limn has its beginnings when Ylsa conquered the citadel of Terkyn, and renamed the area along the Spear of Bith-Xul and the actual Bay of Torpes, Grønborg.

In BC 650/AY 350, Ylsa founded the realm of Grønborg, which, though it was sparsely populated, more than made up for this weakness through the ferocity of its warriors.

The soldiers of Grønborg did not sell their services to others, and they did not seek to expand beyond what could be easily held.

The jarldoms of Gronborg and Markland frequently clashed over territory. Markland, which was centred on the port of Taraldsstad and extended as far east as the Kerothar Mountains, is little more than ruins in modern times. There were also some goblinoid tribes that dominated the foothills of the mountains and occasionally did settle the hills of Ankh-Kahru (between Bay of Eanna and sound of Ishme) when they would impose their will on local tribes and take control of the iron mines for crafting weapons, until finally being driven back to the passes in Sheb-Talai.

ALPHATIAN INVASION

This reasonably stable situation changed when an Alphatian invasion occurred in BC 116/AY 884, which saw all but the city of Grønborg itself fall to the invaders (besides the problems with the Trollhattan pit to the south preventing colonization in that area, which will be discussed later), though the Alphatians lost over 10,000 men in their efforts. Imagine an impressive defensive wall along the neck of the peninsula, some of which may still stand today, though modern Torpes is built upon the ruins of Grønborg city. Between BC 109/AY 891 and BC 72/AY 928, Alphatia was actually forced into pulling back several miles from the city, so ferocious were the counterattacks by the Ystmarhavners.

After its seizure, the region remained unsettled by Alphatians for years.

RISE OF TORPES

Roughly 200 years after the fall of Grønborg, and while the Alphatians were still concentrated east of the Kerothar Mountains, a few battered vessels sailed in from the southwest. A small group of Traldar, who had left their homeland, washed up among the ruins of Grønborg where they sheltered. Eventually, after the Alphatians learned of the displaced Tarpanadeans' history, they offered to the Traldar the possibility of establishing a local colony in exchange for fealty to the Empire. The Tarpanadeans accepted, on the condition that they were allowed to govern themselves as they saw fit. The Alphatians agreed, so long as taxes were paid, finding this reasonable under the circumstances.

During that period, the town's name slowly changed, as newcomers mispronounced it, and as some of the old lore of the original settlers faded. Today, it is now known as "Torpes", a contraction of its old name, though the name "Tarpanades" still appears on official documents and proclamations from the town council. About a few years before the formation of Limn, to help represent imperial interests on site, an Alphatian economist, Xandaram, was designated to administer an embassy in the city as well as represent the voice of Alphatia on the city council.

Some Traldar families have gained prominence in the region including Tarpanades, the original surviving clan, Dracor and Mitrestu, besides other smaller houses. Other families, such as the Marthedren, Hundraal and Thorberg, have Antalian blood.

PLACES OF THE NORTH

(See maps on following pages)

Baenil

Ruled by Hanna Marthedren, the Iron Lady, the village's economy revolves around fishing and refining of iron ore extracted from the hills near Remina. A guild of Per-Atúr dwarves provides services to the Marthedren clan with iron refining, with the refined iron then transported to Remina and sent by ferry to Ishme. One member of the "Iron Guild", Master Dulnor, is actually an agent of the Librarians³ investigating the traffic of banned substances from Frisland to Limn and the widespread use of these drugs among goblinoids working in Remina.

Tharmug (an acteon druid) has sent Grabulg (another actaeon) and his foresters (not to be confused with the forester class in Thyatis) to investigate numerous sightings of a strange creature in the hills and forests. Reports of the beast claim it is more than 5 meters tall and has 4 arms, its body covered with thick black fur and having a huge wolf's head⁴. Sightings are always followed by the brutal deaths of travelers or entire families of farmers. Cattle mutilations have also been recorded. The druid suspects that some beast from Frisland crossed the mountain border and is loose in the field, but attempts to track

³ See about Librarians in [the "Grand Duchy of Frisia"](#) on Bruce Heard blog

⁴ The beast is actually a Howling Fiend, see *"Wrath of the Immortals"* page 108 or a Glabrezu - see the ["Complete Monster manual"](#) for AD&D statistics, or the [d20PFSRD website](#) for d20 stats

Limn, 1000 AC

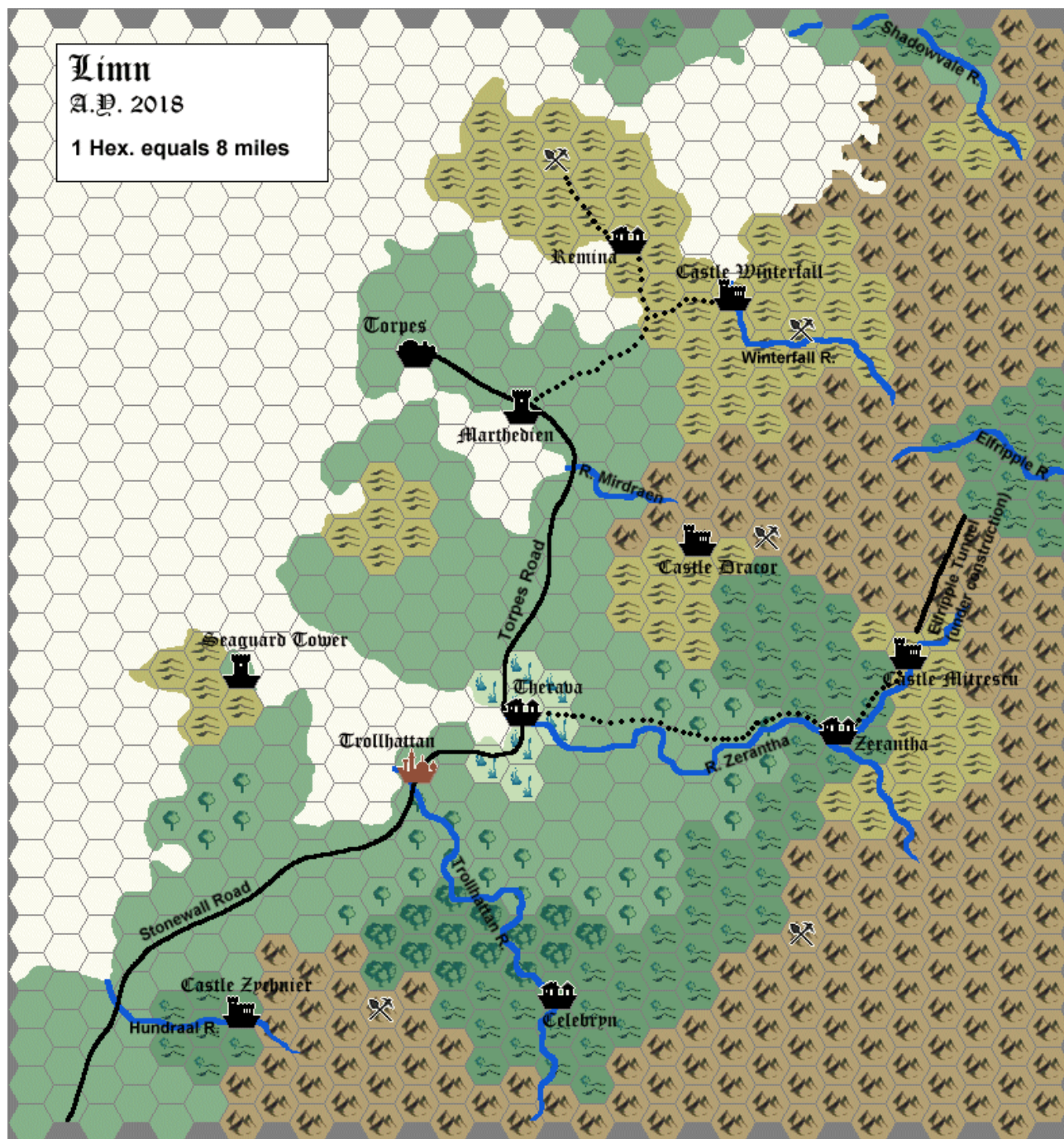
Based on Dawn of the Emperors and maps by Bruce Heard

Cartography by Thorfinn Tait, May 2012; last revised June 2012

www.thorf.co.uk



Map of Limn from [Bruce Heard's blog](#)



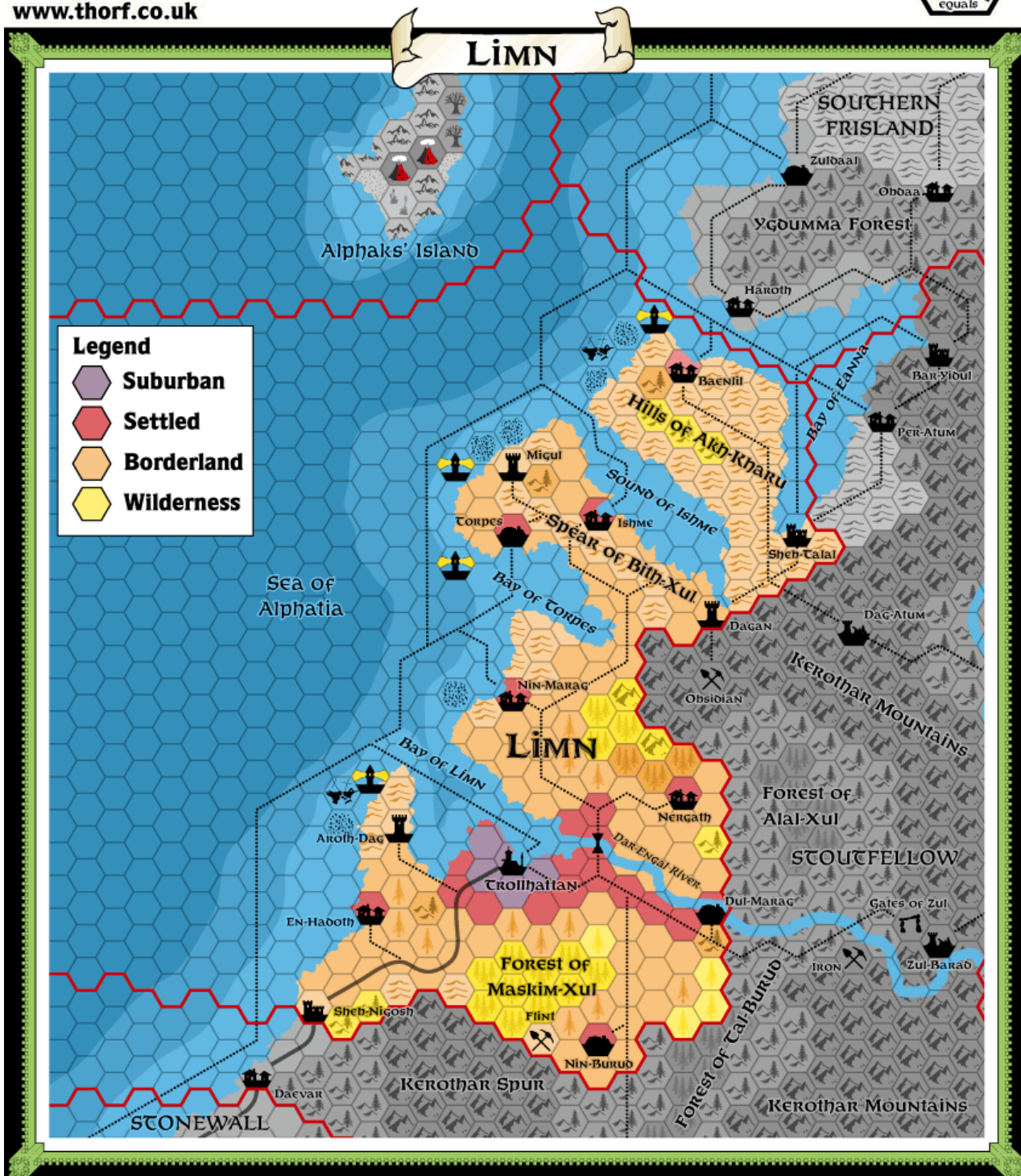
Map from [Mystara Almanac 1018](#)

Limn Population Density, 1000 AC

Based on Dawn of the Emperors and maps by Bruce Heard

Cartography by Thorfinn Tait, June 2012

www.thorf.co.uk



Map of Limn from [Bruce Heard's blog](#)



Depiction of the mysterious beast, published in Trollhattan

the beast down, mundane or magical, have proven fruitless. Grabulg has recently sent a request for help to the druid circle and a letter with his concerns to queen Mellora.

Remina

Ruled by Svart Thorberg, the village controls the mining of iron in the hills and is a haven for gangs and criminals who provide various services to the miners, from food and drinks to gambling and prostitution. The Thorberg receive a large percentage of all transactions conducted in the city, except those related to iron ore itself, since these are strictly supervised by the Marthedren in Baenil. A small militia led by the Thors, the half-breed bastards of Hafthor-Old Crow (Leader of the Thorberg clan) keeps things under control in the city and mines. Those stupid enough to violate the "laws" (failure to pay the Thorberg) are fed to Svart pet dogs in the village square, an event which is always eagerly awaited by the residents.

Around the city there are numerous goblinoid camps housing the miners that work in the hills. These camps have always been a haven for drug dealers, however, a couple of years ago a new drug emerged and spread like wildfire in the camps, the Kala; a mixture of herbs coming from Frisland. Users of the drug have an almost supernatural resilience, they do not need to eat, rest or sleep, they feel a huge euphoria and work whilst hallucinating greatly increases their mining quota, which generates more money, which is in turn used to buy more and more drugs. After some time, users begin to have a strange behavior that the miners call "the wither". Afflicted miners start to hear voices and wander aimlessly and many disappear in the hills, but as ore production has risen sharply, the clans do not give importance to these disappearances.

Elendra Dracor has sent agents to find out more about the Kala and other herbs used by Thorberg to break the domination of the Count over the clan. She plans to use them to break the bond of blood that binds her to Lord Mizilikazi (Leader of House Dracor), however, she has not had much success so far, and one of her agents disappeared recently near the old abandoned salt mine south of Remina.

Hills of Akh-Kharu

Old tales always permeate these forested hills which abound with mystery and suspicion. The place long ago ceased to house sylvan creatures⁵ when the old conflicts between goblinoids and Antalians intensified with the wars involving Grønborg

⁵ About wee folk see TSR supplement "PC1: Tall Tales of the Wee Folk" for more info.

and Markland. They say a last resistance was made here against Alphatian invaders. A magical effect was triggered by witches and old wise women with fairy assistance (Alphatian scholars suspect some ancient witchcraft from Grønborg witches and perhaps some of the old fairy winter court of Frisland). As a result, the forest became inhospitable with haunting tales: people wandering lost in the mists and fog, sounds of screaming and crying, people who disappear and, recently, monsters that appear and disappear next to corpses and dead people. Many of the forest beings now live in the southern regions of Zerantha, Alal-Xul and Maskin-Xul forest.

Recently Tarmugh sent his friend Grabulg (see above) along with some allies from Zerantha to investigate the reports of such creatures.

Sheb-Talai (Winterfall Hills)

Lord Bussnox⁶ rules this castle and the Akh-Kharu Hills. The niece of the Count, Elendra Dracor, also assists in monitoring the extraction of iron ore in the hills. Bussnox is more insular and reserved, preferring to remain isolated within their little castle and out of their fields. The borderlands north of Sheb, Talai, are patrolled and manned by fomorian giants and giant bats, besides regular troops in the Castle from King Drushiye.

⁶ This character was originally presented in "[Mystaran Almanac AC1019](#)" (available at the Vaults of Pandius).



*Bay of Eanna and Castle of Bussnox
on Sheb-Talai Winterfall Hill*

Migul & Ishme

Migul is an outpost keep north of Torpes, guarding the coast and the passage of ships in the region.

Ishme is a port / cargo crossing point which ferries people and ships goods along the shores on the Sound of Ishme. A tribe of several smaller goblinoid clans help the Antalians in local shops (including some evaluators and dwarven guild members from Remina and Baenil).

Dağan

The keep oversees the activities of obsidian mines where slaves do the extraction.

Murtagh Dracor inspects the mine's activities together with men of the Marthedren clan.

Harpies from the mountains and giants (hill and mountain) hunt any fugitives. Corpses of slaves and conscripts are brought up to the domains of the castles of Dracor and Mitrestu.

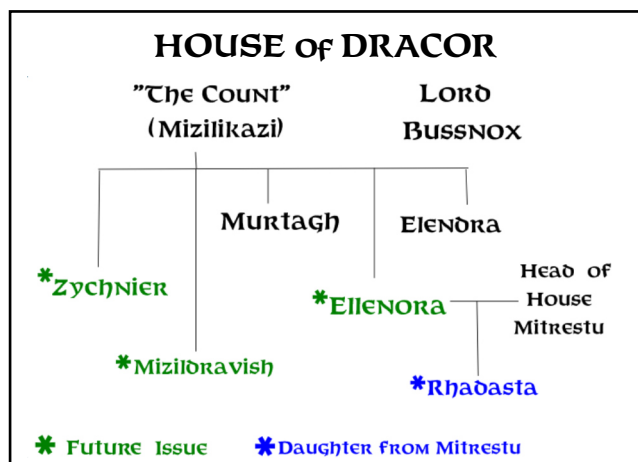
Marthedren

The Tower of Marthedren is the main clan holding east of Torpes and lies along the only travel route between Ishme and the Bay of Torpes. There is a large hall where the clan leaders and representatives of minor houses and families gather to discuss the political and economic cases and to manage the clan's actions in Torpes and daily trade affairs in Ishme.

NPC GALLERY

House Dracor:

Dracor retains the loyalty of smaller houses by Charming the young inheritors of these houses when they are taken to the castle to serve as pages and squires, in order to learn the arts of politics and war. Repeated use of Charm, over the many years of service, ensures an unwavering and unconscious loyalty, but it also has a terrible side effect - the subconscious struggling to free itself from mental domination generates aberrant personality traits that manifest themselves in many different ways.



Count Mzilikazi (Lord)

(CN male human vampire 9HD)

Likely location: Castle Dracor

Political alignment: favors the Marthedren and Mitrestu

Duties: Oversees the Bay of Torpes and Kerothar Mountains

Personality: Lord Mzilikazi⁷ (usually known as "the Count") has family kinship with the Mitrestu⁸. His story begins with the expansion of Traldar families for the exploitation of mining in the Kerothar Mountains. The Mitrestu have magical abilities, especially within the arts of necromancy. Centuries ago Lord Mzilikazi helped in the capture of a local vampire for magical experiments by the Mitrestu involving necromancy and longevity spells. The event attracted the notice of an ancient nosferatu in his crypt (a likely elder vampire from some lost culture or unknown civilization) who quickly turned him into a vampire, and still controls him (see The Elder Vampire Sleeper in the DM Plot informations section below). As count, Lord Mzilikazi has some freedom to rule his domains, he also enjoys clan support of the old houses and clans and now also an alliance with king Drushiye. The alliance with the Mitrestu and Marthedren has lasted a long time making the political forces in the north relatively stable. An order of avenger

⁷ Known as "The Count" this character was presented on [Mystaran Almanac AC1019](#) (available at the Vaults of Pandius).

⁸ Castle Mitrestu was presented as seen in Limn map in [Mystaran Almanac AC1018](#) (available at the Vaults of Pandius).

knights led by the Count (Order of Dracor) form an organized military structure allied with the Antalians, especially with the Marthedren.

LORD BUSSNOX
(CE MALE HUMAN NOSFERATU/WI I)

Likely Location: Sheb-Talai (Castle Winterfall)

Political alignment: He favors the Thorberg

Duties: Administration of the hills of Ahk-Kharu; Oversees the Bay of Eanna and Ishme

Personality: The "elder cousin" of the Count is a cautious and cunning man, used to courtly games and the arts of politics. He leaves Elendra, his younger "daughter", to take care of the provincial administration, as he considers such mundane activities beneath him. He despises Murtagh, his younger nephew, seeing him as an inept thug and unworthy of Dracor's name. Elendra, on the other hand, he considers a useful tool, but one that needs to be closely watched. A refined man and somewhat eccentric, he always dresses with the finest spider silk and brags about his "special collection", a group of young people with serious congenital malformations or victims of freak accidents, a veritable circus of horrors, which he uses as servants and occasionally as food.

Recently, Bussnox managed to break its bond with the vampire Count Mizilikazi when, with the help of the Dark Avengers of Alphaks, he

became a nosferatu⁹ who now secretly plots the fall of his cousin, only awaiting the right opportunity. In the Winterfall hills near Sheb-Talai, Bussnox houses Vraakhys, an agent of the Dark Avengers who has taught the Lord various spells to deal with planar monsters and to capture fomorian giants. Currently he has an ironclad (a submersible) at his service.

ELENDRA DRACOR
(CN FEMALE HUMAN VAMPIRE 9HD)

Likely Location: Sheb-Talai (Castle Winterfall)

Political alignment: Favors the Marthedren

Duties: Directors of the iron mines in Baenil and the hills of Ahk-Kharu

Personality: Elendra is a dangerous woman who is hungry for power. She strives to destroy those who stand between her and her goals. She was adopted as second daughter for her merits by Count Mizilikazi, but was originally the nephew of Bussnox. She hates her uncle Bussnox and aims to take his place in the Dracor house hierarchy, secretly plotting to overthrow the Lord. In this dangerous game, she has two cards up her sleeve: Murtagh, her foolish "brother" who nurtures a sick passion for her, and knowledge about the fact that House Thorberg had secretly broken the mind domination of the Count with the use of extracts from Frisland herbs.

⁹ The Nosferatu was initially presented in GAZ1 *The Grand Duchy of Karameikos*.

Murtagh Dracor
(CE male human vampire 7HD)

Probable location: Dagan

Political alignment: Favors the Dracor and Marthedren

Duties: Supervision of obsidian mine

Personality: Murtagh is a skilled warrior and a competent military commander, being known as "the sword of Dracor". He has a temper, a very bad one, and is feared by his subordinates and peasants of the valleys. The young Dracor nurtures an obsessive passion for Elendra and hates Bussnox, who spares no efforts to humiliate him. He unloads his frustrations over the prisoners in the mines he oversees, subjecting them to sadistic games and disproportionate punishments for their "faults".

Clan Marthedren:

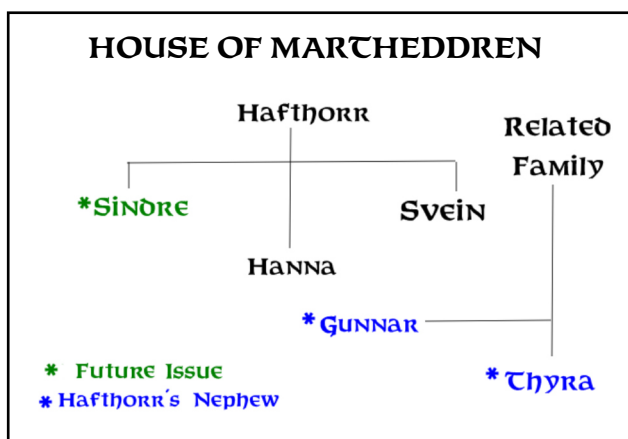
The House of Marthedren is an Antalian warrior clan strongly linked to house Dracor that acts as enforcers of the Count's will. They struggle to maintaining the status quo, because the more power the Earl and the Count have, the better it is for the clan.

Hafthorr Marthedren
(LN male human F9)

Likely Location: Marthedren

Personality flaw: Paranoid

Duties: Oversees the Bay of Ishmer and iron trade through the port of Torpes



Personality: The guardian of the ancient Antalian ways has a hobby: the collection of tales of old Grønborg: their stories, legacies and relics. Over the years paranoia has manifested itself in his behavior as some sort of inner drive to fully demonstrate the efficiency and strength of his house and clan. He believes Marthedren should always demonstrate its ability and competence on the coast domain of Torpes or be swept from local policy by the Traldar families. He hopes that the local strength of his house ensures the support of king Drushiye beyond the alliances with Mitrestu and Dracor. Yet the rudeness and chaotic nature of Thorberg, and miscegenation over the years with goblinoids, has generated frictions that make a firm and reliable alliance with the king impossible.

Hafthorr keeps his eyes in various places (southern Trollhattan at the court of the king, the council town in Torpes, the mines in Baenil and around Dracor) hoping to maintain his position (a kind of game for the maintenance of the power of his house). He makes use of minions to spy and report on his behalf.

The old Marthedren has a secret collection of relics of the old Grønborg: ancient totem stones and marker stones with old runes in addition to weapons and armor. He studies these with the help of an elder from the Sage's League of Torpes, Hogni, a Ravenfolk¹⁰, hoping to find old magical secrets.

HANNA MARTHEDREN (
CN FEMALE HUMAN T9)

Probable location: Baenil

Personality flaw: Xenophobia (elves)

Duties: Administration of the city of Baenil

Personality: The First-Born of Marthedren clan is a fascinating woman, her fragile beauty and deep green eyes hide a determination and relentless spirit that earned her the nickname "Iron Lady". Hanna is a born leader and inspires unswerving loyalty in her subordinates. The mental influence of the Count generated a fanatical loyalty, leading her to see king Drushiye as a usurper, making her believe that her sole purpose is to restore the old days when the Marthedren clan responded only to the old Earls (like Ylsa). She believes that the elven invaders must be expelled from the north (she has already partially achieved this).

In fact in recent years, there have been many disappearances of elves near Baenil and the

¹⁰ These mysterious seers are in fact kin of the ancient Fey, and thus remain bitter opponents of the Ogam as related in ["Foresthme: Burwyn, Orfeander, & Rathmore"](#) on Bruce Heard Blog

border with Frisland, however, the events seem to have no connection with one another and the stray beasts from Frisland woods are always blamed.

SVEIN MARTHEDREN
(LE MALE HUMAN AVENGER 12)

Likely Location: Castle Dracor

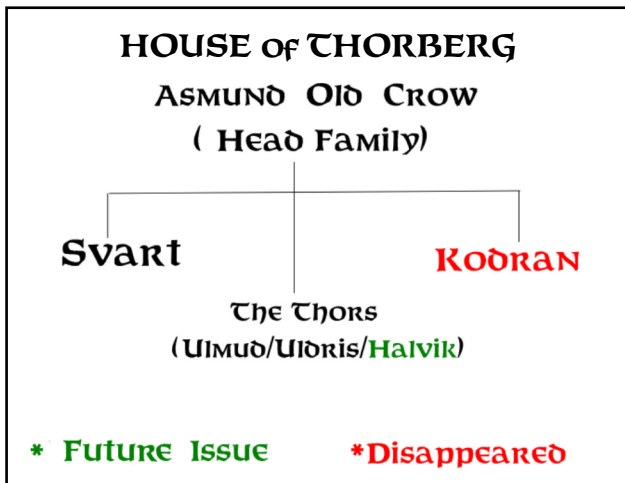
Personality flaw: Obsessive compulsive

Duties: Member of the Count's personal guard

Personality: The young Marthedren is one of the most implacable avengers in Dracor's service (the Order of Dracor) and is greatly feared in the north for his skill with the sword and the habit of launching deadly challenges to those who inadvertently cross his path. Vain and debauched, he collects the swords of the men he defeats in those duels, hanging them in an old oak tree on the side of the road to the castle Dracor. Svein is obsessed with fame and wants to be recognized as the greatest swordsman of Limn.

CLAN THORBERG

A lesser Antalian Clan, they migrated from Frisland a long time ago. Servants of House Dracor, they resent their vassal position. Having secretly broken the mental influence of the Count using Frisland herbs, they plot the downfall of Dracor and the destruction of the Marthedren.



ASMUND THORBERG
 (CE MALE HUMAN F9 IV)

Probable location: Ishme

Personality flaw: Sexual disorder
 ("Goblinophilia")

Duties: Administration of the city of Ishme

Personality: The Thorberg clan patriarch is a cynical and unscrupulous man, who has lived more than 90 winters, but presents an unusual health and disposition. The "Old Crow" has a strange fetish for goblinoids, having generated numerous half-breed bastards, the "Thors" as they are collectively known, who act as foremen in the mines. About five years ago, on a business trip in Haroth, Asmund was contacted by a group of traders interested in a large amount of iron ore. During a dinner at the home of one of these traders, he was presented to the "spiritual guide" of his host, Gork nine fingers. Asmund doesn't have many memories of that night, only the bitter taste of the drink served to him and a strange dream in which he walked among the stars,

but he knew that something had changed; he now can see the invisible chains the Count imposed on his clan and has resented them ever since.

