

# THRESHOLD

## Issue #20

<a href="#">Editorial</a> .....	<a href="#">3</a>
<a href="#">This Issue's Contributors</a> .....	<a href="#">4</a>
<a href="#">Call for Contributors</a> .....	<a href="#">7</a>
<a href="#">Atlas of Mystara - Skothar - 72 miles /hex</a> .....	<a href="#">8</a>
<a href="#">The Great History of Skothar</a> .....	<a href="#">11</a>
<a href="#">The Political Maps of Skothar</a> .....	<a href="#">49</a>
<a href="#">Three Nations of Skothar</a> .....	<a href="#">75</a>
<a href="#">Notes on Skotharian Rakasta</a> .....	<a href="#">84</a>
<a href="#">Beholders of Mystara</a> .....	<a href="#">95</a>
<a href="#">STARPORT</a> .....	<a href="#">109</a>
<a href="#">Returned Blackmoor</a> .....	<a href="#">131</a>
<a href="#">The Tigers of Kuraman</a> .....	<a href="#">160</a>
<a href="#">Playing Zhochal in Mystara</a> .....	<a href="#">170</a>
<a href="#">Artwork Sources and Credits</a> .....	<a href="#">188</a>
<a href="#">Next Issue</a> .....	<a href="#">193</a>

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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

# Skothar the Unknown

Skothar has always been fascinating to me because it was the most mysterious and underdeveloped continent of Mystara. There were a few names in the original Master set map by Frank Mentzer, the Alphatian colony in Esterhold introduced in the Dawn of the Emperors boxed set, the descriptions of Jennites and Tanagoro and the mention of Milenian colonists founding Minaea in the Hollow World boxed and the Poor Wizard's Almanac. That is about all the canon informations on the whole continent. But then, there is Blackmoor. Originally developed by Dave Arneson as an independent setting, the first one for D&D, Blackmoor was placed in Mystara with the DA series of modules (1986-1987). The Mystara Known World Gazetteers seemed to assume Blackmoor was in the Known World, but later the Hollow World boxed set placed Blackmoor in Skothar. The idea is convenient as it allows to give quite an interesting past to the mysterious continent.

As happened with all the rest of Mystara, fans did not stay idle after canon products were discontinued and several new material was created for Skothar too, with a full project to turn the continent into the Oriental setting of Mystara. This issue of Threshold present the current status of the fan development of Skothar. You will see there is still much work to do, but also enough ideas to allow DMs to use the continent as a fully functional setting, fascinating and diverse as all the rest of Mystara is.

We will start with the current map of Skothar done by Thorfinn Tait, then with the History of the continent and the historical maps I have made for it. You will see Thorfinn and I have different takes on the shape and the extension of Skothar and that is fine as Threshold Magazine does not creates "canon" material for Mystara, but present all the different ideas fans may have about the setting. Next, we will see three Almanac-style entries for nations of Skothar and a short description of Skotharian rakasta by Arnden Quartzspar. Then Robin will introduce us to the Beholders of Mystara and Skothar, The Real Nowhere Man will present the Duchy of the Peaks from Blackmoor times to now, and Brian Rubinfeld will show Blackmoor returned with all its might in present days Skothar.

Finally, Giampaolo Agosta will lead us to an adventure with humans and rakasta in the Gulf of Tangor, inspired by the Far East swashbuckling adventures of classic italian writer Emilio Salgari. Last but not least an article not set specifically in Skothar but easily applicable to it: playing the zhochal by Geoff Gander, a completely alien intelligent creature from another dimension who can take humanoid guise and could become either allies or an enemies.

Enough material in this issue to spark your imagination and let you populate the unknown continent of Skothar with history, people and places, turning it into a setting as alive as the rest of Mystara continues to be!

*Francesco Defferrari (Sturm)*  
Issue #20 Editor-in-Chief

## This Issue's Contributors

**Giampaolo Agosta (a.k.a. Agathokles)** agrees with Schiller that “man is only completely a man when he plays&. Therefore, he makes a point of taking gaming seriously, and real life casually. Besides Mystara, his gaming interests include (among others) Dark Sun, Planescape, Ravenloft, Birthright, Call of Cthulhu, Star Wars and Witchcraft RPG.

**Francis Doberty Jr, (Aka Arnden Quartzspar)** started playing in Mystara in 1982 at age 12, with the Isle of Dread. Like Frank, Arnden joined the Air Force, and started to see remote areas of the world. When he lost his homeland, he started to journal his exploration on foot. Skothar caught his eye and has held his interest ever since.

**Geoff Gander** has been heavily involved in the Mystaran community for longer than he cares to remember. He has since been published by Solstice Publishing, Metahuman Press, AE SciFi, and Expeditious Retreat Press. He primarily writes horror and dark fantasy, but is willing to give anything a whirl. When he isn't writing or toiling on a cube farm, Geoff spends his time reading, entertaining his two boys, watching British comedies, playing roleplaying games, and travelling. Not at the same time.

**Justin Pfeil** draws comics, is a historical fencer in the Italian tradition, makes armor for his friends, and has played D&D since the Red Box was first published. His current project is a webcomic about characters attempting to survive The Keep on the Borderlands module from the players perspective.

**Robin** (at The Piazza, **Robin D** elsewhere) Female from 1962, she began playing D&D since its earliest days as far back as 1978,

soon after becoming “addicted”. Ultimately, she was intimately bound to the world of Mystara, because of its complex diversity. A current compiler of massive materials available on Vaults of Pandius & her “Breath of Mystara” blog; and former Teacher of Biology, Ecology, Chemistry, Physics, once travelling all over Europe as a stage dancer including house parties. Once called "The Fletcher" at UK GenCon by Bruce Heard for her extensive compilation in “Revenge of the Little Ones”.

**Brian Rubinfeld:** despite never being as intense of a fan as much of the fandom, Brian has had a fondness for Mystara stretching back as many eons as the stars! Whether coming up with zany ideas or diving into the earthiness of the setting's lore, he always finds something to love about the Known World and beyond. When not writing for Threshold, Brian is an amateur writer and game creator looking into freelance options, as well as currently working in a pharmacy.

I'm **Toni Roads**. I'm a concept artist and illustrator based in Barcelona, Spain. I always liked fantasy as a way to get away from reality so I can learn to face problems with a new perspective. I'm a big fan of RPGs, and fantasy universes like Harry Potter and the Lord of the Rings. Currently, I'm a Half-Elf Ranger raised by Halflings.

You can follow me on *instagram*:@toniroads  
*artstation*: www.artstation/toniroadsart.com

*Facebook*: Toni Roads Art

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.

He's *The Real Nowhere Man*, sitting in his Nowhere Land, making all his Nowhere plans for Nobody.

*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.thorffmaps.com](http://www.thorffmaps.com)) and the Atlas site ([mystara.thorffmaps.com](http://mystara.thorffmaps.com)).



**FROM  
THE VAULTS  
OF PANDIUS**

Some features in issues of Threshold carry a “From the Vaults of Pandius” tagline. As one of our stated aims is “to promote the Vaults of Pandius and the material there”, we hope you will enjoy these revised or extended treasures from that [website](#).



FROM the  
Mystara  
FORUM at



Some features in issues of Threshold carry a “From the Mystara Forum at The Piazza” tagline. These Discussion Boards are an active and dynamic home of creativity for the Mystara community and many other game worlds. We hope you will enjoy the articles that have arisen from that [website](#).



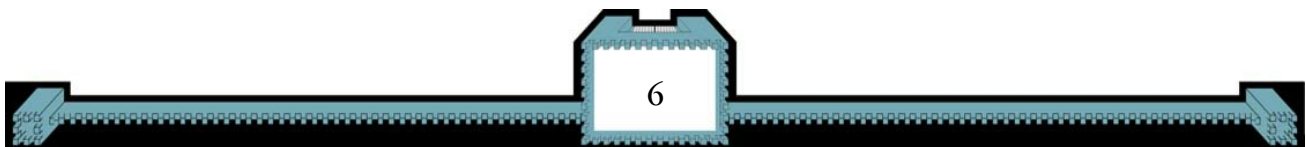
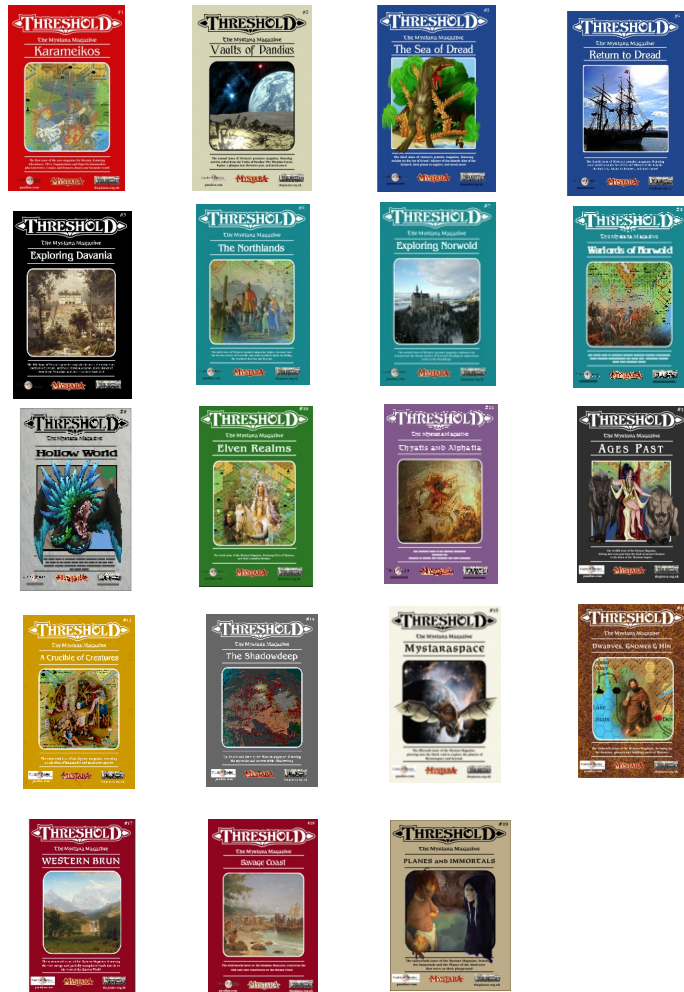


## Previous Issues

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.

- [# 1 - "Karamaikos"](#)
- [# 2 - "Vaults of Pandius"](#)
- [# 3 - "The Sea of Dread"](#)
- [# 4 - "Return to Dread"](#)
- [# 5 - "Exploring Davania"](#)
- [# 6 - "The Northlands"](#)
- [# 7 - "Exploring Norwold"](#)
- [# 8 - "Warlords of Norwold"](#)
- [# 9 - "Hollow World"](#)
- [# 10 - "Elven Realms"](#)
- [# 11 - "Thyatis & Alphatia"](#)
- [# 12 - "Ages Past"](#)
- [# 13 - "A Crucible of Creatures"](#)
- [# 14 - "The Shadowdeep"](#)
- [# 15 - "Mystaraspaces"](#)
- [# 16 - "Dwarves, Gnomes & HIN"](#)
- [# 17 - "Western Brun"](#)
- [# 18 - "Savage Coast"](#)
- [# 19 - "Planes and Immortals"](#)



## CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The Threshold editorial team invites all fans of the Mystara setting to submit contributions to the magazine's next issue. We are especially looking for contributions fitting the following themes:

### Issue 21 - Specularum

Discover the history, personalities, organizations and locales of Specularum, the city on the mirror bay, capital of the Grand Duchy of Karameikos. This issue aims at giving a new life to the vaporware product: "Fantasy Cities #1: Specularum"

**Proposal Deadline:** July 15th, 2018

**Manuscript Deadline:** August 10th, 2018

**Issue Published:** by October 21st, 2018

Call for proposals for main themes of forthcoming issues (2019):

### Issue 22 - Adventures and Campaigns

This issue will focus on adventures, campaigns, and other materials directly useful for your Mystaran games

**Proposal Deadline:** November 3rd, 2018

**Manuscript Deadline:** December 6th, 2018

**Issue Published:** by February 15th, 2019

### Issue 23 - Strongholds

This issue will delve into the myriad of strongholds that dot the Mystaran landscape. Cities, castles, towers, and secret lairs. These strongholds may serve as anything from bastions of refuge, to adventure obstacles waiting to be overcome by Mystaran PCs.

**Proposal Deadline:** March 3rd, 2019

**Manuscript Deadline:** April 6th, 2019

**Issue Published:** by June 15th, 2019

*Articles about other topics are still welcome and the editorial team will evaluate their publication for any upcoming issue, taking into account available space and the issue's theme.*

*Threshold* accepts and invites submissions of extended or revised versions of works having appeared on *The Piazza* or *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, this material should be limited to a minimum. For most NPCs, it is sufficient to mention class, level, and alignment. For important NPCs, a one or two line stat block may be included.

# 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 Skothar, current as of May 2018. For changes since publication, visit [this article at the Atlas site](#).

## Skothar - 72 miles per hex

by Thorfinn Tait



*FROM  
THE VAULTS  
OF PANDIUS*

*Thorf writes:*

*[Overleaf]* is an early draft, and at 72 miles per hex it’s also rather small scale. Which is to say, almost everything is still open for change.

I’ve redone areas that appeared on 24 mile per hex maps to more closely match those maps. For example, Nuar in the Pearl Islands is completely different from how it appeared on previous 72 mile per hex maps; it’s far more accurate. However, Alphatia is not yet updated, nor is the Isle of Dawn, which I’m leaving to do on the Brun map.

I derived the terrain in previously unmapped regions from five main sources:

- The Master Rules Set world map
- The Jurassic Earth map
- The Hollow World Campaign Set world map
- My climate map for Mystara, which is an expanded version of Bruce Heard’s climate map of Brun
- Previous fan-made maps, such as Thibault Sarlat’s and Francesco Defferrari’s

The mountains come primarily from the base Master Set world map. I then referenced the





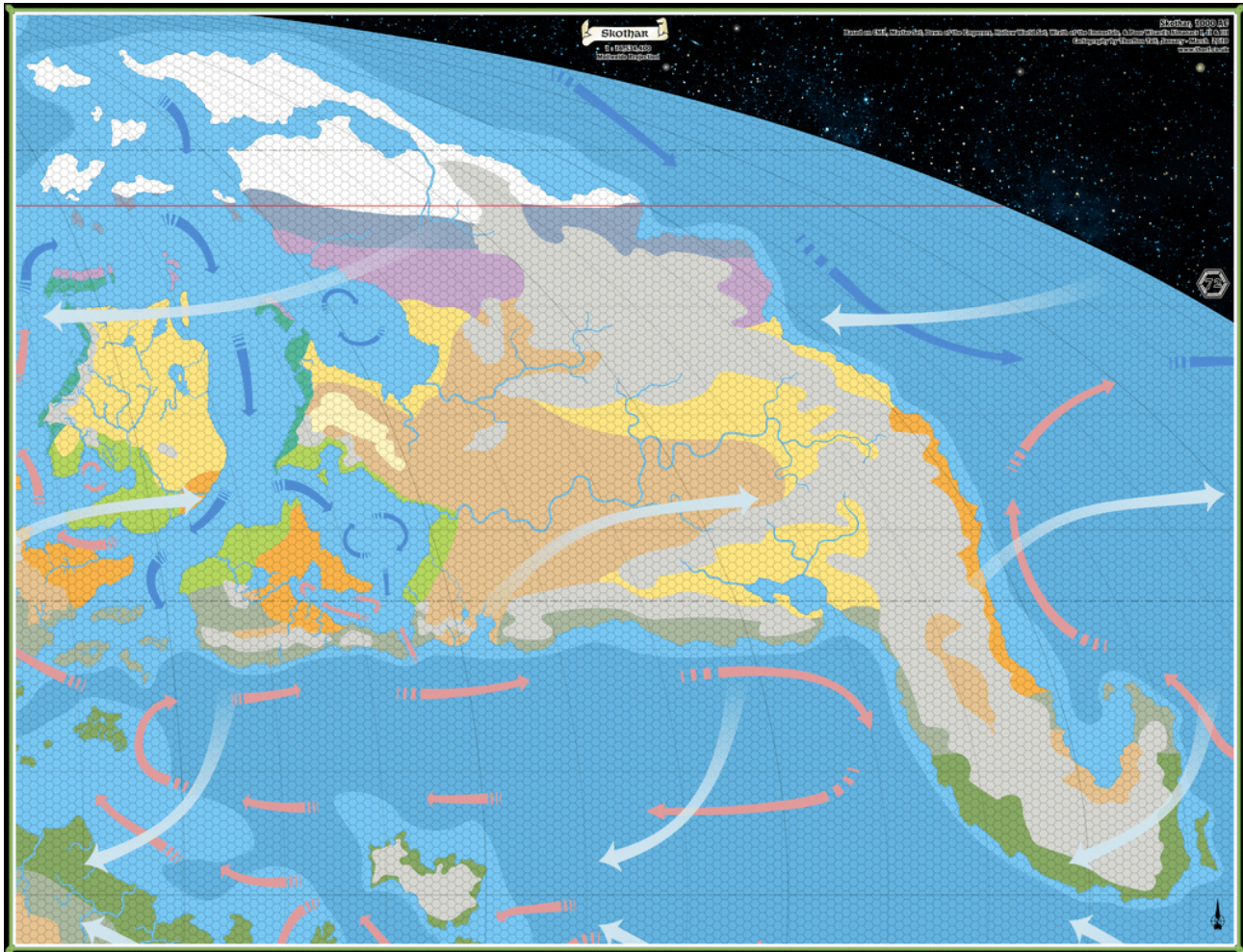
[Continental map of Skothar, 72 miles per hex](#)

Jurassic Earth map to get information on the ridges, which have been marked with dark brown mountain ridge hexes.

The continental shelves come from the same map, as no official maps ever gave ocean depths for any of these regions.

The *Hollow World Campaign Set* map shows all the terrain in very broad strokes. I adapted this to get the forests, hills, tundra/snow fields, and plains. I referred to my climate map for guidance while doing this.

Finally, I tried to reference the fan-made maps as much as I could, but this was made rather difficult by the rather drastic difference in Skothar's shape. As a result, I haven't incorporated nearly as much detail as I would have liked, and instead went for similar overall patterns and inspiration rather than copying specific detail.



*Climate map of Skothar, 72 miles per hex*

**Future Updates:**

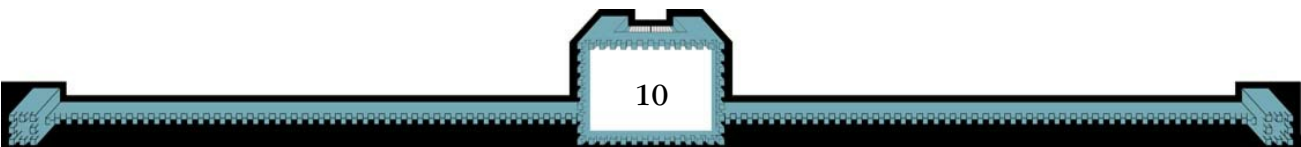
As I said, this is still just an early draft. I'd love to hear your thoughts on the map: what did I get right, what did I get wrong, etc. I'm happy to change terrain details to accommodate existing or new fan projects; nothing east of 30°E is set in stone, as most of it is just arbitrary decisions.

So please don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any comments, suggestions, or corrections!

Back to work... This is just the first of three (four?!), after all..."

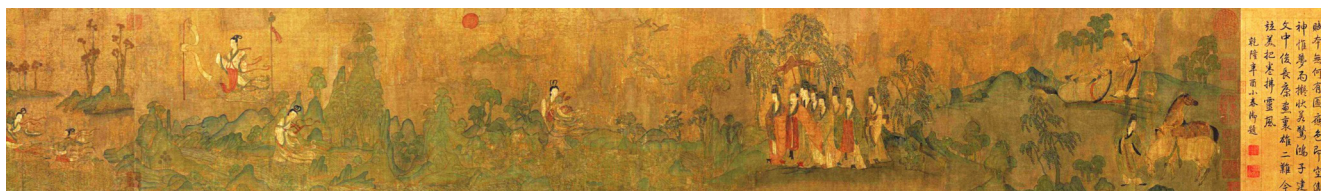
**Visit the new Atlas OF Mystara  
website at:**

<http://mystara.thorfmeps.com/>



# The Great History of Skothar

## A timeline of the Eastern continent



Ancient scroll from a Skotharian kingdom

by Francesco Defferrari (Sturm)

### INTRODUCTION

The eastern continent of Mystara is certainly the one less developed and described in canon products. The first image of the continent was in the map done by Frank Mentzer<sup>1</sup> in the *D&D Master Set* (1985) and shows a few political lines: the land of Nentsun in the north, the land of Thonia, the land of Jen, the Empire of the Great Khan, the Empire of Tangor, Minaea, Zyxl. The western peninsula of the continent is also shown as part of the Empire of Alphatia. And indeed in *Dawn of the Emperors boxed set* (1989), we discovered a little more information on that peninsula, Esterhold, occupied by Alphatia and inhabited by native Jennites. Much more about Skothar was detailed in the *Hollow World Campaign set* (1990), which gave a basic timeline of the whole planet and stated that two important cultures of the Hollow World, the Tanagoro and the Jennite peoples, came from Skothar. The campaign set also clarified that Blackmoor, the campaign created by Dave Arneson and detailed in the modules *DA1-DA4* (1986-7) was meant to be set in the past

<sup>1</sup> See [replica maps by Thorfinn Tait](#) in the Vaults of Pandius

of Skothar before the Great Rain of Fire which destroyed Blackmoor, and showed also a pre-cataclysmic map of the planet and the continent and a migration map of the peoples of Mystara over the millenia. Some additional information was later added in the *Poor Wizard's Almanacs I, II, and III* (1992-4), mostly about Minaea, Jen and Esterhold. This is more or less the extent of the canon information available on the continent, which is much less than what we have about Brun and Davania (see *Threshold* issues #17, 18 and 5).

But obviously the active Mystara fan community soon tried to fill the void adding many ideas which would allow any DM to bring her/his players to Skothar to find plenty of adventures.

The purpose of this article is both to summarize the existing canon and fan material and to add my personal interpretation of Skothar, giving an unique feel and setting to the continent. In fact, Brun has been developed in canon and fan material as a sort of Mystaran Europe in the east and Savage West in the west, while Davania is portrayed as a Mystaran equivalent

for unexplored South America and Africa. Skothar however cannot be “just” a Mystara Asia, because it is meant to contain also cultures which do not come from an asian inspiration (such as the Tanagoro, which are the Mystaran equivalent of African peoples) and is also meant to be the true origin of the modern Mystara humans. Yet many cultures inspired by Africa or Asia have already been used in canon products in Brun or Davania, therefore the human cultures of Skothar should have some unique twists to make them a bit different. I think these unique twists should be a great cultural melting pot and the heritage of Blackmoor.

### The Skotharian Melting Pot

As the origin of the human race and the seat of the most powerful empires in Mystara’s history, Skothar reached a major cultural and material development before the Great Rain of Fire. First the Empire of Thonia, then Blackmoor, Tangor and the Empire of the Great Khan. All these became multi-ethnic empires inhabited by different human cultures, demihumans, rakasta, humanoids and many other races. So while in Brun we have fantasy cultures that mirror the ones of the real world, probably Skothar should have only mixed cultures which have greatly changed from their origin during the course of history by mixing with other cultures and races.

### Post-Apocalypse

The Great Rain of Fire which destroyed Blackmoor was 4,000 years before the present time of many Mystara campaigns, yet the fallout has not ended yet. Before the apocalypse, Skothar had huge empires with immense cities and common technomagic



*Great Rain of Fire*

items. Looking at the pre-cataclysmic and post-cataclysmic map in the Hollow World Campaign set, it is easy to understand that the continent has suffered much more than the rest of Mystara, completely changing shape. Whole nations have been destroyed and new lands have risen. Skothar is dotted with ruins of its past, ruins feared and coveted because they contain the Heritage.

### The Heritage of Blackmoor

Skotharian people know about Blackmoor and how it was supposedly destroyed by its own technomagic powers. They also tell their children about the Wasting disease which was caused by the failing of Blackmoorian

technomagic items after the Great Rain of Fire. Many nations and groups therefore forbid the owning and usage of any Blackmoorian item on the penalty of death. Yet despite their inherent danger, and the will of the Immortals to destroy the dangerous heritage of technomagic, there are still people willing to take the risk to obtain incredible powers.

## THE HISTORY OF SKOTHAR

### The Northern Dragon Empire and the Eastern Court

In the remote past of Mystara, Skothar was completely under water. When the continent began to rise from the waves, its first inhabitants were dragons and the many races of the fairy folk: so were born the Northern Dragon Empire and the Eastern Court, or the Court of Twilight, which dominated Skothar for countless millennia<sup>2</sup>.

### The ancient people

Then other races rose to prominence, those that now are called “the ancient people” of Skothar, but that were the young races at the time, in comparison to dragons and fairies.

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<sup>2</sup> Most of this comes from my article [“99,999985% Mystara history”](#) in the Vaults of Pandius . Except for some notes in the text, most of the references of this timeline are listed at the end of the article.

These races were sandfolk, geonids, fungoids, hivebrood, frogfolk and gatormen, creodonts and rakastodons. The creodonts were a race of intelligent carnivorous mammals now extinct, even if some scholars suspect they could be somehow related to the ancestry of lupins, hutaakans and gnolls. The rakastodons were the direct ancestors of the rakasta, who could have their origin in Skothar, even if some sages think instead their origin was in Davania.

All of these races competed for prominence in Skothar or came to dominate different regions of the continent. Other races came after them - garls, giants and brutemen. The relation between these three peoples is not clear. Garl may be the ancestors of giants. Brutemen are probably the ancestors of modern humans, or just a parallel evolution. Giants dominated Skothar for centuries, then their dominion fell, according to their myth, due to a world spanning war between fire and frost giants. Eventually brutemen became the dominant race in Brun, while it's not clear how numerous they ever were in Skothar. It seems that the rakastodon, and all the rakasta races which evolved from it, dominated large parts of Skothar for a long time, and so did the hivebrood, particularly in Eastern Skothar.

To the present day some of these ancient races have almost disappeared, while others are still numerous and thriving in many regions of the continent, even if they do not dominate it now like once they did in times past.

**Adventurer finds  
Blackmoorian tech,**  
original drawing by  
Justin Pfeil,  
(aka *warriorneedsfood*  
on *The Piazza*, forums)  
check his  
[“Keeps on the Borderland”](#)  
comic



## HUMANS, rakasta & other races

Humanity was born in Skothar, maybe from a group of brutemen, maybe from the will of some Immortals or manipulations of dragons or fairies. Either way the new race became more and more numerous and diversified greatly in shape and look, establishing different groups in different parts of the continent. They were not however the dominant race of Skothar, not yet at least. The rakasta were as numerous and as different as the humans, and the other ancient races were not extinct as well. The relations between humans and rakasta varied between conflict, competition, distrust and cooperation. This pushed both people to exploration and migration, and slowly humans and rakasta migrated toward the central islands and Brun in great numbers. Still many rakasta groups remained in Skothar, differentiating into the rakasta breeds of Skothar: sherkasta, pardasta, snow pardasta, cloud pardasta, dwarf pardasta, lyncasta, grey rakasta, jungle rakasta, sand rakasta, steppe rakasta, wild rakasta, fisher rakasta, rust rakasta, flathead rakasta, bay rakasta, golden rakasta, marbled rakasta and Skotharian simbasta<sup>3</sup>. Humans differentiated as well into many different breeds, the most important ones being the Neathar, Oltecs and Tanagoro.

It should be also noted that some sages dispute that the origin of humanity was in Skothar, and believe instead it was in the

<sup>3</sup> Inspired by [real world felidae breeds](#). Most of this chapter come from "[History And Evolution Of Rakastas](#)" by Simone Neri at the Vaults of Pandius . For another theory about the evolution of rakasta from Davania see also "[History and Origins of the Rakasta](#)" by Giampaolo Agosta from *Threshold Magazine* issue #5

modern Alphatia, or Bellisaria, or near these lands. Others think the origin of rakasta was instead in Davania. In any case, it is certain that many different human and rakasta peoples populated Skothar in great numbers quite early in the history of the continent.

**150,000 BC** Rakastodons and Cave Rakasta are already present in Southern Skothar. The new human species has its origin possibly in the region of modern eastern Minaea or the Gulf of Tangor, from a group of brutemen.

**100,000 BC** Rakasta are differentiating into the modern breeds. The new human species put some pressure on them forcing or pushing them to migrate to other regions of Skothar.

**75,000 BC** Rakasta migrations move to northern Skothar and toward Brun.

**50,000 BC** The expansion and growing numbers of humans force many rakasta groups to disperse across Skothar or leave the continent to the north.

## HUMANS spread AND rise to PROMINENCE

**45,000 BC** Wars erupt in several regions of central and southern Skothar between humans and rakasta. Even if the rakasta stand their ground for centuries, slowly the humans gain prominence and settle more territories. The three main branches of humans, Neathar, Oltecs and Tanagoro are now recognizable. The Neathar move slowly to northern and western Skothar, the Oltec to central and southwestern Skothar, the Tanagoro settle southern and eastern Skothar.

**39,000 BC** Expansion of sherkasta, simbasta

and pardasta in southern Skothar and Bellisaria has to compete with the expansion of Oltec men from southern Skothar to the central plains.

**35,000 BC** More Oltec people settle Bellisaria, forcing other rakasta migrations. (Most of the oltec history come from A Timeline of the Oltec Man by Átila Pires dos Santos and Giampaolo Agosta, see end of the article. The Oltec group settling Bellisaria would be the ancestor of the Mystaran Amerindians Oltecs which will colonize southern Brun and Davania).

**30,000 BC** Dwa Tanagoro reach the Sea Kingdoms, establishing alliances with underwater races. (Dwa Tanagoro are my creation inspired by Melanesian people, from an idea by Giulio Caroletti).

**20,000 BC** The Oltecs of Skothar diversified in several groups like the Jen-Yal, Peshwah, Jen-Kha, Jen-Wan and Mawa, spreading through the continent. (Caroletti, Agosta, dos Santos and me, Jen-Yal, Jen-Kha and Peshwah should correspond roughly to Mongolian, Jen-Wan to Sino-Tibetan, Mawa to Austronesians and Tai-Austroasiatic).

**19,000 BC** Harimau-Belang sherkasta culture of the lowlands, and the Tagh sherkasta culture of the mountains develop in Skothar (Neri).

**16,000 BC** The rakasta leader Ninfangle leads a great migration of rakasta out of Skothar to Brun and Davania. (Dalmonte, see end of the article).

**15,000 BC** The rising power of carnifex in Davania leads to some of them reaching southern Skothar and trying to gain a

foothold in the continent pushing gatormen and frogfolk against humans and rakasta. While the strategy has some success and leads to the increase of the territory of these races, it fails ultimately when the Immortals imprison the carnifex (M3 module, Geoff Gander, *Threshold* issue #11).

**13,000 BC** Several regions of Skothar are still dominated by lizardfolk, gatormen and frogfolk, as is the region of the future Blackmoor (Rafael).

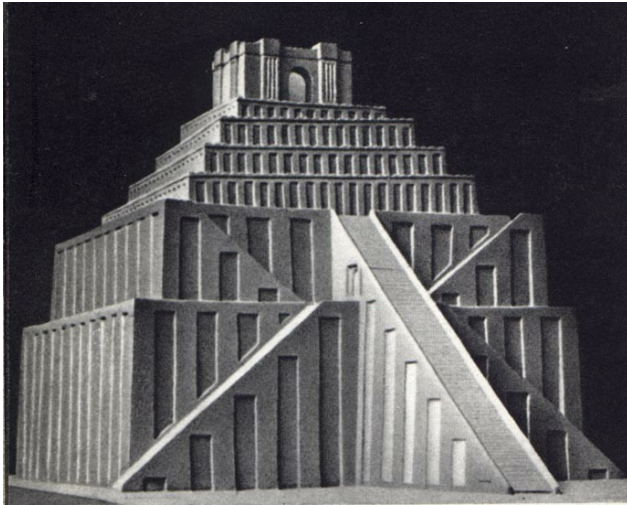
**12,000 BC** Metal working, agriculture, ceramics and the domestication of animals spread in Skothar, mostly coming from the Oltecs who have learned it from dwarves and gnomes of Brun (modified from James Mishler).

**11,000 BC** Lhomarrrian people develop in south western Skothar from Oltecs and Maharian Neathar and spread to Bellissaria and the Sea Kingdoms, eventually reaching Davania. (Lhomarr is a creation of Geoff Gander, Maharian Neathars are the southern, Mediterranean-like population imagined by Caroletti, Agosta and Gander, see end of the article).

**10,400 BC** Most of the Lhomarrrians are pushed out of southern Skothar by the Tanagoro, some settle in the Alphatian Sea, Esterhold and Minaea (Geoff Gander, *Threshold* issue #11).

**8,400 BC** The Lhomarrrians of Davania have founded a seafaring empire. They found colonies in other regions of Davania, the Alphatian Sea and southwestern Skothar (Geoff Gander).





*Lhomarrrian temple*

**8,303 BC** Mythical date of the first Khan of Skothar founding the nation of Khar. The ancient fairy Eastern Court is possibly involved in the creation of the nation, and called by humans the Celestial Court. Dragons are involved as well with the first Khan himself being a dragon (Author, Rafael, MOrient project)<sup>4</sup>.

**8,000 BC** The Valoin migrate to Northern Brun. The Skandaharians are people born in Northern Skothar, mostly from Neathar populations and Valoin. Maharian Neathars settle Alphatian Sea and Southeastern Brun (Caroletti, Agosta and dos Santos). Dunharian Neathar settle north-western Skothar (Dunharians are the Celtic-like

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<sup>4</sup> This event and others below are in truth inspired by the Kingdom of Karak in the *Wilderlands* setting used also by [Håvard](#) and [James Mishler](#). In 1977, *Blackmoor* was published by Judges Guild and later some fans connected it to JG's *Wilderlands* setting. However, even if the *Wilderlands* could provide great inspiration for ancient Skothar, they have since become their own setting and I do not want to use them fully because the setting contains several non human races which do not really fit with *Mystara*.

Neathars imagined by Caroletti, Agosta and dos Santos).

**8,006 - 7,022 BC** The great war between Carnifex and Lhomarrrians in Davania marginally touches also the Alphatian Sea and southwestern Skothar where Carnifex agents try again to push gatormen and frogfolk against humans, with mixed success (Gander, Author).

**7,225 BC** The region of future Thonia is now ruled by sorcerer-kings called the Red Coven. (Rafael).

## The Empires of Thonia and Blackmoor

**7,000 BC** Thonian Neathars conquers the land of the Vantalians Yevan, displacing them to the north. First nucleus of Old Thonia. Some Yevan merge with Oltec tribes in the west, later forming the Afridhi people. (Yevan was a term invented by me in *Threshold* issue #9 for the ancestors of the Vantalians, the *Mystara* Slavic people, in Skothar. The Afridhi leader Toska Rusa in the DA series of modules has a Russian name, so a Slavic influence fits with them. Their Yevan ancestry could also explain their later hate for Thonia).

**6,868 BC** First human record of elves in northern Skothar. Starport in the north is now the capital of the Red Coven (*Maiden's Timeline*). It is possible that halflings arrived at the same time. The elves belong to the Genander clan and are related to the Genalleth and Geffronell who would later settle Wendar and Denagoth in Brun (Author, Håvard, *Threshold* issue #10).

**6,000 BC** Small groups of dwarves and gnomes from Brun begin to settle western Skothar (James Mishler, Blackmoor d20).

**5,632 BC** City of Lum founded by descendants of Lhomarrians, controls trade between Bellissaria and Skothar on the current western coast (JTR, Author).

**5,500 BC** Thonia, learning advanced agriculture and iron working from the dwarves, rises to prominence in central Skothar (James Mishler).

**5,200 BC** Possible date of the founding of Mohacs, King Euphemus makes it the capital of Thonia (JTR). The Kus, a human group descended from Tanagoro and Oltec blood, found the realm of Saku in the eastern mountains (JTR, Author).

**5,050 BC** Mythical date of the halfling migration from Davania to Skothar under the guidance of the heroine Tilla. (Ripvanwormer).

**5,025 BC<sup>5</sup>** Coup in Thonia against the sorcerer king and creation of the Imperial Council, Robert I of Geneva is the new king of the Thonians, Year 0 of the Thonian calendar (Mishler, Blackmoor d20). The fey people in the woods of Thonia have good relations with the humans (PC1).

<sup>5</sup> An exact correspondence between Blackmoor and Mystara history is quite arbitrary because the Hollow World boxed set only indicates 4,000 BC as the rise of Blackmoor, the DA series only speaks of 3,000 years ago (later retconned to 5,000) and the Blackmoor d20 setting was not officially connected to Mystara. I follow mostly LoZompatore's timeline (see below) but have modified it taking into account Blackmoor d20 which did not exist when he created the timeline.



*Thonian Princes in old book*

**5,022 BC** Robert I of Geneva founds a first settlement in the area of Blackmoor town (Blackmoor d20).

**5,000 BC** Mawa Oltecs reach the Sea Kingdoms from southern Skothar. (Mawa Oltecs are my supposition from Austronesian/Polynesian people and were already mentioned in several issues of *Threshold Magazine* as partial ancestors of several populations in northern Davania, Alphantian Sea, Pearl Islands, Ochalea, Thanegioth archipelago and Ierendi, an idea also mentioned by Caroletti, Agosta and Dos Santos in the ethnographic histories, see end of the article).

**4,900 BC:** Legendary birth date of the dwarven hero Urbestar Kazakhum in Skothar (DA1). Telo of Regia is the first Thonian King to declare himself Emperor (JTR). The Empire of Thonia expands into central Skothar and clashes with the Peshwah, Valemen and Skandaharians to the north and Tanagoro to the south, but fails to conquer their territories (James Mishler).

**4,800 BC** Sakkrad of Saku is traditionally the first great Togoro of the Tanagoro. Skandaharian raiders start to pillage the southern coasts (JTR).

**4,780 BC** Thonia completes the conquest of the Western Marches (JTR). Thonia contacts the Deres, a nomad people of mixed Oltec and Tanagoro descent, of Yuila al Kaloon, the Sea of Grass, trading with them (Biles).

**4,700 BC** A successful plot by the ruler of the rival western city state of Shefa succeeds in fragmenting the Empire of Thonia in Ten Principalities (JTR). Thonian aggression against the Deres leads to their invasion and a Deres dynasty ruling for a brief time the southern part of Thonia (Biles).

**4,600 BC** Six of the Thonian houses agree to an arrangement that keep the Imperium restricted to themselves and the Empire is reunified as the Second Republic (JTR).

**4,554 BC** The Bloody Duke, a sadist and architectural megalomaniac, reigns in Blackmoor Castle. He designs and builds a vast, multi-level dungeon beneath castle Blackmoor, connecting to natural caves and to even older, deeper passages (Blackmoor d20).

**4,525 BC** Temple of Id is destroyed in Blackmoor: treachery within the human faction creates a deep rift among the elves. A faction of elves vows to turn their backs on humans and all civilization, becoming the Westryn. The elf king Uhlmar curses them and their leader, Uhlmar's daughter who will become known as the Black Queen, and plague the western woods with undeath for centuries to come. The others who accept mingling with the humans become the Cumasti, also later known as Meriallis (Blackmoor d20, *Threshold* issue #10).

**4,500 BC** Republic of Thonia annexes the territories of its Southern and Eastern Marches (JTR).

**4,500 BC** Beastmen invade northern Skothar. In Afridhi lands, the beastmen are exterminated, hence the land becomes known as Goblin Kush. Duchy of the Peaks founded (James Mishler). Urbestar Kazakhum establish the Northern Delving mines, in the Crystal Peaks mountains, just north of the northern border of the Thonian Empire. It is said that these mines are the most prominent example of dwarvish architecture throughout Mystara (DA1, LoZompatore).

**4,487 BC** First war between dwarves and beastmen (JTR).

**4,450 BC** Beastmen eventually reach Thonia and endanger the Second Republic (JTR).

**4,426 BC** Skandaharians of chief Skuld sack Mohacs, invade Thonia and a Skandaharian dynasty begins in the Empire, the Third Republic (Rafael, JTR). The Third Republic of Thonia creates the North colony as a buffer zone (Mishler).

**4,400 BC** Kingdom of Satum founded in the Tangor Chain by Tanagoro people with some Oltec blood (JTR, Author).

**4,346 BC** Revolt in Thonia and end of the Skandaharian dynasty (Rafael).

**4,325 BC** The Northlands are settled by exiles and criminals from the Thonian Empire, who call themselves "The Unwanted". The first settlements are built far from the Empire's border, in a wild and off-centre region claimed by the far Duchy of the Peaks in what will become the Duchy of Ten. It is known that elves and halflings and the Egg of Coot already live in the area (DA1, LoZompatore).

**4,300 BC** The House of Iyx rises to prominence in Thonia (JTR). Ten lesser noblemen families, opposing the new dynasty emigrate to the Ten region. Upon their arrival they find an overpopulated area, so they are both obliged to establish new settlements in the nearby wilderness or to drop any hope to rule and to act as traders and merchants, but help develop the land (DA1). The northern dwarves are engaged in their third major conflict with the beastmen. In the south, the new coastal kingdom of Satum devastates and absorbs the older Saku kingdom and makes contact with Thonia. The Peshwah move into the Hak. The Afridhi begin to worship Zugzul (JTR).

**4,250 BC** Establishment of the settlement of Blackmoor as an official settlement of the Thonian Empire in the Northlands (DA1, LoZompatore). Among the founders is also the mortal form of the Immortal Khoronus (WotI). The settlement of Vestfold is founded soon after. The whole area is annexed to the Thonian Empire and called "The Province of the North" (DA1, LoZompatore). It is possible that the fey's migration to the Northlands happened in this period. The fey were disappointed by the increasingly authoritarian government of the Thonian Empire (PC1, LoZompatore).

**4,230 - 4,220 BC** Thonian empire defeated by the Unwanted in the first war of Ten. (Rafael).

**4,210 BC** The Mage Wars begin in Thonia (Blackmoor d20). By this date Thonian traders are reaching to southern Skothar and Bellissaria (JTR).

**4,150 BC:** Some scholars and wise men establish the Cult of the Frog in the Province of the North (DA2, LoZompatore).

**4,146 BC** Two powerful wizards, the "Wizard of the Wood" and "Wizard of the Vale", allies with the Thonian crown, stabilizing the Empire (Rafael).

**4,129 BC** End of the Mage Wars in Thonia and Blackmoor (Blackmoor d20).

**4,100 BC** Khoronus the wizard is still alive as one of the founders of Blackmoor, he will later become an Immortal discovering time travel, and preserving descendants of his family in a far away world in anticipation of the Great Rain of Fire (Dalmonte, Mishler). The cultists of the Frog order settle in the Dismal Swamps, fleeing from Blackmoorish pogroms due to the Froggies human sacrifices. The cultists establish the Temple of the Frog in the middle of the swamps (DA2, LoZompatore).

**4,115 BC** The Wizards' Cabal is officially founded. (Blackmoor d20).

**4,100 BC** Thonia attacks Ten but is defeated (DA1, Blackmoor d20). The region is officially called Duchy of Ten. (DA1, LoZompatore).

**4,050 BC** The Duke of the Peaks disappears and his wife Sonia Sholako becomes the new Duchess (DA1, see also the Duchy of the Peaks campaign in this issue of *Threshold Magazine* (#20)).

**4,055 BC** The Egg of Coot appears and modifies the land, connecting the Black Sea with the North Sea and joining the raiding capabilities of the Western and Eastern Skandaharians. Skandaharian raids become much more dangerous than before (DA1, LoZompatore).

**4,040 BC** Uther Andahar born (Blackmoor d20).

**4,031 BC** Marfeldt the barbarian begins his rampage through the north (DA1, Blackmoor d20).

**4,030 BC** First invasion of Blackmoor by the Egg of Coot, Blackmoor city damaged in the attack (Blackmoor d20).

**4,028-27 BC** Orc king Funk I controlled by the Egg conquers Blackmoor and terrorizes the north until defeated by adventurers (Blackmoor d20).

**4,025 BC** Iyx becomes the new Thonian Emperor under the name Iyx I, Year 1,000 of the Thonian Calendar. Toska Rusa, the Afridhi's high priestess, receives from her Immortal Zugzul a grand vision of conquest. The Afridhi start their campaign by invading the nearby lands of the Valem (DA1, LoZompatore, Blackmoor d20). Existence of tieflings discovered in the North (Blackmoor d20).

**4,023 BC** The Afridhi complete their conquest of the Vales (DA1, Blackmoor d20).

**4,020 BC** The Baron of Blackmoor is killed during a Skandaharian raid. Uther becomes the new Baron. Battle of Berne between the Barony of Blackmoor and the Duchy of Ten. The Barony of Blackmoor forces a route of the Ten army. Baron Uther Andahar distinguishes himself in the battle. The Afridhi invade the plains of Hak, inhabited by the Peshwah nomad people (DA1, LoZompatore, Blackmoor d20).

**4,019 BC** Thonian Emperor Iyx hears for the first time about the Afridhi and their movements on the plains of Hak. Careless about these savages and their actions, Iyx

just sends them diplomats, who are sacrificed to Zugzul (DA1, LoZompatore).

**4,018 BC** The plains of Hak are under the Afridhi's control. Their army attacks the Duchy of Ten (DA1, LoZompatore).

**4,015 BC** Blackmoor Baron Uther Andahar valiantly fights in the military campaign between the Province of the North and the Egg of Coot. (DA1, LoZompatore).

**4,012 BC** The Duchy of the Peaks allies with the Afridhi, who are completing their conquest of the Duchy of Ten. The Duchy of Ten falls within the year (DA1, LoZompatore).

**4,011 BC** The Afridhi establish a tyrannical government over the Duchy of Ten and attack the North, but are repelled. Emperor Iyx accuses the northern baron of treason but the governor's army encounters opposition and cannot arrest Uther. (DA1, LoZompatore).

**4,010 BC** Emperor Iyx orders again the arrest of Baron Uther but the Thonian army is defeated in the battle of the Root River. Battle of the Neck: Uther and the allied Barons defeat the Afridhi. Uther is crowned first King of Blackmoor. (LoZompatore, DA1). The Thonian Empire allies with the Peshwah against the Afridhi (DA3,



*King Uther leading Blackmoorians in battle*

LoZompatore). The Docrae halfling escape from Afridhi slavery and settle near Blackmoor (Blackmoor d20).

**4,009-4,005 BC** This is the time of the Five Victories of Blackmoor: two against the Egg of Coot, one against the Skandaharians led by Thorsen One Thumb, previously repelled from Thonia by Taha Markovic, the Duke of Borno, the fourth against the Thonian army occupying the lower Province of the North and the fifth against the Afridhi at Blackmoor city. Toska Rusa decides to suspend any military operations against Blackmoor and to move around it from the south. An Afridhi army is sent to conquer the Dragon Hills. (DA1, Blackmoor d20).

**4,005 BC:** The alien spaceship the F.S.S. Beagle crash-lands on Mystara, in the Valley of the Ancients, a desert lowland south of the Blackmoor Kingdom. The barbarian tribes inhabiting the desert start raiding and looting the landing site (DA3, LoZompatore). On the Beagle spaceship, Security Chief Stephen Rocklin rebels against Captain Bork Riesling and escapes, crashing in the Dismal Swamps, not far from the Temple of the Frog. Stephen and his comrades are revered as gods and start reinforcing the Cult of the Frog with their equipment and knowledge (DA2-DA3, LoZompatore). The Iron Duke Taha Markovic is appointed as the new Governor of the North Western Province (DA1, LoZompatore).

**4,004 BC** University of Blackmoor built (DA1). Zugzul orders Toska Rusa to build the Well of Souls. The Immortal prophecies that only people not yet born may destroy the artefact. (DA4, LoZompatore).

**4,003 BC** The Blackmoorians learn about the crash landing of the Beagle and send a first

scout mission, with the hope of getting aid or allies against Thonia. The scouts reach the spaceship, but they are repelled by its high-tech defences (DA3, LoZompatore).

**4,002 BC** The Blackmoorish noble Bascom Ungolian leads an expedition in the lands of the Egg of Coot in order to free his wife, kidnapped by the Egg's minions. The expedition is ambushed and Bascom disappears (DA1, LoZompatore). A group of Thonian mages establish the Wizards' Cabal and sets up a rebellion in the town of Vestfold, with the intention of destroying the local University. The rebellion is suppressed and the surviving mages flee and hide; their leader, Tamis Azkanikin ("The Green Mage") hides in the ruins of the tower of Old North Watch (DA1, LoZompatore).

**4,001 BC** Uther is kidnapped by the agents of the Iron Duke of Borno. The rulership is entrusted to the Council of the Regents (DA1, LoZompatore). Uberstar Kazakhum is captured by beastmen. The dwarves set up right away a military force to free him, but they are defeated and pushed back until the gates of Northern Delving, where they are besieged by the beastmen. This is the start of the Sixth War between dwarves and beastmen. Lortz Kazakhum, the son of Uberstar, becomes ad-interim Regent of the Mines. The siege forces him to interrupt any communications with Blackmoor and the humans (DA1, LoZompatore).

**4,000 BC** A group of adventurers from AC 1000 reaches Blackmoor through the Comeback Inn, and manages to free king Uther. (DA1 main event, LoZompatore). Thonia establishes formal contact and trade with the Tanagoro Empire (Håvard).

**3,999 BC** Uther sends an expedition of adventurers to the Temple of the Frog in order to free an important noble. During the attack, Stephen Rocklin manages to escape and rebuilds the Order of the Frog. The Blackmoorians get some high tech devices from the battle site (DA2, LoZompatore). Some months later, a deserter from the Beagle spaceship brings a Blackmoorian expedition back. The expedition helps the alien against Stephen Rocklin, but the captain refuses to ally with the Blackmoorians, who however are able to bring some alien equipment to the University. (DA3, Return to the Temple of the Frog). After this incursion the crew of the Beagle becomes more and more dissatisfied (WotI, LoZompatore).

**3,998 BC** The Blackmoorians recruit a group of adventurers from AC 1000, in order to move around the Zugzul prophecy about the Well of the Souls. The group reaches Tor Kurram and destroys the Well of the Souls, thus ending the continuum perturbations and the alternate timeline (DA4, LoZompatore).

**3,997 BC** Ogdoban Treel kills the entire crew of the Beagle and provokes its destruction, in which the only survivor, Rheddrian, turns into an implosion. Rheddrian is imprisoned into the Mirror but becomes an Immortal (Wrath of the Immortals boxed set, exact date supposed).

**3,995 BC** Dragonborn from the Spine of the Dragon mountains contact Blackmoor, Year 1,030 of the Thonian Calendar (Blackmoor d20 - 4th ed campaign time).

**3,950 BC** Guidarezzo, later to become an Immortal, is an extremely famous musician

in Blackmoor and Thonia. (Dalmonte).

**3,900 BC** The Afridhi capture the Western Marches of Thonia. Emperor Neryx II is deposed and the Iyx dynasty ends (JTR). Thonia has fragmented into principalities, duchies and minor entities, while Blackmoor rises as a major power with the new Technomancy (James Mishler). Blackmoor starts to predominate in naval power over Skandaharia and begins trading with the Deres and Tanagoro to the south (Biles). Afridhi mixing with Thonians create the Nasuan people (Caroletti, Author).

**3,750 BC** Blackmoor begins to use Black powder (Mishler).

**3,743 BC** Afridhi under Eos Cynex besiege Mohacs but are repelled by the intervention of Blackmoorian troops (JTR).

**3,740 BC** The iron-wielding Janbu culture of the southern Skothar plains drives the Ibu jungle tribes eastward. Refugees flee into the sea, with survivors landing on northern Davania and Brun (possible ancestors of the Karimari). Southern Skothar is partitioned between the old Tanagoro and Janbu tribes of the plains, the Satum kingdom of the mountains, the Ibu jungle tribes, and the Kho tribes (Oltec descended) of the desert. To the west, a fire priest from the Oltec nations shook the Bellissarian kingdoms (JTR, Author).

**3,730 BC** A devastating attack by beastmen and Ash goblins on Blackmoor city takes and burns the capital. The King and his family are dead, the heir supposedly missing (Author, supposed from Age of the Wolf Blackmoor 4th ed vapourware product).

**3,726 BC** Age of the Wolf in Blackmoor, the capital city is abandoned and as the heir of the kingdom is still missing the other cities have become de-facto independent states as factions debate and compete on the future of the Kingdom. The Afridhi, the Egg and the Skandaharians take this opportunity to attack Blackmoor. Local heroes rise, helped also by the elite dragonborn bombardiers of the city state of Rodhin, to face these menaces (Blackmoor 4th ed, Author).

**3,715 BC** The heir of the Blackmoor crown, Uther III, is found and crowned thanks to the action of some heroes and the help of the dragonborn of Rodhin. Blackmoor again defeats its enemies and returns to greatness; the city is rebuilt (Author, from Blackmoor 4th ed).

**3,700 BC** The Afridhi under Sola Carnix conquer and burn Mohacs, prompting a reaction of Blackmoor which attacks the Afridhi Empire (JTR). Blackmoor discovers precious minerals in the Sea of Grass and begins to attack the Deres tribes (Biles).

**3,680 BC** Blackmoor destroys the Afridhi Empire, enslaving most of the Afridhi populations. (Mishler). The Nasuuan migrate to the southeast of Thonia (Caroletti, Author).

**3,650 BC** Blackmoor exterminates beastmen and humanoids in central Skothar (Mishler). Blackmoor extermination of the Afridhi and racism against the Peshwah leads to their migration north and south. Some Afridhi will merge with Neathar people and form the Jen, while the Peshwah in parts go north and to Brun, to later become the Etesh, ancestors of the Ethengarians, while others settle Central Skothar in the plains and the

mountains mixing with the related Jen-Kha and Jen-Wan or with the Mawa people, forming the Paesh (See my articles in *Threshold* issue #2 and #9 about Etesh, Wan and Paesh people. Paesh should be the equivalent of Tai-Austroasiatics).

**3,620 BC** The Treaty of Dragonia establishes the new Holy Thonian Empire, de facto controlled by Blackmoor, whose King Uther V is also the Emperor and Patriarch of the Thonian High Church (Mishler, JTR).

**3,600 BC** Blackmoor explorers travel all over Skothar and reaches Brun and Davania (Mishler). Blackmoor has completed the conquest of the Sea of Grass in Central Skothar, building many mines with dwarven engineers and Deres and Tanagoro slaves (Biles).

**3,550 BC** Robert the Mariner rounds the Horn of Zyxl and became the first man to circumnavigate Skothar (JTR).

**3,525 BC** Blackmoor and Thonian explorers chart the Great Inland Ocean and western Brun (JTR).

**3,500 BC** Declaration of Purity: the Thonian Church declares a great Crusade against the Goblin races in Brun, considered by many an excuse to engage in massive colonization of the rest of the world (Mishler). Gemstone dragon sorcerers begin their studies to reach immortality and contain Blackmoor (Dragonlord trilogy). Blackmoor expansion in northern Skothar pushes the Yali people, ancestors of Huleans and other central Brun populations, to the Alphantian Sea and Brun (Agosta and dos Santos). The Blackmoor civilisation is flourishing thanks to the meteoric rise in technology. Rakasta,



considered similar to beastmen, are not considered proper subjects of Blackmoor and often persecuted. The rakasta tribes living in Skothar near Blackmoor seek shelter into the wilderness, where they become isolated and aggressive, refusing any contact with humans (this happens mostly to the Mountain rakastas and Tagh sherkastas which live near the Blackmoorian borders) (Giulio Caroletti). More elves from Evergrun, the Anuliinde, settle Thonia and Blackmoor and technomagic is brought to Evergrun (JTR, Peronnet).

**3,480-20 BC** First Beastmen Crusade, Blackmoor defeats the Draconic Empire in Brun and pushes the beastmen north, establishing colonies in Brun (Mishler).

**3,400 BC** The Immortal Ssu-ma sponsors friendship between sherkasta and pachydermions of Skothar, helping the sherkasta contact the packydermions of Patera and giving them and other rakasta some help to resist Blackmoorian aggression (Giulio Caroletti). Blackmoor explorers had charted the shores of Bellissaria, Oceania and large stretches of the Davanian coast (JTR).

**3,370 BC** Start of a massive rebellion of the Thonian Empire against Blackmoor supremacy in Skothar (Mishler).

**3,350 BC** Elven war between Evergrun and Blackmoor, mostly fought on the sea and by proxy, as the elves try to end Blackmoorian slave trade, particularly in Bellissaria and the central seas (JTR).

**3,335 BC** Battle of Marban Green, a decisive Blackmoorian victory over Thonian rebels (Mishler).

**3,330 BC** Concordance of Mohacs re-establishes the supremacy of Blackmoor, but founds the Principalities of the Republic of Thonia, thanks to the generosity of the reformer King Uther VII Andahar, "The Red". Involvement of the Serpentine Empire of Davania is discovered, and wars begin against them, involving also the Sea Kingdoms. Separation of the Church of Blackmoor and the Church of Thonia (Mishler). In the Tanagoro lands the Church of Korotiku and the Church of Thanatos (infiltrated by the Serpentine) struggle for dominance through a secret war (Mishler).

