

THRESHOLD

The Mystara Magazine

AGES PAST



The twelfth issue of the Mystara Magazine,
delving into eons past from the dusk of ancient Lhomarr
to the dawn of the Thyatian Empire.

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THRESHOLD

ISSUE #12

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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

Gaze into the Past

It's been nearly three years since we started *Threshold*, the *Mystara Magazine*, and as I think you'll be able to tell from the page count, we are still going strong. This is the fourth issue of the magazine that I've had the privilege to be Editor in Chief for, and I still really love doing it. This issue, *Ages Past*, in particular holds a special interest for me, because for me, it is *Mystara's* rich and varied past that makes it the campaign setting I want to spend most of my time in.

One can garner quite a bit of history from those early D&D adventure modules, and I think that was one of the driving forces behind the creation of the *Hollow World* campaign setting, for example. It gave game designers a chance to share all of the information that DM's had known about for years, with Players who may have had only the most cursory of looks into their game world's past. But the *Hollow World* setting isn't what I want to talk about today. While it is a great setting, the *Hollow World* is only an echo of *Mystara's* past expressed in the modern era. I want to explore what it was really like in *Mystara's* bygone eras.

I think this issue is amazing because within it are so many seeds that DM's can use to grow full blown campaigns through the timeline of *Mystara's* history. Explore the tower of Bargle... the elder. Journey to Hesperia, where Players can experience, and perhaps even have a hand, in the early development of the Thyatian Empire. Travel to ancient Taymora, where undead rule and the land is shrouded in darkness, or view Thonia as it existed before the rise of Blackmoor...

though tread lightly lest you rouse the Egg of Coot! But the journey doesn't end there... Travel even further back in history to witness the decline of Lhomarr or further yet to gaze upon the dawn of the elves! Of course that's not all this issue offers. We return to the depths of Koskatep, and continue our exploration of Limn, and even more... and to top everything else off, we were lucky enough to spend some time with James Mishler, one of fandom's leading architects in *Mystara* history.

Speaking of James, it was much of his work that inspired me oh so many years (dare I say decades) ago, to delve into *Mystara's* past. His writings about Taymora brought forth so many images of dark undead lords, and their accursed minions, that I had to explore that place on my own. In fact within the pages of this very magazine you will find two different versions of Taymora both inspired (at least in part) by James' work. They don't necessarily conform to all of the ideas he originally put forth, nor do they completely mesh with one another... but that is okay, and in fact something else that I love about *Mystara*.

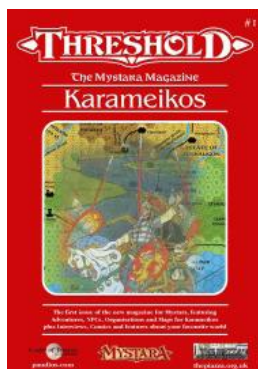
We all have our own version tucked away inside our heads (or if you're a fellow DM, inside a nicely yellowed notebook). From myself, and the other contributors of this issue, I hope that we can bring some of those visions to life for you. And I hope... with your help... that they continue to grow.

John Calvin (Chimpman)
Issue 12 Editor-in-Chief

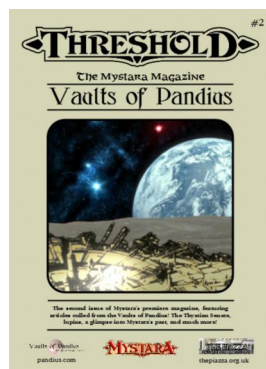
Previous Issues

Previous issues of **THRESHOLD** - the Mystara Magazine, are available for download from the [Vaults of Pandius website](#).

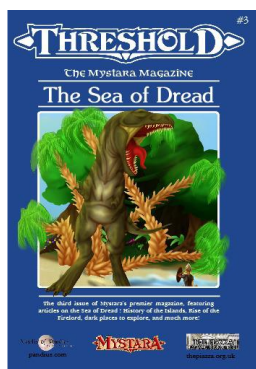
Also available at the same location are higher resolution versions of the maps that were included in the issue's PDF, allowing greater detail to be viewed.



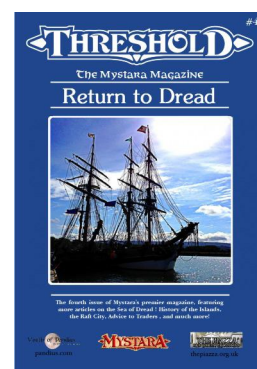
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Karameikos



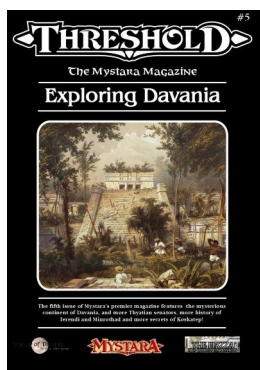
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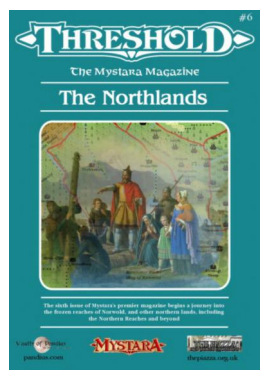
#3
The Sea of Dread



#4
Return to Dread



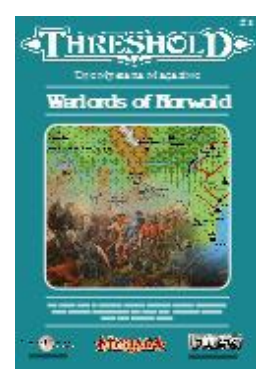
#5
Exploring Davania



#6
The Northlands



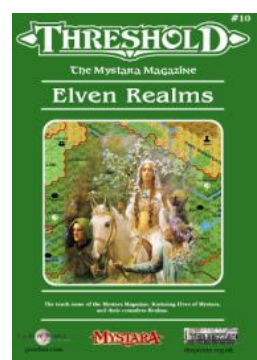
#7
Exploring Norwold



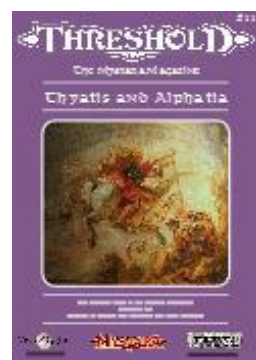
#8
Warlords of Norwold



#9
Hollow World



#10
Elven Realms



#11
Thyatis & Alphatia

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.

I. "Meandrathe" *Calvin* enjoys drawing fantasy, and animals that can kill. Namely wolves, dragons, horses, and most large felines. Human animal hybrids are not excluded either; she often draws human versions of her favorite animals. She does, however, despise drawing things that are unbearably cute. It's a pretty awful thing to do.

John Calvin is fascinated by the depth of Mystaran history, and has always wanted to share that more fully with players. To that end he has been developing sub-settings like The Hollow Moon and Mystara 2300 BC.

Giulio Caroletti started playing in Mystara with the old red box in 1992, and hasn't stopped since. He went "internet" on the MML as Captain Iulius Sergius Scaevola in 1999, and has since written mostly about Thyatis and Dwarves. When not busy pretending to be a Thyatian officer, he lives a boring life as an atmosphere physicist from Rome, Italy. His main interests are light-eyed girls, soccer (he's an AS Roma fan) and rock music (especially 70s progressive rock).

Michele "LoZompatore" C. played BECMI for most of his life, starting way back in 1987. He, most of all, likes mixing and matching canon and fanon material about Mystara to see how many new adventure hooks can be churned out. In the little spare time he has away from Mystara he helps other guys in designing oil and gas pipelines around the (real) world.

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.

Prior to writing fiction, **Geoff Gander** was involved in the roleplaying community and wrote many game products. His first short novel, *The Tunnelers*, was published in 2011 by Solstice Publishing. He has since been published by Metahuman Press, AE SciFi, Exile Editions, McGraw-Hill, and Expeditious Retreat Press. He primarily writes horror, but will try any genre for kicks. When he isn't writing or working a day job, Geoff reads, watches British comedies, and plays roleplaying games. Geoff divides his time between Ottawa and South Mountain, where a lovely stone-carving, bagpipe-playing witch resides with her many cats.

Håvard (aka Håvard Blackmoor) does not, contrary to popular theory, have six arms. When he is not writing about Mystara at The Piazza or is working on his Blackmoor Blog, he goes out raiding neighbouring villages like any true Norwegian. He also runs The Comeback Inn, a forum dedicated to Dave Arneson's Blackmoor.

"What was that? Did you see that?" Gregor stopped and stared at his companion. The frantic Hin was obviously hallucinating. "You drank from the fountain didn't you." -*Sean Robert Meaney*

Giuliano Michelin has been playing D&D since the late 80ies and, like many others, had his start with the Red Box. He soon moved over to AD&D and divided his gaming time between his favored settings: Mystara and Ravenloft (although playing more the latter). With the coming of 3e, he moved fully back to the first setting, Mystara. He collaborated with (and was a member of) the Overlord club in Padua, designing and developing D&D tournament modules for PadCon 2001 and several editions of GiocaPadova. Nowadays, he concentrates fully on his own gaming group, with a weekly D&D Mystara campaign, soon to switch to the 5th edition of the game.

JTR, (a.k.a. OldDawg) is the author of the acclaimed F-GAZ series, which covers several regions of Norwold and neighboring areas with full-blown gazetteer-style treatment. In this issue, JTR showcases his work for the FGAZ "The Open Arms of Leeha", covering the northern Hin lands.

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

Hausman Santos is an art educator and drawing professor. An enthusiast in Mystara since 1995 when he met in Brazil the AD&D boxed set of Karameikos. He has narrated campaigns for game groups in Thyatis, Alphatia, Rockhome and Glantri and keeps some of these groups since 2002. He manages a page for Mystara Brazilian fans on the internet. Currently he has gathered much of the material that he developed into game sessions with his group from projects like the Mystaran Almanac and discussed with the members of the Old Almanac Team about the old and unfinished plotlines (around AC 1016-1017) in order to resume them.

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

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

We are looking especially for contributions fitting the following themes:

Issue 13 - A Crucible of Creatures

Proposal Deadline: July 15th, 2016

Manuscript Deadline: August 10th, 2016

Issue Published: By October 15th, 2016

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

Issue 14 - The Shadowdeep

What lies beneath your feet? Whether you stand on Mystara's surface, or the Land of the Red Sun, the answer is the same... The Shadowdeep! The editorial team will accept proposals on underground labyrinths, degenerate civilizations, and anything else you can find between the surface of Mystara and the Hollow World.

Proposal Deadline: October 15th, 2016

Manuscript Deadline: November 10th, 2016

Issue Published: By January 15th, 2017

Issue 15 - Mystarospace

There is more than darkness beyond the Skyshield. Through the Void of space to the Hollow Moon, Sarimaar the Wanderer, the desolation of Damocles and further, mysteries abound. The editorial team will accept proposals on worlds, individuals, and civilizations far from the firmament of Mystara.

Proposal Deadline: January 15th, 2017

Manuscript Deadline: February 10th, 2017

Issue Published: By April 15th, 2017

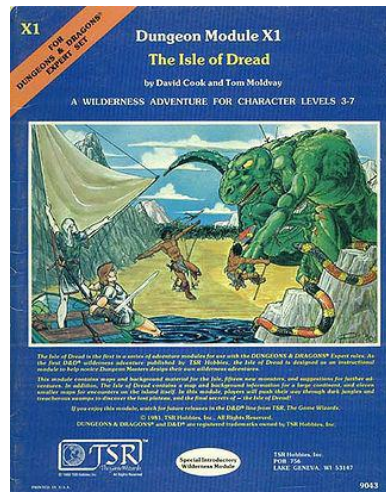
Articles about other topics are still welcome and the editorial team will evaluate their publication in an issue, taking into account space available and that issue's theme.

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

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

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

Isle of Dread Cover Retrospective



Note from the Editor:

As we are delving into Mystara's past in this issue, I thought it might be fun to also delve into the past of Threshold Magazine. Back in Issue #3, The Sea of Dread, I asked my daughter to draw a picture of a dinosaur crashing onto a beach to confront a stranded knight (a very basic description of the cover of *X1, The Isle of Dread*). That was back in March of 2014. Now, slightly over two years later, I asked her redraw the illustration. Below you will find the comparison of the two illustrations along with a few of my daughter's thoughts.

The original picture's dino is so disproportionate. Not only is his body freakishly small and out of place in comparison to his limbs, but what is happening with his tail? That tiny thing cannot balance his body. His shoulders are nowhere near big enough to support that giant head, his toes are like little pinheads... so many problems.

The head is also not as defined as the newer picture's, of which I am proud of. It's still got problems, but it's a massive improvement.

ANATOMY

Aaaaahhhh the anatomy. I like being brutal with my old pictures but then I remind myself that future me is gonna do the same thing and my ego gets knocked down a few pegs.