Svart Thorberg
 (CE MALE HUMAN F11)

Probable location: Remina

Personality flaw: Obsessive compulsive disorder (hunting)

Duties: Administration of the city of Remina

Personality: The Hunter, as he is better known, is fascinated by hunting, especially of large prey, which earned him the hatred of the druids, especially Tharmug, the acteon druid responsible for the Forest of Alal-Xul and Zerantha to the South. Svart commands the foremen of the iron mines of Remina, his crossbred half-brothers, the Thors, and has a pack of modified dogs, much larger and stronger than normal, which he uses in his hunts and to intimidate and punish workers in the mines. Svart maintains a secret relationship with Elendra Dracor and it was through him that she found out about Gork, the herbs of Frisland, and the breaking of the Count's influence over the Thorberg clan.

GORK NINE FINGERS
 (CE MALE HUMAN SHAMAN 10)

Probable location: Unknown

Personality: Gork took a bold mission: one that cannot be completed. Coming from the ancient art of Ogam he was taken to Limn with the help of "Old Crow" Asmund Thorberg during a visit in Haroth. Since then

he has established several refuges and gathered information on a very specific location: the ancient Ogam ritual table (a stone altar) of Ahk-Kharu, the current status of which is unknown. This site was inaccessible and lost after a failed ritual that triggered a chaotic magical state known as Anchorhead¹¹. Gork has relied upon the help of some expendable goblinoids whom he sends into the forest to search for Anchorhead. The use of the Kala drug (from Frisland) has helped in controlling the goblinoids.

One of the current biggest problems for Gork in the quest for Ahk-Kharu is the strange demonic creature that has made him back off and has destroyed his various minions.

Gork is a nickname¹² and he has presented himself to Thorberg as an old hermit herbalist that is more than happy to break Thorberg's mental chain, imposed by Count Dracor, with mixtures of the Kala drug. This information was indirectly passed on to Elendra and has caused the female vampire to start a personal crusade of freedom from the influence of the Count. Unfortunately she has not yet been able to find or locate Gork, having already lost some of her spies in the attempt.

The most recent progress of Gork was to discover that the strange creature likes human and humanoid sacrifices, and this has allowed him a first approach. He has tried to understand if the creature (which sometimes

seems to be more than one) is connected to the plane of his dark lords (the Outer Beings¹³) but still without too much success. If this is the case, then the ancient ritual in the past had partial success, but it is still too early to know.

MINOR NPCS

Sgt Uldris (CN female brute 4HD) - Uldris is a Thors (one of the half-breed bastard children of Asmund) who oversees with her local militiamen (Antalians and goblinoids) commercial activities in Baenil and the actions of goblinoid guilds and the trade of iron ore. She is rude and stout, Uldris tries to impose respect by using her barbarian ways and menacing appearance, and enjoys frightening the weak. She believes that her behavior will bring respect to Thorberg and give her dreaded fame. She tries to collaborate with Elendra when possible and keeps a suspicious eye on Hanna's actions.

Hagarath (CN male human avenger 9) - Delegate responsible for the garrison in Baenil and security of the coast. Hagarath is a bit paranoid with the exercise of his duty and believes in possible incursions of Alphaks' followers along the coast of Eanna. Local goblinoids keep him busy with various disputes between the tribes and local guilds and that makes him more irritable and intolerant of others. The occasional presence of Elendra (when inspecting Baenil) brings him some comfort and the impression of support from Lord Bussnoxx.

¹¹ See further at the "DM Plot Information" Section of this article.

¹² Gorkh-all-Guhlsh is from very old Ogam terminology linked to the Outer Beings.

¹³ The Outer Beings was extensively developed by Geoff Gander in [Threshold Magazine issue #2](#) and "[The Kingdom of Frisland](#)" at the Vaults of Pandius,

Master Dulgard (N male dwarf 4) - Member of the Iron Guild administered by Lady Hanna. The Iron Guild trade in Baenil started when his clan sent him from Per-Atúr to make the purchase and evaluation of ore from the mines and his efficiency has attracted the attention of Hanna and Marthedren, who soon gave him a steady job in the guild. Practical and very focused on business he has a small group of dwarves to help with the services (currently four friends who call their little group the Circle of Ore) of evaluation, purchase, sale and trade with Remina and also Per-Atúr. Dulnor (his cousin) remains mostly in transit between Baenil and Remina and makes few regular trips to Per-Atúr.

Master Dulnor (N male dwarf 6) - Quiet and observant, Dulnor belongs to the Librarians and was sent to Limn a long time ago because he has a cousin working in this region. He is investigating the traffic and use of the strange herb, Kala, coming from Frisland (which has been brought by Eanna bay with permission of Elendra and Thorberg).

Their investigations thus far have only led to the conclusion of the effects of Kala on addicts and the occasional disappearance of some goblinoids between Remina and Baenil. Legends about the forested hills of Akh-Kharu may have some suspected link with ancient Ogam magic but their freedom of investigation in the region is still very limited and the hostility of goblinoid forces nearby has convinced Dulnor to stay closer to guild activities. Currently he has shown interest in the League of Sages and may be acquainted with Hogni, the old man who can usually be seen between Torpes and Marthedren Tower.

Ghrokul (CN male orc 4 + 1 HD) - Proud and vain, a leading chieftain of his tribe and an Iron Guild merchant in Baenil. He has several families of orcs, goblins and hobgoblins as mercenaries, stevedores and caravan guards at his service. He tries to demonstrate prestige and wealth in his clothes and says Limn brought evolution and modernity to his people who before lived in caves. It is still a little early, but he wants the power and influence of the largest guilds in Torpes and maybe one day Trollhattan.

Rutgarth (N male human F3) - Sly and friendly, Rutgarth arrived a few years ago in Baenil and has a trade on the docks transporting spices and plants. He has provided Kala herbs coming from Obdaa in Frisland (he usually does not reveal the source of the product) and transports them with the help of mercenaries and guards of Ghrokul to the Thorberg in Remina. His product still has not been challenged or banned in Limn. Remina leaders certify that the herb consumption is linked to increased productivity in the mines. Rutgarth knows very little about Gork but was advised by his patrons in Frisland to help him in any way possible.

Grabulg (NG male actaeon 11HD) - Serious and dedicated in behavior, Grabulg is part of a small sylvan council that administers the city of Zeranthea, an urban refuge for sylvan beings in the kingdom. At the request of Tarmugh he went to Akh-Kharu with a few allies to investigate the strange reports of some mysterious monster prowling the forest. He has still not had any results beyond a brief encounter in the night wrapped in mist. This occasion resulted in the loss of two of his friends (one was killed

by the creature and another disappeared screaming in the forest). The case seemed more serious and Grabulg has taken a more cautious stance on research preferring to wait for a response from Tarmugh on what to do before alerting Queen Mellora in Trollhattan. Another setback at this moment is also the local influence of goblinoids and Thorberg, who are somewhat intolerant of sylvan beings.

Ulmud (NE male human brute 3HD) - Ulmud is one of the Thors, who still feels like a minor minion of Asmund his father. Ulmud has been put in charge of the smaller tasks between Remina and Baenil. He works well with goblinoids and sometimes resents the strong-willed Svart. The situation has taught him to be strong and show how well he fulfills his services to make him important ... someday.

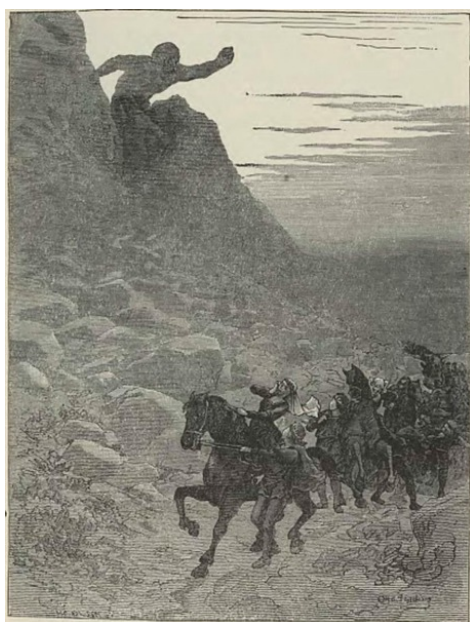
"Captain" Brombargh (CN male orc 7HD) - This experienced and charismatic orc is the leader of a vast tribe of mercenaries and workers in the mines in Remina. Transportation to Ishme, by ferry boat and other means, and supervision of the local market, has been entrusted to him by Thorberg. Brombargh is a self-styled "Corsair Merry man" (or orc) and he loves to tell stories of the tribe's bravery and exploits (even if it is true or not), preferably with many spectators and drink. He can be seen regularly with Ulmud around Remina.

Cathratya (CN female harpy 5HD) - Free-spirited of nature and passionate, Cathratya leads her clan in the mountains near Dagan. A few years ago she discovered the advantage of working with Dracor and Mitrestu watching the passes in the mountains,

hunting fugitives and intruders, gathering local information and investigating the borders with Stoutfellow. Recently she has established contact with the mountain giants in Kerothar and receives help from some gargoyles in the most dangerous missions involving Dracor.



Martoth (NE male mountain giant 20HD) - with the support of the nobles of Dracor and Mitrestu, this giant and his clan has dominated the passages between the mountains and captured all the unwanted visitors that pass (always expecting some reward by the Dracor who supervise the mines in Dagan). Martoth received weapons and armor for him and his band (which includes hill giants, ogres and even trolls). Occasionally he pays visits to Nergath to get goods and food. He has behaved very well since he thought he had enough power to challenge everyone in Limn but was overwhelmed by the forces of Count Mizilikazi.



Giants guarding the Kerothar mountains against explorers

Zaklad (N male human wizard / necromancer 10) - This ambitious Mitrestu has provided service to Lord Bussnox in Sheb-Talai as his court magist. He has shown great interest in the research developed there and this inevitably led him to Vraakhys. Since then he decided to investigate the nature of this deviant host of Bussnox. Inevitably, the use of undead and spirits to discover Vraakhys' nature will be the destruction of this necromancer who will have his freedom stolen by the forces of Alphaks ... but the case is still in process.

Vraakhys (CE male human C14 of Alphaks) - Taciturn and sly, he has been chosen from the Dark Avengers to prepare the ground in the north of Limn and strengthen Bussnox to generate an insurrection in the coming years and thus a beachhead for more agents sent from Alphaks Island. Yet it is still very early and there are forces to be built.

Dragadan (CN male human avenger 10) - Dragadan recently replaced Captain Derfliye after an "accident" in the mountains (he was an elf loyal to Drushiye) and has rearranged the local troops to show more strength in the borders and the mountains. As an avenger of the Order of Dracor, he has attracted the interest of Vraakhys who wants to recruit him as one of his minions.

Hogni (N male human 3+1HD) – Hogni is a Ravensfolk, a member of a race of soothsayers, seers, and tellers of portents who speak in riddles. Hogni came some years ago to study old legends about fey, Antalians and the Akh-Kharu forested hills curse. He joined the League of Sages and since then he has investigated the Ogam presence in Limn.

DM PLOT INFORMATION

The Anchorhead

This site was created when an Ogam ritual was unsuccessful during the time of the Alphantian invasion, when Antalians collaborated with the ritual in a desperate measure of defense, but the expected help of the Outer Beings did not come. An Entropy effect has spread across the hilly region generating an ethereal pocket where the Ogam stone altar currently is. If found, the ritual could be resumed and theoretically a gate could be opened between the material plane and the Outer Being's dimension. The current structure of the Anchorhead in the Akh-Kharu Hills is a sudden transition of planes through invisible and hidden gates. Walking through the woods is like getting

lost among the planes (the DM can generate a random table of planeshift and what conditions should be met for it to return, but it should be something very difficult, as a maze).

Akh-Kharu Monster

Despite the fact that the site is renowned for encounters with planar beings attracted by the gates, the creature who has caused concern recently is a demon from the Pit (At the DM's discretion, this is a Howling Fiend¹⁴ or a Glabrezu¹⁵). He was attracted by the great power and manifestation of Entropy that has happened here, however the confusing structure of this semi maze has prevented him from leaving the forest. Gork Nine Fingers has actually tried to contact him offering sacrifices of goblinoids numbed by Kala in the hope that he may be one of the real Outer Beings trapped in the forest (which is a mistake).

The Elder Vampire Sleeper

In fact, the oldest of this small circle dates back from the lost Taymoran civilization (which was preserved in the Hollow World as the Bahlor Empire¹⁶). During the Mitrestu exploration for lost Taymoran magical research on longevity and necromancy, an

¹⁴ See Howling Fiend in *Wrath of the Immortals* pag.108 or [Glabrezu](#) on AD&D stats.

¹⁵ [Glabrezu](#) is an AD&D version from original stats of Howling Fiend in *Wrath of the Immortals*.

¹⁶ More about this civilization can be found in article ["The Empire of Bahlor"](#) at Pandius.

ancient crypt was found near the ruins of Dag-Atur in the Kerothar Mountains.

Only one of the vampires was captured and magically imprisoned for Mitrestu research. The Elder decided to turn Mizilikazi into his vampire minion to secretly rule the region in his name until he returns (or until the Count's death which would be a very easy end for Mizilikazi). As a very old vampire, this Elder does not have the condition of a common vampire but instead is a nosferatu (and a very powerful one at that). However, he decided not to pass on this condition to Mizilikazi and, through some old secret magic of his ancient civilization, he made the Count only a vampire. He also released a dragon in the mountains to protect him (Large Red Dragon) and from his grave has used his bond with the land and the animals to monitor the development and safety of the mountains where his old crypt is. Its location is unknown to everyone and he prefers for it to remain so.

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Warbirds Add-Ons

by Hausman Santos

This session proposes small illustrations of blueprints of the Warbirds described in FGAZ-7 (The Heldannic Order) , Edited by JTR in 2007 .

The blueprints come with a list of rooms and decks for better understanding and should be used as a supplement in the use of game campaigns involving Heldannic Warbirds

between Thyatis, Alphatia, Heldann, Davania and elsewhere.

Feel free to the necessary changes according to the needs of each game group and individual plans of the DM. It should be useful also the Warbird Stats Reference (included below) as well as a copy of FGAZ -7 to better use them in the game. Enjoy it !

Warbird Class	Adler (Light)	Waffenadler (Light)	Eagle (Medium)	Sturm kondor (Heavy)	Uhubeote (Night)
<i>Tonnage</i>	125 tons	125 tons	160 tons	200 tons	64 tons
<i>Hull Points</i>	90	90	105	120	45 Hull, 6 Sail
<i>Armor Class</i>	8	8	7 6	7	7
<i>Lift Capacity</i>	175 tons	175 tons	200 tons	300 tons	70 tons
<i>Cargo Capacity</i>	10 tons	9 tons	10 tons	20 tons	5 tons
<i>Air Speed</i>	360' (120')	360' (120')	360' (120')	360' (120')	360' (120')
<i>Move Factor</i>	½	½	½	½	½
<i>Length (inc. tail)</i>	175'	175'	200'	240'	60'
<i>Beam (inc. wings)</i>	225'	225'	275'	300'	90'
<i>Depth</i>	40'	40'	45'	55'	20'
<i>Crew</i>	Captain 1 Abbot 3 Commanders 10 Knights 15 Squires 1 Chaplain 9 Sailors	Captain 1 Abbot 3 Commanders 10 Knights 15 Squires 4 Chaplains 9 Sailors	Captain 1 Abbot 6 Commanders 50 Knights 65 Squires 3 Chaplain 20 Sailors	Captain 1 Abbot 6 Commanders 30 Knights 44 Squires 12 Chaplains 25 Sailors	Captain 1 Prior 3 Knights 10 Squires 1 Chaplain 5 Sailors
<i>Weaponry</i>	1 Blight Belcher 6 Ballistae 1 Lt Catapult 1 Hvy Catapult	1 Blight Belcher 3 Lt Blight Belcher 3 Ballistae 1 Lt Catapult 1 Hvy Catapult	1 Heavy Belcher 6 allistae 2 Lt Catapult 1 Hvy Catapult	1 Hvy Belcher 6 Lt Blight Belcher 3 Ballistae 1 Lt Catapult 1 Hvy Catapult 2 War Talons	1 Lt Belcher 2 Ballistae
<i>Defense</i>	None	None	None	<i>Protect. From Normal Missiles, 1x/day, 12T</i>	Darkness

WARBIRD EAGLE CLASS (BLUEPRINT PLANT)

BATTLE DECK:

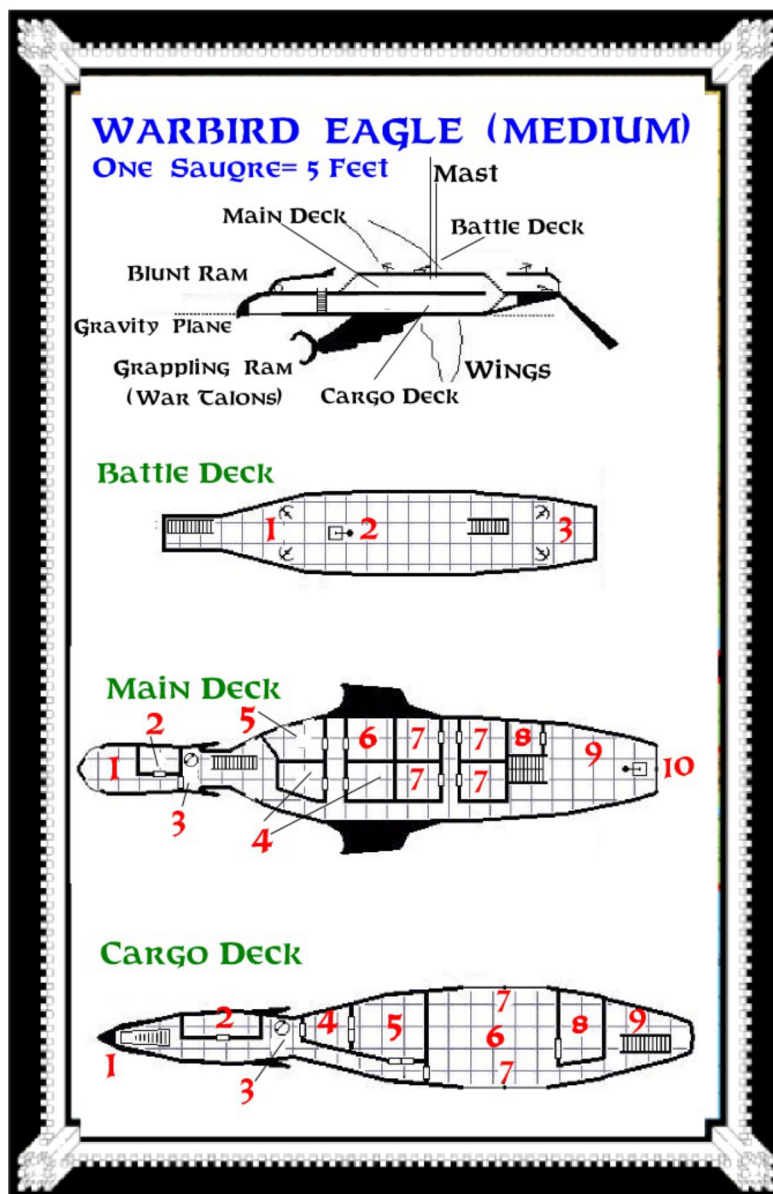
- 1- Forward Ballista Bank
- 2- Forward Catapult
- 3- Aft. Ballista Bank

MAIN DECK:

- 1- Bridge
- 2- Chapel
- 3- Hatch to Cargo Deck
- 4- Officer's Quarters
- 5- Captain's Quarters
- 6- Helmsman's Quarters
- 7- Crew's Quarters
- 8- Ammon Storage
- 9- Upper Hold
- 10- Aft. Catapult/ Belcher

CARGO DECK:

- 1- Board Ramping
- 2- Boarding Equipment
- 3- Hatch to Main Deck
- 4- Galley
- 5- Mess
- 6- Cargo Deck
- 7- Cargo Doors
- 8- Ship's Stores
- 9- Sail Storage



WARBIRD UHUBOOTE CLASS (BLUEPRINT PLANT)

FLIGHT DECK:

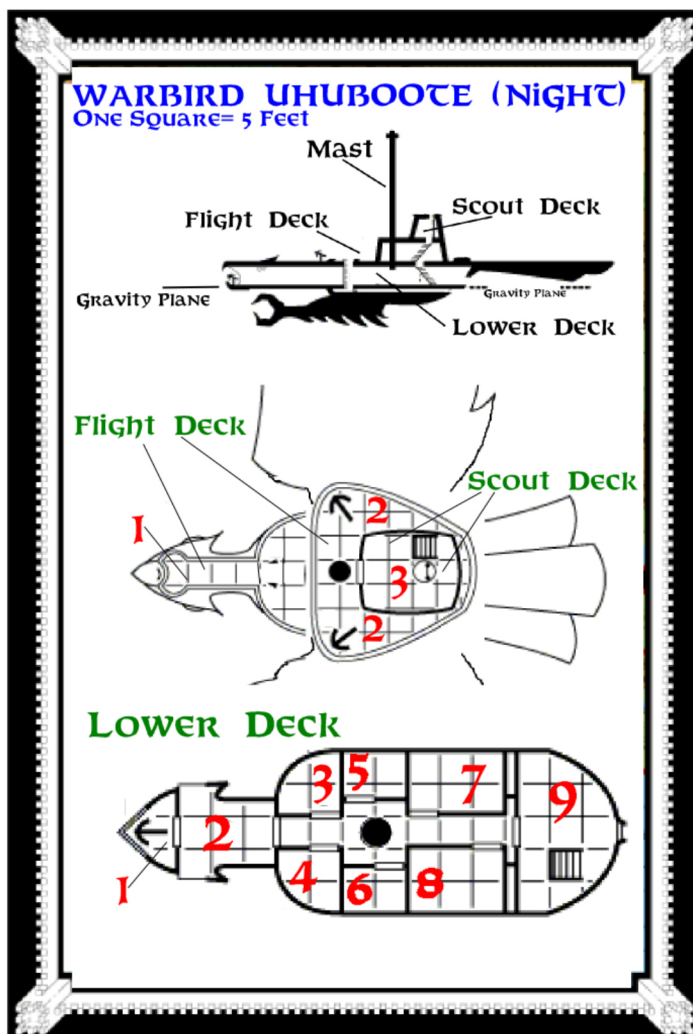
- 1- Forward Watch Post

SCOUT DECK:

- 2- Weapon Battery (Ballistae)
- 3- Storage & Watch Chamber
(With hatch and Ladder on Roof and Ground)

LOWER DECK:

- 1- Bridge
- 2- Chapel
- 3- Galley & Mess
- 4- Helmsman Quarter
- 5- Officer's Quarters
- 6- Storage
- 7- Captain's Cabin
- 8- Chart Room
- 9- Lower Crew's Quarter and Aft. Alley



HELDANNIC NPCS

Heldannic characters so you can fill and use the crew of your Ship with your gaming group. Use as best fit it.

For more information see [“The Heldannic Order”](#) and [these articles](#) at The Vaults of Pandius

Captain Jürgem Zimmer (Abbot C10 lv)

Prior(Helmsman) Baldur (Kb 7lv)

Knights(5):

Eckhard(kb 6lv)

Agnes(Kb 6lv)

Oscar(kb 06lv)

Beor(knight 5lv)

Karl(Kb 7lv)

Chaplains(2):

Gotfried (Knight 6lv)

Gertrud (Knight 5lv)

(Kb= Knight Bannered)

WARBIRD STURMKONDOR CLASS (BLUEPRINT PLANT)

FLIGHT DECK:

- * Watchboard & Masts and Sails

BATTLE DECK:

- 1- Forward Battle Deck
- 2- Aft. Battle Deck
- * Weapon Battery (Ballistae, Catapult and Belcher)

BRIDGE DECK:

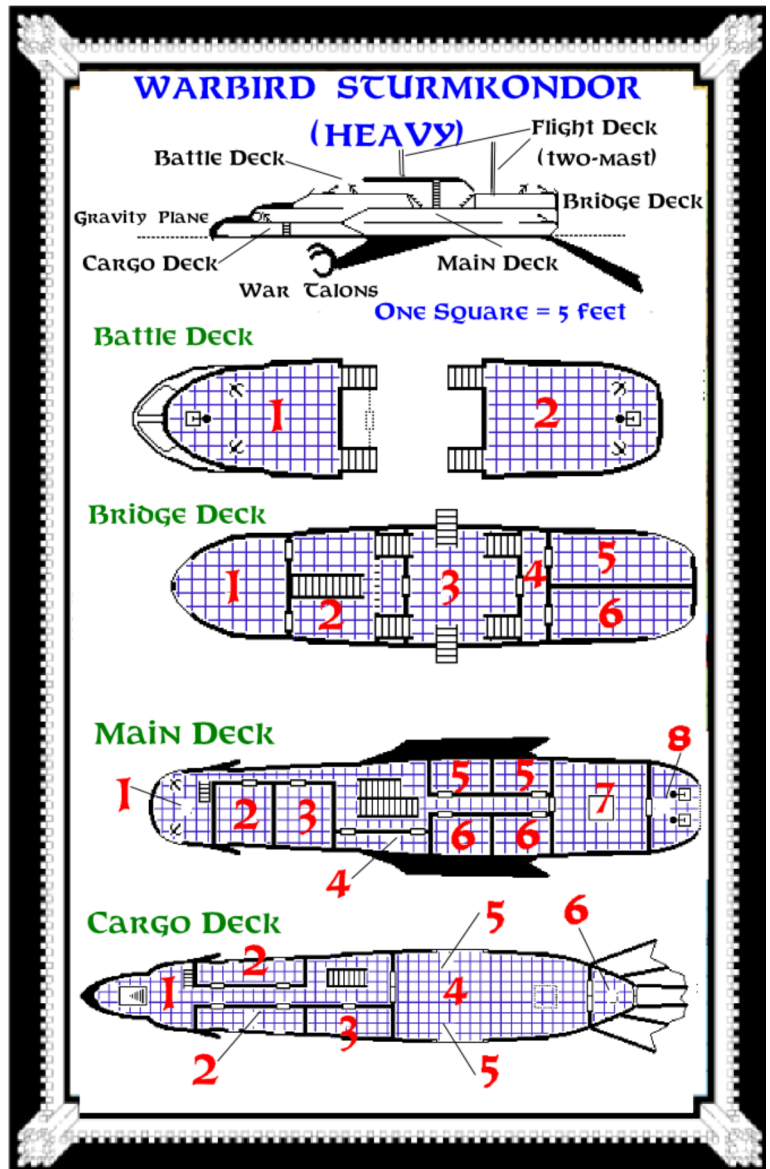
- 1- Bridge
- 2- Navigation and Officer's Chamber Staff
- 3- Assembly Deck
- 4- Companionway
- 5- Flight Crew Quarters
- 6- Mess Hall & Galley

MAIN DECK:

- 1- Forward Weapons Battery
- 2- Captain's Quarters
- 3- Helmsman Quarter (Main Helm)
- 4- Paintry Storage
- 5- Officer's Quarters
- 6- Crew's Quarters
- 7- Cargo Door, Upper Hold
- 8- Rear Weapons Battery

CARGO DECK:

- 1- Main Gangway and Board Ramping
- 2- Crew's Quarters
- 3- Armory
- 4- Main Cargo Hold
- 5- Cargo Doors
- 6- After Alley Deck



20 Years of History in the Sea of Dawn

A timeline of the Isle of Dawn, the Alatian Islands, Ochalea and the Pearl Islands as detailed in Wrath of the Immortals boxed set, the Poor Wizard's Almanacs I, II and III, Joshuan's Almanac and the Mystara Almanacs from 1014 to 1019¹

by Francesco Defferrari (Sturm)

1002 AC:

Ramenhotep XXIII is overthrown by adventurers and popular rebellion after he is discovered to be under the control of a demonic spider. His son becomes the new pharaoh as Ramenhotep XXIV (M5 Talons of Night and Poor Wizard's Almanacs)

Spring 1005:

The Great War is declared between Thyatis and Alphatia, the Isle of Dawn is going to be the first battleground. The pit to the Hollow World in Aegos is destroyed by an earthquake (Wrath of the Immortals boxed set).