**3,310 BC** Beginnings of the Wars of Unification in the Tanagoro kingdoms after the defeat of the Church of Thanatos (Mishler). A dynasty from Satum wins the Janbu tribes and creates the First Tanagoro Empire. Satum however does not join the Empire (JTR, Author).



*Blackmoorian traders arriving in Tangor*

**3,300 BC** Uther VII dies, at 80, while destroying the Serpentine Empire's capital in Davania and is succeeded by his grandson Unther VIII (Mishler).

**3,285 BC** Edicts of Westport end slavery in Blackmoor, but the slave trade continues in Thonia and other colonies (Mishler).

**3,280 BC** The Wars of Unification end in the Tanagoro Kingdoms (Mishler)

**3,270 BC** Uther VIII pass away and his less than capable son Melyon III lets mercantile corporations gain much power during his reign (Mishler).

**3,260 BC** Stardock Accords grants to the Skandaharians kingdoms colonies in the western sea from Skothar to Brun, in the Kingdom of the Giants of Gandhar in the Isle of Dawn and on Zyxl. Tanagoro expeditions to Oceania, Sea Kingdoms, northwestern Davania and the Serpent Peninsula (Mishler).

**3,255 BC** Melyon III dies drunk. (Mishler).

**3,250 BC** Colonial Exchange Accords, signed by four of the Tanagoro Kingdoms, the Golden Empire, the Empire of Evergrun and the United Hin Dominions. Several elves and hin arrive in Tanagoro lands (Mishler).

**3,248 BC** King Marrok II of Blackmoor closes the city park to let wolves run free. Rumors abound about him being a werewolf (Mishler).

**3,240 BC** Skandaharians reach the moon (Matera). (Mishler).

**3,235 BC** Blackmoorians reach the moon too (Mishler).

**3,230 BC** Goblinfolk and beastmen reappear in Skothar spreading destruction, brought into the Skotharian Shadowdeep by the Serpentine (Mishler).

**3,220-3,200 BC** Exterminating again all the beastmen in Skothar, Blackmoor and Thonia wage the Second Beastmen Crusade in Brun and Davania (Mishler). Blackmoor tries to use beholders for military purposes but the creatures escape (Robin).

**3,200 BC** Blackmoorians, Skandaharians and elves found colonies on Matera (Mishler). Skotharian sherkasta and pachydermions from Kompore-Thap build a magical gate, the Svargadvara, that links Mystara to Patera (Giulio Caroletti). The immortal to be Cochere leads many gyerians west to the Alphatian sea and Brun to escape Blackmoorian power. (Dalmonte). Belorfiwyn from Clan Anuliinde invents dirigible balloon (Peronnet).

**3,194 BC** Lunar Accords between Blackmoor, Skandaharia and the Elven Empire (Mishler).

**3,180 BC** Blackmoorian space vessels begin the exploration of the solar system (Mishler).

**3,150 BC** Blackmoor develops TransPlanar technomagic gates (Mishler).

**3,150-3,135 BC** Dragon Wars, war between the Dragonlord of Blackmoor and the dragons. Blackmoor develops giant steamtech robots, ancestors of the Earthshakers. Later an agreement is reached between dragons and Blackmoor but the gemstone dragons are exiled from Mystara (Dragonlord trilogy, JTR).

**3,120 BC** Automatons developed by Blackmoor and later by other nations, such as the Elven Empire (Mishler, HW boxed set).

**3,100 BC** Blackmoorian space vessels reach other solar systems (Mishler). Oltecs of Alphatia and Bellissaria settle the region of current Esterhold on Skothar (HW boxed set). They are former inhabitants of the kingdom of Atlan displaced by the rise of Asydh people in the region, lead by the hero Gilgamesh (see my article on the past of Alphatia in *Threshold* issue #11 and the Codex Immortalis). Start of the reign of the emperor of Blackmoor/Thonia Korin II (DA1) Anuliinde Clan clashes with the empire of Blackmoor for ecological reasons. The retaliations are severe and the elves are put under military rule (Peronnet).

**3,088 BC** Start of the reign of Nial II (DA1)

**3,080 BC** Start of the reign of Ruxpin I (DA1)

**3,077 BC** Start of the reign of Oser I (DA1)

**3,060 BC** In Central Skothar the Blackmoorian government of Kaloolland began the 'Land Reclamation Project' to render the land habitable once the mines finally all gave out. In the cooler northern regions, some progress was made in cleansing the waters and developing irrigated farms. In the very heart of the Yuila al Kaloon, a group of magitechnicians began experimenting with life forms which would consume polluted soil and water and convert it to fertile soil (Biles).

**3,054 BC** Start of the reign of Bodmin I (DA1)

**3,050 BC** Year in which I set the New Blackmoor campaign (set in the Known World in Brun) in *Threshold* issue #2. Blackmoor discovers Patera (JTR).



*Allegory of Blackmoorian power in Skothar, with Tangor and Jennite men kneeling*

**3,040 BC** Start of the reign of Halkad IV (DA1) Space vessels allow the colonization of other solar systems (Mishler).

**3,030 BC** Start of the reign of Ning I (DA1)

**3,014 BC** Start of the reign of Melnik III (DA1)

**3,005 BC** Start of the reign of Reger I (DA1) The Anuliinde, led by Belorfiwyn, flee Blackmoor on 10 gigantic dirigible balloons they have secretly built (Peronnet).

**3,010-3,001 BC** War, chaos and anarchy reign in the Tanagoro kingdoms, Thonia and other nations, spread by a strange genetic disease created by the Serpentine Empire (Mishler).

**3,001 BC** In Central Skothar, the seeding of a 400 square mile region is complete, and the supplies have been put in place to extend the project (Biles). In Evergrun Clan Anuliinde finds shelter among Clan Nadriendel. Both clans are forced to escape on the dirigibles when the cataclysm strikes (Peronnet).

## The Great Rain of Fire and its Aftermath

**3,000 BC** The Great Rain of Fire obliterates the Blackmoorian civilisation. In north western Skothar the destruction is massive. The region of the Kingdom of Blackmoor is completely depopulated and only undead “survive” (Canon, Author). Thonia is almost completely abandoned in the course of a few months and all the survivors migrate west to the coast (Canon). Nyx saves some Thonian wizards who will migrate south and form the Deathless of Central Skothar (Burns, Author). Other southern wizards become shadelings to save themselves from the cataclysm and the Wasting (Burns, Author). In southern Skothar, the sherkasta sages gather their people and use the Svargadvara to transport them to Patera, where the sherkasta settles in the jungles south of Kompur-Thap. As a result, Kata Ng, the White Sherkasta, becomes Immortal, but the Svargadvara is destroyed (see note 3). Fall of the First Tanagoro Empire, many Tanagoro people are brought to the Hollow World to preserve their cultures in the following centuries (HW boxed set). The Second of The Seven Tangor Empires is born, and the four elite units of the Empire's army that exist to these days, the Dragon army, the Rakasta army, The Allies army and the Noble army (Author). Utnapishtim brings his people to safety leaving Esterhold for Bellissaria (Dalmonte). The displacements caused by the catastrophe bring many Paesh and Wan people down to the Tangor coast (Author, MOrient project). The cataclysm creates the Fiery Serpent Sea in the northwestern coast of Skothar, which will become Nentsun. The region is uninhabitable for centuries but eventually becomes warmer and is colonized by lush

vegetation despite its northern latitude (Sarikhhan). The Nasuuan are hit hardly by the cataclysm but manage to survive in the colder climate. Slowly hardships and external attacks push them even more to the north (Author).

**2,995 BC** In Central Skothar, the shifting of the axis causes disastrous storms and freak weather for decades in the wake of the Great Rain of Fire, and many creatures are strangely mutated. Even more of the land becomes polluted waste, the Keres change their name to 'Waros', which means survivors in their tongue, and dubb the land that had once been theirs as 'Drakhaba al Kaloon', the Sea of Corruption (Biles).

**2,990 BC** After the Great Rain of Fire, only 5 elven dirigibles remain, united to form one formidable flying city, Filmaelle, a self-sufficient community which flies over the Farend Ocean (Peronnet). The radiations of the Great Rain of Fire provokes mutations among beholders. Beholder city of Kargash settled in eastern Skothar (Robin).

**2,989 BC** Led by Urthyne Drelgh, a small band of Skotharian dwarves take refuge in a complex near the outermost edge of Blackmoor's borders. The complex, which extends deep underground, grants the dwarves shelter from the dreaded Wasting disease (Calvin).

**2,970 BC** Thonian refugees settle Serison on the western Skothar coast and create the Kingdom of New Thonia. Some elves, dwarves, hin and pegataurs join the Kingdom too (James Ruhland, 1017 almanac, date mine).

**2,960 BC** The Cloud giant Inoq I creates a floating castle on the clouds of northern Skothar after saving many of his people from the Great Rain of Fire (LoZompatore).

**2,900 BC** Djaea promotes the birth of druidic orders in New Thonia to save the people from the devastation of the post Great Rain of Fire (Dalmonte). Jennite culture formed from remnants of the Afridhi and Oltec settlers of Esterhold (Author). Some Afridhi travel further south and are absorbed by Tangor people, forming the Nailan culture (Caroletti). The giant kingdom of Khatmun is created in the eastern mountains (M-Nepal from MOrient project). Conflict on the elves flying city provokes a crash on Skothar. Filmaelle is immobilised in a cold desert between mountains (Peronnet). Satum kingdom of the East Tangor Mountains now is divided between three rival dynasties (Author, JTR). The Second Tangor Empire no longer has control of the whole gulf as the first Empire did and is limited to the central region, mainly because many other people have settled the gulf (Author, Caroletti).

**2,890 BC** In north eastern Central Skothar, the Waros slowly began to flourish. Their coastal region becomes a land of stubborn farmers and tough warriors. The boldest of them return to the way of the horse and move into the interior, learning how to survive among the wastes. They brought back the news of the 'Virik al Rigoon', the 'Forest of Fungus', which was gradually growing in the heart of the Drakhaba al Kaloon. It was a strangely pale land of huge intertwined 'fungal' growth and insects which dwelt within it, led and guarded by the powerful 'Rigoon al Asagir', the 'Wise Ones of the Forest', huge armoured insects the size of a

small village. The forest was filled with a strange miasma which would slay the unwary and careless. The explorers came to call themselves 'Sebgir', or 'Daring Ones', and learned how to survive briefly in the forest, and fairly well among the devastated lands (Biles).

**2,898 BC** Another city is built around crashed Filmaelle, named Ymlyn (Ebony) after the first tree to be planted (the seed of which came from Evergrun) (Peronnet).

**2,886 BC** Belorfiwyn creates the Marwar, a parasitic fungus which increases both production and the culture's resistance to the climate (Peronnet).

**2,882 BC** Belorfiwyn takes to the air with his fixed dirigible the Celorfimir, in order to gather all the tree species he can find around the world (Peronnet).

**2,800 BC** Jennites spread across the plains of Skothar. Some eventually settle in Minaea creating the Teslan culture. (Agosta and do Santos). Golden Khan of the Paesh, descendants of the



*Teslan musicians*

Peshwah, creates The Great Kingdom of Haca (Author). Dragonchildren begin to appear in Haca and soon many of them become part of the Khan's army (Rodger Burns, Author).

**2,790 BC** Foundation of the city of Tesla (Caroletti, Author).

## The INVASIONS

**2,630 BC** Some Skotharian dwarves leave their underground refuges to reach Minaea. Some are captured by kopru and brought away (Dornhoff, Calvin).

**2,602 BC** More Skotharian dwarves migrate to Alpathia and Brun, while some remain in Thorin (Caroletti)

**2,600 BC** Over the centuries, the Waros farmers, and the Sebgir nomads have split, and occasionally war with each other. The Waros build a series of short-lived nations which repeatedly crumbled into city states, sometimes falling prey to conquest by Sebgir tribes. They trade with the Tanagoro and Jennites (Biles).

**2,576 BC** Most of the Skotharian dwarves leave their underground refuge to go to Brun (Calvin).

**2,500 BC** The great hivebrood expansion. Hivebrood expand into many region of Skothar, as the modern Esterhold and several regions of the Tangor chain, displacing humans and rakasta. Fall of the Second Tangor Empire and further displacement of Tanagoro people to the mountains and Zyxl. Tarastia unifies the sparse Jennite tribes and attains Immortality (Author, Codex Immortalis, Håvard). Some elves from Vulcania reach the Sea Kingdoms and Skothar (Author, MOrient project). Last flight of the Celorfimir, which tows the four other dirigibles in the valley to provide a core to four new cities. The Celorfimir settles around Ymlyn (Peronnet). By now the Nasuuan have reached Nentsun, settling on the warmer regions of the coast where the Fiery Serpent Sea keeps the coast relatively

warm, but are in constant danger due to the intense volcanic activity (Author<sup>6</sup>, Sarikhan, Caroletti).

**2,450 BC** Third Tangor Empire founded, but it really has even less control on the Gulf region than the Second one. Tribal warfare is common in the following centuries (Author, Caroletti).

**2,400 BC** Newly born forests dot the landscape. They are composed by the different species Bellorfiwyn brought back from his trip: Oaks, Acacia, Maple trees, Poplars, and so on. The four new cities are named Celithrarith (Oak City), Elvawen (Maple Tree City), Sebrildur (Chestnut Tree City), and Manereteriel (Cedar City) (Peronnet).

**2,333 BC** Kingdom of Yeong created on the eastern Tangor coast (M-Korea in the MOrient project).

**2,300 BC** Ierain Klee, a candidate to Immortality in the Sphere of Energy who had been a priest in late Blackmoor, creates ten engines to warm artificially the cold lands of central Nasuua in Nentsun and becomes King. He moves most of the Nasuuan population away from the unstable southern coast (Caroletti, Author).

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<sup>6</sup> The original [Nentsun material](#) by Giulio Caroletti probably meant to place the nation of Nentsun in the coast where I have instead placed the ruins of old Thonia (see maps in next article). I have chosen to place it instead in the north as the region is kept warmer that it should be given its position by the Fiery Serpent Sea created by Isabel Sarikhan, which keeps it from turning into arctic tundra, and later also by the Nentsunian machines.

**2,200 BC** First Tanagoro migration to the Serpent Peninsula. (CoM)

**2,166 BC** The Kasharin affliction (probably a beholder version of the Wasting Disease), regular volcanic eruptions, and Tangor attacks force the beholders to abandon Kargash (Robin).

**2,050 BC:** Fall of the Enduk realm in North western Davania, Minoides kills Gildesh, the followers of Minoides become the modern minotaurs and create a kingdom in the region. The Enduk survivors escape to Brun (Canon, Mishler, Author).

**2,000 BC** Tanagoro migration to the east, reaching north western Davania. (HW boxed set). Some Ee'aar elves from the Arm of the Immortal reach Eastern Skothar (MOrient project). Magnificent forests cover the totality of the valley. The Ainuliinde and Nadriendel clans have merged and are named from now on the Anuliindriendel (Peronnet).

**1,900 BC** Rise of the Jennites who conquer almost all of central Skothar (HW Boxed set).

**1,950 BC** By now Klee has brought other peoples to Nasuua and chosen ten apprentices to watch over ten engines which warm Nasuua. The local tribes are divided and often war among themselves (Caroletti).

**1,800 BC** Kingdom of Yeha founded in the East Tangor chain as Tanagoro people conquer the remnants of Satum (M-Ethiopia from the Morient project, Author).

**1,750 BC** Humans and Elves destroy the minotaur kingdom in Davania. First minotaurs lead by Minoides (or a

descendant) arrive on Skothar, invading the Tangor Peninsula. (Caroletti, Author). Tanagoro migration to the Arm of the Immortals and Yalu bay (*Threshold* issue #17)

**1,706 BC** Klee ascends as the Immortal Nentsun and leaves the ten apprentices to watch over the engines in an unified Nentsun formed by ten duchies (Caroletti).

**1,700 BC** Tribes of humanoids from Brun invade northern Skothar. Repelled by Nentsun and by the northern giants, they migrate to the central and southern area of the continent along the western coast (Author)

**1,699 BC** Minoides settles the city of Erech in Tesla (Caroletti).

**1,697 BC** The minotaurs of Erech get in touch with the Teslan city of Ekimmu. Trade begins between the two populations (Caroletti).

**1,649 BC** A league formed by Minotaurs from Erech and Teslans from Ekimmu defeat the greatest Jennite attack of the last century (Caroletti).

**1,650 BC** The great humanoid invasion, Fall of the Golden Khan. Fall of the Third Tangor Empire. Great barbarian hordes of central Skothar form, made up of ruling humanoids or rakasta and enslaved humanoids (Author, MOrient project). A tribe of goblins and hobgoblins mix with a Jennite clan, eventually creating the Wanderers of Central Skothar (Burns). Goblins and hobgoblins invade Thonia in large number, occupying for a time the whole north east of the nation, until they are repelled to the wilderlands and partially integrated into the kingdom (Author, Almanac 1017).

**1,623 BC** After successfully defending Erech from humanoid attacks, Minoides leaves Erech, appointing his son Atreides as the new King of Minotaurs (Caroletti).

**1,600 BC** Second Tanagoro migration to the west under Emperor Kumba, reaching Sea Kingdoms, Vulcania, Pearl Islands, Arypt and Cestia. (HW boxed set and *Threshold* issue #9). Jennite wars between traditional followers of Tarastia and followers of Rathanos, traditional Jennites brought to the Hollow World. (HW boxed set). Some Jennites settle in Teslan lands forming the Tarystian culture (Agosta and dos Santos).



*Jennite gold belt*

**1,589 BC** Atreides of Erech dies. His daughter Pallas becomes Queen (Caroletti).

**1,577 BC** Town of Sinbay founded by minotaurs, following the orders of Queen Pallas. Minotaurs extend their control over this part of Tesla (Caroletti).

**1,550 BC** East Tangor is again invaded by Hivebrood, which reach to the gulf.

Eventually humans, rakasta and humanoids cooperate to limit their spread. A dynasty of ogre rulers establish the Fourth Tangor Empire in Tangor. Tanagore born of human and ogre parents soon become a middle class in the empire between ogre rulers and human subjects (Author, Caroletti).

**1,555 BC** Queen Pallas of Erech dies. Her son Agesilaon becomes King.

**1,511 BC** Agesilaon dies of old age. Rumours that he was poisoned by his son Minoides spread unrest among the population. Minoides seizes the throne as Minoides II, but is forced to establish the kingdom's laws, written down and ratified by minotaurs from the most important families (Caroletti).

**1,509 BC** Town of Qyrta founded by Sinbayan minotaurs. They are led by a dissident minotaur named Achlon, that fiercely opposes the Minoides dynasty. Kingdom of Minotaurs renamed Minoidean Kingdom (Caroletti).

**1,500 BC** Silver Khan unifies humans and humanoids of the plains in the new Haca (Author).

**1,488 - 1,483 BC** First War of Tears. Minoideans minotaurs fight against the Achlonites, claiming that they have settled on Minoidean lands. Mercenaries from Ekimmu are employed by both factions, while the government of Ekimmu doesn't involve itself in the war (Caroletti).

**1,477 BC** Minoides II dies mysteriously in his sleep. His eldest daughter Iphygenia becomes Queen (Caroletti).



**1,469-8 BC** Queen Iphygenia sends messengers to the Qyrtans, asking them to open diplomatic ties. A group of aggressive minotaurs that oppose these ideas are exiled by the Queen and leave westwards. Diplomatic ties opened between the City State of Qyrta and the Minoidean Kingdom (Caroletti).

**1,462 BC** Queen Iphygenia is killed by her husband Archon, who is thereafter executed. In fact, Archon was innocent, because the one responsible for her death was her son Minoides III, the new Minoidean King. Town of Deianira founded (Caroletti).

**1,459 BC** Sphinxes attack Erech after the king killed one of them. Minoides III is then killed by an Immortal avatar in the form of a flaming minotaur for his empiety. Erech becomes a republic (Caroletti).

**1,450 BC** Polonius the triton becomes lord of the Sea Kingdoms, creating the coral walls to defend them from the Kara Kara orcs, and attaining immortality (Dalmonte). Gold and iron mines found in the territories north of Qyrta. Qyrta start heavy commerce with surrounding cities (Caroletti).

**1,446 - 1,441 BC:** Second War of Tears. Republic of Erech against City State of Qyrta. The Qyrtans win thanks to the help of mercenaries and their sphinx allies (Caroletti).

**1,428 BC** Astartius, High Priest of Minoides, is king of Erech (Caroletti).

**1,399 BC** Astartius abdicates to his son Iacynthon (Caroletti).

**1,391 BC** Priests of Minoides accuse King Iacynthon of being a tyrant and depose him.

Kingdom of Erech becomes a Theocracy, ruled by the High Priest of Minoides (Caroletti).

**1,364 - 1,361 BC** The High Theocrats of Erech declare war on the City State of Qyrta. Third War of Tears. The Minoideans win and most of the Qyrtan riches and lands are assigned to the Theocracy and to Erech (Caroletti).

**1,359 - 1,356 BC** Disappointed with his High Theocrats, Minoides stops to give them spells and sends a plague until the Theocrats are deposed by the faithful cleric Albaran, who becomes the new King of Erech and Sinbay (Caroletti).

**1,354 BC** Albaran offers a new peace treaty to the Qyrtans, returning the land taken during the Third War to them (Caroletti).

**1,349 BC** A group of military officers depose Albaran. Albaran and nearly two thousand minotaurs flee Erech and settle in Sinbay, where they declare independence (Caroletti).

**1,349 - 1,340 BC** Fourth War of Tears: Erech vs Sinbay & Qyrta. At the end of the war Sinbay is a mass of burning ashes and is later rebuilt by the Erechians. Qyrta is again dispossessed of its land, although it retains its independence. Albaran is the new King of Qyrta. Cults of Minoides and Poseidon officially banned from Erech, the minotaur leaders turn to the worship of a barbaric divinity named Gylgarid, imported from mercenaries of the East that were employed for the war (Caroletti).

**1,338 - 1,327 BC** Albaran seeks the aid of northern sphinxes and later of a mercenary company from the Jennite Lands, the Green

Spear, secretly followers of Jammudaru, who eventually poison him and take control of the city (Caroletti)

**1,250 BC** Some Tanagogres from Skothar invade Davania establishing their dominion in Arica. They quickly sever their ties to Skothar to escape the control of the ogre rulers of Tangor (Wilson, *Threshold* issue #5, Author).

**1,220 BC** By now Qyrta has changed for the worse. Many minotaurs leave the city and move westwards to the sea and even Brun. Those who remain are turned to the worship of Jammudaru. Meanwhile, the military hierarchy of Erech continues to rule the Minoidean Kingdom. Minoides renounces his Quest for Immortality and Protius turns him into an Exalted being (Caroletti).

**1,218 BC** A group of minotaur dissidents from Qyrta and Sinbay manage to throw down the Erechian corrupted government. They create a Republic and grant religious freedom to the population. Minoides is again revered openly, although adventurers and military officers remain mostly worshippers of Gylgarid (Caroletti).

**1,215-1,204 BC** Growing tension between Qyrta and Erech leads to the Fifth War of Tears. Qyrta is destroyed and its inhabitants massacred. The survivors hide in the mountains and continue to worship Jammudaru (Caroletti).

**1,212 BC** Rakasta tribes guided by rakshasas invade and conquer Nentsun, enslaving the population (Caroletti).

**1,201 BC** The ten dukes of Nentsun are dead and the engines begin to emit

radiations, poisoning the rakasta and human population (Caroletti).

**1,200 BC** First emperor of Chung Eun crowned on the Dragon Throne, east of Haca. Chung Eun and Haca fight several wars in the following centuries competing for the eastern plains of Skothar (MOrient project, Author).



*Chung depiction of dragons*

**1,146 BC** Orcnad leads a great revolt in Nentsun, defeating the rakshasas with the help of most rakasta, and becomes first King of Nentsun (Caroletti).

**1,135 BC** Tarystian conquer the Teslan city of Ekimmu. By now the Teslan have been absorbed by the Tarystia culture (Fan Almanacs, Author).

**1,100 BC** Wuo people, mixed humans and humanoids, settle the Tangor chain (M-Manchiuria from MOrient project). Paesh people settle the Sea Kingdoms, Vulcania, the Isles of Steam, some parts of the Davanian coast (Yasuko) and Ochalea (*Threshold* issue #5, #11). Hinu halflings menaced by humanoids escape to Zyxl. Sindhi refugees

reach Skothar, settling in the eastern gulf of Tangor and influencing the culture of the late kingdom of Tanat (MORient project, Author). Fall of the Fourth Tangor Empire, more migrations to the Sea Kingdom, Vulcania, Cestia, Arypt and the Pearl Islands (Author). The Tanagoro migrations meet the Nithians who have colonized the Alatian islands and the two people agree on a peaceful division of territories. The Tanagoro settle the Pearl Islands and parts of the Aryptian coast near the Nithians (LoZompatore, Author). By now the minotaurs of the northern mountain have become increasingly violent under the leadership of the brutal clergy of Jammudaru. The minotaur raiding bands become another of the humanoid threats that periodically harass the Tarystian coast, and then Minaea into modern times (Caroletti).

**1,054 BC** The Tarystian city of Traun is founded (Caroletti).

**1,010 BC** Beholders resettle their old city of Kargash in north eastern Skothar (Robin).

**1,000 BC** Arrival of the Alphatians, who soon proceed to conquer the island from native cultures. Some refugees from the native Alphatian kingdoms settle Tarystia and Jennite lands (Canon, Author).

**1,000 - 990 BC** Nithian explorers reach Skothar and contact Thonia, several Jennites tribes and Tarystia. The Alphatians make the same initial contact as well, following the Nithians (Supposed, but likely). The Sakhalian culture arises in northeastern Skothar from dwarves and humans, slaves and Blackmoorians, in the northern area of the Drakhaba al Kaloon, eventually forming the Sakhalin Empire (Biles).

**986 BC** City of Lendar founded in Tarystia (Caroletti).

**980 BC** In Tangor the union of goblins with humans creates the new Dark Goblin breed which settles in the Western Tangor mountains dividing into 10 different tribes (Caroletti, Author).

**911 BC** The Black Sorcerer of Durhan unifies the gulf of Tangor in the Fifth Tangor Empire (Caroletti, Author).

**900 BC** The arrivals of the Alphatians worries the Thonian Kingdom, who is wary of the newcomers, even if some minimal trade begins (Ruhland). In the elven valley, Belorfael (descendant of Belorfiwyn) develops the Trarwar (a variety of Marwar which doubles the growing capabilities of the trees). This fungus is inoculated to the five symbolic trees of the cities and planted at the core of the cities (Peronnet). Orcs and goblins start to attack Nentsun from the southern mountains (Caroletti)

**897 BC** Alphatians settle Aaslin and Alinquin in Bellisaria. For centuries their control of the island will not extend beyond the two cities (Ebenezum, Author, *Threshold* issue #11).

**854 BC** The Black Sorcerer of Durhan is killed by a Jennite adventurer named Eet-an and chaos of competing pretenders follows his demise (Caroletti)

**850 BC** The peaceful faith of Koryis, also later know in some nations of Skothar as Rohindartha<sup>7</sup>, spreads and becomes official

<sup>7</sup> In the MORient project he was an original Immortal, but Koryis could easily be used as it is supposed to have the same pacifist agenda. Older Immortals as Maat, Ilsundal and The Great One may be suitable too.

religion in Chung Eun. Mysticism develops and spreads in southern and central Skothar (MOrient project).

**841 BC** Eet-an, now known as the Steel Demon, crowns himself King of Ubu and Tangor (Caroletti).

**821 BC:** The Steel Demon leaves his kingdom and a iron golem named Hawa Dulu reigns in his place (Caroletti).

**800 BC** Before the final fall of the Sylvan Realm some elves sail from Brun to Skothar (MOrient project).

**750 BC** Haca invaders place a Khan on the Chung Eun dragon throne. Many Wan refugees settle the bay of Tangor, eventually leading to the creation of the Tangi Empire in the eastern part of the gulf. The hero Jiku leads some Chung refugees, escaping the new Khan, to Zyxl (MOrient project, Author).

**733 BC** Local Tangor people attack the Beholder city of Kargash but fail to destroy it (Robin)

**730 BC** The Tangors bordering the hivebrood colonies manage to open diplomatic relations with the insectoid humanoids. The two races start to collaborate in the face of the menace coming from the north: a massive migration of Dark Goblins led by a charismatic chief named Ghulan (Caroletti).

**710 BC** The Ursinians, a human population descended from Afridhi and Tanagoro, settle in Nentsun (Caroletti).

**700 BC** Alphatians buy gnom slave from the Nithians and bring them to Skothar, with the intent of using them eventually, but soon the

project is forgotten and the gnolls settle between Jen and Thonia, becoming the Thoth-Ath gnolls (Nowack). A few gnolls are captured by the Thonians and eventually integrated into the kingdom (Almanac 1017)

**696 BC** The hivebrood and Tangors of the eastern borders repel the goblins. The Dark Goblins settle in the forested regions just at the north of them (Caroletti).

**665-61 BC** A great campaign conducted by the hivebrood colony of Lleweryn and the Tangors of the city of Yara defeat the Dark Goblins, whose king Ghulan had died some years before. The survivors become hivebrood slaves (Caroletti).

**660 BC** The general Guthbrand becomes famous in Thonia, later leaving to serve under the Alphatians (Dalmonte).

**632 BC** orcs and goblins invade Nentsun conquering most of the Outer Circle, the region not warmed by the engines, but the dukes resist in the lands of the Inner Circle (Caroletti).

**600 BC** Guthbrand is a famous Nentsunian pirate on his path to Immortality as the Eternal General (Dalmonte). Haca invaders have now been absorbed by the Chung culture and Chung Eun expands in former Haca territories (MOrient project, Author). Empress Himiko of Zyxl defeats the Chung Emperor attack on the island (MOrient project). The western Tangor kingdom of Yara becomes powerful by supplying slaves to the hivebrood of Lleweryn (Caroletti). Milenians found colonies on the Isle of Dawn, Bellissaria and the Alatian islands, soon entering in conflict with Alphatia (Author, *Threshold* issue #11)

**570 BC** An Alphatian wizard discovers a magical blue clay in Skothar, but is killed by a rival (Robin<sup>8</sup>)

**565 BC** The beholder city of Zelphim is founded in northern Skothar. Beholders proceed to enslave local humanoids and humans (Robin).

**554 BC** Some non-wizard Alphatians settle the Alatians islands allying with Milenians against their empire (Guerra, *Threshold* issue #11, Author)

**550 BC** Some Hatwa elves from Davania refusing integration with the ogres reach Skothar. Finding ogres and tanagogres in the gulf, they help local humans and rakasta fight them, establishing the first seed of the Muang kingdom (Author, MOrient project). A Nithian expeditionary force to modern Esterhold takes control of the elven valley in north central Skothar. Nithian priests and magicians discover the remains of technology used in the dirigibles and conduct experiments (Peronnet).

**540 BC** Belorfanwyl of the elven valley creates a mutated version of the Trarwar, the Uurwar (which provokes quicker and bigger growth of vegetation). Helped by the Elven resistance, the fungus is spread everywhere in the valley. When the fungus are magically activated, the trees mutate and grow hundred of meters in a matter of hours. The Nithian expeditionary force is crushed by the elvish resistance. The elvish population settles up at the top of the trees. (Peronnet).



*Temple complex in Muang*

**530 BC** The five cities are moved to the top of the trees and the elven valley becomes Calengaer the green ocean. The foot of the trees, already difficult to reach is made impossible to reach because of the toxic emanations of the Uurwar. A web of trails is set in the foliage allowing easier communications between the cities (Peronnet).

**500 BC** Milenians who by now have colonies all over the Isle of Dawn and Bellisaria, begin trade with Skothar. Kiranjo minotaurs devastate Jennite lands and eventually settle in Tarystia (*Threshold* issue #11, Codex Immortalis). Chung contact with Alphatia in the central Gulf of Tangor is disastrous and the eastern empire becomes more and more isolationist (MOrient project). Traces and memory of Nithia are wiped out in Brun but some survive in Skothar among the Thoth-Ath gnolls and in the southern city of Mizpeh (Novack, Taylor). By now in northeastern Central Skothar the Virik al Ragoon is growing over the Sebgir lands, while the forces of the Sakhalin Empire come from the north. The Empire uses lost Blackmoorian magitech to conquer (Biles). Alphatia absorbs Thothia and a rivalry develops between Alphatians and Milenians in the Alphatian Sea, slowly building to an

<sup>8</sup> Robin used this story to adapt the smurfs to Mystara, see <http://pandius.com/smurf.pdf>

undeclared war (Author, *Threshold* issue #11)

**463 BC** The hivebrood are united by the Controllers of Lleweryn in a Great Colony (Caroletti).

**450 BC** Great Wall of Chung built to stop Jennite raids (MOrient project). The Thoth-Ath gnolls build the Great Pyramid to preserve their knowledge and are aided by Rathanos. They establish peaceful relations with the local Jennites (Novack). First unique creatures appear in Calengaer (Peronnet).

**392 BC** King Tsen founds the realm of Hasa in the Tangor mountains, unifying humans, rakasta and humanoids (M-Tibet from MOrient project).

**350 BC** Chung isolationism lessens and colonies are founded in other regions of Skothar (MOrient project). The Sakhalin Empire has conquered the divided Waros kingdoms and become a mighty empire which begins to exploit the creatures of the Virik al Ragoon for their own benefit, especially the Ragoon al Asagir, whose shells can be used to make nearly indestructible armour and weapons. The conquest is quick and astonishing, reaching Jennite lands and obtaining tributes from Chung Eun and the God King Eryos of Tangi (Biles, Author). Orcs and goblins south of Nentsun begin a terrible civil war which ends with the defeat of the goblins and exile of the green orcs, while the victorious orcs create small nations which also accept human settlers (Caroletti).

**333 BC** King Tekhmet of Sakhalin decides to destroy the Virik al Ragoon but thousands of Ragoon al Asagir sweep out of the forest, and the Virik al Ragoon swell to several times its

former size. The Sakhalin Empire collapses. The Sebgir, Waros and the dwarves revolt and Sakhalin break apart into squabbling states (Biles).

**325 BC** The beholder city of Zelphim is destroyed by a combined attack of humanoids and humans, displaced after the fall of the Sakhalin Empire (Robin, Author).

**300 BC** Peaceful tanagogres, mostly followers of Sumag (Terra) leave Skothar for the Arm of the Immortals (Canon). The war between Alphatians and Milenians intensifies in the Dawn Sea and the Alphatians attack Milenian cities on the Isle of Dawn, Alatian islands and Bellissaria. Alphatia occupies Ochalea and the Pearl Islands. The Milenians ally with or pay Tarystian, Traldar and Thyatian pirates to attack Alphatians (Author, *Threshold* issue #11).

**290 BC** Alphatia plans a full conquest of all the Milenian colonies on the Isle of Dawn and starts to attack them. Attacks on the powerful Milenian cities on Bellissaria have less success (Author, *Threshold* issue #11)

**220 BC** In Calengaer the first cyme-raft to navigate over the trees is built (Peronnet).

**210 BC** Tritons escaping the devilfish settle the Sea Kingdoms (PC2, Author)

**200 BC** Alphatians invade the lands of Jen, driving the nomadic inhabitants back several hundred miles. The Alphatians call their new lands Esterhold and take Jennite slaves (DotE). Alphatian magic in Esterhold interior lands leads to the spread of the Kukarachans, large, semi-intelligent insects descended from cockroaches (Daly, Gander). Eyvind, an explorer of from the Antalian kingdom of



*Tanagre temple in the Tangor Chain*

Ystmarhavn in Qeodhar, discover the warm and sparsely inhabited southern coast of Nentsun, and establish a colony, enslaving the local population. The volcanic activity of the Fiery Serpent Sea is greatly reduced by now. Due to the Nentsunian reaction, he ultimately fails in his ambitions of conquest and is succeeded by his wife, who releases all the slaves and with firmness and treaties succeed in creating the kingdom of Højgylden (Sarikhan, Author, Caroletti). By now in the eastern and northern fringes of the Drakhaba al Kaloon there are many squabbling city states, much like the southern region of the Waros, but slightly higher in technological level. Most of these states boast a handful of functional Blackmoorian devices, pried from ruins and carefully maintained. The dwarves gain a powerful economic position (Biles).

**195 BC** Alphatia completes the conquest of Mileanian colonies in the southern Isle of Dawn and Aeria, but Aegos resists and fights back (Author, *Threshold* issue #11)

**192 BC** Alphatia conquers Thyatis and attacks Mileanian cities in the southern Alatians and Bellissaria. Milenia strikes back ferociously in support of its colonies (Author, *Threshold* issue #11).

**188 BC** Tangor troops attack the beholder city of Kargash but are repelled (Robin).

**167-153 BC** Four Tangor kingdoms are slowly united by Makala, a woman sorceress and brilliant tactician, into the Sixth Empire of Tangor (Caroletti).

**151 BC** Kingdom of Gan founded in the Tangor Peninsula by Paesh people, later to be known as the Land of a Thousands Pagodas or Sian. (M-Myanmar in the MOrient project).

**141 BC** Alphatian campaign in Bellissaria conquers the western half of the island. Gaity falls into Alphatian hands as well. Milenian forces resist in Aegos (Author, *Threshold* issue #11).

**123 BC** A half-orc king known as Glashow unifies the orc territories of Nentsun and conquers the Outer Circle. Glashow's army soon revolts under his lieutenant Abdus (Caroletti).

**113 BC** The last surviving duke of Nentsun, Kewd the Hawk manages to restore peace to part of the lands, gives a central government to the Inner Circle and is crowned King. In the eastern conflicting lands, the Ursinians are able to restore peace, but most of the

Outer Circle is dominated by brigands and orc bands (Caroletti).

**104 BC** Thanasis is the first Milenian colony founded in Tarystia (Caroletti).

**100 BC** Minaea founded by Milenian colonists from Davania (Canon). The city of Minaea is founded after an agreement with Tarystia to resist Alphatian encroachment in the region (Caroletti, Author). In the next two decades from the decadent and collapsing Milenian Empire waves of refugees arrive in Bellissaria and join the fight against Alphatians (Author).

**99 BC** Milenians colonists settle Alchemos and eastern Bellissaria in large numbers (Author, Khan).

**94 BC** Green orcs of the Nentsun mountains descend to reconquer their ancestral lands, and the Outer Circle and the hill regions of the south (known by now as Glashow's Desolation) are left in a state of chaos and instability (Caroletti).

**90 BC** Adunapolis is founded by Milenians in Minaea (Caroletti, Author).

**66 BC** Alphatians attack in Bellissaria, temporarily conquering Alchemos and pushing Minaean forces to the eastern peninsulæ (Khan, Author).

**65 BC** An Alphatian expedition is defeated near Minaea by a combined Milenian and Tarystian force, cementing the alliance between the two people (Author).

**50 BC** The fall of Milenia brings other refugees to Minaea (Author).

**45 BC** Now isolated from other Milenian lands, Aegos finally falls into Alphatian hands. More refugees reach Minaea (Author).

**43 BC** Sanka the Hawk of Nentsun founds the Divine School of the Bear to train the ten masters needed to control the engines. No one remembered the existence of the engines, apart from the aristocrats (Caroletti).

## The last thousand years

**0 AC** A fire in the Temple of the Remembrances in New Thonia destroys most of the ancient Blackmoorian/Thonian relics that survived the Great Rain of Fire. Among them there were the last ancient Thonian coins known to Mystarans (DA1). First King of Muang crowned in the Tangor Bay (M-Thailand from the MOrient project). Thoth-Ath gnolls and Jennite raiders attack the Alphatian settlements in Esterhold, almost driving them away from Skothar (Nowack). The Alphatians counterattack and overrun and burn to the ground a Jennite settlement in the NW of the peninsula. They build their own settlement called Sky-Fire (DotE). There are now five main kingdoms in West Tangor: the Tangor Empire, the Kingdom of Ubu, the Kingdom of Mawuru, the Principality of Zambul and the Republic of Durhan (Caroletti).

**10 AC** Minaeans exploit Alphatian difficulties to launch a campaign of conquest in Bellissaria, and eventually take the western and southern half of the island (Author).

**42 AC** First Kukarachan attacks on Alphatian colonies in Esterhold (Daly, Gander, Author)



**100 AC** Macroblan the Tanagogre defeats the giants and ogres ruling the Tangor range and becomes an Immortal. The Kingdom of Oblan is created. (Dalmonte, Author).

**115 AC** Dalya, an adventurer from Rockhome, discovers the unnaturally warm coast of Højgylden in Northern Skothar, leading to a migration of dwarves, gnomes and Ostlanders to Skothar (Sarikhan).

**133 AC** The dwarves and gnomes eventually conquer the kingdom of Højgylden and Dalya becomes Queen (Sarikhan).

**135 AC** In Nentsun the engines are emitting radiations again: disgusted by the incompetence of the aristocrats, Kashang, Baron of Wolven, raises an army of Outer Circle mercenaries, and conquers the Kingdom of Vixen. Kashang reunifies several kingdoms, and re-organizes the engine control, creating another school of fighting, the Sacred School of Nentsun, to help the efforts of the Divine School of the Bear. He tells the population that the reasons for the prosperity of the land were the dangerous engines, that he called "Unholy Devices of Blekmur, things which caused the first destruction of an Empire in Nentsun"(Caroletti).

**150 AC** The Silver Khan of Haca is killed by dragons and the realm falls (Author). First gondolfière built in Calengaer (Peronnet).

**179 AC** Dalya abdicates in Højgylden and the Sisterhood of Kuldana is created as guardians of the realm (Sarikhan).

**193-194 AC** In West Tangor the Republic of Durhan is conquered by Zambul (Caroletti).



*Tangor cavalry*

**200 AC** Alliance between Thonia and the Jennites as Alphatian control increases in Esterhold (James Ruhland). In Minaea, Milenian and Tarystian cultures have blended by now: the Milenians, who had taken with them the technology, magics and architecture of their homelands, are gradually absorbed into the piratical, warlike Tarystian way of life, abandoning their old patriarchal ways for the egalitarian Tarystian attitude (Fan Almanacs). In Højgylden gnomes have developed greenhouses and the printing press. Trade with Alphatia flourishes, but the Empire plans a conquest of the prosperous small kingdom (Sarikhan).

**219 AC** Kingdom of Ubu conquered by the Seventh Tangor Empire, refugees found the city state of Akuba in eastern Minaea (Caroletti).

**227 AC** Refugees from the Kingdom of Mawuru, conquered by the Seventh Tangor Empire, reach Akuba (Caroletti).

**238 AC** Alphatian forces led by general Neroli conquer Højgylden (Sarikhan).

**243 AC** Some Mawurans build the city of Batu Fomba. The only other Tangor kingdom to remain independent from the Empire is the mountain Principate of Zambul (Caroletti).

**252 AC** As Alphatian forces are sent to Ylaruam, the Sisterhood of Kuldana stages a rebellion in Højgylden and frees the country from Alphatian control, but some Alphatians remain in the kingdom and are accepted as citizens (Sarikhan).

**260 AC** Højgylden develops small airships and establishes trade with Nentsun and Thonia, creating also the colony of Bajreve in former humanoid territories to the east (Sarikhan).

**270 AC** Diplomatic contacts between Højgylden and Thorin do not go well, almost leading to war between the two nations (Sarikhan).

**296 AC** Kukarachans have become common and numerous in the interior of Esterhold, harassing both Jennites and Alphatians. The Alphatians try to exterminate them, but are only partially successful (Daly, Gander, Author)

**300 AC** The huge red dragon who will become Pearl rules over Haca and later conquers Chung Eun too (Codex Immortalis, *Threshold* issue #9). Højgylden skyships discover the undead followers of Hel of the Burning Spires Mountain Range, but the Sisterhood of Kuldana stops any plan to destroy them (Sarikhan).

**335 AC** Several Tarystian-Minaean cities decide to create a league in order to resist

the aggressive attitude of the neighbouring Seventh Tangor Empire (Caroletti).

**335-336 AC** Minaea's victory over the Seventh Tangor Empire (Caroletti).

**353 AC** Four Alphatian wizards become the rulers of the Tarystian city of Lendar in Minaea and rename it Leontion. Piracy against Alphatia ceases in the region and the city begins to trade with Alphatia (Caroletti).

**354 AC** A coalition of Minaean cities attack Leontion but fails to conquer it. The four ruling wizards sign a peace treaty, promising not to become an Alphatian Imperial base in Minaea (Author).

**360 AC** Tension decreases between Højgylden and Alphatia and trade resumes (Sarikhan).

**374 AC** King Rikyudy of Wolven destroys the rakastan city of Zeshuita and enslaves the population to possess the local silver mines. Many other Nentusian states, enraged by the brutal conclusion of the siege, declared war on Wolven (Caroletti).

**393 AC** A kukarachan swarm time endangers Alphatians and Jennites in Esterhold until put down by massive Alphatian intervention (Gander, Author)

**400 AC** Højgylden skyships discover the northern entry to the Hollow World and after some failed expeditions, succeed in contacting some Antalian and Beastmen tribes (Sarikhan).

**411 AC** The Nentusunian leader known as Warchild creates a theocratic Confederation

of 12 states over the entire Nentsun region, each assigned to one of the 12 Immortals of the Nentsunian pantheon (Caroletti).

**439-446 AC** The Seventh Tangor Empire attacks eastern Minaea (Caroletti)

**445 AC** Akuba is conquered by the Seventh Tangor Empire (Caroletti).

**467 AC** Tangor tribes attack the beholder city of Kargash but are defeated (Robin)

**500 AC** In north eastern Skothar a powerful Waros leader, Nimrod the Great, conquers the Sebgir and begins to exploit the Rigoon al Asagir to arm his troops. While he is about to conquer the remnants of the Sakhalin states the Rigoon al Asagir attack much of the Sebgir lands. The Waros emperor is slain, the Sebgir come close to extinction, and the Virik al Ragoon reaches the border of the Waros lands (Biles).

**502 AC** Minaeans settle the colony of Erineos (Caroletti).

**510 AC** Gemstone dragons return to Skothar, slowly gaining dominance again in the continent and establishing the Council of the Six Great Dragons, a Huge Crystal in Nentsun, a Huge Ruby in the Thonian Range, a Huge Onyx in Minaea, a Huge Sapphire in Esterhold, a Huge Jade in the Tangor Bay and a Huge Amber in the Tangor Chain (Dragonlord trilogy, *Threshold* issue #9).

**523 AC** The recently formed Nentsunian confederation is split into twelve dominions and soon descendants of the ancient families are back on the thrones. The leadership of the Inner Circle, result in malcontent and hostility in the regions of the Outer Circle (Caroletti).

**530 AC** Thonia threatens to invade Højgylden but eventually desists (Sarikhan).

**536-539 AC** Minaea loses a war with the northern Kingdom of Hastwr over the control of the cities of Dool and Durke (Fan Almanacs).

**543 AC** A swarm of kukarachans hits Esterhold. The Alphatians obtain the cooperation of Jennite tribes to fight the insects (Gander, Author).

**554 AC** City of Vidruntos founded in Minaea (Caroletti)

**575 AC** Micael Scryv, high priest of the Wind of Nentsun raises an army from the Outer Circle, conquers the city of Wolven and kills Alsun, King of Wolven, then he proclaims the Outer Circle free of the Inner (Caroletti).

**581 AC** Minaea grants independence to its colony of Erineos (Caroletti).

**590 AC** Alphatia attacks Milenian cities in Bellissaria, almost conquering all the island (Author).

**595 AC** Minaeans intervene in Bellissaria, defeating the Alphatians who have to retreat to the line of Aaslin (Author, *Threshold* issue #11).

**633-42 AC** Great slave revolt in the hivebrood kingdom of Lleweryn. It takes nearly ten years for the insectoids to again take control of the goblins, many of whom manage to flee into the mountains. This leads to increasing tensions with Zambul, who accuse them of raids (Caroletti).

**645-67 AC** Tangor and Lleweryn conquest Zambul after a long war. Empress Zaila the

Ruthless of Tangor donates all the prisoners of Durhanian language as slaves to the hivebrood in exchange for the complete sovereignty over Zambul (663). Disgusted by the political move of the Empress, several nobles and cities revolt, but the Empress crushes them (667) (Caroletti).

**649 AC** Refugees from Zambul settle the Tarystian city of Serenia in Minaea, in a territory claimed by Adunapolis (Caroletti).

**652 AC** Adunapolis attacks Serenia but fails to take the city. The on and off war will continue for decades (Caroletti).

**671-674 AC** Empress Zaila is poisoned by her fourth husband, who seizes the throne to rescue the hivebrood slaves. The hivebrood go eastward and invade the kingdom of Rathasia, weakening it greatly. The new Emperor, Vamoro III, is thus able to conquer it (Caroletti).

**681 AC** The hivebrood conquer the Duchy of Cymru, and stop there, using the human population as broodlings (Caroletti).

**690 AC** The merchant organization known as the Ant is founded in Tangor to trade with the hivebrood and only they are allowed to enter their domains (Caroletti).

**693 AC** Dwarves exiled from Thorin found the city of Dain-Karak in Minaea (Caroletti).

**700 AC** Chung Eun by this time has absorbed the Tangi empire, but their southern commercial port is sacked by Alphatians, provoking a time of isolationism in the eastern empire and eventually the independence of Tangi (MOrient project,

Author). Tanagoro sea raiders begin to harass the coast of Waros, and eventually the Taylin Tanagoro conquer all the coast. Some of the nobles of the Waros kingdoms escape to the northwest, and join with the remains of the Sebgir in the western and northern fringes of the Drakhaba al Kaloon. These become known as the 'Valley Kingdoms', and are soon forced to swear fealty to the 'Taylin Heptarchy', a collection of seven kingdoms dominated by a Tanagoro-derived ruling class and led by the High King of the Taylin (Biles).

**701 AC** Emperor Swahimi of Tangor sets a plebiscite in the provinces of Durhan and Zambul, allowing the population to choose whether to become independent or remain in the Empire. Durhan chooses independence, Zambul remains in the Empire (Caroletti). Kukarachan swarms hit Alphatian colonies all over Esterhold, forcing the local rulers to ask for the help of the Empire to face the menace. Another purge of the creatures is done, but is not resolute (Gander).

**703 AC** Beautification project by the Alphatian emperor in the Alatian islands leads to more Milenian refugees arriving in Bellissaria and Minaea (Guerra, Author)

**708-715 AC** A great plague spreads terror in Nentsun, orc raids increase in the Outer Circle which is almost abandoned (Caroletti).

**720 AC** A mysterious figure who calls himself 'the Holy Emperor' appears in the lands of the Sakhaba (the human survivors of the fallen Sakhalin Empire), with a great knowledge of Blackmoor's secrets (Biles).

**721-722 AC** The minotaur cities of Erech and Sinbay pillaged by orcs and savage minotaurs. (Caroletti).

**723-725 AC** Nentsun is invaded by giant butterflies of mysterious origin whose grubs damage the land until the creatures are repelled (Caroletti).

**725 AC** Alphatian forces complete the conquest of Bellissaria (Author, *Threshold* issue #11)

**728-31 AC** Hjika the orc conquers the rakasta kingdom of Einikushagi but soon his troops rebel against him (Caroletti).

**730 AC** The pirate Arkali, famous for many victories against Alphatians, deposes the democratic government of Minaea and becomes king, starting his dynasty, exploiting the fear of an Alphatian invasion. A Minaean attack on Bellissaria, at the same time as a Thyatian attack on the Alatians, is repelled by Alphatia (Caroletti, Author). Some Filwarf dwarves from the Isle of Dawn reach Minaea (Author, Caroletti, Theisen).

**738 AC** Minaea defeats the orcs and savage minotaurs and King Arkali reforms the League as a Confederacy of Thirteen cities and kingdoms, including the minotaur cities of Erech and Sinbay. Serenia and Adunapolis finally settle on a truce. (Caroletti). Leontion joins the Confederacy, and the four Alphatian wizard rulers swear fealty to Minaea, but they maintain peaceful trade relations with Alphatia (Author). Hjika is killed by the orc revolt, the rest of Nentsun defeats the orcs and Einikushugi is resettled by rakasta, but the orcs who had abandoned the savage ways are accepted in the area (Caroletti).

**742 AC** Several Dark Goblin tribes of the mountains are conquered and united by a weird race of female humanoids that call themselves Demonettes, exiled from Zyx.

The new kingdom is called Lamu (Caroletti). The Iliifari elves from Alphatia settle the Outer Circle of Nentsun after chasing away some local orc tribes (Caroletti).



*Minaean plate depicting a minotaur*

**745 AC** The Holy Empire of Sakhaba is born and the city of New Sakhalin rises on the ruins of the old (Biles).

**794 AC** The Demonettes ally themselves with the governor of Ekleke, and begin to prepare the city to regain its independence from the Tangor Empire (Caroletti).

**800 AC** The five cities of Calengaer have founded numerous forester villages on the canopy. Cyme-rafts and gondolfières travel the valley (Peronnet).

**811 AC** Thanasis creates the colony of Ire as a base to attack the Tangor Empire (Caroletti, Author).

**814-816 AC** Third Tangor War between Minaea and the New Tangor Empire. Ire

joins the Minaean Confederacy as an independent city (Caroletti).

**816 AC** Akuba freed from the New Tangor Empire by the Minaean Confederacy, defeats an attack from the city of Batu-Fomba. The Mawuran city of Ekleke manages to gain independence. Black-men from Batu-Fomba organise a political coup to bring the city into the Confederation, but it is foiled by a young adventurer named Dabo. He is crowned King of the city (Caroletti).

**823 AC** The 80 year old Alphatian wizard Bo-Keem Marid is believed killed during an expedition in Esterhold, but he just found another world, Argain, and began to conquer it (Taylor). Demonettes begin to infiltrate the human population of Ekleke (Caroletti).

**840 AC** Højgylden defeats an invasion of humanoids and giants and enslaves them in the Læggenkul mine (Sarikhan, Author).

**850 AC** The huge red dragon which will become Pearl becomes an Immortal and leaves central Skothar (Dalmonte). His actions involuntarily wake a great ancient grey dragon which will take the name of Wei Huang Long (Author, *Threshold* issue #9).

**890 AC** Hivebrood attack the beholder city of Kargash but fail to conquer it (Robin). A great swarm of kukarachan attack Esterhold and is driven back by the Alphatians in the lands of Jen, where they are eventually destroyed after a large war (Gander).

**895 AC** In retaliation for the kukarachan invasion, the Jennites of Jen support the tribes of Esterhold in attacks against the Alphatians, years of raids and wars begin which often see the Alphatians in serious difficulties (Author).

**900 AC** Dalung-quo, the Empire of the Great Dragon or new Empire of the Great Khan is founded in the central plains of Skothar by the ancient dragon Wei Huang Long. He soon creates an army of Dragonchildren (Author, Burns). The Heptarchy of Taylin and the Holy Empire of Sakhaba come into contact around the fringes of the Virik al Ragoon but neither is able to wage a truly successful war (Biles).

**912 AC** Alphatia finally contains the Jennite raids and founds the port settlement of Anchorage in northern Esterhold, as a way station between Faraway and Skyfyr (PWA III, Author)

**915 AC** The port of Rock Harbor is founded by Alphatia on the Southeastern shore of Esterhold to increase trade (PWA III).

**917 AC** A green orc attack is crushed by Minaea at the Battle of Adunapolis (Caroletti).

**934 AC** The city of Dool revolts and leaves the Kingdom of Hastwr, joining the Confederacy of Minaea (Fan Almanacs).

**949 AC** The elf Skaarn became the first non-human Master in Nentsunian history (Caroletti).

**950 AC** Zyxl sends its warriors to start a trade in gems with Gombar and Suma'a (*Dragon Magazine* #200, Author)

**964 AC** Batu Fomba is raided by people from Akuba (Caroletti).

**967-8 AC** Batu Fomba and the Tangor Empire's city of Ungkha ally themselves against Akuba. The city is conquered and split in two parts: one controlled by the Governor of Ungkha and the other by the

Ruling Council of Batu Fomba (Caroletti).

**976 AC** In Nentsun the elven King Vidaar is slain mysteriously in the forest. Rakasta are blamed and tension rises with the elves until it is discovered it was a plot by a paranoid elf (Caroletti).

**981 AC** Akuba regains independence and becomes a democratic government with the support of Minaea (Caroletti).

**990 AC** The lost Nithian city of Mizpeh is discovered by the Kassites, a tribe of Tanagoro and Jennites, who almost conquer it but are eventually repelled (Taylor).

**993 AC** The Alphatian wizard Bo-Keem Marid, on his path to Immortality and set to invade Skothar with an army of improved kobolds, the boor, is temporarily defeated by adventurers (Taylor).