POSING

AAAAAA I'LL CHOMP YOU LITTLE MAN vs.
Look at me roar I'm very scary

I'm proud of both of these pictures, pose wise, but I went for a much more dynamic setup in the newer one and I think it puts a lot more life into the picture.



Threshold Issue #3 Cover



Threshold Issue #12 Retrospective

COLORS

The original's colors are much more saturated, the green and brown in the trees almost neon-y and the red in the mouth a shade a healthy dinosaur should not have. The new picture is much more color accurate- using muted and bright tones in moderation (or at least I tried). Judging what color looks right, and where, is all due to experience though, you get a better eye for it the longer you spend with colors. In two years I'm gonna be complaining about how bright those teeth are.

OUTLINE

In the original picture I used lines but removed them for the end product; Mainly relying on shading to define the dinosaur and human. In the updated picture I did not remove the lines though-this is the one thing I'm unhappy with, as the picture isn't as cohesive with the background because of this.

[\(Continued on page 16\)](#)

COMMUNITY INTERVIEW

James Mishler

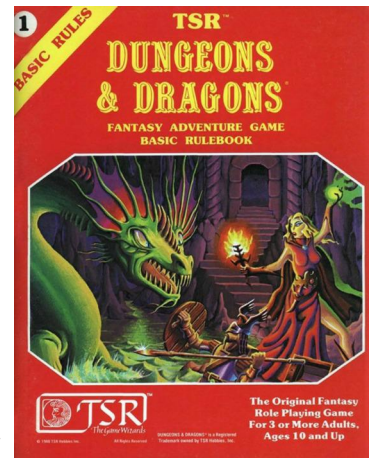
As this issue focuses on Mystara's Ages Past, we thought it would be interesting if we could have a discussion with James Mishler. James was around during the formation of the earliest online Mystara communities, and was also instrumental in fleshing out some of the earliest events in Mystaran (fanon) history. We are very excited that we had this opportunity to speak with him!



Threshold Magazine: Can you tell us what specifically drew you to the World of Mystara?

James Mishler: I got involved with Mystara at the same time I started playing Dungeons & Dragons, back in 1981. I received the Moldvay edition of Basic D&D for Christmas that year, and bought the Expert Set within a month. The very first campaign I ran was set in Karameikos, using the map including in the Expert book (page X61).

In fact, I set my first town setting, Geneva, on what would eventually become the Windrush, on the western bank between Verge and Rifflian. Thus, the Known World (as detailed in module X1: *Isle of Dread*) would be my first campaign setting. I would not acquire the Wilderlands from Judges Guild and Greyhawk from TSR until the following year...



How did you become involved in the Mystaran Community online? Also, you were one of the first Mystara fans to have an online presence. How do you remember those pioneering times?

I'd dabbled a bit in the BBS days ca. 1992 to '94, but graduate school kept me too busy to be really involved (that, and having access to only a 4800 baud modem). When I finally broke away from graduate school and got into the real world, and got access to faster Internet through AOL, I started posting in the Mystara section of the old TSR boards. This would have been c. '94 to '96 or thereabouts. Bruce Heard was there, as were a bunch of guys from the day, most of whose names I sadly have forgotten (B1Bard, RLarue, others lost in the mists of time). Then the MML started up and things got bigger, with more people jumping in.

It was pretty wild and woolly. At the time, of course, there was no "fanon" for Mystara, as this was the era in which such started to be developed. Lots of interesting and weird stuff, much of which is lost in the mists of time. Many variant Mystaras, far beyond the different stuff available today; one variant was even known as "Heretic World." We tried some interesting story-telling fiction, with each person writing a chapter and then handing it off to the next guy. And of course, there were arguments over what various bits of texts in the book REALLY meant, and so forth. If it seemed more civilized back then, I'm sure that's just my poor memory clearing out the bad stuff and remembering the good stuff more fondly...

When many Mystara fans hear the name James Mishler they think immediately of grand Blackmoor era timelines, and ancient Mystaran civilizations (such as Taymor or the Golden Empire). Was that your favorite part of Mystara (the past)? Were there any other jewels of Mystara that you didn't share with the community at the time (that you want to share with us now)?

My education was in Sociocultural Anthropology (particularly the process of cultural evolution, adaptation, and assimilation) and Humanities (Ancient Classics) and as such, the historical foundations of the civilizations of Mystara and their development to the current era was of personal interest; my personal desire to fully develop these cultures and their histories in order to provide a "realistic" background drove that even further. So it wasn't so much that the past was my favorite era as much as I felt the need to have a developed past to understand the present... the better to place ruins, develop artifacts and relics, and build conflicts within Mystaran societies and between them.

Blackmoor was of course the basal civilization for pretty much everything that came later (whether directly or through its influence on every other civilization then extant due to colonization, technological development, and barring all else, the global destruction of the Great Rain of Fire). So I felt I had to start from there to really understand what came after; thus I created the Age of Blackmoor to give me a broad base from which to build upon.

Taymor became important and I felt it required my attention because so much in the Known World depended or derived from it. Thus, it too needed to be more fully developed, especially as my core campaigns for Mystara always began in Karameikos (well, not always, but almost always). And to understand Nithia, and the Traldar, and the Thyatians, one had to understand what Taymor was, how Nithia arose from it, what it left behind between the Altan Tepes and the Sea of Dread, and what remains of it to this day, living or dead or undead.

Most of the peripheral realms, such as the Golden Empire, were developed to understand where various races and cultural elements came from, and what might be found in those regions “today” (1000 AC). Unfortunately, most of the material from that early era, if not found on the Vaults of Pandius, is lost... I’ve gone through so many moves, and so many computers, that much of it fell to the wayside and was lost. I think I still have some 5 ¼” floppies somewhere from that era, but would have no way to read them even if I could find them... and the 3 ½” disks I found recently were all post-2000...

One of your major developments in Mystara has been the Empire of Taymor (and its Hollow World counterpart, Bhalor). What were the major sources of inspiration, and what are your thoughts on Mystara in the age of Taymor?

Well, early Taymor was essentially, in modern terms, Mad Max meets the Walking Dead, with the Walking Dead controlled by liches. When things settled down again, after the fallout from the GRoF, the liches, built up cities and developed legions of vampires,

mummies, and other undead servants; eventually the vampires rose to be the ruling caste, the Necromancer Kings, and the liches were “retired” to well-trapped vaults, and the classic Taymoran Empire came into being. Taymor was one part Hammer Horror, one part Vampire: The Masquerade, and one part Ancient Mesopotamia.

In my Mystara, Taymor was the only major civilization on Brun for many centuries, between the fall of Blackmoor and the rise of Nithia (from the ashes of Taymor). Elsewhere, to be honest, I recall little, if anything, that was going on in that period (ca. 3000 to 1500 BC). Skothar was a radioactive wasteland (very Gamma World, with magic); Davania was probably going through various dynastic throes between successor states; elsewhere on Brun the dragons were nearly extirpated and the dwarves were deep underground; and the elves were still on the move, likely due to all the convulsions in Davania. Taymor was kind of a calm eye in the storm, so to speak, even if it was an ugly, undead eye...

This issue of *Threshold Magazine* has two separate articles on that subject (Taymor). How do you feel that members of the Mystaran community have taken inspiration from your work and continued to develop it in their own styles?

I think it is pretty damn cool. It is always gratifying to know that someone enjoyed your work well enough to not only integrate it into their own campaign, but also to then run with it and develop something totally new and different.

We saw only some glimpses of the planned, and never produced, [HackWurld of Mystaros](#), do you have any additional information on the world you were planning beside that which you already shared? Do you have a favourite part of the planned product that you regret not having the opportunity to fully develop?

If I recall correctly... and we are talking some 13 years ago... the plan was to release the Guide to the HackWurld of Mystaros, which would be an encyclopedic volume detailing every region of the HackWurld, including Brun, Skothar, and Davania, each entry (detailing a state, such as Karameikos, Glantri, Bellayne, or what have you) having half to a full-page. The HackWurld itself was truncated, with most of western Brun, southern Davania, and eastern Skothar lost; it was essentially an alternate ending to the Wrath of the Immortals in which time was re-wound to 1000 AC, and as a result Alphatia was not sunk, though the Empire was destroyed and most of the continent reduced to a ruins-filled wilderness and petty warring states...

The Archduchy of Adventure was to follow, describing Karameikos in depth, with all the cultural variants I've included among the Traladarans and Thyatians, all the ruins (more extensive), all the humanoid tribes in detail, and so forth, with in-depth details on the City of Specularum (not Mirros). Imagine Karameikos done Wilderlands of High Fantasy style, with the City of Specularum done in detail like the City-State of the Invincible Overlord... that is what I had planned.

The third book would have been HackLords of Mystara, the rules on how to take your HackMaster characters to the levels of the Immortals, plus details on all the HackLords.

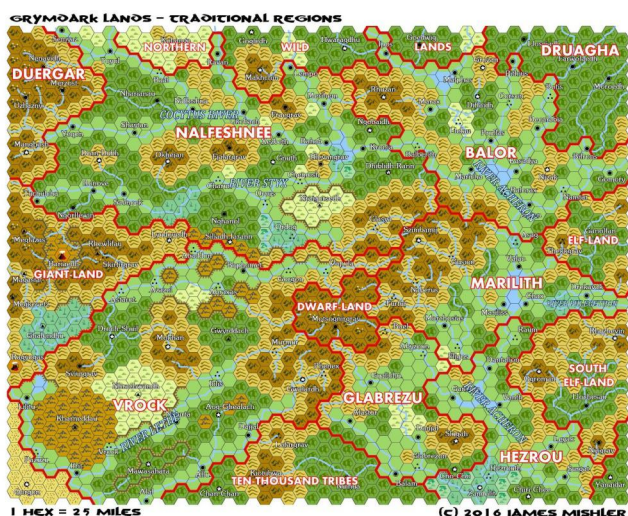
A lot of the Guide was done, some of the Archduchy was done, and I'd sketched out ideas for HackLords, when personal issues struck, and the project went on hold. Then it was on again, then off again, then on again. Then all the conversions from the old AD&D/D&D stuff to HackMaster 4th Edition ended, and not long thereafter, so did the whole line, and Kenzer & Company started work on 5th Edition HackMaster.

That I never completed the project was a blessing and a curse; a blessing, because it never would have seen the light of day due to the licensing issues, and a curse, because I let a lot of people down. Sadly, the HackWurld was not the only project I was working on from 2003 to 2005 that went completely into limbo... I was also working on Lejendary Earth and Lejendary West with Gary Gygax, and the Wilderlands of High Fantasy with Bob Bledsaw. While I later went on to work on the Wilderlands with Bob, I never got a chance to pick up my work on HackWurld, or the shelved work with Gary...

How has your early involvement with Mystara shaped the work you've done since then? Do you notice Mystaran influences seeping in when you work on your own worlds (for example Grymdark Lands, the 64 page campaign setting you're working on now)?

Mystara is one of the two great influences on my work; the Wilderlands of High Fantasy is

the other. The fact that they are such wildly divergent worlds – Mystara with its big nation-states and broad histories, the Wilderlands with its tiny city-states and savage wilderness – has always had a weird yin-yang effect on my writing and campaign development. It is hard to try to find a balance between the two. Such is my constant battle...



Grymdark Lands is along the lines of Mystara... as it is designed to be a 64-page product along the lines of the original Moldvay and Cook books, I am trying to keep that style of campaign development... sort of an overview of the Known World, if it had been written for 64-pages. Though that project has been on hold for a while now...

What exciting projects are you working on now, and do you still have an online presence? What is on the horizon? Any Mystaran influence in them?

I currently have three blogs:

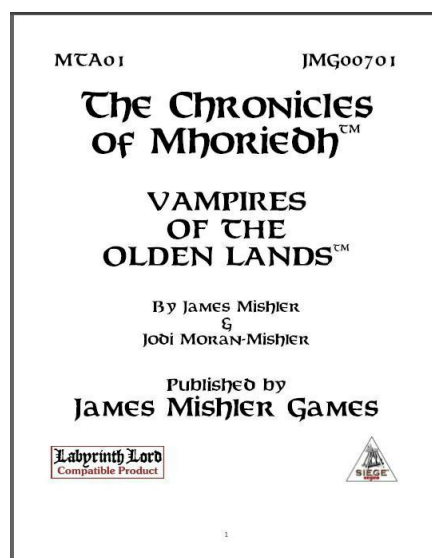
My personal blog, Adventures in Gaming v2: <http://adventuresingaming2.blogspot.com/>

James Mishler Games: <http://jamesmishlergames.blogspot.com/>

and Grymdark Lands: <http://grymdarklands.blogspot.com/>

Chivalrous Realms won't have a blog until I release the first product, and that's if I can have a blog to support the product line under the terms of the DMG agreement (still not sure how that part works out)...My previous products, designed for the Wilderlands of High Adventure for use with Castles & Crusades, are still available through Judges Guild and Troll Lord Games.