Fall 1005:

West Portage and Kendach are conquered by the Alphatians, Countess Julia Kendasius is killed in battle, Guildmaster Lareth Kubek of West Portage is executed.

¹ The purpose of this timeline is mostly to highlight the many changes that happened in the Isle of Dawn and nearby lands between the Dawn of the Emperors Boxed set and the Mystara Almanacs, including those written by fans that can be downloaded from the [Almanacs section of the Vaults of Pandius](#), and to highlight the great work done in the



A battle of the Great War

Winter 1006:

Redstone besieged, Furmenglaive falls. Caerdwicca resists.

Summer 1007:

Newkirk fall, the Archduke Donegal Firestorm falls in battle. General Harantius Lycrandonion is defeated and killed and Redstone surrenders to the Alphatians.

Winter 1007:

Ochalea and Pearl Islands declare unilateral independence from Thyatis

Spring 1008:

Helskir becomes an Alphatian kingdom under Eruul Zaar and Asteriela Torion.

Summer 1008:

The Thyatian fleet repels an initial Alphatian invasion

Summer 1009:

Alphatia succeeds in invading mainland Thyatis.

Fall 1009:

Thyatis surrenders to the Alphatian army, but later Alphatia is destroyed. King Hastalan the Fair of Ekto disappears.

Nuwmont 10th, 1010: The Thyatian army returns to the western Isle of Dawn. Periandra Docerius is appointed baroness of West Portage. General Deitica Baralius is appointed Governor of Septentriona. Anaxibius and Stefania Torion command the Thyatian army in Redstone, and are later given the territory as County (*Poor Wizard's Almanac I*).

Nuwmont 14th, 1010: Thincol recognizes independence of Helskir but secretly encourages Ostlander raids against the country.

Nuwmont 25th, 1010: Thyatian navy attacks Dunadale, the Heldanners attack Helskir

Vatermont 8th, 1010: Heldanners and Thyatians attack Dunadale ports.

Vatermont 11th, 1010: The Thyatian and Mintotheadan navies conquer Aegos in the Alatian Islands.

Vatermont 27th, 1010: Ne'er-do-well allies with the Thyatian empire

Thaumont 13th, 1010 Thyatians conquer Deirdren in Dunadale,

Thaumont 28th, 1010 Thyatians conquer Dunadale city and all the nation. King Tastagarth Lunn escapes to an unknown location.

Flaurmont 9th, 1010 The Thyatian navy conquers Gaity in the Alatiens

Flaurmont 25th, 1010 Thyatians attack East Portage, and in exchange for a Thyatian ducal title, King Lornce M'Jozee surrenders the kingdom to the Thyatians.

Klarmont 16th, 1010 Ekto is burned down by its own citizen who refuse to surrender to the Thyatians, and then they retreat toward Trikelios. Townmaster Trumbull, who advised the people to surrender, is killed.

Felmont 12th, 1010 Aeria in the Alatiens joins peacefully the Thyatian Empire

Fyrmont 1st, 1010 Thyatians attack Trikelios and are repelled.

Fyrmont 14th, 1010 Helskir calls for adventurers against Ostlander raids

Ambrymont 19th, 1010 Thyatian wizards poison Trikelios' waters

Sviftmont 14th, 1010 The Flying Fish, airborne vessel from Alphatia, reaches Helskir.

Sviftmont 20th, 1010 Trikelios falls into Thyatian hands

Kaldmont 22nd, 1010 Thyatians invade Thothia and are repelled by undead.

Kaldmont 27th, 1010 Thyatians start exploring the Great Escarpment



The Thothian pharaoh leading the resistance

Nuwmont 13th, 1011 Thyatian Admiral Alrigo Gioncardi searches for adventurers to scout Thothia and the Great Escarpment in occupied Trikelios (*Poor Wizard's Almanac II*)

Vatermont 13th-14th, 1011 Northwestern Isle of Dawn is hit by a great blizzard. Heldannic armada meant to attack Helskir is almost destroyed.

Thaumont 12th, 1011 Mario's Marauders terrorize Helskir countryside.

Flaurmont 3rd, 1011 Ostlanders ransack Helskir villages

Flaurmont 22nd, 1011 The Behemoth attacks Minrothaddan ships travelling to Ochalea

Yarthmont 6th, 1011 The earthquake in Aegos is felt in Caerdwicca and vicinity

Yarthmont 15th, 1011 Thyatian settlers arrive in West Portage

Klarmont 15th, 1011 Thyatian troops invade Thothia but are repelled in front of Edairo by undead, drolems, sphinxes and golems.

Felmont 2nd, 1011 Thyatian army retreats from Edairo and is followed and routed by wizards on sphinxes

Felmont 9th, 1011 Barony of Albarocca is established in the Great Escarpment south of Trikelios.

Fyrmont 1st, 1011 The Thothian army marches on Trikelios

Fyrmont 13th, 1011 The Thothians win a naval battle near Trikelios.

Fyrmont 21st, 1011 The Thothian fleet blocks Trikelios Bay.

Fyrmont 26th, 1011 The new Barony of Albarocca remains neutral as the Thothian army marches through its territory toward Trikelios.

Amyrmont 17th, 1011 Outbreak of mummy rot disease in Thyatis, spread by Thothian spies.

Amyrmont 19th, 1011 The Thyatian army leaves Trikelios and falls back to Ekto.

Sviftmont 7th, 1011 The Thothian army reaches Ekto.

Sviftmont 11th, 1011 The Thothian navy defeats the Thyatians in front of Ekto.

Eirmont 1st-2nd, 1011 Thothian army attacks Ekto, Alphatian troops retake East Portage from the Thyatians. General Quicklimn is the new ruler of the city. Duke Lornce, who was in Thyatis, escapes to Esterhold. Queen Stillian returns to Trikelios.

Eirmont 20th, 1011 Ottavio Giacomo, Thyatian governor in Gaity, is removed for his mistreatment of Alphatians, who are sent to Esterhold

Eirmont 21st, 1011 The Alphatian crew of the *Imperial Eagle*, first Thyatian skyship built in Aeria, mutinies and takes control

while the vessel is directed to aid the besieged Thyatians of Ekto. The Eagle reaches the city on Kaldmont 4th.

Kaldmont 9th, 1011 The Thothian army attacks Ekto again.

Kaldmont 11th-12th, 1011 More battle at Ekto, both Thyatians and Thothians receive reinforcements.



Stefania Torion visiting the tomb of her parents

Nuwmont 5th, 1012 Ekto is attacked again by Thothia. Admiral Alrigo Gioncardi surrenders. (*Poor Wizard's Almanac III*)

Vatermont 16th, 1012 Thothia sends truce proposals to Kendach, Redstone and Westrouрке.

Thaumont 1st, 1012 Thyatian prisoners in Ekto are released to Kendach.

Thaumont 2nd, 1012 The baron of Caerdwicca encourages piracy against Thothian ships to support Thyatis.

Yarthmont 9th-15th, 1012 The King and Queen of Helskir and the Thyatian rulers of the Isle of Dawn meet in Newkirk, agreeing on declaring their fealty to the Thyatian empire. General Edmondo Tiberia becomes Duke of Dunadale.

Yarthmont 27th, 1012 Stefania Torion of Redstone proposes a treaty to Pharaoh Ramenhotep XXIV of Thothia.

Klarmont 5th, 1012 Peace talks begin in Redstone

Klarmont 13th, 1012 Treaty of Redstone between Thyatis and Thothia assigns the Great Escarpment and Aeria to Thothia, Aegos and Dunadale to Thyatis, Gaity and Ne'er-do-well as independent territories. General Tristan is appointed the king of Ekto by Thothia.

Klarmont 21st, 1012 Emperor Eusebius sends more colonists to the Thyatian areas of the Isle of Dawn.

Klarmont 27th, 1012 The *Evander* and the *Marinos*, two Thyatian ships of the navy, desert and turn to piracy in Aeria.

Fyrmont 2nd, 1012 Thothian clerics go to Thyatis to cure the mummy rot disease the Thothians themselves had spread the year before during the war, a move to strengthen the peace treaty between the two nations.

Kaldmont 13th, 1012 Thothia is invited to the new Alphatian Council.

Nuwmont 23rd, 1013 First skyship are produced in Aeria for the New Alphatian Empire (*Mystara Almanac 1014*)

Thaumont 2nd, 1013 The *Evander* and the *Marinos*, Thyatian ships turned to piracy, are captured in the Alatian islands by the



Naval battle against pirates

Thyatian imperial fleet. (*Joshuan's Almanac*)
Thaumont 8th, 1013 Emperor Eusebius establishes an emigration draft, many homeless of Thyatis are shipped to the Isle of Dawn or the Hinterlands. Hopetown is founded in southern Meridiona.

Yarthmont 10th, 1013 Thothia joins the New Alphatian Empire.

Klarmont 11th, 1013 Earthquake kills 75 people in West Portage.

Ambyrmont 13th, 1013 Uprising of forced emigrants in Hopetown, Provincia Meridiona, and abandonment of the colony.

Yarthmont 13th, 1014 Gaity is in chaos between competing barons after becoming independent from the empires. (*Mystara Almanac 1014*)

Ambyrmont 18th, 1014 Thyatian colonists in the Great Escarpment are attacked by giant spiders and escape to West Portage

Ambyrmont 21st-22nd, 1014 Helskir opens diplomatic relations with the New Alphatian Empire.

Eirmont 5th, 1014 Some Minrothaddan dwarves begin working on the still closed world elevator in Aegos.

Thaumont 15th, 1015 First Alphatian-Karameikan skyship, the Concordia, launched in Aeria. (*Mystara Almanac 1015*)

Felmont 23rd, 1015 The work of Minrothaddan dwarves at the Pit to the Hollow World in Aegos is hindered by several sabotages.

Ambyrmont 13th, 1015 The Grey Front occupies Serraine while it is over the Isle of Dawn, and hundreds of Serraine's citizens are ferried out of the city to the nearby Isle, in Septentriona.

Eirmont 13th, 1015 Ostland demands some Thyatian territories in Westrouрке, negotiations begin.

Nuwmont 5th, 1016 Strange sightings near the village of Perdidis, in Septentriona, due to the nearby presence of Serraine's refugees. (*Mystara Almanac 1016*)

Nuwmont 13th-19th, 1016 Revolt in Dunadale against Duke Edmondo Tiberia. The revolt is quelled and a curfew and pass laws are proclaimed. Deputations are sent to Helskir and Thyatian authorities.

Vatermont 22nd, 1016 Mario's Marauders on rampage in Hillvale



Dunael lord on war chariot

Thaumont 12th, 1016 Followers of Thothian mysticism disturb a ceremony to Rathanos held by the pharaoh in Edairo.

Thaumont 18th, 1016 Tiberia is deposed on the Emperor's orders, Dunadale to be joined with Helskir in the Kingdom of Heldun. New talks begin between Alphatia and Thyatis in Helskir.

Flaurmont 2nd, 1016 New treaty of Helskir gives independence to Heldun and returns all the Alatian Isles to the Alphatians. Thyatis starts evacuation of Aegos.

Flaurmont 5th, 1016 Thothian mystics collapse a temple of Rathanos in Edairo, numerous victims.

Flaurmont 12th-13th, 1016 Burrower on the Loose in Aegos, the Thyatians escape

Flaurmont 16th-17th The Burrower attacks the Alphatians as soon as they arrive in Aegos.

Flaurmont 17th, 1016 King Eruul Zaar is killed by monsters in Alphatia, and Queen Asteriela barely escapes the attack.

Flaurmont 20th-27th, 1016 The Alphatians in Aegos find the Pit destroyed by the Thyatians. The agreed Thyatian quarter is not created in response.

Flaurmont 21st, 1016 Westrouрке becomes an Exarchate.

Yarthmont 8th, 1016 The Burrower in Aegos confines the Alphatians to Aegopoli.

Yarthmont 18th, 1016 William Hazard, an Alphatian general, arrives in Trikelios to deal with Mario's Marauders.

Yarthmont 23rd, 1016 The former king of Aegos, Dromedon returns to the island to fight the Burrower.

Klarmont 4th, 1016 The Thothian lich Haptuthep II starts a rebellion against the ruling pharaoh in the village of Anunak

Klarmont 6th, 1016 After two battles with Dromedon, the Burrower apparently disappears from Aegos.

Klarmont 13th, 1016 Gnomes from Serraine encounter the Trueflower elves of the Great Escarpment.

Klarmont 19th, 1016 The Burrower resurfaces in Gaity

Felmont 5th, 1016 Alphatian citizens are attacked in Edairo.

Felmont 7th, 1016 Thyatian settlers arrive in Rialtos, Septentriona.

Felmont 10th, 1016 Thyatian quarter is opened in Aegos.

Fyrmont 9th, 1016 Dromedon banishes the Burrower in Gaity but is apparently destroyed too.

Fyrmont 13th, 1016 Pirates hunted by the Alphatian navy take refuge in Caerdwicca.

Fyrmont 22nd, 1016 The New Alphatian Empire annexes Gaity.

Ambymont 10th, 1016 The lich Haptuthep tries to ally with the hunakoi (stone giants) against the ruling pharaoh, promising to rid them of the araneas.

Ambymont 10th, 1016 Dawnsea Concords are signed in Beitung. Ochalea and Pearl Islands return to the Thyatian Empire as Exarchates.

Ambymont 14th, 1016 Ne'er-do-well voluntarily joins the New Alphatian Empire.

Sviftmont 18th, 1016 The araneas of the Valley of Kings are attacked by golems raised by Haptuthep.

Sviftmont 26th, 1016 Rulers of Redstone, Kendach and West Portage meet in Redstone to decide how to react to the Thyatian civil war.

Eirmont 19th, 1016 Redstone and Westrouрке remain loyal to Eusebius. The rebellious rulers of Kendach and West Portage are arrested.

Kaldmont 2nd-5th, 1016 The Heldannic Knights attack and conquer Helskir.

Kaldmont 12th, 1016 Haptuthep completes the occupation of the Valley of Kings.

Nuwmont 4th, 1017 Pharaoh claimant Haptuthep II gathers followers in the Valley of Kings, Thothia. (*Mystara Almanac 1017*)

Vatermont 4th, 1017 The Duke of Westrouрке announces a project to expand and improve the signalling system of Westrouрке to West Portage, Kendach, and Redstone.

Vatermont 11th, 1017 Riots in Edairo are provoked by followers of the banned spider religion.

Vatermont 14th, 1017 Cabal of Thanatos followers reach Rialtos in Septentriona.

Vatermont 20th, 1017 Having secured their positions in Helskir city, the Heldannic Knights start to advance on the countryside too.

Vatermont 26th, 1017 Ramenhotep XXIV sends emissaries to the Alphatian Centre of Disease Control of East Portage to study the body of a werespider.

Thaumont 2nd, 1017 The Heldannic Knights won Battle of Two-Forks Ridge against Heldunian forces south of Helskir.

Thaumont 20th, 1017 Sjofjord is conquered by the Heldannic Knights in Helskir.

Flaurmont 2nd, 1017 The Heldannic Knights conquer the Village of Dawnhaven in Helskir.



Heldannic knights win the battle of Two-Forks Ridge

Flaurmont 2nd, 1017 Thyatian-Minrothaddan Skothar expedition stops in Beitung, Ochalea

Flaurmont 7th, 1017 Some Thyatian merchants from Albarocca contact Trikelios.

Flaurmont 14th, 1017 Guest Hospice is opened by Thyatians in Seagirt, Pearl Islands

Flaurmont 16th, 1017 Thyatian-Minrothaddan Skothar expedition stops in Seagirt, Pearl Islands.

Flaurmont 27th, 1017 On the fifth anniversary of Eusebius Torion's ascent to the imperial throne Westrouрке becomes an Exarchate, as Heldun and Redstone, Furmenglaive is expanded and becomes the Archonate of Meridia. Kendach and West Portage are combined into the Archonate of Hesperia.

Yarthmont 5th, 1017 Thyatian-Minrothaddan Skothar expedition stops in Ne'er-do-well, in the Alatians.

Yarthmont 10th, 1017 Skirmishes near Westrouрке between Heldannic knights and Thyatian troops. The Knights are defeated.

Yarthmont 20th, 1017 Electrum is

discovered near Rialtos, Province of Septentriona.

Yarthmont 25th, 1017 Philippos Dassinites is proposed as the new Archon of Hesperia in the Thyatian senate.

Yarthmont 28th, 1017 The Army of Heldun leaves Dunadale to attack the Heldannic Knights in Helskir.

Klarmont 3rd, 1017 A Cabal of Thanatos cultists establishes a stronghold in the western portion of the Great Escarpment.

Klarmont 12th, 1017 The hunakoi giants build a wall to protect the Valley of Kings from the Thothian army.

Klarmont 22nd, 1017 The researchers at the Alphatian Center for Disease Control in East Portage create a magical device that can detect lycanthropy.

Felmont 7th, 1017 The Alphatian Navy starts a blockade around Helskir against the Heldannic Knights.

Felmont 14th, 1017 Thyatian trade outpost is established in the unclaimed coast south of the Great Escarpment in the Isle of Dawn,

across from Aeria.

Felmont 19th-23rd, 1017 The armies of Heldun and Thyatis advance toward Helskir.

Felmont 20th, 1017 Strange golems attack a Minrothaddan magical vessel near Rialtos.

Felmont 27th, 1017 Mario's Marauders raid a village in the Hillvale region, followed closely by the Alphatian men of William Hazard.

Fyrmont 9th, 1017 The Heldun and Thyatian armies start a siege of Helskir.

Fyrmont 11th, 1017 Strange golems occupy the ruins of Fjellstue in Septentriona.

Fyrmont 16th, 1017 The Heldun and Thyatian armies begin to assault Helskir's walls.

Fyrmont 19th, 1017 The Thanatos cultists contact the Barony of Albarocca.

Ambyrmont 7th, 1017 Ennius Necrekis arrives in West Portage leading an expedition to search for pro-Alphatian Thyatians who left the mainland after the revolt of BC 2

Ambyrmont 10th, 1017 After a long battle, the Heldannic Knights are finally defeated in Helskir.

Ambyrmont 17th, 1017 Mario's Marauders are caught in an ambush by the forces of William Hazard. Mario is captured, to be sent back to East Portage to stand trial for his crimes.

Sviftmont 4th, 1017 Ekto and Trikelios are annexed peacefully by Thothia.

Sviftmont 6th, 1017 Queen Asteriela returns triumphantly in Helskir.

Sviftmont 7th, 1017 The New Alphatian Council is angered by the Thothian

annexation.

Sviftmont 13th, 1017 Alphatian troops arrive in Hillvale to discourage the Thothian annexation.

Sviftmont 16th, 1017 In Helskir, collaborators to the Heldannic occupation are executed.

Eirmont 12th, 1017 The Thyatian archaeological expedition led by Ennius Necrekis reaches the phanaton village of Caligaris in the Great Escarpment.

Eirmont 13th, 1017 Julius Ambrosius's Davanian expeditionary flotilla docks in Seagirt, Pearl Islands

Eirmont 19th, 1017 Several important alphatian agents vanish in the Alatian islands.

Kaldmont 24th, 1017: In the library of Edairo, Ennius Necrekis discovers that Caligaris was indeed founded by ancient Thyatians.

Vatermont 3rd, 1018 After wintering in the city of Seagirt, the Thyatian expedition to Davania led by Julius Ambrosius, lifts anchor to resume its explorations. (*Mystara Almanac 1018*)

Felmont 19th, 1018 Galatia re-joins Queen Asteriela in Dunadale, after the two friends have been several years apart. They will soon have some encounters with the returned Terari, their former master, about the status of the New Alphatian Empire.

Ambyrmont 3rd, 1018 Several Thyatian military engineers arrive to assist in the improvement of walls and defences at the city of Helskir.



Asteriela Torion rallying her soldiers against the Heldannic Knights

Svifmont 18th, 1018 Economic crisis in the New Alphatian Empire, and shortage of metals

Nuwmont 6th, 1019 Daffyd ap Llewellyn ap Carver, a bard of indeterminate continental origin, arrives in the tiny southern village of Guangtieu, Ochalea. (*Mystara Almanac 1019*)

Nuwmont 11th, 1019 Banditry by humans and ogres is on the rise on Ochalea.

Nuwmont 13th, 1019 The skyship Eagle takes flight from Edairo, Thothia, heading west over the Great Escarpment.

Nuwmont 17th, 1019 A group of adventurers find an underground complex

occupied by bandits in the Dragon Spine Mountains, Shun Province, Ochalea

Nuwmont 26th, 1019 Garrison is slaughtered by unknown assailants in Bohan Province, Ochalea

Vatermont 11th, 1019 The New Alphatian Empire resumes work to re-open the Aegos Pit.

Vatermont 1st, 1019 Monster attacks increase in the countryside villages of Kiang Province, Ochalea

Vatermont 2nd, 1019 The Eagle is returned to Thyatis by the Thothians in exchange for the hulls of some damaged alphatian skyships.

Vatermont 9th, 1019 The Thothian convoy is attacked by a black dragon in the Sea of Dawn and some of the damaged skyships are lost at sea.

Thaumont 1st, 1019 The decision of the *exarch* to officially make women full citizens is met with stiff opposition in the courts by conservative bureaucrats, nobles and clerics of Ochalea.

Thaumont 6th, 1019 Numerous noble parties and interests begin a process of petitioning the royal courts to renegotiate the terms of Ochalean membership in the Thyatian *Imperium*.

Thaumont 11th, 1019 Student demonstrators from many of the finest schools fill the streets, declaring the *exarch* to be a heretic for his decision to make women equal to men.

Thaumont 13th, 1019 The bureaucrats of Ochalea declare demonstrations of any kind except religious festivals and royal parades to be illegal.

Thaumont 26th, 1019 Many noble women of Ochalea stand up on both sides of the feminine rights debate in the royal courts.



Ochalean painting of a female warrior

Flaurmont 16th, 1019 Explorers investigating goblinoid bandits in the northern foothills stumble upon ancient city ruins submerged in a valley lake in the Tang Hills, Ochalea.

Flaurmont 24th, 1019 Upon hearing of the *exarch's* decision to limit polygamy many poor and lower middle class young men spontaneously demonstrate in support of the *exarch*.

Klarmont 7th, 1019 Master Yao Zhuchin, a honours student at a military academy in the southern Cao province, Ochalea, is revealed to be Miss Yao Su-Xin, the young man's elder sister.

Felmont 4th, 1019 Riots and protests in Ekto and many other alphatian territories due to the economic crisis.

Felmont 15, AC 1019 Master Wu Phong Zhin of Celestial Mountain Harmony Temple declares publicly the discovery of massive underground complexes in the Dragon Spine Mountains, Shun Province, Ochalea

Sviftmont 18th, 1019 Employment plan by the New Alphatian Empire has some success in Aeogs and Gaity

Eirmont 3, AC 1019 The Royal Office of Cultural Conservation arrests Master Zhin and several of his students on charges of conspiracy to create disharmony in Ochalea after is discovered that over a dozen native Ochalean warrior maidens are in the service of the order.

Eirmont 8th, 1019 The Pit in Aegos collapses, killing many workers

Eirmont 19th, AC 1019 A number of nobles and respected warriors, having paid the requisite priority fees, petition the *exarch* in public court to intercede in Master Zhin's case.

An Atlas of the Isle of Dawn

by Francesco Defferrari (Sturm)

To Her Imperial Majesty Eriadna the Wise, a short description of the Isle of Dawn, its communities and its inhabitants, known and unknown, compiled by Thiserstian of Alphatia, magician and scholar of the Imperial University. Borders and communities are those of 1000 AC, with 1020 AC integrations as specified in the map and the text.

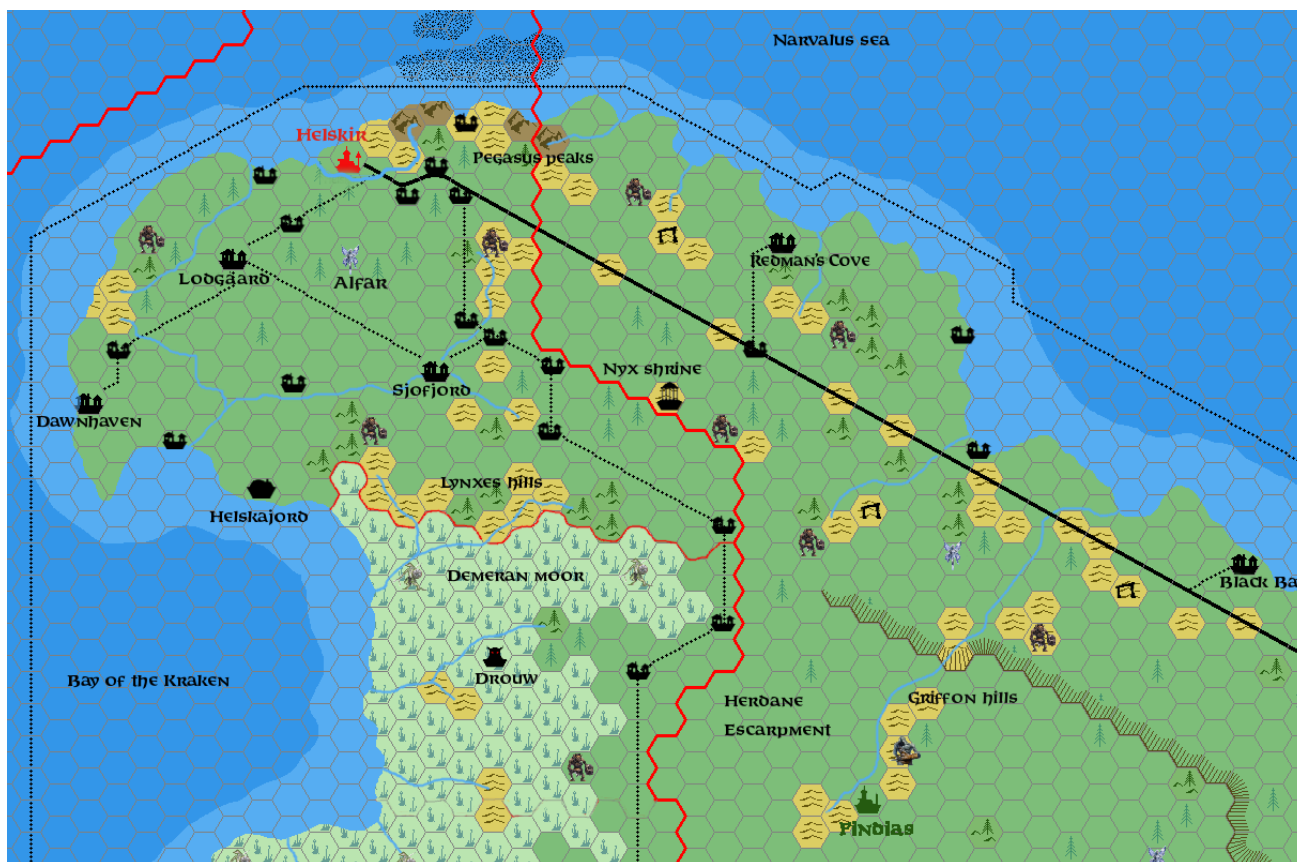
This Atlas is based on all the available fanon and canon sources, mostly M5 *Talons of Night*, *Dawn of Emperors* Boxed Set and the *Poor Wizard's Almanacs* I, II and III in canon and [these articles](#) at the Vaults of Pandius and the [Mystara Fan Almanacs](#) in fanon. The maps were populated by me, modifying the

original maps by Mark Howard, of the [Northern Isle of Dawn](#) and

[Southern Isle of Dawn](#) which can be found at the Vaults of Pandius. The full size map of the Isle with my additions will be published at the Vaults at a later date.