**1,000 AC** Zelphim in Northern Skothar is resettled by a small number of beholders (Robin). Rumors abound in north eastern Skothar of the birth of a Holy Messenger, sent by the Immortals to finally bring peace between humans and the Virik al Ragoon, who will unite the lands and cleanse them,

bringing about a new age of peace (Biles).

**1,004 AC** Eruption near the beholder city of Kargash, which is not directly damaged (Robin).

**1,010 AC** Xanthus of Skyfyr begins to act as an independent king in Esterhold (PWA I)

**1,012 AC** Xanthus is defeated by Alphatian and Jennite forces in Esterhold. (PWA III)

**1,013 AC** The New Alphatian Council names Favian Vern as King of Blackrock. King Favian's first act is to declare all Jennites of Esterhold to be free citizens. (Fans Almanac).

**1,017 AC** Thyatian-Minrothaddan Skothar expedition prepares in Beitung, Ochalea (Fans Almanac)

**1,018 AC** Minrothad traders and the Thyatian-Minrothaddan expedition reaches Jennite lands in Esterhold (Fans Almanac).

**1,019 AC** The Thyatian-Minrothaddan expedition reaches Minaea, establishing good relations with the Confederation (Fans Almanac).

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["3000 BC, Under the Great Rain of Fire"](#) by Francesco Defferrari (Sturm)

[“Skothar Overview”](#) by Håvard  
[Blackmoor Regional Maps](#) by Håvard

### Thonia

[“Hail Thonia!”](#) by JTR from *Threshold* Magazine issue #12  
[Thonia articles](#) on the Vaults of Pandius by James Ruhland, Aaron Novack and others  
[“The Tboth-Atb Gnolls”](#) by Aaron Nowack

### Oriental Skothar

[“Skothar Overview”](#) by Håvard  
[“Mystaran Orient Project”](#)  
[“Dalung-quo, the Empire of the Great Dragon”](#) by Francesco Defferrari (Sturm)  
[“Who’s Who in the Wyrksteeth part 2”](#) by Francesco Defferrari (Sturm) from *Threshold* Magazine issue #9

### Dwarves and other races

[“The \(Not So\) Young races, a guide to Dwarves and Gnomes”](#) by Giulio Caroletti from *Threshold* Magazine issue #14  
[“Shimmering Lands”](#) by John Calvin  
[“Lost Immortals: Tilla”](#) by Ripvanwormer  
[“Demibumans of Skothar”](#) by Rodger Burns  
[“Kargash: Beholder City”](#) by Robin and the expanded article in this issue (#20) of *Threshold* magazine.  
[“The Kukarachans”](#) by Jeff Daly and Geoff Gander  
[“The castle of the Inoqs”](#) by LoZompatore

### Other lands of Skothar

[Atlas of Skothar](#) from the Fan Almanacs  
[“Calengaer, the green ocean”](#) by Frédéric Peronnet  
[“Ist Campaign”](#) and [“Boor”](#) by Neal Taylor  
[“Kingdom of Højgylden \(pronounced Hoygilden\)”](#) by Isabelle Sarikhan  
[“Drakbaba al Kaloon”](#) by John Walter Biles  
Giulio Caroletti’s work on [Nentsun](#)

### Tangor and Minaea

[“Tanagoro Timeline”](#) by Håvard  
[“Thoughts on the post Rain of Fire Tanagoro Migrations”](#) by DJ Hartel  
[“Oltec Timeline”](#) and [Maps of the Known World before and after the GROF](#) by JTR  
Giulio Caroletti’s work on [Tangor](#)  
Steven Wilson’s work on [Arica](#)  
Giulio Caroletti’s work on [Minaea and Minotaurs](#)  
[Map of Minaea](#) by Francesco Defferrari (Sturm)

### Bellissaria and the Alphatian Sea

[“The Minaean Affair”](#) by Jamuga Khan  
[“Expedition to the Great Southland”](#) by Captain Ebenezum  
[“Alphatian Rulers since Landfall”](#) by Jennifer Guerra  
[“History of the Filwarves”](#) by Andrew Theisen and [“Birth of the Filwarf Dwarves”](#) by Giulio Caroletti  
[“The Sea of Steam and the Farend Ocean”](#) by LoZompatore



# The Political Maps of Skothar

by Francesco Defferrari (Sturm)

## INTRODUCTION

Following the previous timeline of Skothar, here is a brief description of the people and nations of the continent of Skothar. I have placed on the map all the available canon and fan information, even if, in some cases, I have arbitrarily decided the position and borders of nations of which no map ever existed. All the rest is my creation as specified in the text below. Obviously this is meant only as a possible inspiration for Dungeon Masters wishing to set a campaign on Skothar as not everyone may wish to use the cultures and the nations described. To outline the history of Skothar I have created political maps of the continent in four different times: 7,050 BC, at the time of Lhomarr, 4,000 BC at the rise of Blackmoor, 2,300 BC after the Great Rain of Fire and 1,000 AC, the present time for most original Mystara products.

## SKOTHAR IN 7,050 BC

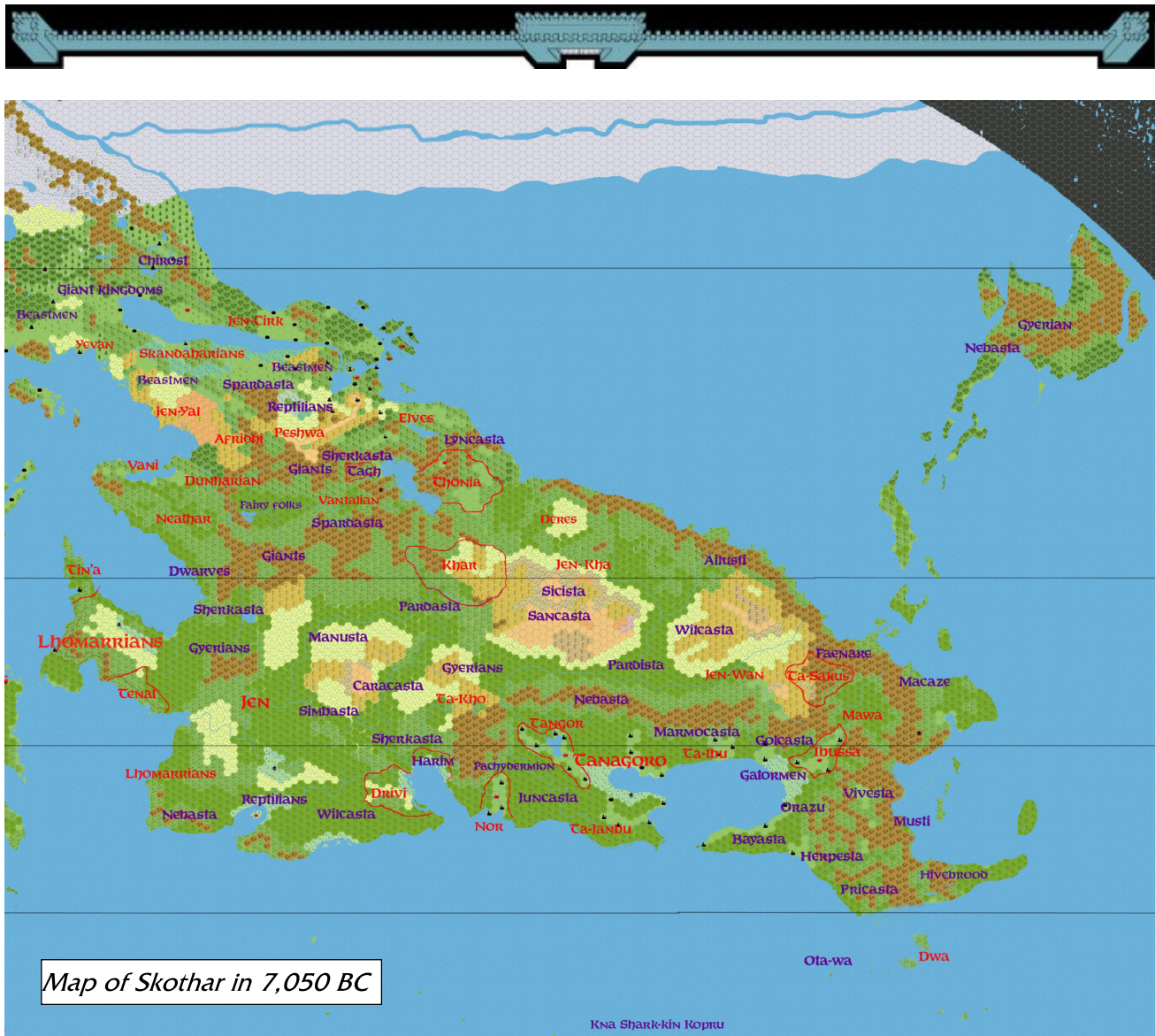
At this time Lhomarr dominates southeastern Davania, while the rival reptilian empire of Y'hog dominates the northwest of the continent<sup>1</sup>. Skothar is only marginally involved in this conflict as Lhomarrians, once almost completely expelled from the continent by ancient Jennites, Tanagoro, reptilians and rakasta attacks, have now created several colonies in the regions of modern Minaea and Esterhold. Y'hog has tried to harass these colonies by helping and funding local reptilian people (mostly lizardmen, gatormen and frogfolk), with only partial success.

What follows is a description of the labels in the map in alphabetical order. Names in red are human populations, while names in purple are non-human populations. If the nation was present in canon or fan material, the name of the author is indicated and more details can be found in the previous article, the Timeline of Skothar. If the nation is my original creation, it is indicated as (New). The

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<sup>1</sup> Lhomarr and Y'hog are creations of Geoff Gander, see "[Lhomarr: The Land, Its People, and Their History](#)" in the Vaults

## The Political Maps of Skothar



same tag is also added to some fan nations of which I have expanded the original description here and in the Timeline. The names referenced in parenthesis are those of the authors whose articles have already been linked in the previous article about the Timeline of Skothar.

**Afridhi:** These people should just have formed from Vantalian Neathars which mixed with local Jennite Oltecs, see previous article (Canon, New).

**Ailusti:** A land inhabited by an unique race often confused with rakasta, possibly a hengeyokai breed, or related to the Mythu'nn folk of Brun. Inspired by the Ailuridae family [[source](#)] (New).

**Bayasta:** A neologism coined by me for the Bay rakasta, a variety of the domestic rakasta [[source](#)] (New).

**Beastmen:** In canon their origin is given at 5,000 BC, but I would consider them much more ancient creatures. In Blackmoor d20 they can resemble apes, badgers, bears, bisons, boars, bulls, dogs, goats, weasels, wolves, or wolverines, making them possibly related to canon neshezu, minotaurs, goatmen, lupins, or hengeyokai (see below). Otherwise, in this age they could also be substituted by cryions or rakasta. (Blackmoor 3th ed, New).

**Caracasta:** A canon breed of rakasta which in this age still lives in the plains of Skothar: [[source](#)] (Heard, Neri, New).

**Chirost:** Northern cold lands inhabited by bat-like creatures, inspired by the cryion race which appears in the AC9 and 1993 Creature Catalogues (New).

**Deres:** Nomadic humans descended from Jennites and Kho-Tanagoro. In this age they have probably not domesticated the horse yet (Biles).

**Drivi:** A nation of Tanagoro humans loosely inspired by ancient India or by Viridistan in the Wilderlands setting. Also inhabited by sherkasta, pachydermions and other rakasta breeds (New).

**Dunharian:** Mystaran Celts, a branch of Neathars. Some of them will settle the Isle of Dawn and several regions of Brun, like Robrenn. Also inspired by the Ethnographic History of Mystara. The group living in Skothar at this time worship the local fairy folk.

**Dwa:** A branch of Tanagoro humans loosely inspired by Melanesian people which by this

age have already settled the Sea Kingdoms (*Threshold* issue #9, New)

**Dwarves:** The first dwarves from Brun and Alphatia should have reached Skothar around this time, slowly moving toward the region of Blackmoor (Canon).

**Elves:** Mentioned in this time in Blackmoor setting sources. They could have recently arrived from Evergrun in Davania and also be present in other areas of the continent (Canon, Havard, *Threshold* issue #10).

**Faenare:** Canon creatures which in this age are common in all the eastern mountains of Skothar (Canon, New).

**Fairy folk:** In this age, the most ancient forests of the continent are still inhabited by fairy folk, wild and often feared by humans and rakasta. The region is also inhabited by hengeyokai (badgerfolk, cranefolk, foxfolk, harefolk, hedgehogfolk, monkeyfolk, ostrichfolk, pangolinfolk, ratfolk, sparrowfolk, spiderfolk), possibly breeds of aranea, gyerians, lupins and pooka, or unknown types of faeries (New).

**Gatormen:** These people inhabit many swamp regions of the Tangor Gulf in this age, often ruling over lizardmen, frogfolk and even rakasta. Y'hog agents are trying to influence them and push them to Outer Being worship (Canon, Gander, New).

**Giant Kingdoms:** competing giant jarls and kingdoms of cloud, storm, frost, mountain, hill and fire giants dominate many regions of northernmost Skothar in this age (New).

**Giants:** The mountains of Skothar in this age are inhabited by many giants, mainly mountain and cloud giants (New).

**Golcasta:** A neologism coined by me for the Golden rakasta, a variety of the domestic rakasta inhabiting eastern Skothar: [\[source\]](#) (New).

**Gyerians:** A huge variety of gyerian breeds roam in this age the plains and forests of Skothar: from ostrich gyerians to crow gyerians, also known as kenku, thrushes, woodpeckers, hornbills, parrots, pelicans, storks, ibises, flamingos, pheasants and cranes, gyerians comes in all shapes, colours and sizes. And they are not the only intelligent bird like creatures around, as hsiao too are common in the woods, harpies in the hills and faenare in the mountains of Skothar (Canon, New).

**Harim:** A nation created by the Harimau-Belang sherkasta, i.e. the southern sherkasta breed. (Heard, Neri, New).

**Herpesta:** A neologism coined by me for a people inspired by the mongoose: [\[source\]](#) which could be superficially similar to the Jorri of the Savage Coast (New).

**Hivebrood:** These canon insect-like creatures have been fought and almost exterminated both by humans and rakasta, but have not been completely eradicated (Canon, New).

**Ibussa:** A nation ruled by the Ibu Tanagoro created by JTR, also with a sizable rakasta and Mawa population (New).



*Nomad people in the plains*

**Khar:** A nation formed by humans descended of Jennites and Lhomarrians, could be inspired by Karak in the Wilderlands setting. Inhabited also by pardasta, other rakasta and hengeyokai (New).

**Kna, Shark-kin, Kopr:** Canon creatures which inhabit the underwater regions of the Sea Kingdoms in this age. Possibly a limited number of merrows and sea giants are also settling in the region by now (Canon, New).

**Jen:** The land of the Jennites, which in this age have not yet domesticated the horse and are just beginning to keep auroch cattle. Many of them still live in a forest environment (Canon, New).

**Jen-Cirk:** an offshoot of Jennites which travelled far north and mixed with local Neathar. Inspired by the real world Circassian people ([\[source\]](#)) and by the nation of Cirkhosia, mentioned in the Blackmoor setting (Havard, New).

**Jen-Kha:** A branch of Jennites related to the kingdom of Khar, but not subject to it (New).

**Jen-Yal:** Jennite people which will become the ancestors of the Yalu people of Brun, the Huleans and other related populations, as mentioned in A Timeline of the Oltec Man (dos Santos, Agosta).

**Jen-Wan:** A branch of the Jennites who have settled on the rivers of eastern Skothar and will originate the nation of Wa, later to become Chung Eun Empire (MOrient, New).

**Juncasta:** A neologism coined by me for the Jungle rakasta, a variety of the domestic rakasta common in this age in the Tangor area [[source](#)] (New).

**Lhomarrians:** People of mixed Maharian and Oltec descent. Several independent Lhomarrian city states are here, occasionally harassed by lizardmen and gatormen. The region is also inhabited by gyerians and some sherkasta (Gander, New).

**Lyncasta:** A neologism coined by me to indicate the canon Lynxman rakasta. They are quite numerous in this age in the temperate northern area of Skothar, but divided in clans and small tribes (Heard, Neri, New).

**Macaze:** A neologism created by me for a race inspired by the Asian macaque: [[source](#)] which could be related to the canon Neshezu of the Savage Coast (Canon, *Threshold* issue #18, New).

**Manusta:** A neologism for the Manul rakasta, a variety of the domestic rakasta [[source](#)] which in this age is common in central Skothar (New).

**Marmocasta:** A neologism coined by me for the Marbled rakasta, a variety of the domestic rakasta which lives all around the Tangor bay: [[source](#)] (New).

**Mawa:** A Oltec descended people created by me as partial ancestors of the Makai, Pearl Island natives and inhabitants of the Sea Kingdoms, inspired by Polynesian people (*Threshold* issue #5, #9, #11, New).

**Musti:** A neologism coined by me for a people inspired by Asian martens: [[source](#)] which could be related to the Jorri of the Savage Coast (*Threshold* issue #18, New).

**Neathar:** In this age more Neathar people inhabit the region which will become modern Thonia. Lyncasta and fairy folk are also probably present in the area. These Neathar could be Dunharians or Vantalian or Maharian (Southern Neathar, from *Ethnographic History of Mystara*), or a bit of all, and also mixed with Valoin (Oltecs).

**Nebasta:** A neologism coined by me for the canon Cloud Pardasta which in this age should inhabit many mountains of southern and eastern Skothar: [[source](#)] (Heard, Neri).

**Nor:** A nation of Tanagoro humans with some Jennite blood, loosely inspired by ancient Nubia or Ghinor in the Wilderlands setting (New).

**Orazu:** A neologism coined by me for a race inspired by orangutans: [[source](#)] which could be related to the canon Neshezu of the Savage Coast (Canon, *Threshold* issue #18, New).

**Ota-Wa:** A neologism coined by me for a variant breed of the Omm-wa of the Savage Coast inspired by Eared seals: [\[source\]](#) (*Threshold* issue #18, New).

**Pachydermion:** Even if most of them have already emigrated to Patera, a sizable population of pachydermions still live in the region (Canon, Agosta, Neri).

**Pardasta:** A breed of rakasta which is common in Central Skothar (Heard, Neri).

**Pardista:** A neologism for the Leopard cat rakasta, a small breed of the Pardasta [\[source\]](#) (New).

**Peshwah:** These people are described in canon Blackmoor material and should be related to the Jennite Oltecs. In this age they could be the first to domesticate the horse (Canon, New).

**Pricasta:** A neologism coined by me for the Fishing rakasta, Flat-headed rakasta and Rusty rakasta: [\[source\]](#), small local varieties of the domestic rakasta (New).

**Reptilians (north):** In this age the region which will become Blackmoor is dominated by lizardmen, gatormen and frogfolk, as mentioned in Blackmoor d20 material (Canon).

**Reptilians (Minaean coast):** In this age this region is inhabited by lizardmen, gatormen, frogfolk and dragons, influenced by Y'hog against the Lhomarrians (Gander, New).

**Sancasta:** A neologism for the Sand rakasta, a small variety of the domestic rakasta: [\[source\]](#) (New).

**Sherkasta and Tagh:** The Tagh Sherkasta have created their own nation in the mountains of north central Skothar. Not all the sherkasta have joined the nation, and some still live in independent families and clans (Heard, Neri, New).

**Sicista:** A neologism for the Skotharian mountain rakasta, a variety of the domestic rakasta common in northeastern Skothar: [\[source\]](#) (New).

**Simbasta:** The Skotharian breed of the Simbasta [\[source\]](#) (New).

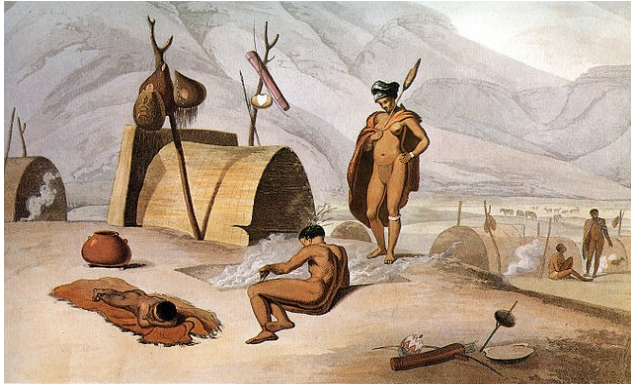
**Skandaharians:** Antalians people mentioned in the Blackmoor setting, ancestors of the Antalians of northern Brun. In this age the Skandaharians have not built yet their longships and are divided into competing clans (Canon, various fan works).

**Spardasta:** A neologism I have created for the canon Snow Pardasta created by Bruce Heard in the article Rakasta of *Mystara* which appeared on *Dragon Magazine* #247 in May 1998. In this age they mostly inhabit the mountains of northern Skothar (Heard, Neri).

**Ta-Ibu:** a branch of the Tanagoro humans created by JTR, could be related to the Karimari which ended up in southern Brun (JTR, New).

**Ta-Janbu:** A Tanagoro population which will rise to prominence in the region after learning to produce metal tools and weapons (JTR).

**Ta-Kho:** Tanagoro humans of the northern plains, who have recently domesticated the auroch. Inspired by Khoisan people [\[source\]](#) (JTR, New).



*Ta-Kho people*

**Tangor:** The area inhabited by the Tanagoro humans and a first nucleus of the nation of Tangor, later to become the first Tangor Empire (Canon, Mishler, New).

**Ta-Sakus:** Tanagoro humans which will later create the Kingdom of Saku, loosely inspired by ancient Kush: [[source](#)] (JTR).

**Tenat:** A nation of Lhomarrians and Jennites, Lenap of the Wilderlands setting could be used as inspiration. Inhabited also by rakasta and gyerians (New).

**Thonia:** The nation of Thonia has just been formed, ruled by the High Thonians, an Antalian people, but mainly inhabited by Common Thonians, usually of Vantalian or Maharian Neathar descent. Fairy folk are also present in the nation (Canon).

**Tin'a:** A matriarchal nation of Lhomarrians and Jennites, Tarantis of the Wilderlands setting could be used as inspiration. Also inhabited by rakasta and gyerians (New).

**Vani:** A nation of Valoin humans (Mystaran Ugro-Finns) which have special relations with local fairies and some rakasta accepted in their communities, created by me but

inspired by the Ethnographic History of Mystara (Caroletti, Gander, Agosta, New).

**Vantalian:** More Vantalian people inhabit the central forests, divided in tribes and clans (New).

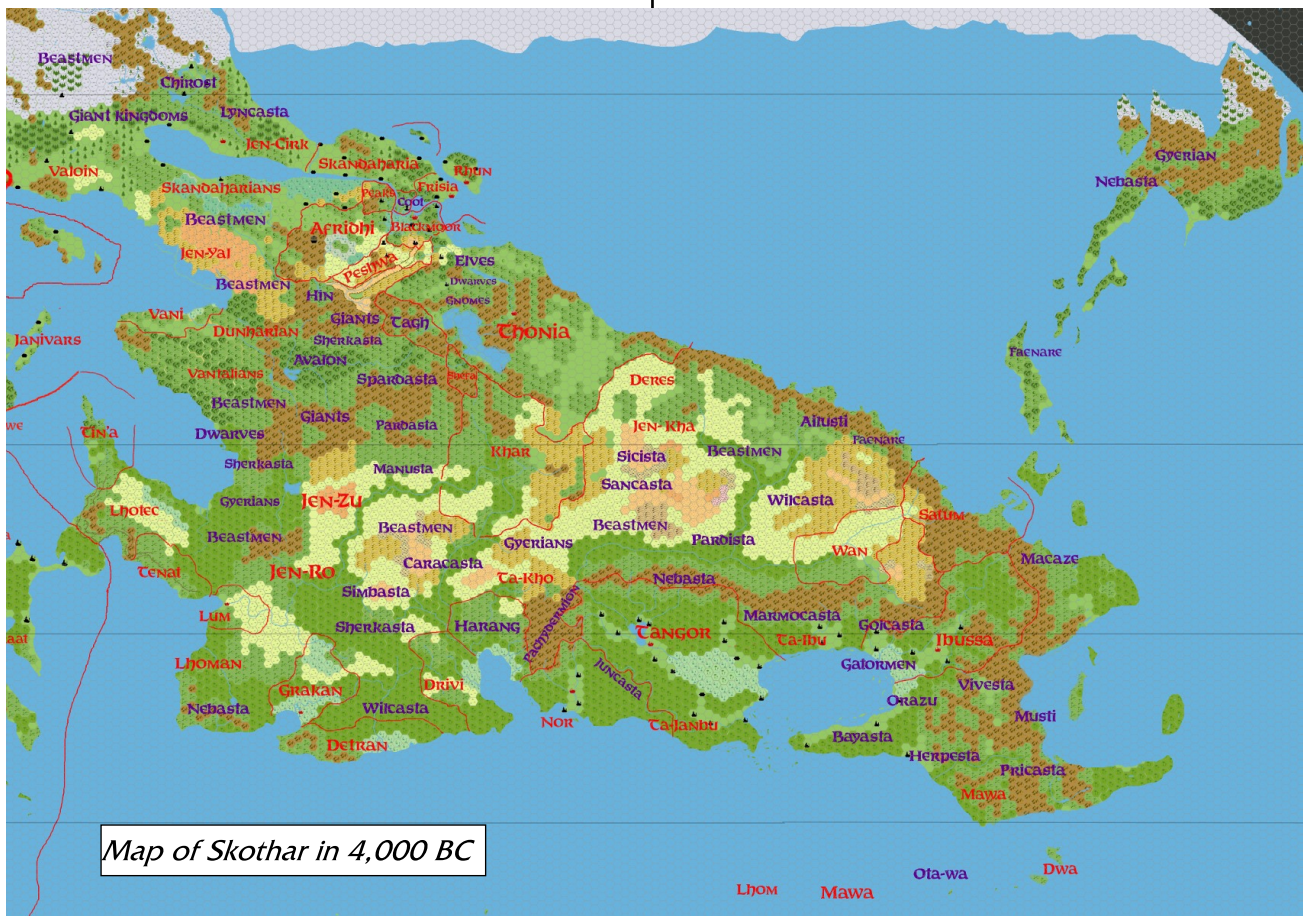
**Vivesta:** A neologism coined by me for a race inspired by Asian civets and bearcats: [[source](#)], a people often confused with a rakasta breed but not related to rakasta beyond a slightly similar appearance (New).

**Wilcasta:** A neologism for the Steppe rakasta, a variety of the domestic rakasta adapted to life in the steppes of central Skothar [[source](#)] (New).

**Yevan:** A Vantalian (Mystaran Slavs) people which will originate the Yevo people of Brun, ancestor of the Empire of Zuyevu created by Adrian Mattias [[source](#)] (Mattias, *Threshold* issue #9).

**Zyxl:** In this age the northeastern island is very big and inhabited mostly by gyerians, faenare, cloud pardasta and some hivebrood. The other eastern islands are also inhabited by other rakasta breeds and by some lizardmen, gatormen, chameleon men, turtles and crabmen.

## SKOTHAR IN 4,000 BC



At this time Blackmoor has gained independence from the Thonian Empire and will begin its rise to power, mostly thanks to the technomagic items developed after contact with the alien visitors of the F.S.S Beagle starship. Elves, gnomes, dwarves and hin have arrived in Skothar, but rakasta and other non-human populations are still quite numerous in the interior of the continent. In the following millenium up to the Great Rain of Fire of 3,000 BC Blackmoor will become more and more powerful and the Beastmen Crusades will often target not only the beastmen but also several other non-human races, shrinking their number and territories all over the continent.

As above, what follows is a description of the labels in the map in alphabetical order. Names in red are human populations, while names in purple are non-human populations. When borders are present, this means there is a structured nation (with a recognizable leader and a government), while if borders are omitted this means the population is divided in tribes or groups, competing or not.



**fridhi:** The territory conquered by the growing Afridhi Empire, including the former Valelands, the Duchy of Ten and the Peshwah lands of western Hak (Canon).

**Avalon:** A realm of fairy folk, dragons, hengeyokai and rakasta, inspired by Arthurian myths. Valon from the Wilderlands setting could also be used for this region (New).

**Beastmen:** In this time, beastmen have spread in almost all the northern and central regions of Skothar, menacing both humans and other races (Canon).

**Blackmoor:** Blackmoor as described in the DA series and the namesake setting. The Kingdom of Blackmoor also includes sizable populations of dwarves, gnomes, elves and halflings and other creatures such as beastmen, ash goblins, lizardmen, gatormen and frogfolk (Canon).

**Coot:** Territory of the mysterious Egg of Coot, inhabited by his thralls of many races, from frogfolk and beastmen to many others (Canon).

**Detran:** A nation of Lhomarrians and Jennites which has a sizable population of tieflings. Inspired by the Demon Empires of the Wilderlands setting and by the fact that Blackmoor 4th ed setting had tieflings (New).

**Drivi:** This kingdom has grown, often competing with Harang and Nor (New).

**Frisia and Rhun:** Antalian inhabited nations, later to be conquered by Eastern Skandaharians (Havard, Canon).

**Grakan:** Dragons secretly rule here over lizardmen and gatormen subjects (New).

**Harang:** The realm of the Harimau-Belang sherkasta has become bigger too (New).

**Hin:** By this time halflings should have reached Skothar from Davania, settling in different regions around Thonia and Blackmoor (Canon, Dalmonte).

**Ibussa:** This nation has grown by this time and dominate eastern Tangor (New).

**Jen-Zu and Jen-Ro:** The northern, patriarchal Jennite population is now dominated by followers of Zugzul and in competition with the southern matriarchal Jennites, dominated by Ordana, a conflict begins to unfold that anticipates and mirrors the one between followers of Tarastia and Rathanos after the Great Rain of Fire (New).

**Khar:** This nation has grown extensively by now (New).

**Lhoman:** A nation of loosely allied cities, descended from Lhomarrians which however have almost forgotten their old empire (Gander, New).

**Lhotec:** In modern Esterhold, descendants of Lhomarrians have now mixed with Oltec people from the Alpathian sea (Canon, Dalmonte, New).

**Lum:** A powerful city state, descended from Lhomarrian people, who control trade in the region (JTR).

**Lyncasta:** The growth of human kingdoms and the Thonian Empire in particular has

pushed the lynxmen rakasta to the north of the continent. (Heard, Neri).

**Nor:** This realm too has grown, competing with Tangor for control of the region (New).

**Peaks:** Duchy of the Peaks, inhabited by humans of Thonian origin but including slaves of all races, see the article dedicated to it in this issue of *Threshold* ((#20) Canon).

**Peshwah:** Eastern Hak, inhabited by the Peshwah, now allied with Thonia against the Afridhi expansion (Canon).

**Satum:** A kingdom founded by Tanagoro people with some Oltec blood, who absorbed the older Saku kingdom, inspired by Aksum [[source](#)] (JTR).

**Shefa:** A powerful city state bordering the Empire of Thonia (JTR).

**Skandaharia:** Eastern Skandaharians are by now often united under a Jarl which leads them to destructive raids against Thonia, Blackmoor and other people (Canon).

**Tagh:** The Tagh sherkasta nation has grown by this time, bordering Thonia (Neri, New).

**Tangor:** The First Tangor Empire has grown in the southern central region. Its population includes also rakasta, aranea, lizardmen, reptilian and frogfolk, sometimes but not always accepted as proper subjects of the realm (Canon, New).

**Thonia:** The Empire has reached a great expansion in eastern Skothar, including in its territory dwarves, gnomes, elves and halflings, fairy folk and possibly some rakasta



*Tangor statues representing a Tangor man and a Blackmoorian*

(Canon, Havard).

**Valley of the Ancients:** South of Blackmoor, this land is inhabited by the Ungolwaith or sand folk and geonids, and nearby mountains also by dragonborn (Canon, Blackmoor 4th ed).

**Vani:** By this time this Valoin nation has united. In later Blackmoor times it will fall under the influence of Skandaharia, despite several rebellions against it (New).

**Wan:** A realm created by Jennite people, inspired by ancient China (MOrient, New).

## The expansion of Blackmoor and the persecution of “beastmen”

In the later Blackmoorian times, i.e. from 4,000 to 3,000 BC, the power of Blackmoor continues to grow in the continent. Ancient enemies are completely destroyed, such as Coot and the Afridhi, and two “Beastmen Crusades” target not only “proper” beastmen, but also gyerians, rakasta, giants and many others, including some group of elves. The crusades of 3,480 and 3,220 BC and the fight against the Serpentine Empire in Davania culminate in 3,200 BC with the attack on the Harimau-Belang sherkasta and the Pachydermion and their escape to Patera after the realm of Harang is destroyed. The kingdom of the Tagh sherkasta was destroyed much before, in 3,500 BC, forcing the survivors to hide in the most remote mountains. Reptilian creatures, considered agents of the Serpentes, have been persecuted so much they survive only deep underground or in the more remote swamps. The sand folk of the Valley of the Ancients, despite never being enemies of Blackmoor, are deported to the Adri Varma region in Brun to use them as soldiers against beastmen. Even the dragonborn, once allies of Blackmoor, are persecuted after 3,200 BC. The reptilian kingdom of Grakan and the tiefling kingdom of Detran are destroyed in 3,320 BC, and nearby rakasta people are persecuted as well. This racist attitude infects also other human realms, such as Skandaharia and Tangor, which often applies the same ethnic cleansing policies toward beastmen and rakasta. Still, rakasta and other non-human people manage to survive in the more remote regions of Skothar, and their number will grow again after the Great Rain of Fire.



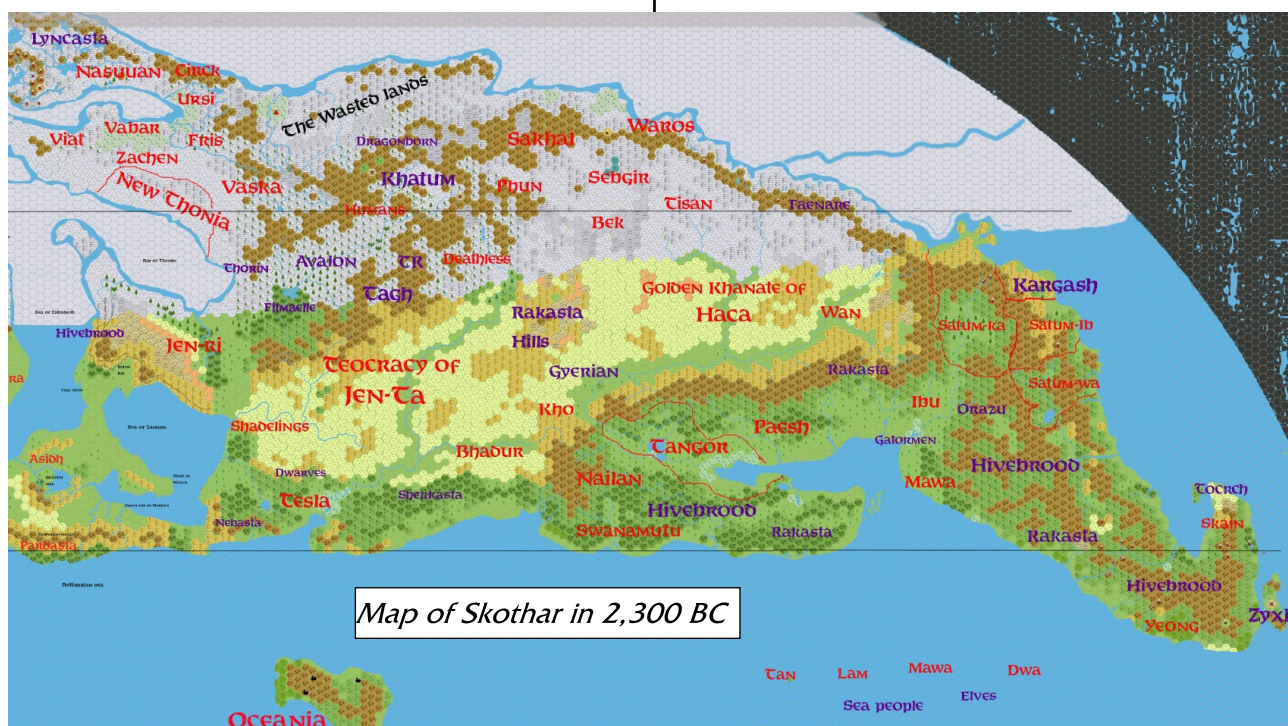
*Blackmoorian troops attacking a Tangor tribe*

Between 3,150-3,135 BC the dragons of Skothar try in vain to destroy Blackmoor, but are defeated as well. Fairy folk by now have become completely hostile to the once friendly Blackmoor and Thonia, and have severed all the links between their hidden realms and Skothar.

Late Blackmoor is not only racist, but also colonialist. In 3,285 BC the Edicts of Westport ends slavery in Blackmoor, but the trade continues outside the borders of Blackmoor proper, even in Thonia. The targets of slavery are almost always other humans, as beastmen and rakasta are not tolerated in Blackmoor territories, not even as servants. The consequence is that many human kingdoms, such as Drivi and Ibussa, are destroyed by direct Blackmoorian interventions or Proxy wars because they defied the will of the powerful empire and many people, as the Deres, are enslaved. Other kingdoms, such as Shefa, Khar, Lum and others, are reduced to be de-facto client states of Blackmoor.

When the Great Rain of Fire strikes in 3,000 BC, many people in Skothar have reason to feel that Blackmoor fully deserved the Wrath of the Immortals, but the cataclysm harms all the inhabitants of the continent, which will take centuries to recover.

## SKOTHAR IN 2,300 BC



Map of Skothar in 2,300 BC

At this time, chosen because it is the date of the post-cataclysmic Taymora setting developed by John Calvin<sup>2</sup> for the Known World, Skothar is recovering from the cataclysm. The Jennites, dominated by the Church of Tarastia, have extensive power at the centre of the continent, and the humanoids have not returned yet to the continent. The hivebrood however invaded several regions and are a terrible threat in all the continent. In late Blackmoorian times (3,500-3,000) beastmen were effectively exterminated in the continent and rakasta and other non-human people were often labelled as such and suffered the same fate, or were severely

restricted in their territories. Now however they are spreading again all over Skothar.

As above, what follows is a description of the labels in the map from North to South (and from West to East when applicable). Names in red are human populations, while names in purple are non-human populations. When borders are present, this means there is a structured nation (with a recognizable leader and a government), while if borders are omitted this means the population is divided in tribes or competing groups.

In several cases I have indicated real, historical or modern nations as inspiration for the fantasy realms listed below. This is intended only as a guideline to provide suggestions and ideas that could be used to create a fantasy culture as happened in canon Mystaran products.

<sup>2</sup> See Past Ages of the Known World in the [Atlas section](#) of the Vaults of Pandius or in the [dedicated sub-forum](#) at The Piazza



*Jen-Circk raiders attack Vantalian*

After an interesting discussion on The Piazza Thunder Rift forum with Gravesguardian<sup>3</sup> I have decided Skothar is probably the perfect continent where to place the Rift. Its inhabitants should be refugees from Thonia and Blackmoor, even if they do not remember this anymore.

**Avalon:** A mysterious and reclusive land inhabited by faeries, centaurs, sherkasta, lyncasta, gyerians, hengeyokai and possibly werecreatures (New).

**Bek:** A human Jennite culture which will later form the nation of Tasbek, loosely based on Uzbek people (New).

<sup>3</sup> See in particular [this forum post](#) at The Piazza about the estimated dimensions of the Rift.

**Bhadur:** A nation of people descended from Jennites, Tanagoro and other humans, which will later split in Bhat and Dur, loosely based on ancient India and Pakistan (New).

**Deathless:** Thonian wizards which have survived the cataclysm by turning to the worship of Nyx (Burns, New)

**Dragonborn:** Resistant to the Wasting, dragonborn are rising in the mountains, now free from the Blackmoorian persecution (Blackmoor 4th ed, New).

**Dwarves:** Some dwarves which did not left for Brun settled in northern Teslan lands, renouncing Blackmoor technomagic (Calvin, Caroletti, New).

**Circk:** Descendants of the ancient Jen-Circk live here, their land is also inhabited by several rakasta breeds. In later time they will be absorbed by the nation of Kisvan (New).

**Faenare:** The eastern mountains are again the domain of faenare, pegataurs, sphinxes, rakasta, hengeyokai and ailusti (New).

**Filmaelle:** A flying elven city which crashed on Skothar (Peronnet).

**Fris:** These people are descended from displaced Antalians (Blackmoor, New).

**Golden Khanate of Haca:** A nation of Kha Jennite which is conquering a vast territory in the eastern Skotharian plain. The land is also inhabited by dragonchild and hengeyokai and rumors say the Khanate was created by fairies, and that the Khan really is a dragon (Canon, Burns, MOrient, Author, New).

**Hivebrood:** The Great Rain of Fire and the following centuries of cold and diseases greatly reduced the number of humans in the continent, and the hivebrood have profited of this new situation, spreading in all the continent and reaching Esterhold and Alphatia (*Threshold* issue #11, Burns). These creatures are powerful also in eastern and southern Skothar, where they have conquered extensive territories. More ancient than mammals, they consider all this just reclaiming what once belonged to them (Canon, Burns, Mattias, Caroletti New).

**Humans:** Displaced humans who will later find the Rift and inhabit it (Thunder Rift setting, New).

**Ibu:** The kingdom of these Tanagoro people was destroyed by Blackmoor. Now they are trying to rebuild it but are menaced by gatomen and hivebrood (JTR, New).

**Jen-Ri:** A branch of Jennites which do not follow Tarastia but mostly Djaea, their land is inhabited also by some rakasta and gyerians (Dalmonte, New).

**Theocracy of Jen-Ta:** The powerful and enlarging territory controlled by the Jennite clans which follow Tarastia. The land is also inhabited by some rakasta breeds, but also menaced by the spread of the hivebrood (Canon, New).

**Kargash:** The beholder city is powerful in this age and menaces nearby Tanagoro kingdoms (Robin).

**Khatum:** Giants have created a powerful kingdom in the mountains, loosely based on Nepal and also inhabited by snow pardasta and sherkasta (MOrient).

**Kho:** Land inhabited by the Kho Tanagoro (JTR, New).

**Lyncasta and Giants:** The north of the continent is dominated by lynxman rakasta and giants, which are taking back the territories Blackmoor took from them. Giants dominate in this cold age vast territories of the northern seas and in northern Brun.

**Mawa:** This branch of Jennites has settled this region of Skothar, many fleeing the hivebrood to the safety of the Sea Kingdoms (*Threshold* issue #9, New).

**Nailan:** A people formed by local Tanagoro people and enslaved Afridhi escaped from Thonia after the cataclysm (Caroletti).

**Nasuuan:** A people of Afridhi and Thonian descent which escaped the wastelands near Thonia and found a strangely warm land in the far north. Lyncasta, snow pardasta and sherkasta also live near them (Caroletti).

**Nebasta:** Cloud pardasta are rebuilding their numbers too, but like other people are menaced by the expansion of the hivebrood (Heard, Neri, New).

**Orazu:** These people are now free from Blackmoorian persecution but are menaced by the expanding hivebrood (New).

**Paesh:** These people descend from the Peshwah and were pushed southward by the terrible climate after the Rain of Fire. Now they are trying to rebuild their lives, but are menaced by the hivebrood expansion (*Threshold* issue #9, #11, New).

**Phun:** A culture of humans mostly of Jennite descent which will later form the Phu nation, loosely based on ancient Bhutan (MOrient).

**Rakasta (eastern):** The different rakasta breeds of eastern Skothar hardly had the time to rejoice for the demise of Blackmoorians, as all the chain is now being invaded by the hivebrood (New).

**Rakasta hills:** Almost exterminated during Blackmoorian times, many rakasta breeds and tribes have now reunited in this region of central Skothar, determined to resist the growing power of human empires (Heard, Neri, New).



*Sea Kingdoms girl*

**Sakhal:** A culture formed by a mix-up of Blackmoorian and Thonian refugees, descendants of slaves and dwarves (Biles).

**Satum-Ka, Satum-Ib and Satum-Wa:** The powerful kingdom has risen from the devastation of the Great Rain of Fire, but it is now divided between three rival dynasties and will slowly descent in utter chaos in the next centuries (JTR, New)

**Sea Kingdoms:** By now the Western Sea Kingdoms, south of Skothar, are inhabited by many sea creatures (kna, kopru, shark-kin, sea giants, merrows, narwhals, the ota-wa previously mentioned), by descendants of the Hatwa elves from Davania and by four human groups: the Dwa Tanagoro, the Mawa Jennites, the Lam and the Tanagoro. The Lam are descendants of Lhomarrians, Blackmoorians and Skandaharians colonist who have by now almost forgotten their different origins and joined as just one people. The Tanagoro arrived recently after the hivebrood invasion which destroyed the Second Tangor Empire (Canon, New).

**Sebgir:** The “Daring Ones”, the Waros who have chosen to live near the mysterious fungus forest (Biles).

**Shadelings:** These wizards have recently submitted to the Church of Tarastia and are therefore tolerated in the expanding theocracy (Burns, New)

**Sherkasta:** Even if most of them fled to Patera in later Blackmoorian times, the Harimau-Belang sherkasta are now slowly rebuilding their numbers in southern Skothar (Heard, Neri).

**Skain:** Former Skandaharian colonists of eastern Skothar live here, trying to resist the hivebrood (Mishler, New).

**Swanamutu:** Southern and western Tangor coast, also inhabited by rakasta breeds, threatened by the hivebrood (Caroletti, New).

**Tagh:** The Tagh sherkasta are expanding again in the mountains of Skothar. They may also consider concealing the existence of the Rift to the outside world a sacred task. The dwarven and gnomish refuge of Farseer should also be in the south of this region<sup>4</sup> (Heard, Neri, Calvin, New).

**Tangor:** The Third Tangor Empire has risen after the second was destroyed by hivebrood a couple of centuries ago, and is now trying to defend its territory from the insectoid creatures (New).

**Tesla:** Here is the center of the culture of sedentary Jennites, trying to preserve their

independence from Jen-Ta and their homes from rising gatormen, lizardmen, frogfolk and hivebrood (dos Santos, Agosta, Caroletti).

**Tocrch:** After the cataclysm several populations of turtles, crabmen and chameleon men which lived on the islands near Zyxl have settled here (New).

**New Thonia:** A nation of Antalian and other humans, with minorities of dwarves, gnomes, elves, hin and rakasta. Loosely based on medieval Germany (Canon, Fan Almanacs).

**Thorin:** A land inhabited by dwarves since before the Great Rain of Fire (Canon, New).

**Tisan:** Ancestors of the people of Ti’sang, loosely based on ancient Tibet (MOrient, Arnden in this issue of *Threshold* (#20)).

**TR:** Thunder Rift, inhabited at this time only by dwarves and elves, refugees from Blackmoor and Thonia (Thunder Rift setting, New).

**Ursi:** The land still inhabited by Ursinians, a people of Afridhi and Tanagoro descent former slaves of Blackmoor. Most of them will settle in Nentsun in 710 BC to escape humanoid attacks (Caroletti).

**Vabar:** A nation of Valoin and Antalian humans, loosely based on ancient Estonia (New)

**Vaska:** A nation of Vantalian humans, loosely based on ancient Poland (New).

**Viat:** A nation of Valoin and Antalian humans, loosely based on ancient Latvia (New)

<sup>4</sup> See the [“Shimmering Lands Gazetteer”](#) by John Calvin



**Wan:** A branch of Jennites which will create a powerful kingdom, now however menaced by Haca and hivebrood (MOrient, New)

**Waros:** Descendants of the Deres nomads, which have changed their name to Waros, meaning “survivors” (Biles).

**The Wasted Lands:** The land formerly known as Blackmoor and Thonia, now a wasteland dotted with ruins and inhabited only by undead, degenerated creatures and mutants. Full of powerful technomagic items, but still contaminated with the Wasting disease, which affects anyone who stays for more than a week (Canon, New).

**Yeong:** A nation recently created by Wan Jennites, it is now threatened by the hivebrood (MOrient, New).

**Zachen:** The westerners, an informal group of displaced Antalian, Dunharian, Vantalian and Jennite people, loosely based on ancient Bohemia and Hungary, will be pushed eastward by the humanoid invasion of 1,700 BC (New).

**Zyxl:** Inhabited initially only by faenare, gyerians, macaze, ursi, musti, jorri and cloud pardasta, the island was devastated by the cataclysm, slowly joining the east of Skothar, and is now inhabited only by some corrupted crow gyerians, descendants of Skandaharian colonists affected by the wasting disease and newly arrived Tanagoro refugees (Canon, New).

## SKOTHAR IN 1,000 AC

Present time. Elves, dwarves, gnomes and halflings exist in Skothar, but they are often isolated populations with aspect and customs quite different from their counterparts in Brun and humanoids have spread all over the continent after their initial invasion of 1,700 BC. Hivebrood, rakasta and other non-human races are well known in several regions of Skothar, and often human kingdoms include significant non-human populations.

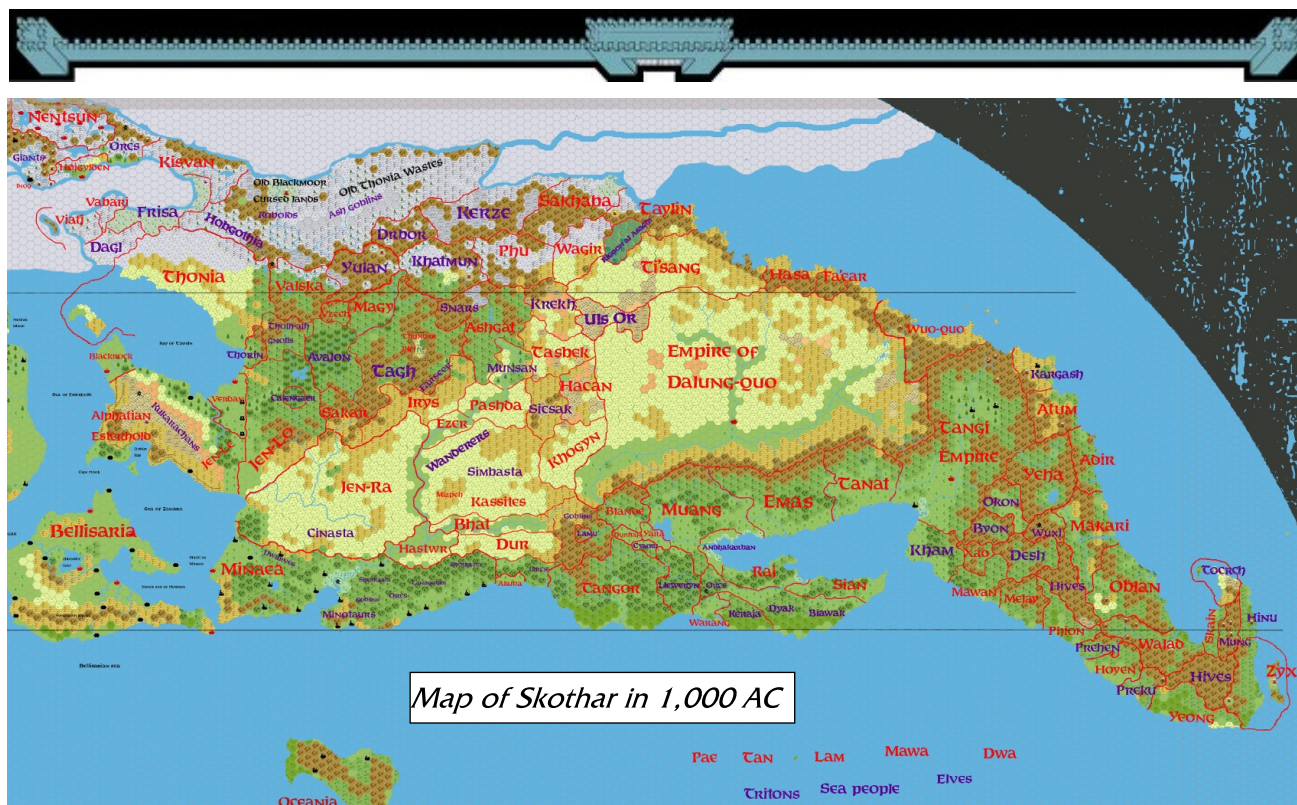
As above, what follows is a description of the labels in the map from North to South (and from West to East when applicable). Names in red are human populations, while names in purple are non-human populations. Note that in this age the division is arbitrary, as many lands now have a mixed population of humans and non-humans. In general, the labels in red are those for the nations where the dominating population is human, even if it may not be the absolute majority. In this age, borders are almost always present as normally several structured nations (with a recognizable leader and a government) surround the territories which are still divided in tribes or groups. Some people live across state borders or in territories claimed by other nations, or share a territory without clear borders.

**Adir:** A nation of Ibu Tanagoro with some Jennite blood, also inhabited by tanagore and macaze, loosely based on Somalia (New).

**Akuba:** A Tanagoro city state, also inhabited by some tanagore and sherkasta (Caroletti).

**Andhakarban:** A savage territory dominated

## The Political Maps of Skothar



by sherkasta and inhabited also by pardasta, nebasta, juncasta and bayasta, with some Alphantian outposts and lizardmen. Loosely based on colonial India or Southeast Asia in colonial times (Agosta).

**Ashgat:** A nation of Yali Jennites, distantly related to the modern inhabitants of Hule, inhabited also by pardasta and humanoids, loosely based on Turkmenistan, supposedly dominated by the Deathless wizards (Burns, New).

**Atum:** A Tanagoro kingdom which claims to be the legitimate heir of Saku and Satum, menaced by the beholders of Kargash, loosely based on Eritrea, also inhabited by macaze and humanoids (JTR, New).

**Avalon:** A mysterious and reclusive land inhabited by faeries, centaurs, sherkasta, lyncasta, gyerians, hengeyokai and possibly werecreatures (New).

**Biawak:** A land of lizardmen, but also inhabited by some gatormen and juncasta, loosely based on ancient Borneo (Agosta).

**Bhat:** A nation of sedentary Jennite humans and Khoi Tanagoro, also inhabited by humanoids, gyerians, sherkasta and pachydermion, loosely based on some aspects of ancient India (New).

**Byon:** A nation of bayasta, pricasta, goblins, hobgoblins and bugbears with some tanagoro (New).

**Old Blackmoor Cursed Lands:** These lands are dotted with ruins but considered cursed by most inhabitants of Skothar. See the articles on Returned Blackmoor and the Duchy of the Peaks in this same issue of *Threshold Magazine* (New).

**Blande:** A nation created by Nailan Tanagoro (Tanagoro humans with some Jennite blood) with relevant populations of cloud pardasta (Caroletti, New).

**Calengaer:** An unapproachable, strangely tall forest the Jennites consider taboo. Inhabited by elves (Peronnet).

**Cymru:** Once a Tanagoro nation, now inhabited by hivebrood (Caroletti)

**Dagl:** A realm of humanoids and Antalian humans, loosely based on ancient Denmark (New).

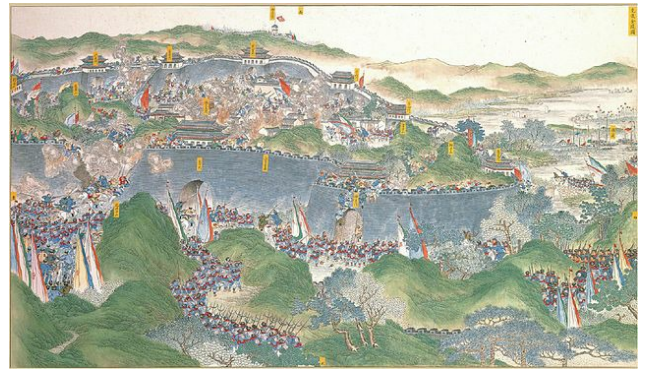
**Desh:** A nation dominated by ogres which for a time dominated a huge territory in the Tangor gulf and even the Tangi kingdom. Humans, sherkasta, vivesta and golcasta minorities also live in the region. Loosely inspired by Bangladesh (New).

**Dyak:** Or Land of the Headhunters, a territory inhabited by savage juncasta who kill any foreigner they meet. Loosely based on ancient Borneo (Agosta)

**Empire of Dalung-Quo:** An empire ruled by an ancient dragon, loosely inspired by imperial China during the Ming dynasty, which has conquered many territories. Followed directly the Chung Eun empire which existed from 1,200 BC to 850 AC with different dynasties (MOrient, New).

**Drbor:** Land of the dragonborn, also inhabited by snow pardasta and humanoids (Blackmoor 4th ed, New).

**Dur:** A nation of sedentary Jennites, with a long history of rivalry with Bhat, also



*Dalung-Quo army taking a city*

inhabited by sherkasta and humanoids, loosely based on some aspects of Pakistan (New).

**Durhan:** A nation created by Nailan Tanagoro (Caroletti)

**Emas:** A nation ruled by Taranya Tanagoro humans but inhabited also by tanagogre, Paesh Jennites, pardasta, nebasta, sherkasta, juncasta, bayasta and marmocasta. Could be loosely based on ancient Timor (Agosta).