I also have a few random bits here and there, now and again. I'm mostly working with Labyrinth Lord and Mutant Future right now; LL for the Olden Lands, LL and MF for Realms of Murikah. My wife and I also



provided some monsters for Monsters Macabre for Cryptworld from Goblinoid Games.

My love note to Mystara is, of course, the Olden Lands, snippets and bits and bobs of which are available through James Mishler Games on DriveThruRPG/RPGNow. While work on the Olden Lands has been on hiatus for a while, I still work on it now and again, and hope to have the gazetteer released... someday. I really need to just publish a few

small bits and pieces to get going with that again... hmmm...

Seems like it is time to get back to work!

Thank you so much James, for taking the time to talk to us about your experiences with Mystara. Your work has truly inspired others, and we appreciate you sharing your thoughts with us!

Isle of Dread Cover Retrospective

[\(Continued from page 10\)](#)

THE BACKGROUND; IN TERMS OF QUALITY, DIFFICULTY AND REALISM

The background in the old picture was my first attempt at a finished, cleaned background. I struggled so much with everything, from the globby trees and (disgusting) palm fronds to the sand. At the time, it was the best background I had ever done-so similarly, I pushed myself on the newer background. I still hate trees and palm fronds. I was able to give the sand more texture and depth however, define the water, and make the sky more realistic.

AND FINALLY, AND MOST MAJORLY, THE LIGHTING

And of course, the part that I am the most proud of-the lighting! When I made the original, I hadn't fully developed my shading skills yet- and so the shading was focused only on the creatures, not carrying over to the background. It was also soft, especially the highlights. In the new picture, I went all out on the lighting, putting the sun right behind the head, trying out lens flares and carrying the lighting throughout the picture. My shading technique has also improved, I cell shade first and then soften the edges with a soft brush.

Overall... I'm very happy with the improvement I've made over two years. I've made massive strides in everything and I'm looking forward to seeing what it'll look like in two more years!

~Meandrathel

Time Travelling in Mystara

by John Calvin



*FROM
THE VAULTS
OF PANDIUS*

FROM the
Mystara
FORUM at



INTRODUCTION

While the history of Mystara makes it a much richer world, it is a treasure that is rarely experienced by the majority of its players. Dungeon Masters may know about the struggles between the Azcans and the Oltecs, how Blackmoor's folly caused fire to rain down upon Mystara, and even perhaps of dark saurian beings that the immortals fear enough to lock away in a prison plane. How many Players know how Zendrolion I won his empire, or how Ilsundal led his people from Vulcania to the Sylvan Realm, or that large portions of southern Brun fell beneath the sea long ago?

Yes, there are many adventures that deal with legends, but truth be told most Player Characters are too busy dealing with current

events to worry about what happened to their game world thousands of years ago. What if all of those fantastic stories, those rumors and legends, could be more than just window dressing? What if the Players could actually experience those ancient places and cultures, and all of the wonders... and horrors... that they contained first hand?

Perhaps they can...

PERILS OF TIME

Before exploring possible modes of time travel, we should perchance ask ourselves why we might want to send our Player Characters on adventures throughout the eons, and how such adventures might affect our beloved era of modern day Mystara...

Why visit other times?

The Groundwork is Laid

Lots of the work has already been done for us. Many of those adventure modules you have lying around, already have detailed legends about the past. All of that information, upon which the foundation of the adventure must be built, is ripe for the picking. What ancient culture built the pyramids that the PCs are now exploring?

Answering these questions (the author believes), is probably the greatest impetus for the creation of the Hollow World Campaign setting. It is quite clear from the existence of such a setting that other authors and game designers have been searching for ways to bring the rich history of Mystara back to life for PCs to experience directly... however we don't need to relegate such adventures to the confines of the Immortal's museum. With time travel, PCs can experience not only the cultures of the past, but the actual events that made those cultures interesting in the first place!



Immortal Paths

On Mystara, there may be other compelling reasons to visit the past. The Immortals, especially those of the Sphere of Time make all ages in Mystara history their concern. Not only the Immortals, but mortal candidates in

the Sphere of Time must also travel time in order to complete their trials.

How will time travel affect the present?

One question that we all must ask about time travellers, especially if we are concerned about (and wish to continue using) the modern era setting, is how will the actions of time travelling PCs affect the present day?

Time Doesn't want to Change

Many of the PC's actions may have little to no long term impact on the modern era of your favorite game world. Stopping a thief, clearing out a dungeon full of goblins, or even killing a dragon, may not be significant enough to alter the course that history plays out.

On the other hand, imagine what would happen if the PCs prevented General Zendrolion from murdering the kings of Thyatis, Ochalea, and the Pearl Islands at the signing of the Treaty of Edairo. What would the modern world look like if the PCs reverted the corruption of Nithia, or prevented the Great Rain of Fire from ever happening!

It may not be possible for PCs to change world shattering events such as these... or if they do, those changes may not last forever. Time itself may not *want* to change. Perhaps the PCs stop Zendrolion, but Lucinius had the same plan all along. Likewise, the PC's actions may postpone the corruption of Nithia or the destruction of Blackmoor for decades, or even centuries... but at some point (well after the PCs are gone) those

events will still take place. When the PCs return to their own time, they may notice little more change than a slight variation in a way the old legends are told.

History as a Backdrop

Another, less intrusive, way to adventure in time, is to use alternate eras merely as backdrops to the real adventures being run. PCs might enjoy traveling back in time to ancient Taymora, having to struggle to survive in an era dominated by nosferatu nobles, vampire vassals, and entire nations devoted to serving them. Perhaps they need to gather the blood of the first werewolf ever created on Mystara¹, or maybe their immortal patron has sent them to vanquish a particularly evil vampire queen and bring back the golden relic that hangs from her neck. Throughout their travails the PCs experience earthquakes, storms, and even volcanic eruptions. They may be able to accomplish their tasks and successfully complete their missions... but they shouldn't be able to stop Taymora from sinking beneath the waves.



¹ See Treatise on Lycanthropy

Time is Fluid

Enterprising DMs may take a more dynamic route, though with it comes much more work and preparation. Perhaps the PC's actions in the past can alter their own timelines, either for better or worse. A band of brave adventurers may perform heroic deeds in the past only to find that upon returning to their own time they are met with a disastrous and dire future. Extrapolating the results of a fluid timeline may be done on the fly, or even determined beforehand and tied to specific goals accomplished by adventurers in the past. Regardless of what happens to the PC's own present era, and whether those results are desirable or not, there is always a way for them to fix it... they just have to go back in time and "repair" whatever it was that they broke.

INSTANCES OF TRAVEL

In fact there are already adventures set in Mystara that take time travel into consideration. In DA1 - Adventures in Blackmoor, modern Mystaran adventurers can travel back in time through the Comeback Inn, an ancient building that serves as a portal through time from the founding of Blackmoor to the unseeable future of the world. But the Comeback Inn is but one example of the modus operandi that can send Players hurtling through time... perhaps we can discover a few more.

Stone Toad



History

Said to be able to cross any barrier of distance, and possibly even time itself, the Stone Toad has left a trail of misery in its wake throughout the ages. Created by unknowable creatures even before elves first walked the planet, the Toad has found its way into horror stories and hauntings told by innumerable cultures across Mystara, from the Lhomarrians and Blackmoor, all the way to present day Karamaikos and Rockhome. Through all the stories, one thing remains constant - whoever uses the Stone Toad is cursed to bring misery to all they touch thereafter.

Appearance

The Stone Toad appears to be a statue of a sitting toad made from the blackest basalt. It is 10' wide by 15' long and stands at a height of 10' tall. Eroded by the ages, the features of the toad can barely be made out, although if one stares long enough at its form, bulbous eyes sitting atop a round head, and a wart covered back can be discerned. The basalt

itself is coarse and pockmarked, and various portions appear to have been eaten away by acid. Although the Stone Toad appears to be a solid statue, it is in fact hollow.

The inner dimensions of the vessel are somewhat distorted and slightly larger than they should be. Thirteen divots along the ceiling (the largest warts on the toad's back) are lined with spherical iron cages, each fused into the surrounding basalt. In the center of the chamber is a chest high pillar upon which rests an onyx heart nearly a foot in diameter.

Operation

Life must be consumed in order to power this fiendish vessel. For thirteen nights, when the darkest hour is marked, the Stone Toad issues forth its siren song, summoning a single lantern archon within its presence. For reasons unknown, lantern archons find the Toad irresistible, and always investigate the object eventually floating near its head. It is then that the Toad strikes. Its eyes alight with blue hellfire, the Toad's mouth opens and a tongue of dark force lashes out to capture the unsuspecting archon. Consumed archons find themselves trapped within one of the iron cages inside the vessel.

Once thirteen archons have been captured, the Stone Toad is fully powered and can jump to another location. A user communicates a destination to the Toad by grasping the onyx heart and creating a mental depiction of the desired location. With each beat of the stone heart, the lantern archons begin to dim, and one by one lose both their light and their life. When the last archon has faded away the Toad stands in its new location.

Gate of Light

History

Constructed in BC 2319² by dwarves living in what would later be Rockhome and the Northern Reaches, the Gate of Light was designed to be a portal leading back to their ancestral lands³. Though none survived the destruction of Blackmoor in the Great Rain of Fire, those dwarves lucky enough to be outside the blast radius never forgot where they came from. Longing to return to the lands of their forefathers, the dwarves of the Shimmering Lands created a massive technomagical archway that could take them home. Though a powerful artifact, the Gate of Light did not operate quite as expected, being infused with the very energies that caused the destruction of Blackmoor centuries before.

Appearance

The Gate of Light is a massive stone archway extending well over ten leagues in length from the base of one foot to the other. Wreathed in metal and dripping with pipework and wires, glowing runes adorn its surface, insuring that the surrounding region is constantly bathed in greenish-blue light, even when the moon is new. Around the southeastern foot is the city of Himnem, a mecca for dwarven radiomancers and their twisted experiments.

Originally built on the Bridge of Oost, an ancient land bridge connecting the Known World to the Isle of Dawn, the Gate of Light

² See the Mystara BC 2300 Campaign Setting, and Gaz BC1, The Shimmering Lands for more information on the Gate of Light.

³ Probably one of the mountain ranges surrounding the Kingdom of Blackmoor

has long since disappeared from modern view. Advancing oceans consumed the Gate of Light, at the same time forming the island nation of Ostland. Though submerged in the modern era⁴ the Gate of Light remains relatively intact, and may be sought out by those adventurers with enough historical knowledge to know where it lies... and with a means to visit it beneath the waves.

Operation

Unknown to most, even to the powerful radiomancers who constructed it, the Gate of Light is not only a portal through space, to the ancestral dwarven lands in Skothar, but in time as well. The gate is keyed to open up to a time shortly after the Great Rain of Fire. Radiance from that time powers the artifact, seeping into its very core over a period of a single year, until there is enough energy to physically open the Gate. Once charged, the Gate's portal remains open for a single month before the energies are drained.

Should an archmage powerful enough in the art of radiomancy find and open the Gate of Light's portal, they may be able to alter its timestream just enough to shift it to before the Great Rain of Fire. How long before the catastrophe would be hard to know, but the Gate could prove a semi-reliable means of traveling to the age of Blackmoor.

⁴ Modern shorelines in the Known World would have been fully formed circa BC 1700, probably shortly after the sinking of Taymora.

Soul Gems (and reincarnation)!



History

Soul gems can be found far in the bowels of Mystara's Shadowdeep, and have existed since the Great Rain of Fire... and perhaps even before. Shadow Elf tales paint the Soul Gems as receptacles for elven souls, sheltering elven spirits after death and providing them sanctuary until they can be born once again into elven bodies. Shadow Elf shamans know the truth however, that the crystals are little more than a repository for the latent radiance energy that permeates the depths. So they believe.

Indeed there is some amount of truth to the old Shadow Elf legends, for some rare soul

gems⁵, imbued with both the World Shield ore and magic of the Immortals, do shepherd chosen souls throughout the ages.

Appearance

True soul gems appear much as their mundane counterparts, with one major difference. At their core, beneath layers of shimmering translucence, lies a metallic-crystalline shape, often in the form of an animal or magical beast.

Operation

Individuals bound to a particular soul gem are always born with that gem's totem as a birth mark somewhere on their bodies. Soul gems are typically passed along through the ages down a family line, though they need not be tied to a specific bloodline and in fact often shepherd souls through diverse lineages. They must however, be present at the time of death in order to gather the departed's spirit, just as they must be present during birth in order to pass a shepherded spirit into a new body.

In this fashion a Player may continue playing (at least the essence) of their character through many lifetimes and across many ages. Time travel of this fashion generally only runs forward, from the past to the future, though hiccups in the time stream could cause a soul to travel in either direction, past or future. Reborn characters may begin to recall aspects and memories of their former lives, however skills and abilities are always tied to their current incarnated bodies.