HELSKIR AND THE NORTH



Helskir and Northern Dunadale

The Northern Isle of Dawn is dominated by the City of Helskir, independent from both empires in 1000 AC, then an Alphatian Kingdom in 1008, independent again in 1009, occupied by Heldannic Knights in 1015, and finally forming the Kingdom of Heldun by absorbing Dunadale in 1016 AC. During several periods of its recent history, Helskir also claimed the Demerian Moor, inhabited by reptilian creatures and dark fairies. The plains are mostly dotted with farms and towns of the local Antalians, the Helska, and also some wizards' towers. The central woods are the rumored home of the Alfar, the northern fairies, and many hills are

roamed by bands of humanoids, some of them hostile to other races. Mountain Rakasta are rumored to live in the southern Helskir hills near the Demerian Moor. The Pegasus Peaks are also inhabited by Pegataurs, Cloud Giants and other strange creatures.

Northern Dunadale is a wild land, with Dunael humans living only near the coast, and the interior inhabited by fairies, humanoids, giants, griffons and more. There are also rumors of a cabal of Nyx worshippers and undead in the interior. The Herdane Escarpment is rumored to be the

domain of sidhe and other fairies, determined to protect their privacy and their fabled city of Findias from any intruder.

This area of the Isle is quite cold and subject to blizzards, strong winds and snowstorms in winter. Common animals are seals, lynxes, deer, elks, aurochs, wolves, bears, and beavers along with a huge variety of birds of prey and seabirds. The Bay of the Kraken, inhabited by seals and whales, is so called because of the monster which is supposed to lurk in its depths.

References:

The idea that a strong cult of Nyx exists on the Isle comes from M5 *Talons of Night*, by Jennell Jaquays.

About Helska, Dunael, Alfar and Drouw: see [“History of the Isle of Dawn”](#) by James Mishler

About the villages of the North: see [this article](#) by Geoff Gander

About rakasta in the Isle of Dawn: see [“History And Evolution Of Rakastas”](#) by Simone Neri

About the Herdane Escarpment: see the Almanac entries for [“Dunadale \(Duchy of: Empire of Thyatis\)”](#) and [“Heldun \(Exarchate/Confederated Kingdom of\)”](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

About Helskir and Dunadale: see the Almanac entries for [Helskir](#), [Dunadale](#) and [Heldun](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

Many creatures and monsters included in the map were inspired by [The Isle of Dawn Monstrous Atlas](#) by Sheldon Morris



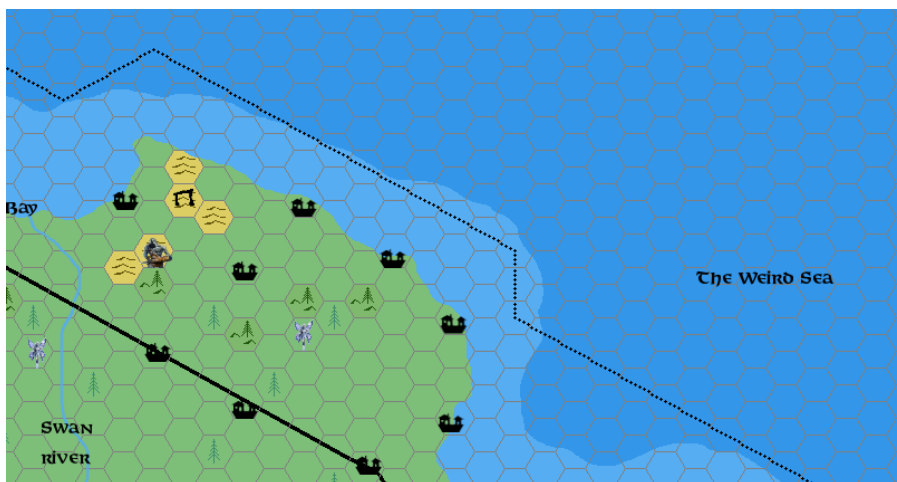
Helska and Dunael warriors

THE SWAN PENINSULA

This area is inhabited by Dunael humans, as is the rest of Dunadale. Local lore says the interior is dominated by swan creatures, but no one seems able to tell if they refer to fairies, pookas or werecreatures, or gyerians.

Some friendly Firbolg giants also live in the region. The sea of this area is also called the Weird Sea

because superstitious sailors say fairies often take people away from the ship's deck. It may also be because Water Weirds are quite common in this area.



The Swan Peninsula

References:

Gyerians appear on the Isle of Dawn in the Mystara book *Son of Dawn*

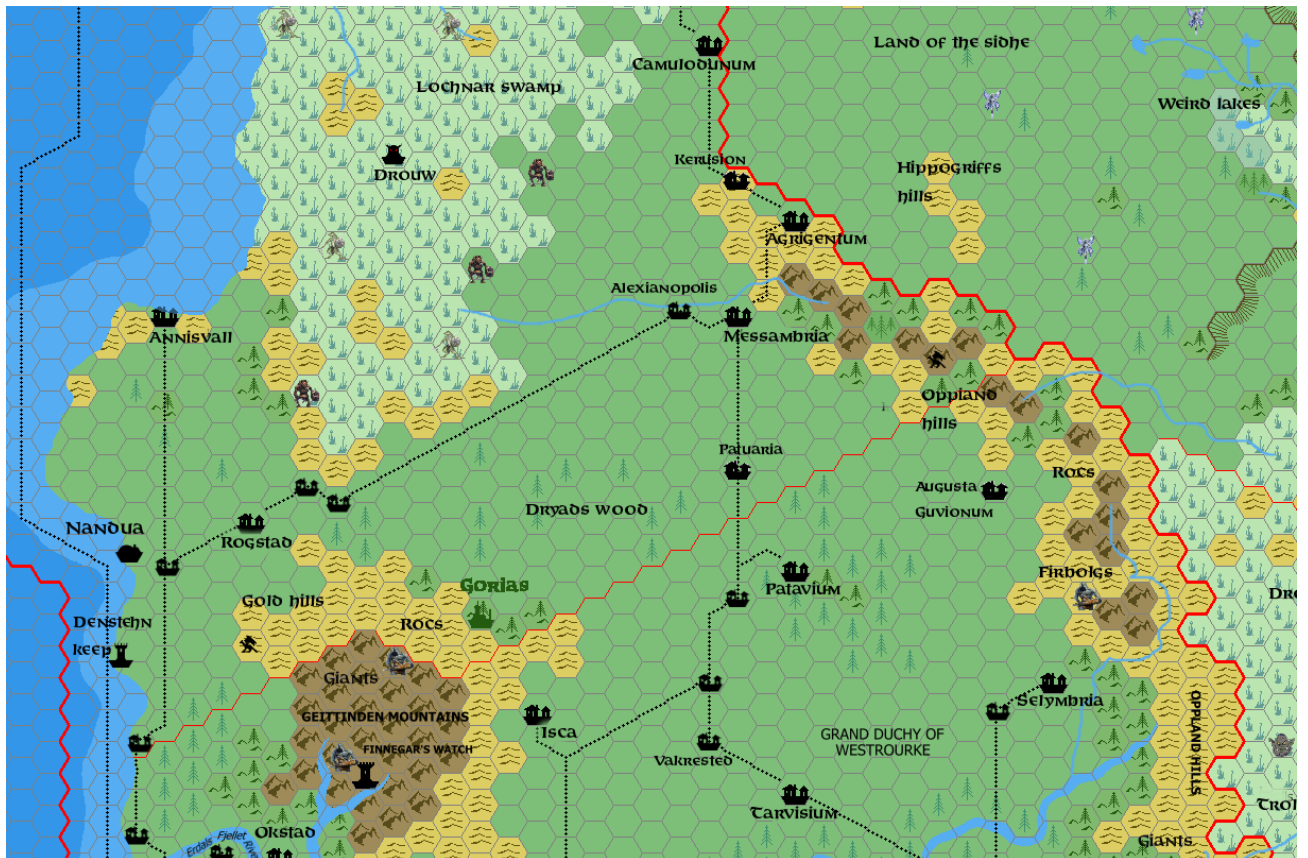
About Dunadale: see these Almanac entries for [Dunadale](#) and [Heldun](#) at the Vaults of Pandius, but this area was detailed by me here.

THE NORTHERN TERRITORIES

The northern part of this area, the southern Demerian Moor, has been claimed by Helskir in the past and eventually became part of the Kingdom of Heldun in 1016 AC. No one has much control over these lands however, and the Lochnar swamp, as the southern moor is normally called, is really inhabited by reptilian creatures, frogfolk, dark fairies and hostile humanoids.

The Thyatian villages of Camulodunum, Agrigentum and Messambria were proverbial

among legionaries as the most backward and isolated places a poor soldier could be sent to. Since the formation of Heldun the soldiers who guard this road are sent from Helskir or Dunadale, but they probably feel the same way. The Oppiand Hills which divide Westrouke from Dunadale are inhabited by Firbolgs and other giants, rocs, dragons and hippogriffs. The same goes for the Geittinden Mountains of northern Westrouke, where the famous Finnegar's Watch lay, a sacred place dedicated to a



The Northern Territories

mythical Dunael king who battled in the ancient past the evil Fomorian giants. The most important city of this area is however Nandua, on the western coast, a haven for pirates and unscrupulous merchants. Another mythical faerie city, Gorias, is according to local lore hidden in the hills around the Geittinden Mountains.

References:

Nandua and nearby Denstehn keep are mentioned in *AC10 Bestiary of Dragons and Giants*, and in [Threshold issue 9, page 101](#).

Some locations in this area came from Simone Neri's [Guide to Norwold](#) published

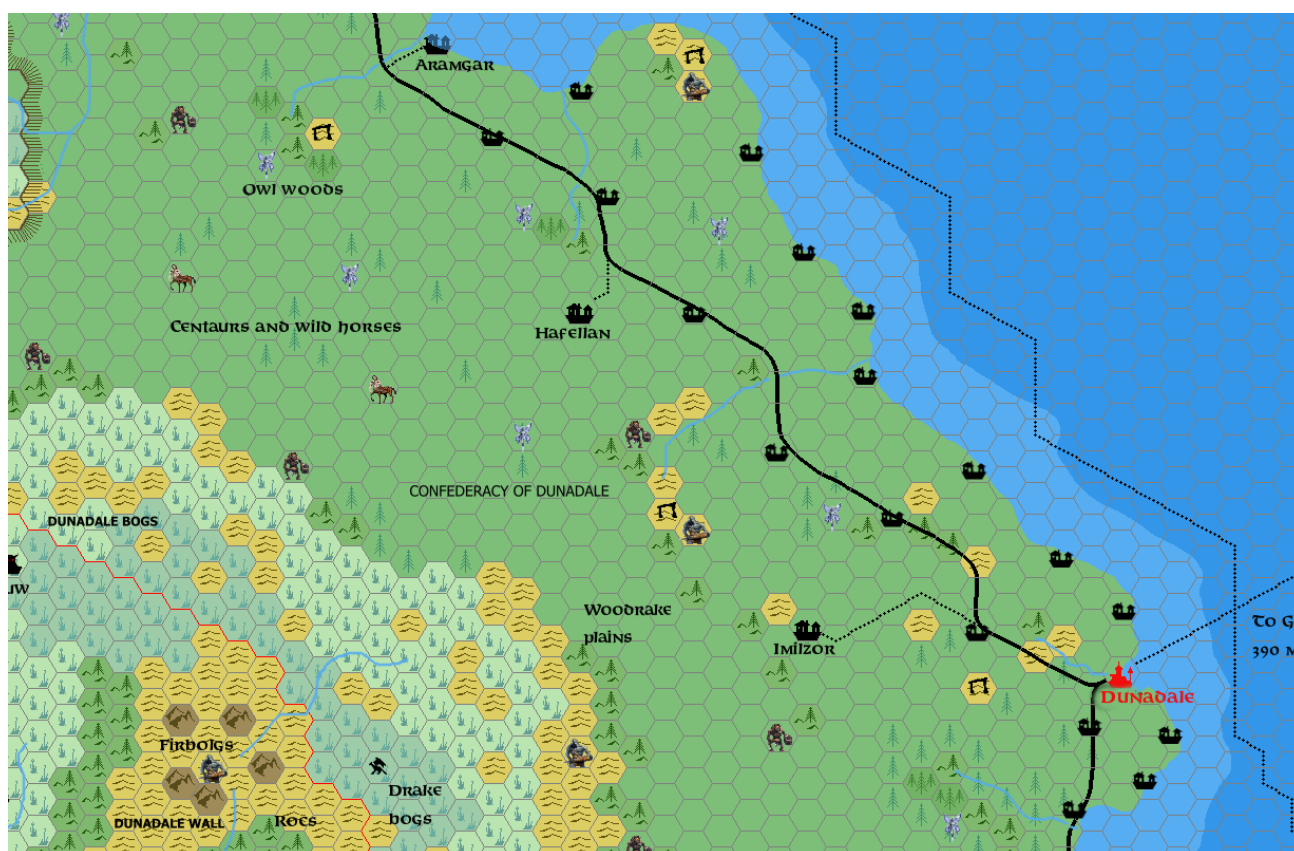
in *Threshold* issue #7; [his 24 mph](#) maps can be also found at the Vaults of Pandius

About Finnegar's Watch, Gorias, Firbolgs and Fomorians: see ["History of the Isle of Dawn"](#) by James Mishler



Dunael chief surrendering to the Thyatians

CENTRAL DUNADALE



Central Dunadale

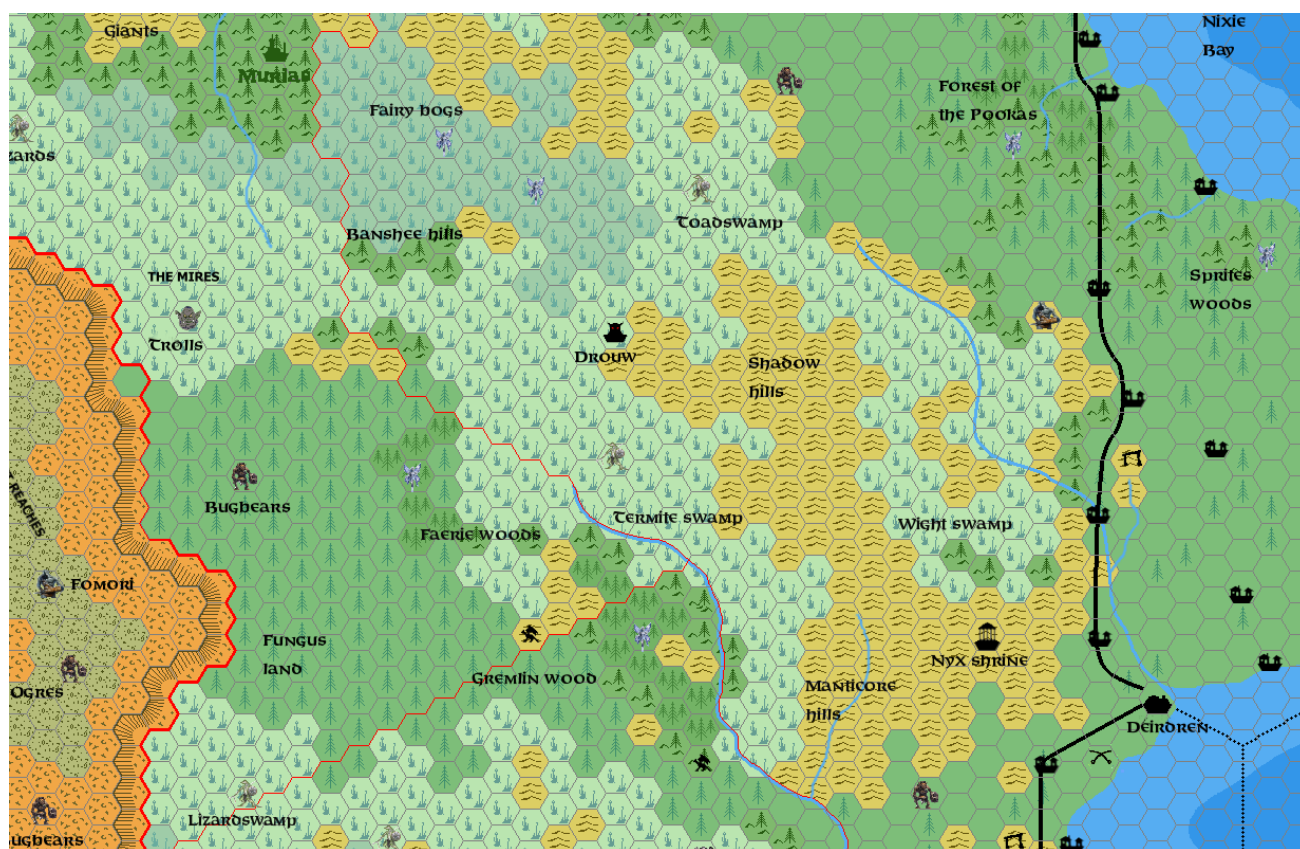
Inhabited by Dunael humans on the coast, Dunadale, which will become part of Heldun in 1016 AC, is a wild land in the interior, the domain of fairies, centaurs, drakes, humanoids and many other non human creatures. It is also a green land, full of plant life, woods and animals, such as deer, horses, wild goats and many others. It can be quite cold and foggy in autumn and winter but warm during the summer. The Dunadale bogs are quite dangerous, claimed by humanoids and dark fairies. The mountains of the Dunadale Wall are dominated by Firbolgs and other giants, rocs and giant

eagles. Nixies and Sea Hags are supposed to dwell in the waters of Dunadale.

References:

About Dunadale: see Almanac entries [“Dunadale \(Duchy of: Empire of Thyatis\)”](#) and [“Heldun \(Exarchate/Confederated Kingdom of\)”](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

SOUTHERN DUNADALE



Southern Dunadale

The winters are milder here and the coast is supposedly inhabited by friendly fairies, but the interior is as dangerous as any wild land could be. Trolls, giant termites, dark fairies, wights, banshees, manticores, bugbears and other humanoids, gremlins, harpies, fungus creatures, lizardmen, frogfolk and other kinds of creatures live in this area, including some normal animals that could occasionally be dangerous, such as great bears, wolves, jackals and mountain lions. The Dust Reaches, in the west toward Westrouрке, are also inhabited by humanoids and Fomorian. More than one group of Alphatian adventurers has explored the wilderlands searching for the mythical fairy city of Murias,

but no one, to the extent of my knowledge, has ever returned.

References:

About Dunadale: see Almanac entries [“Dunadale \(Duchy of: Empire of Thyatis\)”](#) and [“Heldun \(Exarchate/Confederated Kingdom of\)”](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

NORTHERN WESTROURKE



Northern Westrouke

The area of the Isle nearest to Ostland is inhabited by similar Antalian people, who sometimes fight against Ostlander pirates and sometimes are allied with them. The internal woods of Svorkmo (or Svorkomo) are infested with goblins and similar creatures. The Fyresvatn Bogs are inhabited by lizardmen. More humanoids, and according to some unverified accounts, also lupins and rakasta, inhabit the Cougar hills and the Dust Reaches to the east.

Ancient and mysterious ruins are rumored to exist in the Reaches, but the high number of humanoids in the area has always been a serious obstacle to their full exploration. Underwater, the Gulf is supposedly

dominated by Sea Giants and Whales, and clans of Storm Giants also live among the small islands and the reefs of the western coast.

References:

About Westrouke: see [these Almanac entries](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

I placed Nithian ruins in several locations of the Isle taking inspiration from the description in Dawn of the Emperors and from [“Extent of the Nithian Empire”](#) by LoZompatore

GULF OF NEWKIRK



Gulf of Newkirk

This gulf, often closed by high cliffs, is dominated by Westrouke's capital, Newkirk. The regions north of the city, the Kauth Hills, Westrouke Bogs and southern Dust Reaches are not the domain of man, and anyone treading on them does so at his own great risk. The northern coast of Redstone and the inner part of the Gulf are instead dotted by fishing towns and keeps. The interior of Redstone is still quite a wild land, and the Sutherlands peninsula is mostly inhabited by centaurs, usually not hostile to travellers. The western coast however is also called the Pirates Coast, as it is dotted with pirate and buccanier coves, and considered quite dangerous for passing ships. The sea in front of the Sutherlands is dominated by the

intelligent Dendan Whales, who often attack ships because humans often attack them, as their bodies are supposed to contain a magical ingredient to produce water breathing potions, and precious oil and meat, just as all other whales.

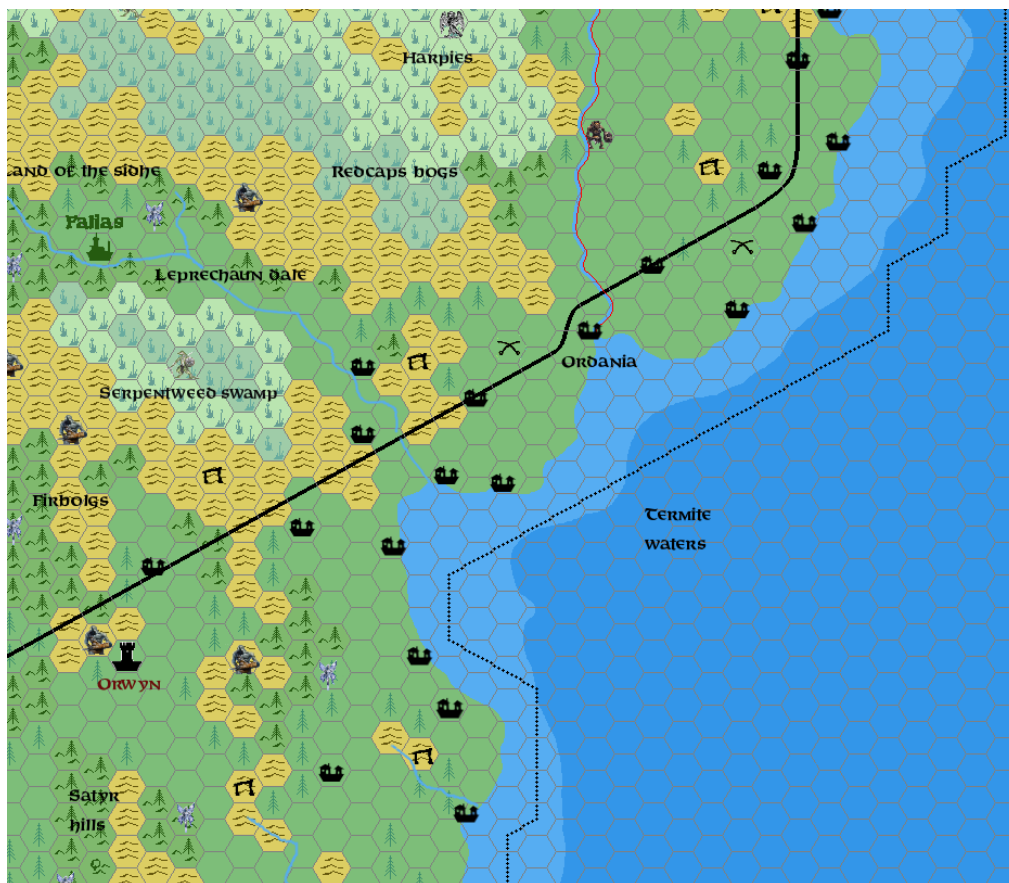
References:

About Westrouke: see [these Almanac entries](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

About Redstone see [these Almanac entries](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

About the Dendan Whales see [“Advices for Traders in the Sea of Dread”](#) by Michele “LoZompatore” C. in issue #4 of Threshold Magazine (page 49).

NORTHERN HILLVALE



Northern Hillvale

This region is really fairy land, outside the main road and the coastal Dunael villages, it is quite easy to get lost in the woods and the fog, encountering sprites, pixies, satyrs or the more dangerous redcaps. Firbolgs too live numerous in the western hills. Another mythical fairy city, Falias, is rumored to lie somewhere in a remote vale. The rivers of this area and the coastal waters are often inhabited by water termites.

References:

About Hillvale: see [these Almanac entries](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

Ordnania is mentioned in [“History of the Dunael Peoples”](#) by Thomas Forsyth



Dryad and pixies

REDSTONE AND WEST PORTAGE



Redstone and West Portage

Since a thousand year the main fortress city of the Thyatian Empire in the central Isle of Dawn, Redstone became a County in 1010 AC, then an Exarchate in 1017 AC. The Dunael human natives of the area call themselves Ruagallans and have always cohabited peacefully with centaurs, faeries, lupins and Firbolg giants, quite common in the area, and have often fought against humanoids and Fomori giants. Many scholars think indeed that either the modern Newkirk or Redstone was in the remote past the capital of the great kingdom of the giants of

Gandhar. Other giant kingdoms, later ruled by Firbolgs or Fomorians have risen and fallen in the following centuries. Other human people, such as Thothians, Milenians and Northmen, have also founded their cities in this region in the past centuries. Non human races still inhabit the interior of this land in relevant numbers. The area of the Fengallen marshes, Carryduff Hills and Killyleagh Curragh in particular is a huge territory dominated by bugbears and kobolds, and maybe other creatures too. Nemedra, an important town south of

Newkirk, has a very ancient history as it once was a Thothian and Milenian¹ city.

The area of the Barony of West Portage is inhabited by the Teihzel Dunaels, who also live further to the east, and it has its own share of fairies, and humanoids. Some unverified accounts say “one of the seven” fairy cities, Ardulla, lies in the area. If there are indeed seven fairy cities, I have identified only five of them so far, and therefore I don’t know where on the Isle the other two may lie.

References:

About Redstone: see [these Almanac entries](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

About the giants of Gandhar see James Mishler’s [“Age of Blackmoor”](#) article at the Vaults and my article [“New Blackmoor, 3050 BC”](#) in Threshold issue #2.

About West Portage see [these Almanac entries](#) at The Vaults of Pandius

About the Ruagallans and Teihzels: see [“Real World Inspiration for the Isle of Dawn”](#) by Simone Neri at The Vaults of Pandius

About the town of Alexandria near the Carryduff Hills: see [“To Build A Mystara City”](#) by Jesper Andersen at The Vaults of Pandius

About Nemedra, Nithian and Traldar city: see [“History of the Isle of Dawn”](#) by James Mishler at The vaults of Pandius

About Ardulla: see [“Summerhill Hounds”](#) by Håvard at The Vaults of Pandius

¹ Part of the great Milenian colonizations and explorations of 500 - 100 BC, see the article [“Lost Civilizations of Thyatis and Alphatia”](#) in this same issue.