**Alphatian Esterhold:** The region of Skothar dominated by the Alphatian Empire, including the dominion, later to become independent kingdoms of Blackrock and Verdian.

**Ezer:** A kingdom formed by humans, hobgoblins and manusta, loosely based on Azerbaijan (New).

**Fa'ear:** A nation of faenare, Ee'aar winged elves and ailusti (New).

**Frisa:** A realm of humanoids, Antalian humans and lyncasta, loosely based on ancient Frisia (New).

**Islands of the Giants:** (Not shown on map)  
The whole northern sea from the lands west of Nentsun to Frosthaven in Brun, and beyond, is a land inhabited by giants. The mountains closer to Nentsun are inhabited by fire giants. Cloud giants live in Inoq and other locations, but frost giants dominate most of the islands of the northern sea (LoZompatore, Canon, New).

**Goblins of Tangor:** Mountains of the dark goblins, divided in several clans (Caroletti).

**Hacan:** A nation of Jennite humans which once had a powerful empire that dominated the continent but is now in danger of being absorbed by Dalunq-Quo, loosely based on Kazakhstan (New).

**Hasa:** A nation of the same ethnic stock of Ti'sang, but formed by settled people, see also description by Arnden (MOrient, Arnden).

**Hastwr:** A kingdom of sedentary Jennites, could be loosely based on Azerbaijan (Caroletti, New).



*The Tangor Chain*

**Hinu:** A nation of Hinu halfling, also inhabited by some turtles (New).

**Hives:** Many territories of the eastern Tangor chain are still inhabited by hivebrood, whose territory has waxed and waned over the centuries (Canon, New).

**Hobgothia:** A land dominated by hobgoblins but inhabited also by goblins, bugbears, kobolds, snow pardasta and lyncasta, always a source of trouble for Thonia, loosely based on ancient Gothia (New).

**Højgylden:** An advanced nation inhabited by Antalian people, dwarves and gnomes (Sarikhhan)

**Hoyen:** A nation of Mawa and Paesh Jennites, loosely based on Vietnam, also inhabited by pricasta and humanoids (New).

**Irys:** A nation of sedentary but fierce Jennites also inhabited by giants, humanoids, gyerians, sherkasta and manusta, loosely based on Ossetia (New).

**Jen-Le:** The Jennites of Esterhold, usually worshipping Utnapishtim and Rathanos. Battered by Alphatians and Kukarachans, are trying to unite with the local pardasta to defeat the invaders (Canon, Dalmonte).

**Jen-Lo:** The Northern Jennites, mostly followers of Djaea, Utnapishtim, Ixion, Ninsun. The region is also inhabited by rakasta, humanoids and gyerians. Could be loosely based on Tajikistan people (Dalmonte, New).

**Jen-Ra:** The main Jennite land, or Southern Jennites, mostly following Rathanos with some minorities still worshipping Tarastia. Also inhabited by cinasta, the cheetah rakasta, also called Fast Runners, which came from Minaea, and shadelings in the coastal cities, loosely based on ancient Scythia but probably local humans should look like inhabitants of current Kyrgyzstan. Also see description by Arnden in this issue of *Threshold* (#20) (Canon, Dalmonte, Burns, Fan Almanacs, Arnden).



*Battle between Jennites and Minaeans*

**Kassites and Mizpeh:** A nomadic tribe of mixed Kho Tanagoro and Jennite which has recently discovered a lost Nithian city, but has been repelled (Taylor).

**Kerze:** A divided land inhabited by humanoids, snow pardasta, lyncasta, hengeyokai and humans divided in many different clans and people. Loosely inspired by the Caucasus (New).

**Kargash:** territory controlled by the beholders of the namesake city, controlling also some humanoid tribes (Robin, in this issue of *Threshold*) (#20).

**Keraja:** complete name Kerajaan Berlian-Wajik, a realm inhabited by sherkasta, pardasta and juncasta, now under Alphatian

influence, loosely inspired by Indonesia (Agosta)

**Kham:** A nation of goblins, tanagore, golcasta, bayasta and Mawa humans, loosely based on Cambodia (New)

**Khatmun:** A kingdom created by giants, but inhabited also by minorities of Tagh sherkasta, snow pardasta, dwarves and humans. Loosely based on Nepal (MOrient, New).

**Khogyn:** A nation founded by Khoi Tanagoro and gyerians, which also include a sizable population of caracasta, sherkasta and pardista (New).

**Kisvan:** A nation inhabited mostly by Antalian, Vantalian and Jen-Circk humans and a relevant number of lyncasta. Loosely based on medieval Ukraine (New).

**Krekh:** A nation created by ogres with relevant minorities of other humanoids, giants and pardasta (New).

**Kukarachans:** A race of insect-like creatures which periodically threaten the interior lands of Esterhold (Daly, Gander).

**Lamu:** A nation created by female demonettes, tiefling like female only creatures which rule over the Tanagoro population (Caroletti)

**Lleweryn:** The greatest hivebrood nation of western Tangor (Caroletti).

**Magy:** A nation of Jennite humans, sherkasta, lyncasta and centaurs, loosely based on medieval Hungary (New).

**Makari:** A nation of Ibu Tanagoro and Mawa Jennites, loosely based on Madagascar, also inhabited by vivesta and macaze (New)

**Mawan:** A nation of Mawa Jennites, also inhabited by orazu, bayasta and herpesta, loosely based on ancient Taiwan (*Threshold* issue #9, New)

**Melay:** A nation of Mawa Jennites, also inhabited by herpesta, loosely based on ancient Malaysia (New).

**Minaea:** A confederation of cities settled by Milenians from Davania which mixed with a Tarystian population, descended from Jennites. Inhabited also by sherkasta, pardasta, nebasta, minotaurs, sphinxes, orcs, goblins, tanagore and Tangor humans. Minaeans could be loosely based on Hellenistic greeks and Tarystians on Armenians (Caroletti).

**Muang:** A nation inhabited by Paesh Jennites, Tanagoro, tanagore, sherkasta, juncasta, bayasta, golcasta, marmorasta and humanoids, loosely based on Thailand (MOrient, New).

**Mung:** A nation of musti, also inhabited by some hinu halfling and chameleon men (New).

**Munsan:** A nation of mamusta and pardasta, also inhabited by gyerians (New)

**Nentsun:** A federation of several allied nations which inhabit a strangely warm land, populated by humans, lyncasta, snow pardasta, elves and half orcs (Caroletti).

**Oblan:** A nation of tanagore, the origin of the Gombar and Sumag colonists, mostly

following Macroblan, Korotiku and Karaash (Canon, Dalmonte, New)

**Okon:** A nation of orazu, macaze and tanagore (New)

**Orcs of Nentsun:** All around Nentsun the land is dominated by orc tribes, often at war with each others (Caroletti).

**Orcs of Tangor:** Forest of the green orcs, which are common all along the western Tangorian and eastern Minaean coast (Caroletti)

**Pashda:** A kingdom formed by descendants of the Peshwah, loosely inspired by Iran and Afghanistan. Includes sizable minorities of humanoids, caracasta, simbasta and gyerians (New).

**Phion:** A nation of Mawa Jennites also inhabited by some Ibu Tanagoro, pricasta and herpesta, loosely based on Philippines (MOrient, New).

**Phu:** A kingdom formed by displaced Jennite and Neathar humans, with sizable minorities of Tagh sherkasta, snow pardasta, hin and giants. Loosely based on Bhutan. Its northeastern region also contained the former beholder city of Zelphim, now inhabited by a single beholder hive (MOrient, New, Robin).

**Prehen:** A nation of pricasta and herpesta, also inhabited by some Mawa Jennites (New).

**Preku:** A nation of Pricasta, also inhabited by some tanagore (New).



**Sherkasta warrior,**  
original drawing by  
Justin Pfeil,  
(aka *warriorneedsfood*  
on *The Piazza*, forums)  
check his  
[“Keeps on the Borderland”](#)  
comic

**Raj:** Complete name The Alphatian Raj, conquered by Alphatians but inhabited also by sherkasta, juncasta, bayasta, Paesh Jennites and Tanagoro. Loosely based on Brunei (Agosta).

**Sakar:** A nation of sedentary Jennite humans also inhabited by peaceful humanoids, sherkasta and pardasta. Loosely based on Georgia (New).

**Sakhaba:** A reborn kingdom which once conquered vast lands of northeastern Skothar, inhabited by humans and dwarves (Biles).

**Sea Kingdoms:** Inhabited since ancient times by ocean creatures, such as kna, kopru, shark kin, sea giants, snapper, omm-wa and narwhal, the islands were settled first by Dwa Tanagoro, who soon established alliances with underwater races, then by Lhomarrians, mermen and tritons, Mawa oltecs, Blackmoorians, Tanagoro, Elves, Kara Kara orcs, Paesh Jennites. Defended by a coral wall built by the Immortal Polonius to keep the Kara Kara orcs at bay, the Western Sea Kingdoms lay just south of Skothar and trade with many nations of the Tangor gulf and the Tangor chain (Canon, New).

**Sian:** Or the Land of a Thousand Pagodas, a nation of Paesh Jennites, with relevant minorities of sherkasta and juncasta. Loosely based on Myanmar (MOrient, Arnden in this issue of *Threshold*) (#20).

**Sicsak:** A nation of sicista and sancasta, also inhabited by pardasta, some gyerians and humanoids (New).

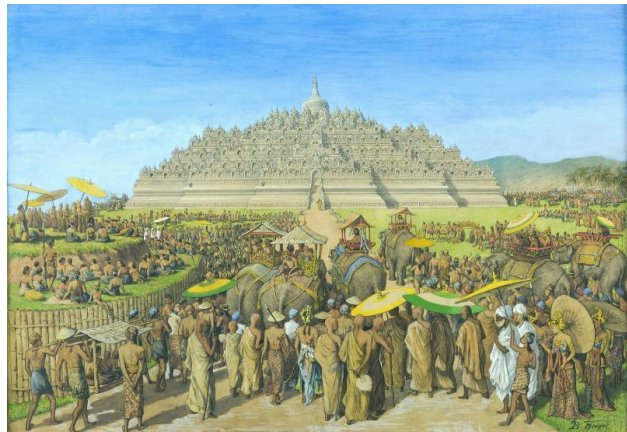
**Simbasta:** A proud rakasta breed of central

Skothar (Heard, Neri, New).

**Skain:** A nation inhabited by descendants of Skandaharian colonists, some Mawa Jennites and macaze (New).

**Snars:** A nation of snow pardasta also inhabited by giants, Tagh sherkasta and pardasta (New).

**Tagh:** The Tagh sherkasta have expanded greatly in the last centuries, ruling also over snow pardasta, lyncasta, humans and humanoids. The mythical city of Farseer, inhabited by gnomes and dwarves, would be in the south of this region (Neri, Calvin, New).



*Pilgrims to the great temple of Tanat*

**Tanat:** A nation inhabited by Paesh humans, tanagore, Ibu Tanagoro, marmocasta, golcasta, pachydermion, sherkasta and humanoids, loosely based on Indonesia (New).

**Tangi Empire:** A powerful nation inhabited by Wan, Mawan and Paesh Jennites and Ibu Tanagoro, includes also sizable golcasta, macaze and gyerian populations, loosely based on Southern China (New).



**Tangor:** Also known as the New Tangor empire or the Seventh Tangor Empire, inhabited by Tanagoro humans, with some minorities of tanagore, sherkasta, juncasta, orcs, goblins and Paesh Jennites (Caroletti)

**Tasbek:** A nation of Kha Jennites, loosely based on Uzbekistan, also inhabited by humanoids, pardasta, sicista and sancasta (New)

**Taylin:** A nation of humans of Jennite origin, the Waros, which were conquered by a Tanagoro dynasty, now at odds with Sakhaba (Biles).

**Old Thonia Wastes:** These lands are inhabited by undead, corrupted giants, humanoids and ash goblins, which are apparently immune to the Wasting, have found many technomagic items and happily use them against intruders (Blackmoor 3ed, New)

**Thonia:** the heir of the former Empire, loosely based on Germany and inhabited by humans, dwarves, elves, gnomes, halfling, goblins, hobgoblins, gnolls and pegataurs (Canon, Fan Almanacs, New).

**Thunder Rift:** The Rift is now inhabited by humans, dwarves, elves, humanoids, rakasta, frogfolk, centaurs and other races, but mostly isolated from the outside world (Canon, New).

**Ti'sang:** A nation of nomadic clans of Jennite origin, loosely based on Tibet, see also description by Arnden in this issue of *Threshold* (#20) (MOrient, Arnden).

**Thoth-ath gnolls:** Former Nithian slaves, these gnolls have defended their

independence for centuries. Normally allied with Jen-Lo, maintain good relations with the dwarves of Thorin (Novack, New)

**Thorin:** A nation created by dwarves and gnomes, also inhabited by some pegataurs (Canon, New).

**Tocrch:** A nation inhabited by crabmen, turtles, chameleon men and some gyerians (New).

**Uls Or:** A land inhabited by orcs, goblins and hobgoblins with sizable minorities of Jennite humans, sancasta and sincista, loosely based on Mongolia. It was once much larger but is now on the verge of being absorbed by Dalung-Quo (New).

**Vabari:** A nation of Valoin and Antalian humans, loosely based on medieval Estonia (New)

**Valska:** An elective kingdom created by Vantalian humans, loosely based on Poland. It swings between good and bad relations with Thonia (New).

**Viatj:** A nation of Valoin and Antalian humans, loosely based on medieval Latvia (New)

**Vzech:** A nation of Dunharian humans, faeries and lyncasta, loosely based on Bohemia (New).

**Wagir:** A nation formed by Waros and Sebgir people which united when the Taylin conquered Waros, now under the informal control of the Taylin (Biles).

**Walad:** A nation of Ibu Tanagoro with relevant numbers of tanagore, pricasta and

macaze. Loosely based on aboriginal populations of southeastern Asia (New).

**Wanderers:** An unique people formed by goblins and hobgoblins mixed with humans (MOrient, Burns).

**Warang:** Or Warangan, a land settled by Alphatians and dwarves from Alphatia, but originally inhabited by sherkasta and juncasta, loosely inspired by Singapore (Agosta)

**Wuo-Quo:** A nation formed by Jennite humans and humanoids, which has already lost to Dalung-Quo many western territories, loosely based on Manchuria (MOrient, New).

**Wuxi:** A nation of vivesta supposedly dominated by an ancient huge amber dragon (New, *Threshold* issue #9)

**Xao:** A nation of Mawa Jennites also inhabited by golcasta, vivesta and humanoids. Loosely based on Laos (MOrient, New).

**Yara:** A nation created by Nailan Tanagoro which trades with the hivebrood of Lleweryn (Caroletti)

**Yeha:** An ancient nation of Ibu Tanagoro with some Mawa Jennite blood which conquered the even more ancient kingdom of Satum, loosely based on Ethiopia, also inhabited by tanagogre, humanoids, golcasta, vivesta (MOrient, JTR).

**Yeong:** Nation created by Wan Jennites, inhabited also by pricast, nebasta, musti, macaze, faenare, gyerians, loosely based on Korea (MOrient, New).



*The Emperor of Yeha*

**Yulan:** A nation of humanoids and Vantalian humans, loosely based on Transylvania (New).

**Zyxl:** Inhabited after the cataclysm by crow gyerians and descendants of Skandaharian colonists, it was then settled by the Hinu halfling in 1,100 BC, then by some tanagogres and by Chung Jennites in 750 BC. Zyxl is now dominated by an Imperial matriarchy dominated by the humans descended from the Chung. Halfling and tanagogres have special roles in the society, the first as artisans and the latter as warriors and long distance sailors. The crow gyerians and the white men are instead considered monsters and enemies (Canon, MOrient, New).

# Three Nations of Skothar

by Arnden Quartzspar



*Jen, M-Tibet and M-Myanmar placements in the original Mystara Oriental project, an updated placement which takes into consideration other fan works can be seen in the Political Maps of Skothar article.*

## JEN (LAND OF)

**Location:** Continent of Skothar, east of Esterhold Peninsula.

**Area:** Unknown (nomadic Jennites roam much of Skothar's central regions, see maps).

**Population:** Unknown (estimated at 100,000 Jennites, in clans of 50-1000 individuals).

**Languages:** Jennite

**Coinage:** The people of Jen rely on barter for trade.

**Government Type:** Tribal; clans are headed by a clan chieftain, who is advised by the clan's most powerful shaman (cleric)

**Industries:** Herding (cattle, sheep, goats, and horses), hunting and raiding.

**Important Figures:** The Jennite clans are divided by great distances and differing customs; each clan has its own important figures, but none has yet become an important figure in Known World politics.

**Flora and Fauna:** To the Jennites, the only animals that truly matter are their cattle and their horses. Likewise the only plants that matter are the endless grasses on which their herds graze. Many other animals share the steppes with the people of Jen, however. They include gazelles, marmots (rodents related to woodchucks, whose pelts are prized by the Jennites), wild two-humped camels, wild asses and horses, and antelopes. Birds abound on the steppes, especially partridges, larks, cranes, and falcons (sometimes captured and trained by Jennite hunters). Rivers and lakes of the steppes teem with fish, including trout, perch, and pike.



*Jennites meeting a Minaean traveller*

**Description**

From a letter to the Dahl Lam Tenzin Gyatso of Lhasa, from his humble servant, Ngawang Lozang.

The Land of Jen encompasses most of the grassy steppes that stretch across the central region of Skothar, from the western coast and the Esterhold Peninsula to the Nentsun Plateau far to the east. This land is ringed by mountain ranges to the north, the east, and

the southeast, and by the forested hills of the Minaean Coast to the south.

The people of Jen are copper-skinned nomadic herders and horsemen. They rely on New Stone Age technology (well-crafted tools and weapons made of wood, bone, and stone), as the art of forging metal was lost to their ancestors. Jennite craftsmen know how to beat and hammer gold and copper, which they can find in a natural, almost pure state. Most Jennites worship the Immortal Rathanos, although some clans follow other Immortals. Women rarely hold a high position in Jennite society. Masters of the horse and of the steppes, Jennite warriors sometimes raid Alphatian or Minaean communities in Esterhold and along Skothar's southwestern coast.

**Notable Sites:** There are no known permanent settlements in the Land of Jen. Along the Minaean Coast, there are rumors of a distant valley where Jennite chieftains are interred with their accumulated possessions.

**History:** Four millennia ago, Oltecs reached the fertile shores of Skothar and colonized the continent. They called the new land *jen*, meaning “green.” Most of these newcomers



*Jennite jewelry depicting horses*

established farming communities near the coast. Others discovered herds of wild horses and aurochs (an ancient breed of enormous, aggressive cattle) and became herders. Ultimately, the nomads began to prey on the settled farmers, raiding the towns for food and gold.

Eventually, the nomadic Jennite clans formed two separate groups at odds with one another. While many clans continued to worship Tarastia, patron immortal of justice, some clans turned to the worship of Rathanos. Tarastia took offense at Rathanos's insistence that his followers should keep women subservient to men. She incited her own followers to war. Generations of war followed and threatened to destroy both groups. Around 1600 BC Tarastia spirited her followers to the Hollow World, to keep their culture intact.

The outer-world Jennites prospered for a time before a series of natural catastrophes weakened their culture. These disasters included a deadly plague that decimated their herds of aurochs, and this loss, in turn, decimated the nomads. It was some time before the Jennites were able to build up herds of a smaller breed of cattle. The nomads gradually regressed to stone-age technology, their former glory all but forgotten and their ties with the agriculturalists and craftsmen of the coastal lowlands severed.

With the exception of the disastrous encounter with Alphatians on the Esterhold Peninsula, the Jennites' nomadic way of life--herding, hunting, and occasionally raiding settlements-- has remained unchallenged for centuries. (See Esterhold and Minaean Coast)

## LHASA (LAND OF)

**Location:** Continent of Skothar, southeast of Jen.

**Area:** 1,228,400 km<sup>2</sup> (474,300 sq mi) (nomadic Lhasans roam much of Skothar's central regions).

**Population:** Unknown (estimated at 318,000 Lhasans, in clans of 50-1000 individuals).

**Languages:** Lhasan, Sian

**Coinage:** The people of Lhasa rely on barter for trade.



*High monastery in Lhasa*

**Government Type:** Tribal; some nomadic clans, some settled clans, each headed by a clan chieftain, who is advised by the clan's most powerful shaman (cleric). Monasteries are headed by high level monks, the highest levels go by the title Lam with the supreme religious and political leader known as the Dahl Lam. Monasteries are mostly among the settled clans, some in the city centers, and others in more remote areas.

**Industries:** Herding (cattle, sheep, goats, and horses), hunting and farming (main crops grown are barley, wheat, buckwheat, rye, potatoes, and assorted fruits and vegetables.)

**Important Figures:** Each clan and Monastery has its own important figures, but none has yet become an important figure in Known World politics.

**Flora and Fauna:** To the Lhasans, all animals matter. They pay particular attention to their cattle and horses. Likewise, all plants matter. Anywhere from the grasses on which their herds graze, their farmed crops and the rare woods that survive are prized due to their altitude. Many animals share the steppes and mountains with the people of Lhasa. The Lhasan Plateau hosts species of gray wolf, snow leopard, domestic and wild yak, wild donkey, horses, cranes, vultures, hawks, geese, snakes, and water buffalo.

### Description

From the personal letters from Tien, student of divinity and monastic studies. Late of Sian, currently studying in Lhasa.

The Land of Lhasa encompasses most of the grassy steppes that stretch across the southern side of the Jennite Sword in central Skothar. This land is ringed by mountain ranges to the north, the east, and the southeast, and by the forested hills of Sian to the south.

The people of Lhasa are copper-skinned nomadic herders, subsistence farmers, horsemen and monasteries. They rely on New Stone Age technology (well-crafted tools and weapons made of wood, bone, and stone), as the art of forging metal was lost to their ancestors. Lhasan craftsmen know how

to beat and hammer gold and copper, which they can find in a natural, almost pure state. Most Lhasans worship the Immortal Rathanos, although some clans follow other Immortals. Women rarely hold a high position in Lhasan society. Masters of the horse and of the steppes, Lhasan warriors sometimes raid Alphatian or Minaean communities in Esterhold and along Skothar's southwestern coast.

**Notable Sites:** There are several known permanent settlements in the Land of Lhasa, as well as nomadic groups. The Land of Lhasa isn't known beyond the neighbouring regions.

**History:** Four millennia ago, Oltec men reached the fertile shores of Skothar and colonized the continent.

“Although their history is similar to ours in many ways, as we have both had to deal with countries to our North, East, and South; and our countries are currently at peace with these same people, the Lhasans have had a varied outcome then we Sianesse have.

“As I am learning the long song of the Lhasan People from the Great Dahl himself, I am reminded that since history takes its own slow path to Enlightenment, so too will it take me to learn their history and accomplishments.

I pledge that I will continue with this history in my next missive. Until next time, as always, your humble student.”

*- From the personal letters of Tien, student of divinity and monastic studies. Late of Sian, currently studying in Lhasa.*

## SIAN (LAND OF) (LAND OF A THOUSAND PAGODAS)

**Location:** Continent of Skothar, Tangor Bay, east of Empire of Tangor, Southeast of Jennite Sword, Southwest of Lhasa.

**Area:** 513,120 km<sup>2</sup>  
(198,120 mi<sup>2</sup>)

**Population:** Unknown (estimated at 6,478,590 Sianesse, in clans of 50-1000 individuals).

**Languages:** Sian(esse)

**Coinage:** The people of Sian rely on barter for trade.

**Government Type:** Tribal; clans are headed by a clan chieftain, who is advised by the clan's most powerful shaman (cleric)

**Industries:** Herding (cattle, sheep, goats, and horses), hunting and farming (rice and millet.)

**Important Figures:** Each clan has its own important figures, but none has yet become an important figure in Known World politics.

**Flora and Fauna:** To the Sianesse, forests, including dense tropical growth and valuable teak in lower Sian, cover over 49% of the country, including areas of acacia, bamboo, ironwood and magnolia champaca. Coconut



*Golden pagoda in Sian*

and betel palm and rubber have been introduced. In the highlands of the north, oak, pine and various rhododendrons cover much of the land.

Typical jungle animals, particularly tigers, occur in Sian. In upper Sian, there are rhinoceros, wild water buffalo, clouded leopard, wild boars, deer, antelope, and elephants, which are also tamed or bred in captivity for use as work animals, particularly in the lumber industry. Smaller mammals are also numerous, ranging from gibbons and monkeys to flying foxes. The abundance of birds is notable with over 800 species, including parrots, myna, peafowl, red jungle fowl, weaver birds, crows, herons, and barn owl. Among reptile species there are crocodiles, geckos, cobras, Sianesse pythons, and turtles. Hundreds of species of freshwater fish are wide-ranging, plentiful and are very important food sources.

## Description

From "The Land of a Thousa Pagodas"  
by Patrick Sullivan

*An excerpt from the diary of Taferias of Mafertat, Captain of the Glorious; Faithful Explorer to Her Imperial Majesty, Eriadna the Wise; Wizard Extraordinaire; etc.; etc.; etc.*

"...We believed all was lost once the ship ran aground, for everyone knows that this area of the world holds nothing remotely resembling civilisation. We couldn't determine our exact location due to the storm, which was still as fierce as ever, but we knew that we were somewhere on the jungle coast of the Sea of Steam or perhaps the Gulf of Tangor. At any rate, our chances looked grim: even if we did somehow manage to repair the ship, we still could not get away from this place without facing THEM again. At this point, I think I'd rather take my chances with the jungle.

Daylight finally brought a clearing of the storm. The damage to the ship was not as serious as I feared that it might have been, but it would still require about a month of hard labour to repair, and we needed provisions. Even if it were repaired, could we get away from here by sea? I certainly had my doubts, but with the sun came new hopes for survival. I decided to lead an expedition up the coast a few miles in each direction in order to see what could be discovered. After a couple of miles we spotted something shining in the distance ahead of us. You can imagine my surprise when I saw, as we drew closer, a full-fledged town. Here! In what everyone knows is the

absolute middle of nowhere! At first glance, I would have to guess that this town is about as big as home, back in Mafertat, Frisland, Alphatia. The homes were primarily made out of wood with straw and mud to seal them, and many small fishing canoes were moored along a full half-mile stretch of the shore and along the slow mouth of a wide river. The people going about their business in the town were undoubtedly human, but their complexion was unlike any other that I have seen. If I had to guess, I'd say that they were closest to the Jennites. They wore fairly typical clothes for this climate-- scant and brightly coloured, but not indecent. Aside from its size, it seemed to be a fairly typical native village, except for the great temple or palace structure of some sort at the centre! It's gracefully soaring, curving architecture towered over the rest of the town, dwarfing it in comparison. But the most astonishing thing was that this structure was covered with what appeared to be gold! When we came closer and the peasants noticed us, they seemed somewhat frightened, but more an uneasiness of strangers than the panic of terror. They backed away, until three men in red robes with completely bald heads came toward us. Despite what appeared to be a great treasure here, we didn't appear to be in a very good position to take it by force, so I made the obvious choice to try to befriend them. They three bald men bowed before us, and we returned the gesture. I cast a spell so that we could communicate, hoping that they wouldn't interpret it as a threatening gesture. They never batted an eye, and I began to speak to them. I explained our situation (they were most impressed that we had actually made it here across the sea), and asked them for



whatever help that they could give us. The monks, as they turned out to be, and the peasants gladly and freely welcomed us into their homes, despite the fact that almost none of my men could communicate with the natives. I sat on the floor at a low table with my monk/host and shared a meal of rice and chicken with a strange, foul-smelling, though pleasant-tasting, spice. We also shared several cups of a delicious tea, and then he allowed me to rest the night in his home. It never occurred to me until I was already lying on my bedroll that they never once asked us to surrender our weapons.

It turns out that the palace is actually something called a "Pagoda". Apparently it's a holy sight for their religion, which seems to involve extreme pacifism and kindness to all beings. They do not "worship" their patron immortal, as so many other primitive societies do, but look up to him as a role model and mentor in their own quest for enlightenment. They call their patron "Rohindartha," but I have never heard of such an immortal. Everyone in the town seems to be a fervent philosopher; Allanmyo, my host, explains that every boy of the town, as well as many of the girls, join the monastery for at least a few months of their lives. If it is their calling, they will spend their lives at the monastery. The monks and nuns (I met a few nuns today) seem to actually be people from all walks of life: many are typical clerics, but there are people reminiscent of Sindhi mystics, and there are even a few magic-users! They follow their philosophy of pacifism and respect for all life very rigidly, though it is believed to be each individual's responsibility to determine right or wrong

for himself. Most of my men, along with some of the natives, went back to the ship today to try to repair it, but I decided to stay to learn what I could of this land.

The dome of the Great Pagoda is real gold! What's more, the natives tell me that this is only one town in the great Land A Thousand Pagodas. Allanmyo told me that there is a great king of this land who rules from his capital at Pantang, the Glorious City of the Hundred Pagodas. The city I'm in, by the way is called Rangyon. Anyway, Allanmyo says that there are hundreds of pagodas throughout the Kingdom. Not all of them are made out of gold; there's not that much gold in the whole world! But this is obviously an incredible kingdom nonetheless! From how the monks describe the Kingdom, it sounds more like a very loose federation of tribes united in their faith and their symbolic allegiance to their King at Pantang.

Today I awoke to the sounds of shouting in the village. I quickly drew on some clothes and then rushed outside to see what the commotion was. A pair of tigers were in the centre of the town, and townspeople were running helter-skelter to try to avoid their fangs and claws. I rushed forward and fired a lightning bolt from my wand. Unfortunately my aim was off in my haste, and it only grazed the side of one of the tigers. I prepared to shoot again, this time more accurately, when I heard a spell cast from behind me and felt myself unable to move. Me! An Officer of the Imperial Alphatian Navy! A powerful wizard! ME! HELD?!? Allanmyo ran from behind me and began calling orders to the peasants, who, instead of panicking, listened and followed his orders. They all ran in the same

directions, leaving an open path for the tigers to escape, which they quickly did, running back into the jungle. They poured some sort of tea which, in retrospect, must have been drugged into my mouth. It released me from my paralysis, but also seemed to relax my tension and calm my nerves and my fury. Allanmyo explained to me that the tigers were simply passing through town this morning when the townspeople began to awake, scaring the tigers, and accidentally herding them towards the centre of town. The tigers had eaten well that night, and, being one with nature, had no desire to kill. As this was the case, all that Allanmyo had to do was allow them to escape to go back to their cave and rest, all they ever wanted in the first place. This excitement (and probably the tea) helped convince me to go back to bed for a long nap. After my peaceful rest, I had much of the night to converse with the monks. They explained many things of this part of the world, claiming that great empires exist where Alphatian textbooks have always taught exist nothing but barbarians! They also explained some more about their philosophy, which sounds fairly good (and similar to the Great Immortal Alphatia's) except that it is terribly impractical. Late this evening, one of the monks spotted something moving quietly through town. When we went to investigate and discovered three ghouls prowling the night, I restrained my impulse to attack, remembering last time. You can imagine my surprise when the monks all raced forward and fought the ghouls with such incredible fury that nothing I've ever fought could stand up to their combined might...

These are a strange people: peaceful, yet

powerful; knowledgeable, yet unknown; full of seeming contradictions. This diary does not do them justice, with all the complexities of their society, but it at least sheds some light on what until now has been a completely unknown kingdom, right under the nose of Great Alphatia! I for one am certainly glad to consider these people my friends, and I will never spread word of this land to those money-grubbing gold-seekers who would try to rob them blind. Besides, I might be able to turn a healthy profit off of trade with The Land Of A Thousand Pagodas!

*From the diary of Huli Jamin Fi'ayi Makan, formally crewman of the Glorious; Faithful Explorer to Her Imperial Majesty, Eriadna the Wise; Wizard Extraordinaire; etc.; etc.; etc.*

It has been my decision to leave Her Imperial Majesty's service in order to explore this strange land. Here are some of my findings.

The Land of Sian encompasses most of the jungle areas that stretch across the central region of the Skothar continent, from the western coast to the Nentsun Plateau far to the east. This land is ringed by mountain ranges to the north and the east, and by the forested hills of the Minaean Coast to the west.

The people of Sian are typically copper-skinned but range from a light yellow through copper and light tannish brown, depending on general area. They are herders, farmers, and horsemen. They rely on New Stone Age and Copper Age technologies (well-crafted tools and weapons made of wood, bone, copper and stone), as the higher arts of forging other metals were lost

to their ancestors. Sianesse craftsmen know how to beat and hammer gold and copper, which they can find in a natural, almost pure state.

In a traditional village, the monastery is the centre of cultural life. Monks are venerated and supported by the lay people. A novitiation ceremony called shinbyu is the most important coming of age events for a boy, during which he enters the monastery for a short time. All children in Rohindist families are encouraged to be a novice (beginner for Rohindism) before the age of twenty and to be a monk after the age of twenty. Girls have ear-piercing ceremonies at the same time.

Most Sianesse worship the Immortal **Rohindartha**, although some clans follow other Immortals. Women rarely hold a high position in Sianesse society, but it is not unheard of. Masters of the river and marshes, they are accomplished small boat sailors.

**Notable Sites:** There is an unknown number of permanent settlements in the Land of Sian. Along the Tangor Coast, there are rumors of a distant valley where Sianesse chieftains have been buried with their wealth.

**History:** It is believed that the ancestors of the Sian were remnants of the Southians, who broke off from the Tangor people, who migrated to the northwest and settled in the Tangor Gulf. They may have intermingled with Afridhi and Peshwans....

“As I am currently learning the Sianesse Language, the documentation of their Great History and culture, have been an understandably slow process. I will contact

you later with updates to this investigation. Regrettably, this may take some time to accomplish. I have included the notes that I have so far. Your Faithful Explorer, Huli Jamin Fi 'ayi Makan, formally crewman of the Glorious ; Faithful Explorer to Her Imperial Majesty, Eriadna the Wise; Wizard Extraordinaire; etc.; etc.; etc.

Excerpt from [\*“Ethnographic History of Mystara”\*](#) by Giulio Caroletti, Geoff Gander and Giampaolo Agosta

**Birth of the Human Race  
Before 75'000 BC**

Black skinned human race in Tangor Bay area.

**75'000 - 70'000 BC**

First migrations leave eastwards and cross the Tangor mountains. Those that remain are the ancestors of the Tanagoro and of the other black-skinned humans. The evolution of the black skinned races will be treated separately in a later article.

**67'000 - 56'000 BC**

Southians remain on the south-eastern coast. They may have become extinct, or have crossed over the sea to Zyxl. The rest of the migrating humans, known as Northians, continue upwards near the eastern Skotharian coast.

# notes on skotharian rakasta

a treatise on skotharian rakasta  
taken from the field notes of arnden quartzspar

by Arnden Quartzspar

*"I have taken it upon myself to document my anthropological study of the Continent of Skothar, specifically with this entry concerning the elusive rakasta. This will be a study of their physical characteristics, as well as their interactions with other races and cultures during a very informative tour of Skothar."*

Arnden wrestles with some papers. His riding dog, Rody raises his head for a moment before resettling. Arnden continues with his presentation...

## Cloud Pardasta

Contrary to what their name seems to imply, cloud pardasta are not greater rakasta. This wild felid type remains one of the best examples of arboreal rakasta, and somewhat of a legend as well. Cloud pardasta live in the forests of Skothar, along the Minaean Coast, Tangor Bay, and the Tangor Peninsula. On Skothar, they call themselves Rimau-Dahan – literally, fork-of-branch tigers.

Cloud pardasta gained their name from the large spots on their backs, which look like cloudy blotches. Their base coats vary from brown to pale or rich yellow, with white or light tawny on the inner limbs, throat, and chest.



The odd name also comes from their unusual ability. When using their energy burst, cloud pardasta can harness natural magical forces pervading the forest and blend away into its mist, fog, or clouds. In effect, cloud pardasta can cast dimension door to a distance of 10' per experience level, at which point the energy burst ends. Cloud pardasta may invoke this power at any time while the energy burst still lasts. Cloud pardasta must be in contact with forest mist when they perform the dimension door. Cloud pardasta' clans are tucked away in small villages built on the branches of very tall trees, virtually invisible from the ground. Cloud pardasta suffer no movement penalty when in a tree. They have been observed by some hunters to sneak or run down tree trunks head first, without any difficulty whatsoever. They can hang from branches

using only their legs, or run underneath one with ease. Jumping from one branch to another is a native game, which they do without requiring Dexterity checks or the use of a Jumping general skill, unless the distance exceeds 15 feet (horizontally or downward). Cloud pardasta receive the general Jumping skill for free, as can be expected of arboreal creatures. To accomplish these feats, the cloud pardasta's long tail must be free to help balance movements. On the other hand, they lose two points of Dexterity when caught on the ground.

Cloud pardasta also have a +15% bonus on Climb Walls checks when climbing on trees.

AL: any (non-evil).

## Fast Runner



The fast runners dwell on the dry grasslands of the southern Steppes of Jen on Skothar. The coat of a fast runner is coarse, varying

from yellowish-gray to golden or reddish-fawn with small dark spots. These tall, lanky rakasta often stun observers by their running speed and their agility when pursuing a prey. This alone makes them the most successful hunters among rakasta. This notoriety and the ensuing attention has been a curse to them for centuries.

The life of the fast runners remains indeed a difficult one. On Davania, where they call themselves Msongo, they must beware of the Simbasta who view them as annoying pests. Elsewhere, Thothian monarchs and Jennite warlords who wish to bolster the ranks of their armies often seek their services, often with less than amicable terms. The rich and the powerful covet them as household hunters and status symbols. Unfortunately, fast runners are too few truly to challenge these difficult neighbors.

When using its natural energy burst, fast runners can run at a much faster pace than other bipeds: fast runners can run at quadruple speed (instead of triple speed); they can go five times normal speed when succeeding a normal Strength check; six times normal speed with a  $-4$  penalty on the check. Finally, with a  $-8$  penalty, they can accelerate to seven times its normal movement rate, but for one round only, after which the energy burst ends. Time normally allowed to keep the running speed is counted beginning from the end of the fast runner's energy burst.

AL: any (non-evil).

## Lynx-man

These strange rakasta claimed the coldest regions of Mystara. On Davania, these nomads travel as far as the southern tip of the Brasol Range. On Skothar and Brun, they do not venture past the Nentsun Plateau, the Hyborean Reaches, or the Wurmsteeth Range.

Recognizable by their tail, shortened as a protection against extreme colds, tufted ears, stocky bodies, and big broad paws, lynx-men are notorious for their thick neck ruffle when angered. Their pelage varies from reddish-tawny or cream with faint spots and facial lines in Davania forests, to gray in Skothar and Brun woodlands. In frozen regions, lynx-men turn pure white to blend in with the icy background.

These hardy rakasta travel the dark frozen expanses of the polar rims leading to Mystara's Hollow World. Their natural instinct guides them through these treacherous lands. lynx-men travel between the two worlds according to the cycles linked to the clans' own totems, signs in the skies, or divinations from their priests. Davanian clans know the way to Hollow World's Nithia, while their northern kin travel instead to the land of the Antaliens. On this route, the latter compete with Norwold Malamutes (a lupin breed dwelling in northern Norwold). Lynx-men can move across snow at a normal speed.

When using their natural energy burst, lynx-men can shake off the effects of any cold-based attack, or survive a situation where natural cold would be fatal. For example, a lynx-man accidentally falling into the sea in

polar conditions might crawl out and still survive with one hit point left instead of freezing to death. It could also shake off all damage from a magical cone of cold. The energy burst ends immediately after any one such situation occurs.

AL: any.



## Pardasta

These clever rakasta can be found almost anywhere on Mystara, away from heavily populated centers – that is, regions with few human or demi-human settlements. Small tribes have been discovered fairly close to human settlements, but these rakasta are elusive and sneaky enough that people often fail to notice their presence at all. Their natural habitat includes any sort of woodland, savannas, semi-deserts, and rugged mountains. Pardasta tribes exist especially on Skothar, Bellissaria, Ochalea, Cestia, and Davania, in regions stretching roughly between the 30th parallel.

Their pelage can be fairly short and sleek in warmer climes to deeply furred in the north. Base color varies from pale straw, tan, or

gray-buff to bright reddish-yellow, or jet black for natives of heavily forested regions. Small spots cover their head and necks, turning to larger rosettes on their back and flanks. The base color of their throats, inner limbs, and belly remains white.



Pardasta are smart and strong enough to live near other rakasta or human settlements without too much difficulty. They often outwit the powerful simbasta, they know how to avoid angering the mighty sherkasta, and if threatened by humans they always find a way to exact a terrible revenge against their aggressors. Pardasta are supreme stalkers and always seem to find their quarry. They excel as thieves, spies, and rangers. They generally dislike tabaxi, unless they share the same alignment.

When using their energy burst, pardasta are immune to all mind-altering attacks (fear, sleep, hypnotism, charm, etc). This does not affect their natural fear of water or spells that already had been cast upon them before they used their energy burst. They also have a permanent +2 bonus to their initiative rolls. Pardasta have a +10% bonus on Climb Walls checks when climbing on trees.

AL: any non-lawful.

## Sherkasta

Mightiest among the greater rakasta, sherkasta prowl the forests and swamps of southern Skothar. Some have also claimed the mountain forests of northern Skothar. The



southerners, who call themselves the Harimau-Belang, remain the most common. Their base color runs from reddish-orange to reddish-yellow, with dark stripes and white or cream fur inside their limbs. Their northern cousins, the Tagh, show a thicker, light-gray or white pelage, with brown or black stripes.

The more reclusive sherkasta form small clans and shun contact with other races. Other individuals sometimes mingle with neighboring human or demi-human populations. Sherkasta, because of their size and ferocious appearance are normally considered evil monsters, or at least dangerous predators by other races. However, with time, a few become more accepted by the local population.

The sherkasta loathe the rakshasa evil spirits that resemble them. For centuries, individual rakshasa have subjected clans to a despotic rule or slavery. These spirits resort, to magic, fear, or blackmail to maintain their hold over the clans and influence their minds. Sherkasta can only unmask rakshasas for what they really are when attacking and realizing fangs and claws aren't hurting

them. rakshasas delight in pitting their feline slaves against humankind to further their own schemes. This has done great harm to the sherkasta clans and their relations with human populations. The power of the rakshasas over sherkasta clans can last decades, but usually a sherkasta escapes to return later, when it has reached a sufficient experience level to challenge the spirit and free its clan.

Sherkasta and were-tigers, on the other hand, get along fairly well and sometimes ally against a common foe. Sherkasta can also maintain an empathic link with common tigers.

When using their natural energy burst, sherkasta can virtually shake off the effects of magic previously cast upon them. A successful Wisdom check dispels a first-level spell, provided it originated from a lower-level spell-caster sherkasta cannot alter the effects of area spells or spells that are not cast directly upon them (fireballs, explosive clouds, phantasmal forces, etc). For example, a 10th level sherkasta can dispel a charm cast by a 7-HD rakshasa, but not one cast by a rakshasa maharajah (13th-level spell-casting ability). Furthermore, at every fifth additional level, the sherkasta may increase its spell immunity one level (second-level spells at 6th level, third-level spells at 11th level, etc).

AL: any (non-evil).

## Snow Pardasta

Snow pardasta tribes are scattered above forest lines on the northern mountains of Skothar (Nentsun Plateaus).

Their thick, long fur protects them from the intense cold of their natural habitat.

Small spots cover their heads and neck, becoming large irregular circles on their back and flanks. Their pale gray fur makes them difficult to detect against the bleak background of high mountain rocks.

Hardly anyone competes with the snow pardasta, considering how remote their homelands are. There, they hunt the ibex, the markhor, and as opportunities present themselves, marmots and other small mammals. Occasionally they wage sporadic wars against encroaching yetis or sasquatches. Their villages, often built around temples, include a few freestanding buildings made of stones and slates, and walls covering the entrance to natural caves. Snow pardasta can tread ice and snow without movement penalties. Although they cannot boost their Dexterity ratings as mountain rakasta do, snow pardasta benefit from the same leaping abilities. Furthermore, a snow pardasta can blend into a rock big enough to contain the whole creature or into a large chunk of ice for the duration of its energy burst, after which it reappears outside. While doing so, it can see





and hear what happens outside, but it cannot communicate or cast spells. The snow pardasta is at a disadvantage outside its natural terrain. When exposed to warm weather or less mountainous terrain, the snow pardasta suffers a -2 penalty on all saving throws, ability checks, and attack rolls.

AL: neutral.

*"I have met representatives of all the differing types of Rakasta in my travels around Skothbar, and have a cloud pardasta as a traveling companion. We have helped each other over the last several years, and I have found that they can be great friends or terrible enemies, depending on how they perceive your intentions and actions."*

Arnden motioned to the rakasta sitting off to the side with Roady.

## CREATING A RAKASTA CHARACTER:

Rakasta can be played using normal human character classes (including druids, paladins, mystics, etc.). Each rakasta starts with 2 HD at first level, using the type of dice corresponding to the chosen character class, and a one-time penalty of -2,200 XP that must be overcome before any of the class abilities can be used. The rakasta suffers a permanent 30% experience penalty (rounded up to the nearest 100) on all experience points gained thereafter during adventures.

For example, a 1st-level magic-using domestic rakasta gains an extra 1d4 hp in addition to his initial 2 HD when reaching 2nd level; he must have first gained 2,200 XP to qualify as a 1st level magic-user, then 3,600 XP (-30% penalty = 2,500 XP) for 2nd level. Rakasta share some ability score adjustments (including maximum and minimum scores) according to their breed and must respect all limitations that are normally part of the chosen class. They have no level limitation; Constitution adjustments apply only once per class level up to 9th level. Rakasta fight and save as their chosen character classes or as 2 HD monsters, whichever offers the best score.

### Size and Weight

Size and weight are based largely upon the rakasta's breed and Strength score. Should you decide to make female characters smaller, a -10% size difference is recommended for rakasta up to 70 inches tall, -20% for taller specimens. Weight is calculated accordingly.

Table 1: Rakasta Species on Mystara

Breed	Real-world Feline Species	Main Diffusion Areas of Mystara
<b>Ancestors</b>		
Cave Rakasta	Cave Lion	Hollow World
Rakastodon Fatalis	Smilodon	Hollow World (mostly equatorial areas)
<b>Greater Rakasta</b>		
Fast Runner	Cheetah	Meghala Kimata Plains, Steppes of Jen, Thothia, and Great Thothian Escarpment
Jakar	Jaguar	Immortal's Arm
Mountain Rakasta <sup>1</sup>	Mountain Lion	Continent of Brun (mostly Terra Vermelha, El Grande Carrascal, Kurish Mas-sif, Wyrksteeth Range, Endworld Line)
Pardasta	Leopard	Continents of Skothar and Davania, Bellissaria, Cestia, and Ochalea
Sherkasta <sup>2</sup>	Tiger	Northern Skothar and Nentsun Plateau (Tagh breed), Minaean Coast an Sko-thar's southern jungle coasts (Harimau-Belang breed)
Simbasta	Lion	North-eastern Davania (mostly Aryptian Basin, and along the coasts of Adak-ian Sound, Pass of Cestia, and Gulf of Mar)
Snow Pardasta	Snow Leopard	Nentsun Plateau, Hyborean Reaches, Wyrksteeth Ranges, Ice Peaks, and Dia-mond Ring
<b>Wild Rakasta</b>		
Caracasta	Caracal	Hule, Meghala Kimata Plains
Cloud Pardasta <sup>3</sup>	Clouded Leopard	Bellissaria, Minaean Coast, Tangor Bay, Tangor Peninsula
Jakarundi	Jaguarundi	Immortal's Arm
Lynxman	Lynx	Arctic and antarctic areas, southern Brasol Range, Nentsun Plateau, Hyborean Reaches, Wyrksteeth Range
Ocelotl	Ocelot	Immortal's Arm, north-western Davania
Servasta	Serval	Continent of Davania (mostly central and northern areas)
<b>Domestic Rakasta</b>		
Alley Rakasta <sup>4</sup>	Domestic Cat (mongrel)	Anywhere (mostly Bellayne and civilized areas in Brun)
Domestic Rakasta <sup>4</sup>	Domestic Cat	Anywhere (mostly Bellayne and civilized areas in Brun)

<sup>1</sup> Mountain Rakastas are also found on Patera (Myoshima mostly).

<sup>2</sup> Sherkastas are also found on Patera (mostly Rajahstan, Surabayang, and Malacayog).

<sup>3</sup> Cloud Pardastas are also found on Patera (mostly Surabayang and Malacayog).

<sup>4</sup> Domestic and Alley Rakastas are also found on Patera (Myoshima mostly, but also Selimpore and Rajahstan).

## Lifespan

The basic lifespan of a rakasta is 90 years (maximum longevity is 90 + 2d8). Middle age for a rakasta comes at about half its base lifespan (45 years for a generic rakasta). Old age comes at two-thirds its base lifespan (or 60 years, minimum 40 years), and venerable age at its base lifespan (90 years, minimum 60 years). A middle-aged rakasta loses a point of Strength and Constitution, but gains a point of Intelligence and Wisdom. An old rakasta loses two points of Strength,

Dexterity, and Constitution, but gains a point of Wisdom. A venerable rakasta loses a point of Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution, but gains a point of Intelligence and Wisdom.

## Rakasta Spell-casters

Only domestic rakasta can be clerics or magic-users. Wild, greater, and ancestor species cannot choose any of the spell-casting classes save the druid (it's suggested

Table 2: Racial Modifiers & Other Statistics

Breed	STATISTICS						Size (inches)	Weight (pounds)	MV	Bite	Claws	Roar	Fear of Water
	St	Dx	Co	In	Wi	Ch							
<i>Ancestors (Strength 16-19, max. 12 Intelligence &amp; Wisdom)</i>													
Cave Rakasta	+3	-2	-	-1	-2	+1	82+St	SizeSt./2.2	12	1d12	d4/2d4	Y	High
Rakastodon Fatalis	+3	-1	-	-2	-2	-	76+St	SizeSt./2.1	12	2d6	d4+1/2d4	Y	Mod.
<i>Greater Rakasta (min. 14 Strength, max. 14 Wisdom)</i>													
Fast Runner	-	+2	-	-	-2	-	62+St	SizeSt./5.5	15	d4+1	d2/d2	N	High
Jakar	+2	+1	-1	-	-2	-	68+St	SizeSt./4	9	1d8	d3/d4+1	Y	-
Mountain Rakasta	+1	+2	-1	-	-2	-	68+St	SizeSt./4.2	12	1d6	d3/d4	N	Mod.
Pardasta	+1	+1	-	-	-2	-	64+St	SizeSt./4.4	9	1d6	d3/d4	Y	Mod.
Sherkasta	+2	-	-	-	-2	-	79+St	SizeSt./2.4	12	1d10	d4+1/d6+1	Y	-
Simbasta	+2	-	-	-	-2	+1	73+St	SizeSt./2.4	12	1d10	d4/6+1	Y	High
Snow Pardasta	+1	-	+1	-	-2	-	60+St	SizeSt./4.3	9	1d6	d3/d4	N	-
<i>Wild Rakasta (min. 12 Strength, min. 8 Dexterity, max. 16 Wisdom)</i>													
Caracasta	+1	-	+1	-	-2	-	56+St	SizeSt./4.3	9	d4+1	d3/d4	N	High
Cloud Pardasta	+1	+1	-	-	-2	-	57+St	SizeSt./4.6	9	1d4	d2/d3	N	Mod.
Jakarundi	-	+1	-	+1	-2	-	55+St	SizeSt./4.6	9	1d3	d2/d3	N	-
Lynxman	-	-	+2	-	-2	-	58+St	SizeSt./4.5	12	1d4	d2/d3	N	Mod.
Ocelotl	-	+1	+1	-	-2	-	56+St	SizeSt./4.6	9	1d3	d2/d3	N	-
Servasta	-	+2	-	-	-2	-	58+St	SizeSt./5.0	12	1d4	d2/d3	N	High
<i>Domestic Rakasta (min. 9 Strength, min 8 Dexterity)</i>													
Alley Rakasta	*	*	*	*	-2	*	54+St	SizeSt./4.6	9	1d4	d2/d3	N	Varies
Domestic Rakasta	-	+2	-1	+1	-2	-	52+St	SizeSt./4.7	9	1d2	d2/d2	N	High

MV: indicates a rakasta's normal movement factor. Multiply the rate by ten to get the distance moved per turn. *Example:* MV9 becomes 90' (30').

Bite: gives the amount of damage for a rakasta's bite.

Claws: specifies claw damage (front first, then rear claws). When not using artificial weapons, rakasta can make three attacks (claw /claw /bite) plus another two with rear claws if both front claws hit. Strength bonuses do apply. All rakasta have retractile claws to some extent.

you use the rules found in the Players Handbook, or Red Steel Campaign book to have them start as druids since 1st level) and the bard (if you allow this class to cast spells at all in your campaign).

Wild, greater, and ancestor rakasta can nevertheless take the Wokan (or Wicca) and Shaman options described in GAZ10 - The Orcs of Thar by B. Heard (TSR 9241, 1988, "Dungeon Master's Booklet", pages 5-10) and later supplements; use the rakasta's chosen class as its normal progression, then apply the additional XPs to be earned to

advance a level in the Wokan or Shaman class.

### SPECIAL ABILITIES:

Most rakasta share the following special abilities. Please read carefully these entries and confront them with Tables 2 and 3 to understand an individual breed's abilities. Most rakasta breeds also have their own special abilities which are listed in their individual description, later in this paragraph.

Table 3: Special Abilities & Weaknesses

Adult Rakasta	Young & Old Rakasta	Cubs & Venerable Rakasta
<b>Infravision:</b> 60'	Same	30' only
<b>Balance &amp; Reflexes:</b> sustain half damage from any fall.	Three quarter damage	Full damage
<b>Detect Invisible &amp; Ethereal Beings:</b> within 10'. Surprised only with 1 on 1d6.	Within 5'. Surprised only with 1 on 1d6.	No detection ability.
<b>Blind Fighting:</b> free general skill.	Same	None for cubs.
<b>Natural Concealment*:</b> 50% chances of success within 100', or 70% beyond 100'.	Old: 60% (80% beyond 100') Young: 30% (50% beyond 100')	Venerable: 70% (90% beyond 100') Cub: 10% (30% beyond 100')
<b>Detect Noise:</b> As a thief of the same level.	As a thief of two-third its level.	As a thief one-third its level.
<b>Roar:</b> opponents within 100' of the rakasta make their attack rolls and saving throws with a -1 penalty for d6+1 rounds following the roar.	Within 80' for d4+1 rounds	Within 60' for 1d4 rounds None for cubs.
<b>Special Weakness:</b> Fear of water; -1 penalty to saving throws vs. sound-based attacks.	Fear of water; -1 penalty vs sound-based attacks.	No such special weaknesses, except fear of water.

\* Only Greater and Wild Rakastas have the natural concealment ability. Greater Rakastas' chances are halved.

### Roar

Most ancestor and greater rakasta have a roar powerful enough to affect their foes (see Table 2 for individual listing). The roar must be used in the first round of any combat encounter to be effective and counts as an action. Table 3 lists the effects of the roar.

### Fear of Water

See Table 2 for each rakasta's rating. Entering open water requires a successful Wisdom check, else halve the rakasta's Strength and Dexterity ratings (rounded down) until out of the water. Halve Charisma as well until dry. Rakasta listed with None are immune to this limitation. Moderate fear requires a normal Wisdom check. High fear adds a +4 penalty to the check.

### Feline Physiology

All rakasta can gather their strength and release it in a sudden burst of activity. When doing so, a rakasta may temporarily increase its Strength as follows: subtract half the rakasta's normal Strength score from 10; add the result rounded up to the rakasta's Strength. The Strength burst cannot exceed 19.

This burst of energy lasts a number of rounds equal to half the rakasta's Constitution score (rounded down), or until the rakasta decides to calm down, whichever comes first. Each time this ability is used, the rakasta must rest for as many turns as the number of rounds the burst of energy lasted. rakasta must sleep 12 hours each day in addition to these cat naps, although not necessarily at one time or during night hours. If a rakasta fails to complete either, its

Strength, Dexterity, and Intelligence scores are all halved (rounded down) until properly rested. Felines normally rest 16 hours a day, but rakasta can limit their rest to 12 hours when adventuring.

All rakasta are light sleepers. They can wake up at any suspicious sound, provided they make a successful Detect Noise roll. Add a 20% bonus for each subsequent sound. For example, a snoring companion does not affect a sleeping rakasta. A companion waking up and rummaging inside a backpack does. An approaching thief will too, unless the thief makes a successful Move Silently roll. Use common sense in adjudicating these situations.

### Natural Concealment

Wild rakasta can conceal themselves when hiding or moving slowly within their natural environment (see individual descriptions). Greater rakasta have the same ability, but all chances are halved. Table 3 lists the chances of success. Ancestor and domestic breeds don't have this special ability.