⁵ Such gems might be tied to the Dragonstones of Thorn's Mystara. See more of RobJN's work at the Vaults of Pandius, and on the Piazza.

Past Ages

of the KNOWN WORLD

by Francesco Defferrari (Sturm)

As written by famed Ylari scholar, explorer and wizard Aamir Ibn Saleem, teacher at the Krakatos School of Magecraft, to his friend and colleague Erik in the year 1019 AC¹

My research in the most forgotten and lost dungeons of the Known World is giving me and my friends quite an expertise on the past of our lands. I will report here a small part of our discoveries, advising the reader to remember that many of my suppositions could be partially or entirely wrong, and definitive proofs of my many theories could well be hard or impossible to find. Long before Blackmoor even existed, the Known World was not inhabited by humans, but by much more ancient races. dragons, fairies, giants, araneas, reptilians, brutemen and sasquatches were certainly among the oldest inhabitants of this land. Reptilians is however a rather inaccurate term that includes lizardmen, troglodytes, chameleon men, caymen and gatormen. And then there are

¹ see also [Threshold magazine issue 3, page 174](#) and [“Thoughts and expansion on the History of Karameikos”](#) at The Vaults of Pandius

also the frogfolk, which are amphibians and could be even more ancient than the different reptilian races. From several ancient texts I know other people came later, particularly dwarves, gnomes, lupins and rakasta. I have now a rough picture of what the Known World should have been about 9000 years ago, 8000 years Before the Coronation of the first Thyatian Emperor. Note that at the time apparently the islands which now belong to Ierendi and Minrothad were connected to the mainland and part of it.



Aamir Ibn Saleem

But let's read an incredibly ancient description of what was then called the Sunset Land, as written by a giant of Gandhar:

THE KNOWN WORLD AROUND 8000 BC



THE KNOWN WORLD AROUND 8000 BC

For the Players:

"As the Jotun, the great ones, were in decline at the time due to the wickedness of the Immortals, the Empire of Gandhar was the only civilization left in the Dawn and Sunset Land. Three corrupted reptilian cities were founded in the west and Gandhar was the only power which could stop them, as the dragons of the north did not. These reptilians were powerful in magic and even more wicked than the Immortals, so powerful and wicked that the Immortals did fear them and could not stop them. Eventually the dragons destroyed their northern city, Kha-reth, the human followers of the Sun destroyed their western city, Shi-akh, and we destroyed the eastern one, Na-qeth, which was close to our Empire".

From what I have been able to learn, I suspect this northern reptilian city of Kha-reth was in the area of the modern Broken Lands, maybe it was near to where Oenkmar now lies. The western one, Shi-akh, probably was on the coast, I suspect its ruins, if they still exist, may lie under the modern city of Jahore in Sind, or under the Asanda Delta. The eastern city, Na-qeth, probably is still buried under the sewers of Tel Akbir in Thyatis. More investigations may be necessary to verify this.

For the Dungeon Master:

Names in red on the map indicate organized cities or realms, while the names in purple indicate ethnic populations organized as clans or tribes, but without a central

government. The three reptilian cities would be **Carnifex** cities, as described in ["Of the Lore and Legends of Y'hog, City of the Unclean Ones, and of that Race"](#) and other articles by Geoff Gander, including the ["Timeline of Mogreth"](#). The people indicated in the map as **Naqan** and **Neset** in the area of modern Thyatis and Ylauruam are my creations, I imagine them as ancestors of the Nithians and could be related to the Lhomarrians, also developed by Geoff Gander (in ["Lhomarr: The Land, Its People, and Their History"](#)) and to the Asyidhi as envisaged by Simone Neri in ["Real World Inspiration for the Isle of Dawn"](#) and already included by me as Mysteran equivalents of Middle East people in [Threshold #5](#) and [#11](#). For **Rakasta** populations, see their ["History And Evolution"](#) by Simone Neri and for **Chochomec Lupins**, see ["History of the Lupins"](#) by Giampaolo Agosta and ["Lupin Breeds"](#) by Atila Pires dos Santos and in [Threshold issue #2](#). **Oteino, Oteici and Azcans** are Oltec populations inspired by the ethnographic work done by Giampaolo Agosta, Atila Pires dos Santos, Giulio Caroletti and Geoff Gander in ["Ethnographic History of Mystara"](#) and in ["A Timeline of the Oltec Man"](#).



Oltec statue depicting the head of a giant

THE KNOWN WORLD AROUND 5000 BC



THE KNOWN WORLD AROUND 5000 BC

For the Players:

Three millennia later, the Known World was much changed, and dominated by four powerful empires. I know this through some ancient Oltec writings we have found still preserved in the temples of modern Sind:

“The Oltec, the Son of the Sun, the Emperor of the Many Lands rules the setting sun, a thousand cities inhabited by the sun men, the gator men, the cat men, the wolf men, the ancient men, the great men and the pale men. North there is the Kingdom of the Dragon, with the small men and the men of the forest and of the horse, which sometimes can be appeased by gifts and sometimes must be fought. In the far east, cradle of the new sun, there is the Kingdom of the Great, which rules over many cities of our brothers under the Sun and can be our ally against the Enemy. The Enemy lives in the south, from the great southern continent the snake men come, with armies of lizard men and spider men, to enslave us. We are still fighting them in the seas and in the jungles of the Sunset Land”.

From this, it seems an empire dominated by Snake men ruled Davania at the time. I’ve found mention of this powerful nation even later, at the time of Blackmoor.

For the Dungeon Master:

As detailed in [“Timeline of Mogreth”](#) by Geoff Gander, a first version of the nation of lizardmen existed in modern Ylaruam between 5500 and 3800 BC. The **Serpentine Empire** was created instead by James Mishler in [“The Age of Blackmoor”](#) and was also detailed by me in [Threshold issue #5](#). I’ve independently decided Old Mogreth could have been part of the Serpentine Empire.

Dunharians and Maharians are mentioned in the Ethnographic history of Mystara by Giulio Caroletti, Giampaolo Agosta and Geoff Gander, linked above. **Maharians** should be part of the different populations which made up the Taymorans.



Oltec statue depicting a dragon or a serpentine

THE KNOWN WORLD AROUND 3500 BC



The KNOWN World around 3500 BC

For the Players:

Around 3500 BC explorers from the Skotharian lands of Thonia and Blackmoor started to explore the Sunset Land. The Serpentine Empire was in decline at the time, while the Oltec Empire was at the peak of its power. The Draconic Empire and the Empire of the Giants of Gandhar still existed. I have found a very rare Thonian account of this time.

“Once a land dominated by non human populations, such as giants and lizardmen, the Sunset Land is now the home of many human cultures with whom Blackmoor could trade more easily. The Tudaka in the south have been able to keep the Oltec Empire at bay with their strange magic connected somehow to the great circles of stone and statues they build. North of them, the Albai do not apparently possess strong magic, but the Oltecs consider them too stubborn to be ruled. The Tjeset of the south eastern coast have some good ships, but the area also hosts many clans of lizardmen which can be occasionally hostile. The Naqan are clearly heavily influenced by the Oltec culture and architecture, but the Giants of Gandhar find it convenient to preserve their independence from the eastern Empire. The Oltec Empire however is friendly with our merchants and, as it is well known, there have been Thonians living within it from the time of the fall of Thonia four centuries ago”.

For the Dungeon Master:

The cultures and people that appears in the map above are described in the links indicated previously or expanded by me in Threshold issue #2, in the article “**New Blackmoor 3050 BC**”.



Maharian priestess

THE KNOWN WORLD AROUND 3050 BC



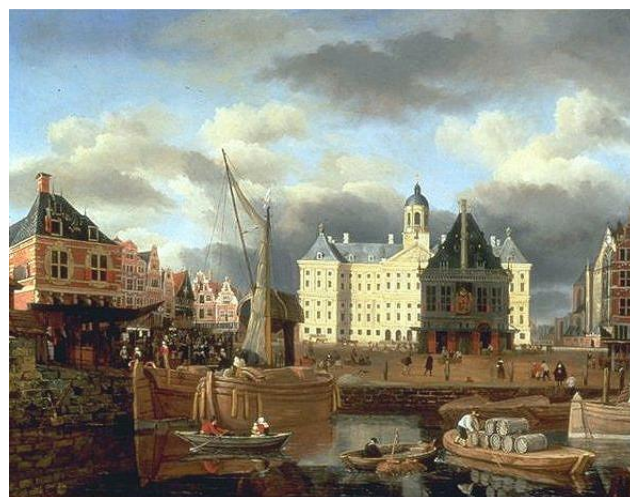
THE KNOWN WORLD AROUND 3050 BC

For the Players:

At the height of its power, Blackmoor had an important colony right where the Known World now is. I believe this generated some confusion in past scholars, some of whom believed Blackmoor was indeed located in the Known World. Rather I have strong evidence that the current Glantri City could have been the capital of the Blackmoorian colony. We have found Blackmoorian artifacts in other locations too, which probably were also important cities of the colony. The ones I have identified so far are Tel Akbir in Thyatis and Stronghold in Minrothad, but I have quite interesting clues about the existence of important cities somewhere in the Broken Lands and in the mountains of Rockhome and Karameikos. Dangerous places to explore, but it may be worth it. We have recovered already some Blackmoorian artifacts. They seem to have some powerful, even if sometimes dangerous, magic in them.

For the Dungeon Master:

The map above depicting the Known World in 3050 BC was already published in my article [“New Blackmoor, 3050 BC” in Threshold issue #2](#), where all the cultures and the people are described.



Redfen, capital of New Blackmoor

THE KNOWN WORLD AROUND 2900 BC



THE KNOWN WORLD AROUND 2900 BC

For the Players:

Just after the Great Rain of Fire the situation in the Known World must have been extremely difficult, to use an understatement. We have found evidence that all the cities from the previous age were destroyed or abandoned. Apparently at the time the Tudaka civilization mentioned in the Thonian source above was the only one still thriving, or at least surviving with minor difficulties. Settlements and items that we have recognized as belonging to that culture were found mostly on Trader's Isle and vicinities. The northern part of the Known World was probably covered by snow and ice all year long, making food scarce and life quite difficult.



Tudaka village

For the Dungeon Master:

This map is mostly inspired by the work done by John Calvin for the 2300BC setting, which can be found in the [Vaults of Pandius](#), and in the [2300 BC subforum at The Piazza](#).

The map was drawn by John, but I have added in purple the populations living in the indicated area, and he may not fully agree with my suppositions here. I've also added more ice to differentiate the 2900 BC map from the 2300 BC map, as suggested by Robin D.

At this time the descendants of the **Azcan** should all be hidden underground and the **Thonian** refugees who will contribute in the formation of Taymora are still roaming the central plains of the Known World and have not yet reached their destination.

The Toralai neathars of the Darokinian plain now call themselves **Turans**, a name that will later become Dars and Daros with the influence of Taymora and descended cultures, like the Doulakki.

Dunael are a Dunharian population of the Isle of Dawn developed by several authors and mentioned in ["Ethnographic History of Mystara"](#). I placed in the Isle of Dawn already in 2900 BC as I believe all the Dunharian populations should be related to the Valemen of Ancient Blackmoor, as described in [Havard's Blackmoor blog](#).

THE KNOWN WORLD AROUND 2300 BC



THE KNOWN WORLD AROUND 2300 BC

For the Players:

About seven centuries after the Great Rain of Fire, new civilizations were thriving in the Known World. Dwarves and Gnomes apparently dominated not only Rockhome but all the Northern Reaches at the time, while Taymora was the power in the south, dominating lands which are now under the Sunlit Sea. The ancestors of the modern Atruaghin Tiger Clan, and heirs of the ancient Azcan Empire, lived up to the modern Lake Amsorak. A great central area from modern Glantri to Karameikos was apparently inhabited by fairies and giants. Lizardmen lived in the region of modern Ylaruam. We have also found some clues about a mysterious and advanced culture living in the south of modern Thyatis, but further investigations will be necessary to understand what this culture was. The modern Dread Archipelago at the time was probably joined in a unique land with a common government, but so far we have been unable to discern which of the many races that currently live in the isles dominated the region.

All these civilizations probably were not empires in the modern meaning of the word. They apparently had no centralized government, but were more like coalitions of city states and colonies. Yet their competition to dominate the regions not under their control was fierce, and we have found evidence of many battles fought in the area of modern Thyatis, Darokin, Ethengar and the Isle of Dawn between these powers.

We have found clues that lizardmen and dwarves had at least some outposts in the Isle of Dawn and around this time a new and powerful kingdom of Giants was born too, named Fomor. It's not clear if this kingdom was allied with Taymora or with the fairies and the giants of the Known World. There were also some contacts between the Oltec kingdom of the Atruaghin area and the Oltec descended people of the southern Isle of Dawn.