Violent battle between Alphatians and Thyatians

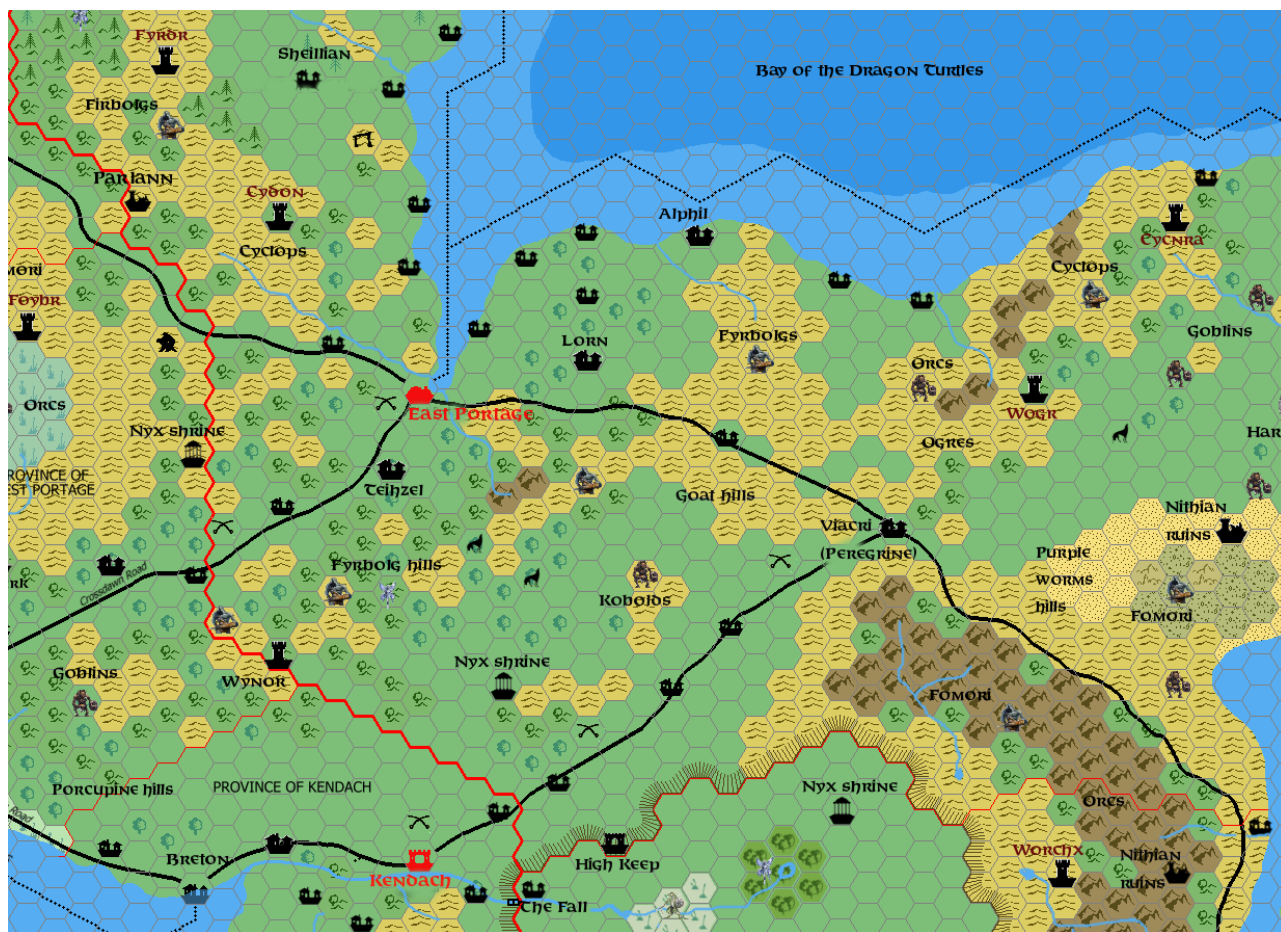


Thyatian lord judging a prisoner



Conquest of a Milenian city by Thyatians

EAST PORTAGE AND KENDACH



East Portage and Kendach

This region too is inhabited by the Teihzel Dunaels as the area of West Portage, later joined by Thothians, Thyatians and Alphatians. Most of the wilderlands are inhabited by Firbolgs and other non human races, including faeries, lupins, kobolds, orcs, ogres, cyclops, Fomorians, harpies and much more. The region is untamed and mostly unexplored just a few miles out of the main roads and the coasts. East Portage, once a city state of the Alphatian Empire, became the capital of the Kingdom of Hillvale in 1016 AC. The Bay of the Dragon Turtles is such named because the creatures have been spotted in the area, and often blamed for ships lost at sea.

The Kendach Escarpment has been claimed by Kendach since 1000 AC, but in truth is a land dominated by Fomorian giants, even if it seems it once hosted the capital of a Firbolg kingdom. A rumor I was unable to verify also says that the Archdruid of the Isle has his house on the Escarpment.

References:

About Firbolgs and Fomorians in this area see [“History of the Isle of Dawn”](#) by James Mishler at the Vaults of Pandius

About the Archdruid: see [“Archdruid of the Isle of Dawn”](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

About East Portage: see these [East Portage](#) and [Hillvale](#) Almanac entries at the Vaults of Pandius

About the Teihzels: see [“Real World Inspiration for the Isle of Dawn”](#) by Simone Neri at the Vaults of Pandius

About Kendach: see [these Almanac entries](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

About West Portage: see [these Almanac entries](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

BAY OF EKTO



Bay of Ekto

The Peninsula of Rathen, east of East Portage is the start of the fastest sea lane to reach Alphatia, but also a wild and dangerous land inhabited by goblins, cyclops, harpies and Fomorians, and dotted with mysterious ruins from a forgotten past. The Bay of Ekto to the south is much more civilized near the city, but the hills and the mountains west of Ekto are the domain of orcs and Fomorians giants.

The mountains however are also extremely rich in minerals, and in fact they hosted in the past many Thothian outposts and are still the seat of the famous Great Mines of Ekto.

The land beyond the road south of Ekto is a wild land, inhabited by orcs, minotaurs, cyclops, medusa and other monsters and, some believe, dominated by followers of Nyx and undead.

The Bay of Ekto is supposedly inhabited by non hostile merrow and tritons, but the high sea towards Alphatia is infested by giant octopuses.

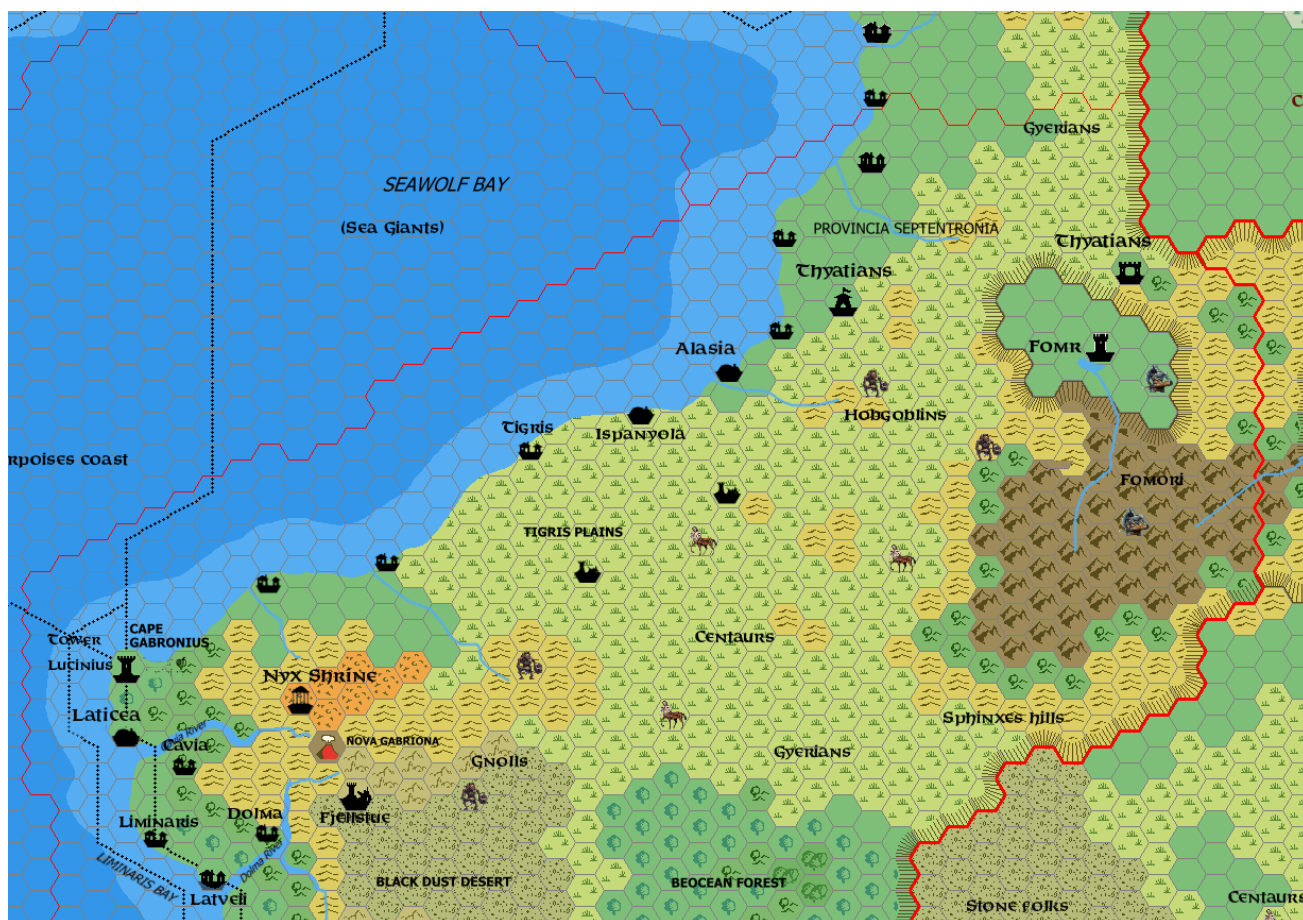
References:

I assumed several Nithian outposts could exist in the area, inspired by [“Extent of the Nithian Empire”](#) by LoZompatore at the Vaults. I created the Great Mines of Ekto because

mining is given as an important activity for the city in Dawn of the Emperors.

About Ekto: see [thes Almanac entries](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

SEPTENTRIONA



Septentriona

The area which the Thyatians now call Provincia Septentriona has in truth a very ancient history, inhabited in the past by giants, Thothians and Milenians. The area near to the city of Alasia is also the original homeland of the modern inhabitants of Ylaruam, and the nearby city of Ispanyola was for some centuries the home of the Thyatians that later colonized the Savage Coast, far to the west. Indeed the human cultures of this region are quite complicated, as there are also the Aseni and the Armeni, who could be related to ancient Alasiyan or to the Asieni of the Shadow Coast, and important Traldar and Milenian settlements,

such as Latticea, were also founded in the western coast. The inhuman inhabitants of the area are even more different and interesting, if sometimes dangerous, including dragons, Fomorian giants, centaurs, gyerians, gnolls, sphinxes, hobgoblins, rakasta, lupins and other humanoids. Much more should be written of Septentriona to truly learn the secrets of this land.

Despite its name, the Seawolf Bay is not inhabited only by seals, but also by many dolphins, porpoises and sea giants.

References:

GAZ2: *The Emirates of Ylarum* mentions that the Alasiyans of Ylaruam did come from the Isle of Dawn, brought as slaves by the Nithians.

The Aseni and a M-Armenian culture are mentioned in [“Real World Inspiration for the Isle of Dawn”](#) by Simone Neri

About the Asieni and Latticea: see [“History of the Isle of Dawn”](#) by James Mishler

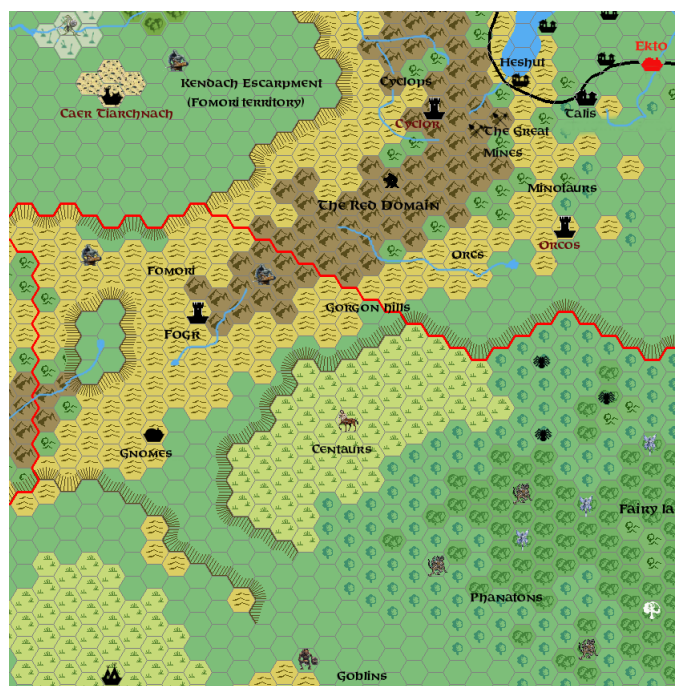
About Septentriona: see [these Almanac entries](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

About Ispanyola: see [“The History of the Ispan People: Some Notes”](#) by James Mishler

Rakasta presence on the Isle of Dawn is mentioned in [“History And Evolution Of Rakastas”](#) by Simone Neri at the Vaults

Lupins presence in Ochalea are mentioned in [“History of the Lupins”](#) by Giampaolo Agosta; I decided independently that they could have a presence in the Isle too.

LAND OF THE FOMORIANS



Land of the Fomorians

It is worthwhile to describe separately the central area of the Isle between Kendach, Ekto and Latticea because it can be considered a land fully dominated by the Fomorian giants, who rule over the three minor Escarpments and the Fomorian Hills and Mountains to the south and the east of them. These giants are usually hostile to human encroachment, but in their territories there are other races and monsters too, including gorgons, cyclops, minotaurs, orcs and dragons, probably all allied with them. A notorious but unnamed red dragon rules the so called Red Domain in the mountains, probably in league with the Fomorians. The northern part of the Great Escarpment, south of Fomorian lands, is instead inhabited by centaurs, phanations and gnomes, of whom I will write below.

References:

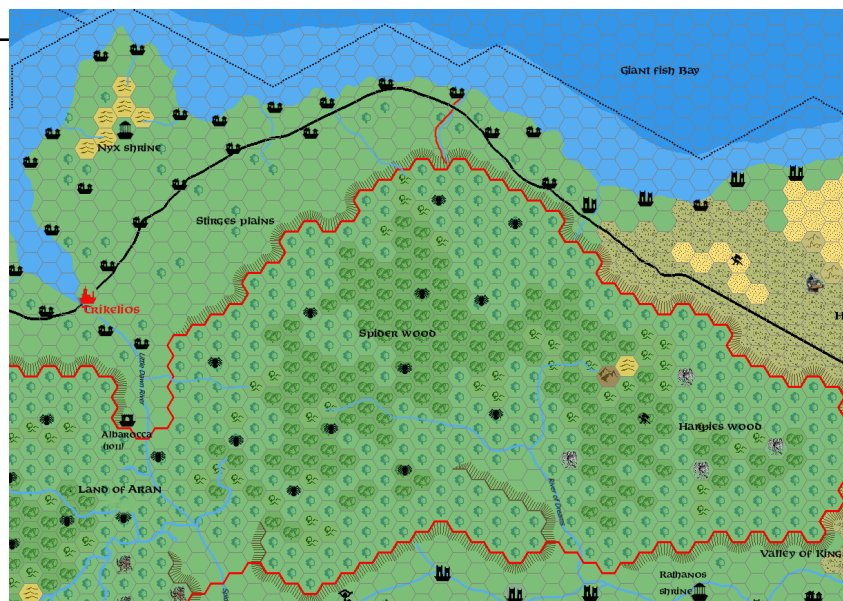
The main reference about the Fomori is again [“History of the Isle of Dawn”](#) by James Mishler

THE TRIKELIOS ESCARPMENT

The branch of the Great Escarpment which goes from Trikelios towards Thothia is often called in Alphatia the Trikelios Escarpment. It is also called the Spider Wood, as giant spiders are the most important inhabitants of the area, with some harpies, gremlins, dragons and phanatons. Fairies of various kinds also probably live in these woods. The area is largely unexplored and, according to some explorers, dotted with ancient ruins infested by giant spiders.

The Trikelios peninsula northeast of the city and the area toward Thothia is inhabited by the local humans, mostly descendants of the ancient Milenians and Alphatians, but it too has several wild regions, inhabited by stirges and other creatures or rumored to be dominated by followers of Nyx and the undead. Great animals of the region include seals, ostriches, wild goats and wild asses, deers and gazelles, wolves, jackals and leopards.

The sea of this region is notorious for the great tuna fish that can be caught here.



The Trikelios Escarpment

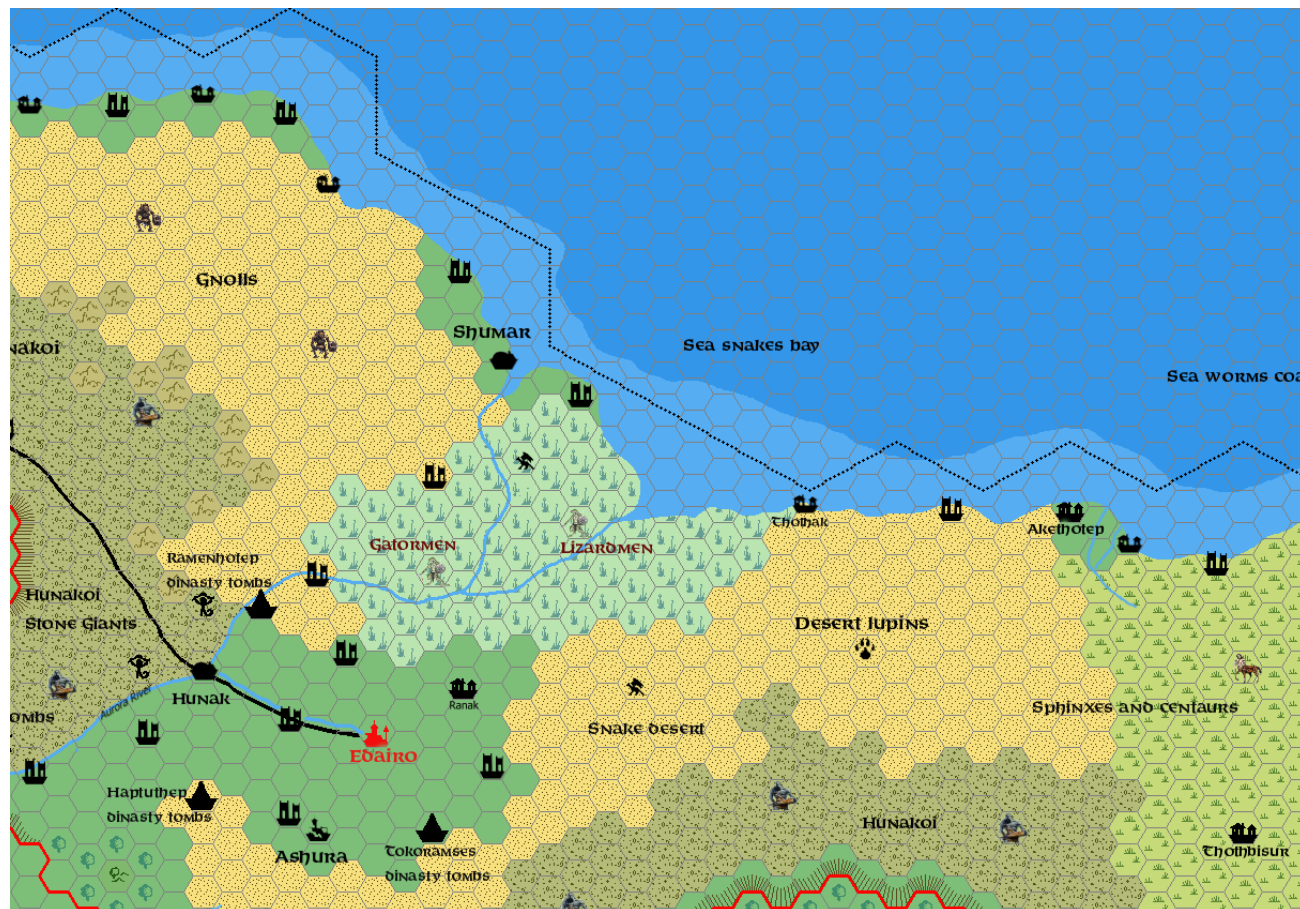
References:

The land of Aran, ancient realms of the Aranea, is south of Trikelios in the module M5 Talons of Night, where also the cult of Nyx in the Isle is mentioned.

About Aran: see also [“Lost Histories: Empire of Aran”](#) by Andrew Theisen and the [“History of Thothia and Aran”](#) timeline by John Calvin

About Trikelios: see [these Almanac entries](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

THOTHIA



Thothia

The central region of Thothia contains the great city of Edairo but not just it, as there are also the ancient tombs of the pharaohs, great pyramids, the ruins of Ashura, the city of Shumar and much more. The local humans are mostly Thothians, with some Alphatians, but there are also a variety of non human races in the area, from the gnolls of the northern desert to the lupins of the east, several reptilian races both in the Thothian swamp and in the deserts, sphinxes, centaurs and more. The Hunakoi stone giants are also an important population of the area, as they once had a great kingdom here, with Ashura as their capital.

The Aurora river is famously full of the equally dangerous hippos and crocodiles.

In the open sea, ships are sometimes attacked by sea snakes and sea worms.

References:

The Hunakoi, stone giants with red skins, are mentioned in *M5 Talons of Night*, page 10 and in James Mishler’s [“History of the Isle of Dawn”](#), as Ashura and Shumar.

See also [these Almanac entries](#) on Thothia at the Vaults of Pandius

EASTERN THOTHIA

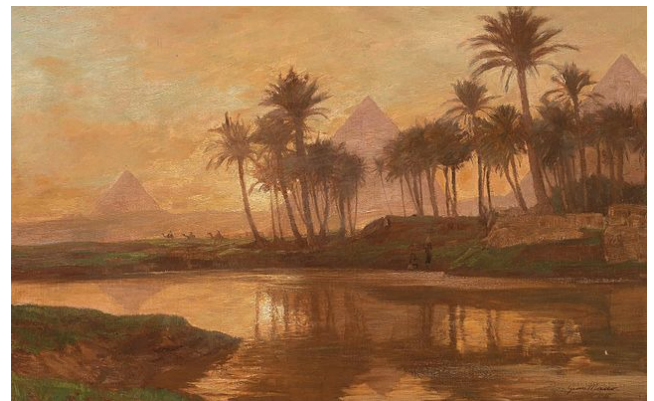


Eastern Thothia

The Thothian Peninsula, also called Eastern Thothia, is a huge grassland inhabited by humans mostly along the coast. The interior, while still dotted with some Thothian villages, is mostly the domain of other creatures, such as the Fast Runners Rakasta, a huge variety of antelopes, goats and gazelles, centaurs, sphinxes, dragons, gnolls and thouls. Tigers, lions and leopards all hunt in this great plain. The seas around the peninsula are supposedly full of giant squid, sharks, manta rays and devilfish.

References:

Rakasta Fast Runners are mentioned in the area in [“History And Evolution Of Rakastas”](#) by Simone Neri

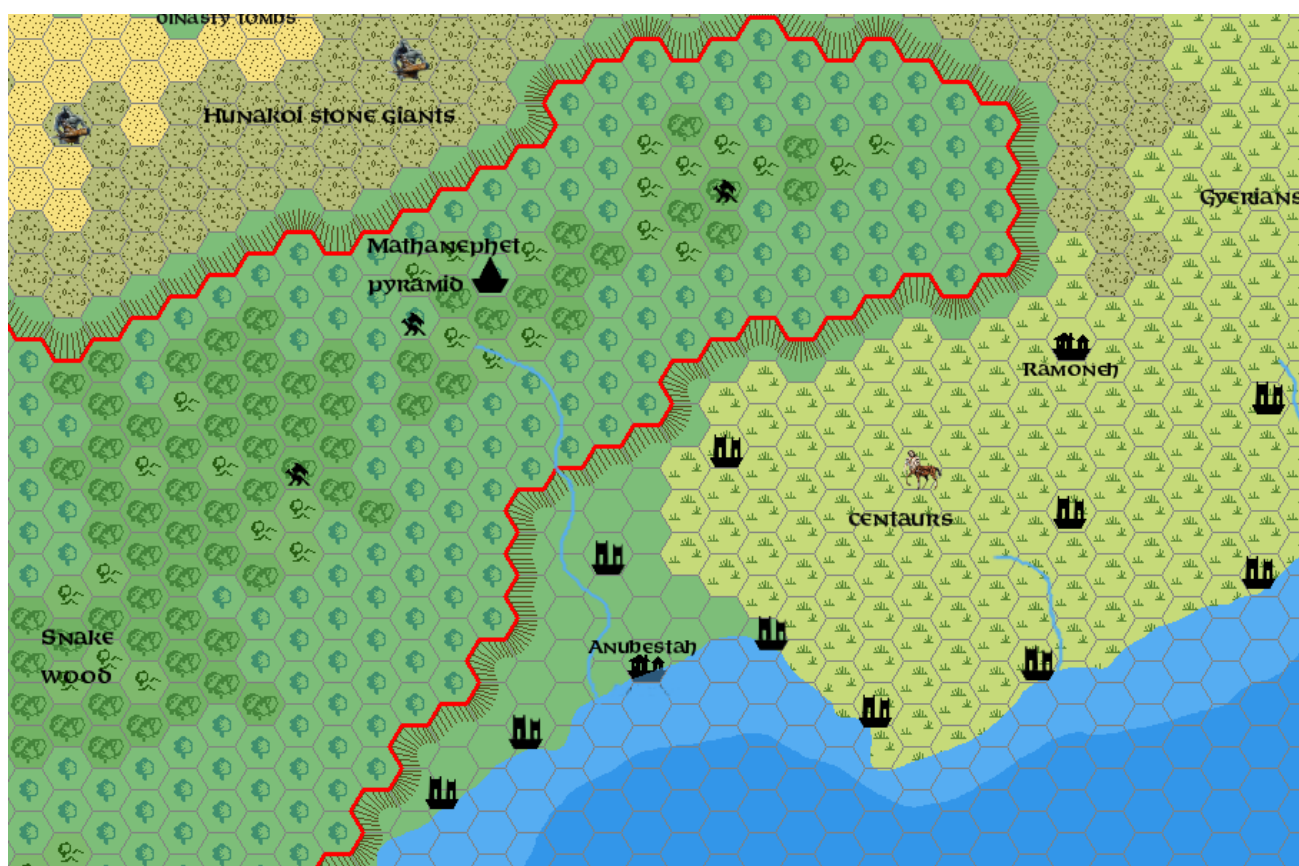


Thothian landscape



Depiction of Fomorian giants (see ppage 189)

MATHANEPHET

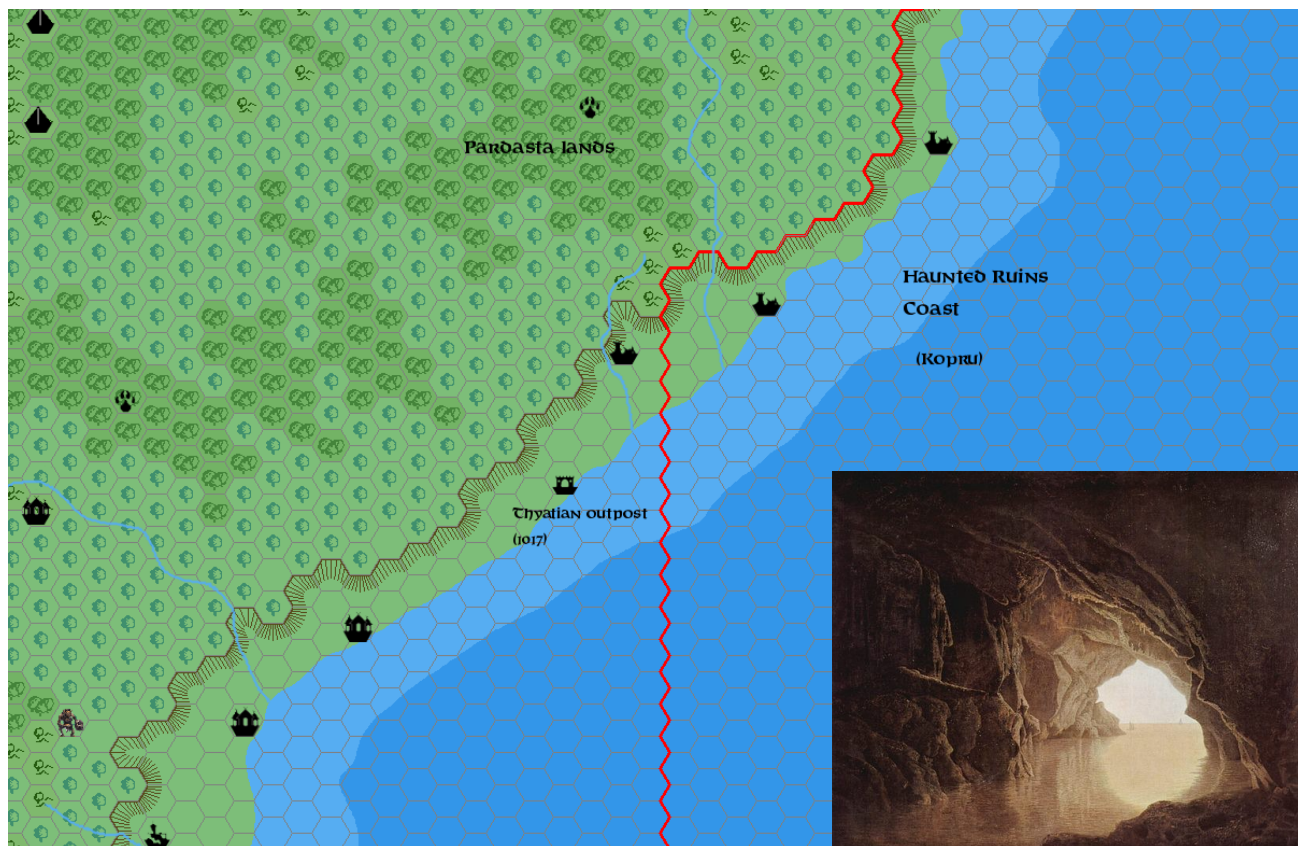
*Mathanephet*

The southern branch of the Great Escarpment, also called the Thothian Branch, is locally known as Mathanephet, from the name of a legendary dragon king who once had here a huge pyramid and ruled over a great domain. No one so far has ever been able to discern if there is some truth in this rumor. Thothian adventurers do not usually venture in this area, and the Alphantian adventurers who have done so did not return, recruited, willing or not, by Mathanephet, or so the story goes. The Thothian villages of the southern coast are actually quiet places, but some say they are all dominated by death cults.