### Catnip

Called nepeta rakastaria by some Known World sages, this plant of ancient Ochalean origins has a powerful effect on all Mystaran felines. Unless making a successful Wisdom check, the rakasta feels an uncontrollable and immediate urge to rub and roll on the plant, displaying a state of utter ecstasy (licking, biting, chewing, rubbing its cheeks and chin, shaking its head, purring, growling, leaping in the air). The victim never actually eats catnip but only enjoys its contact and smell. This display persists for as many rounds as the rakasta failed its Wisdom

check, during which time it can make no action (attacks, spell casting, etc). If attacked at this time, the rakasta retains all magical, armor, and Dexterity bonuses to AC, while the attacker sustains a -2 penalty to its attack rolls against this rakasta due to its unpredictable twists and rolls. There must be a fresh patch of at least a foot-square in order to affect a rakasta.

### Whiskers

Part of all rakastas' Dexterity comes from their vibrissae, which act as air-current detectors. Should these be damaged or cut off, the rakasta loses 2 points of Dexterity, and both the blind fighting and detect invisible proficiencies. These whiskers regrow in 1d4 weeks.

### Weapons and Armour Limitations

Rakastas have no limitations on what weapons they can use, other than class related or campaign setting restrictions. Ancestor and greater rakastas never use missile weapons other than hand thrown weapons (stones, javelins, hand axes, etc). The former weapons are either too complex, out of character, or simply deemed cowardly. Hand-to-hand or unarmed blood lust is more in their natural style. Some rakastas will not use any missile weapons at all due to their Warrior Honor. Paladins and wild rakasta never use firearms. There are no further weapon limitations.

More lightly built rakastas stay away from heavy armor as a matter of racial preference. Rakastas listed with a weight divider of 4.6 or

more (see Table 2) avoid armor whose standard encumbrance exceeds 250 cn. Rakastas with a weight divider of 4.1 or more avoid armor whose standard encumbrance exceeds 400 cn. Rakastas with a weight divider of 4 or less have no armor restrictions, other than those usually imposed by the chosen character class or the particular campaign setting.

Increase the weight of armor for larger rakastas, as follows: for rakastas up to 70" tall, use the normal armor encumbrance. For every extra 4" size (or fraction thereof), add another 10% (retain fractions). For example, normal plate mail is listed at 500 cn. For each extra 4" size, add +10% (+50 cn). For an 80" tall rakasta, this armor should weigh  $50 + (3 \times 50) = 650$  cn.

Generally speaking, rakasta favor swiftness, maneuverability, and aggressive tactics over cautious or defensive approaches (such as heavy armor). Ancestors never wear armor other than hides and bones. Greater and wild rakasta do not normally manufacture metal armor of any sort, but they might wear it if made available to them.

**SOURCES:**

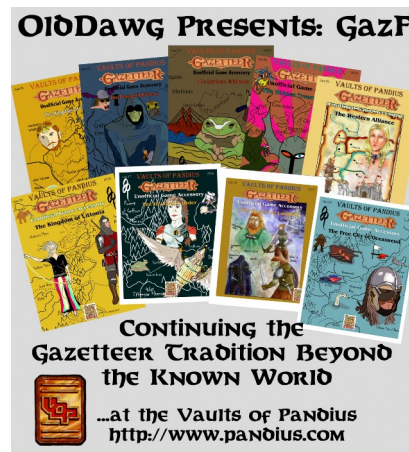
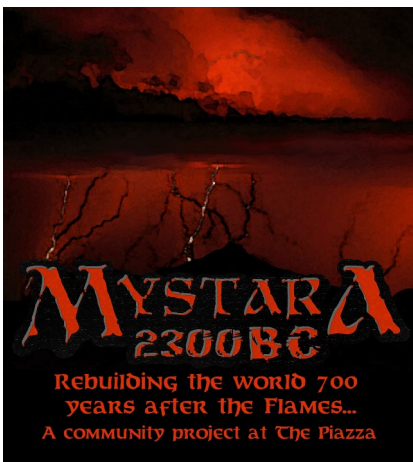
["History and Evolution of Rakastas"](#) by Simone Neri,

The original articles on rakastas by Bruce Heard:

**"Rakasta of Mystara"**, in *Dragon Magazine* #247 (vol. XXII, no. 10, May 1998)

**"The Voyage of the Princess Ark - Part 28: In the Eye of the Cat,"** in *Dragon Magazine* #181 (vol. XVI, no. 12, May 1992).

[See also *"Herioes of the Princess Ark"* book (pages 48-52 and 92-93) in the *"Champions of Mystara"* boxed set which compiles much of the original *VotPA* rakasta material]



# Beholders of Mystara



FROM  
THE VAULTS  
OF PANDIUS

by Robin

14 YARTHMONT 1001 AC; almost  
SUNSET; GLANTRI GREAT SCHOOL OF  
MAGIC, MUSEUM OF MONSTEROLOGY,  
ANATOMY/EXAMINATION ROOM.

“The weseawch of a lifetime is what I desire to call it”.

“I know, I know, ...yet Gaston<sup>1</sup>, ...from other researchers we have learned from Autopsy, Anatomy, Divination and Thanatology that the mind of a beholder is utterly chaotic and dancing around the barrier of sanity and madness. Don't you agree Master Timonn Lest?”

“Yes, I do, yet I also understand the conceptual ideas of Master vander Klil. It indeed seems that these chaotic creatures seem to have an ordered concept of living. It is as if these chaotic creatures do seem to have some lawfulness and order”.

<sup>1</sup> Sir Gaston vander Klil is Master of Biology, Ecology and Geomorphology in the Great School of Magic, and is also an explorer and adventurer. He has a speech deficiency due missing teeth (w=r). His adventures can be followed un the [“Breath of Mystara”](#) blog.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Timonn Lest is Master of Monster Lore in the Great School of Magic working together with his brother Sir Johann Lest who is Master of Animal Lore. Both work in the Museum of Monsterology of the Great School of Magic.

“That is pwecisly what I intent to undewstand Master Lest. And the Dweamspeech magic divulged a lot of infowmation of these dangewous, intewesting species. That is why I called upon the expewtise of Master Bhes<sup>3</sup>. And see what his divinations bwrought us knowledge”.

”Indeed my fellow teachers. It seems that the specimen laid before us still has mental images remaining in his mind. Are you sure brother Lest that the creature is dead and incapacitated?”

“Yes, Master Bhes. The creature seemed to be a renegade beholder. According to the brave adventurers it was hunted by at least three beholders of a different breed. The differences are clear when knowing how to look. It was not known until recently that the beholder race has several different breeds, which seem to combat each other,” replied Sir Timonn.

“Yes, indeed, this specimen seemed to belong to a breed we have seen only on the continent Skothar,…” his brother Sir Johann chimed in.

“That was interesting, yet not what information I requested Masters. You don't seem to understand that if I delve deeper

<sup>3</sup> Sir Wilhelm Bhes is Master of Divinations in the Great School of Magic.

within the decaying mind, I could lose my way of returning if there is an active sentence within.”

“Sorry, Master Bhes, the creature was subjected to several rays of magical eyes from the following beholders. And even to them the creature seemed to be dead, before they left. The adventurers also cut several times within the creature, and with the examination, and autopsy we have not discerned any glint of life”.

“Oke, then I will commence with the Deep Divination. We must know more about these monsters.””...How intewesting they might be.”



Master Bhes sat down, meditate for a turn or so, and then began invoking his divination magic. He arose, grabbed the brain, and an image appeared. Followed by another, and another, faster and faster until the images seemed to be a moving active situation depicted in translucent illusion magic. Master Bhes started to speak; and his voice spoke;...

## BEHOLDERBREEDS ON MYSTARA AND THEIR CITIES

by 6inchnails<sup>4</sup>

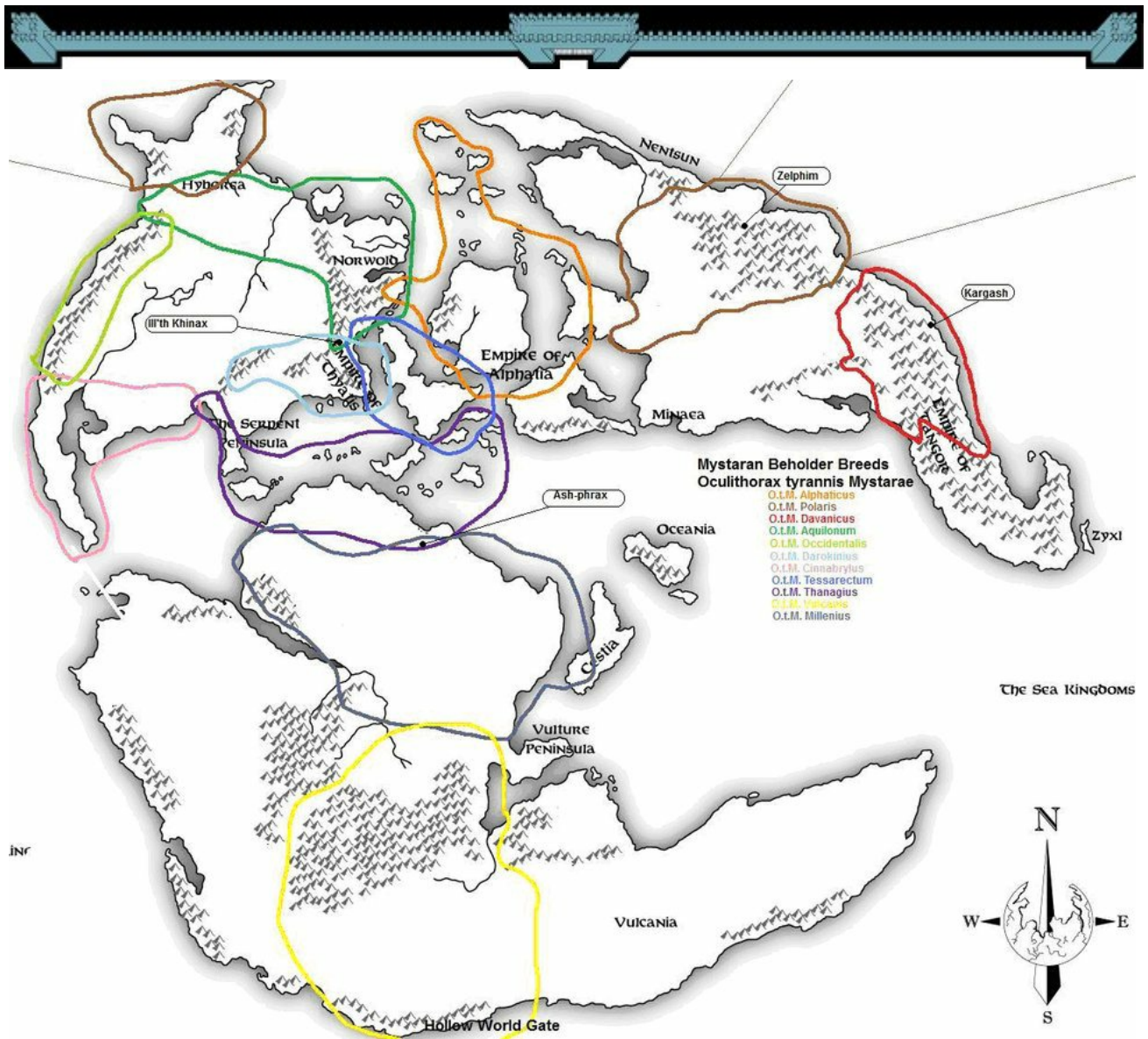
### True Beholders (Oculithorax variants) AND The standard Beholder (Oculithorax tyrannis Mystarae)

Mystaran beholders tend to be brown or green, and possess mottled skin. The distinctive patterns of the mottling define the particular breed. Their tentacles are about average in length (24 inches) and mostly unsegmented. These beholder stalks have human-sized eyes that disappear when their dark eyelids close. A Mystaran beholder that closes its eyes and folds its eyestalks across its body while settling on the ground, looks much like a moss-encrusted or mud-encrusted boulder. Stories of unwitting

<sup>4</sup> Originally an article, [“Beholder Breeds on Mystara and their Cities”](#), published on Robin’s art blog



## Beholders of Mystara



adventurers who sat atop sleeping beholders are quite common. Alas, all of these tales end in tragedy. It is suggested the varieties in local ecology and diet create new breeds. Currently 11 different breeds are recognized on Mystara (in a beholder's opinion the breeds other than their own breed are variant befouled monstrosities);

The Known World Breed = O.t.M. Darokinius, (this version is medium brown, with dark-brown mottling in a band like

pattern, blue eyes. Some individuals of this breed seem to have developed water-breathing as a natural ability)

Davianian Breed = O.t.M. Davanicus, (this version is more brown with thicker, hair-like green mottling, blue eyes. This breed is less vulnerable to heat, and somewhat more to cold)

Blackmoor Breed = O.t.M. Polaris, (this version is more dark-brown with lighter

mottling, yellow eyes. It has a banded profile of scales--a predecessor of armor. This breed resembles the first breed brought to Mystara by the FSS Beagle aliens at best )

Alphatian Breed = O.t.M. Alpaticus, (this version is light-brown with dark-brown mottling, brown eyes. This breed has the highest percentage of beholder mages and elders of all breeds)

Norwold breed = O.t.M. Aquilonum, (this version is dark-brown with much mossy mottling, grey-blueish eyes. This breed rarely speaks, and seems to have developed a 50' telepathy)

Savage Coast Breed = O.t.M. Cinnabryllus, (this version is reddish-brown with muddy darker mottling, reddish brown eyes--the reddish tint is not genetic but a side effect of the area. This breed often camouflages itself with mud).

Thanagian Breed = O.t.M. Thanagius, (this version is light-brown with intensive green almost hair-like top mottling, and dark-brown muddy bottom mottling, green eyes. This breed adorns its stalks with shells)

Isle of Dawn Breed = O.t.M. Tessarectum, (this version is creme-brown, with a dark-brown grouped mottling, dark-brown eyes. Known for its three-dimensional gravity-changing mazes found on the Isle of Dawn regularly)

Western Breed = O.t.M. Occidentalis, (this version is dark-brown, with darker brown variant sized mottling all over its body, and is mostly wet with real moss growing on its top

(due the wet caves it lives in). It has red or yellow bloodshot eyes.)

Northern Skothar breed = O.t.M. Millenius, (this version is slightly more armored (AV+1 or AC-1)<sup>5</sup>, its scales are light-brown with a greenish cast and some dark-brown mottling on top, it has green eyes)

Southern Skothar Breed = O.t.M. Vulcanis, (this version has a more armored skin (AV+2 or AC-2) and segmented eyestalks, with yellow eyes, its scales are medium brown with lighter brown ends. The face-nose area is cracked, it has yellow eyes--see picture)

It is possible a variant breed will develop somewhere else. All breeds tend to stay to their own part of the world, and new breeds must settle somewhere yet unclaimed by the other breeds. As expected there are conflict areas where the breeds claim territory (territories overlap on the map) or are reasonably near to other territories. Keep in mind that beholder borders do not follow any other racial borders.

The O.t.M. Vulcanis (travelled there by themselves) and the O.t.M. Alpaticus (placed there by the translocation of Alphatia 1009 AC as a floating continent) are currently the only two breeds found in the Hollow World, and their numbers are very low, they possess no cities and no more than 3 hives each and the spell of preservation prevents the rise of new breeds unless they travel or are placed there. With the demise of Alphatia in 1009 AC, the O.t.M. Alpaticus survived only in Esterhold, Bellissaria, Norwold and

<sup>5</sup> This depends if the Armor Value (AV) rules of the Dawn of the Emperors Boxed Set is used or not.

the Northern Islands. They were driven from the Isle of Dawn, and are almost destroyed in Bellisaria and Norwold. Esterhold can't sustain them enough, and the northern islands are too cold to reproduce, so this race is eventually doomed to extinction on the Outer World. Of the four beholder cities that have existed on Mystara, Kargash is currently the only active one.

Outside Mystara (Space and Planar) 25 other variant beholder races are known to exist named after their planet or Plane (they are all *Oculithorax tyrannis* species), and these may have their own (mostly up to 6) local breeds (the fourth name in line). A beholder race of the Outer Plane Hades would be O.t.Hadesius, followed by the name of the breed.

#### Other beholder creatures<sup>6</sup>

The beholder mage (*Oculithorax tyrannis Mystarae-Occultis*) and elder orbs (*Oculithorax tyrannis Mystarae-Antiqua*) are altered standard beholders and still bear the original breed traits and marks.

**Beholderkin** like the eye-of-the-deep (*Oculithorax aquaticus*), gauth (*Oculithorax quadricrinixus Inferior*), death kiss (*Oculithorax ungueus Sanguina-Electrica*), spectator (*Oculithorax curiosis Cogitarus*), and the searechter<sup>7</sup> or marine spectator (*Oculithorax curiosis Aquaticus*), observer (*Oculithorax curiosis Nirvanaeus*), and

gorbel (*Oculithorax pyrophoricus*) do exist, but are rare on Mystara. They are spawned by a hive mother depending on her diet, and are able to reproduce amongst their own. They may or may not bear the original breed traits and marks of the breed they are spawned from. The eye-of-the-deep is the best known and most widespread of these creatures.

**Abominations** (*Oculithorax detestatio* species) belong to the beholder abominations spawned by a hive mother depending on the need and circumstances. These are completely different species being equal in any breed they are spawned; defender<sup>8</sup> (*Oculithorax detestio Defendus*), director (*Oculithorax detestio Princepius*), examiner (*Oculithorax detestio Scrutator*), lensman (*Oculithorax detestio Humanoides*), overseer (*Oculithorax detestio Arboretus*), watcher (*Oculithorax detestio Vigilius*), astereater (*Oculithorax detestio Bothynus*), orbus (*Oculithorax detestio Orbus*), are all beholder abominations once existing on Mystara (and may well still exist in Kargash). They are not able to reproduce. At least one astereater is known to roam Mystarospace, probably originating from Mystara just before the Destruction of Alphatia (1009 AC), and may have been a reaction of the great war.

**Undead beholder;** death tyrant (*Corpus animatea Oculi-Tyrannis*) 1166, kasharin (*Corpus mummificatum Oculi-Tyrannis*) 1260, doomsphere\* (*Spiritum oculi tyrannis*) 1137<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> All these creatures are excellently detailed in AD&D 2ed supplement "I, Tyrant" - a [table for Mystara](#) can be found on Robin's art blog

<sup>7</sup> A variant (aquatic) spectator, named in *Dragon Magazine* #139, and see [this Wikipedia entry](#) for more information

<sup>8</sup> A defender is another beholder abomination created by me,...however, the statistics are not finished and will be placed on Piazza/Pandius later.

<sup>9</sup> The numbers are page numbers of these

## History - as the IMMORTALS know it

When the Multiverse was young and chaotic, in the beginning of time, the Great Mother was born from an unknown creature in the Nightmare dimension. It developed so much intelligence that it quickly arose to immense power. Many current races in that realm have either heard of her as being one of the Great Creators of existence, or even herald their own offspring directly to her.

She soon succeeded in becoming Immortal; who her sponsor was is unknown, but Thanatos already did exist, maybe she was the first mortal that he sponsored into Immortality. (If so, he no longer remembers this anymore).

Unlike its mortal spawn, the Great Mother is an egg layer. It drifts endlessly on its mysterious journey, stopping only to lay eggs (in effect casting the Immortal spell Create Species) or briefly return to its home plane. Most of the Great Mother's eggs hatch into Hive Mothers of various breeds.

Scholars do not know what factors determine the breed of the eggs, though some believe that the Great Mother's diet greatly influences this process. As the Immortal law 'No direct interference against mortals' counts only on the Prime Plane, she stays far away from there, and thus devours any creature she likes to devour, ranging from devil to demon or Outer Planar spawn. The Great Mother often encounters powerful beings in her wanderings throughout the

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undead in my ["Mystara Monster Manual Compilation"](#) book on undead in BECMI style

Planes. Legends say that the Great Mother usually consumes these powerful creatures. These 'unions' doubtless account for some of the more unusual sorts of beholder kin and abominations. This behavior is also found within hive mothers, and as such expected magically transferred from the Great Mother to hive mothers. It seems that each new abomination or beholderkin can be spawned from the moment of its initial creation by the Great Mother from hive mothers if they desire so depending upon circumstances.

In one of these realms her offspring arose to a great civilization, with technological and magical progress. Yet its chaotic genetic imbalance soon prevailed, and different breeds came forth. At first this was no problem, as the beholders did not yet have their xenophobic tendency. But soon there was absolutely no order. In all this chaos, tensions became violence, and violence became a war, a giant war. Several beholder breeds settled on their space vessels to escape the utter chaos, bringing with them the genetic seed for xenophobia.

In the early Blackmoor era, a gigantic vessel travelled haphazardly through space and finally even through the solar system of the beholders, while they were warring and combating with each other, or even trying to flee. Within these travels they succeeded in capturing several warring beholders. Some sages suggest; it was probably due to the chaotic energy these creatures emit (magic) that the giant vessel ruptured the dimensional borders in the first place. When the vessel was disabled and crash-landed on Mystara, nothing happened at first, but soon intruders from the planet, invaded the vessel and released the imprisoned horrors (mostly

unwittingly), and thus the beholder came to Mystara. The Blackmoorians soon tried to control these monsters to be used in the war with the beastmen. However, their chaotic minds and magic abilities made them unreliable and prone to escape. The creatures were greatly affected by the Rain of Fire and the radiation. They were dispersed over Mystara, and suffered several mutations. It is these ones which formed the basis of the current Mystara beholder breeds. The number of variety in beholder and beholder-kin and even abominations was limited by the magical aura of the planet itself.

In the beginning they were mostly solitary<sup>10</sup>, yet soon hive mothers spawned, and beholder hives<sup>11</sup> came to be. The appearance of beholder hives is significantly less common than the appearance of a solitary beholder. A hive consists of one ruling hive mother and either 1d6+4 beholders (or even more rare) 5d4 abominations and beholder-kin. The standard beholders present in a hive must all be of the same breed; even the presence of a hive mother will not deter different breeds of beholders from attacking each other. Generally, the hive mother will be the parent or ancestor of all other members of the hive, but this is not always the case.

Occasionally, two or more same-breed hive mothers decide to unite their individual hives. The resultant community, regardless of its size is called a city. Historically, these cities have formed for two reasons; the same beholder breed dominates a particular geographical locale abundantly, and it is

<sup>10</sup> A solitary beholder is called Ashatsi in beholder tongue

<sup>11</sup> A beholder hive is called Claskho in beholder tongue

sparsely or not at all occupied by other sentient races. A small beholder city will contain the following; 1d6+2 hive mothers, 3d6 standard beholders, (there is a 50% chance that 1d3 of these creatures will be mages), 3d6+3 overseers, 1d6+4x10 directors, 1d4x10 examiners, 3d6+3 watchers, 1d6=2x10 lensmen and 2d6 miscellaneous other beholder kin. A very large beholder city will have a terrifyingly large population consisting of 1500 hive mothers, 3000 overseers, 2500 standard beholders (of whom some 250 are beholder mages), 17.500 directors, 6000 examiners, 3000 watchers, 15.000 lensmen, and 1500 mixed beholder kin. The usual proportions of non-beholder-kin population also reside in the city.

### Hive mother (*Oculithorax tyrannis* Mystarae-Dominatrix)

Hive mothers were first encountered by a matriarchal elven society in the distant past (probably Norwold elves just after the Rain of Fire 3000 BC). This elven society assumed that these giant creatures were female because they led beholder communities, and worshipped an Immortal called the Great Mother. Naturally, the elves named these creatures hive mothers. However, the beholders' own name for a hive mother is Kawahak Kru, which translates more correctly as "Spawner-Boss". Kawahak kru have no specific female traits. Hive mothers are naturally transformed beholders or born that way from an adult hive mother, or more rarely a direct transformation under the influence of their Immortal the Great Mother. The natural process is that in a hive,

the first pregnant beholder births a single young hive mother, that rapidly grows in the following years. During the teenage stage, the creature starts to grow so exponentially that it forces the eyestalks to become regressed in mounds of flesh. The rapid growth halts when the hive mother-beholder gains adult size and normal growth sets in. During the autopsy research of a recently killed hive mother, it was indeed discovered that the eyestalk is literally pulled inside to the limit by the exponentially grotesque beholder body, and the eyestalk skin is still found just behind the eyes within the body, shriveled up like a pushed-up sleeve.

The hive mother's ability to create abominations—sterile beholder-like creatures that exist only in hive situations—most likely stems from the species predisposition towards mutation. Beholder legends, however, claim that this is a gift from the Great Mother. Hive mothers are larger adapted variants of their own breed; as such they hold the same naming, but with "-Dominatrix" added to the 3rd designation. A hive mother of the beholder race of the Outer Plane Hades would be O.t.Hadesius-Dominatrix, followed by the name of the breed.

Only four (mostly empty or almost empty) beholder cities have existed on Mystara. Only one of these cities is active--very active.

## The Lost UNDERGROUND Beholder city<sup>12</sup> Ill'th Khinax ON BRUN

Created 2795 BC, it thrived between 2755 BC and 1750 BC, warred against the 2<sup>nd</sup> Empire of Mogreth on Brun, but fell from warring factions within the city. Once it did hold over 2000 beholders and beholder-kin. Current occupation unknown (depending on results from the AD&D2e adventure series; "*Eye of Doom*", "*Eye of Pain*", and "*Eye to Eye*".

The city itself originates from a time long past, when beholders ruled both the surface and the depths and humans had only begun to appear in the area. Named Illth Khinax in the beholder tongue (which means "Place of Spires"), the beautiful city (at least the beholders themselves considered it beautiful) was once a thriving population center with over 2000 beholders and beholder-kin dwelling there. Many of the other subterranean species knew of and marveled at its existence, and some even managed to establish peaceful (sort of) relations with the eye tyrants (through adopting a suitable obsequious attitude and thereby circumventing the beholder's legendary xenophobia) and began to trade with them (the modrigswerg are rumored to have done this, but all information about this trade is lost in time.) Still, the beholders were enemies of many races, and constant retaliation against invasion was seen a necessity. On more than one occasion other subterranean species attempted to attack Illth K'hinax, either openly or through subtle infiltration. Some of the fallen warriors of the beholder enemies decorate the halls of the city to this day

<sup>12</sup> A city is called Bering in beholder tongue

### The End

In the end, the downfall of the city came, not from without, but from within. Factions within the society of the great city constantly opposed each other, plotting for power and prestige against one another. Ultimately, the conflicts became too openly militant to check, and a full-blown civil war ensued. Some factions were annihilated, others fled to safer havens, still others continued to war with one another in the channels and spires of Ilth K'hinax. In the end, one faction reigned supreme, but the glory of the great beholder city was but a memory. The other subterranean races, seeing their chance at revenge and domination, allied against the remaining eye tyrants and hunted them down. When all was said and done, the surviving citizens of Ilth K'hinax had scattered with the four winds, and the city lay silent and dark. No other species could comfortably live there without the inherent levitation ability of the beholders, so the place was abandoned by the sentient ones. The mindless monsters that the beholders once kept as pets and guards remained, multiplying and adapting or dying out completely (for escape was impossible for most of them). Ilth K'hinax lay dormant for hundreds of years, and the knowledge of its location became lost in the shrouds of time.

### Recently

In the wilds beyond Ilth K'hinax, the legend of the city has been passed from generation to generation of beholder. It has become more a tale of myth and mystery than a simple set of facts, but the memory of the place remained, nonetheless. Many an elder orb or hive mother has dreamed of one day returning there to claim dominion over it,

but none has ever attempted it, until now. Ixathinon began her quest to re-establish the throne of Ilth K'hinax over 150 years ago. No known routes existed to the Place of Spires, but she diligently researched for years, examining shreds of evidence from tales and records bought, stolen, or connived away from other subterranean races. Slowly, the hive mother began to construct a map that revealed a possible location of the fabled city. Her perseverance paid off; she was the first beholder to lay eyes on Ilth K'hinax in over a millennia.

Overjoyed, Ixathinon led her hive to the site and established a home there. The task of reclaiming the city from the ravages of time proved to be a long and arduous one, but slowly, the beholders are beginning to return the place to its former glory. Only a portion of Ilth K'hinax has been taken back; the rest will be restored in due time. A major obstacle stands in the restoration of Ilth K'hinax's former glory: the presence of humans and demihumans on the surface. Ixathinon knows too well the tale of the original downfall of Ilth K'hinax, and she has been convinced through her studies that it was a result of the citizens' interaction with and acceptance of the other races. It has become an obsession of hers that no other sentient species should be permitted to dwell in the vicinity of the great city; to do so only invites disaster once again. Thus it has come to pass that Ixathinon has devised a plan to eradicate the town of Cumbert and all of its inhabitants. Understanding the limitations of the military strength of her hive, Ixathinon realizes she could never hope to win an all-out war with the surface dwellers. To even attempt such a thing would not only deplete her valuable

resources, but it would draw unwanted attention to the hive and its activities. Instead, by using a criminal organization called the Unblinking Eye, she has set in motion a scheme to subtly degrade the fabric of Cumbert's society hopefully leading to its eventual and ultimate corruption. This plot has become the source of contention between the hive mother and the beholder Qeqtoxi. Because of the great success of the Unblinking Eye, Qeqtoxi has come to enjoy the level of power it commands among the surface dwellers and is not so willing to surrender it to Ixathinon. It sees her plan to destroy Cumbert as foolish and a waste of potential resources, so the elder orb has decided to usurp her and take over the hive. If successful, Qeqtoxi will continue to build its power base within Cumbert and eventually spread its organization's influence farther afield.

This is where the *Eye of Doom*, *Eye of Pain* and *Eye to Eye AD&D2ed* adventure trilogy begins.

## The haunted beholder city Ash Phrax on Davania

Deep within underground Davania is the beholder city Ash Phrax. It is unknown which of the two Davanian beholder breeds built the city and which destroyed it. Between 255 AC<sup>13</sup> and 280 AC it was a viable beholder city containing over 500 beholders of one of the two breeds. As there are remains found of over 1100 beholders and beholderkin, apparently both breeds met, battled and

eventually lost the battle here. It is now completely abandoned.

The underground beholder city Ash Phrax is the lost city according to beholders. In many respects it resembles Illth Khinax, yet all breeds corresponding to either city would be very insulted by this. Ash Phrax is similar to Illth K'hinax in a way, that it is located within a cave 500 miles deep within the ground, hidden deep under the surface of the Davanian continent. It may appear to be similar to Illth Khinax, the main difference lies within its floating middle city. This huge stone circular disk floats about 10 feet from the ceiling and about 30 feet from four carefully placed gravity-influencing poles that keep the disk in its position. The magic is so strong (and apparently not affected by the Day of Dread's no-magic effect), that it is assumed that the beholder goddess the Great Mother had something to do with creating this "artifact" city.

This floating section and the assumption the Great Mother created this was apparently also the reason that both Davanian beholder breeds battled over possession of the city. The battle was so immense that more than 1100 petrified beholders are currently found in the area. Some unknown force succeeded in controlling these petrified undead beholders (stats as normal death tyrant, but AV +3), maybe it is due to doomspheres or something worse.

The city is now completely abandoned, as at least 50 beholder ghosts (doomspheres) seem to haunt the area. Neither beholder breed knows of this city anymore, and the only memory with the same name leads to an immense slaughter field. In fact this made so

<sup>13</sup> It was created about a decade earlier as a hive and grown into a city over time.



much impact that the word Ash Phrax literally is translated as battlefield, or death field. No beholder would be interested in this city due to the hundreds of dead and undead beholders lurking there, uncontrollable, unlike death tyrants.

### The abandoned Beholder city of Zelphim ON Skothar

The abandoned Beholder city of Zelphim<sup>14</sup> has recently (1000AC) been rediscovered and partially repopulated.

Inhabited from 565 BC to 325 BC on the northern part of Skothar—very well recorded slaughter records<sup>15</sup>; located; 1504 beholders, 342 hive mothers, 1100 variant beholders slain, warred against hordes of humanoids (combined, Jennite human, orc, ogre, troll and giant), and was almost wiped out of existence. The city is currently nothing more than an abandoned, mostly ruined, beholder city functioning as a living location for the

<sup>14</sup> As depicted in this [illustration](#) on beholder cities

<sup>15</sup> Hin explorers stumbled upon the battlefield in 325BC. They succeeded to remain hidden, and recorded the battle on shells and birch bark scrolls written in Lalor. When the battle was over, they saw no survivors. They returned home with several beholder parts, and became instant heroes. These remains can be found in many Hin public buildings of Mystara. Up to today nobody knows the truth, and descendants still boast the stories. The records only dictate variants species and kills, with mutual battle tactics, and assumed 'heroic' attacks of the Hin. Copies are stored in the library of Shireton, The Great Library of Serraine and in the Great Library of Glantri.

new single hive (32 beholders, 1 hive mother named Kai-La-rinn, and about 15 beholder-kin).

### The living Beholder city Kargash<sup>16</sup> ON Skothar

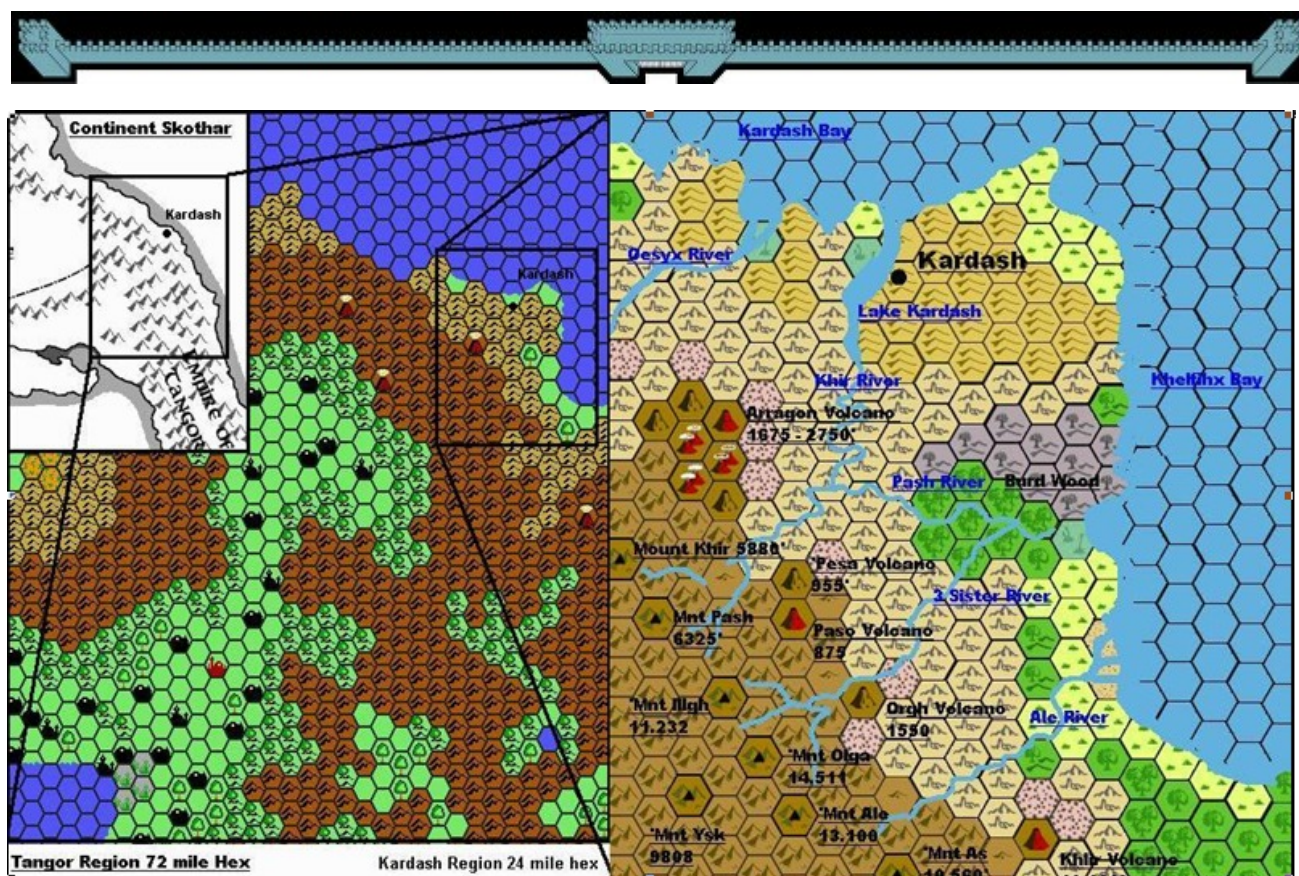
by Ginchnails<sup>17</sup>

Kargash is depicted in the AD&D 2ed supplement "I, Tyrant" as the main beholder city and is in fact the only truly functioning beholder city on Mystara.

This beholder city is made up of many of the wasp's nest style dwellings, plus other constructions and places for the common use of all beholder citizens. It was created shortly after the Great Rain of Fire in 2990 BC, and was active yet small until 2166 BC. At that time the Kasharin affliction (probably a Beholder version of the Wasting Disease), and regular volcanic eruptions, together with Tangor attacks made an end to the city. When the Alphatians made Landfall, the beholders had already rediscovered and repopulated the city for a decade. No Tangor tribe was powerful enough to resist them, although major attacks have occurred in 733 BC, 188 BC, and 467 AC. There has also been

<sup>16</sup> Author; the map uses Kardash instead of Kargash....this is a mistake...sorry..probably a gremlin in my PC....or it may be assumed to be the Tanagoro human translation of the beholder name. As such Kargash and Kardash are the same and used by the variant species/cultures.

<sup>17</sup> Originally appeared as an [article](#) on Robin's art blog



an attack by the hivebrood (*Formica bominoidea-parasites*)<sup>18</sup> in 890 AC, which was overwhelmingly won by the beholders. The Tangor tribes suffered several major defeats from these monsters and since then refrained from crossing the Ale River, the mountain chain and the Desyx River to prevent further war and retaliations they can't manage. The beholders on the other hand have created more beholder spawn (amongst them the new defender spawn), and it may be assumed they will initiate attacks on either the humanoids, the remaining hivebrood of the region or travel beyond and attack Tangor tribes.

Over time, the cliff sides of the beholder city became so infested with lairs that their origin

as natural cliffs became obscure. Examiners, acting as structural engineers, make sure that the cliffs are not so heavily dug out that they will collapse; otherwise, these cliffs look entirely artificial.

The above map shows the location of the small city of Kargash (on the Mystara continent of Skothar) — population 2000 — located on a volcanic, mist-shrouded tract of land far from any settlements or trade routes. Once upon a time, the city was nothing but a small river canyon. However, a hive mother named Kagg discovered the area in 2990 BC and pronounced it perfect for settlement. It has gradually become one of the largest eye tyrant cities ever recorded (even on other Planes).

<sup>18</sup> See pages 672-676 of "[Lowlife](#)" at the Vaults of Pandius.

### ARRAGON VOLCANOES

This line of the continent of Skothar lies upon a deep crevice of geologically unstable matter. Deep below, the lower cells of the planetary creature (the Megalith, see [this post](#) at "*Breath of Mystara*") continuously deplete, and new cells are created on top of it (instead normally below this wound). Probably this wound was created in the Great Rain of Fire incident in 3000 BC, and the massive radiation even affected the regenerative abilities of the creature we know as the planet Mystara, as well as causing it to massively tilt permanently.

In fact the northern part of the area is slowly and steadily pushed down by the growth of the cells south of it, creating mountains there, and enabling lots of volcanic activity on the overlap zone, where these cells meet.

It is due to these volcanoes that the area still exists, as the magma pours out of the holes of Mystara, they flow north and eastwards, creating new continental matter, that again is slowly used in the creation of the mountains.

In fact the whole area is geological fresh matter, with clear ridges, "canals" of hardened magma, between the local hills that were pressed up a little against the mountains. The latest eruption in 1004 AC, caused the great woods to become the **Burned Wood**. The burned carcasses of the ancient trees still abound. Further areas of interest are the bombardment fields, where the area is littered with pyroclastic bombs of earlier eruptions. The beholders like the region for its instability, difficulty for ground-bounded creatures to pass, and the overall feeling and sensation of destruction and chaos.

The beholders get their slaves from the Tangor tribes on the other side of the mountain. The Tangor have named the Mountain range as **Tembo Taboo**, what means forbidden area. Most of the Arragon volcanoes are currently active, and slowly erupt their ashes and magma in continuous streams in underground tunnels toward the North and East. The other volcanoes are either dead or currently inactive. The whole area is riddled with magma tunnels, and many giant worms are attracted to the fresh matter, riddling it further, with their tunnels. Almost any kind of worm can be found here. No other important races are found here, except spiders and other large lowlife, but there are no other sentient races in this desolate dying part of the world, other than a handful of subjugated humanoids (orcs, trolls, kobolds).

The Beholder city is described and mapped on pages 59-62 of the AD&D *Monstrous Arcana* supplement "*I, Tyrant*", and can be used to illustrate Kargash

15 Yarthmont 1001 AC;  
about an hour after sunrise;  
Glantri Great School of Magic,  
Museum of Monsterology,  
Anatomy/Examination Room.

Master Bhes finally collapses due to the mental strain of the Deep Divination (*see sidebar*). The illusionary effect slowly fades away. Master vander Klil, and the Masters Lest rise up from their seats.

“This gave much more information than we ever expected.”

“Indeed, we must understand that a beholder is not alike every beholder”.

“Yes, each breed surely has its differences. The question is however; if all these breeds have come to be from a handful of beholders in the Blackmoor era; will they develop into more breeds, or was the original diversity between the initial beholders enough to spawn new breeds?”

“Do not forget the slim chance of weneegade beholders meeting and mating, creating a new breed”.

“Sure? I don’t agree. The chaotic mind seems to restrict this, especially the weird behavior of these monsters killing its own spawn when being aberrant in any minor way of the breed of their own.”

“The good thing we now know, is that the major danger is far away, on a continent not affecting us in any way.”

“As of yet Mastew Lest, ...as of yet”.

## Deep Divination

A Deep Divination is the Diviners version of a Lore spell. Often cast together with a basic visual and auditory illusion to enable others learning from the spell (like a holographic movie with sound). Unlike Lore the spell is not an instant knowledge tool, but acts slow; the caster’s combined intelligence, wisdom and constitution is the amount of Turns the spell will be active at best. The duration of this spell depends on how deep is delved; 1 Turn base, each 1 year=+1 Turns, each 10 year=+2 Turns, each 100 Years=+3 Turns, opposed alignment (L vs C, or E vs G=+3 T/opposition, for each 500 miles distance=+1 Turn, +1d10 for variant sources of resistance; Protection, Mental controlled, Immortal Influence, etc.). Like an Analyze weakens the caster temporarily, a Lore (or Deep Divination) will do the same (Con-8). A long sleep (8 hours +2 Turns per passed Turn) will cause the caster to revive completely. During the spell the caster is in full meditation and can’t be disturbed. If an active and resisting sentience is within the divined source, or the caster is disturbed in any other way, he or she may be in need of breaking off the spell, suffer the same weakness as normally at the end of the spell, but must succeed an intelligence check at -5 or become subject to temporary insanity (which cures naturally at a chance of 25% each month, or by use of a Cure Insanity spell (Cleric/Healer class).

Compiling their notes, the mages regroup and bring Master Bhes to a bed to recover. The notes are stored in the Great Library, and a copy can be found in the anatomical library of the Museum of Monsterology of the Great School of Magic in Glantri.

(Continued on [page 130](#))

# STARPORT

## A CAMPAIGN IN THE DUCHY OF THE PEAKS

A system agnostic,  
roleplay-heavy campaign  
for six players and  
a Game Master

by The Real Nowhere Man

### WHAT IS THIS CAMPAIGN ABOUT?

This campaign is focused on the lands of the Duchy of the Peaks and is made of ten episodes. It doesn't have a reference ruleset, but each Game Master can use her favorite ruleset or can even use a different ruleset for each episode.

The episodes will NOT take the characters from zeroes to heroes as it often happens, but the players will play a different character in each episode, starting every time from scratch... almost. Why? Because at the end of each episode they will die (sometimes a violent death, other times of old age) and

reincarnate when the next episode starts. This way they will live through some of the most exciting ages of the Duchy of the Peaks.

As you may expect from a game involving a cycle of reincarnations, you will have not only to solve some complex situations proposed by the Game Master, but also to progressively prepare your soul for... something that is waiting for you at the end of your path through multiple lives and situations.

## CAMPAIGN INTRODUCTION FOR THE PLAYERS

You start this campaign as pure souls. In front of you is an overwhelmingly powerful being with female appearance, flowing red hair, fair skin and sharp eyes piercing space and time.

“You are part of my project.” she says.

You don't have time to reply. You feel dizzy as you cross the barrier that divides you from the incarnates. A crossing that always brings oblivion.

In who are you incarnating?

First of all, in order to define in which “role” you will incarnate, each player needs to choose randomly (as an option, the Game Master can choose them and rotate the roles as the adventures come and go or introduce variations inspired by previous adventures and experiences) between one of these six characters:

1. **Lover (female):** your objective is overcoming all hurdles and getting together with the Lover (male). You are in general naïve and shy. One character between the female and male Lover (chosen randomly) comes from a somewhat inferior social environment.
2. **Lover (male):** your objective is overcoming all hurdles and getting together with the Lover (female). You are in general naïve and shy. One character between the female and male Lover

(chosen randomly) comes from a somewhat inferior social environment.

3. **Antagonist (female):** your objective is to prevent the Lover (female) from achieving her objective. You come from a somewhat superior social environment, but you have a hidden psychological wound or a dark secret (to be agreed with the Game Master).
4. **Antagonist (male):** your objective is to prevent the Lover (male) from achieving his objective. You come from a somewhat superior social environment, but you have a hidden psychological wound or a dark secret (to be agreed with the Game Master).
5. **Jester (choose sex as you prefer):** your objective is to make a mess of the adventure and make everybody else laugh. You can choose to be more clumsy, or salacious, etc. as you prefer. The Game Master will allow you to repeat once any roll that may allow you to play better your “comic relief” character.
6. **Confused (choose sex as you prefer):** despite all possible evidence, you believe that one Lover is a bad person, and you want to be an obstacle, while one Antagonist is a good person, and you want to help. You master the art of misunderstanding, in good faith. Typically, you are older than the other characters and like guiding and controlling them.

This way, besides having to achieve the overall group objectives that the Game Master will indicate to you at each Episode,

you will also need to take care of your personal objectives. You can't change these guidelines when you roleplay, unless instructed differently by the Game Master.

Now, you need to order randomly the seven sins (pride, greed, lust, envy, gluttony, wrath and sloth) and the seven virtues (prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance, faith, hope and charity).

When you start the campaign, highlight the number one sin and the number one virtue. When roleplaying your character, you need to stick strictly to them, unless you want to try changing your "destiny". Depending on the ruleset chosen, the Game Master will tell you which (difficult to achieve and expensive to play) game mechanic will allow you to overcome your initial sin and virtue (maybe a Saving Throw with progressively increasing penalties, a Fate point use, a Benny, or a LUCK roll...) and, if you manage to do it, you can roleplay against your sin and/or virtue. As the opportunity to roleplay against your pre-defined sin is difficult to achieve, make sure it is worth it!

If, during an episode, you "overcome your karma", in the subsequent episode you will move to your second sin and your second virtue, and so on until you get rid of them all. If the Game Master judges that you haven't "changed your destiny" enough, you will play next adventure of the campaign with the same sin and virtue.

After a number of episodes, you should be able to free yourself from all "hurdles" (sins and virtues) and roleplay as you like, without having to stick to a predefined background behavior, with few, costly opportunities to deviate from it.

## CAMPAIGN INTRODUCTION FOR THE GAME MASTER

This system agnostic campaign is focused mainly on the Duchy of the Peaks, with a story arc covering millennia. The characters will reincarnate at the start of each Episode and their final objective is not just to complete successfully the ten Episodes, but also to "purify" their souls. Of course, a character that dies during an episode will reincarnate on the next one, typically with no penalty incurred from that. Actually, dying a good death, helping to overcome the obstacles of that episode and one's sin, should be awarded with some bonus.

In practice, the good behavior in one episode will not be rewarded with special objects or extra levels on the next episode, as the characters will die between episodes and are reincarnated many years after (the Game Master can decide what experience level is appropriate for the characters on each episode), but with a progress to the next sin and virtue. As there are ten episodes and only seven sins, the Game Master can set the difficulty level accordingly: the opportunities to "change the story", as mentioned, should be rare (between one and three per episode?) and their success rate should be reasonably unlikely.

This approach is similar to certain Thai lakorn telenovelas, where the same actors play first on a historical background (often ancient Thailand), usually displaying bad behaviors and making mistakes. Then the same actors, sometimes with swapped roles and different personal situations, play again as their reincarnated selves in a

contemporary background, of course oblivious of the past. They will find themselves in front of quite similar moral dilemmas and they will have to decide if they want to repeat their past mistakes or if they want to break the circle of bad behaviors and “change the story” for good.

Of course, with this campaign, I don't want to promote the beliefs of reincarnation, nor the concept of karma (that are often in the background of some Thai lakorn, that this way sometimes become kind of moral plays), but I want to put the players in unexpected and intriguing situations, where they will have to take difficult decision, under a roleplaying point of view.

The overall campaign plot, as it will become clearer reading through the Episodes, is the conflict between logic and technology versus religion and magic. Logic and technology are the basic beliefs of a race that claims to be the original inhabitants of this universe, while religion and magic are promoted by the Immortals, that originally came from a different universe through the Vortex. The Immortals have the initial advantage of being able to time travelling, so they can actually change the story, but have the disadvantage that they can't make direct interventions and need to use pawns. The self-proclaimed original inhabitants of this universe need to learn quickly time travelling technology to overturn the changes in history, but have the advantage that the Immortals actually need some of their race as pawns.

## EPISODE ONE: WE SAW YOUR STAR IN THE NORTH

Recommended soundtrack:  
*“The Planets”* by Gustav Holts

The first episode is set in a mythical past, when men were few in the world and the Thonian Empire was young. Imagine an early bronze age. The climate is colder, an icecap still covers Frisia (north of Blackmoor, across the Black Sea) and a big part of what will become the Duchy of the Peaks. Between Hak and Mohacs there are large steppes, where tribal groups migrate constantly with their flocks. The characters are part of the clan of a mysterious child mage-monarch, that leads her followers wherever prophetic dreams and portents indicate the way. On this occasion, during her astronomical observations she saw a star falling on the Superstition Mountains and wants to reach it.



*The Star Satura has seen in the sky*



The mysterious child, known as Satura (although her original name would be pronounced more appropriately as T'Pzatura) came to Mystara a long time ago on an exploration and study mission from a planet very far away in space and time (one of the many visits aliens have paid to Mystara during the millennia). She looks like a human child with slightly elvish traits (pointed ears, up-swept eyebrows) and her skin is pale with a slight bronze to greenish tint. She is usually impassible and controls very strictly her feelings. She greets by showing the palm of her hand with strangely outstretched fingers and by muttering a few words in an unknown language that no magic allows an understanding of. Her spaceship crash landed and she has been waiting a long time for her rescue mission (the *Vessel of Stars*), that also crash landed. She doesn't know this, however there is still a functioning escape pod, that will become her ultimate objective to go back home. This sequence of crash landings is the result of a local singularity. The spacefaring race of Satura came from a turbulent past when they almost self-obliterated and on the brink of destruction decided to negate their attraction for greed and lust and embrace pure logic, philosophy and desire for perfection. They are now on the brink of being conquered by another race of spacefarers and are looking for alternative planets where they may want to live in exile, in case they lose the planetary war, as looks likely right now.

Just before the beginning of the game, she lost nearly all her followers in a battle against off-world enemies, so the characters will be her last hope to reach the *Vessel of the Stars*. As a source of inspiration, you can imagine

the technopowers of Satura as similar to the powers of the best equipped oards from the classic module *Where Chaos Reigns*<sup>1</sup>, written by Graeme Morris and published by TSR.

The adventure can be played starting from the module *The Vessel of Stars*<sup>2</sup>, written by Robert Holzmeier, published by the Wizards of the Coast, with a number of adaptations, changes or clarifications described below.

The map should be replaced with a Blackmoor map, although its northern shores are threatened by an ice shelf. There is only one meaningful Human settlement in Blackmoor, Maus (that replaces Horvath in the original adventure), mostly dedicated to fishing, and another minor settlement in what will become Ten: the Waystation (that on the map is where Port Dacoit will be in the far future), populated when the season leaves the Black Sea free of ice and suitable for whaling.

Between Maus and Port Dacoit there is an untamed and underpopulated forested wilderness where the bizarre Queen Maragaine reigns over a small nation of elves that are just beginning to notice the human presence. Feel free to add this force to the possible forest encounters.

The areas of what will become the Barrier Swamp are populated by an almost intelligent race of reptiles similar to humanoid crocodiles. Feel free to add this force to the possible encounters before reaching Superstition Mountains, but remember that this area is cold at this time in

<sup>1</sup> Available as a [pdf product](#) on DriveThru

<sup>2</sup> Available as a [free download](#) from the Wizards of the Coast site

history and reptilians can become very slow with cold temperatures, especially in the night.

The crash site is of course in the area where Starport will be founded.

The city of Stern is a trading post somewhere north of Mohacs.

Raz's name is replaced by Thrax.

The Blighted Hills are replaced by Superstition Mountains.

Fharlanghn, Boccob and Pelor can be replaced with Death, Phellia and Pacuun<sup>3</sup>.

In room #5 of the Vessel of Stars Keyed entries (Royal Yacht Hangar), besides the egg-shaped escape pod for Satura, there is a gift that the young monarch mage leaves behind for her followers: the Pygmalion! She is a fabled relic: an android, in fact, programmed for bringing happiness and harmony to Satura's followers left behind, after serving her.

## INTERLUDE ONE

One way or the other the characters from Episode One met the end of their lives and, depending on how they overcame their sins, they should move to the next sin or not, while, depending on how well they achieved

<sup>3</sup> Please note that Death is also known by some worshipper on Mystara as the Air Elemaster, Phellia as Ixion and Pacuun as Odir, although not everybody agrees on this.

the objectives of their adventure, they should get a bonus while generating their new character sheet, leaving some details open to fate, such as their new roles (lover, antagonist, etc.) and gender.

This time they do NOT meet the same overwhelmingly powerful being with a female appearance that originally told the characters that they are part of her project. They instead meet a similarly overwhelmingly powerful being, but with a male appearance, with amber skin, black hair and beard and sharp eyes piercing space and time.

He will say that the project is still very far from being concluded, but, somehow, starting it and concluding it is all part of a single step. He's of course talking about the point of view of an Immortal with a strong grip of Time.

During the years following the discovery of the Vessel of Stars, more wandering monarch mages and stargazers came from the south to study the relic from the stars. That is the start of the settlement known as Starport! The inhabitants of this small human enclave will call this land Thracia. They exploited the fantastic services of the Pygmalion, that made their life easier. The Pygmalion achieved her objective of pacifying the life of humans, that previously were always at war with each other, by giving them all kinds of facilitation, so the society lost the high level of violence that was inherent before, as there was no more need to fight for the meagre resources, that were instead tapped by the Pygmalion. This way the new society of Thracia, the first name of the civilization growing on the Superstition Mountains, was mostly a society

dedicated to pleasure and debauchery. The humans enslaved the reptilians that were living in the area of Superstition Mountains. Passing barbarians (the ancestors of what will become the Skandaharians) occasionally tried conquering them, with poor results, due to the great services of the Pygmalion, and some other times they rather offered themselves as slaves, hoping to enjoy at least a small part of the great pleasures of the Thracians.

The Thracians, in order to avoid the cold climate of Superstition Mountains, asked the Pygmalion to dig for them an underground kingdom of pleasures. Eventually, the Pygmalion went too deep and discovered what should have stayed hidden: the lost civilization that ages before was the reptilian civilization and that worshipped the bloodthirsty Immortal named Thanatos!

The Pygmalion disappeared in the bowels of the earth and only a few roaming barbarians kept alive her legend and her cult. Some worshipped the Pygmalion as an Immortal, while others instead believed the Pygmalion to be Phellia's avatar.

## EPISODE TWO: THE CAVERNS OF THRACIA

Recommended soundtrack:

*"William Tell"*, by Gioacchino Rossini

This adventure can be played starting from the module *The Caverns of Thracia*<sup>4</sup>, written by Paul Jaquays, published by the Judges Guild, with a number of adaptations, changes or clarifications described below.

**Room 73: The Singing Caryatids.** One of the three caryatids is actually the Pygmalion! However her body from the outside is in all similar to the other two caryatids described, including its functions. She will be brought back to her former self by the triangular key that can be found in room 112 and which needs to be plugged into her body.

**Room 112: The treasure trove of the Minotaur King.** In this room, mixed up with all other treasures, there is a golden, triangular object that is big enough to be held in a human hand: on one side it is flat and smooth, while on the other side it has strangely crafted, delicate studs. If inserted in the appropriate way into the body of the right caryatid (as a kind of plug), it will revive it again as the mighty and glorious Pygmalion!