For the Dungeon Master:

As previously indicated, the map and the information about this period come from John Calvin's **2300 BC Setting**. Peoples and cultures of the **Isle of Dawn** around this time and the following ones below come from the "[History of the Isle of Dawn](#)" by James Mishler which can be found at the Vaults of Pandius.



Taymoran priestesses

THE KNOWN WORLD AROUND 2000 BC



THE KNOWN WORLD AROUND 2000 BC

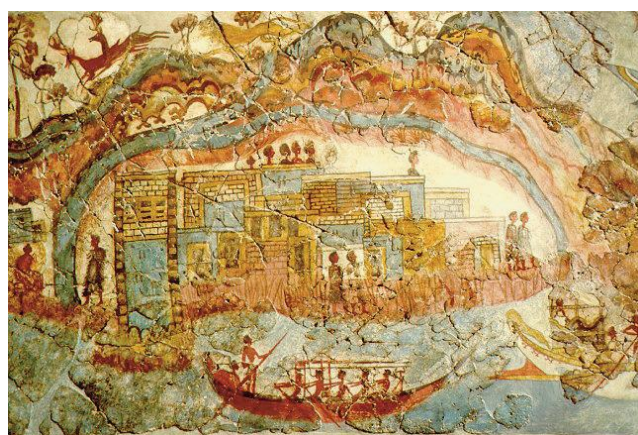
For the Players:

Around 2000 BC, Taymora was at the peak of its power while its neighbours were mostly in sharp decline. It seems that at some point the Taymorans conquered from giants and fairies several territories in the modern area of the Five Shires and Karameikos. Taymoran armies employed minotaur mercenaries and other monsters. They also founded colonies on the Isle of Dawn. The lizardmen civilization in modern Ylarum was destroyed by some deluge or similar catastrophe. The dwarves and gnomes, according to their own history, were plagued by incurable maladies until, some centuries later, Kagyar saved them by sending his emissary Denwarf. The Azcan-like civilization was apparently still strong at this time, dominating not only the current Atruaghin lands but also part of Darokin. If fairies and giants were declining in the Known World, they were instead on the rise on the Isle of Dawn, where it seems that at the time existed a powerful Firbolg kingdom allied with fairies and Dunael humans, while Fomorian giants had been temporarily defeated.

For the Dungeon Master:

As previously indicated, the map and the information about this period come from John Calvin's 2300 BC Setting. In 2000 BC, as detailed in my Koskatop dungeon, Taymora has not conquered yet the whole former Southern Grondheim, but it's about to. Mogreth has been destroyed and now the ancestors of **Nithians** and **Traldars** dominate the region.

Peoples and cultures of the Isle of Dawn come from the ["History of the Isle of Dawn"](#) by James Mishler which can be found in the Vaults of Pandius. For a detailed history of **Elven migrations**, see my article on the topic in [Threshold issue #10](#). The elves living in Glantri at this time should be the ancestors of the Gentle Folk and the Icevale elves now living in the Hollow World. Ancestors of the Sheyallia, Meditor, Vyalia and Verdier probably start reaching the area of southern Taymora from 2300 BC. In 1950 another mysterious group supposedly settles in the area of modern Broken Lands, see next DM paragraph.



Taymoran fresco

THE KNOWN WORLD AROUND 1750 BC



THE KNOWN WORLD AROUND 1750 BC

Around 1750 BC the Kikianu Caldera, a supervolcano which was and is in the modern Ierendian region, become unstable. A series of volcanic eruptions and earthquakes heavily damaged the Taymoran civilization, or at least, this is one theory. Another, more sinister one is linked to the civil war which at the time was pitting Taymoran cities one against another, the main struggle being between followers of Nyx and followers of Thanatos, the latter supposedly lead by the Immortal Orcus himself. It's possible that the use of dangerous magic during this struggle may have precipitated the natural disasters. A new civilization was starting to flourish in modern Ylaruam, probably created by natives influenced by the Taymoran culture. In the meantime, elves had arrived in the north in relevant numbers, establishing the realms of Genalleth and Aengmor. The Fomorian Empire was again powerful on the Isle of Dawn, even if it had to face rebellions from Firbolg and Dunaels and the Antalian pressure from the north. Another realm of giants, Tarsh, had taken possession of almost all the modern Karameikos and the Altan Tepes mountains. Lizardmen were quite numerous in the area between modern Malpoggi, Ierendi and the Blight swamp, new humid areas created by the climatic and geographical changes. The Daro clans, human ancestors of the modern Darokinians, thrived in the central plains of the Known World as bison hunters. This was also the Antalian golden age, and the men of the north were thriving from modern Norwold to Soderfjord, to the Isle of Dawn. They were

organized as jarls, rather than in an unified empire, but they were still capable of uniting against common threats. However this unfortunately was not enough when the Great Invasion came.

For the Dungeon Master:

Map and information on this age come again from John Calvin's and James Mishler's work as indicated above. All the rest is my invention.

Due to the Spell of Oblivion, Aamir obviously cannot discover many details about Nithia. Aengmor in canon is just the name of the city founded by elves in a cave under the Broken Lands which would become Oenkmar in BC 1190. In GAZ13 is also noted that some Shadowelves came to the surface in 1950 BC, but did not encounter the other elves living in Glantri. My supposition instead is that Aengmor was a true realm founded by the ancestors of the Schattentalen and Shadowelves, which also tried to include the ancestors of the Gentle Folk and Icevale elves. The realm was created to resist the incoming humanoid invasion. The cataclysm which created the Broken Lands may have been caused by an ancient Blackmoorian device the elves tried to use against the humanoids. The true history of Aengmor was later forgotten due to the cataclysm and maybe also due to Atzanteotl's lies. Atziann, the first canon mortal identity of Atzanteotl could indeed have been the King of this Realm. All this is mostly my creation and each DM should decide if it's appropriate for his or her campaign.

THE KNOWN WORLD AROUND 1710 BC



THE KNOWN WORLD AROUND 1710 BC

For the Players:

In the space of a few decades, further eruptions and earthquakes completely destroyed the Taymoran civilization, or what was left of it. The heirs of Taymora were dispersed among the southern islands, Karameikos, Thyatis, Ylaruam and the southern Isle of Dawn.

In the central plains the Oltec civilization had apparently fallen too, and the Children of the Horse were the dominant culture, encroaching on the territories of the Daro clans.

From the north King Loark's Great Horde of humanoids was on the rampage, endangering the very existence of the Antalian civilization and of the elven realms of Genalleth and Aengmor. The horde was mostly composed by grey and yellow orcs and hobgoblins, but other races may also have been present among them.

Then the Second Cataclysm struck, and the Broken Lands were created. It is again not clear how and why this happened. Some Wendar chronicles maintain that their elven brothers in the Highlands of modern Glantri tried to use a terrible Blackmoorian weapon to destroy the humanoid horde, but the plan backfired. Others say it was just another eruption triggered by the Kikianu Caldera. We may never know the truth, but certainly the Known World was again thrown back to a new stone age.

For the Dungeon Master:

This map too was drawn by John Calvin for the 2300 BC setting and [the original can be seen at the Vaults of Pandius](#).

Aengmor as shown in the above map is strictly non-canon as in the previous map, and now bigger. My personal idea is that King Atziann (later known as Atzanteotl) tried to persuade or force all the elves and humans living at the time in the area of Glantri and the Broken Lands to join his realm, with the aim to create a common front against King Loark's invasion force. This should have happened between 1722 BC, when Loark invaded Norwold, and 1709 BC, when his horde settled in the Broken Lands². The Second Cataclysm occurred only in 1700 BC, so it could be imagined that the elves were enslaved by the humanoids as were the Ethengarians. King Atziann, maybe in hiding with some loyal followers, tried to use the Blackmoorian device to destroy the humanoids, but his plan backfired, and he was forced to escape underground, until he emerged in the Hollow World as the lone survivor of his clan. This tragic history could enhance the already interesting background of this Immortal.



*Ancient
Ethengarians*

² See GAZ 10 *The Orcs of Thar*, DM's Booklet, pg 4.

THE KNOWN WORLD AROUND 1500 BC



For the Players:

After the Broken Lands Cataclysm, the Known World was caught in another small ice age and humanoids dominated vast territories in the area of Darokin, Glantri and Ethengar. Despite this, the Ethengarians were among the most powerful people of this time. The other nations who had recovered quickly from the Second cataclysm were the elves of Genalleth, Geffronell and Lothenar (in modern Wendar and Denagoth), the Children of the Horse in modern Atruaghin lands, the Firbolg of the Kingdom of Parlann on the Isle of Dawn and

the new civilization in Ylaruam. This latter one is quite mysterious to scholars of the Known World, as we know it spread to many nearby lands between 1500 and 500 BC. My personal theory is that it was an Hutaakan civilization, of which now the only traces that are left appear in the Lost Valley in Karameikos and in the Hollow World. Obviously I have developed this theory only after the recent discovery of the Lost Valley and the Hollow World. Before that, many theories existed among scholars about this mysterious civilization: some believed it to be connected to ancient dwarves, other to giants, others to populations related to

modern Alasiyans or Atruaghins. The Alphatians always maintained instead it was a Thothian civilization, of which modern Ylaruam was only a colony.

Besides these major cultures, there was a myriad of people, city states and minor nations in the Known World, and new migrations such as the one of the Traldar, who probably were displaced from their ancestral lands in modern Makistan from the rising Hutaakan civilization (or Thothian colony) in modern Ylaruam.

Some Traldar immigrants also probably founded several Darokinian cities that still exist today, such as Akorros, Athenos, Dolos and Selenica (known as Salonikos at the time).

The area of modern Glantri was abandoned by elves and at the time was mostly inhabited by humanoids and some sparse human clans.

For the Dungeon Master:

In red on the map the population which at the time had some central organization, while in purple the people who were divided in tribes or clans. The names in black are secret dragon kingdoms, normally unknown even to their direct neighbours.

The information in this map comes mostly from canon sources, see in particular the Gazetteer series, the Hollow World boxed set and the Champions of Mystara boxed set, or the compiled [“History of Mystara”](#) document by Michael Diehm at the Vaults of Pandius. Other main sources for the timeline from 1500 BC to modern times are mostly The

[“History of Karameikos”](#) by Simone Neri and other [histories of Karameikos](#) by Giampaolo Agosta and me, also stored in the Vaults of Pandius.

Check also Simone’s articles in [Threshold issue #3](#), [#4](#) and [#5](#) for the History of Ierendi and Minrothad and [Threshold issue #7](#) for the History of Norwold (and the Antalian people).

Another source, for Doulakki people and Cynidicea, was the [“Dungeon Master’s Guide to Cynidicea”](#) by several authors, stored at the Vaults of Pandius and the [“Expanded Darokin Timeline”](#) by Aaron Nowack at the Vaults, and other articles about the [History of Darokin](#) by Geoff Gander.

See also JTR’s [“Gazetteer of Wendar”](#) at the Vaults and the other Gazetteers from the same author (Denagoth, Landfall, Oceansend in particular).

The map of Nithia was created by Robin D. and can be found at [“Ancient Nithia 1500BC-8 mile hexes”](#) in the Vaults. Beside Nithia, the main geographical differences from modern Known World are:

- Anur lake is still present between the Broken Lands and Ethengar, as supposed by Robin D. in her ongoing work on the geological history of the area detailed in [Geomorfological History of the Broken Lands](#)
- Alfheim doesn’t exist yet and the area is a steppe, as per canon information.
- The Atruaghin plateau has not been raised yet, as per canon information.
- The Sind area is less arid, as per canon information.

I apologize in advance if I have used or will use other sources present in the Vaults of Pandius and forgot to mention them.

The Rasna people in Thyatis should be the ancestors of the Etrusna invented by me and detailed by Giulio Caroletti in his article on Hesperia in this issue. The Kartana were detailed by him too in his [Gazetteer of Carytion in issue #11 of Threshold](#). They could be the descendants of the Tudaka from previous times.

Canonically Glantri was uninhabited at the time, but as I find quite unbelievable the idea that the whole human population of the country is made up of recent emigrants, I prefer to have native people in the area. They should be descendants of Dunharian populations (i.e. Mystaran celts).

Aamir cannot know of Nithia due to the Spell of Oblivion, but he can know about the

Hutaakans if the events of B10 (discovery of the Lost Valley) and the Poor Wizard's Almanac for AC 1011 (publication of Claransa's Travels in the Hollow World) have occurred. This may not be appropriate for your campaign.