References:

Mathanephet is an undead dragon who was created by me in [“Who’s Who in the Wyrksteeth part 2”](#) (Threshold issue #9, page 101)

THE HAUNTED COAST



The Haunted Coast

Sea cave in the southern coast

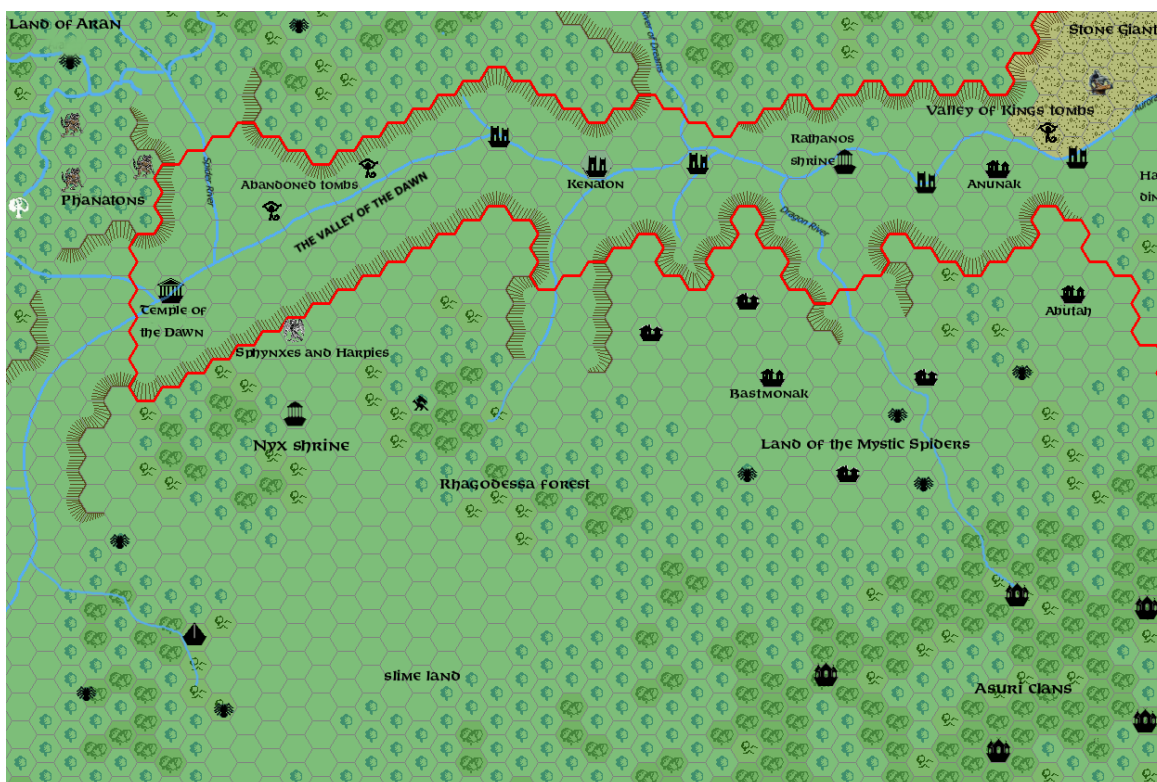
The so called Haunted Coast is an unexplored area of the Isle, inhabited according to local rumors by dangerous creatures both under the sea and on the coast. The region is also dotted with mysterious and unexplored ruins, maybe Thothian, maybe much more ancient. The warm woods of the Escarpment above are dominated by Pardasta rakasta, and by other non human inhabitants, including treants and fairies. The few human settlements of the coast belong to the Asieri and Asuri cultures, but those who inhabit this area are said to be savage and xenophobic.

References:

Pardasta rakasta are mentioned in the area in [“History And Evolution Of Rakastas”](#) by Simone Neri at the Vaults of Pandius

The ruins should belong to the ancient colony of New Thonia, invented by James Mishler in his [“History of the Isle of Dawn”](#), from before the Great Rain of Fire. Same source for the Asieri and the Asuri cultures.

THE VALLEY OF THE DAWN



The Valley of the Dawn

This great valley is the heart of the Isle, once inhabited by Asuri humans and Hunakoi giants, then settled by the Thothians, who built here great temples and tombs. Soon after they fell under the domination of the Night Spider cult, and were liberated in 1002 AC by Ramenhotep XXIV. The valley is also the main base of the rebellious pharaoh Haptuthep II from 1016 AC.

Rumors in Edairo say the now banned religion of the mystic spiders still thrives in the villages of the Escarpment just south of the valley. Giant spiders, sphinxes and harpies are numerous in the area, as are many other kinds of dangerous monsters. It's not clear if the Asuri humans who live in this area of the Escarpment are followers of the Night Spider or not.

The phanatons who live west of the Valley are certainly enemies of the Spider and of her servitors.

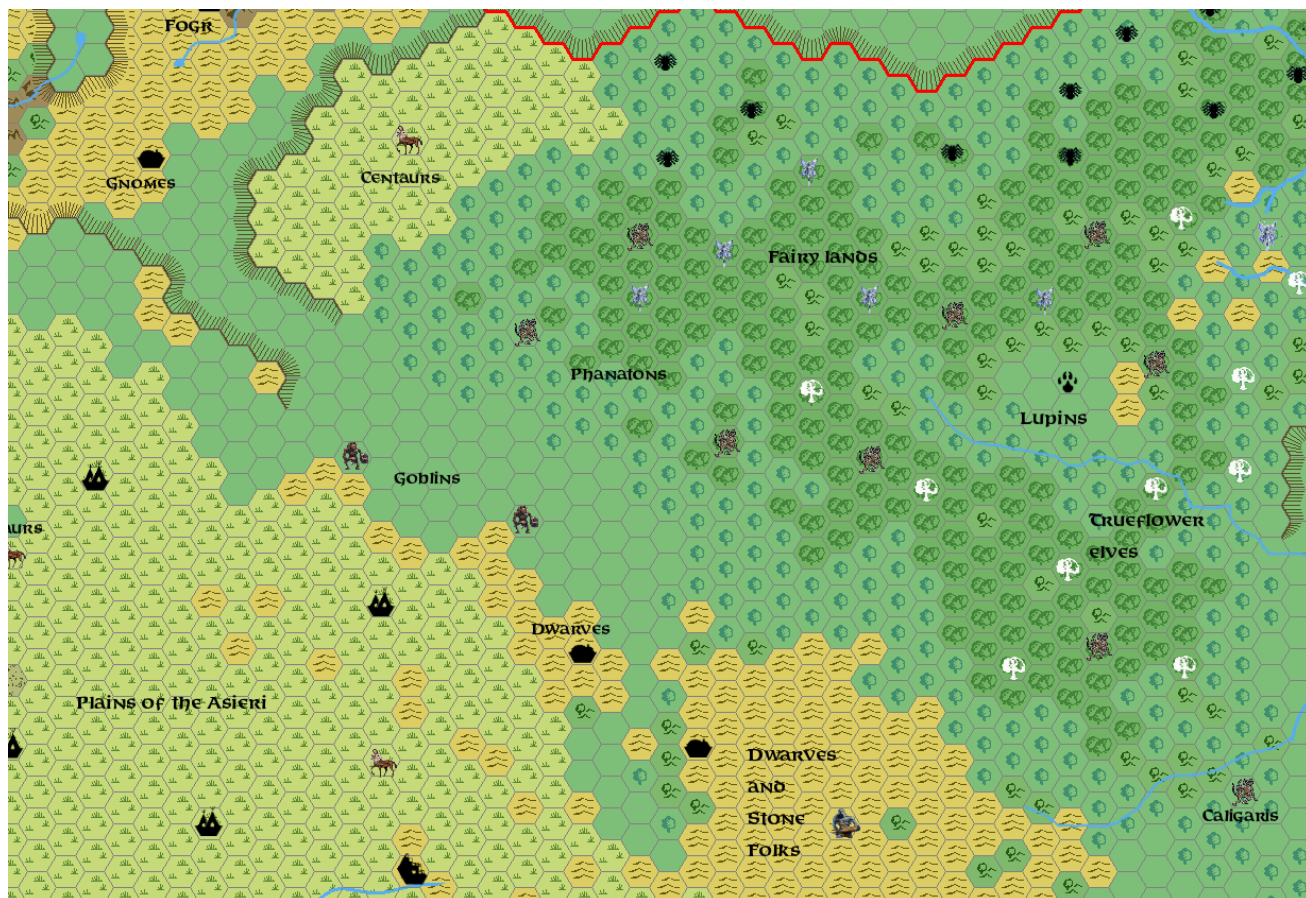
References:

The Valley of the Dawn and the Night Spider are prominent in the module *M5 Talons of Night*.

For the timeline of the Valley, see also my article "*20 Years of History in the Sea of Dawn*" in this issue of *Threshold Magazine*.

For the Asuri culture and the Hunakoi, see "[History of the Isle of Dawn](#)" by James Mishler

THE CENTRAL ESCARPMENT NORTH



The Central Escarpment North

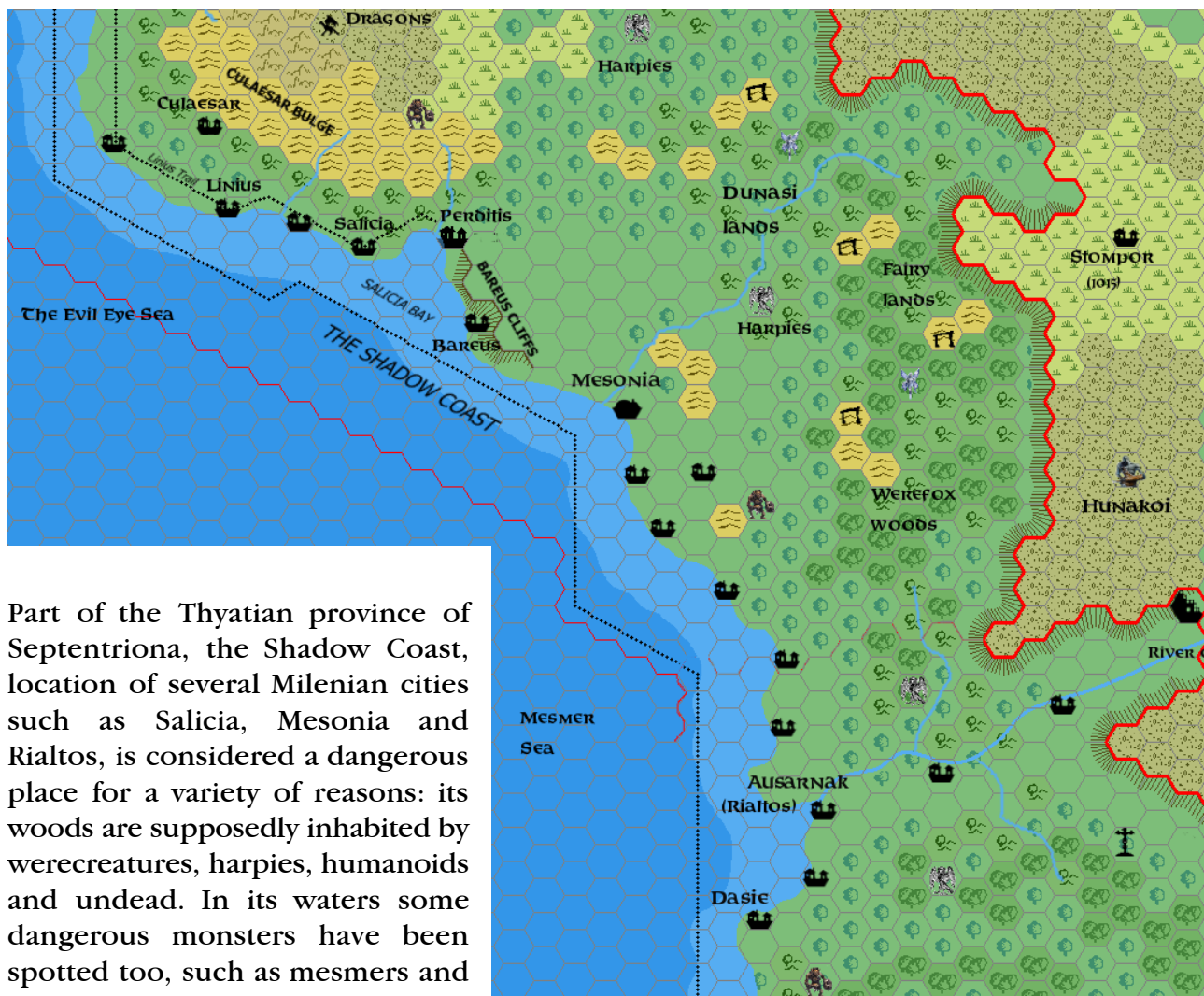
This area of the Isle is inhabited by some mysterious cultures, such as the almost unknown Trueflower elves, who I have mentioned recently in my small treaty about the Elves of Mystara, lupins, phanatons, many kinds of fairies, centaurs, the stone folk and some isolated clans of gnomes and dwarves. I cannot say much about these people because I know almost nothing about them. The valley that divides this region of the escarpment is also inhabited by powerful goblin clans, while the plains to the south west are dominated by the Asieri humans and centaurs.

References:

The Trueflower elves were mentioned in my article [“The Elven Clans and their Migrations”](#) (Threshold Magazine issue #10)

For the local dwarves and gnomes, the stone folks and the Asieri, see [“History of the Isle of Dawn”](#) by James Mishler at the Vaults of Pandius

THE SHADOW COAST



Part of the Thyatian province of Septentriona, the Shadow Coast, location of several Milenian cities such as Salicia, Mesonia and Rialtos, is considered a dangerous place for a variety of reasons: its woods are supposedly inhabited by werereatures, harpies, humanoids and undead. In its waters some dangerous monsters have been spotted too, such as mesmers and aquatic beholders. The interior of this region is truly an unknown and wild land, but is still inhabited by some ancient cultures, like the Dunasi, the Ausar and the Albernians. These bronze skin humans are descendants of Thothians, Dunaels, Oltecs, Traldar, Milenians or, more probably, a bit of them all.

References:

About Septentriona see [these Almanac entries](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

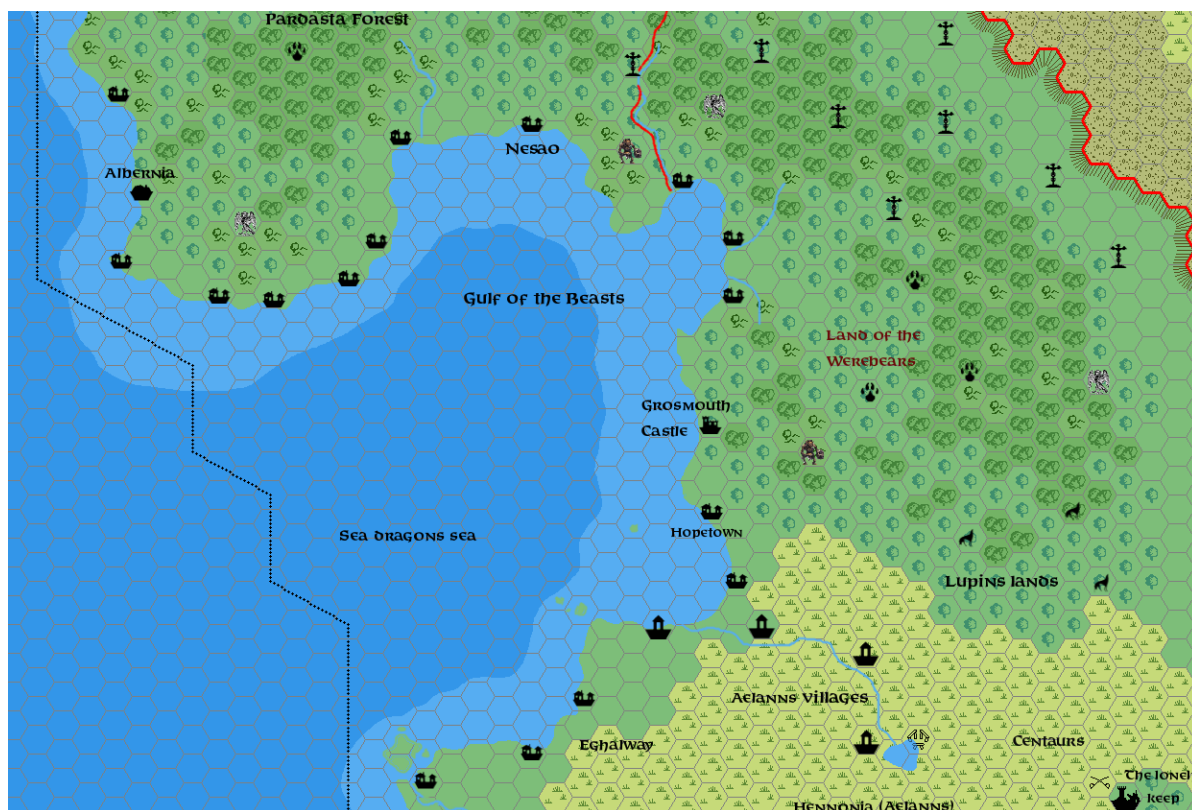
For Ausarnak: see James Mishler's "[History of the Isle of Dawn](#)". The Ausar should be the descendants of the Nithians who lived there.

For the Albernians: see Simone Neri's article, "[Real World Inspiration for the Isle of Dawn](#)", at the Vaults of Pandius

The Dunasi have been invented by me here as a mix up of Dunaels and Asieri.

The Shadow Coast

MERIDIONA NORTH

*Meridiona North*

The region the Thyatians call Provincia Meridiona, or rather the northern part of it and the southern part of Septentriona, is also called the Gulf of the Beasts, as the interior lands are inhabited by wercreatures, humanoids, lupins and rakasta. Beside that, the sea is also inhabited by sea dragons. On the coast there are also many human villages, inhabited by Albernians and Thyatians. There are humans also in the interior lands, the Asieni, supposedly descendants of the ancient Oltecs who mixed with Milenians, Dunaels and Thyatians. They are often considered savages, and dedicated to entropic cults, by those living on the coasts. Another rumor I heard maintains there are elves living in the remote forests of the Shadow Coast. If such elves really exist, they

are even more mysterious and reclusive than the Trueflower of the Great Escarpment.

References:

About Meridiona: see [these Almanac entries](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

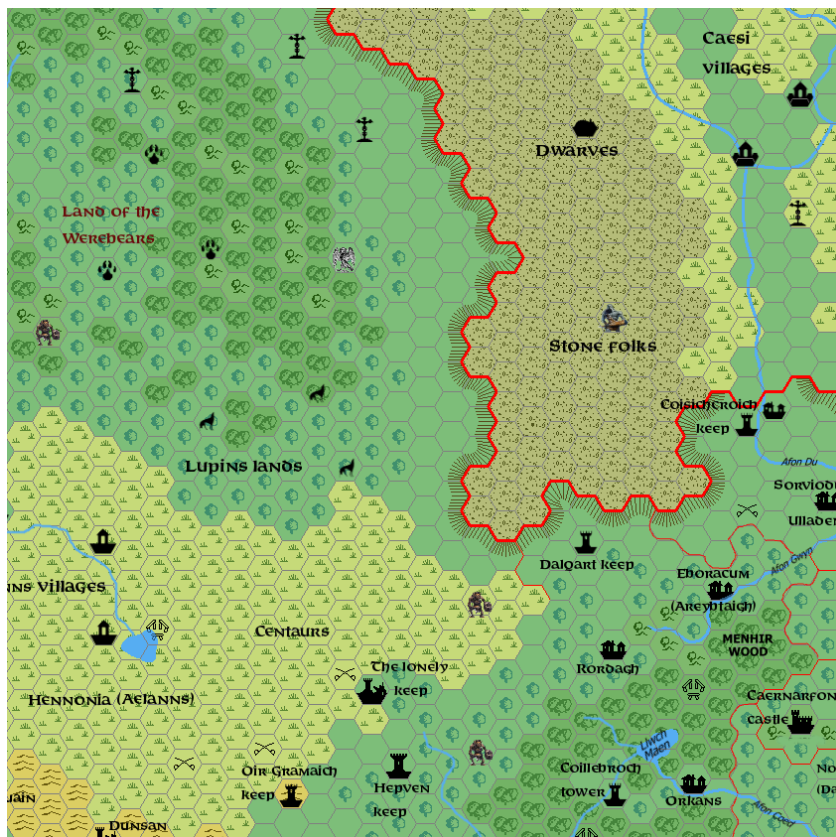
About the Asieni: see James Mishler's ["History of the Isle of Dawn"](#)

For the Albernians: see ["Real World Inspiration for the Isle of Dawn"](#) by Simone Neri

About the Shadow Coast's Elves: see ["The History of the Ispan People"](#) by James Mishler. These elves probably were meant to be somehow related to the Belcadiz and the Elves of the Savage Coast in the West.

CENTRAL MERIDIONA

It's interesting to focus a bit on the woods east of the Gulf of the Beasts in Meridiona. These woods are called the Lands of the Werebears, as they are inhabited by such creatures. South of these lands and just north of Caerdania (Caerdwicca and Furmenglaive) there are the lands inhabited by centaurs, lupins and the Aelann humans, some of them sedentary, particularly on the coast, and some of them nomadic. To the northeast, near more lands inhabited by dwarves and stone folk, there is also the Caesi culture, a mix up of Asieri and Caerdas.



Central Meridiona

References:

About Meridiona: see [these Almanac entries](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

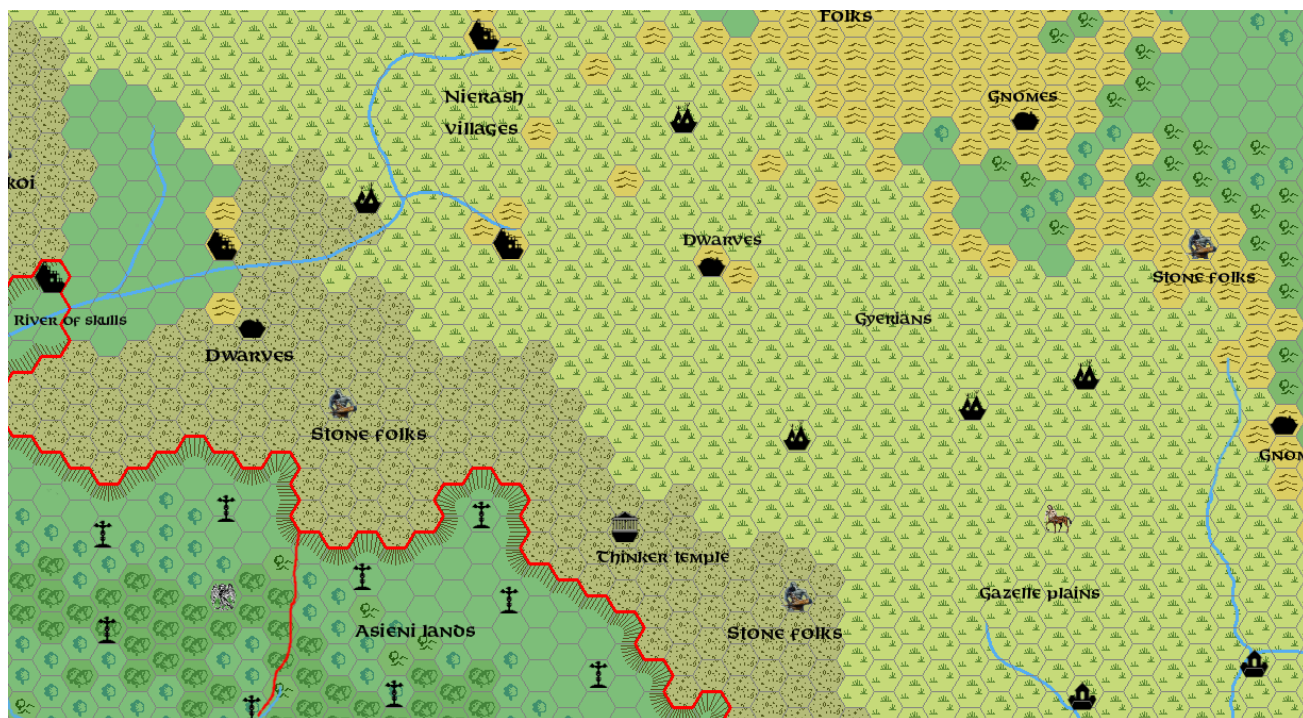
About the Asieri, see [“History of the Isle of Dawn”](#) by James Mishler

For the Aelanns and Caerdas: see the articles [“Real World Inspiration for the Isle of Dawn”](#) and [“Caerdania Gazetteer, version 1.0”](#) both by Simone Neri



Thyatian general sparing the population of a conquered city

WESTERN ESCARPMENT



Western Escarpment

The region of the Western Escarpment is dominated to the north by the River of Skulls, that arrives to Rialtos on the Western Coast, and is inhabited by stone folk, giants, dwarves, gnomes, centaurs, gyerians, Asieri humans and the Nierash culture.

The Nierash are simply sedentary Asieri, heavily influenced by dwarves and gnomes, while the others are normally nomadic, and hunt the huge variety of gazelles, antelopes and bovids who roam the great western plain.