As a source of inspiration, you can imagine the technopowers of the Pygmalion as similar to the powers of the best equipped Oards from the classic module *Where Chaos Reigns*, written by Graeme Morris and published by TSR.

<sup>4</sup> Available as a [pdf product](#) from DriveThru

## INTERLUDE TWO

More rogue mages from Thonia reach the Superstition Mountains and the new found Pygmalion revives the society around Starport, which slowly grows, still with its peculiar culture of debauchery. Slavery is also very common and many people, especially barbarians, give themselves up voluntarily as slaves or mercenary warriors as there are rumors about the fact that the best slaves and mercenaries are eventually allowed into the decadent society of Starport as full citizens.

After several years of good service the Pygmalion is mysteriously lost again, raising a lot of anguish, only mitigated by the wide use of slavery to keep the life of the free citizens as easy and comfortable as before.

During these years, the name Duchy of the Peaks is used for the first time. The title of Duchy is used to make sure no great interest or retaliation desire is raised from the Emperor of Thonia, who doesn't like rivals. Not even in such a far, isolated country.

The Duchy of the Peaks welcomed refugees from all over, as long as they were happy to serve as slaves, as the use of reptilians (gatormen) as slaves went out of fashion over time.

In order to attract more people from the Stars, slaves were used to carve mysterious trenches in the mountains, that can only be seen from high in the skies and from that point of view look like drawings and are meant to attract spaceships to Starport. This was an ancient design by the Pygmalion, now worshipped more than ever as an

Immortal on her own or as Phellia's avatar by the locals. During these years the climate becomes a bit warmer and the Black Sea is free of ice for most of the year, apart from winter.

This time the souls, ready to be re-born oblivious of the past, will meet a demonic-looking creature with sharp eyes piercing space and time. He will mock them and order them to carry on with their project, if they don't want to be devoured.

## EPISODE THREE: A VISITOR FROM A DISTANT STAR

Recommended soundtrack:  
*"Rusalka"* by Antonin Dvorak



*Starship crash*

Eventually, another alien spaceship (looking for alternative places to start a colony, as their original planet was under attack and likely to fall to another species of aliens) visited Starport, and crash-landed like the

previous ones, due to an unexpected singularity that caused so many crash-landings in time.

Seeing this other star falling near Starport, the locals send a party of slaves willing to show off their worth and be made full citizens of the Peaks (the characters, of course!) to investigate.

This adventure can be played starting from the module *Dungeon from a Distant Star*<sup>5</sup>, written by Stuart Robertson, published by Robertsongames, with a number of adaptations, changes or clarifications described below.

Remove the first paragraph of the background and replace it with the above info to run this adventure.

Room 23. Crypt. In this room no alien can be found alive, but there is a half-damaged and half-mad android with a humanoid shape: Ran of Ah Foo! This android is somehow like the fabled Pygmalion with respect to its powers and abilities (that appear to be semi-divine), although with a male shape of otherworldly physical symmetry, but part of his memory banks and emotional circuits are damaged.

### INTERLUDE THREE

Ran of Ah Foo doesn't have the Pygmalion's programming aimed at taking care of the surrounding humans, but he is rather programmed for exploration. He therefore goes to investigate the closest singularity: the

<sup>5</sup> Available as a [Pay What you Want pdf](#) at DriveThru

Egg of Coot! He is also interested in magic and magical creatures, like dragons, that on his original planet are unknown or, if they were known in a very distant past, they are now replaced by technology. Ran of Ah Foo, having powers approximately like the Pygmalion, can be assumed to have technopowers similar to the powers of the best equipped Oards from the classic module *Where Chaos Reigns*, written by Graeme Morris and published by TSR<sup>6</sup>, but also with some magic-like ability coming from his study and imitation of Mystaran magic.

The souls this time meet with a very old-looking man with long, white hair and beard and sharp eyes piercing space and time. The old man doesn't speak, but looks at them with interest and smiles gently.

## EPISODE FOUR: THE SINGULARITY

Recommended soundtrack:

*"The Phantom of the Opera"* soundtrack, by Andrew Lloyd Webber

The first part of this episode is based on the adventure *Ties that bind*, that is included in *Dave Arneson's Blackmoor*<sup>7</sup>, written by Dave Arneson, Dustin Clingman, Jeff Quinn, Richard Pocklington and published by Zeitgeist Games (it is in Chapter 9). This part of the adventure is about finding a Blackmoorian noblewoman that disappeared, as she is controlled by the Egg of Coot. The Game Master will have to make

<sup>6</sup> Available as a [pdf product](#) on DriveThru

<sup>7</sup> Available as a [pdf product](#) in DriveThru

sure that she isn't caught before sailing towards the lands of the Egg of Coot as in the original adventure, but that instead she manages to escape to it, followed by the characters.

The characters will have to take break from their pursuit just before crossing the Black Sea and this will be the beginning of the second part of the adventure, that can be based on *All the Egg's Men*<sup>8</sup>, an Episode from Blackmoor MMRPG campaign, written by Dustin Clingman and Tad Kilgore, published by Zeitgeist Games. In this second part of the adventure, the characters will also have to gather as much information as possible about the Egg of Coot and its plans.

In this second part of the adventure, Skae (Chapter 4) should be replaced with the noblewoman that disappeared at the beginning of *Ties that bind* to make everything gel together. On top of this, in the same chapter, at the head of the Army, there should be the encounter with Ran of Ah Foo, an overpowered enemy that, once has demonstrated his superiority to the characters, should start a telepathic conversation with the Egg of Coot, accusing it of not being perfect, nor logic and, eventually, deciding to abandon its services, leaving the characters still (barely) alive and able to complete the adventure.

<sup>8</sup> Available as [a free download](#) upon registration at *The Comeback Inn Blackmoor* forum and following the instructions in this post

## INTERLUDE FOUR

Ran of Ah Foo moves to the Duchy of Ten, where, thanks to his overwhelming powers, he quickly becomes one of the ten Dukes, replacing one that he killed while serving the Egg of Coot. The Duchy of Ten was founded quite recently by more Thonian refugees and was largely ignored by the Duchy of the Peaks, despite being so close.

Ran of Ah Foo is then involved in several battles for the Duchy of Ten and he proves to be a real mastermind in battle, calculating with superhuman perfection and logic all actions and reactions. However, being mortal meatbags, sometimes his troops or his enemies have reactions that are beyond his calculations and this causes him to have a very strong crisis, pushing him to seek isolation.

Ran of Ah Foo is also making plans for a new capital for the Duchy of Ten (Starmorgan) and to replace all organic inhabitants of the Duchy with 10,000 androids, so his proposed new name for the Duchy will be the Duchy of Ten Thousand. However, he doesn't have time to pursue his most far fetched plans.

The souls this time meet with a man in his prime, with long, black hair and beard and sharp eyes piercing space and time. He smiles gently and tells them that the plan is progressing nicely and that he is very curious to see its conclusion.

If the characters ask for it, the Game Master can confirm that the man looks like the younger self of the old man with long hair and beard that they met previously.

## EPISODE FIVE: WARGAMES!

Recommended soundtrack:

*"1812 Overture"* by Piotr Ilich Tchaikovsky

On this Episode, all characters are the top generals of neighboring nations, each of them with specific motives. They may ally or betray each other.

Here are the six contenders in which the six players will be incarnated:

- The Duchy of Ten, guided by the Duke General Ran of Ah Foo. This is a leader always open to all possibilities, quick to switch alliances and attack the weakest contender on the field to get the most advantage in a cold and logical way, without affection for his lands and citizens, that he sacrifices without a second thought whenever he can get a strategic advantage.
- The Duchy of the Peaks, guided by the Abominable Snowfreak, Duke Whitehead, although it is whispered that the real power behind the throne is Sonia Sholako, his lover. The Duke's mercenary army is very powerful, although small (as they are motivated by the dream of becoming full citizens if they distinguish themselves enough in war), but the real secret weapon of this mountain nation is the ability to corrupt whatever enemy is camping within its borders. They are very quick to switch their alliance to the closest or strongest army.
- The Afridhi, guided by Zugzul's priestess Toska Rusa. The Afridhi are slavers and attack relentlessly the Duchy of Ten. Their final target, however, is Blackmoor. They worship the fire and hate water, so they are a bit clumsy when crossing rivers and even swamps.
- The Skandaharians, barbarian seafarers always looking for plunder, under the leadership of the first Jarl Thorsen. They opportunistically attack the weakest coastal settlements and don't like going too much inland, unless it is along rivers.
- The Egg of Coot, an enigmatic being, controlling a strange army of creatures of many kinds, often with grafted limbs, and interested above all in plundering magic items and magic users to drain their powers, as it is said that the Egg of Coot gets its power from draining magic.
- The Earl of Vestfold, the future of Blackmoor, is mostly interested in defense, and attacks other nations only as pre-emptive attacks to negate their chances of attacking Blackmoor, rather than to conquer them.

This adventure is in practice a military campaign (wargame) to be played by the various characters following the motives of their army. The references for setting up this adventure can be found in *The First Fantasy Campaign*, by Dave Arneson, published by The Judges Guild. This publication leaves some details under described, and the Game Master will have to be ready to fill some gaps.

The characters can of course exchange messages, agree to alliances, break alliances,

attempt sneak attacks, try assassinating each other, hire and fire heroes, etc. as true generals.

On this occasion, the end of the adventure doesn't coincide necessarily with the death of the characters, but rather their souls are withdrawn from the bodies they occupy.

## INTERLUDE FIVE

Ran of Ah Foo, perhaps shocked by a military defeat that he didn't foresee, or by the fact that the other Dukes of Ten didn't approve his blueprints for the new capital Starmorgan (that was eventually built along solid Thonian architectural canons), disappears, while the Duchy of Ten is completely subdued by the Afridhi.

In the Duchy of the Peaks, old Duke Whitehead marries an exotic dancer, Sonia



Sonia Sholako

Sholako, then disappears under mysterious circumstances. The crown passes smoothly to Sonia Sholako.

The souls meet again with the man they encountered last time: in his prime, with long, black hair and beard and sharp eyes piercing space and time. He is very curious to see how the plan develops, because, the more he studies it, the more he struggles to understand its vast boundaries. However, he won't provide any more information.

## EPISODE SIX: THE TEMPLE OF THE PYGMALION

Recommended soundtrack:  
 "Il Trovatore" by Giuseppe Verdi

Gin of Salik, one of the greatest wizards of the time (mentioned in *The First Fantasy Campaign*, page 15) studied the ancient legend of the Pygmalion and dedicated his life to finding her. For this reason, he moved from Salik to the Duchy of the Peaks and is now called Gin of Kralc (Kralc is the small settlement, not far from Starport, where Gin's new tower is). He offered, as a payment, huge riches, or full citizenship of the Duchy of the Peaks, or himself as a slave for a year, to whoever finds for him the Pygmalion, and there is news that an ancient temple has been found in Superstition Mountain. The characters come across the map by chance and realize that this is a great opportunity for them to sort out the rest of their lives...



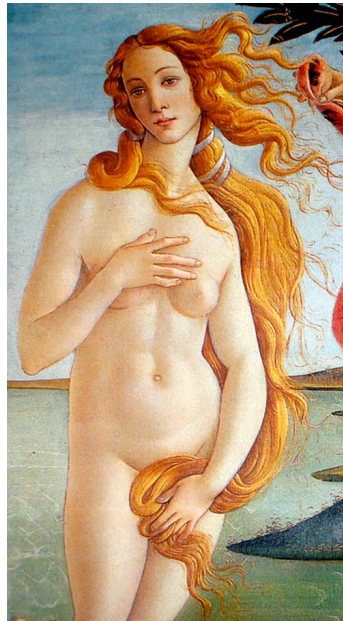
This adventure can be played starting from the module *The Temple of Poseidon*, written by Paul Reiche III, published by Dragon Publishing, a division of TSR Hobbies, in *Dragon Magazine* #46, February 1981<sup>9</sup>, with a number of adaptations, changes or clarifications described below.

The location of the Temple is somewhere in Superstition Mountain.

Replace Poseidon and the Sea Lord with, obviously, the Pygmalion and the Lady of all Graces.

Room 18, there is no great bearded man emerging from the waters, but of course an amazing female of otherworldly beauty.

Room 31, inside a sarcophagus is the Pygmalion. She won't tell what happened to her during the many years she was away, nor will she explain how or why she ended up in this underground temple. She doesn't seem to be under any kind of stress and suffers no visible damage. The myth of the Pygmalion will live on: she will be the one that will subdue the mighty Marfeldt the Barbarian, perhaps the



*Appearance of the  
Pygmalion*

<sup>9</sup> A [description page](#) for this issue is on Rpg.net

most dangerous warrior of these times, on his rampage against the Duchy of the Peaks, although in such a way that no one will know it, as this time she behaves in a much more stealthy and hidden way compared to the past.

## INTERLUDE SIX

The Afridhi conquer the Duchy of Ten and enslave its population in their terrible grip. They also threaten Blackmoor, while they reach some kind of arrangement with the Duchy of the Peaks. The rulers of Blackmoor can't convince the Emperor of Thonia to help them and, when they repel the Afridhi invasion by themselves, they get removed from their position by the Emperor, as he didn't order them to fight the Afridhi.

After this insult, Blackmoor fights back for its independence and becomes an independent kingdom.

In the meanwhile, Ran of Ah Foo, the strongest General of Ten disappears. This is due to the shock of losing his last battle, that he calculated so carefully, but his predictions didn't materialize and he went into one of his legendary fits of depression.

After a long time, an oracle reveals news about him: he is in Port Dacoit, pretending to be an old madman. If somebody could be sent to remind him of his duties and to persuade him to go back and fight the Afridhi, then there would be a new hope for Ten!

The souls meet again with the man they met last time: in his prime, with long, black hair and beard and sharp eyes piercing space and

time. He urges them to stay strong and keep going, as the conclusion of the plan is slowly but surely coming forward.

## EPISODE SEVEN: PORT DACOIT, THE CITY OF THIEVES

Recommended soundtrack:

*"The Thieving Magpie"* by Gioacchino Rossini

The Afridhi have no experience with seafaring, due in part to their loathing of waters, and Port Dacoit is one of the few ports they conquered. For this reason, apart from the initial bloodshed during conquest, to make sure they are taken seriously, they treat this city in a somewhat "gentler" way than their other conquests. A minimum Afridhi presence, and a light hand at governance, insures that the city maintains a good reputation and does not drive away all the people with a good knowledge of seafaring. This way, Port Dacoit, known also as Blacksand from its volcanic and sandy soil, has been left a bit to itself during last few years. The Afridhi continue to cultivate some seafaring skill here, in case they are needed in the future for conquering Blackmoor. Now, most of the surviving inhabitants are thieves, assassins or morons... but they can sail!

Ran of Ah Foo found his privacy here and he's drawing very complex plans, involving programming 10,000 androids and winning the war with precision calculation and detail control. He needs a lot of time and quiet for these calculations!

This adventure can be played as a sandbox in Port Dacoit, starting from the module *Blacksand*<sup>10</sup> (only Chapter 3, excluding the History section), written by Graham Bottley, published by Arion Games, with a number of adaptations, changes or clarifications described below.

Carsepolis is an ancient, walled pirate stronghold originally founded by the Duke of the Peaks, Carse, as a present for the Amber Channel pirates (that in exchange stopped disrupting the traffic of slaves, spices and gems to and from Starport and acquired the typical debauchery of the Duchy of the Peaks - a classic Starport strategy) over an even more ancient settlement (the Waystation, from Episode 1). Carsepolis is now buried underground below the surface of Port Dacoit.

The Guild of Wizards and Sorcerers is actually what it says and it protects both Wizards and Sorcerers, that in Port Dacoit are not fighting all the time against each other!

Hause Hadrak is owned by a family that betrayed Port Dacoit, the Tenian ruling Van Ringe family and took their mansion. More recently they claimed that they are the oldest family in the city, while the truth is that they descend from a treacherous pirate.

House D'Arrago is a family originated from an exiled noble from south Thonia, due to his bad deeds.

The four noble houses currently in Port Dacoit (Hardak, Kobassis, Sturtz-Chenser and D'Arrago) are all Afridhi collaborators, in

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<sup>10</sup> Available as a [pdf product](#) from DriveThru

exchange for power over the City of Thieves. Unverified gossip says that they all sold their souls to Zugzul and therefore they are under his control.

The City Guard is made of a mix of races conquered by the Afridhi during their long march to Ten and Blackmoor and they are very faithful to their masters, although undisciplined and debauched.

G15 – Arakor Nicodemus: this is the hidden identity (crazy, old mage) that Ran of Ah Foo took to stop being harassed and take his time and think about the best way to program 10,000 androids and retake the nation. The objective of this Episode is to locate Ran of Ah Foo and convince him to come back to his duties as Tenian Duke and General. If convinced, he will trigger the next Episode.

T7 – Temple of Solinthar, replace with Uzu Kul. This temple has fallen somewhat into disuse as to avoid displeasing the Afridhi. However, it is tolerated that services are held when a ship is about to leave the port or when it returns from a long sail.

T8 – Temple of Fourga, replace with Zugzul. This temple, the most beautiful of Port Dacoit, was once dedicated to Khoronus. It was desecrated and recently it was rededicated to Zugzul, although true Afridhi don't seem to worship there, but almost all Tenians that converted to the cult of Zugzul come to this temple to worship.

T9 – Temple of Sukh, replace with Mwajin. It followed a path similar to the Temple of Uzu Kul, but it sees even less crowds.

T10 – Temple of Kukulak, replace with Kadis. This temple was converted to the cult of Zugzul right after the fall of Port Dacoit. Nowadays only the few Afridhi resident in Port Dacoit go there. If a non-Afridhi ARE found here, they are often sacrificed to Zugzul.

T11 – Temple of Elim, replace with Med-a.

All references to Logaan are replaced by references to Death.

Lord Azzur is actually a Lich possessed by Zugzul and its background story needs to be rewritten accordingly.

## INTERLUDE SEVEN

After Ran of Ah Foo is found again, he states that he needs to focus on his calculations for some time more, but if his followers want to help and expedite his plans in the meanwhile, they should clear the way to the 10,000 androids that he wants to re-program.

He gives indications to an ancient spaceship where the androids should be found still intact. This is the spaceship that long ago brought Satura to Mystara and crash-landed not too far from Starport.

On this occasion, the characters don't necessarily need to die and be reincarnated, as the next Episode is very close in time, although the Game Master can choose to do it.

Potentially, for next Episode, a few characters could have purified themselves of their sins and could remember all their previous lives... and the Immortal *project*.

Nobody will believe them, of course, apart from the other characters that went through the same kind of purification, leaving them with a free will. This should make the following adventures easier for the characters that completed their purification.

## EPISODE EIGHT: THE SEARCH FOR THE ANCIENT ARMY

Recommended soundtrack:  
*"Pictures at an Exhibition"*  
 by Modest Mussorgsky

This adventure can be played starting from the module *Expedition to the Barrier Peaks*<sup>11</sup>, written by Gary Gygax, published by TSR Hobbies, with a number of adaptations, changes or clarifications described below.

This adventure is not set in the Grand Duchy of Geoff but in the Duchy of the Peaks.

Background information should be limited to Ran of Ah Foo's information to locate the entry to the ancient spaceship.

The spaceship comes from the world of queen-mage Satura (see Episode 1) and crash-landed on Mystara and not on the World of Greyhawk.

Level VI, Cargo Hold areas have lifts going down to Level VII, where 10,000 androids still to be programmed have been dormant for millennia. Ran of Ah Foo wants them to be transported to a safe place for

reprogramming. This will probably require some kind of deal with the Duchy of the Peaks.



*Climbing the Peaks*

## INTERLUDE EIGHT

After the wars against the Afridhi (if the Game Master wants to add another adventure to play in this same timeline, perhaps the *City of Gods*<sup>12</sup> module, by Dave Arneson and David Ritchie could be added) there is a very long time lapse. During this time, Blackmoor civilization flourishes and dies under the Great Rain of Fire, to be covered by the polar ice cap, after the axis of Mystara is shifted by the terrible cataclysm. The inhabitants of the Duchy of the Peaks of course follow the same destiny of Blackmoor, due to the short distance.

When the global axis shifted, Starport was occupied by kobolds, much more resistant to the Wasting Disease than other races. They quickly got quite a lot of their advanced technology, starting up a glorious civilization somewhere under the polar ice cap (powered with the nuclear reactors that

<sup>11</sup> Available as [pdf product](#) from DriveThru

<sup>12</sup> Available as [pdf product](#) from DriveThru

were present in Starport, of course). Outside their technological refuge below the ice, the planet took centuries to heal and civilization took millennia to flourish again.

This civilization is the “fabled” kobold civilization, very isolationist and based on a highly scientific and philosophical approach to life (canine teeth of predators are replaced by flat teeth of the vegetarians). They could possibly rule Mystara with their high tech, but they are not interested in power, just in knowledge and philosophy. Their only “weakness” is that they like travelling in secret and helping “underdeveloped” kobold tribes all over the world (that's where Kurtulmak's "shining" armor suit comes from, for example).

The souls this time meet with a very old-looking man with long, white hair and beard and sharp eyes piercing space and time. The old man is the same that was met after Episode Three and says that time progressed a lot since their last incarnation, but the project is still ongoing and their help is needed to complete it.

## EPISODE NINE: THE BARBARIAN JUDGEMENT

Recommended soundtrack:

*“The Water Goblin”* by Antonin Dvorak

The characters are incarnated as a group of kobolds. They are part of the Whistling Wind horde and, like the wind, their horde roams vast steppes (in northern Skothar) with their grazers. Their ancestral culture is very low-

tech, but their mythology tells about a fabled kobold civilization of outstanding refinement.

According to their culture, tribesmen desire an honorable death, fighting face to face with an honorable enemy to meet their ancestors in a fabled land where they can stay together forever in glory: this is the Road to Glory. For them, the only honorable death is one found in hand to hand combat. Ranged weapons are considered good only for hunting or for cowards to be used against other kobolds.

Recently, the Mourning Star appeared in the skies, initiating a terrible, never-ending winter that is taking a terrible toll on the huge herds of the horde and on the tribesmen.

During this hard times, the horde is attacked by new, mysterious enemies coming from south (the characters should be involved in some of these skirmishes): the enemies are in fact human troops with higher technological and magical advancements, taking advantage of heavy metal armor, long range crossbow bolts and wands casting Fireball and Lightning Bolt spells, while the kobolds are fundamentally at Stone Age technology level, with no magic abilities. For the kobolds it is practically impossible to get close enough to fight in an honorable melee and eventually the horde leaders order the tribes to fall back north.

Eventually, the horde is surrounded in a flatland called, with ironic hindsight, the Shallow Grave. All around it, there are frozen lakes, difficult to spot under the snow that keeps falling.

During just another skirmish, enemy troops, with heavy armor, break the ice and sink in the lake below. This can happen various times. After these episodes, the enemies seems to change strategy: now they just wait, shooting at any kobold that tries escaping. During the impasse, cold is slowly but surely grinding down the horde and there is no hope in sight.

The heroes are abducted by a super technological flying saucer and taken into an underground base, run on nuclear power (what in ancient times was Starport).

People in boilersuits, faces covered by breathing masks, control the heroes with paralyzing rays. They are stripped, completely shaven, carefully washed, disinfected and given strange medicines. They are fed exclusively with tasteless nutribars.

Eventually, the heroes are put into an aseptic labyrinth, like guinea pigs. They encounter logic puzzles that force them to work cleverly together to progress, get food, avoid traps and, finally, there is a door that can be opened only by keeping a kobold-sized hamster wheel in continuous movement: the exit. One hero will have to stay behind in the wheel, while the others can escape.

Then there is a group fight against a big troll, requiring collaboration to survive.

Then there is a session against a mechanic spider. It is too fast and powerful and the only escape option is having one hero staying behind and fighting it, while the others flee.

Typically, the situations call for a single to sacrifice for the community (or vice versa).

The trials continue until the heroes either refuse to “play” or only one of them is left standing.

Whether they refuse to “play” or keep going until the last one, eventually the super technological “Masters” reveal themselves, congratulating the heroes and telling them they are worth saving, like their ancestors .

The “Masters” remove their breathing masks: they look like kobolds too! However, their teeth are not pointy, like carnivores (and the heroes), but flat, like grazers. In fact, they eat only vegetarian nutribars, trim their hairs carefully and are hygiene fanatics.

This is the “fabled” kobold civilization, very isolationist and based on a highly scientific and philosophical approach to life. They could rule the world if they were interested in power, but they just love knowledge and philosophy.

They travel periodically to "underdeveloped" kobold tribes all over the world, take “samples” (like the heroes), make “civilization tests” and, occasionally, lend a hand to their kind (that's where Kurtulmak's mythic armor comes from, for example).

Having passed “the tests” the heroes are allowed to roam freely in the otherworldly underground base where they meet legendary kobold heroes of the past: Road to Glory!

When the Heroes mention the dire situation of their horde, the tech-kobolds will sigh, as they have a law that doesn't allow such dramatic interventions: their "help" can only be a little nudge, but in the tactical map it is very clear that the enemy troops will overpower the horde. Just a nudge won't suffice.

The tech-kobolds will also show the Mourning Star, an asteroid that will cause huge destruction and climate change, passing very close to Mystara, but they built a nuclear super missile that will deflect it. In theory they could use it to destroy the enemy instead, but the law doesn't allow it. The enemy will destroy the horde before the asteroid hits Mystara.

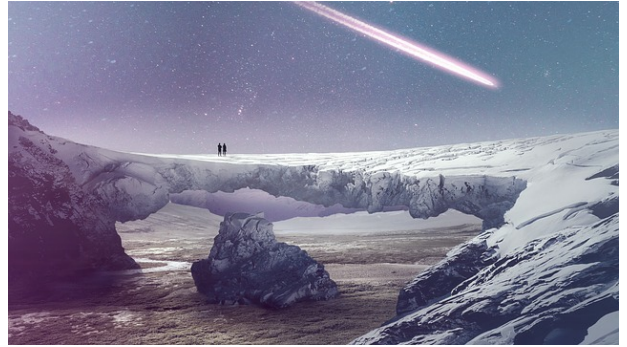
The heroes have to decide between staying put in this fake heaven, leaving the horde to a grim destiny, or using the missile against the enemy, causing a massive fallout, but perhaps allowing most of the horde to survive, as kobolds are a resistant race, until the collision with the asteroid.

If the heroes choose to use the missile against the enemy, then the tech-kobolds, realizing what kind of damage technology can do, hastily build a second missile to destroy the asteroid, effectively saving the planet as intended, and then, stoically, they destroy their own civilization in a blast, removing this source of technological knowledge (and danger) for the world.

If the heroes decide not to save themselves or their horde, in full Duchy of the Peaks fashion, and let the tech-kobolds destroy the asteroid instead, the adventure ends here anyway.

## INTERLUDE NINE

Whether or not they completed the path to get rid of sins, all the character now can remember their nine previous "lives". During



the following Episode, the characters should be able to make the most of all bonuses and advantages earned so far, by completing successfully the previous Episodes.

The "souls" meet an overwhelmingly powerful being with female appearance, flowing red hair, fair skin and sharp eyes piercing space and time. If they ask the question, the heroes can be informed that it is the same powerful being they met at the beginning of the campaign.

She finally explains that their project was started to prevent magic from being wiped out from Mystara (she won't say that this would also prevent the very existence of the Immortals in this universe and that the Immortals are bound to strict rules to avoid direct interference on the Prime Material Plane and therefore need to rely on heroes like the characters to push their agenda). A foul race of time travelers, the oards, from the planet of Aelos, is time travelling to many different planets, destroying retrospectively the development of magic (and religion), to

supplant them with logic, philosophy and technology: they need to protect their planet and their way of living from technology!

## EPISODE TEN: WHERE CHAOS REIGNS!

Recommended soundtrack:

*"The Isle of the Dead"* by Sergej Rachmaninov

Episode Ten is divided in various parts, where each time the "souls" meet the Immortal with a female appearance, flowing red hair, fair skin and sharp eyes piercing space and time that they met at the beginning. She is still running her mysterious project and asks the characters to support her against the oards, without telling much about them. In particular, she will not mention that Aelos and Mystara are two different names for the same planet, used at different times.

During this Episode, if the characters can't achieve the objective at the end of each Part, they are left stranded in space and time, as the Immortal disappears and can't bring them back anymore, resulting in an unsuccessful conclusion to the campaign.

Of course, all following Parts of Episode Ten are based on *Where Chaos Reigns*, written by Graeme Morris and published by TSR<sup>13</sup>.

<sup>13</sup> Available as a [pdf product](#) on DriveThru

## EPISODE TEN, PART ONE: IN THE BEGINNING

The characters are sent to the original planet where Satura (and the Pygmalion) came from by the female Immortal that started the *project*. They are sent to a very ancient time, when magic (and religion) were still developing (early Stone Age, early times for humanity). The Immortals can in fact be defeated by the oards in two ways: either by removing magic from the universe, as magic is the very nature of the Immortals, or by removing all religions, as Immortals wither and vanish if they are not worshipped.

What is not clarified to the characters is that this planet is actually Mystara (and approximately the area that will become the Duchy of the Peaks), but on another time / timeline, and that Satura went back home not with a journey in space, but rather with a journey in time. She was time-stranded.

The objective for the characters is to keep the populations with magic and religion alive, then they will once again face the female Immortal that they met at the beginning.

## EPISODE TEN, PART TWO: FORGE OF POWER

This time, the Immortal with a female appearance sends the characters to another time and place: the past of the planet of Ran of Ah Foo. Once again, it is still Mystara (and approximately the area that will become the Duchy of the Peaks) on another time and timeline, but this is not communicated to the characters.



### EPISODE TEN, PART THREE: BRONZE AND IRON

Another trip to “a different planet” (with not much further detail) sponsored by the Mystaran Immortal. However, the characters may start thinking that it was always the same planet every time, as its inhabitants may remember them in their legends related to previous parts of this Episode.

### EPISODE TEN, PART FOUR: ISLAND OF SORCERERS

The announced trip to another “different planet” may raise more doubts in the characters, similarly to previous expeditions, as it is always the same planet (a different time and timeline of Mystara). The Immortal driving this *project* keeps avoiding all questions that may cause doubts.

### EPISODE TEN, PART FIVE: THE ENTROPY BUBBLE

This is the final climax of the campaign. The characters, at the end of Part Four, should have acquired enough information and equipment to travel (or be transported by the Immortal as previously, although this option is less preferable in the climax of the story arc) to the Entropy Bubble, an oard location out of space and time. The location is not so dull and oppressive as described in the original adventure module, but more logical and technologic in nature. On the way into the Entropy Bubble, the characters may glimpse, in the chaotic landscape outside space and time, a huge Vortex.

Once the characters reach the Column and earn their chance to destroy the Entropy Bubble, that is the last sign of existence of the oards in the universe, one of them comes forward and tries to convince them not to do it. She says that the oards are actually the true representatives of mankind and that all their adventures took place on Mystara, a planet that had million years of history without either magic, or religion. The Immortals, together with religion and magic... and the ability to manipulate time, came to this universe from the mysterious Vortex, but are originally aliens from a different dimension and invaded this universe to colonize it.

The oards tried to defend their universe from the attacks of the Immortals, that manipulated time to bring mankind back to a state where technology was very underdeveloped and taught them religion and magic, but the original representatives of mankind struggled before learning how to travel in time. During this time, the Immortals manipulated the hearts and soul of the inhabitants of Mystara to the point that they convinced them with lies to act against themselves.

Suddenly, the female Immortal with flowing red hair, fair skin and sharp eyes piercing space and time appears, just outside the Entropy Bubble. She says that clearly the oards haven't learnt to manipulate time fully, as now there is no longer a way to say what the original status of this universe was, because history changed so many times (she doesn't confirm it explicitly, but she doesn't say that the oard's explanation is false, only that it doesn't matter anymore)... but now they finally won: technology and logic have

now been completely expelled from this universe, limiting them on the Entropy Bubble, outside time and space. She then urges the characters to destroy the Column and collapse the Bubble once and for all.

The oard says that, while the Entropy Bubble has now been pushed out of time and space, it still has all the knowledge required to bring the universe and mankind back to the situation it was before the Immortals' attack, wiping out all religions and consequently all Immortals and all magic. It all depends on the characters.

Now it is up to the characters to decide the story of the universe: magic or technology? Who will they chose? This may be the beginning of a new world and a new era!

## Beholders of Mysraa

(Continued from [page 108](#))

### Final Note by Author

I created these locations using *Dragon Magazine* #139, and the various Beholder D&D books, of which TSR9521: "*Monstrous Arcana - I, Tyrant*" was the most important, as I used the city of Kaggash to create Kargash.

The 72 miles hex map I used was found on [Wombat's website](#). The website appears to be from John Walter Biles, but you'll notice that the maps are in a sub-directory called FrenchSiteMaps. Shawn Stanley recalled that the site, which is now no longer online, was

run by Thibault Sarlat. He noticed that some of the maps in the folder have his name on them, and thus suspects that all of the maps may have been created by Thibault, not John.

I used this map (the only detailed hex map at that moment on Skothar) to be able to create a 24 mile hex map, to make the Kargash location maps as presented above. Together with the inset of the Master boxed set map, the region/location of the Kargash region is made clear.



# Returned Blackmoor:

## A Darkened Grim Shadow of its Former Self

by Brian Rubinfeld

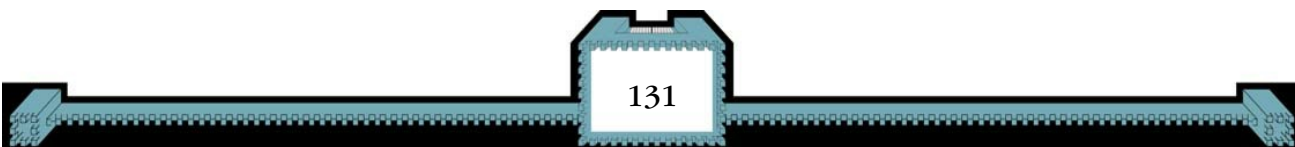
*Blackmoor City, an illustration by Aleksei-Liakh*

### INTRODUCTION:

Ever since I became interested in the Known World and beyond, I was always fascinated by Blackmoor more than anything. My modus operandi when it came to D&D always leaned towards “Science Fantasy” rather than the straight up Medieval Heroic Fantasy that the game is better known for. When I discovered that there were plans to bring Blackmoor into Mystara via a boxed set, I was amazed and all the more disappointed that this ended up scrapped, along with the rest of the line. As for the article itself, it borrows heavily from dark fantasy, dystopian fiction, post-apocalyptic fiction and gothic science fiction... with tons of subtle nods here and there to things. Not to mention, other projects and ideas from the community are alluded to here, like Mystaraspace. Because of these inspirations,

this article takes a slightly more mature theme, even though certain topics are only examined briefly or alluded to.

The gist of the actual game that inspired this was the heroes found the good ol' Inn from the DA series and helped save Blackmoor from many plots. They then discovered the Oard (from CM6) and battled them a fair bit (not the whole module, just enough to introduce them), only to discover they've found their way to Blackmoor. The semi-episodic game detailed the war against the Oard and the development of Blackmoor, leading to its prophesied doom. The players helped use the Oards' time tampering tech, alongside the Comeback Inn, to help save Blackmoor. When the players returned to see the fruits of their labors, they were greeted with the outskirts of the dark, dystopian mockery that is Returned



Blackmoor. The game sadly ended there, which is where the article picks up and elaborated in the timeline slightly.

This work is made with the assumption of the year 1000 AC, when the Adventures in Blackmoor modules takes place initially. Albeit, this is an alternate timeline created by the events of the DA line as well as CM6 Where Chaos Reigns. However, this article wasn't made with any mechanical assumptions in mind, despite a heavy basis off the original Basic/BECMI books and AD&D 2E Boxed Sets. However, beyond looks into the earlier age of Blackmoor, very little official material exists on its rise to becoming a world conquering technomancy superpower. As for placement, it was decided by plenty of debates and research to be set in Northeastern Skothar.

*“Those who seek out this tundra gem always meet the same fate, a gruesome demise. Every time, some addled exploration team with grand notions of fame and fortune plot their expeditions to the northern reaches of Skothar. They say the remains of a once mighty civilization rest there in deathly slumber. Before they set foot on the continent, the majority of their own troops are wiped out in some horrid manner. And those left? Why, they're too mad to communicate properly! We need to end these insane plans to head there, or we'll be next! Besides, how could such things be permitted to occur? There's only one logical reason behind this, the Immortals are sending a grave warning to all who dare to challenge them. Some subjects are best left unknown. There are things out there that our feeble mortal minds dare not try to comprehend. Such*

*knowledge leads to oblivion! Something is alive up there, something we are not prepared to handle. I pray to the Immortals we don't discover it. May we either be granted ignorance or survive the same fate as those before us.”*

A waterlogged journal entry of a Marcos De'Casagrande, First Mate of the sunken wreckage formally known as The Ever Vigilant Mariner.

## A GREATLY ALTERED TIMELINE OF EVENTS:

- **1,000 AC:** A team of adventurers learn of The Blackmoor Comeback Inn<sup>1</sup>. Hepath Nun, Gern, Charo and Rilk discover its incredible power. Due to some tampering, Duke Markovic discovers useful powers from it. Meanwhile, the events of the adventure CM6-TSR9158-Where Chaos Reigns concludes slightly differently. In short, a back door is left open to the Known World by accident, and what's left of the Oard take notice. Upon skimming through history, they discover the same Comeback Inn as the heroes of Blackmoor.
- **3976 BC:** Adventurers from the future aid King Uther, after discovering a plot from Duke Markovic alias "The Iron Duke". The heroes, and the Oard<sup>2</sup> by proxy, discover the City of the Gods and the problems that it has caused. After St. Stephan is dealt with and outreach to

<sup>1</sup> The Comeback Inn is detailed in module DA1: "Adventures in Blackmoor" [TSR9172]

<sup>2</sup> Oards appear in module CM6: "Where Chaos Reigns" [TSR9158].

Capt. Riesling is attempted, a brief calm comes to the region.

- **3975 BC:** As conflicts are being addressed in the Duchy of Ten, the Oard begin to sow their treachery and deception across Blackmoor. Magic in nearby regions is slowly being corrupted, as the Oard do what they can to render mages insane and find means of tainting their power. As a result of this corruption, Blackmoor City is attacked by a mysterious wizard called “Egethar the Astounding”<sup>3</sup>. The ensuing assault cripples outward city defenses. Following the mad mage's defeat, the Oard trace him back to a dread entity called “The Egg of Coot”. An unholy allegiance is made. Through this partnership, the Oard find their means of twisting magic into something wicked.
- **3974 BC:** Bolstered by the Egg, the Oard do whatever they can to coax the Afridhi into raiding the City for whatever strange technologies lie within, while infiltrating the city and shifting any blame to magic users. The heroes, who attended to Uther, banished St. Stephen's Cult of the Frog and aided the City of the Gods, return to find a new menace. Beastmen are armed with strange devices they barely understand, mages are going insane in droves, the metallic grand city beside the desert is under siege by the very raiders that helped get the party inside in the first place, St. Stephen has taken up new allies. A joint effort between the Kingdom, Riesling's crew and the extra temporal heroes not only expose the Oard, but push them back.

<sup>3</sup> NPC from a campaign, implied to be a manifestation of the Egg of Coot itself.

Much of the cyborg menace is wiped out, but many vow revenge. Artifacts are given to the heroes that send messages transcending time itself.

- **3489 BC:** The Oard slightly slip up, almost revealing themselves again after helping to push steam based technology throughout the region. To their dismay, magic continues to help to build these creations. In response, they weaponize steam inventors that rebuke magic in all forms. This age of steam ends in a great war. The heroes are brought back to face a familiar menace.
- **3030 BC:** Greatly wounded and soon to be eliminated, the Oard enact one final plan... to obliterate Blackmoor and put all blame on magic. They return to their plan of corrupting magic users from the shadow, capturing countless mages to either push into tampering with dark powers or abusing them to the point of madness. Chaos magic is introduced to Blackmoor in part from the Oards' mischief and in part from The Egg, causing disaster after disaster around the region. Government officials within the original city greatly worry about the uptick in unstable magic. Efforts to preserve the main city and nearby regions are put in place.
- **3001 BC:** The “Plague of the Arcane” reaches a feverish outbreak, as wild magic surges rampage through the continent, causing mass destruction and leaving a magical radiation in its wake. Those who can sense the Egg realize that it has become far more powerful than ever before. It begins to absorb its remaining

allies of the Oard any way it can, much to their horror. A forcefield-like shield against this corruption proves to be useful, but not a permanent solution to this issue. However, life seems to somewhat stabilize amidst the apocalyptic chaos. The Heroes are called to return one final time, to help put an end to the Oard as well as the Egg, who has finally revealed itself. All sorts of horrific arcane mutants are created, many being former Beastmen, as well as a variety of other races. This timeline has accidentally created the progenitors to a variety of new humanoids in Mystara. Countless Blackmoorians are affected by this.

- **3000 BC:** Although originating from a different cause, The Great Rain of Fire occurs like as if it was meant to be. Either way, most records of this cause are lost. The constant use of the Comeback Inn, along with the Oard time travel technology gave protected Blackmoorians the kind of power and gateway needed to leave. Many Blackmoorians near the edge of the blast zone (who weren't shielded) absorb enough of the powerful energy to become Immortals in their own right. These Immortals decide to remain in the destroyed landscape, awaiting the return of their home. Much of Blackmoor is plunged into what they'd consider the distant future. However, the coordinates of the heroes' timeline of 1000 AC are altered due to some of the corrupt magic seeping in and causing damage to the machines. While there is no widespread carnage like the other regions, it causes a glitch that sends them several decades too early. The remains of the Oard are

wiped out in the Great Rain of Fire, at least in this timeline.

- **ALT2999 BC:** The New Immortals, fearing the wrath of the Mystaran Immortals, leave the Material Plane.<sup>4</sup> However, they continue to watch over Northern Skothar from afar, making sure nothing tampers with the region much. This persists until Blackmoor's return. Few new Immortals make their presence or names known, even after Blackmoor resurfaces. However, more dangerous entities such as "The King in Crimson"



*The King in Crimson*

<sup>4</sup> As the Immortals of Mystara considered Blackmoor dangerous in canon, the Blackmoor Immortals would not be allowed to join them. Thus, they remain in their own space for the time being.

- **ALT967 AC:** The surviving Blackmoorian colony emerges through a demiplane to witness a tundra wasteland containing some unearthed bits of their old home. The machines used to measure time distance have completely broken down, only succeeding in giving the current age of their new Mystaran home. In truth, it's the fault of both the chaos magic from past and present tampering with the systems. Word begins to spread that the time they have chosen was off by decades. The general response from the public is disappointment, despite their gratitude for being saved. Attempts to reassure the population are made by seeking out any trace of the famed heroes. Reger I and Andahar still maintain influence of this new Blackmoor, for now. The Immortals of Blackmoor plea to have the land spared from the wrath of Mystara's Immortals. They're met with silence, for now.
- **ALT969 AC:** Sickness, below zero temperatures and low morale ravage the displaced colony. Reports bring back that most of the heroes are likely not even born yet. This further damages morale as civilians become more fed up with the current rulers. General Gwyn Allogost, a faithful aid to Blackmoor's military, begins to boost the hopes of civilians through careful planning, rationing and empowered speeches. His true motives aren't clear to the rest of the empire yet.
- **ALT970 AC:** Allogost stages a violent coup against the ruling powers of the empire. The insurrection goes on for over 2 years, resulting in annihilation of the royal line. With approval of the citizens, he's appointed supreme emperor of Returned Blackmoor.
- **ALT976 AC:** New energy shields are completed to block the lands off from the awful climate, attempts at maintaining crops and cattle are made far easier with enclosed artificial climates. The people have been won over to their strict "yet fair" emperor, as life seems to improve.
- **ALT978 AC:** Loki, completely unaware of Returned Blackmoor, harnesses the chaos magic that still resides around Skothar. While his control over it is limited, he's capable of infusing it into pockets of magic.. Some theorize it infected the Red Curse of the Savage Coast<sup>5</sup> as Loki traveled with his mad acquisition. Fortunately, the chaos magic isn't strong enough to cause much damage. However, its appearance in the region has lead to wild mages becoming a reality. The Blackmoorian Immortals are sent into a panic trying to understand the reason for Loki's mischief, later discovering that he is oblivious to Blackmoor itself. Other Mystaran immortals are curious by Loki's actions.
- **ALT979 AC:** Blackmoorian scientists improve the energy shields, allowing them to expand and take more land with it over time. In one year alone, several miles are assimilated. Outsiders take notice of the strange magical alien wall that eats the land itself. The word slowly spreads and most commoners are deeply afraid. .

<sup>5</sup> More on the Red Curse can be found in the "Red Steel" boxed set.

- **ALT980 AC:** A tribe of fast-runner rakasta find themselves taken by the barrier after dismissing the rumors from crazed adventurers. Their original goal was to create an oasis in the frozen tundra, using various shamastic magics. Due to their skepticism regarding “magic land-eating walls”, they’re grabbed during a consumption phase of the barrier. Much of the tribe migrated further into the region, only to be discovered by Allogost's fleets. The tribe manages to petition for their stay within the region, eventually settling down in a far off plot of land. They are mostly left alone, but the later rise of extreme rule results in them being a heavily repressed minority. However, their knowledge of terraforming has given them some leeway compared to others.

- **ALT982 AC:** Overly curious adventurers discover that the wall has two phases, the blockade phase and a very quick consumption phase.<sup>6</sup> By exploiting the shield’s timing and use of teleportation magic, they find their way inside after hearing rumors of a rich and glowing city deep within the coastline of Skothar's coldest reaches. After being taken in by guards, they are brought before The Emperor, slowly becoming more delusional from trauma and isolation. He mistakes the group for the heroes of ancient Blackmoor, welcoming them in.

The adventurers took to looting whatever they could when eyes weren't on them. However, they were quickly caught and questioned. Upon learning that the General-turned-Leader had been tricked in one of his delirious states, the group was executed in public on a day dubbed "Traitor's Day". This holiday becomes a yearly event where anyone who "betrays" the nation is executed as a publicized display. Brutal sanctions are passed to discourage any trespassers, ranging from capture to immediate execution (should they resist or prove unruly). While Allogost would favor execution on sight, his personal council encourages keeping captured outsiders alive for enslavement, brainwashing or even more insidious purposes; should the need arise. However, this hasn't stopped a small handful of curious and powerful outsiders. Although, they've just proved to be very evasive and lucky.

- **ALT985 AC:** Researchers from Blackmoor University have helped to develop a new technology alongside the portal tech of Khoronus Laboratories to rip the whole domain into a demiplane, to prevent further incidents, as other Immortals begin to take more and more notice of the sprawling colony. As a result, Blackmoor's ascended Immortals begin to interact with the Immortal politics of Mystara on a larger scale, in hopes of preventing a conflict of cosmic proportions. While both sides are met with resentment and distrust, no major action is taken by either side at this time.

- **ALT986 AC:** The demiplane experiment is completed. The actual lands

<sup>6</sup> The shields operate on two cycles, a protective wall and the consuming barrier. The first phase blocks things out majority of the time. The second functions for no longer than 1 hour. Despite grabbing material, it is monitored by guards, who can “extract” material and push it away. Clever stealth and magic can get past this.



themselves are lifted off the material, while what's left is a replica of Skothar as if it were untouched by Blackmoor. Meanwhile, the consuming wall has been changed to sample Skothar land and recreate it in the new plane. The wall otherwise functions as it did before, blocking out most of the time while consuming some of the time. However, most organic life forms cannot be taken into Blackmoor without direct intervention. Further interaction between the Blackmoorian and Mystaran Immortals leads to an impasse. However, both accept the demiplane being created.

- **ALT991 AC:** A combined effort of elves and druids from the Red Woods to overthrow the state fails spectacularly. Legions of troops blaze through the area, claiming anything salvageable for land development. Prisoners are taken to work demeaning jobs while civilians are given the chance at being integrated into mainstream Blackmoor after a lengthy screening process. Those who were not noticed flee deeper into the woodlands, in hopes of remaining hidden.
- **ALT993 AC:** A troop of venturing tribesmen lead by a powerful shaman accidentally make their way past the various defenses and into the demiplane, managing to kill several soldiers patrolling the border against all odds. They are ultimately defeated by a roving bandit gang. The survivors, including the shaman, escape using the same process that lead them into Blackmoor. They eventually go mad from being lost in a desolate region of the continent for so long. No one believes their encounter

with Blackmoor when they do eventually return to their home.

- **ALT994 AC:** The secrets of space travel are slowly recovered once more. The prototype ship, Uther's Blade, discreetly launches (with the protection of Blackmoorian Immortals) beyond Mystara's Crystal Sphere and into wildspace. The vessel receives a faint and cryptic message in a strange Thonian dialect informing the crew that other Blackmoorians are living out in wildspace.<sup>7</sup> This news is brought to Allogost, who is filled with both hope and dread.
- **ALT995 AC:** Further attempts at communicating with the Thonian-speaking Wildspace denizens is cut off by some force. The crew behind the project are deeply distraught. One of the Blackmoorian immortals, known as "The King in Crimson", tries to influence the material plane... or at least the regions beyond Blackmoor. A tribe of arctic barbarians is manipulated into random acts of violence around the Blackmoorian border, further discouraging intruders. However, this sudden outbreak of madness intrigues adventurers.
- **ALT996 AC:** Uther's Blade successfully returns from its voyage. However, the ship returns with a group of new passengers, a rather odd group of gun-obsessed mercenaries. The creatures are humanoids with hippo shaped heads and are clad in military-style uniforms. The

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<sup>7</sup> This refers to the Mystaran Exiles campaign, further elaborated [here](#) at the Vaults of Pandius.

hippo-like passengers<sup>8</sup> are brought before a state council, where they agree to work for Blackmoorian weapons development in any way possible. The appeals to the state mostly amounted to declaring utmost loyalty to the state, showing off a vast knowledge of weaponry/military experience and payment options for their services. The strange humanoids have mostly stayed out of public eye, working for the government where needed.

- **ALT998 AC:** Massive innovative leaps have seen the Kingdom expand into something of a small empire. However, prolonged isolation and alienation has not only taken its toll on the leader, but its populace. Surveys return that people are either afraid of each other or apathetic, while opinion of the state is hardly positive. On top of that, they wish Blackmoor be returned to the Material in full. Meanwhile, the leader has become hyper delusional. He has begun to experience frequent hallucinations, as his authoritarian rule has become even worse. Physicians have done all they can to aid him, but his conditions continue to become more drastic. Allogost begins to consider equally drastic options, including recently re-established cybernetics.
- **ALT999 AC:** Opinions regarding the state begin to feel that Allogost's regime is likely to crumble in a couple of years. He has failed to make a public appearance for over 4 years at this point. Many speculate he's already dead, as others

plan to take the empire for themselves. A faction of "knights" has arisen out of duty and radical dedication to Blackmoor's ancient ideals. While they stand by their leader, they care more about national identity than paying service to a "dying" dictator. Many continue the tradition of wiping out explorers who get too dangerous, but many are reluctant to do so. The frequent treks into the wastes have resulted in archeological digs throughout the ruins. Most of the results are repurposed for other technologies.

- **ALT1000 AC:** One of the "knights" of returned Blackmoor was deployed to a recently established explorer's guild of Esterhold, after hearing their plans to explore Blackmoor's ruins. Tales of "the land of ghosts", as locals call it, intrigued the guild. However, their destruction brings unwanted attention and bedlam. Allogost has forsaken his old body, replacing with a mechanical one. Eventually, he resurfaces, a brain-in-a-jar bonded to an intimidating robotic body.<sup>9</sup> Despite a superior physical form, his mind remains heavily damaged and unhinged. The cyborg creates a paranoid campaign to root out anyone who planned to overthrow him during his time of weakness. This campaign roots out the governor of the Outer Province of Woodenbridge, who conspired to kill Allogost in his frailer state. The governor is executed in his own office. This is broadcasted across the region. Several denizens take the opportunity find exploits in the demiplane barrier to leave Blackmoor entirely. A combination of the

<sup>8</sup> The "hippo-like" Giff appear in the "Spelljammer: AD&D Adventures in Space" boxed set

<sup>9</sup> Similar (non-magical) cyborgs are detailed in DA3: "City of the Gods" [TSR9191].

Esterhold incident and the faults in Khoronus Lab Portal Tech results in the Blackmoor name surfacing more around Mystara. Despite all of this, Allogost feels Blackmoor is on the rise once more.

and frigid crags. Jutting frozen spears keep much of the coastline hostile towards docking ships. Harsh gusts of wind and the occasional snow storm are common within the region. Much of the powdery dust is blown out towards the sea, further inhibiting any sailors who dare to get too close.

## CLIMATE, ENVIRONMENT AND WEATHER

Much of the area outside the massive bubble shield surrounding the region is a desolate, frozen landscape. Besides the few hidden ancient artifacts accidentally left behind, very little lies within these reaches. Rumors of flying shining ghosts and sinister disappearing spires have kept many nomadic travelers and the possible once-native populations in the area away. Much of the terrain is mostly flat, ice cover lands. Further inland sports some jagged inclines

The area inside this ever expanding shielding bubble proves to be far different. A mixture of a greenhouse effect and weather regulating devices allows for a temperate climate, much akin to home. Likewise, weather tends toward the mild; save for mandatory drills which force situations to their extremes, especially with "winter" weather. The general feel of the area tends to shift thanks to artificially regulated seasons. Much of the "natural" spaces are man-made parks and reserves, quiet pockets of serene wilderness built up for both aesthetics and preservation of old world wildlife. A wide variety of deciduous and pine trees line the reserves, alongside

## GENERAL FACTS

**Population:** 1.3 Million  
(62% Humans,  
9% Dwarves,  
8% Gnomes,  
4% Halflings,  
4% Elves,  
13% Others)

**Ruler:**  
Allogost the God-King of Blackmoor

**Politics:**  
Authoritarian/Militaristic Dictatorship

**Technology Level Equivalent:**  
Estimated equal to Real World 2070-2170.

**Capital:**  
Blackmoor City

**Military:**  
nearly 400,000

**Religion:**  
Allogost the God-King (and to an extent Khoronus and The Ascended of Blackmoor)

**Currency:**  
Digital Credit (worth 1 silver pieces), Commemorative Hybrid Alloy Coin (worth 2 gold pieces)

various types of plants long thought to be extinct. To promote geographical diversity, the scientists of Blackmoor have helped to craft various hilly rock formations, forests, marshland and various other types of biomes within this space. In fact, they've even simulated other types of biomes that are a good match for other parts of the world. As for areas that are assimilated into the realm, they slowly transition from the arctic of outside to the changing landscape found inside with the help of the constantly busy science divisions.

## CULTURE

Despite the dystopian society that has been imposed on Blackmoor, it still retains much of its culture, with an added sense of stubbornness to it. For all the pride in advancing innovations and a new form of government, the region remains heavily conservative. Genuine cultural change is rare and often met with criticism. Whether out of maintaining graces with the rulership or comfort in traditions, people aren't overly likely to adopt too many new ideas. Even proxy rulers for areas like the provinces or the citadel tend to be the same as both the mainstream ideologies and the state itself. But, in their defense, they are essentially the puppets of Allogost himself.

However, some critics of Blackmoorian tradition have successfully petitioned or proposed some new ideas, as Allogost fears too much stagnation settling in. For example, law abiding citizens have been granted a couple of work rights allowing

them to earn "home time" after a certain amount of hours are worked each day. As such, new forms of leisure and entertainment have slowly emerged. Much of it has been filtered due to government approval systems and other forms of censorship. However, what has been cleared has still found its way into public consciousness. This ranges from newer forms of music to traditional art movements to even technological media itself. However, all of these required to advance the state and the "image of its people" in some regard. This proud and chauvinistic approach is either embraced by its citizens or hated behind closed doors. In fact, wherever you go within the civilized majority of Blackmoor, you will see some symbolism related to the nation or the face of the ruler featured clearly. However, frivolous and distracting novelty that bears no threat to the state is allowed in certain amounts. As such, all sorts of pointless and fascinating devices crop up in Blackmoorian markets.

## POLITICS

Following the fall of the noble houses and royalty of Blackmoor, this colony has been ruled through a brutal dictatorship. The supreme overlord of this empire is Allogost, the former general under Blackmoor's military. Following his usurping of power, he has ruled the land rigidly. His elite military team, the Exe-Corps or Executioner Corps, helps to crack down and suppress dissenting opinion while the rest of his armed forces carry out his will. And, what the militarized police and army can't handle, surveillance



*The Exe-Corps*

techno-magic covers. Very little of the land isn't being watched over by something. Privacy within the borders is almost non-existent.

Equally important to maintaining order is maintaining secrecy of Blackmoor itself, despite the fact nothing within country limits is secret. Despite the calming look of the natural reserves and awe of the sprawling cities, the ever moving borders look anything but. No façade is kept here. Guards are on constant patrol, looking for any outside "contaminants" that might stumble past the cloaking illusion of just more frozen wastelands. Most intruders or outsiders who react negatively are killed on sight, while others are taken for questioning. Those who escape gain bounties on their heads or are left to fend with the strange things outside of Blackmoorian civilization. Those who are taken in are often enslaved or brainwashed into pawns to be used for Blackmoor. Only the "mythic heroes" are granted special privileges. But even then, these unique individuals would be constantly under watch.