Traldar warriors



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THE KNOWN WORLD AROUND 1255 BC



For the Players:

From 1300 to 1255 BC the western Known World was hit by two more great migrations which had long lasting effects. One was of the halflings from Davania, which was a peaceful migration to the area of the Five Shires (and later, to several more regions including Ierendi, Minrothad and up to Norwold). We do know how halfling reached Ierendi, with their own ships, and Minrothad, captured as slaves by Thyatians and Minrothaddans, but halfling histories are not clear on the exact timeline of the later

migration to the North. It seems some halflings lived for centuries in the Northern Reaches, maybe brought by slavers after 1000 BC, before reaching Norwold after 500 BC. The other great migration of this time was much less peaceful, and was the invasion of the west by Wogar's goblin horde (which also included ogres, red orcs, kobolds and bugbears). The red orcs occupied Atruaghin and Sindhi lands and the whole area of Darokin and Glantri fell under their rule. Some people resisted, like the Hutaakan civilization in Karameikos/Traladara and Ylaruam, the new dwarven nation of Dengar,

the gnomes in the mountain and hills around it, the khans of Ethengar and the elves of Genalleth.

On the Isle of Dawn apparently some Traldar colonists established powerful nations, like Nemedra and Latica. The Helska kingdoms of the north were the first resurgence of the Antalain people. At this time the Thantalian, ancestors of the modern Thyatians, probably inhabited the area of modern Heldann. They left the area for Davania circa 1000 BC, probably deported (or maybe hired as mercenaries and colonists) by the Hutaakan/Thothian civilization.

For the Dungeon Master:

See references in the 1500 BC paragraph.

Halfling were brought to Minrothad by slavers around 400 AC, and the Northern Reaches by Nithian slavers around 950 BC or before, but details about this previous forced movement should be lost to them due to the Spell of Oblivion, see the relevant histories by Simone Neri in [Threshold issues #3, #4 and #7](#), and JTR's "[History of Leeha](#)" in [Threshold issue #6](#).

The idea that the **Thyatians** could have been mercenaries for the Nithians rather than slaves was first proposed in [a thread on The Piazza Forums](#) by Mike.



The Nithian pharaoh crushing his enemies

THE KNOWN WORLD AROUND 1000 BC



For the Players:

Around 2000 years ago, most of the Known World was dominated by the humanoid city of Oenkmar, which directly or indirectly controlled a large empire from Atruaghin lands to Ethengar, from Glantri to the modern Five Shires. It's quite probable that the documented attacks of the ogres and the gnolls against ancient Sindh, of the gnolls against Traladara and of the hobgoblins against the Ethengarians were all sponsored by Oenkmar. The dwarves of Dengar were attacked several times as well. While Sindh,

Ethengar, Traladara and Dengar did not fall, certainly they were in severe danger. The Hutaakan civilization was damaged, maybe by association with the gnolls, and apparently humans became the dominant race in ancient Ylaruam too. The Thothian civilization (if at the time Thothia was indeed its centre as many Alpathian scholars maintain) also established several colonies all over the coast of Brun, the Isle of Dawn, Ochalea, the Alatian Islands and beyond. It seems that several Antalian clans, displaced by such colonies, arrived in the land of the elves in Genalleth.

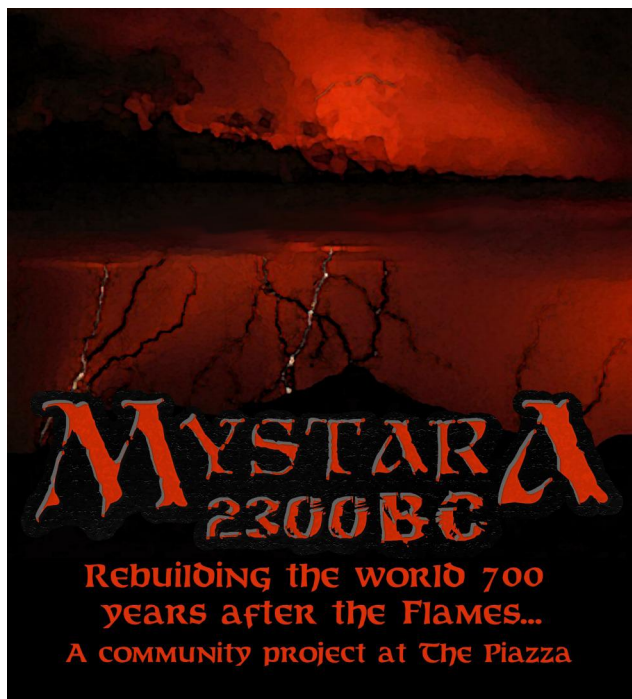
For the Dungeon Master:

The idea of an **Oenkmarian Empire** was introduced by John Calvin (Chimpman) in [a thread on The Piazza Forums](#).

See references in the 1500 BC paragraph. About the people living in the area of **Thyatis** at this time, see also my article on the Lost Civilizations of Thyatis and Alphatia in [Threshold issue #11](#) and Giulio Caroletti's article on Hesperia in this issue.



Oenkmarian priests sacrificing prisoners



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THE KNOWN WORLD AROUND 500 BC



For the Players:

Five hundred years later the political situation of the Known World was much changed. Both Oenkmar and the Thothian colony in Brun were experiencing a quick decline, and would disappear in the matter of a few years. The arrival of the elves of Alfheim and the creation of the Canolbarth forest, together with the defeat of the red orcs and the raising of the Atruaghin plateau, were instrumental in limiting the power of Oenkmar. The Hin were now free and had created their nation of Shaerdon. One powerful city, the mysterious Tuma which

once ruled a sizable territory north of Karameikos, had been destroyed, maybe by humanoids, but other cities and minor nations were free again and flourishing in the Darokian plains, such as Akorros, Athenos, Dolos, Salonikos and the nations of Molharran, Eraeda and Inlashar. The Fall of Oenkmar however would bring more humanoid invasions, in particular Queen Ubdala's attack on Dengar and Leptar's attack against Traladara. Both would be eventually repelled, but humanoid activities remain high in all the Known World in the following centuries.

In this period and for several centuries, the elves of Genalleth and their Antalian allies were under the constant attacks of humanoid from the north. This would lead eventually to the creation of the Wendarian league.

Gnomes and halfling living in the Northern Reaches at this time were forced out by humanoid migrations. The gnomes escaped to Glantri and Karamaikos, while most of the halflings eventually reached Leeha in Norwold.

Elves had returned to Glantri, in Alvar and created the nation of Brethilad in the northern Amsorak region. In the Isle of Dawn, the Firbolg nation of Tuatha had greatly limited the power and the territory of the Thothian colonies, and many Antalian clans had regained independence. The Antalian kingdom of Helska was also a major player in the north.

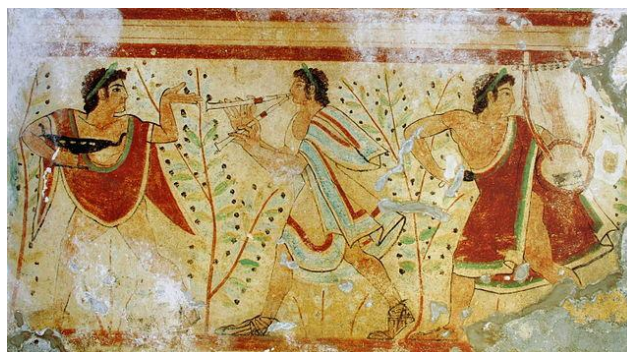
At this point Thyatians, Kerendans and Hattians had already arrived in modern Thyatis and soon would absorb all the native civilizations, such as the Etrusna and the Doulakki.

For the Dungeon Master:

See references in the 1500 BC paragraph.

The **Belcadiz elves** should have arrived in Glantri between 700 and 150 BC, see also my article on Elven migrations in [Threshold issue #10, page 20](#). In my article in [Threshold issue #2](#) on New Blackmoor, 3050 BC, I supposed they already lived in Glantri before the Great Rain of Fire, but were forced to leave by the cataclysms.

More details about **Thyatis** during this time are in Giulio Caroletti's article about Hesperia in this same issue, and in his article on Carytion and in my article about the Lost Civilizations of Thyatis and Alphatia in [Threshold issue #11](#).



Etrusnans dancers and musicians

THE KNOWN WORLD AROUND 1 AC



For the Players:

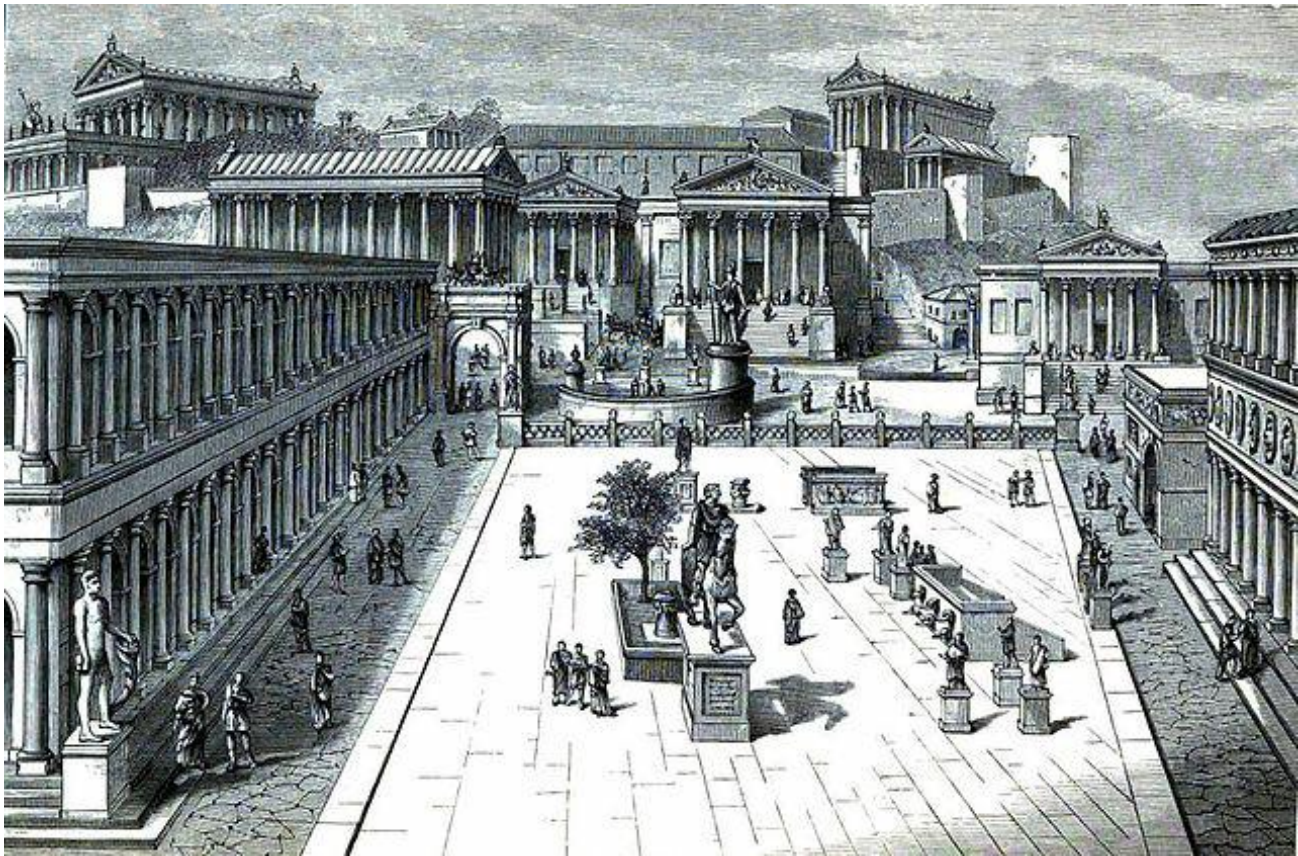
A thousand years ago, the Thyatian Empire was just born and was already dominating the western half of the Isle of Dawn. Darokin was experiencing quite some trouble, with humanoid attacks endangering the Eraeda clans in the plains. Ancient Sindh was now fragmented into several competing kingdoms, some dominated by non human lords. The fall of the Thothian colonies in Ylaruam, Ierendi and Minrothad had left space to native peoples, who however would soon be attacked by the expanding Thyatian

Empire. The Helska kingdom in the northern Isle of Dawn fragmented in Helskir and other powerful city states, while the western Antalians were still divided in competing jarldoms.

For the Dungeon Master:

See references in the 1500 BC paragraph. The **gnomes** living at this time in northeastern Glantri would be forced to leave due to the war with the dragons described in the Dragonlord trilogy. See [“Dragonlord Chronicles - Detailed](#)

[Summaries](#)” for a detailed synopsis by David Keyser or [“History of Dragonkind”](#) by Simone Neri. Most of the gnomes probably settled other regions of Glantri, from where they were again forced out by the Year of Infamy (the Glantrian persecution against dwarves, gnomes and wercreatures of 828 AC, described in *Gaz3 The Principalities of Glantri* and *PC4 Night Howlers*).



Thyatis city in the first centuries

THE KNOWN WORLD AROUND 580 AC



For the Players:

Five centuries ago the Known World was a bit more similar to what it is today, yet there were still many important differences and almost all the modern nations were not born yet.