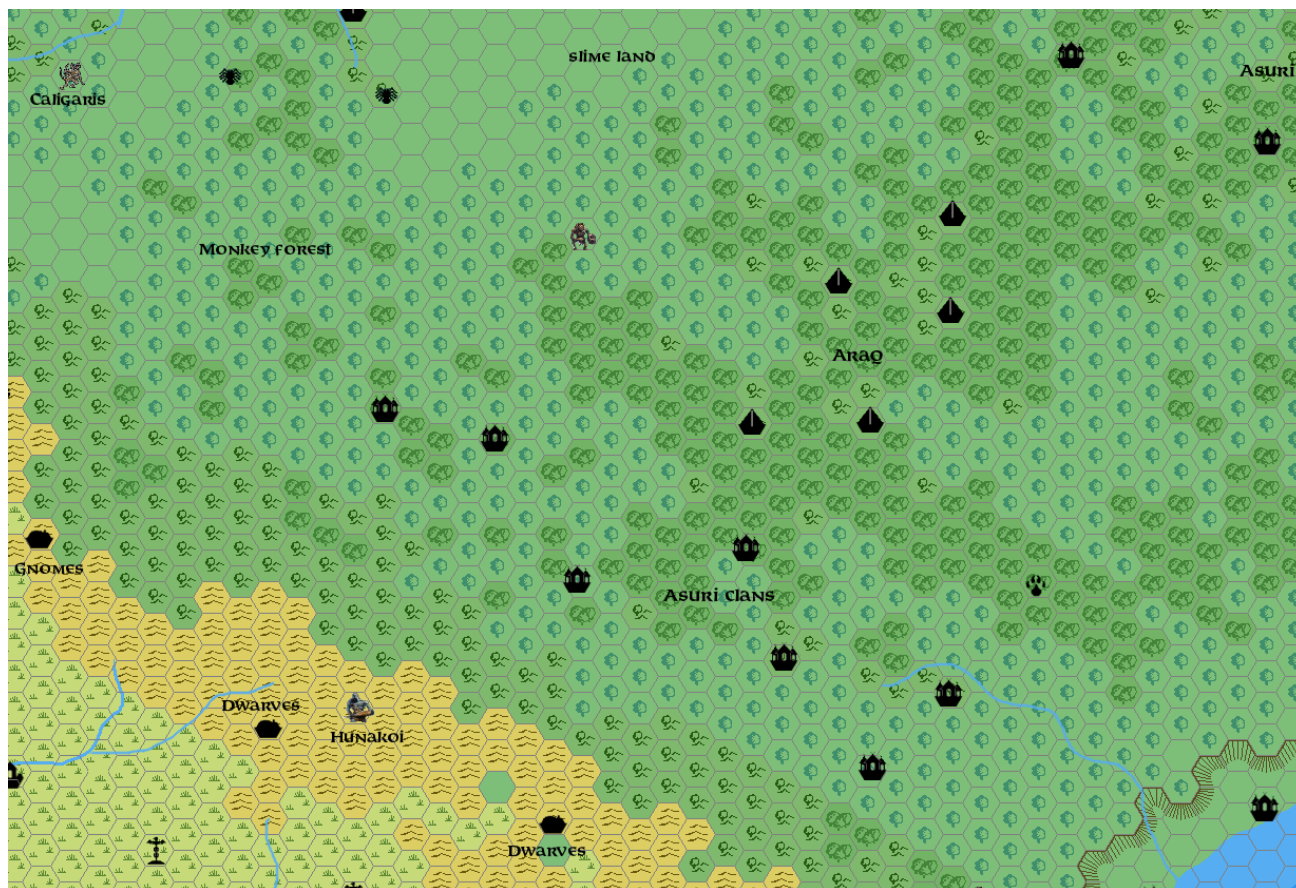
References:

About the stone folk, gnomes, dwarves and Asieri: see [“History of the Isle of Dawn”](#) by James Mishler; the Nierash were invented by me for this issue.



Rim of the Great Escarpment

THE CENTRAL ESCARPMENT SOUTH



The Central Escarpment South

This region could possibly be the most mysterious and unknown of the whole Escarpment. It is supposedly inhabited by the Asuri humans, Oltec descendants who revered animal and ancestor spirits, but later became partially followers of Tarastia and allies of the Hunakoi giants. It is unknown what kind of society they may have and what immortals they may follow in modern times. There is also a mythical Realm of Araq hidden in this forest, according to unverified rumors. The realm was supposedly founded by Asuri who worshipped the immortal Korotiku, or maybe the Night Spider, as the accounts are not clear on this matter. An area of these

woods is also called the Monkey forest, and may be inhabited by intelligent monkeys, or so the rumor goes.

References:

About the Asuri: see [“History of the Isle of Dawn”](#) by James Mishler; Araq and the Monkey forest were invented by me here.

CAERDWICCA



Caerdwicca

The region of Caerdwicca is inhabited by the Caerda humans, who are quite infamous as pirates in the Alphatian regions. They stay well away from the Dark Coast to the north east, inhabited by the so-called Dark Asieni, who however are probably just followers of Nyx. The Escarpment just above Caerdwicca is inhabited by dwarves, centaurs, stone folk, gnomes and the human Asiur clans, probably Asuri who left the eastern woods centuries ago.

The region of Caerdwicca, as the whole southern Meridiona, is near to the tropic and therefore quite warm for all the year, among

the common animals there are scorpions, snakes, lizards, frogs, parrots, deer, buffalo, goats, lynxes, jackals, leopards and lions, with a great variety of seals, dolphins and whales in the sea.

References:

About Caerdwicca: see [these Almanac entries](#) and [“Caerdania Gazetteer, version 1.0”](#) by Simone Neri

About the Asieni and the Asuri: see [“History of the Isle of Dawn”](#) by James Mishler; but I invented here the particular groups described above.

FURMENGLAIVE



Furmenglaive

The region of Furmenglaive goes beyond the borders of its namesake county and includes all the main regions of Caerdania, inhabited by the Caerda humans, who however have to share their land with several non human populations. These include humanoids, lupins, wercreatures, fairies, undead, gyerians and some dangerous monsters such as robber flies, seergars, yowlers and many others. While the human presence goes back centuries, maybe millennia, the region is still sparsely inhabited and a big part of it should be considered wilderlands. The sea north west of Furmenglaive is supposedly inhabited by some clans of aquatic elves.

References:

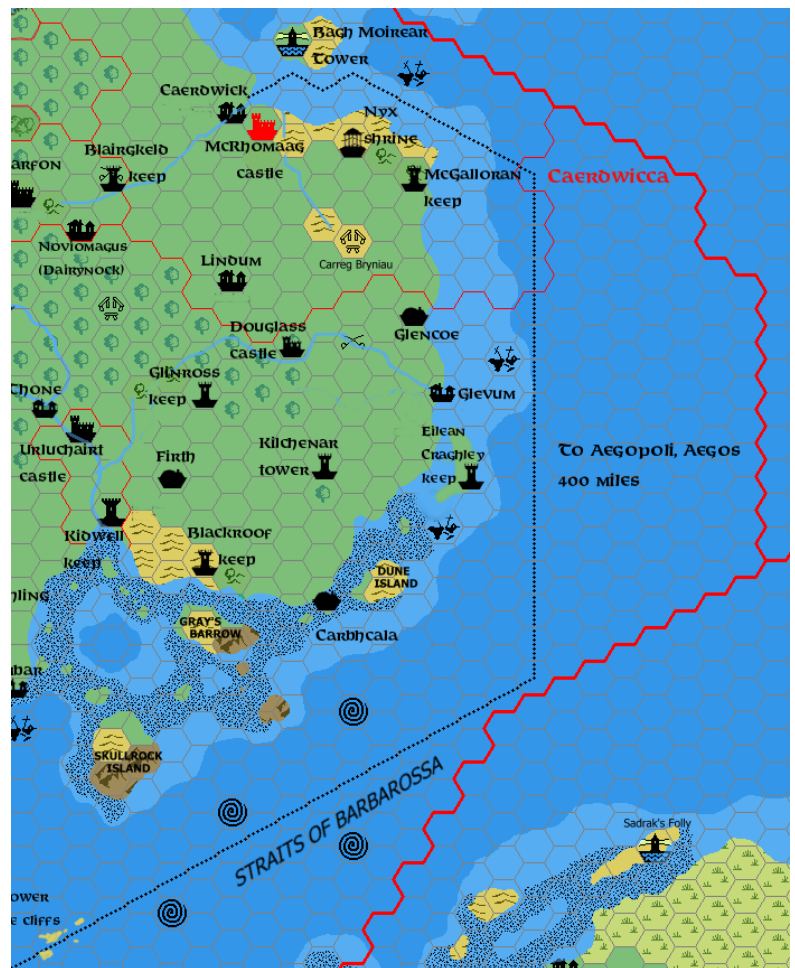
About Furmenglaive see [these Almanac entries](#) at the Vaults of Pandius and [“Caerdania Gazetteer, version 1.0”](#) by Simone Neri

THE STRAITS OF BARBAROSSA

The Straits are dangerous for natural, human and inhuman reasons. The natural reasons are whirlpools, storms and reefs. The human reasons are pirates, who have many bases in the area or come from Caerdwicca and Ne'er-do-well. The inhuman reasons are hostile sea creatures that sometimes attack ships. The sea here and towards Caerdwicca is also inhabited by shark-kin and knas, who however are not hostile unless provoked.

References:

About The Straits: see [“Twilight of the Dawn”](#) by Andrew Theisen from issue #3 of Tome of Mystara at the Vaults of Pandius



The Straits

Ship sinking in the Straits



koskatep level 9

Krystallac, Crystal heart



*Depiction of unidentified
fairy queen, or Nyx*

by
Francesco Defferrari (Sturm)

The Three Sisters ruled over the Fair Immortals. A Queen of Spring, a Queen of Summer, and a Queen of Twilight. The Queen of Summer had a daughter with the Sun, to mend the wounds of the world. The Sun did not want the wounds to mend, and the daughter was buried deep under the earth. The Queen of Spring had a daughter with the Enemy, to prepare the end of the world. And the Queen of Twilight had a daughter with the Lord of Death, that she could kill her mother, and her father too.

Ancient, haunting fairy song.

SECRETS OF KOSKATEP, LEVEL 9

This level can be reached going down from the closed and trapped hatch of area 9 on Level 8 or even through the chasm in area 10 on Level 8 (Mokrath, published in Issue 10 of Threshold magazine). The PCs will find themselves on **Level 9, Krystallac**, once a city of fairies, now apparently completely empty, but in truth haunted and cursed.

The text below repeats the original description of this level in issue 1 of Threshold Magazine (Mirror of Eternal Night article). Read on to discover more on this level of Koskatep!

This level was Krystallac, a holy place of the fairy and giant realm of Grondheim¹. The walls of this levels are heavily decorated with magically enlightened, coloured crystals and beautiful natural designs. This level is empty, apparently everything of value was plundered when the city fell to the lizardmen many centuries ago.

The secrets: Even though fairy folk were driven away from the city so many years ago, they have always maintained a hidden magical gate in a small, unassuming room. Now sidhe lords from across the Known World, Oberon's court, and storm giants are gathering their strength to reconquer Krystallac. Unknown to the Darkers, at the time of Grondheim, sidhe priests discovered that the Starlake could indeed be used to open a permanent gate to any other plane, and the fairies would like to open one to the Dreamlands. Yet, as the Starlake is defiled, the gate would now open to the Unseelie court, unless it is first purified.

Before the Darkers arrive, this level is empty, and afterwards it still is, even though the Darkers are slowly exploring it, hoping to find some lost fairy folk artifact.

¹ Grondheim is mostly a creation of John Calvin (aka Chimpman) and more details can be found at [this link](#) on the Vaults of Pandius, and mostly in the [Grondheim](#) and the [Grondheim 2300 BC](#) threads on The Piazza forum. Many ideas in this article also come from RobJN (aka Robert Nuttman, jr) on Thorn's Chronicles and Thorn's Mystara, about which more details can be found in "[Thorn's Chronicle](#)" and "[Thorn's Mystara](#)" in the Vaults of Pandius, or in [Robert Nuttman's blog](#). My personal take and interpretation on faeries and Grondheim could well be different from the original intentions of both John and Robert.

TIMELINE

The Great Mother Time: When the fairies were not divided in two Courts, Chaos ruled over Law and the Great Mother reigned. The mythical time in which fairies were above the modern Immortals.

The Dragon wars: When, after the Immortals betrayed and killed the Great Mother, the Dragons waged war against the Immortals and were defeated, losing their immortality. Fairies, allied with the dragons, were also exiled from the immortal realms.

Ixion and Elienor: When Elienor the Fairy Queen of Summer fell in love with the Immortal, Ixion, and they had a daughter who was called Ashira.

Ashira's Dream: When Ashira created the Dream of Fire, a powerful artifact that could change past history. Her father Ixion imprisoned her for this. Elienor led a war against her former lover, but the fairies were defeated.

Carnifex wars: When Carnifex and the Outer Beings almost destroyed the Immortals, and some fairies decided to help them to save the worlds². Thus it was that the rift was created between the Unseelie Court of Elienor and the Seelie Court of Morganna.

Blackmoor: When Morganna fell in love with Uther, King of Blackmoor, but later the

² By "Worlds" here I mean Mystara's Prime plane and adjacent other planes, see for example this article by Ripvanwormer on "[Mystara's Cosmology](#)" at the Vaults of Pandius

fairies of both courts had to fight the encroachment of the technomagic empire.

2504 BC: The Inti, led by the church of Ixion, occupy the ruins and rebuild the city of Koskatepetl.

2379 BC: The Troll Queen of Grondheim conquers the city, renaming it Krystallac. Just a few years later sidhe priests discover the existence of the inner temple and begin a century long negotiation with the Sollux and the Brutemen below to gain access to the artifact. The Troll Queen also creates the Crystal Lake, a permanent gate to the Border, the area between the Dreamlands and the Nightmare dimension.

2282 BC: As the Queen grows impatient about the unwillingness of Ixion to compromise, she sends her best troops to open the temple. Inti troops soon attack the place, and Taymora intervenes shortly thereafter. This is the beginning of the War of the Empires, or the Twilight Wars, or the War of Southern Grondheim, that will last decades and will devastate the region. Mogreth intervenes as well a few years later.

2170 BC: Some fairies of Krystallac turn to the Unseelie, and decide to tell Elienor about Ashira's tomb. The Troll Queen discovers them and exiles them, and manages to scatter the essence of Elienor after a terrible magical battle near the Crystal Lake. But she is gravely wounded by Elienor's magic, and will never be able to recover. The Crystal lake is also damaged and its capacity as a portal greatly reduced.

2080 BC: In a time of crisis in Grondheim due to the Troll Queen's malady Taymora

and Intua, lizardmen and troglodytes, escaped from the Mogreth, occupy Krystallac and keep it for a hundred years. As the lizardmen cannot locate all the portals left by the fairies in Level 9, they try to seal it completely.



Supposed portrait of the Troll Queen

1976 BC: After a long siege Taymora conquers Krystallac and renames it Kosmoteiros. Nyx knows about Ixion's artifact but rather than try to steal or destroy it she decides to exploit the magical aura of the place to build her own strongest artifact that will bring fulfillment of her Dream. The followers of Nyx leave Krystallac alone, and fairy agents of Titania, the Troll Queen and their mother Morganna start to fight to control the Crystal Lake.

1777 BC: To prevent Kosmoteiros from falling into the hands of Thanatos, the priests

of Nyx destroy the city with a terrible earthquake. Thousands die and the place is abandoned for many years as seismic activity increases in the area. The Starlake waters from Level 7 spill into the Crystal Lake of Level 9, changing its properties. Agents of Oberon and Mabel also arrive in Krystallac.

1664 BC: After the destruction of Taymora fairies of the Unseelie court, former exiles of Krystallac, take possession of the place and try to use the Starlake, but do not discover Ashira's burial and are not able to reach Elienor until much later. The dark fairies of Kundrak try to reach Krystallac but the agents of the three Seelie Courts ally against them. A long negotiation begins, but is cut short by Lord Keiros' coming.

1597 BC: Lord Keiros, a Tal nosferatu and follower of Nyx, conquers Koskatep from the dark fairies. Vampiric followers of Thanatos attack several times but are defeated.

1412 BC: Hutaakans conquer the site for Ixion and Pflarr, a seriously wounded Lord Keiros is forced to hide, and his followers are exterminated.

1021 BC: Orcs sack Koskatep, some hutaakan priests survive hiding in the lower levels, and will become more guardians for the hidden temple of Ixion. The fairy agents let the hutaakans pass, Haput is recruited by Oberon's faction.

954 BC: After several battles a dwarven army defeats the orcs and conquers Koskatep, but are soon in constant warfare with the gnolls that rule over the region.

912 BC: The dwarves are finally defeated by the gnolls, who build their own city over the ruins. Shamans of Ranivorus and Thanatos begin to study the Starlake.

841 BC: Followers of Nyx, aided by ogres and giants, attack Koskatep but are unable to conquer it from the gnolls. Yet they succeed in killing the most powerful shamans of Thanatos and burning their notes.

603 BC: The ogre king Kulfan conquers Koskatep in the name of Nyx and ogres rule over the area for centuries. Human priests of the Lady of the Night live in the city along with them.

95 AC: The Darkers almost complete the ritual to use the Starlake and bring forth the Eternal Night, but are stopped at the last moment by priests of Ixion, who drive out the ogres and occupy Koskatep for years. Elienor returns to Krystallac, and the Lord of Leaves pledges his fealty to her. She learns about the existence of her daughter's tomb and tries to conquer Koskatep, but she and her agents are repelled by the priests of Ixion, who also occupy Level 9, hindering the work of the faerie agents or stopping it completely.

227 AC: The priests of Ixion have repelled several attempts by ogres, giants and followers of Nyx trying to reclaim the ruins, but are destroyed at last by a very powerful and ancient vampire sent by Thanatos, The Last One, called by Elienor. Some priests of Ixion escape to the lowest level and become defenders of the inner temple. In the following centuries ogres, giants, followers of Nyx and even adventurers sent by Ixion try to reclaim Koskatep, but The Last One destroys

them all. The Last One sends Akrash's minions from Level 8 to conquer Krystallac, but the Seelie Courts ally to stop them. The Dark Fairies of Elienor try too, but are likewise repelled. Rarely, some human adventurers reach this far, and are kidnapped by the fairies or sent back against Akrash and the Last One, to their doom.

912 AC: Traladaran freedom fighters hide in the ruins for some time, but are destroyed by the Thyatian army. The Thyatians soon leave the place.

998 AC (or later if the DM prefers): Lady Sonya, the Grand Daughter of the Night, a powerful priestess of Nyx, and her followers, are able to defeat The Last One and reclaim Koskatep. Elienor on Level 6 is now growing impatient with The Last One's apparent inability to reach Level 13, while secretly on Level 9 agents of Titania, Oberon, Mabel, Morganna and the Troll Queen are waiting for the right chance to take control of the Crystal Lake. Elienor also tries to turn some of their agents to her cause, and sends parley offers to her rivals.

1031 AC: The next alignment. On this date the Starlake could be used to bring forth The Eternal Night.

The Random Critters table of level 2B (in issue 3 of Threshold magazine) and the **Wandering Parties** table may apply here if the DM so wishes. In this case there is a 1% chance in each room that a Wandering Party will be encountered.

The **Followers of The Last One** encounter table of level 1 (in issue 2 of Threshold magazine, page 122), can also still be used here if the DM so wishes. One such follower could try to join the PCs to explore this level, with the final purpose of bringing them in the presence of The Last One himself (in Level 7). After the Darkers take control (see issue 1) any Follower of The Last One will obviously keep a much lower profile and maybe even aid the party against the Darkers to use them or lead them to their deaths.

Spells that provide magical transportation, such as teleport, passwall, dimensional door, magic door, travel, gate and spells such as clairvoyance and find the path do not work on this level as on Levels 5-8 due to powerful wards placed by The Last One and others before him. The DM could decide to apply the same rule to the levels above the 5th, at least from Level 2 and below, particularly if the PCs are of a high level.

In addition, every faerie being secretly surveilling this level will immediately perceive any spell cast here and will likely try to invisibly follow the PCs to discern their motivations. The behaviour of these agents will be described in each individual area.

The map and the inhabitants of this Level

The area in dark grey on the map is solid stone, very difficult to dig, even though it may contain small tunnels dug by critters and wandering monsters. The area in light grey is partially clear, but full of rubble, rocks and collapsed structures which cannot be recognized anymore.

The black “scar” in the middle of the map is the Chasm opened by the Kosmoteiros earthquake of 1777 BC, which goes all the way down to Level 12.

The structures in green are the original constructions of Krystallac at its height, built with magical greenish crystal that still glow in the dark of this level. The green points are trunks of the crystal trees, which once had branches and leaves. The purple squares are the seven abodes of the Seven Dream Kingdoms. All these locations will be fully explained below.

At its height, the city was packed of green crystal houses, but most of them have since crumbled, their magic exhausted. A fine green dust covers most of the area in light grey, all that remains of the thousand magical houses of Krystallac.

The green and purple structures not only glow, but also show transparent images from time to time, usually leaves and flowers, but sometimes faces, or creatures.

The azure spot is the Crystal Lake built by the Troll Queen.

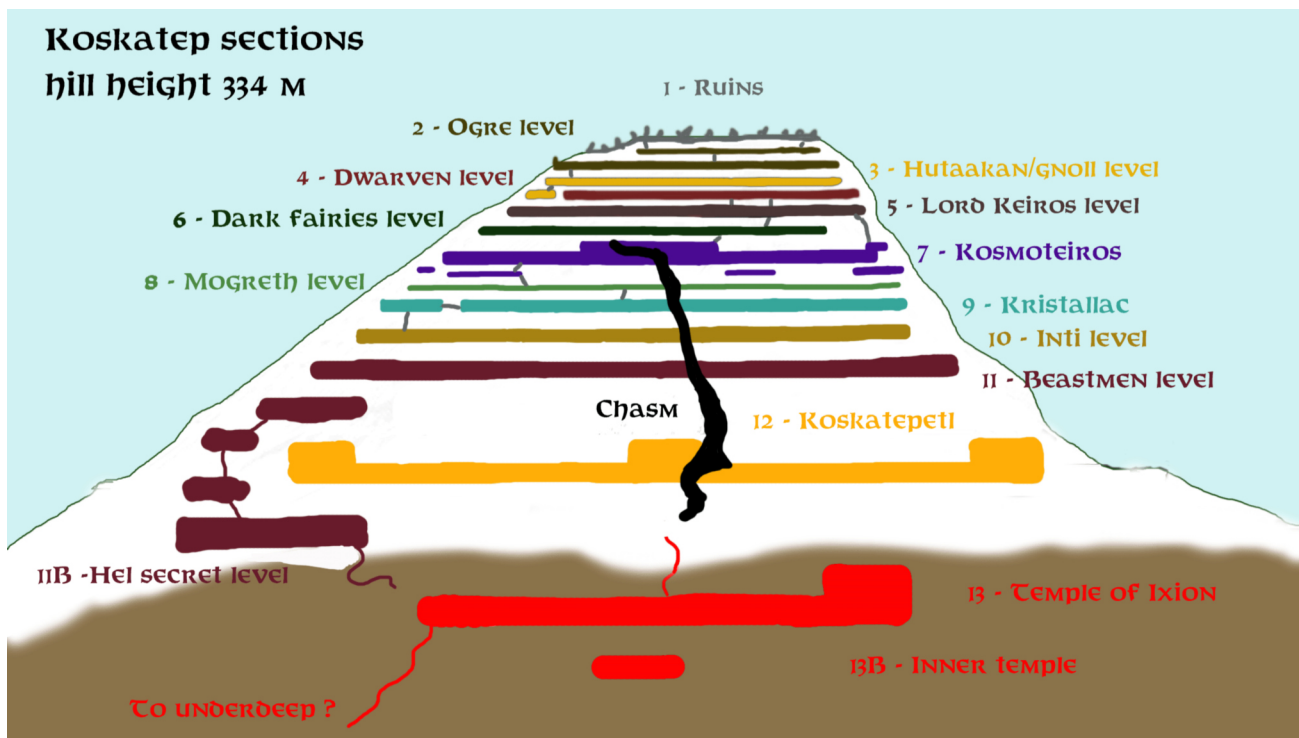
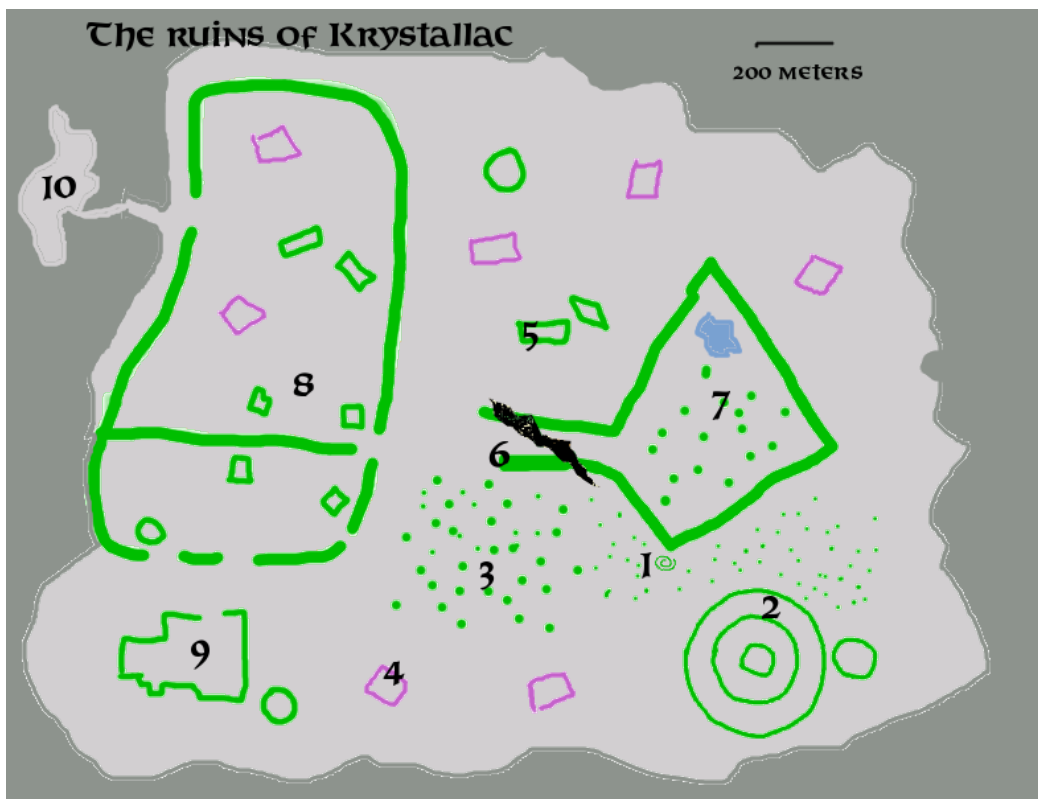
This level is completely empty and apparently has no living (or dead) inhabitants. This is because the inhabitants of this level are not physically here, but are instead in the Dreamlands (or Annwyn in the Nightmare Dimension) the homes of the fairies of the Seelie and Unseelie Courts respectively.

The DM could decide that the PCs will be able to cross this level without encountering anyone, or, through this level, the PCs will be able to travel to the Seven Worlds.

The levels of KOSKATEP in issues of THRESHOLD Magazine

- #1: [“Mirror of the Eternal Night”](#) (Overview)
- #2: [“The Debris”](#) (Level 1)
- #3: [“The Akropolis of Kotesesh”](#) (Level 2B)
- #4: [“The Lower Ruins of Kotesesh”](#) (Level 2A)
- #5: [“Ranesh, city of four people”](#) (Level 3)
- #6: [“Karrast, dwarven gold”](#) (Level 4)
- #7: [“Dark secrets of Ieronyx”](#) (Level 5)
- #8: [“Shadows of Kundrak”](#) (Level 6)
- #9: [“Signs of the Universe”](#) (Level 7)
- #10: [“Mokrath, serpent eye”](#) (Level 8)

koskatep, level 9



1 - The stair from Level 8 and the Crystal Trees

Here a spiral staircase comes down from Area 9 of Level 8, the Shrine to Thanatos. This access is normally kept locked and trapped by Akrash and his minions above (see Level 8 in issue #10 of Threshold magazine). All around the spiral staircase there are the trunks of the Crystal trees. Magical constructs of the Troll Queen, at the height of Krystallac they had branches, leaves and fruit with various magical properties, but now they seem just broken columns of green crystal. In front of the staircase there is the huge crystal green wall of the Temple (Area 7). The wall is impossible to climb. Anyone attempting this will simply reappear at the base of the wall right before he or she reaches the top, unless he or she possess immortal level magic. Bones or other similar remains litter the floor in this area, among the green dust. They are mostly what's left of followers of the Last One who tried to invade the level and were destroyed by the fairies of Areas 2, 5, 8 or 9.

The Darkers will open this access to start exploring this level, but mostly it will be Elienor and her minions from Level 6 that take advantage of this option, as they will hope to contact the members of the Seelie Court who sometimes come here, to sway them to their cause. A mixed group of **1d10+2 Darkers and Dark Fairies** may be present here at any time.