When it comes to unruly behavior or lawbreaking, forgiveness is extremely rare. Should this happen, it often has a catch to it. This can range from enslavement to usage in secret experiments. Otherwise, execution is a common reality. As Blackmoor doesn't really have the accommodating space for prisons, it's very rare that they take prisoners of any kind. As it is, political prisoners are often slain after "outliving their usefulness". In some cases, they're lumped in with the lab guinea pigs, to be used for all sorts of unethical research. There have also been talks of sites being used solely for the purposes of mass slaughter, but no one from the public has been able to confirm this as fact. Meanwhile, the government only confirms that they take actions to further the empire's will.

As for the leadership of the land itself, Allogost rules as the god-king, supreme commander, overseer, emperor or whatever else strikes his fancy that day. His trusted cabinet of associates serve directly under him as glorified obedient mouthpieces and servants to his causes. The classic Blackmoor castle now serves as his dark base of operations. Offsite locations include a barracks by one of the borders of the actual city, a fortress and battery that also acts as a carryover from Old Blackmoor and several classified bunkers below main city limits. The final location is top secret information only shared with top informants and other "trusted" elites of the land.

## CITIES AND DOMAINS

### Blackmoor City

The capital of Returned Blackmoor. This region is by far the most built up, as this urban sprawl was well maintained before the big jump. Expansion mostly lies in increased security and anything seen fit by the supreme leader. It is here that both the center of commerce and culture for Blackmoor resides. Or at least, whatever is permitted by the ultra strict laws and far harsher government. All the same, a chaotic underground thrives in the city's cracks, just outside of the regime's eyesight.

### Torchlight

A small colony created many miles away from the prime city. Once next to the ever expanding energy walls, it now resides as a midpoint for any guards and military that are actively on patrol. Originally meant as a resting stop for workers helping to terraform the land, it's now a recuperation stop for Allogost's soldiers.

### Mobile Work Towns

What can only be described as industrial buildings carried by a slab with mechanical crab legs. These mobile locations are used to shelter workers while keeping them near sites relevant to their jobs for that day. These were created after Torchlight outlived its purpose.

### Backburner

A collapsed former colony of citizens descended from outsiders and immigrants.

Discrimination and unfair conditions lead to a revolt, which was sadly squashed. This incident wasn't erased by propaganda, as news of this was already widespread before the government could do anything about it. It's left as a grim reminder of those who turn away from their ruler. Some scrappers and monsters have found their way into the ruins though.

### Citadel Archivis

Originally an encampment, now a compound, this archeological base is the center of operations for any funded treks to discover what's left of the old world. Blackmoor University often sends out scholars and professionals for briefing on where to explore and what to hopefully unearth. Unfortunately, this was how the Serpentine Ruins were unearthed... strangely intact! A lot of the larger laboratory and technical groups have moved here over time, turning it into the central cluster of knowledge and innovation. Meanwhile, Blackmoor University stands as a reminder of a historic age.

### Star Garden

Built up by priests who became dismayed by the failing leadership in Returned Blackmoor, prior to the upheaval, this place remains an important center for religious affairs. The current regime tolerates its presence, as many of the leaders revere the Immortals (including those who ascended during the chaos magic storms). However, these religions tend to be reworked and woven to fit the agendas of the state. Many of the largest supporters are fervently devout to the religions of Blackmoor.

### Outer Provinces

Large territories in their own right, they pale in comparison to Blackmoor City itself. None the less, they are maintained by puppet-leaders that directly serve under Allogost in some manner. However, it's possible that one of these division leaders could have their own subversive agenda. Nonetheless, little is extraordinary. Residential ranges from comfortable homes for those who have connections with the regime to humble establishments and slums for everyone else. While industry is often found in other parts of the colony, the provinces are still developed enough to help support the colony's central hubs. Many of the residents are likely employed under these services. These can range from agriculture to manufacturing supplies for the military. Otherwise, nothing is exceptional about these areas.

### The Outlands

A savage wasteland that, while converted, has remained very much barren dirt. Due to little attempt to cultivate, little is usable. However, some effort has been made to maintain areas reserved for future provinces or other spaces. The only populations out here are the growing number of "wild men", escapees and fugitive criminals, outsiders who broke out of the fake demiplane and former military who snapped under pressure. Many of these people have degenerated into raiders and bandits. Small towns exist out in the wastes, but lack the protection of locales overseen by Allogost. Help for these settlements often comes well after carnage has been unleashed. Tribal grounds and forest kingdoms like the Red Woods are considered part of the outlands, due to a

disconnect with the rest of Blackmoor. These insulated lands prefer to keep to themselves and are unlikely to unite under some revolutionary banner. However, nothing is outside of the realm of possibility.

### The Vaults

Below the city and stretching far beyond its limits is a series of bunkers and shelters occupied by the government and any allies within the elite. These winding, maze-like places serve many uses; a private retreat, top secret planning, a place to interrogate or execute potential enemies without any prying outside eyes or a place to conduct all sorts of heinous experiments. Of course, should things go terribly wrong, it's secluded enough that it won't affect anything up above.

## LOCATIONS OF INTEREST

### Blackmoor University (Blackmoor City):

One of the few relics from the "earlier age". The medieval-esque architecture of Old Blackmoor stands strong through the ages. A mixture of archaic and contemporary, this place is the font of learning from which the Blackmoorians gain knowledge from... Or rather, whatever is currently allowed is taught here. Until change is enacted, this institution is a glorified center for propaganda.

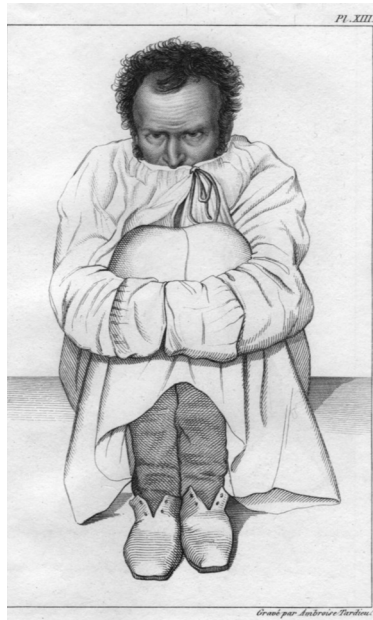
### Blackmoor Zoo (Blackmoor City):

If the menagerie details Blackmoor itself, this captures the exotic world around them.

Many scouts and mercenaries have captured all sorts of fascinating wildlife from around the world. However, the means of doing so were probably very illegal, but somehow discreet enough to not get too much attention drawn. Despite xenophobic views of the outside world, this park is approached with enthusiasm and learning. There is a stranger side to it, as many of the scientists utilize dying and crippled animals for all means of tests. Some of them result in bizarre hybrid creatures and unspeakable abominations. In fact, the zoo lab techs have made their own aberrations similar to those from other Prime Materials, drawing many frightened questions and ire from superiors.

**Carr Memorial Hospital (Blackmoor City):**

Named after a famed priest of days old (and also known as "St. Carr Memorial Hospital" to many), this long running establishment helps to provide medical aid that mixes the best of old healing techniques with modern arcane sciences. For nearly five centuries in



*Blackmoor mental patient*

Blackmoor's original time, a sanitarium within the hospital has operated as a means of understanding and conquering mental illness. While many have been treated, the likes of Allogost refuse to acknowledge an issue. Law-

abiding citizens with spotless records are granted free healthcare, while those who display the most minor of infractions must pay out of their own pockets. Those who are unable to pay up are granted experiments for future treatments, which are often gruesome and inhumane. Many of these patients are moved to undisclosed locations for particularly heinous experiments. Eerily enough, these experiments are overseen by the main medical instructor for the Blackmoor University division of the hospital, Dr. Gorble.

**Castle Blackmoor (Outskirts of Blackmoor City):**

The seat of power for the land. In the recent past, it housed the greatest rulers of the seemingly invulnerable empire. In more recent years, it is the base of operations for the current regime. The castle itself connects to an annexed basement floor fortified with technologies not yet seen by civilians. This secret government lab holds all sorts of sinister experiments. Its presence casts an eerie shadow on the city limits, a reminder that the citizens are always watched from afar.

**Cootbane Dams (Outlands):**

Named after the site of a great battle against cultists of the Egg of Coot, this well fortified dam acts as both a buffer for the massive lakes beyond it, as well as a backup power source for much of the territories. In recent months, the dam has been decommissioned and blocked off. However, far below the dam itself lies a decent sized laboratory and excavated relic bristling with foul power. Rumor has it the dam recently went defunct due to an experiment gone horribly awry.



Cleaner crews have been sent to destroy any evidence, but that won't stop any rebels from discovering what horrors have been unearthed. The barricaded secrets could very well tie into the fate of the serpentine and something even the dark mages wish they could have had.

**Dungeons of Renewal (Star Gardens):**

Deep beneath the religious sector above lies a sinister series of passages and chambers operated by the Cult of the Cleansing Mother. Part political war room, part torture chamber of horrors; this is where spared enemies of Blackmoor are sometimes taken. The cult takes maniacal joy in tormenting all within its grasp some times, while planning their end-times final solution for the rest of the world. It is here where the cult also stockpiles enough hidden supplies to prepare for the off chance that Allogost's regime topples, so that they can replace it and continue his vision.

**Entertainment District (Blackmoor City):**

Despite rampant censorship and constant control over anything consumed by the public, people are still given the opportunity to unwind and enjoy themselves... within reason. It is here where performers are welcome to perform sanctioned works of art and permitted beverages are poured. Almost everything here is sanitized and relatively fake, but most visitors barely care. The Commandant Club is a popular place for elites and military personnel to unwind. It's common to see powerful officers engaging in casual discussion over some rare ales or over a game here. For those who wish to evade prying eyes, there is "The Skewered Devil

Swine", a wretched hive of scum and villainy. Of course, the place is routinely searched by military and security for wanted criminals and mercenaries alike. The tavern is out of place, especially since it's founded by one of the few outsiders to successfully sneak in and integrate into Blackmoor.

**Fast-Runner Tribal Grounds (Outlands):**

The site of a tribe of rakasta that made their way into Blackmoor following rumors of a better land free from the strife of the world. What they received was relatively accommodating at first, until harsh sanctions crippled their ways of life. The tribe lies impoverished, acting in service to the empire. While younger generations have adopted the ways of Blackmoor, many resist in an attempt to keep their own traditions alive. In fact, in reaction to the harsh Blackmoorian state, many have taken up a slightly technophobic stance. Some of the rakasta created from the wild magic plagues have found their way into the tribe, in part to infiltrate and survey the everyday happenings of the people there.

**Historic Blackmoor Village (Outskirts of Blackmoor City):**

A famous historical site used to help boost patriotic morale. This classic small town resembles Blackmoor in a far earlier age. Re-enactors portray various famous icons of history while various events take place based on chapters of Blackmoor's progress. Much of it is a sanitized version of reality, if only to further encourage children into being proud of their ancestral home. Those who have pushed for the living museum to be more realistic have either been silenced or

removed from the picture. Until then, the historical site remains a place of idyllic propaganda for a past that wasn't quite as portrayed.

**Khoronus Laboratories (Blackmoor City):**

Named after the Immortal, much to his dismay. This laboratory has always been cutting edge in regards to new scientific ideas and experiments. They've often helped to propel the empire further and further forward. After the great leap into Mystara, they were part of the main reason that the estranged colony recovered so quickly. Rumors have surfaced that many at the laboratory have gotten influence from somewhere outside of this space and time. These rumors have persisted for countless centuries, with the City of the Gods being the only proof. It's likely they've somehow gotten into contact with far more than the ruined F.S.S. Beagle crew.

**Knowledge Vault (Citadel Archivis):**

Comparable to Candlekeep in Abeir-Toril, this massive fortress contains vast records of knowledge through the ages. While everything has been absorbed into Blackmoorian data banks, physical records are still stored for tradition's sake. Only the most prestigious and privileged are granted access to this fabled library. Copies are made physically and in the electronic magical databanks that fill the scholarly fort.

**The Living Forest (Outlands):**

One of the major projects of Blackmoor City was to recreate the wilderness as it was far before many of Blackmoor's revolutions.

Sadly, recreating the exact wilderness was a failure, but they created a convincing simulation of what it might have otherwise been like. While actively maintained for both wildlife preservation and research, various people of importance have been allowed to walk around the area with enough caution and perception. Many elven citizens have taken up protecting and maintaining the region.

**Menagerie of the Extinct (Citadel Archivis):**

One of the preserves has several small biomes dedicated to wildlife that would have been exterminated in the Great Rain of Fire. Visiting this location requires special privileges or at least strict supervision. The few that have visited these contained reserves have helped to turn them into a symbol of national pride. Those who are allowed inside must follow a strict rules conduct, perhaps harsher than the rules of everyday life. Any antagonism or violence against any plant or animal within this safe zone is grounds for execution, due to potentially threatening the existence of extremely endangered life. Some think the higher ups care more about this menagerie than the actual populations of people.

**Power Shuttle Stations:**

Altered and Tinkered Blackmoorian technology given new purpose! These locomotive-like cars zoom across an energy rail in record speed, allowing for quick and seemingly instant travel. So far, these shuttles operate between Blackmoor City and the various "Hub Urbs" or Outer Provinces. The only set sights for expansion is Citadel

Archivis. Their incredible speeds are outdone by the spaceships that Blackmoor hopes to get fully operational again.

**The Rogues' Gallery (Outskirts of Blackmoor City, Outlands, Backburner):**

Whoever said they could monitor ALL of Blackmoor is a fool and a lunatic. Through the cracks lies chaotic scum like the rogues' gallery. This is the modern Blackmoor version of the thieves' guild, more than aware of counter-measures against all the state's tricks and traps. However, many of their operatives have been tracked down, caught and/or killed. Their numbers dwindle, but they remain ever strong. They operate in cells around parts of Blackmoor City, with a few expansions in other territories.

**Serpentine Ruins (Outlands):**

The Serpentine tortured Blackmoor in its later years, as they were rumored to be minions of the Egg. As their time was numbered, they tipped off the Oard invaders about many secrets of Blackmoor and beyond. While unaware of this, the falling armies were slowly being converted into undead by mad necromancers who were either in service to Blackmoor or just insane mages. The ruins remain swarming with the living dead. Only the toughest of patrols and units dare to quest into there. These serpentine are quasi-mindless, only acting territorial. The mages themselves? They only respect Allogost, worshipping him like a deity. The few soldiers who discovered this ponder if this might set their leader on the track to becoming an Immortal.

**Temple for the New Ascended (Star Gardens):**

A place to honor the brave heroes who helped push Blackmoor through the temporal vortex as all hell broke loose. Doing this changed them into the Immortal protectors of the land. While slightly distant, they remain an active part of this new Blackmoor. These are detailed halls of glory, detailing the mighty heroes of Blackmoor's still somewhat recent past. Each of these new immortals has a devoted space to them, even the more unsavory ones that none the less generate national pride.

**The Temple of Hope (Star Gardens):** They say in times of darkness, a sliver of hope is needed to keep people moving. It is perhaps this reason why this religious charity is allowed to continue. The weary and weak travel here to seek healing and rejuvenation, at least on the state's terms. Other priests have slowly tried to infiltrate this temple to turn it into a place of furthered propaganda.

**The Cloaking Shields (Outlands):**

This bubble-like formation has three functions: disguising the region to fit in with the mostly barren and bland icy scenery, acting as a force field against outsiders and curiously acting like a portal key to throw visitors completely off. This last function is largely experimental, finding surprising approval from the state. When it works, outsiders who come into contact with the barrier are whisked away from the hidden demiplane. It looks like pre-return Blackmoorian Skothar. Small bits of ancient artifacts and general Blackmoorian influence can be found within the material plane

itself.. However, there are no hidden artifacts or bits of Blackmoorian influence here. However, sometimes the barrier malfunctions and sends outsiders into an endless void. One such scientist discovered this, utilizing a portal device to get back. Sadly, they perished the next day from exposure to whatever that void was. This glitch doesn't bother the officials who gave the research grant.

**The Great Heroes Monument (Blackmoor City):**

In Grand Thonian Park, a group of statues were erected in honor of the heroes that helped to save Blackmoor several times before vanishing. Before it was discovered that the kingdom traveled too far into Mystara's past, they were thought to have died. The statues have since been left as a tribute to honor them, rather than in memoriam. Allogost finds the statues tacky and a remnant of a "tragic age", but refuses to tamper with them, as they are a treasured symbol of Blackmoor's people.

**Uther Space (Citadel Archivis):**

A program dedicated to helping Blackmoor achieve travel into the stars. Before the Great Rain of Fire, Blackmoor had already discovered the stars beyond. Many Blackmoorians were stranded in the reaches beyond the Mystaran crystal sphere for ages after the fall of Blackmoor. By all means, it's possible that Uther Space Program could receive messages by these long since detached descendents. The message they did receive could have been that, but it's also possible that was a hoax. The ships they have available now are by no means as capable as

their older ones. They've slowly been gathering the means of replicating their mightiest vessels, as the originals were scrapped to help build the colony back up. The prototype spacecraft, Uther's Blade, did prove to be an outstanding success. This has since spurred on increased funding and more projects.

**Warrens of Madness (Outlands):**

A ways away from Backburner is a series of caves hollowed out and dug by a deranged wererat and its equally unhinged cult. They believe that Blackmoor's technology is needed to help build a Machine God. So far, they have assembled a robotic creature that is sentient, but lacking in self-awareness. Strangely enough, it is capable of using priestly spells. They seek to complete what they call a god. All of this was caused by a cleric sent with a scouting party to learn about Mystara, only for the priest to be a sole survivor infected by a wererat's bite. The infection rendered him insane as he vanished mysteriously. Rumors declared him dead soon after returning from the mission. In truth, he was grabbing up foolish explorers to help with his warped vanity project. However, as the robot has grown stronger, it has slowly been taking control of the wererat priest's cult. Attempts to kill off the priest have been made, as the mad wererat has been completely oblivious to this.

## DRAMATIS PERSONAE:

### ■ God-King Gwyn Allogost -

At one time, he was a widely admired and beloved military hero who helped to end the terrors of the serpentine, the oard and many other threats. He ended up accompanying the heroes to learn all he could before settling down in Blackmoor's original final years, embodied as a seemingly immortal hero. The fame and glory went to his head, as he began to imagine himself as larger than life. He also thought of himself as the ruler that his people deserved. To him, the government of Blackmoor had become decadent, incompetent and corrupted. With that, he devised his scheme to take it back from bloated old monarchs and bureaucrats to help set up the governing forces of a new age. His narcissism and paranoia ultimately distorted his vision into Blackmoor's equivalent of a fascist state. As his withered human form is replaced with a disturbing cybernetic body, his weakened empire seems to be making a rebound, but perhaps not in ways he's anticipating.



*An anti-Allogost propaganda drawing*

### ■ Lady Galvena Gailendawn -

A cruel overseer for Citadel Archivis. She cares solely about obtaining knowledge

through any means necessary. She cares little for her cohorts or associates, and honestly little for the supreme ruler of the land himself. Allogost often leaves her to whatever goals, as they typically align with and aid Allogost's as well. She often surveys over what new information has been brought to the Citadel and catalogued. While few are allowed to leave the bubble, her most trusted scholars are repurposed into spies for discovering everything about the changed world. Her main concern over outside information is discovering weaknesses and strengths, so she may gain more favor from Allogost.

### ■ Sir Bertrin -

The commanding knight from the Knights of Returned Blackmoor. He is responsible for the protection of not just the mighty empire, but its people, its projects and its ideals. Despite serving diligently, he has pangs of regret and sorrow. Many of his missions have involved the butchering of curious minds and scholars who were accused of being like the other pirates and brigands he was sent to hunt in the first place. Upon sparing two members of an exploration guild, he has had a slight change of heart. While he doesn't actively work against the state, he has subverted them on several occasions in more subtle ways, such as informing citizens of places where rampant surveillance won't always catch them.

### ■ Tsabalya -

Originally an outsider from an explorer's guild bend on plundering the ruins of North Skothar, her company was obliterated by Sir Bertrin. She pleaded to join in whatever Bertrin was up to, as she

personally hated the guild she was part of... outside of good pay. While a cold-blooded and morally devoid mercenary, she is passionate about finding new experiences and interacting with all she can. It's why she became an explorer to begin with. Her experience in Blackmoor, under the protection of Sir Bertrin, had been a surprisingly positive one. Granted, she never really needed the protection, outside of from her own ignorance. Keeping her identity out of the light, she has had the chance to marvel at the uncanny and alien world that Blackmoor has brought with it. Her roguish tendencies do directly butt heads with the strict order present in the State itself. For a number of years, she's found a way to fend for herself, as this land is far detached from her Alphantian roots.

■ **Asanis -**

An exile from the Tangor region. He's greedy and bitter, living in one unfulfilling place after another. Like Tsabalya, he cares deeply about good money. It's the main reason he stayed in the same guild as her for a long time. After being spared and offered a job with the knights, he turned this down in favor of security work for caravans, archaeologists, work teams and more. Upon discovering the growing issues with bandits, he has since regretted this decision. Unlike Tsabalya, he's itching to find a proper escape. However, he's more than aware any attempt at deserting duty will mark him a dead man. All the same, he'll probably find doom if he tried to help bandits too. This internal conflict keeps him at his station, for now.

■ **Lord of Bloodshed -**

Once a high ranking army official by the name of Sir William Erentimen, he helped organize and carry out campaigns to thwart traitors and secure the expanding boundaries of the region. A mix of redundancy of the job and violence against Blackmoor's civilians ate away at his mind over time. During an excursion in the outlands to deal with talks of bandits, he threatened his troop to abandon the mission. Those who stayed loyal to the state were slain. Not long after, a raider gang approached the shot up camp. The thugs were little match for the official and his deserters. Many thugs were spared and assimilated into this new army, The Bloodshed Conquest. William, now the Lord of Bloodshed, recruits workers and soldiers alike as captured slaves for his desire of overthrowing Allogost by force. His alternative for a better Blackmoor is far from better though. The Lord of Bloodshed has long since become a thorn in Allogost's side, but he's far too proud to be worried about a "deserter who aligns with misfits and tribals".

■ **Blunthammer and Battlestein -**

Two dwarven fraternal twins, sister and brother, who frantically come up with new schematics for all sorts of seemingly ridiculous devices. They've been accused of squandering funds to pursue passion projects. However, many of the plans are repurposed for more practical goods which they help to create. Despite their slight slipping into the mad scientist trope, they are genuinely good natured folk in the otherwise dark world of Blackmoor.

■ **Uther, V.1 -**

One of the first successful attempts at artificial intelligence. Uther, V. 1 is closely modeled on the famous King Uther of Blackmoor. However, he is currently loyal the regime as it stands. He bids his time, awaiting for the right moment to help bring back a noble age of chivalry and kingdoms. However, he's tactful enough to play along with whatever plans the government has for him.

■ **Ssst'lexteth -**

A Serpentine Lich and one of the few of his kind to retain an intelligent mind. During the assault on the last bastion of the serpentfolk, Ssst'lexteth quickly aligned with the dark mages laying siege. In the process, he learned forbidden necromantic arts. While he hates Blackmoor, he finds the current regime to be a suitable punishment. All he cares about is being left alone and seeing Blackmoorians suffer.

■ **Scratchy Pete -**

A very scruffy looking Lupin who was captured by one of many patrols during a daily run around the border. While the rest of his party was slain, he offered up knowledge as a reason to stay alive. He was captured immediately and taken to a containment center for questioning, shackled with devices to prevent use of magic. After several days, he earned his worth, remaining as a prisoner. His only "release" is for more discussion on the outside world. However, he is given limited access to Lady Gailendawn's libraries under strict surveillance, should an army troop head in the direction of Citadel Archivis. The fluffy mage's

uniform fails to show his Renardie heritage, as he has long since been clad in slave's rags. He expects few visitors and fewer allies to communicate with.

■ **Zaddergath Wentlestone -**

A gnomish explorer from Serraine, this wayward folk hero went on a journey to travel through all known realms of the known world and beyond. However, his flying machine was shot down during his travel over Returned Blackmoor. He has been kept in holding ever since. Still ever chipper, he seems more concerned with examining all that Blackmoor City has to offer. Sadly, the guards still have suspicion that he's a spy, albeit a horribly incompetent one. Plus, the guards enjoy torturing him for fun.

■ **The King in Crimson -**

By far, one of the most insidious Immortals to come out of Blackmoor's changed timeline is this one. His name long since lost, this ascended one was a devoted mage, corrupted by the Egg of Coot and deceived by the Oard. The end result changed him into the something more akin to the Egg itself. Upon becoming immortal, it's likely that any essence of humanity was completely discarded. Now, he bids his time doing all he can to sow chaos until his influence breaks from Blackmoor into the rest of the known world and beyond. In truth, Blackmoor is a means to mobilizing an army against the world, crumbling all of the progress and changes they have made. He wants the world to collapse, so Blackmoor can help revert it back to how it once was. Part of his essence is trapped under Blackmoor City itself. His lingering

mania has helped to propel the distrust and paranoia within the lands, making his agenda even harder to accomplish. While most Immortals from this realm have intentionally remained out of the way, The King in Crimson has made his influence and presence well known, at least to his cultists and others affected by him.

#### ■ **The Cleansing Mother -**

The leader of an apocalypse cult, but a crooked devotee of The God-King as well. While not de facto overseer of the Star Gardens, she holds much sway here. Her agenda end game is to cause catastrophic damage to every other region, all for the sake of easy conquest later. She proves to be one of the few people to unnerve even Allogost himself, as her personality and charisma are destabilized by her absolute madness. However, her cultist zeal proves to be far too useful for the religious sects of Blackmoor. If it weren't for her obsession with Allogost and flawless organization skills, she probably would have been executed long ago. However, some say she might actually be an immortal in disguise. Of course, most will deny this... as far as they know.

#### ■ **Lady Angelsgleam -**

Lone survivor of the original clergy of Blackmoor. Daughter to devoted priests, she was one with the cloth at an early age. However, the Great Rain of Fire brought her to maturity for sooner than she expected. Now, very much a mature adult, she does whatever she can to aid the citizens of the land while avoiding the wrath of all around her. To many, she is one of the last good souls within the church of Blackmoor.

#### ■ **The Machine God -**

A confused and childish construct. It seeks admiration and worship however it can get it, but doesn't understand much of what's going on in the world around it. While this construct is as powerful as some of the strongest heroes, it's far from stable. It frequently throws tantrums and loves causing destruction out of spite. The cult that worships it usually fails to completely pacify it. Many cultists who have realized their mistake are found out by the Machine God, as they are "removed" as the construct calls it. This doesn't mean it's stupid. It continues to create all sorts of plots on not just seizing the cult for its own agendas, but finding ways of assimilating any tech in the area for its own resources.

#### ■ **Doctor Garvin Gorble -**

Don't let the silly sounding name fool you, he embodies the concept of mad science. Originally a medical technician for Blackmoor University, he was granted transfer to work for the government. Eventually, he was tasked with utilizing prisoners and slaves for whatever research he desired. His proposal was creating bioweapons out of "undesirables", reprogrammed to lay siege to enemies of the state while defending all that the regime holds dear. Of course, only Dr. Gorble knows the "fail-safe switches", in case of personal emergency. His specialties lie in "defeating death" through his arcane sciences as well as aiding the experimental underground in Blackmoor's zoo. It's rumored that he has received inspiration from the depths of the stars themselves or worse, The Egg of Coot. Few have seen him in public, save



for his appearances in Carr Memorial Hospital as an occasional medical instructor.

● **Rogues' Gallery Cells:**

Not so many an individual, but an anonymous collective of brigands, bandits, pirates, anarchists, rebels and outsiders. Some are members of the outlander gangs that terrorize the border reaches. Others are to blame for the black markets that are hidden in the deepest parts of Blackmoor City, peddling all sorts of contraband tech and drugs to any civvie with the right amount of money and a mouth that knows when to shut up. However, many of the "rogues" aren't actually criminals and are in fact good minded folk who want to help liberate the realm from the tyrannical grasp of Allogost. They have come to the realization that they might require outside help to turn the tides. In fact, their magic users have been secretly sending out messages to any traveler, bard and explorer within the region who happens to take notice. It's partially the fault of these rebels for the Esterhold incident. Most of these rogues are just citizens who operate in private. Most of the more noble minded rogues know few of their fellow rebels, due to the secrecy of their operations. However, many of these "noble rogues" have resulted to terrorism to get their point across, murdering government official and civilian alike.

## ENTERING BLACKMOOR

Sneaking into the lands of Blackmoor should prove to be no easy feat. For starters, travelers must brave the brutal tundras of northern Skothar, finding their way to where the "ancient ruins" of Blackmoor should be located. Harsh storms, frostbite, unstable icy ridges and impaired vision alone would prove to be deadly adversaries for any explorer foolish enough to fight the elements. The tell tale sign of finding your way is an uncanny glimmer in your path ahead. Everything looks distorted, as if a magical painting was made of the frozen reaches beyond. In reality, this is the barrier wall that cuts off Blackmoor from the outside world.

Penetrating the wall while it lies in its protective mode is next to impossible. Outside of extremely powerful magic, any creature that attempts to enter is repelled backwards and shot back onto the icy ground. When the barrier rarely turns to its consumption phase, teleportation magics have been known to succeed. However, there is a 50% chance that you'll instead be sent to the facade crafted by Blackmoorian scientists, a barren wasteland of ice; the endless void that Northern Skothar was originally meant to be. For those who lack the proper magic, one can wait for the wall's second phase to move past them and hope that the scientists that survey wall import the "organic matter" that the wall has consumed. However, it's also likely that the teams monitoring the wall will "delete" anyone who tries to enter through the barrier in this manner, to avoid "contaminations" from entering the land.

Another, less savory alternative, is to not only know of the guards that patrol the perimeter but get their attention from the outside zone. This will result in combat or capture. Should a fight break out and the party succeed, a hefty bounty will be placed on them at the very minimum. Perhaps they could become a national threat. Should they not resist arrest, they'll be brought into the territories where they will face all sorts of horrible trials. They could range from being transported to a secret laboratory, a prison complex or be assigned into servitude (slavery) under some Blackmoorian official.

Less likely is to gain the contact of a powerful Blackmoorian. By some circumstance, they might be willing to let "the gates" down for you to grant you entry into Blackmoor. This assumes that you can fulfill the nation's agenda, or the ruler's to be more specific. Barring that, a rebel or rogue that has either infiltrated a powerful inner circle or one of Blackmoor's magical science institutions is willing to recruit help, should you find a way to reply to their message for help.

## THE FUTURE OF RETURNED BLACKMOOR?

Suffering under a harsh tyrannical rule for many years, it is unlikely that this new version of Blackmoor will find happiness. In time, it is likely that the heroes that helped to save Blackmoor in the first place will stumble upon the consequences of their actions. Despite having missed the heroes by decades, many still recall them from either direct contact or the mythic tales they produced. While the denizens of the land want little to do with outsiders, it is likely that the party that traveled back to the ancient kingdom to begin with would receive at least cautious fanfare.

Returned Blackmoor can't sustain itself in a reclusive and repressed state forever. Eventually, the current state will falter, people will leave, outsiders will find their way in and change will occur. Eventually, Allogost's reign of terror will come to an end; by the hands of his own trusted council or a civilian revolt. While all revolts up until this point have been crushed by him, a brave group of adventurers could help turn the tide.

Will the Immortals take kindly to one of the largest examples of temporal tampering in the multiverse? It's hard to say. The alternate events that created this colony also created its own share of Immortals who watch over the somber land. It's likely that massive conflicts will stem from both mortal turf and the domains of Immortals over the controversy of Blackmoor's resurgence... not on the Mystaran Immortals terms, but the Blackmoorians themselves! This new City of the Gods will eventually find its purpose, perhaps branching out and sharing the secrets of its once lost technologies!

*Oltruder captured by Blackmoor border guards, drawing by Toni Roads*  
[www.artstation.com/toniroadsart.com](http://www.artstation.com/toniroadsart)



## POSSIBLE ADVENTURES IN RETURNED BLACKMOOR

► **Cousins!:** In their attempts to venture far into the Known World and beyond, a troop has accidentally found itself in the Hollow World. In an attempt to hide from Ka's wrath, the expedition team accidentally stumbled upon the Blacklore Elves. Somehow, this group of elves wasn't saved by the protective shields in time. The expedition troop's findings proved to be quite surprising. In the end, their similarities allowed them to bunker down in the region, at least for now. Perhaps your team has made their way into the Hollow World, finding Blackmoorian knights as well. Even stranger, perhaps an archaic version of Blackmoor rests within there too!<sup>10</sup>

► **Demiplane of Dread:**<sup>11</sup> The corrupted realm of Blackmoor is well on its way to catching the attention of The Mists, with Allogost as its Darklord. As it is, the realm is already cut off as a demiplane. In this scenario, the Demiplane of Dread absorbs Blackmoor and nearby regions into into dark pocket dimension. What's left behind are the original ruins of a Blackmoor destroyed by the Great Rain of Fire. Meanwhile, the domain that surfaces in the realms of Ravenloft is a distorted mockery of Blackmoor's glory.

<sup>10</sup> As referenced in ["The Lighthouse's Guide to Unknown Cultures"](#) (Threshold Magazine issue #9)

<sup>11</sup> The Domains of Dread are further elaborated in the *"Ravenloft: Realm of Terror"* boxed set.

Allogost's subordinates chafe under his rule and seek to thwart him, pushing the dictator further into madness. Even worse, adversaries surrounding the land are far stronger than ever. Allogost's grasp on the realm is constantly in peril as total demoralization has slowed down the progress of technology... that only works in this domain. This is a domain of dread where technology has truly run amok!

► **Devour, Assimilate:** The shields are controlled by a super computer that's hellbent on converting the land into something akin to ancient Skothar (Blackmoor age). However, this might cause a lot of damage in the process. Any landscapes and settlements would be absorbed into Blackmoor while a frigid abyss is all that's left behind.. Who's to say it will stop at there? It might try to convert all of Mystara, if given the chance! The scientists themselves will admit that changing or halting the program will be hard, near impossible! They made their program a little too well.

► **Nightmares of Carcosa:** The floating and distant realm of Carcosa is a wretched place beyond dream itself. This land is decadent and failing, but still shares its curse with other realms. In this scenario, the entropic Immortal known as The King in Crimson realizes there are great beings like him, greater than him, older than him. He wants to know more, even going as far as bringing Blackmoor into Carcosa's realm. Or worse, melding the Dreamlands with the Dimension of Nightmare. The results of such a planar calamity would be unfathomable.

However, Crimson bids his time waiting and plotting. Should such a plan occur, the other Immortals of Blackmoor would be forced to find cooperation from the rest of the universe.

► **God that I Am:** Allogost hasn't just become a powerful cyborg, his technomagical infusions have helped him on the path to becoming an Immortal as well. If not stopped, he shall ascend to said ranks and lead the new Blackmoorian Immortals in a relentless crusade; whether to take Mystara or expand Blackmoor into a deadly superpower unlike what the known world has ever seen! This scenario would require the heroes to stop Allogost from becoming an Immortal. Will his bizarre mixture of magitech rituals and eldritch sorceries propel him to new heights? Such a fight would prove most deadly. Or worse, should he succeed in his plans, the heroes must find a way to gain a level of power needed to take down a deific level villain.

► **Iron Gods:**<sup>12</sup> Experiments in new technomancies have transcended what was thought possible, an artificial intelligence capable of wielding the same powers as mortals and immortals alike! Journey not just into Blackmoor's prime lands, but the wasted world tainted within the grasp of its ever expanding barrier shields. This adventure takes heavy inspiration from the Iron Gods adventure path for the Pathfinder

<sup>12</sup> More details on the *Iron Gods* adventure path are detailed in the Adventure Path adventures #85 - #90 for Paizo's *Pathfinder* RPG

Roleplaying Game. Many liberties would have to be taken, especially in regards to Silver Mount and the littered ruins of ship parts around the wastes. A viable alternative would be unearthed ruins from the cataclysm. As for Silver Mount? What if the Blackmoorians tried to recreate the Beagle? And even more, what if Khoronus Laboratories did gain the attention of alien life? Or even stranger, what if the Beagle wasn't the only ship to crash? Perhaps the colony traveled in time once more to rip the Beagle out of the ground, taking it with them? Perhaps another ship finally caught the Beagle's distress signal and found its way to Mystara not long after Blackmoor returned?

► **It's Party Time!**: A group of insurrectionist rogues have launched a terror attack on Cootsbane Dam. The ensuing flood has subsided, but they've just unleashed something far worse. A magical construct of the serpentine, wielding infectious chaos magic, has broken loose from the facility below. Waves of mutants and undead follow the monstrosity in its wake. The revolutionaries themselves are trapped, but aren't going down without a fight.

► **Return of the Wrath of the Immortals:** Messing with space and time is a major taboo in almost any prime material plane. Something of this magnitude would certainly get the Immortals involved. To make matters worse, this strange new colony has brought its own cast of Immortals with it. A direct clash over Blackmoor's shattering of reality is inevitable.

► **Returned Egg of Coot:** Blackmoor wasn't the only thing that survived its jump to Mystara. The dreaded Egg of Coot has made the jump as well. The moment the Oard made their way into the past was the moment the Egg caught a glimpse of the would-be future and began to plan, bidding time till it could abandon its old conquest and set sights on a new prize, the known world and beyond! Whether or not Allogost remains in power, the forces of Blackmoor must take arms alongside other nations and factions to purge the greatest evil never meant for this world!

► **Revolution!:** For those who are able to find their way into the new empire, they quickly discover a heavily oppressed people. Gone are the days of a fair and noble monarchy, here are the days of totalitarian rule over a once trusted and beloved warrior. This scenario involves heroes from the outside world helping to start an uprising against their usurper-leader, Allogost. The backlash from his forces would be intense, but would draw focus to squashing this rebellion. But, he's no fool. He'd anticipate help from the outside world... either to liberate his people or to topple Blackmoor as a whole. Be careful who you trust, you might just help create a far more dangerous world.

► **REVENGE!:** The Red Woods was greatly crippled by Blackmoor, even before the failed revolt. Any characters connected more to nature, such as rangers and druids, would be sought out for one last strike against a now weakening state. As far as the various enclaves across the

forested lands are concerned, anything Allogost must go. As for the various decadent technologies and strange creations? That will be addressed later, as long as it doesn't overly tamper with or harm the ways of nature.

► **The Great War of Fire:** Glantri can be said to be the modern stand-in for Blackmoor. Needless to say, the Blackmoorians themselves dislike this greatly. Once discovery of the Nucleus of Spheres is made, all hell shall break loose in the name of either securing it or destroying Glantri with it. Other lands are caught between a war between two forces they dare not intervene with. However, whether out of fear or strange admiration, some might even take arms alongside the two powers. By all means, this could lead into the Greater Rain of Fire scenario.

► **The Greater Rain of Fire:** An End All Be All Scenario, should the tyranny of this new empire prove to be too great. The only way to purge it for good is to kickstart something the denizens of Blackmoor are more than familiar with. Under normal circumstance, the Immortals would obliterate the threat, but the rise of Blackmoorian equivalents has made this more of a challenge. This scenario would risk destroying Mystara as it is currently known, causing far more damage than the Wrath of the Immortals saga accomplished. The world would be shifted once more, majority of the great nations would collapse in an instant, the survivors would once again have to fend for themselves and sacrifice centuries to rebuild a civilization. An adventure with

this conclusion would truly be the end of days, or at least of the Known World as it is currently known.

- **The World of Tomorrow:** Assuming Allogost is deposed and new order is established, the denizens might either turn towards finding a way to hide themselves once more or establishing themselves better with the new world. In the latter case, they learn from the mistakes of the F.S.S. Beagle crew and try to establish better relations with the world at large. Perhaps their shielded demiplane returns back to the material realm. In fact, allies might even learn their secrets of technomancy. By some miracle or means of intervention, these newer devices seem more stable than the original devices that should have caused the Great Rain all those ages ago.



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# THE TIGERS OF KURAMAN

A Companion-level mini-adventure  
in the Gulf of Tangor

by Giampaolo Agosta (Agathokles)

## INTRODUCTION

Tigers of Kuraman is an adventure and mini-setting for the continent of Skothar. The adventure is written for BECMI Player Characters of early Companion levels. Pregenerated characters are provided, tying the party to the setting and introducing the key NPCs. The adventure can be used to set the background for a more complex campaign, either using the provided PCs, or using different characters, and turning the pregenerated PCs into NPCs for the rest of the campaign.

The adventure is set in the Gulf of Tangor, but the setting covers also part of Tangor Bay.

The Tigers of Kuraman is inspired by “Pirates of Malaysia” by Emilio Salgari, and the related “Indo-malay” cycle of novels.

## THE LAY OF THE LAND

Most of the population of the Gulf of Tangor is composed of rakasta, either *Harimau-Belang* (sherkasta), *Rimau-Daban* (cloud pardasta), *Rimau-Gunung* (pardasta), or *Kucing* (domestic rakasta).

Other native sentients of the area include lizard men (*Biawak*), dragons (jade, onyx, and black dragons), naga, and Tangor and Jennite humans (called *Orang-Hitam* and *Orang-Datar* by the native rakasta; Alphatians are called *Orang-Langit*, literally meaning both humans from the sky and sky-coloured humans, referring to the bluish tint of pure Alphatians' complexion).

Biawak lizard men are similar to the shazak of the Savage Coast, but their skins are covered in a natural mail of bone extrusions, giving them a natural AC 5, and have poison glands that allow them to inject a powerful and deadly venom. Furthermore, their blood naturally contains a strong antibacterial compound, which gives them a +2 bonus to saving throws to resist diseases.





Map of Tangor Bay area

## The Pirate Island of KURAMAN

Kuraman is a disappearing island, impossible to locate. It is considered as a legend by the mariners of the Gulf of Tangor. However, it does exist in the Gulf of Tangor and, at the same time, in the Dreamlands. The island originally moved erratically between the Dreamlands and the real world. Since two years, the consciousness of Lady Mylerila, and Alphatian elf maiden, has merged with the land itself, and exerts a degree of control over it, mostly at the behest of her former husband, the sherkasta pirate lord *Bahadur the Brave*. Bahadur's "cubs", fierce sherkasta pirates, make up most of the island's population, from which they sail out in *prahos* (use longship statistics) to raid Alphatian shippings.

There are few other threats on the island, although some sleepy treants are found in the woods on the slopes that lead to the keep where Bahadur holds his court.

## The Kingdom of WARANGAN

This semi-independent dominion is located along the coast of the Gulf of Tangor. It is controlled by *Quisoth Tredissur*, an enterprising Alphatian cleric of Brissard and former military officer of the Imperial Navy, who is known as "The Pirates' Bane" and "The Human Rajah". Warangan is rich in mineral resources, and the Human Rajah is increasingly attracting dwarven miners from the Kingdom of Stoutfellow to improve the efficiency of the mines. This causes conflict with the local sherkasta clergy and hunters and the domestic rakasta farmers. Quisoth is currently attempting to get his claim as King of Warangan recognized by the Imperial throne.

Inland, the jungles of Warangan are inhabited by dangerous creatures, including giant snakes and lizards, as well as plants such as archer bushes, mantraps, and choke creepers. The jade dragon *Tuan-Ular* controls much of this territory. She is friendly towards the natives, but hostile towards the Alphatians.

## Kerajaan Berlian-Wajik (Rajasthan of Berlian-Wajik)

The nearest neighbour to the north and east of Warangan, Berlian-Wajik is a large but underdeveloped kingdom, ruled by a caste of sherkasta warriors and clerics lording over cloud pardasta hunters and domestic rakasta farmers. Pardasta also live in the northern borderlands. The Rajah of Berlian-Wajik, *Delima-Batu* (sherkasta cleric 12, N), is an ineffective, prejudiced, traditionalist ruler who has been unable to resist the Alphatian requests, leaving the island of Lawang under Alphatian control. The island is used by the Alphatians as a stopover for flights and sea travels to the Alphatian Raj.

The fauna of Berlian-Wajik is similar to that of Warangan, but decapi, surtaki<sup>1</sup> and hill giants are also found in the the more remote areas.

## The Alphatian Raj

This large dominion in the south of the Bay of Tangor is controlled by a group of high-level Alphatian adventurers, the *Company of Mage Adventurers*, who have invested large amount of money and magical resources in carving out their own dominion in Skothar, subjugating local sherkasta Rajahs and Maharajahs. The Alphatians are supported by a small amount of magically armed Alphatian troops, as well as domestic rakasta and sherkasta *sepoys*, native mercenary troops. *Viceroy Qanetar* (male human magic user 30, C) is the leader of the Alphatians. He

<sup>1</sup> A surtaki is an unusual monster from "Creature Catalog", page 104. It is a predator large as a bull, with a reptilian head, poison quills, and a shaggy fur.

claims the title of Viceroy, although in Alphatian terms he is a full-fledged King. The Raj territory is divided into many smaller principalities, mostly held by local vassals, or by Alphatian administrators.

Besides Alphatians, Jennite and Tangor humans are also found in the area.

## The Andhakarban

This giant mangrove forest at the delta of a the Devanadi river in Tangor Bay borders the Alphatian Raj. Sherkasta hunt-lords control swaths of the jungle, maintaining retinues of sherkasta and pardasta hunters, and cloud pardasta and domestic rakasta servants. The Alphatian Raj maintains military outposts along the borders, mostly manned by *sepoys*. The murderous cult of the demon goddess Andhakari (Demogorgon) hides in the depths of the forests, emerging to abduct victims to sacrifice in her pagoda temples. *Sanshodbara*, the high priest of Andhakari, leads this evil cult.

The Andhakarban is a hotbed of monsters. Hydrae are particularly common, as are hangman trees, and multiple black and onyx dragons claim territories in the region, all under the command of a huge onyx dragon, *Kelam-Akik*.

## KINGDOM OF EMAS

This multi-ethnic kingdom east of the Andhakarban is composed of sherkasta and other rakasta, but also Tangor humans and ogre-kin, who have stratified in a long sequence of migrations and invasions. The current rulers are a displaced Tangor human



*A beach in the Gulf of Tangor*

people, called Taranya in the rakasta language. They form circa 15% of the population, with ogre-kin immigrants from the east composing another 20%, and the rest divided among the pardasta, cloud pardasta, sherkasta and domestic breeds of rakasta, and a few Jennite immigrants. The current chief of state is the dowager *Queen Zamrud* (female human cleric 9 of Ixion).

## FACTIONS

### The Alphatians

The Alphatians operate in the Gulf of Tangor and Tangor Bay regions in a semi-official way. Most of them are independent or semi-independent adventurers, hoping to establish dominions in this remote but resource-rich region. A relative amount of organisation is provided by the Company of Mage Adventurers, an organisation sponsored by rich Alphatian magic users as well as by the Cult of Supremacy, a cult of Brissard originating in Frisland. The

Company has sufficient clout to be able to get limited support from the Imperial fleet, and sufficient funds to hire Alphatian and native mercenaries. Viceroy Qanetar is the leader of the Company of Mage Adventurers.

### The Pirates

The Tigers of Kuraman are directly opposed to the Alphatians, since their leader, Bahadur, lost his family and petty kingdom to the human Rajah, Quisoth Tredissur. They mostly strike at Alphatian ships, but occasionally attack ports. While Bahadur is a noble leader and does not condone slavery or the killing of prisoners, his followers are not as lenient when Bahadur himself is not present.

### The Thugs

These ferocious rakasta of various breeds are cultists of Demogorgon, in her aspect as Andhakari. They practice ritual sacrifices of sentient beings as well as engaging in

kidnapping, murder, and slave trade. Their upper ranks include weretigers and randara<sup>2</sup>, beside high level sherkasta clerics of Demogorgon. They originate from the Andhakarban, but are found in Emas and the Alphatian Raj as well, usually under cover. The high priest Sanshodhara is the leader of the cult.

## DRAMATIS PERSONAE

### Bahadur the Brave

Pirate Lord, sherkasta fighter 20, C

Bahadur was born the heir to a petty kingdom in what is now Warangan. At that time, the territory was part of the Rajahstan of Berlian-Wajik. Bahadur's parents and most of his relatives were killed or dispersed by the Human Rajah during his campaign to consolidate his power on Warangan, while Bahadur was away on a trading expedition to distant Zyxl. On his return, Bahadur vowed vengeance and assembled a pirate crew out of the remaining warriors of his household and others wronged by Quisothe. After a particularly violent battle at sea, Bahadur's praho shipwrecked on Lawang, where he was not recognized. Lord Astreth and his protégé Mylerila nursed him to health. During that time, Bahadur met a mysterious and fascinating sherkasta woman, whom he wooed, only to be forced to flee by a sudden visit of the Human Rajah. After many adventures, Bahadur managed to reunite

<sup>2</sup> A randara is the BECMI version of the AD&D rakshasa. It is found in "Creature Catalog", page 89.

with his beloved, who turned out to be Mylerila, a weretigress! Unfortunately, Mylerila elven blood interfered with her lycanthropy, leading her to fall ill and, in time, die of her lycanthropy.

A majestic sherkasta with piercing black eyes, dressed in red cloth brocaded with gold, Bahadur often sports a turban kept in place by a ruby and dark red leather boots. A curved dagger and a scimitar complete his outfit.

### Yonar to Sphendon

Minaean thief 17, N

Yonar is a roguish gentleman of Minaean origins. He was traveling on an Alphatian ship as a mercenary, when the ship was attacked by Bahadur's pirates. Yonar was the last defender to surrender, and Bahadur admired his bravery and skill so much he decided not only to spare him, which he does with all prisoners, but to acknowledge him as his equal. From that time, Yonar became almost a brother to Bahadur, as well as his second in command. A master of disguises, Yonar is able to pass himself off as an Alphatian, as he speaks the language perfectly, and uses this ability to help Bahadur gather information and infiltrate the Alphatians' ranks.

Yonar is tall and lanky, with a drooping moustache and a long nose. His greying hair is tied in a ponytail. He wears the colorful clothes of a swashbuckler, and wields rapier and main gauche in combat.

## Shakta-Byadha

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Andhakardan Hunter, sherkasta fighter 16, N

Shakta-Byadha is a noble sherkasta from the Andhakardan. A tall, handsome specimen with large stripes, Shakta-Byadha is a skilled snake hunter and outdoorsman, as well as a valiant fighter. He is a sworn enemy of Sanshodhara and the Thugs, and the lover of Lady Halarys Telanes.

## Sanshodhara

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High Priest of the Thug Cult, sherkasta cleric of Demogorgon 20, C

A wily sherkasta priest, Sanshodhara is known by the titles of High Priest of Andhakara, and Son of the Great Waters. His true identity is mostly unknown, even to the adepts of the cult, and only the inner circle of priests -- all devoted worshipers of Demogorgon -- know his face, which is hidden behind a golden mask during the rituals. Yet, he commands the absolute devotion of his followers.

Physically, Sanshodara is thin for a sherkasta, but has ropelike muscles. He is an expert wrestler and a master of disguises. As the high priest, he wears a golden mask and rich paraments of black silk decorated with golden thread.

## Rajah Quisoth Tredissur

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The Human Rajah, King of Wangaram, Alphatian cleric 18 of Brissard, C

Quisoth Tredissur is a former Imperial Navy officer turned explorer and adventurer. An imposing man in his mid-forties, Quisoth sports longish brown curly hair, a thin moustache, and the coppery complexion of a common Alphatian. He is originally from Ambur, and has retained a certain theatrical flair, relishing in unexpected appearances and sudden revelations. Quisoth is a competent military commander, although he tends to push his men too much, and is prone to sudden bursts of wrath. His success derives mostly from the superior magical power of the Alphatians, his good relations with the Company of Mage Adventurers, and his prized possession, the sky schooner *Ybodnei*.

Quisoth is a follower of the Cult of Supremacy, a Frislander religion centered around the cult of the Immortal patron of slavery, Brissard. He is loosely allied with the Alphatian Raj, and is developing an alliance with Sanshodhara. Quisoth is the mortal enemy of Bahadur.

## Lord Astreth

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Skycaptain, Governor of Lawang, Alphatian weretiger 12/magic user 15, N

Lord Astreth is an older Alphatian adventurer and skyship captain. He is the governor of Lawang, which he holds as a sub-dominion for the Human Rajah. He and his beautiful protégé, Mylerila, are both weretigers. Astreth is not as evil as Quisoth Tredissur,

but hates Bahadur for carrying away Mylerila and blames him for her death.

Astreth looks like a pure Alphatian, dressed in the uniform of a navy officer, or in the flowing robes of the aristocracy. In tiger form, his black and white stripes have a bluish cast.

### Mylerila, the Sapphire of Lawang

Nature Spirit, formerly Alphatian (half-)elf 9/weretiger 9, N

Mylerila was born of Feredyl Telanes' sister and Lord Astreth's older brother. Her mother died in childbirth, and her father died when the girl was very young following the Spike Assault in distant Thyatis. Mylerila was sent to live with her uncle, who moved to Lawang when the Human Rajah acquired the island. As the daughter of an elf and a weretiger, her dual nature stressed her physique immensely, leading to her premature death a couple of years after marrying Bahadur. When she died, her spirit did not leave Kuraman, but merged with the island itself becoming a nature spirit. She sometimes appears as an elf or a sherkasta maiden, or as a white tiger. She exerts a degree of control over Kuraman's presence in the material world or in the Dreamlands, which she can use to help Bahadur.

### Captain Feredyl Telanes

Shiye Mercenary, alphatian elf 10 (Attack Class D), L

This mercenary officer from Shiye-Lawr is the uncle of Mylerila, and the adoptive father of her half-sister Halarys. A stern, no-nonsense officer, Feredyl serves the Company of Mage Adventurers in the Alphatian Raj, commanding a border fort near the Andhakarban.

### Halarys Telanes

Alphatian cleric 13/weretiger 10, N

Halarys Telanes is Mylerila's half-sister from her father's side. The identity of her mother is a secret known only to Feredyl Telanes, who used to be a close friend and assistant of her father. Feredyl adopted the girl, who remains very close to her half-sister. Halarys was kidnapped by the thugs to be trained as a priestess of Demogorgon. However, Shakta-Byadha and Feredyl joined forces to rescue her.

### Antek

Cloud pardasta fighter 14, L

Antek is a cloud pardasta servant of Shakta-Byadha. He is unceasingly loyal to his master, and a remarkable fighter on his own. He is often able to save his master by appearing at the last minute out of nowhere and saving the day, as well as to escape defeat by suddenly disappearing from a battle site.

## Jumlah Dibuang

Exiled Prince of Warangan, domestic rakasta cleric 10 of Bastet

The son of the former ruler of Warangan has been sent to the custody of the Viceroy of the Alphatian Raj. He is a popular figure in Warangan and Berlian-Wajik, and his disappearance has put a halt to insurgency in the area.

## THE ADVENTURE

The adventure starts as Shakta-Byadha has been captured by the Human Rajah. Instigated by Sanshodhara, the Rajah is sending Shakta-Byadha to a prison colony in Esterhold by ship. *Feredyl*, *Halarys*, and *Antek* set sail on the “Young Tangor” to attempt a rescue, but shipwreck on Kuraman, where they are joined by *Yonar*, who helps them in their efforts.

The adventure is designed for the four characters mentioned above, but can the party can be expanded by adding one or two high-level Tigers of Kuraman (sherkasta F14, N). In this case, the DM will need to adjust the number of opponents. The adjusted TPL for the party, as stated above, is 120.

## The Shipwreck

The adventure begins in medias res, with *Feredyl*, *Halarys*, and *Antek* on board the “Young Tangor”, a small sailing ship manned by captain *Kelasi* (male domestic rakasta F5, L) and his sailors. A violent storm sends the “Young Tangor” to shipwreck on the Tangor Gulf island of Kuraman.

*Bahadur* sends *Yonar* with a group of his pirates to attack the invaders. A furious melee ensues. The three PCs on the ship are attacked by 12 Tigers of Kuraman (sherkasta F3).

*Yonar* is instead faced by 3 sailors (domestic rakasta F2) and captain *Kelasi*.

The other sailors and Tigers are busy fighting each other, and can be considered as not contributing to the fight. If *Yonar* dispatches the sailors (or if the Tigers capture the other PCs), the Tigers of Kuraman dispatch the remaining sailors, and surround *Feredyl*, *Halarys* and *Antek*. If, on the other hand, the three PCs dispatch all the Tigers before *Yonar* wins his fight, or if *Yonar* is subdued by the sailors, *Bahadur* himself appears with a large group of Tigers, and forces the surrender of the shipwrecked crew.

In any case, *Feredyl*, *Halarys* and *Antek* are brought before *Bahadur*, who recognises the resemblance of *Halarys* to *Mylerila*. Soon, the truth is discovered, and the three can expound their plight to the pirate lord, who asks *Yonar* to help them. He sends them out with a *prabo*, 20 Tigers, and *Yonar*.