The Wendarian league was created, but the modern nation of Wendar would be born only after 900 AC. Geffronell was under Denagothian attack from the north, but still a powerful nation until its final fall in 975 AC. In the Adri Varna Plateau, the modern nation of Gulluvia and the city of Sol-Klor,

which still exist today, were just born. In the northern lands Ostland was the most powerful nation, dominating over Vestland and several territories in the Isle of Dawn. The whole eastern coast was the theatre of a cold and hot war between Thyatis and Alphatia, both trying to bribe and control the Jarls. In Ylaruam, Thyatis had occupied the modern Emirates of Nicostenia and Dythestenia, and the south of Abbashan, and Alphatia the north of the latter and the Emirate of Nithia. The Alasiyans were free only in the middle of the desert, Makistan was de-facto an independent territory and Al-

Zalenikah, the modern Selenica, controlled a vast territory until it became part of Darokin. As we know, Vestland was born in 614 AC and Soderfjord only in 950 AC. Thyatis tried to colonize heavily the northern Isle of Dawn and Norwold only after 900 AC and the Heldann Freeholds had some semblance of unity only through the actions of the eponymous hero in 707 AC. Ylaruam freed itself from Alpathia and Thyatis in 830 AC, with the successful campaign of Al-Kalim.

Dengar, Alfheim, Ethengar and the Atruaghin lands had more or less the same borders they have today, but they had to fight against several humanoid raids and attacks.

Traladara was divided into two kingdoms, its western part called the Kingdom of Achelos, which would last until the Thyatian conquest in 900 AC. Before this time, Thyatis and Darokin both tried to conquer Traladara on multiple occasions, but both failed.

Five hundred years ago, Minrothad and Ierendi did not exist yet as they do today, Minrothad being only the nucleus of Trader's Isle and Ierendi divided between Makai tribes, Hin and Thyatian colonists. The Thyatian Empire tried to seize the islands in 586 AC, but lost them soon afterwards when Ierendi became an independent kingdom in 602 AC.

Darokin had its kings from 88 AC to 723 AC, and they were kings with ambitions, who managed to unite the nation and tried on different occasions to conquer Alfheim, the Broken Lands and the Orclands, Traladara and other neighbours, with disastrous results. The more peaceful republic was finally established in 927 AC after two centuries of divisions and instability.

Glantri was settled by the Flaems in 395 AC, received more colonists in the following centuries, was briefly conquered by Alpathia and finally became the magocracy we know today in 859 AC.

Sind was still divided in 580 AC, but would be unified by the Ul Nervi dynasty of Sindrastan between 691 and 714 AC.

For the Dungeon Master:

See references in the 1500 BC paragraph. The area labelled in black as "**Kardyer**" east of Dengar/Rockhome refers to the dragon who ruled over the area from 2 BC to 497 AC, when he was slain by the Dragonlord as described in the Dragonlord trilogy. In 580 AC his former territory was probably already taken over by the other dragon rulers described by Bruce Heard in "[Who's Who Among Dragons](#)", i.e. Ambur, Druuwor and Jargnir.



Portrait of a Thyatian emperor

Hail Thonia!

by JTR (OldDawg)

“Here! Over here! I told you it was here!”

Magnar Runnarson, had often spoke of a discovery he had made in his youth, and now many years later, he was about to be the proven right. There beneath him, the grass gave way, and a large stone breached the earth.

An older man, grey but strong, made his way across the windswept grasslands of Thorin. Sir Allen of Newkirk felt the worn etchings carved within the stone. He poured water over its surface, revealing a faint pair of symbols “ΘN”. Pensive, the old knight whispered, “Now what do we have here?”

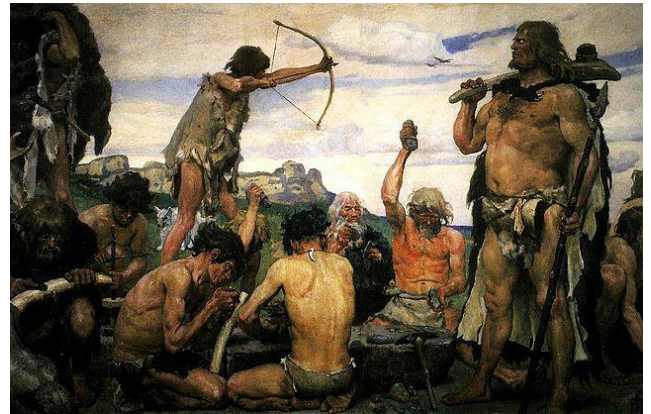
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The Dawn of Man (6000-5500 BC)

“The waters abated, and the hidden lands of Urt revealed themselves. A figure stirred in the loam and the clay. First the one, then the other.”

- *Antehistorium*, Book 3, verse 16.

7,000 years ago, the world looked very different from its modern face. The north pole lay near modern Glantri, and the ice cap covered much of the Known World. Global sea levels were significantly lower, and landbridges, now awash, connected the continents.



The Dawn of Man

No true civilization existed. The lizard-kin who had survived the wars before Man’s Dawn continued to devolve and degenerate to a point where they could begin their rise anew. These remnants were relegated to hidden swamps, secluded valleys and the most desolate of deserts. So, too, brute-men lived in scattered enclaves throughout the world mired in a Stone Age existence. It was in this world that the five races of men came into their infancy.

The Neathar were light-skinned hunter-gatherers that followed the great northern herds from the Isle of Dawn to Bellisaria. They moved quickly across the landscape and would come to settle Ur-Alphatia, half of Skothar and even Brun itself. To their east, the dark-skinned Tanagoro and related tribes inhabited the equatorial plains, mountains and jungles of Skothar. The third tribe of men – the stout dwarves – occupied the Frosthaven Landbridge in the north, a rough

territory where Norwold joined Ur-Alphatia and Skothar. These barbaric dwarves survived as goatherds amid the cold mountains and hills.

Davania sheltered the two remaining tribes of men. The original Oltec Men, such as the Protec, inhabited the Forest of Ka and the rainforests of the Addakian Mounts. Man's fifth tribe, the diminutive halflings, lived in rolling hills and forests amid a protected valley in Davania's interior.

These new races proved prolific, and the brute-men slowly disappeared as men expanded their ranges. In 5900 BC, the first permanent settlement of Kadech arose upon the Alatian Strait. It was followed by the Bellisarian towns of Gorem (5873 BC), Pa-Met (5812 BC), Lyd (5803 BC), and Ankgshem (5791 BC). Additional settlements occurred further east, foremost among them the City of Lum which occupied an important crossroads on the Ester Strait (5632 BC).

As humans ventured into the wildlands, they encountered the mysterious Children of the Sea. These tall, advanced beings, were not true kin of humanity, but rather the last remnants of the ancient Lhomarrian people whose homeland was swallowed by the Great Southern Expanse. Weary and in decline, the Children of the Sea were ultimately absorbed into the human diaspora.

The Burrower Wars and the Wild Lands (5500-5000)

"And in the days of Heth, the mighty hunter Sagoron strode the land of Ber-shad. And both man and beast fled in terror. And Madem walked the wadis of Stratem-heth, as the Children of Lum danced before As-Tod, as was their way. In the cold seas swam Levith and the warm seas Walu-eth, and Humungus trampled the field and forest."

- *Antehistorium, Book 22, verses 1-3*

"I stood before the shadowy figure and he offered me a pool from which to drink. Then I perceived myself standing beside and behind the figure and peered into the depths of what was and was to be."

- *Diakboronus, Book III, verses 10-11.*

As men continued their eastward expansion, they confronted strange lands and creatures. Powerful burrowing monsters and other bizarre creatures roamed the world, and in their wake isolated cultures grew corrupted (5500 BC). The people began to regard these beings as gods and made offerings. The burrowers disturbed the slumber of the champion races, corrupting many of them as well, and they weakened the prisons that held back ancient abominations (5400 BC).

The worship of these creatures continued to devolve, and tribes fell upon one another in savage, irrational wars that waxed and waned for three centuries (5300 -5000 BC). The city-states of the east grew isolated amid the mayhem and monsters, and only those willing to dare to high adventure left the safety of their city walls.

Prophetic visions drew one semi-nomadic tribe out of the Bellisarian wastelands. These Thonians travelled through Lum and the tent cities of the Perfumed Coast. Despite admonitions from their leader Euphemus, the Thonians adopted the ways of the eastern people, including the secret worship of As-Tod. Euphemus led his people further into the desolation beyond the city-states. He too faced his own temptation from the Witch of Shefa and her alluring charms.

After 50 years of travel and purification, the Thonians passed through the hills and mountains and reached the Sunrise Sea. There they built the City of Mohacs (5200 BC). In the cacophonous festivals that followed, the unknown figure of Euphemus's visions revealed himself as Wodus (Odin). Euphemus ascended to his side and merged with Odin's shadowy companion, declaring himself reborn as Khoronus and gifted the gathered Thonians his precepts and prophecies for the future.



City of Mohacs

In western lands far removed from the reveling Thonians, another Neathar tribe stirred to its own migration around the northern shores of the Great Inland Ocean. These men would become the Skandaharians.

The First Republic of Thonia – The Ten Principalities (5000 - 4700 BC)

“Let it be written and let it be known, that we are as brothers, bound and true.”

- *Telo of Regia,*
The Chronicles of Thonia, Book I

When the Burrower Wars concluded and the terrifying creatures disappeared, men established more settlements, setting the stage for further cultural development. Ambitious forces tried to claim the city states of the east, but they held firm to their independence. The Thonians, meanwhile, had expanded their territories beyond Mohacs along the Sunrise Sea. The people were fragmented among ten competing houses, so it was decided that a single authority should be installed to settle disputes. Leadership would be drawn by lot among the Ten Princes, who assumed recognized governorship of the territories beyond Mohacs. Telo of Regia was selected Thonia's first Emperor. He installed the Codical Rex, a stone wall of ancient laws from the Diakhronus and other texts. He was aided by the Imperium, a council of six chosen from the clan elders.

Other nations also rose. The Tanagoro people to the south experienced a revelatory event similar to that which previously occurred at Mohacs when the entity Korotiku empowered Sakkrad of Setum. From the north, the Skandaharian Raiders of the East and West sailed from the waters of the Frosthaven Landbridge and beyond. Their

reaver culture was now fully engrained and they pillaged the coastal lands.

Thonia projected its increasing might and annexed the Western Marches (4900-4780 BC), a collection of city-states that scattered the lands between Lum and Thonia. Not all city-states fell easily. Talitha the Sybarite was a powerful warrior, as cruel and tempting in her beauties as with her steel axe. She ruled Shefa and consorted with adventurers, kings and generals, playing them off against one another as befit her needs or her amusement. In this way, she sparked a jealousy among the Thonian nobles. These squabbles paralyzed the Republic which dissolved in disagreement over the appointment of succeeding Imperiums (4700 BC). The city-states reasserted their independence.

The Second Republic of Thonia [4600 -4400 BC]

“Selumid, Iyx, Cassem, Medius, Paphemy, Eschate”

- *The Chronicles of Thonia*, Book 3

In 4600 BC, six of the Thonian houses agreed to an arrangement that kept the Imperium restricted to themselves. The reconstituted nation extended its sphere of influence once more. First it reasserted control over the wayward Western Marches. Then the Republic annexed the territories of its Southern and Eastern Marches (4500 BC). These efforts brought Thonia into contact with both the northern dwarves and the southern mountain kingdom of Saku. Rogue mages fled the confines of the aggressive empire and settled the Superstitious

Mountains in the north, while far beyond Thonian control, the Yan, a Central Neathar tribe, settled Ur-Alphatia.

Skandaharian reavers became an increasing threat, but they were not the only force to threaten imperial Thonia. Beastmen – reputed to be the reincarnated souls of evil beings - appeared in the Borean Valley, a semi-frozen land northeast of the dwarves. These Beastmen were wild chaotic creatures that did not breed true. Their initial encounters with the dwarves ignited the First Dwarf-Beastman War and prompted the formation of the Kingdom of the Dwarves in 4487 BC. The Beastmen also troubled the Thonian Eastern Marches, and, ultimately, much of Ur-Alphatia.

After a century of continuous predations by beastmen and the human raiders, Thonia finally collapsed (4400 BC). The foremost Skandaharian chief of this age, Skuld, sacked Mohacs and returned to his northern homeland laden with gains and eternal infamy.

The Third Republic of Thonia (4300 -3900 BC)

“Unica Thonia et Unicum Lux.”

- *The Chronicles of Thonia*, Book V

By 4300 BC, the House of Iyx positioned itself to wrest a permanent claim to the throne of Mohacs. The Iyxians consolidated power in the newly formed Third Republic and compelled their competitors to join settlers in the Northlands, pushing Thonian borders to the Misauga and the Black Sea.