2 - The Mound

This is just a round wall of green crystal, apparently less massive than the one of the Temple in Area 7, yet likewise unclimbable. There is no apparent access to the inside.

This area was inhabited by cloud and storm giants at the height of Krystallac. **Vuram**, a cloud giant envoy from the Altan Tepes mountains, and ally of

1 - It is possible to reactivate the trees with a green key. These keys are normally only in the possession of high level fairies and can open any green crystal house or structure, if the fairy concentrates on it. PCs of other races will be able to activate the key only 30% of the time. A reactivated tree can randomly provide food, beverage and magic. Fairy folk are able to call a specific "product" from the tree, but non-fairies will succeed only 10% of the time, otherwise the tree will create a random object, food or beverage, up to a maximum weight of 3.3 pounds (1.5 kilograms).

2 - There are giant sized pieces of armor, weapons, furniture and food inside the Mound, but PCs will probably be able to access it only with the aid of Vuram, and he will not let them take anything away.

the Fairy King *Oberon*, sometimes visits the area, mostly to hunt and kill minions of the Last One who are exploring the area from Level 7. He often has 2d4 other giants (mountain, cloud or storm giants usually) with him. He has a unique green key which opens the Mound, and if he encounters the PCs will ask about their allegiance before attacking. He will know if they tell the truth, but will not attack if they are not aligned with the Last One.

Some time after the arrival of the Darkers they will contact Vuram and he will be friendly with them, even if he has his own plans about Koskatep.

3 - The Crystal Forest

This great area is full of green crystal trunks, once the crystal trees that provided Krystallac with magical food, beverages and items. Now they can only be activated with a green key, as explained above.

After the Darkers initial attack any follower of the Last One still alive in this area will escape with him to Level 10, and wait for his revenge. Afterwards there is a 3% chance that a group of Darkers (1d6+1), led by a priest or a wizard, may be encountered here.



Faerie in the night sky

3 - There are 1d10+1 followers of the Last One hidden among the trunks. Check the table in issue #2 of Threshold magazine as explained above or choose any kind of undead minion as appropriate to the PCs levels. Their purpose here is to kill faerie agents, if they can surprise them. In truth, this is only the latest group of followers the Last One sent. All the previous ones were discovered and destroyed by Vuram (Area 2) or the fairy agents (Area 5).

4 - The Purple Houses of the Seven Kingdoms

These seven houses, the only structures built in purple crystal instead of green, each lead to one of the Seven Kingdoms. The kingdoms are just how the faeries call seven very different areas of Mystara. The Houses were built by the Troll Queen thanks to the magic of the Crystal Lake and their use was reserved to her and her most trusted servants. They can be accessed only by a purple key, unique to each house, which only the Lord of Leaves in Area 9 and any other very high ranking fairy may possess. Using the house may leave the PCs stranded in a far away location or even kill them, if they do not have faerie help:

I - The Earth House leads anyone entering it to a random faerie location in the Outer World³, unless the traveller concentrates on a specific location. Non-faeries will only be able to pick a specific location with a successful saving throw against spells, but they will not be aware of the necessity to concentrate unless a faerie agent explains it to them.

II - The Sea House leads anyone entering it to a random Undersea location⁴ in the Outer World. PCs not equipped with water breathing spells will probably drown.

III - The Sky House leads anyone entering it to a random Cloud Castle of the cloud giants or a random Faerie City⁵ in the skies high above the Outer World.

IV - The Shadow House leads anyone entering it to a random fairy location of the Shadowdeep⁶

³ See PC1 *Tall Tales of the Wee Folk* or the [“Who are Mystara's Archfey”](#) thread at The Piazza forums for fairy locations in the Outer World

⁴ Nixies are detailed in PC3 *The Sea People*

⁵ Faeries appear in the Rules Cyclopeda; see also [“Faerie Subtype and Faerie”](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

4 - There is a safe way to travel the Purple Houses, as the Lord of Leaves will explain to the PCs if he decides to meet them in Area 9, see the description of that Area for further details.

between the Outer and the Hollow World.

V - The Hollow World House leads anyone entering it to a random fairy location in the Hollow World⁷. As normal teleportation spells will not work in the Hollow World, PCs will be able to return here only with Immortal level fairy magic, i.e. the aid of an extremely powerful fairy, should they stay for more than a week (see below).

VI - The Matera House leads anyone entering it to a random fairy location in the moon of Matera⁸, either on the outside (where the PCs could die for lack of air) or in the Hollow Moon.

VII - The Patera House leads anyone entering it to a random fairy location⁹ on the invisible moon of Patera.

Once the user reaches a location, the Purple House will remain in that location for a week, waiting for the traveller's return, then it will disappear forever, leaving him, her or them stranded if they do not return in time to the House.

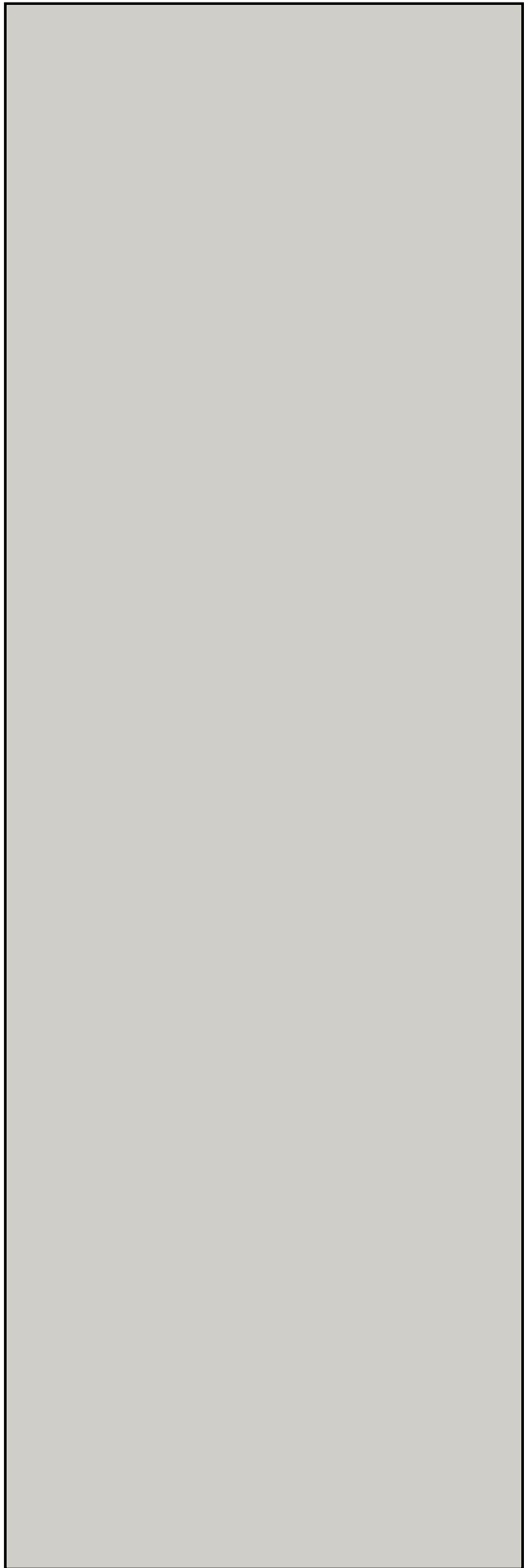
The Darkers will be very interested in the Purple Houses, but any fairy party will try to destroy them before they are able to use them. Should the faeries fail to defeat the Darkers, they will magically blow up the whole level to avoid the danger of a human organization gaining control of so many faerie portals.

⁶ See [these articles](#) in the Vaults of Pansius

⁷ [Tepictoton](#) are fairies living in the Hollow World, other fairies specifically linked to Hollow World cultures may exist too.

⁸ About the surface of Matera: see the topic ["Revamping Matera"](#) by LoZompatore un The Piazza forums; about the Hollow Moon, see [these articles](#) in the Vaults, and John Calvin's articles in previous issue of Threshold Magazine.

⁹ About Patera: see [these articles](#), particularly the ["More details about Patera"](#) by LoZompatore and page 22 of the ["Gazeteer of Myoshima"](#) by Agathokles



5 - The Houses of Green Crystal

These houses of green crystal, apparently without doors or windows, are the only ones still standing in the city because they are occasionally visited and



The Court of Oberon and Titania

occupied by living fairy folk. A green key is needed to access any of them, one unique to each house. There are twelve green houses still standing, and twelve active faerie agents. (Fifteen if the Lord of Leaves in area 9, Vuram in area 2 and Heshaanis in area 7, are also counted. They, however, have their own particular stories as detailed in their areas). The exact location of these twelve minor agent's houses can be determined randomly. They normally avoid each other and all are trying to repair and study the Crystal Lake in area 7:

I - **Crais**, a pooka who appears as a porcupine man and is an agent of the Summer Court of Queen **Titania**. Crais seems nice and harmless but it's just a ruse. He is a powerful wizard (Pooka 10, Wicca 13) who has destroyed many followers of The Last One already. He normally only exits the house with 1d10+2 other powerful fairies (Levels 4-10). He is the leader of the Summer Faction, whose ultimate goal is to make a rebuilt Krystallac the center of a new fairy realm, open only to some selected races, such as elves, but not to humans.

5 - Politics of the fairy courts could well be quite confusing for the PCs, but they are meant to be. All of them could be allies against the Last One, some could accept a temporary alliance with the Darkers or the Church of Ixion, but they will eventually try to take Koskatep for their people. From the most friendly to the less friendly faction, consider that Mabel's faction could be the most willing to share the place with others, even humans, but it also the less powerful and most far away, as it represent Davania's fairies. Oberon's faction too is relatively friendly, and much nearer. Then there is Titania's faction, who would prefer not to share the place with humans, but will try to use non lethal force to drive them away. Then there is Morganna's faction, whose purpose is mysterious even to other fairies. The Troll Queen's faction is willing to resort to any means to drive other races away from Koskatep and control its magic, and its ultimate goal is to bring back Grondheim, conquering any human nation in its way, such as Karameikos. Elienor's faction plans nothing less than awake Ashira in Level 13 and change the past, thus destroying the world as the PC's knows it.

There are a multitude of enchanted fairy objects in each house, belonging to the faerie who lives inside when he or she is present. It is very unlikely, however, that the PCs could be able to gain access to a

II - **Etraig**, a sidhe knight (Sidhe 10) is another agent of the Summer Court, but of King **Oberon's** faction. He cooperates with Crais and the other agents of Titania, but Oberon has his own agenda as he would prefer a fairy city more open to the external world, including humans. He may also be more willing to ally with the Darkers, or at least not oppose them directly. He normally only exits the house with 1d6+1 other powerful fairies (Levels 3-9).

III - **Aesha**, a dryad shaman (Dryad 9 Shaman 9) and chief agent of the Twilight Court of **Morganna**, the mysterious Queen of the Fairies of Skothar. The other factions are not sure of what goal she might have. Morganna supposedly aided the ancient King of Blackmoor, Uther, in his rise to power, but it's hard to say if she is still friendly toward humans, as the other fairies are not even sure she is still alive. Aesha normally only exits the house with 1d8+2 other powerful fairies (Levels 4-10).

IV - **Cuachal**, a Tepictoton (as Pixie 10 or see note¹⁰), a Davanian fairy, is the only agent of the Spring Court of **Mabel** in Viridin. His goal is mostly to wait and see what the other Courts will do, or who will win, and intervene only if The Last One or the Darkers gain control of Krystallac. In this case, Mabel could decide to send relevant forces. Cuachal often leaves the house alone, or with just a single companion (normally another sprite or pixie, Level 3-7)

V - **Shorok**, a woodrake (Woodrake 10, Wicca 9) is the chief agent of the **Troll Queen** in Krystallac. The other fairy courts are not sure about the ultimate fate of the Troll Queen of Grondheim. Some say she is asleep, hidden somewhere, while others say she has awakened and is active again in

house without the consent of the owner, even if they stole his or her unique green keys. A non faerie can in fact gain access, even with the correct key, only 10% of the time, and he or she can try only once a day. If the PC fails, he or she will be stunned for the rest of the day.

¹⁰ About Tepictoton: see [this article](#) at the Vaults. About Viridin see my article on the Izondian Coast of Davania in Threshold issue #5.

Alphatia. Regardless, Shorok's purpose is to repair the Crystal Lake and bring Krystallac back to its former glory, destroying any interloping humans. He normally only exits the house with 1d12+2 other powerful fairies (Levels 5-10).

VI - **Jinimix**, a brownie (Brownie 9) is officially an agent of Titania, now in the service of **Elienor** (see Kundrak in Threshold issue #8) due to his fealty to the Lord of Leaves (see Area 9) who also turned to the Queen of Winter. The others of his faction do not know this, but Crais suspects something. He normally leaves the house alone or with 2 bodyguards (Pooka 5). The bodyguards have turned to Elienor too.

VII - **Kirvos**, a faun (Faun 9) is the only known agent of **Elienor**, even if he was sent by the Troll Queen centuries ago. Shorok hates him for his betrayal. Kirvos has met with Jiminix in secret several times already. Elienor's goal is nothing less than access to Ashira's tomb on Level 13, then destroy the Immortals and bring back the Time of Chaos. Repairing the Crystal Lake and exterminating humans in all the area surrounding Koskatep could be a minor goal. Until the Last One is destroyed, Kirvos does not have easy access to the Dark Fairies of Level 6, due to the wards preventing teleport and portals in Koskatep, he communicates with them through spells. The situation could change if Heshaanis (see Area 7) shares his access. Kirvos normally exits the house alone, secretly and in the dark, but Elienor has given him the power to summon 1d6+3 wraiths once a day, with a black magical stone he always brings along.

VIII - **Taasea**, a dryad (Dryad 9) is another agent of **Titania** and apparently loyal to Crais, but she is secretly in love with Etraig, who plans to enlist her help for Oberon's faction if needed. She normally only leaves the house with 3 other dryads and 2 fauns (Levels 3-7).

IX - **Kuyckj** is a bog imp (Bog Imp 10¹¹) and an agent of the **Troll Queen**. He would like very much to kill Kirvos but normally obeys Shorok loyally. He normally only exits the house with 1d6+2 other bog or wood imps (Levels 3-6).

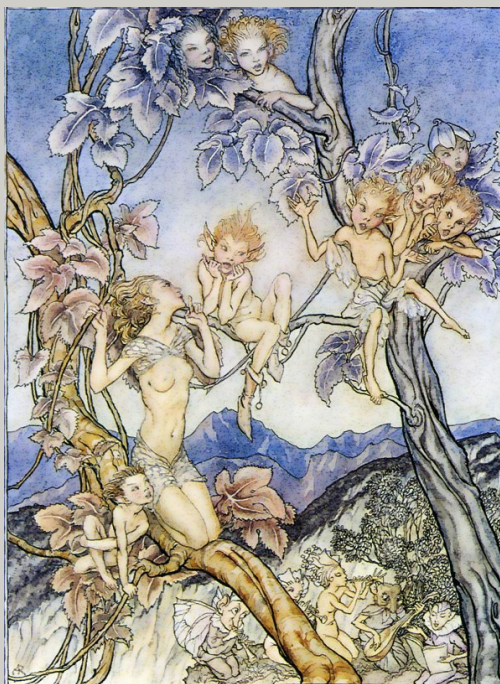
X - **Tairyc**, a sprite (Sprite 10) is an agent of **Morganna** and he normally just aids and obeys Aesha. He often has 1d7+1 other sprites with him (Levels 2-7).

XI - **Kaeja** is a dryad (Dryad 10, Shaman 8) and an agent of the **Troll Queen**. She obeys Shorok but would like very much to succeed in their mission before him and take the credit. Tairyc is trying to turn her to Morganna. She normally exits the house with three dryad acolytes (Dryad 3-5, Shaman 1-4).

XII - **Verish** is a Pixie (Pixie 10) and an agent of **Titania**. He is loyal to Crais and doesn't know that Jinimix has turned to Elienor, but suspects that Taasea has a relationship with Etraig. He normally exits the house with 1d6+1 pixies (Levels 3-8).

Some time after the arrival of the Darkers all the minor agents will show themselves and profess their friendship, while secretly trying to further their cause by spying on the Darkers and the rival agents and smearing the rival groups. If the Darkers have allied with the Dark Fairies of Level 6, the agents of Titania, Oberon, Morganna, Mabel and the Troll Queen will try to warn them that the ultimate goal of Elienor and the Winter Court is nothing short of the destruction of the world and all the Immortals, Nyx included. Obviously the Dark Fairies and their agents here will try to deny such claims and accuse the others instead. All Faerie factions, except maybe for Oberon's, will probably betray the Darkers for their own ends,

¹¹ See the AD&D *Mystara Monstrous Compendium* or "[Bog Imp](#)" at the Vaults



sooner or later. Oberon, Titania and Mabel could also be willing to compromise with a winning Ixion faction, while Morganna's goals are completely mysterious and the Troll Queen will want complete control of Koskatep for herself.

6 - The Chasm, and entrance to the Temple

The Chasm opened by the earthquake of 1777 BC has destroyed the former entrance to the Fairy Temple which contains the Crystal Lake. Now the only safe way to enter is to fly over the Chasm, while climbing up and down or tying a rope could be quite dangerous as the water dripping from Level 7 has random teleportation effects, see sidebar.

The Darkers will eventually try to cover the Chasm to have an easier access to the Temple and the Crystal Lake. The fairy factions will not hinder them, waiting for another good opportunity to strike at them and at the other factions.

7 - The Temple and the Crystal Lake

This area is now partially isolated from the rest of the level by the Chasm, as explained in the previous area, and the faerie factions constantly battle one another to have access to the Crystal Lake. This happens through pitched battle, laying traps or sending expendable minions (such as human adventurers) against each other, or by simply trying to sneak here unnoticed by the other factions. There is a 5% chance each time that the PCs arriving here may encounter a (temporarily) victorious fairy faction here studying the Lake. There is another 5% chance each time that the PCs arrive right in the middle of a battle between fairy factions, or between a faction and the followers of The Last One of Area 1.

6 - There is the Dark Waterfall coming down from above. As the walls of the chasm are wet, it is extremely dangerous to try to reach Level 10 and below going down from here.

Touching the Dark Waterfall may also cause random teleportation effects to Annwyn, particularly the areas where it borders the Carnifex prison¹.

¹ This idea comes from the [Thorn's Chronicle blog](#) by RobJN. For more information about the Carnifex, see ["Of the Lore and Legends of Y'hog, City of the Unclean Ones, and of that Race"](#) and ["Carnifex"](#) (both at the Vaults). Annwyn is the homeplane of the Dark Fairies, see also the previous level of Koskatep in [Threshold issue #8](#) and [issue #9](#) about the Dark Waterfall. The chance of teleportation could be very low (only 5% of the times that someone touches the waters), or much higher, depending on the DM's preference.

The Crystal Lake was created by the Troll Queen to be a permanent gate to any faerie land in Mystara and to the Border, the land between the Dreamlands and Annwyn and the Nightmare lands. Thanks to its properties, the Purple Houses and the Green Houses were built too (see Areas 4 and 5). After the battle here between the Troll Queen and Elienor in 2170 BC the Crystal Lake began to fail, sending users to unknown locations of the multiverse¹², or maybe just destroying them. Since then, the faerie factions are trying to repair the magical damage, but their efforts have been seriously undermined by the fact that they do not cooperate but rather constantly try to hinder each other.

The Darkers will be quite interested in the Crystal Lake too. After their arrival a group of them, (1d6+1), led by a priest or a wizard, may be encountered here with a 3% chance. They will probably not have the time to study it properly, however, as one or all the fairy factions will soon strike against them once they rid them of The Last One. The latter's return from Level 10 (see Level 7 and previous issues of Threshold) could well happen while the Darkers are busy fighting the fairies here and on the level above.

8 - The City

This was the main area of the city of Krystallac at its height, it therefore contained a lot more houses than now. The terrain is covered with fine green dust and there are still 7 green houses and 2 purple houses here, but not much more.

The Darkers will make plans to rebuild the city, with the assistance of the Dark Fairies of Level 6. In truth, as explained before, they will just wait for the right time to betray them. After the arrival of the

7 - **Heshaanis**, a dark hsiao (a hsiao aligned with the Unseelie Court) is hidden among the crystal trunks of this area. He has arrived from Area 7 of Level 6 (through the random teleportation effect of the Faery Ring) but he has not communicated this to his superior and Queen Elienor. He is trying to decide if he could gain more by exploring this level first, in the hope he could discover some treasure of Krystallac. He will try to contact the PCs to obtain their help. He will claim to be a hsiao of the outside world who just wants to save the ancient secrets of this fairy city from the plundering of the Last One.

8 - With a thorough search of the area some items could be found, mostly weapons, coins, armor or other objects dropped during the centuries by the rare adventurers or minions of the Last One who came this far and were destroyed by the fairies.

¹² Anywhere, such as the Vortex or Calidar...

Darkers a group of them (1d6+1), led by a priest or a wizard, may be encountered here with a 3% chance.



The Lord of Leaves and his Court

9 - The Palace of the Queen

This was the Palace of the Troll Queen at the height of Krystallac. Now it is apparently completely empty, and without a door to close it, it can be easily entered. In truth, the **Lord of Leaves** (Sidhe 10, Wicca 10, Shaman 10) is often here with several minions (at least 1d20+5 or more), including sidhe knights, pookas, drakes, sprites and more. But they will all be invisible unless he decides to meet the PCs. If the PCs had some agreement with Elienor on Level 6 or the Flame Duke (see Area 14 of Level 6), the Lord of Leaves will appear to them.

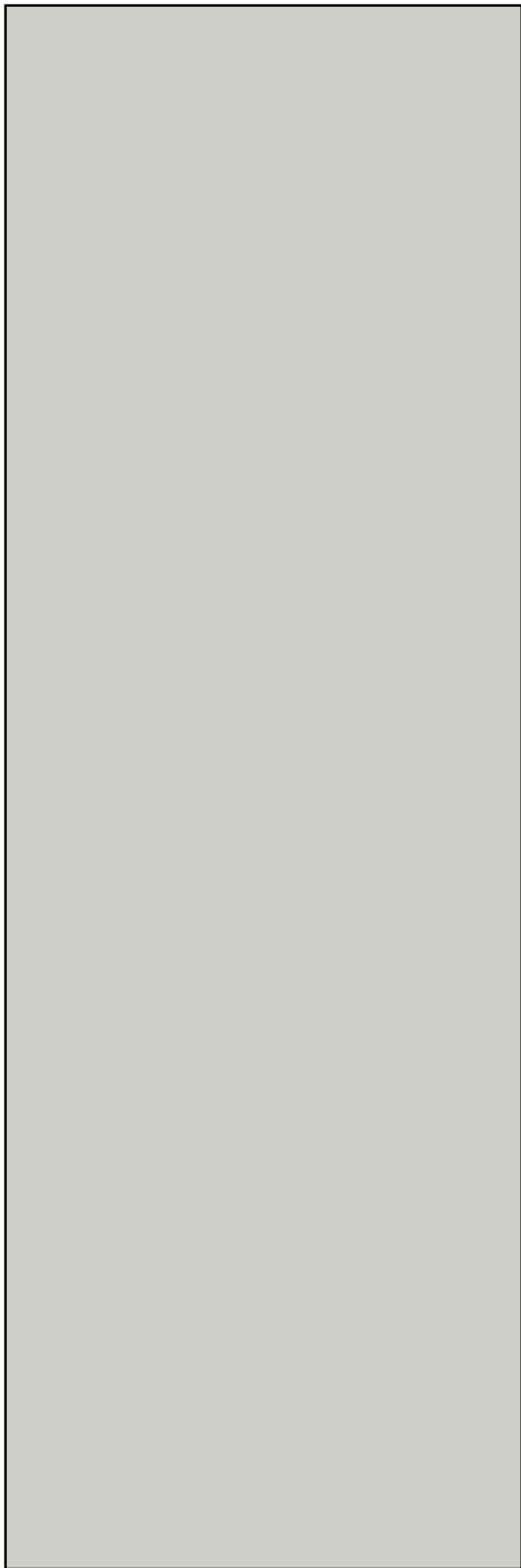
The Lord is in fact the brother of the Flame Duke, leader of the Fairies who betrayed the Troll Queen in 2170 BC. The Lord of Leaves remained loyal, but the rift with his brother weighed heavily on him, and with the passing centuries he reconsidered his position. Officially aligned with Titania after the fall of Grondheim in 1700 BC, the Lord of Leaves

9 - There is a treasure of magical objects in the palace, some dating back to the time of Grondheim. Spells to see magic and invisible things may reveal them, but the Lord of Leaves and the other fairies here will not allow thieves to escape unmolested.

nevertheless contacted his brother in Kundrak in 1664 BC and kept contact with him even after the fall of the Dark Fairies. Eventually his turning point was in 95 AC, when he found Elienor by the Crystal Lake. Since then, he has been a secret agent of the Winter Queen. Even if he normally aids Crais and the other agents of Titania and Oberon to deflect suspicions, he always subtly sabotages their efforts. He has also successfully deflected Crais' suspicions to Jinimix (see Area 5) and other factions, so far. The Lord of Leaves has found a way to repair the Crystal Lake, even if he has not shared this information with anyone yet, not even with his brother and Elienor. The magical ritual to repair the lake needs some quite rare components from the Seven Kingdoms accessible through the Purple Houses (Area 4):

- I - A dryad's love potions from the earth fairies.
- II - A nixie's veil from the sea fairies.
- III - A faerie's wing dust from the sky fairies.
- IV - A gem of Annwyn from the Shadowdeep fairies.
- V - A tepictoton's cloak from the Hollow World fairies
- VI - A pinch of enchanted dust from Matera's fairies
- VII - A pooka's boot from Patera's fairies.

Obtaining all the above items will include some difficult feats of persuasion and a lot of travel. If the PCs manage to do that the Lord of Leaves will reward them handsomely with magical items and will promise even more rewards from Elienor and the Flame Duke, once he informs them. The PCs could instead obviously bring such items and knowledge to one of the other fairy factions described in Area 5. Elienor and the Duke will obviously eventually use the lake to bring here huge numbers of Dark Fairies, to eliminate humans and any other faction. The Lord of Leaves may try to convince the others to spare former allies, but Elienor and the Duke may well not necessarily listen to him.



The Darkers will meet the Lord of Leaves too but he will not tell them about the items, as he will decide to speak directly with his brother and the other Dark Fairies. The Lord and his retainers will become visible here once the Last One has been temporarily defeated.

10 - The Cave, only safe way to Level 10

Even if it is possible to reach Level 10 through the Chasm, this cave is the only safe way to do so. The fairy agents and the Lord of Leaves know that the Last One has awakened some mummies below, but they did not care as their only interest is the Crystal Lake. Therefore the hatch opening into the spiral staircase going down is bolted.

The Darkers will not immediately try to open Level 10, but should decide to do so eventually, activating or disarming the trap. It is very likely, however, that The Last One, hidden below on Level 10 and after his first defeat on Level 7, will strike against them well before they decide to explore below.

10 - There is a trap on the hatch left by The Last One if someone tries to open it without saying "All praises to Thanatos Lord of Death". The trap is exceedingly powerful, sending a meteor swarm against the intruders. A clue to its existence are the battered bones of some old adventurers who somehow managed to reach this far.

THE BATTLE ON THIS LEVEL

There will be no initial battle on this level, as the Darkers and the Dark Fairies will arrive here peacefully after conquering Level 7 (see issue #9 of Threshold) and finding an agreement with the lizardmen on Level 8 (see issue #10 of Threshold). After some time however the minions of the Last One (or of

other parties, see the next issue of Threshold magazine for a possible timeline and outcome of the battles for Koskatep's control) will come up from Level 10, and they will have to battle whoever controls Krystallac, probably the Darkers or the Dark Fairies, or another fairy faction.





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- Traversing the lands of Blackmoor, Y'hog, and Taymora
- An interview with James Mishler
- Return of the Egg of Coot
- The Lost Origins of the Elves
- Maps of the past of the Known World, from 4000 BC to 900 AC
- Treatise on Time Travel
- Another level of Koskatep

... and much much more...

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