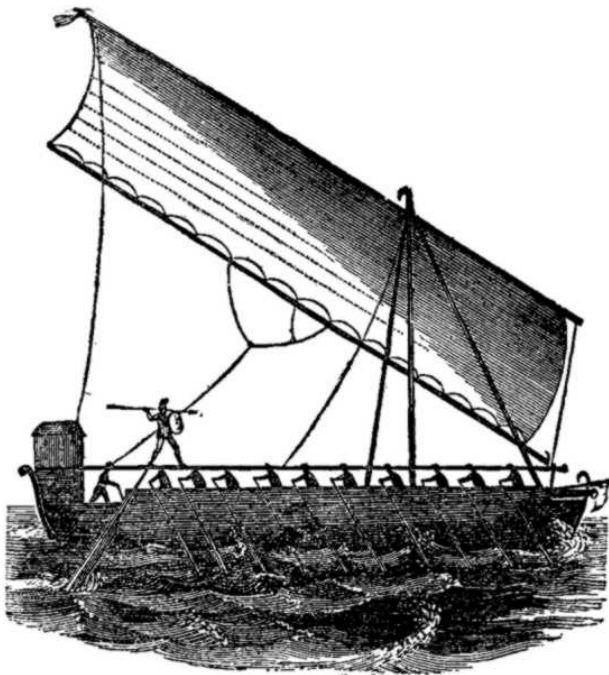
## Battles in the Sky

*Bahadur*’s plan is that the PCs take command of the “Star of Verdun”, the ship that will bring Shakta-Byadha to Esterhold. The PCs will then reach Warangan, retrieve Shakta-Byadha under the guise of Alphatian officers, and bring him back to Kuraman. For this reason, only the PCs can accomplish the mission -- *Bahadur* himself would be easily recognised, so he remains on Kuraman.

### The Star of Verdun

The "Star of Verdun" is an Alphatian navy ship, equivalent to a large sailing ship. It is manned by 26 sailors (normal humans), captain *Taloth Ur-Daryr* (male human T14, N), first officer *Lernan* (male human T9, N), and 3 mates (each a T3). Protecting the ship is a company of 20 heavy marines (F3, armed with longswords and wearing plate mail and shield) led by commander *Zumthan* (male human F9, L).

Mylerila senses the proximity of the "Star of Verdun", allowing the PCs to reach it on a praho, in case they want to attack the ship, or on a lifeboat, if they want to pass themselves off as survivors of a shipwreck. They can then use persuasion, charm spells, bribes or any means they can come up with to replace the officers. However, if one of the officers manages to escape the PCs persuasion methods, he will be able to use a scroll of communication to alert an Alphatian base, from which the skyship "Starpoint Arrow" is dispatched.



### The Starpoint Arrow

The "Starpoint Arrow" will intercept the "Star of Verdun" near Warangan's coast. It attacks from the sky with a belcher, aiming at disabling the sails. Then, the Arrow's captain sends a boarding party of 10 elite boltmen (E3 or MU3), commanded by Commander *Tsalim* (male human MU10, N) and 12 marines (F4), commanded by Lieutenant *Zyndras* (male human F12).

If the boarding fails, the captain will withdraw his forces and sink the "Star of Verdun" using his belcher, forcing the PCs to reach the coast swimming.

### The Rajah's Palace

Once in Warangan, the PCs may try to carry out the original plan, if they are still in possession of the "Star of Verdun". In this case, however, they will be betrayed by one of the officers or sailors, forcing a confrontation with the White Rajah's guards (use the same statistics as for the "Starpoint Arrow" boarding crew, but there is no aerial support in this encounter).

Otherwise, they need to come up with a different plan. This part of the adventure is less constrained, as the PCs may come up with different plans to free Shakta-Byadha. If they ask for a local contact, then a local sage and opium house owner, *Pembag* (domestic rakasta T9, C) will suggest to infiltrate the Human Rajah's palace, give Shakta-Byadha a finely tuned dose of Black Lotus, so he will appear dead, then exfiltrate him from the mortuary.



### The Thugs

If the PCs do not exercise the utmost caution, the followers of Sanshodhara will discover their purpose by interrogating their informants (e.g., Pembag or any survivor of the "Star of Verdun" crew). In this case, the Son of the Great Waters will dispatch his representatives in Warangan to ambush the PCs, if possible by night. The team is led by *Jabat* (cloud pardasta cleric 10 of Demogorgon) and composed by six Thugs (HD 5 each). Furthermore, Jahat will have summoned a death leech. If Jahat falls, the Thugs will retreat, leaving the death leech to cover them.

### The Mortuary

The mortuary is haunted by a *vision*. The vision appears as 8 rakasta fighting monks, armed with wicked polearms (1d10 damage). The vision does not manifest by day, and the mortuary is otherwise empty by night -- the curators know of the haunting.

If the PCs have poisoned Shakta-Byadha, his body lies on a table in the center of the mortuary.

### FINALE: The Human Rajah

When the PCs have recovered Shakta-Byadha, the Human Rajah will suddenly appear, having got wind of the PCs' presence -- perhaps an NPC recognised them, or a surviving Thug informed him. The Human Rajah will be always accompanied by his six bodyguards (each a human F8).

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# A very different Mind-set: Playing Zhochal in Mystara

by Geoff Gander

*“Surveyor, there is a task to be completed,” said the figure seated on the pedestal.*

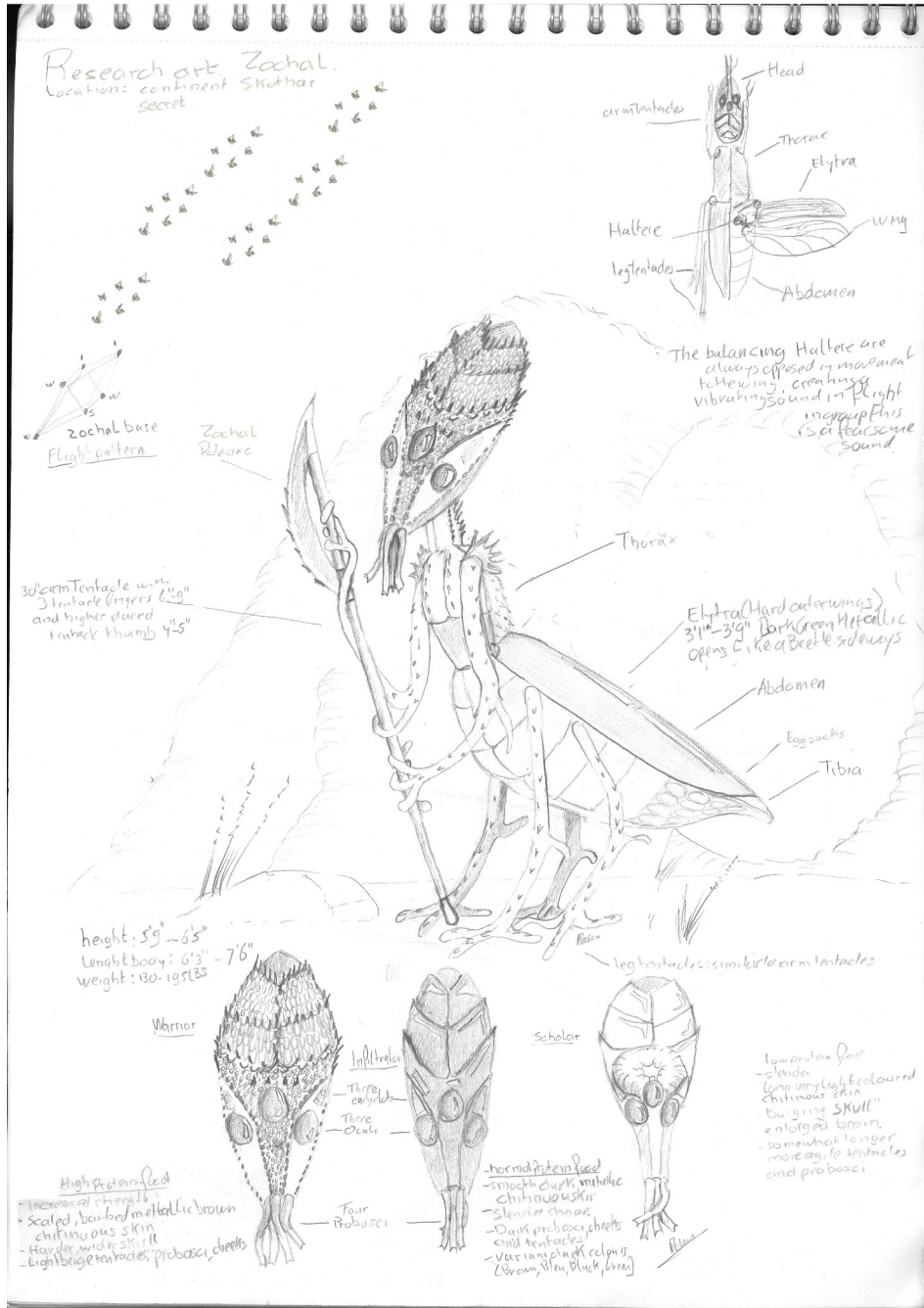
*Surveyor advanced towards the other. The lighting in the First's chamber was dimmer than in the surrounding corridors. The conductive veins in the living walls throbbed weakly. Surveyor listened. The life pulse of the Citadel had ebbed noticeably, despite reallocating all of the Heart's energy to repairs. “This one awaits direction,” said Surveyor.*

*“A grouping of humans has entered our domain,” said the First. “Preliminary observations indicate that these could be the individuals that recently eliminated the rival outpost that once lay to the southeast. If this is so their power would be considerable. The identities of these humans must be ascertained.”*

*“This one concurs,” said Surveyor. “Yet, this one is unfamiliar with the identities of humans thus mentioned. This one is compelled to suggest delegating this function to Senior Surveyor.” Surveyor stepped back and relaxed its tentacles. “This one awaits a decision.”*

*“Senior Surveyor is unable.”*

*“This one shall perform as directed.”*



A drawing made by the explorer Professor vander Klil, in his younger years

Professor vander Klil can be seen in [Robin's Blog](#); and works as a teacher in the Great School of Magic of Glantri. He is also mentioned in her Beholder article of this very Threshold magazine. He uses another dialect to describe the species; Zochal

*The text in the art is displayed here, to give extra clarity.*

## Research Art Zochal

Location; Continent Skothar (secret)

Wings;

Arm Tentacles, Head, Thorax, Elytra, Wing, Haltere, Wing, Abdomen, Leg Tentacles.

The balancing Haltere are always opposed in movement to the Wing, creating a vibrating sound in flight.

In group this is a fearsome sound.

Creature;

Zochal Poleaxe, Thorax, Abdomen, Eggsacks, Tibia

Arm Tentacles with 3 tentacle fingers 6"-9" and higher placed tentacle thumb 4"-5"

Elytra (Hard Outer Wings), 3'1"-3'9" Dark Green Metallic.

Opens like a Beetle sideways.

Height; 5'9"-6'5"

Length Body; 6'3"-7'6"

Weight; 130-195 LBS

Leg Tentacles similar to arm tentacles

## Warrior

High Protein Food

-increased strength

-scaled, barbed, metallic brown chitinous skin

-Harder, Wider skull

-Light beige tentacles, Probosci, cheeks

## Infiltrator

Normal Protein Food

-smooth dark metallic chitinous skin

-slender shape

-dark probosci, cheeks and tentacles

-variant dark colors (Brown, Blue, Black, Green)

## Scholar

Low Protein Food

-slender, long, very light coloured Chitinous skin.

Bulging "skull"

enlarged brain

somewhat longer more agile tentacles and proboscid

## Zochal base Flight Pattern

## Introduction:

This article provides rules for a new race and character-class package for the Mystara campaign setting: an alien race known as the zhochal. The zhochal are loosely inspired by H.P. Lovecraft's Mi-Go (also known as the Fungi from Yuggoth); however, they are far from being a malicious race bent on experimenting on humanity for their own selfish aims. Instead, the zhochal are beings with a full range of motivations and personalities—they are simply very, very different, and playing one offers interesting challenges and opportunities.

When I originally designed them, the zhochal were far more faithful to Lovecraft's Mi-Go, as they were intended to be a race that originated in another dimension who discovered the Outer Beings and chose to venerate them (as opposed to being a created servitor race). This positioned them as a handy nemesis for any campaign, as a highly intelligent, utterly inhuman race that willingly embraced a pantheon of beings bent on destroying the universe not out of malice, but because they simply wanted to replace it with something of their own. The zhochal did, in fact, work quite well as opponents in my campaign.

Ideas evolve over time (as they are wont to do), and I soon saw great roleplaying potential in such a race. I played one (who had a human disguise) in a Play by Email Campaign (with the GM's permission, of course), without the other players' knowledge. I quickly discovered that not only were the zhochal fun (but challenging) to play; their very alien mindset presented an incredibly rich roleplaying experience

because I was forced to look at everything through new eyes. This was especially true for social situations (some very interesting in-character discussions were had). This article is the result of my experiences with that campaign, combined with numerous discussions with my players, many hours of deep thought, and play-testing.

## Using the Zhochal Player Character Race in Your Campaign:

Saying the zhochal are not your typical Player Character (PC) race would be an understatement. Their physiology, mindset, and social organisation are products of a completely alien environment and, despite having lived on Mystara for approximately three millennia, these elements remain deeply rooted in their being. Just about every form of behaviour and reaction we take for granted as human beings—which we can safely extrapolate to elves, dwarves, halflings, and even orcs—cannot be done for the zhochal.

For example, almost all social beings engage in “small talk” and use body language of one form or another, the purpose of which can be to reinforce social bonds, to assess status, to demonstrate dominance, or to determine sexual availability. The zhochal, however, do not engage in nonverbal communication, use superfluous gestures, or engage in small talk because of their hive-like and rigidly hierarchical social structure. All members of the collective are equal under their leader (who is known as the First), and therefore there is no social status to gain or lose; although more experienced zhochal often act

as teachers, imparting their wisdom for the betterment of the collective. Likewise, the zhochal are asexual, so there is no reason to solicit a mate. Thus, even if a zhochal is wearing a human guise they will not pick up on social cues that we take for granted, nor will they use gestures, unless they are thoroughly schooled in human behaviour. As a result, they will come across as very odd and will likely arouse suspicion.

As a result, playing a zhochal (at least as described in this article) is something that requires more attention on the part of both the player and the DM than most other classes require. This is a character who is a fish-out-of-water in almost every sense, for whom many experiences other races take for granted will be—at first—novel, confusing, overwhelming, and possibly dangerous. However, because a zhochal PC will likely be adventuring with “native” Mystarans, there are also many opportunities for character growth. In this sense, players can use a zhochal PC to explore social concepts such as belonging, identity, and morality to a greater depth. I would add that the zhochal is a race/class that is ideally suited to players who are not only familiar with roleplaying, but who are willing and prepared to play a character that will need to grow and change if it is to thrive. Playing one will probably also require a discussion with the DM as to how the race will fit into the campaign.

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*Hrothgar peered into the mist. A rasping voice had told him to stop, and a shadowy figure landed not far from him to examine the drawing Galfridus had made for him. The man had said it would guarantee them safe conduct with this group of zhochal, and he had not deceived them yet. There's always a first time, though, he thought.*

*Another silhouette emerged from the mist, this one human-shaped, which resolved itself into a young woman. Hrothgar didn't really pay too much attention to appearances—especially those of other races—but he had seen enough humans to know that this one was...average. She had straight brown hair, brown eyes, a pale complexion with no markings to speak of. She'd just melted into a crowd, said a voice in his head. She tottered up to the dwarf, as though unsure of her footing, and stopped half a dozen paces away.*

*“This one is designated as Surveyor,” said the woman without preamble. She stood at attention and waited, her eyes focused on Hrothgar's face.*

*“Ah, who?” Hrothgar looked behind him to see if any other strangers had shown up, but saw nothing but mist. He could only assume the rest of the party was still behind him somewhere.*

*“This one,” said the woman. She directed a finger towards herself.*

*"Wha-oh!" said Hrothgar. "Right. You are Surveyor. Nice name. I'm Hrothgar Hammerfast."*

*"This one?" asked the woman, pointing towards him.*

*"Yes. Me. This one is designated as Hrothgar." He jabbed himself with a thumb for added effect.*

*The woman known as Surveyor stepped closer and prodded Hrothgar's beard. "This one has the stature of a juvenile human, yet possesses facial hair. Perplexing."*

*"Hey, ah, normally I don't let people touch me beard, but I suppose I'll let it go this time. I'm a dwarf."*

*"Dwarf," said Surveyor slowly. "Dwarf." She seemed to roll the word around her mouth. "Hrothgar Hammerfast does not travel alone. The First would speak with this sub-collective. Information must be exchanged."*

*"Ah, right then. I suppose we've come to the right place." Hrothgar let out a long breath. He had actually been a little worried for a moment. He turned back to the party, who were presumably still back there somewhere and hopefully not dead. "The way's clear, gang," he called out.*



*An illustration of the Lovecraftian creature that inspired the zhochal*

### **Description:**

In their natural form the zhochal (a rough approximation of what they call themselves) are vaguely insect-like creatures averaging 6' in height. They have a mottled greenish-grey carapace, with six appendages (two segmented legs and four two-foot long, highly dextrous tentacles at the "chest" level). When desired, they can split their carapace in the back to produce two light green membranous wings (much like a beetle), which emit a low whirring noise when in motion.

*From the old examination scriptures of Professor vander Klil;*

All zochal have dark green metallic Elytra (wingshield), varying in intensity only. Other body section colors vary by class, which is dictated by diet, or some genetic coloring. Zochal receive an adjusted diet in their initial growing phase. It seems they have an egg, then Larval, then main individual phase, making the initial growing phase the Larval phase. Each diet varies by protein content. Low amounts increase the yield of the brain, but lower physique, high amounts increase physique, alter skin, but lower intelligence. The donut-shaped bulge of the Scholar class harbours the an enlarged brain, making it capable of memorizing and casting magical spells.

The yellowish translucent Zochal wings (with brown-yellow veins) and Dark brown Haltere together cause a vibrating sound (equivalent to the sound of a Bluebell fly), but in groups combined into the fear-causing hum, ([listen to an example](#)). This hum together with the typical flight pattern (see art), is a fear inspiring approach, similar to a fear aura of Dragons, being effective if heard.

DM Note: As an option in increase variation between Zhochal sub-classes, Warriors have 1d8 hp/HD but a +2 on their strength and constitution, but a -2 on intelligence and wisdom. The Scholar thus has 1d4 Hp/HD and a +2 on Intelligence, +1 on Wisdom, and a -2 on Strength and constitution. The Infiltrator will have no such adjustments and being 1d6Hp/HD. The Warrior class has a barbed harder skin, not only does this skin give 1 point of damage to soft-skin creatures upon contact, it also provides a higher Armor Value (or better Armor Class) of +1. The other classes will have no adjusted AC or AV.

Their heads are oval-shaped and extend, crest-like, backwards. Their faces are dominated by three red, saucer-sized eyes, each of which is capable of independent movement (zhochal cannot be flanked when in their natural forms). They do not have proper jaws, and instead have four thin, foot-long tubes, each ending with a tiny toothless mouth. Because of this arrangement, they are fully capable of communicating while eating (they find single-mouthed creatures to be very limited). Although capable of producing a full range of sounds, a zhochal's voice in its natural form has a rasping, buzzing undertone that many listeners find disconcerting.

In combat, zhochal may attack up to two times with their tentacles, or wield a one- or two-handed weapon. When fighting, they may also swoop down on a foe, and if a successful attack roll is made, they can grab their opponent and try to haul them into the air and then drop them from great heights.

Zhochal PCs can be guardians (fighters), infiltrators (thieves), or scholars (magic users). Each of these classes has the same abilities as their human equivalents (i.e., guardians have fighter combat options at later levels, infiltrators have thief skills), with the exception that scholars, when assuming a guise (see Shapeshifting – below) are allowed to wear any non-metallic armour, and may use any one-handed weapon.

Due to the otherworldly nature of the zhochal, and their extensive historical association with the Outer Beings, Mystaran Immortals will not grant spells to them (even if prayed to fervently). As a result, the only “divine” magic available to the zhochal



derives from the Outer Beings (who are generally considered to be evil). As a typical heroic adventuring campaign does not allow evil characters, zhochal cannot be clerics. Furthermore, there is a 25% chance that any clerical spell cast on a zhochal—even healing—will fail.

### Society:

Although they are not insects, the zhochal are intensely hierarchical and behave in a very hive-like manner. Each well-functioning member of a community is assigned a specific role by their First, and they are expected to perform that role without question until they die, or unless the First reassigns them. Most zhochal perform their duties to the best of their abilities without complaint; they are so thoroughly programmed that the concept of job dissatisfaction, or dereliction of duty, is foreign to most of them. This behaviour is not a conscious choice, but something that is genetically coded into their being. A small percentage, however, do possess an individualistic streak, and while they still feel intense pressure to conform and serve the greater interests of the collective, they are apt to propose new ways of doing things, or to (politely and with discretion, usually) question actions that might not be ideal. This is not a flaw, but a means of ensuring the race's survival. In the event that the First of a collective is killed, one of the more individualistic zhochal will notice the sudden absence of a co-ordinating force, and become a replacement. In most cases there are few enough individualistic zhochal in a collective that this sudden ascension is not challenged, and genetically-driven, pragmatic communitarian impulses do the rest;

although a large number zhochal found in adventuring parties would also possess the individualist streak. Hierarchical and collective impulses are always lurking in the background of an individual zhochal's psyche—any sizeable gathering (more than six) of zhochal, even if they had each been living independently for years beforehand, will automatically feel the urge to forge subconscious mental links with each other in order to create a collective. One of their number will then become a First, and will begin assigning societal roles.

Although the zhochal have unique personalities and a sense of identity, the idea of having a name is foreign to them. The zhochal know who they are and define themselves publicly by their function. Due to their hive-like social organisation, the needs of the collective always supersede those of the individual (even unto the death of the individual, if that is what the community requires), and the notion of putting personal wants and needs first is considered a form of insanity. In fact, within the collective the ambient psychic link that exists between all the members creates a low-pitched, pleasing buzz or murmur that tamps down individualistic tendencies and impulses, and strengthens group solidarity. Most Mystaran societies, by contrast, with their emphasis on individuality, are considered highly chaotic at best, and utterly mad at worst. Thus, conformity and deference to authority are virtues of the highest order.

This strong communitarian focus, combined with their inborn ability to detect members of their own species, means that prolonged isolation is traumatic—many zhochal would go insane (especially if the isolation is sudden and prolonged), but some make

painful adaptations and become true individuals. Even in the latter case, however, the desire to find a group of any kind (such as an adventuring party) as a surrogate collective is very strong. Isolation is, in fact, the worst form of punishment meted out in a collective; death is preferable. Due to their highly structured society, most collectives act in what would be considered a “lawful” manner; however, their highly rational, communitarian, deterministic outlook on life often comes across as being very cold to outsiders. Hence, most zhochal PCs should be neutral.

Individually, zhochal do feel emotions—of a sort. Notions of personal sadness, anger, and happiness are confusing enough that hive philosophers have spent decades analysing observations of other races from the field and writing about them. While they possess an instinct for self-preservation, and in most circumstances would never wish to die or be harmed, zhochal do not feel fear, they merely want to continue contributing to the collective. An accidental death of a worker, for example, is cause for regret and worry—not for the life lost, but because the collective has lost a contributor and overall well-being may suffer. A murder might be avenged out of a desire to prevent the perpetrator from doing so again, not out of revenge. Happiness is especially confusing, as fulfilling one’s duties competently is seen as a satisfying end in itself. However, when the collective succeeds in something important, the community’s mood is elevated. Zhochal who live as individuals for prolonged periods can experience and express emotional states that more closely approach those of other races—but even so they are not as strong.

The zhochal are asexual, and reproduce through parthenogenesis (self-reproduction without fertilisation) upon receipt of specific biochemical signals from the First. They find the sexual duality of most native Mystaran species to be both illogical and biologically unnecessary. Offspring develop in black spherical pods measuring 1-2’ in diameter, and are fully functional when they hatch (although much smaller in size). Maturation takes up to ten years, during which a function is assigned and training is provided. The typical zhochal lifespan is between 150-250 years, and they are fully active until 3-6 months before death, at which time they degenerate rapidly. The oldest zhochal records state that in their home dimension they lived for many centuries.

Zhochal physiology allows them to function without food or rest for far longer than many other races can manage. Two hours of rest per 24-hour period, and one moderate-sized meal every two days, is sufficient; although it is common for them to eat every 3-4 days instead. A zhochal can survive comfortably without food for one week, after which the effects of starvation must be considered. Most can function without sleep (which resembles a sort of quiet meditation) for one week without suffering the ill effects of fatigue. In their natural environment the zhochal grow their food, which resembles grey pond scum, in special dedicated vats. This food is tasteless, but nourishing (other races find it incredibly bland, but digestible). The notion that food should do anything beyond sustaining life is a strange concept. Zhochal are capable of digesting “native” foods, but most find the flavours to be overwhelming and the profusion of textures to be unpleasant.

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*The zhochal landed in a forest clearing. The sun was rapidly sinking towards the horizon, but true night would not begin for another hour or so. The First's instructions had been clear: Artifacts from a rival stronghold had been acquired by a group of armed humans, and were being shipped secretly by caravan to the city. Infiltrators in the city had reported the presence of other zhochal—logically, these could only be members of a rival collective. The caravan must be boarded, and the cargo searched, before it entered the city.*

*It looked at the greenish-grey band that encircled one of its tentacles. It could not travel in its natural state, but the last experience with the guise had been quite difficult. **Action is necessary**, it thought. It directed a mental signal to the ring, which warmed noticeably within seconds. A rippling sensation passed through its body as it felt its internal organs shift, and its tentacles fuse into two arms. It felt lighter and heavier at the same time. The world itself seemed to flatten, as though it could only be viewed through a narrow aperture. How humans were able to thrive despite having only two eyes linked in binocular vision remained a mystery.*

*When the last echoes of the sensation died down, it gazed at its body. Pinkish flesh had replaced its exoskeleton, and where its dextrous tentacles had been were now five-pronged human hands. It touched its face with one hand. Gone were its four mouths. Instead, a single toothy orifice permitted the ingestion of nutriment. The guise would suffice.*

*The adhesive sac, containing human clothing, lay on the ground nearby—it had had the sense, at least, to set that aside so it would not be destroyed by the transformation. Some articles were genuine, but most were copies of observed human clothing styles, manufactured by the collective using their own vat-grown fibres. **More practice is needed**, it thought, as it donned the clothing awkwardly.*

*Finally, the last item of clothing was on. It was time to head out to the road to wait for the caravan, which would be along soon. It was not unnatural for caravans to permit lone humans to board them to ride to the nearest settlement—this behaviour had been documented numerous times. The zhochal permitted itself a feeling of satisfaction. **Success is feasible**, it thought.*

### Shapeshifting:

After their arrival on Mystara the zhochal learned very quickly that they would only survive through disguise and subterfuge. Within a few generations they developed the techniques required to craft items to allow them to walk unmolested among the locals. Today, these items—most often rings, but they can take other forms—are ubiquitous enough that most communities have enough to send out small parties to spy on, or do business with, local populations. Regardless of their form, shapeshifting devices work

only as long as they are worn—if they are knocked off or destroyed the zhochal reverts to its true form. Transformation takes one round (ten seconds), and if reverting back to its true form a zhochal must take care to remove any clothing it wishes to keep. It is assumed that zhochal PCs have been sent into the broader world on a mission, and therefore they will be equipped with such items—at least initially. Once transformed, a zhochal may remain in its altered state for as long as it wishes; although many do not enjoy being “trapped” inside a body that functions in an awkward manner.

Players must decide what their guise, or “alter ego”, looks like at character creation. Once a guise is chosen, it cannot be changed. All zhochal guises are human (they have reasoned that humans attract the least amount of attention), and although they are asexual it is not uncommon for some to prefer “playing” one gender over another when disguised, or (among experienced zhochal infiltrators) to adopt guises over time that have certain traits in common (such as a specific eye or hair colour). Hive philosophers have pondered this phenomenon for centuries, and some speculate that the first guise chosen is one that expresses the individual zhochal’s personality in some way. Once selected, a guise does not change (i.e., hair and nails do not grow), nor does it age. Experienced zhochal infiltrators, who are more likely than any other group to use guises, take care not to use a specific guise, or to stay in one place, for more than 10-20 years in order to avoid suspicion; although old guises may be re-adopted if enough time has passed since its last use. It should be noted that most zhochal who venture into the outside world

receive training on human anatomy, including typical physical characteristics (such as hair colour and complexion) for the region in which they inhabit before assuming a guise. This is done to ensure that the guise does not attract undue attention. In cases where the training is unavailable, or incomplete, the shapeshifting device’s rudimentary intelligence guides and “corrects” a zhochal’s choices, to ensure that a four-armed hermaphrodite (for example) is not chosen. Unless the zhochal specifies particular characteristics, the default human model is a brown eyed, brown-haired male or female of average appearance, build, and complexion, with no noticeable facial features such as scars, moles, or facial hair.

Guises are not illusions, enchantments, or spells; they are actual physical transformations, all the way down to the skeletal structure. The main clues that give away a disguised zhochal’s true nature are its blood (a runny yellow fluid), the location of its three hearts (in the abdomen—stabbing them in the chest is not fatal), and its metabolism (they still require very little food or rest). Experienced zhochal infiltrators feign sleep (or keep a very low profile), and force themselves to eat more regularly, in order to avoid suspicion.

Most zhochal are only capable of mastering one guise, but older, more experienced specimens can retain two or three. Extremely powerful zhochal are capable of shapeshifting without an item of any sort, which suggests that this is actually an inborn ability that requires a visible focus to activate, and practice to master. The fact that a zhochal’s guise does not change if they use different shapeshifting devices, and seems to

be part of them, supports this theory. In game terms, a PC starts off with one guise, and can acquire a new one every ten experience levels, to a maximum of three.

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*Jortan Elstam read the report a third time. There was no mistaking it—they had proof that Martin Hallonica had set up an elaborate money laundering scheme. There was no way the man was going to escape this time. He rang a bell on his desk. The door creaked open and a young man poked his head in. “Sir?” he asked.*

*“Get me the man who wrote this report.”*

*Moments later a nondescript man in a brown doublet appeared in the doorway. “I understand you wished to speak with me, Chief Investigator,” he said. Jortan narrowed his eyes. He had read the man’s file before he arrived. Connal Lynneldon was from Corunglain. No known run-ins with the law, no real family to speak of—in fact, there was very little written about him.*

*“Yes, Lynneldon. I read your report. I wanted you to know that it was excellent, and we shall be able to apprehend Mr. Hallonica soon.”*

*Connal bowed. “I am indeed gratified,” he said. He stood in silence for a long moment, regarding Jortan. “Do...you...require anything further?”*

*“As a matter of fact, yes,” said Jortan. “As I said this was impressive work. You must have an extensive network of your own, am I right?”*

*Connal paused, and blinked. A gentle wave of relief washed over him at the realisation that the Chief Investigator had given him a way of telling the truth without telling everything. He had been living among the humans for almost 20 cycles as an infiltrator, gathering information for his collective about the goings-on in Darokin City. His position gave him access to a great deal of information, and humans seemed to pay little attention to clerks. Yet he was still zhochal, and there were certain things that he found very difficult, such as lying to one’s superior. No one had to know that he had assumed his true form the previous night in order to fly to Hallonica’s house to eavesdrop. “Yes, I do.”*

*“Good to know, Lynneldon. Carry on.”*

*“It is a pleasure to serve,” said Connal. He bowed and left the room. Jortan smiled and placed the report in his drawer. Yes, Lynneldon was definitely an asset. One of Jortan’s aides once asked, half-jokingly, whether Lynneldon ever slept. “The man can stand on his head and sing all night, for all I care,” Jortan had said. “If I had a dozen more men like him, crime would become a thing of the past.”*

## Getting About in the World — Movement and Magic:

### Flying and Encumbrance

Although they are accomplished flyers, there is a limit to how much a zhochal can carry before it is unable to fly. The encumbrance chart below outlines how weight affects their flying ability.

*Table: Encumbrance chart*

Speed	Maximum Encumbrance in cn. (Lbs.)
210' (70')	300 (50)
180' (60')	500 (50)
150' (50')	700 (70)
120' (40')	900 (90)
90' (30')	1,100 (110)
60' (20')	1,300 (130)
30' (10')	1,500 (150)
0'	1,500+ (150+)

### Magic

Although the zhochal are a technological civilisation that originated in another dimension, they are capable of wielding the native arcane magic of Mystara (and can even sense it to a degree). However, because of their alien origins they are unable to master magic to the same extent as “native-born” species. As a consequence, zhochal scholars cannot cast spells until they reach second level, and their repertoire at 36<sup>th</sup> level is less than would be the case for magic users and elves.

However, zhochal have one advantage in that their scholars (magic users) do not need to use spell books. Their brains have a third lobe that is specifically designed to retain information—basically an internal library—and it is in this portion that spells are stored. In order to memorise a particular spell, a zhochal scholar reviews the specific memories associated with it. The effects of casting a spell, however, are identical in that it is “forgotten” temporarily.

As noted above, zhochal cannot cast divine magic. Furthermore, any clerical spell cast on them (including healing) has a 25% chance of failing. Unlike servants of the Outer Beings, the zhochal are not vulnerable to spells and magic items that specifically target those entities and their servants.

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*Darius turned to his companion, who was sitting in front of the campfire, roasting a slice of apple on a stick. Her bandages showed clearly in the flickering firelight. Somehow her drying, yellow blood looked worse when she was in her guise. “Are you sure you want to take watch again? I mean, you’ve done it four times this week and even you must be getting tired.”*

*Evalina drew back her lips into a smile. “Rest assured if I had an issue, I would tell you. Ricardo and Harfric are still recovering from their injuries, and even though I also suffered, I am in a better state than they.”*

*"Well, yeah, but..." Darius's voice trailed off as he grasped for a counterargument. Evalina could always be counted on to supply the logical answer to any question. He sighed and sat down on the log next to her, and studied the apple slice as it burned. It wasn't the first time Evalina had cooked food, but she had never done fruit before. He wondered, briefly, whether he really wanted to know what she was doing. "Alright," he said, "I'll bite. What's with the apple?"*

*Evalina blinked and cocked her head. She glanced at his mouth before her eyes darted up to meet his once more. "But you are not...ah, yes, I understand. I am roasting this apple to better comprehend your dietary practices."*

*Darius shook his head and rubbed his eyes. "I don't...understand." Evalina had been part of the group for almost a year, and although the party had learned her secret within weeks of her joining them, everyone had quickly learned to pay closer attention to what they said around her. Metaphors were especially dangerous territory.*

*"Oh, it is simple," said Evalina. "Many races roast animal flesh and vegetables prior to consumption, but in all my cycles, even when I was with my...my..." she paused and stared into the fire.*

*Darius placed a gentle hand on her shoulder. He knew little about her kind, but he did know that they were highly*

*social creatures. Evalina was teetering on the brink of madness when the party met her, prowling the ruins of her community and surrounded by her dead kin. Ricardo's intercession had saved her from an untimely end. "It's okay," he said softly. "As long as you remember them, they will live on."*

*Evalina nodded. "Thank you," she said. "I am truly gratified." She pulled the apple from the flames, blew on it, and took a bite. She chewed the charred piece of fruit thoughtfully before swallowing. "I cannot say that roasting an apple improves the flavour. I understand now why you consume them raw."*

*Darius let out a sigh. Why was he not surprised? "Okay, Ev, shift's yours. But if you ever feel like you might drop off, come see me."*

*"I shall, Darius," said Evalina. "I hope you achieve a restorative sleep."*

*"G'night," murmured Darius. Of course, he knew she wouldn't wake him. Not ever. She would stay awake the whole damned night and watch over the party. But he also knew nothing would happen. Nothing ever did, when Ev was on watch.*

## New Skills:

**Crystal Singing (Cba):** This is the art of shaping crystals by emitting sub-sonic pulses. Crystal singing is an ancient art form of the zhochal, and sculptures are used to aid meditation, and to elevate moods. Each use of the skill shapes a crystal for one hour, after which it grows very imperceptibly. Very complex geometrical patterns can be created over many months. The artist's emotional state at the time of creation also influences the shape that the crystal assumes.

**Kinetics (Dex):** This skill allows a zhochal to master the use of a guise to a point where they can move naturally. No skill checks are required for daily activities such as walking, running, or climbing, but the GM may ask that a check be made if the PC has to perform a complicated manoeuvre (i.e., dancing) for which they do not have the skill. Failure means that the PC trips up. Zhochal PCs without this skill can still get around in their guises, but they will be noticeably clumsy.

This skill can also be used whenever a zhochal PC learns a new Strength- or Dexterity-based skill (such as acrobatics). Such skills are learned, initially, for one physical form only—the player should note this down. All skill checks in the other form are halved unless the player makes a successful *Kinetics* check to determine whether they learn how to use the newly-acquired skill in both their natural form and their guise. Once a successful check is made, no further *Kinetics* rolls are required when using that skill. If the roll fails, the player

must spend at least one week practising before attempting the check again.

**Lifeshaping (INT):** This skill allows the zhochal to manipulate the living protoplasmic matter that forms the basis of their civilisation to create tools, weapons, armour, and other items. Each use of the skill involves one hour of effort, and the GM will determine how many checks are required to produce an item. As a guide, an item with no moving parts (such as a sword) might require one successful check, whereas a shocklance would require five or more, due to the complexity. When shaping an item, the PC may only make one check per day, and must keep the item in a specially prepared nutrient bath for the duration of the work. If the item is removed for more than one hour prior to completion, or if the chemical composition of the nutrient bath is changed, it will “die” and the work must start over.

**Psychology (Race – INT):** This skill gives the PC a thorough understanding of the psychological makeup of one race of the player's choice. The character will have a clinical understanding of what motivates that race, as well as the drivers behind its most common behavioural patterns, social dynamics, etc. A successful skill check would allow a character to understand when a given species is using sarcasm (which does not exist in zhochal society), or that a raised voice may indicate anger, but not necessarily an imminent attack. Zhochal without this skill will tend to take other races and what they say at face value, and react accordingly.



## New Player Character Race: Zhochal

The zhochal are an utterly alien race that originated long ago in a far-off dimension, brought to Mystara during a time now forgotten. Although many had already embraced the unwholesome Outer Beings by the time they arrived, a minority remained devoted to the principles of collectivity and logic that had originally guided them. In the centuries since their arrival the zhochal have established many strongholds in the more remote corners of Mystara, but a number of communities have broken away from the Grand Collective to return to the old ways of logic and order. Many of these embattled groups seek ways to cleanse their race of the taint of the Outer Beings. Zhochal player characters come from one of these struggling communities.

### Prime Requisite:

Dexterity and class requirement.

### Other Requirements:

Intelligence and Dexterity 11 or higher.

### Attribute Modifiers:

+2 Intelligence (max. 19), +1 Dexterity, -3 Charisma.

### Experience Bonus:

5% for Dexterity + class requirement 13-15,  
10% for Dexterity + class requirement 16-18.

### Hit Dice:

1d6 per level up to 9th level. Starting at 10th level, +1 hit point per level, and Constitution adjustments no longer apply.

**Maximum Level:** 36.

### Armour:

Natural AC of 4. Other restrictions as per class.

### Weapons:

Any, as per class restrictions.

### Special Abilities & Limitations:

Arcane Sense, Awkwardness, Flying, Horror Rating, Immunity to Cold, Infravision, Low Bio-Survival Needs, Psy-sense, Skill Requirements, Susceptible to Disease & Poisons.

**Saving Throws:** As per class.

**THACO:** As per class.

### Languages:

Zhochal begin with their native language (a combination of clicking of pincers and buzzing), plus the local language of the nation in which they live.

### Weapon Mastery:

Begin with two weapon choices; additional choices as per other non-fighter classes. An extra choice per 300,000 xp gained after level 36.

**Arcane Sense:** The zhochal can detect low-level energy discharges that are emitted from magic items, which are imperceptible to other races. All magic items within 60' can be detected in this way; although the zhochal will not know what the item is.

**Awkwardness:** The zhochal homeworld was a belt of rugged asteroids nestled within an atmospheric, low-gravity envelope orbiting a dim red star. Their bodies are not well suited

## Playing Zhochal in Mystara

*Table: Zhochal Experience Levels*

Experience Level	Guardian	Infiltrator	Scholar	Scholar Spells per day by Spell Level								
				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	0	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	2,400	1,500	3,250	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	4,800	3,000	6,500	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	9,600	6,000	13,000	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	19,000	12,000	26,000	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	38,000	24,000	50,000	2	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	76,000	48,000	100,000	2	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
8	150,000	96,000	250,000	3	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
9	300,000	190,000	400,000	3	2	2	1	-	-	-	-	-
10	450,000	350,000	650,000	3	3	2	2	-	-	-	-	-
11	600,000	500,000	800,000	3	3	2	2	1	-	-	-	-
12	750,000	650,000	950,000	4	3	2	2	2	-	-	-	-
13	900,000	800,000	1,100,000	4	3	3	2	2	-	-	-	-
14	1,050,000	950,000	1,250,000	4	4	3	3	2	1	-	-	-
15	1,200,000	1,100,000	1,400,000	4	4	3	3	3	2	-	-	-
16	1,350,000	1,250,000	1,550,000	4	4	4	3	3	2	-	-	-
17	1,500,000	1,400,000	1,700,000	5	4	4	3	3	2	1	-	-
18	1,650,000	1,550,000	1,850,000	5	5	4	4	3	3	2	-	-
19	1,800,000	1,700,000	2,000,000	5	5	5	4	4	3	2	-	-
20	1,950,000	1,850,000	2,150,000	5	5	5	5	4	3	2	1	-
21	2,100,000	2,000,000	2,300,000	6	5	5	5	4	3	3	2	-
22	2,250,000	2,150,000	2,450,000	6	5	5	5	4	4	3	2	-
23	2,400,000	2,300,000	2,600,000	6	6	5	5	5	4	3	2	-
24	2,550,000	2,450,000	2,750,000	6	6	5	5	5	4	3	2	1
25	2,700,000	2,600,000	2,900,000	6	6	6	5	5	4	4	3	2
26	2,850,000	2,750,000	3,050,000	7	6	6	5	5	5	4	3	2
27	3,000,000	2,900,000	3,200,000	7	6	6	6	5	5	4	3	2
28	3,150,000	3,050,000	3,350,000	7	7	6	6	6	5	4	3	2
29	3,300,000	3,200,000	3,500,000	7	7	6	6	6	5	5	4	3
30	3,450,000	3,350,000	3,650,000	7	7	7	6	6	6	5	4	3
31	3,600,000	3,500,000	3,800,000	7	7	7	7	6	6	5	4	3
32	3,750,000	3,650,000	3,950,000	7	7	7	7	7	6	5	4	3
33	3,900,000	3,800,000	4,100,000	7	7	7	7	7	6	6	5	4
34	4,050,000	3,950,000	4,250,000	7	7	7	7	7	7	6	5	4
35	4,200,000	4,100,000	4,400,000	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	5	4
36	4,350,000	4,250,000	4,550,000	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	6	5

to Mystara, and as a result their maximum movement rate on land is 60' (20').

**Flying:** Zhochal are winged, and in their natural forms can fly at speeds of up to 210' (70'); although their speed is reduced if they are encumbered.

**Horror Rating:** Due to their otherworldly natures, the zhochal (regardless of temperament) tend to inspire intense fear in native creatures when in their natural forms. All zhochal characters have a Horror Rating of 3 (see rules for insanity in my article [“Insanity, Horror, and the Outer Beings in Mystara”](#) at the Vaults of Pandius).

**Immunity to Cold:** Although the zhochal have lost the ability to survive in the vacuum of space, they have retained their immunity to cold. They do not take damage from magical cold sources (i.e., from spells or a white dragon's breath weapon), nor are they susceptible to mundane cold-based damage (i.e., frostbite). They take full damage from fire-based attacks (i.e., no saving throws permitted).

**Infra-vision:** Due to their alien physiologies zhochal are able to see beyond the conventional spectrum to distances of up to 60'.

**Low Bio-Survival Needs:** Zhochal can go without food or rest, without penalty, for long periods of time. Minimum requirements are two hours of rest per 24-hour period, and one moderate meal every two days. A zhochal can survive without food for two weeks, and may function without sleep for one week, before suffering penalties.

**Psy-sense:** The communal nature of the zhochal means that they are constantly in psychic connection with each other at a basic level (no roll required), meaning that a zhochal can sense others of its kind within 120'. Although it is possible to read general emotional states, zhochal cannot read another's thoughts or determine whether they are disguised. Prolonged association with non-zhochal can sometimes result in a link being formed, such that they can also be tracked in this manner on a roll of “1” on 1d6.

**Skill Requirements:** All zhochal characters, regardless of class, must take the following skills at creation: Acting (Intelligence), Disguise (Intelligence), Knowledge (country - Intelligence), and Survival – Mountains (Intelligence).

**Susceptible to Disease & Poisons:** The alien nature of the zhochal makes them especially vulnerable to native diseases and certain poisons. All Constitution checks against disease are halved, and if attacked by deadly or damaging poisons saving throws are penalised by -4. Zhochal are vulnerable to paralytic and sleeping poisons (-2 penalty to saving throws).

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- Page 13: **[Image: Adventurer finds Blackmoorian tech]**  
Original drawing by Justin Pfeil, aka warriorneedsfood on The Piazza, check his [Keeps on the Borderlands](#) web comic
- Page 16: **[Image: Lhomarrrian temple]** [Source](#)  
Sumerian ziggurat via Wikimedia commons
- Page 17: **[Image: Thonian Princes]** [Source](#)  
"The seven electors choose Henry, Count of Luxembourg, as King of the Romans at Frankfurt on the 27th day of November." Drawing on parchment from 1341; today at public main federal state record office in Koblenz, Germany.
- Page 20: **[Image: King Uther]** [Source](#)  
Rhead, George Wooliscroft & Louis. "Arthur Leading the Charge at Mount Badon" from Tennyson, Alfred. Idylls of the King: Vivien, Elaine, Enid, Guinevere. New York: R. H. Russell, 1898.
- Page 24: **[Image: Blackmoorians in Tangor]** [Source](#)  
Victoria (Cameroon) from "Das Buch von unseren Kolonien" von Ottomar Beta, Leipzig 1908 traditionsverband.de by Rudolf Hellgrewe (1860–1935)
- Page 26: **[Image: Blackmoorian Power]** [Source](#)  
The East offering its riches to Britannia. Allegorical ceiling piece commissioned by the East India Company in 1777 for the Revenue Committee Room in East India House. Oil on canvas.

- Page 28: **[Image: Teslan musicians]** [Source](#)  
 An illustration from the Encyclopaedia Biblica, a 1903 publication which is now in the public domain. Fig. 24 for article "Music". Image of an Assyrian quartet - two lyres, a drum, and cymbals
- Page 31: **[Image: Jennite belt]** [Source](#)  
 Gold scythian belt title from Mingachevir, Azerbaijan. Author Urek Meniashvili.
- Page 33: **[Image: Chung depiction of dragons]** [Source](#)  
 The Nine Dragon Wall in the Beihai Park, a large imperial garden in central Beijing, China. Authorsplitbrain.
- Page 36: **[Image: Temple complex in Muang]** [Source](#)  
 Wat Chai Wattanaram, Ayutthaya, Thailand, June 2005. Photographer: Heinrich Damm (User:Hdamm, Hdamm at de.wikipedia.org)
- Page 38: **[Image: Tanagoge temple]** [Source](#)  
 ete Giyorgis (Church of St. George), Lalibela, Ethiopia. Author Bernard Gagnon.
- Page 40: **[Image: Tangor cavalry]** [Source](#)  
 Mossi horsemen, from J.W. Buel. 1890. Heroes of the Dark Continent and How Stanley Found Emin Pasha. Philadelphia, PA, St. Louis, MO: Historical Publishing Company. Author J. W. Buel.
- Page 44: **[Image: Minaean plate depicting a minotaur]** [Source](#)  
 The Minotaur, tondo of an Attic bilingual kylix, circa 515 BC, National Archaeological Museum of Spain. © Marie-Lan Nguyen / Wikimedia Commons / CC-BY 2.5
- Page 50: **[Map of Skothar in 7,050 BC]**  
 Original worke by author
- Page 52: **[Image: Nomad people in the plains]** [Source](#)  
 Nomads near Namtso, Tibet, via Wikimedia commons
- Page 55: **[Image: Ta-Kho people]** [Source](#)  
 1805 aquatint by Samuel Daniell. Original caption: "Bosjemans frying Locusts", reproduction from Suid-Afrikaanse Geskiedenis in Beeld (1989) by Anthony Preston. Bion Books: Printed in South Africa.
- Page 56: **[Map of Skothar in 4,000 BC]**  
 Original work by author

- Page 72: **[Image: Pilgrims to the great temple of Tanat]** [Source](#)  
 Tempera painting depicting the Borobudur as a pilgrimage site. Date before 1919. Collection Tropenmuseum (English: Museum of the Tropics), Amsterdam, Netherlands. Author G.B. Hooijer (Painter).
- Page 74: **[Image: The Emperor of Yeha]** [Source](#)  
 Emperor Menelik II of Ethiopia photographed on the throne in coronation garb. Wikimedia commons.
- Page 75: **[Map: MOrient project Map]** [Source](#)  
 Map of the MOrient project.
- Page 76: **[Image: Jennites meeting a Minaean traveller]** [Source](#)  
 Eugène Delacroix (1798–1863): Ovid among the Scythians, painting. Date 1862, oil on paper mounted on wood. Current location Metropolitan Museum of Art New York City.
- Page 76: **[Image: Jennites jewelry depicting horses]** [Source](#)  
 Scythian jewelry, Budapest, VAM Design Center. Author Derzsi Elekes Andor.
- Page 77: **[Image: High monastery in Hasa]** [Source](#)  
 The Potala palace in Lhasa, Tibet. Date August 2009. Author Antoine Taveneaux.
- Page 79: **[Image: Golden pagoda in Sian]** [Source](#)  
 Shwedagon Pagoda, Yangon, Myanmar. Date 15 May 2005 (original upload date). Author Dwstein.
- Page 84: **[Image:Cloud Pardasta]** [Source](#)  
 Clouded leopard face, close up. Date 14 July 2007, Source Flickr. Author Frank Wouters.
- Page 85: **[Image:Fast Runner]** [Source](#)  
 Acinonyx jubatus (Cheetah) in ZOO Olomouc, Czech Republic  
 Author Mistvan
- Page 86: **[Image:Lynx-man]** [Source](#)  
 English: Eurasian lynx. Author Bernard Landgraf.
- Page 87: **[Image:Pardasta]** [Source](#)  
 Shot in Guwahati Zoo, Assam, India. Date 28 January 2016, Author R4robin.
- Page 87: **[Image:Sherkasta]** [Source](#)  
 Cathay, South China Tigress, in Africa. Date September 2007.  
 Author Save China's Tiger.

- Page 88: **[Image: Snow pardasta]** [Source](#)  
 A snow leopard (*Uncia uncia*). Date 29 January 2005.  
 Author Bernard Landgraf.
- Page 96: **[Image: Beholder]** [Source](#)  
 Modified by author from a picture by Huntleigh on  
 WikiMedia Commons of a sculpture of a beholder in the  
 convention center complex, Gen-Con 2010
- Page 97: **Map: Beholders of Mystara by Robin]**  
 Based on continental map from *Master Rules* boxed set
- Page 106: **[Map: Kargash location by Robin]**
- Page 109: **[Image: Stars over the Peaks]** [Source](#)  
 Pixabay CC0 Creative Commons
- Page 112: **[Image: The Star Satura has seen in the sky]** [Source](#)  
 Photo of the comet Hale-Bopp above a tree. This picture was  
 taken in the vicinity of Pazin in Istria/Croatia. Date 29 March  
 1997. Author Philipp Salzgeber
- Page 116: **[Image: Starship crash]** [Source](#)  
 by Mysticsartdesign from Pixabay under CC0 Creative  
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- Page 120: **[Image: Sonia Sholako]** [Source](#)  
 Mata Hari photographed in 1906 (Public Domain)
- Page 121: **[Image: Pygmalion]** [Source](#)  
 Particular from Sandro Botticelli (1445–1510): *The Birth of Venus*  
 painting. Date from 1484 until 1485. Current location Uffizi  
 Gallery, Florence, Italy.
- Page 124: **[Image: Climbing the Peaks]** [Source](#)  
 Pixabay CC0 Creative Commons
- Page 127: **[Image: Sky and Comet]** [Source](#)  
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- Page 131: **[Image: Blackmoor City]** [Source](#)  
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- Page 134: **[Image: The King in Crimson]** [Source](#)  
 Modified from wikimedia commons
- Page 141: **[Image: The Exe-Corps]** [Source](#)  
 By Walt Miller - *Last Enemy - Astounding Science Fiction*)

- Page 145: **[Image - Blackmoorian Mental Patient]** [Source](#)  
Mental Patient by Ambroise Tardieu
- Page 149: **[Image: God-King Allogost]** [Source](#)  
Mammon, from A book of images, 1898, by W.T. Horton (1864-1919), preface by W.B. Yeats (1865-1939).
- Page 155: **[Image: Intruder captured by Blackmoor border guards]**  
Original drawing by Toni Roads and used with permission ([www.artstation/toniroadsart.com](http://www.artstation/toniroadsart.com))
- Page 161: **[Image: Map of Tangor Bay area]**  
Giampaolo Agosta, Map of Tangor Bay area, 2018. Used by permission of the author.
- Page 63: **[Image: A beach in the Gulf of Tangor]** [Source](#)  
Louis Le Breton, Adolphe Jean Baptiste Bayot. Rade et ville de Singapour, vue prise de la maison du gouverneur. Atlas pittoresque, planche 134. 1846. Public Domain via Wikimedia Commons.
- Page 168: **[Image: A piratical praho]** [Source](#)  
A Piratical Proa in Full Chase as depicted in The Pirates Own Book by Charles Ellms. 1837. Public Domain via Wikimedia Commons
- Page 171: **[Image: Zhocal illustration]**  
Original work by author
- Page 175: **[Image: Mi-Go illustration]** [Source](#)  
Original drawing by Khannea SunTzu via Wikimedia commons
- Back **[Back Cover]** [Source](#)  
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## NEXT ISSUE



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Venture into the bustling capital city of the Grand Duchy of Karameikos! Learn of its colourful history and meet many personalities who call it “home”! Find your way through its maze of streets to a friendly (or perhaps unfriendly) tavern, to a boarding house to rest your limbs, to many businesses that sustain adventurers in the wilderness lands beyond the city! Immerse yourself in the number one fantasy city:

## SPECULARUM

Anticipated contents include:

- History of the city
- The rulers over the centuries
- The Trade Guilds
- Maps and details of the city’s districts
- Citizens - a range of NPCs
- The Estate of Marilenev

...and much much more!

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Or by email to the Editorial address:  
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Please begin the subject line with the tag “[LETTER]”

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### Proposals

All proposal submissions can be sent by mail to the editors at the following address [Threshold.Mystara@gmail.com](mailto:Threshold.Mystara@gmail.com), and must be received by the proposal deadline<sup>†</sup>. The Threshold editorial team will contact you within 7 days of the proposal deadline regarding the status of your proposal.

Submission proposals should be sent inline in the mail, using the following subject format: [ISSUE#][Proposal]<title of your article>

The mail content should include the following:

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- The type of article being proposed (short story, adventure, geographical location, organization, etc...)
- A one paragraph description of what the article is about.
- An estimated word count of the article (articles should range anywhere from 1000 to 7000 words, depending on the type of article submitted).

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Manuscripts should only be submitted after you proposal has been accepted by the Threshold editorial staff, and must be received by the manuscript deadline<sup>†</sup>. When submitting a manuscript file, please use the following naming convention:

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- An attached document containing the article contents.
- The final word count of the article.

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*Illustrations:* please submit art and maps in lossless format (e.g., PNG).

*Articles:* manuscript submissions can be sent by mail as plain text, doc(x) or odt, or shared as Google Doc. The issue editor will create a shared document (for each article) to allow the author and editorial team to work on it. Articles can be as short as a single page, or as long as 6 pages, depending on the specific content. The editorial team will do its best to accommodate the contributions, but especially long works may be split over several issues.

*Tables:* Tables should be numbered (Table X: Name of Table), and any references in the article should refer to that table number (and not to "the table below," for example).

*Author Bios:* Please include a short blurb (one or two sentences) biography/blurb about yourself for our "contributing authors" section. It can be serious or silly, but don't get too carried away with it, please.

*Other types of contributions:* the editorial team will consider on a case by case basis other types of contributions. Please contact us to inquire if and how we can accommodate unusual contribution formats.

<sup>†</sup>Refer to "Call for Contributions" (page 5) for next issue deadline dates.

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