Additional events were unfolding beyond the empire. The northern dwarves were engaged in their third major conflict with the beastmen of Borea. In the south, the new coastal kingdom of Satum devastated the older Saku kingdom and made contact with Thonia. The Peshwah moved into the Hak, while outcasts settled the territories between the Northlands and the Goblin Kush, known now as the Kerothar Mountains. There the Afridhi, a remote Neathar tribe from the Kush, began to worship Zugzul the One.

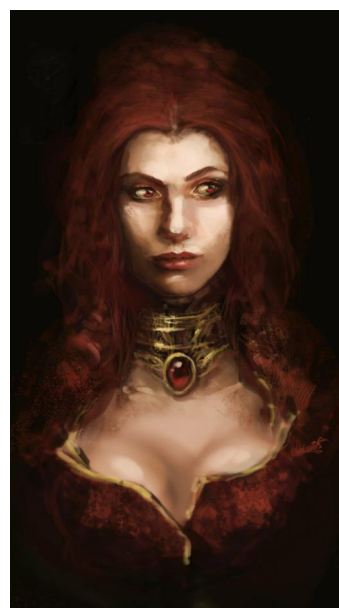
Thonia slowly brought its former holdings back under control, and in 4200 BC, new colonial efforts in southeastern Skothar and Bellisaria were initiated. These efforts were hampered by imperial involvement in the Mage Wars (4185-4104 BC). The Order of the Frog, an offshoot of the ancient Cult of As-Tod, emerged in the northern settlement of Vesthold, but it was driven out after its involvement in child sacrifice (4128 BC).

Thonian forces sought to subjugate the lands west of the Misauga (The Free Northern Marches) but suffered a resounding defeat at Brushy Fen (4100 BC). The victorious Unwanted declared themselves the Duchy of Ten. The losses incurred by Thonia stalled further expansion of its Colonial Marches, but its settlements had penetrated deep enough to be discovered by Davania's Wanderer elves and their halfling companions. Several of the elves and halflings chose to reside within the Empire, and those under Menander Ithamis settled into the Northern Marches (4077 BC).

A decades-long series of political and environmental events rocked the human settlements on the Frosthaven Landbridge,

beginning in 4050 BC. A coup took place in the Duchy of the Peaks (4040 BC), and Joloxon's Wall, which marked Thonia's northern boundary sank into the Shallows. The mysterious Egg of Coot also established its own domain in this sparsely populated region of wild magic and forgotten monsters. Human, dwarf, and beastman enclaves peppered northern Norwold, and Thonian proselytizers had brought the Northern Neathar to honor Vodius. Finally, in 4004 BC the infantile Emperor Iyx IV took the Perfumed Throne.

The Afridhi, a militant matriarchal society that referred to itself as the Children of Fire, marched east with holy fervor towards the Thonian Empire under the high priestess Toska Rusa. They left the Yan unmolested but overran Valemen settlements (3999 BC). In 3996 BC, The Afridhi marched 170,000 men, women and children east across the Plains of Hak, conquering the Peshwah in 3995 BC. When word of this invasion of wild hillmen reached Mohacs, an attitude of non-provocation held sway at the court.



Toska Rusa

The Afridhi concluded a treaty with the Duchess of the Peaks before finally crushing Tenian resistance (3988 BC). When they crossed the Misauga, however, a coalition of northern forces rebuffed them. Emperor Iyx ordered the leaders arrested for threatening the peace. Uther Andahar of Blackmoor turned back Thonian forces at Booh and then Root River. The northern barons again checked the Afridhi at the Battle of the Neck (3987 BC). When Iyx beheaded the barons' emissary – a nobleman's son – Uther declared himself King of Blackmoor. The other barons joined his Great Rebellion and prevailed over foes on four fronts (3987-3982 BC). The Afridhi foreswore Blackmoor and turned south. Amidst the chaos, the Order of the Frog resurfaced as the Monks of the Swamp (3983 BC).

In addition to these military and political events, 3982 BC bore witness to an incident with world-shaping implications. An other-dimension exploration vessel, the FSS Beagle, was caught in a freak energy/dimensional vortex and crash-landed in the nearby Valley of the Ancients. Mutinous segments of the crew escaped and took control of the Monks of the Swamp, while Blackmoor's Regency Council sent expeditions to the Valley of the Ancients to investigate this new City of the Gods. Examples of rare alien technology filtered their way across the north.

King Uther was kidnapped in 3978 BC. The dwarven Regent of Mines was likewise taken, starting the sixth Dwarf-Beastman War. A group of foreign adventurers rescued the king in the following year. They subsequently defeated the Monks of the Swamp and destroyed the Afridhi's infernal Well of Souls.

The Interregnum (3900-3620 BC)

"The people cried out to Vod and Khron, even to ancient Verthan and As-Tod of the Sea, but in silence they were rebuked."

- *The Apocalypse of Marcus*, verse 45.

The Afridhi captured the Western Marches in 3900 BC. Absent effective routes of travel, the Southern and Colonial Marches were equally lost to the Empire. Thonia was thrown into disarray. Commerce halted as the flow of trade goods from its provinces ceased, and the Iyxian Emperors grew increasingly detached from reality. They dismissed their councilors and issued ever-more bizarre edicts.

When Neryx II proclaimed himself Sollux Idiotum, the Personification of the Sun, the end of the Third Republic was near. Neryx ran through the streets of Mohacs bearing torches that ignited plumes of perfumed vapors. The Duke of Marcovic colluded with his fellow nobles, and they removed the Iyxians from power. Neryx himself was consigned to exile upon the Isle of Heliot in the Sunrise Sea.

The princes could not resolve the matter of succession, however, and as violence loomed, the Patriarch of the High Church of Thonia declared conservatorship of the capital city. The nobles withdrew to their own estates where they exerted control over local affairs.

The Thonians felt that the gods had abandoned them in their time of need and saw the Afridhi as a divine scourge sent to chastise a wayward nation. The belief in

abandonment crystallized in 3863 BC when the City of the Gods – that marvel to the north in the Valley of the Ancients – vanished in a thunderous blinding light that was witnessed as far as Lum. Adventurers sent to investigate the lost wonder found only a plague of mutated life and glass-filled craters.

The calamities that beset the once Golden Empire produced a schism within the Church, and a heretical order emerged that held that the salvation of the world required the annihilation of the Thonian people in atonement. Their agents in the west procured a device termed the Spicum Thanatus, or Spear of Thanatos, but the order's efforts were undone in the city of Lum when a young thief named Asterius destroyed the weapon. The exploits of Asterius grew in fame among the city-states as he outwitted Afridhi overlords, brigands, witches, and end-time cults. He preserved connections and smuggled goods between the communities during their long dark night.

With the loss of the City of the Gods and its stores of wonder, Blackmoor was forced to rely upon its own ingenuity to propel itself further. The University of Blackmoor committed itself to the study of technomancy and the rediscovery of the alien technologies. In due course, arcanists and scientists unraveled the secrets of black powder weaponry (3800 BC).

The Afridhi renewed their expansion into Thonian territory under the leadership of Eos Cynex. Afridhi forces pressed deep into the Ten Principalities and besieged Mohacs (3743 BC), but Blackmoor intervened, and its technological superiority delivered the imperial capital.

A similar migration-invasion occurred in the south. The iron-wielding Janbu culture of the southern Skothar plains drove the jungle tribes eastward. Refugees fled into the sea, with survivors landing on northern Davania and Brun. Southern Skothar was 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 of the desert. To the west, a fire priest from the Oltec nations shook the Bellisarian kingdoms.

Forty years later (3700 BC), the priestess Sola Carnix inspired the Afridhi to one final campaign to reach the Sunrise Sea. Afridhi warriors overwhelmed the Thonian defenders. They burned Mohacs to the ground and pursued its denizens into the sea where many drowned. At long last, the hill people of Goblin Kush had completed their holy mission. In their celebrations, the Afridhi visited untold sufferings upon their captives.



Afridhi march upon Mohacs

The depraved actions of the victors angered the Blackmoorians, who declared a war of reprisal and unprecedented savagery against their ancient enemies. Over a 20 year campaign, Blackmoor rolled back Afridhi forces: first from the 10 Principalities, then across the Plains of Hak, and up through the former Free Northern Marches and the Vale. The Goblin Kush was devastated. Its smoldering, lifeless hull served as an eternal reminder to those who would threaten the peace of the Blackmoorian world. Without fear of reprisals, the occupied Western Marches rebelled against the surviving Afridhi overlords.

Beastmen took advantage of the chaos that followed the war years, and they entrenched themselves in royal and imperial territories. A wearied Blackmoor responded slowly to this additional threat to their kinsmen, but eventually it expelled the last of the inhuman raiders in 3650 BC.

For Thonia, the risk of potential occupation by the kingdoms of the south became an increasing concern. In 3620 the lords of Thonia bent the knee before the kingdom of Blackmoor and signed the Treaty of Dragonia which established the Holy Thonian Empire under the aegis of Blackmoor. Uther V, commonly known as Uther Magnus, was crown emperor. Although the imperial reign of the elder Uther was brief, those years were critical in reestablishing the integrity and connections of empire's long lost marches.

The Holy Thonian Empire and the Pax Technologica (3620 -3330 BC)

“There is no greater shield than a whetted sword.”

- *The Chronicles of Thonia*, Book XI

As the peace settled upon the Eastern World under the Pax Technologica, Blackmoor embarked upon an age of naval exploration (3600 BC). Intrepid adventurers and learned sages set out to learn what lay beyond the boundaries of the Golden Empire. In 3550 BC Robert the Mariner rounded the Horn of Zyxl and became the first man to circumnavigate Skothar from the Eastern Marches to the southern waters of the City States and Colonial Marches. Other explorers charted the Great Inland Ocean in 3525 BC, documenting the range of Skandaharian settlements and the devastation of the Afridhi Coast below the Goblin Kush. Navigators also sailed portions of western Brun, but those expeditions were discontinued in 3450 BC after the perilous voyage of the Meridian, a vessel sunk with all hands on deck by an attack from a flock of dragons.

The elves were equally expansive and a number of Wanderers claimed territories in Bellisaria (3600 BC) and the unincorporated territories beyond Thonia's Western Marches (3500 BC). Both southern and colonial elves grew fascinated with human technology and conspired to steal Blackmoor's secrets at Ringlo Hall, including reproductive technologies. Discovery of the theft ignited the Elven Brush War. The elves were defeated, but not before they had smuggled their gains out of the empire.



Map of the Thonian Empire

Globally the Neathar race underwent rapid development and diversification. Even within the Golden Empire, the language in individual areas evolved into very distinct dialects, and kinships were no longer recognized. Additional conflicts emerged in the Borean territories as dwarves clashed with dragons and beastmen. Moreover, the beastmen had begun siring a race of half-breed brutes among the local humans, and their progeny were appearing in the empire proper. Faced with a growing population of brutes within its borders, The High Church of Thonia declared the Doctrine of Purity. The First Beastman Crusade (3480-3420 BC) removed all “unnatural” beastmen and brutes from the old Eastern and Northern Marches, and as the efforts pressed northward, the crusade became embroiled with the Dwarf-Dragon War. The Meridian was but one casualty.

By 3400 BC, Blackmoor explorers had charted the shores of Bellisaria, Oceania and

large stretches of the Davanian coast. They encountered eastern Oltecs migrating along northern Davania and crossing the sea to Bellisaria. Many of the northern realms, particularly Lumbrai, proved eager to exploit this potential source of labor. Slave ports sprouted in Bellisaria and Skothar.

Blackmoor’s technomantic development now produced elemental steamtech engines that powered lumbering devices of war. Thonian lords had grown weary of their allegiance to a “foreign” northern emperor. Like the elves before them, the Thonians absconded with Blackmoor’s technological secrets. When they were prepared, the lords declared themselves in open rebellion against the throne of Blackmoor. The Thonian Wars raged for 40 years (3370-3330).

Concurrently, other concerns mounted. Naval explorers sailing from the Horn of Zyxl ventured into the Great Southern Expanse and discovered Davania’s western shore and

Evergrun, the homeland of the elves (3350 BC). Fearful of human encroachments, the elves struck against the fleet, precipitating the Second Elven War (the Great War). The Great War was a mixture of naval campaigns and proxy wars among the colonial holdings. The colonial elves also joined with a coalition of humans known as the Brotherhood of Freedom that fought to overturn the Bellisarian slavers.

These events transpired as the “Boy King”, Uther VII, ascended the throne (3360 BC). Uther had contemplated the growing fractures of society within and outside of the empire, and set about his great Reformation (3350-3270 BC). Thonian forces were finally put down at the Battle of Marban Green (3335 BC), and after five years of negotiations – culminating in the Concordance of Mohacs (3330 BC) – a new world was born. The Concordance ended the Bellisarian Slave Wars, the Thonian Wars, and the Great War with the elves. The act established colonization limits between Blackmoor and Evergrun, and the slave trade was abolished within the empire. The imperial seat was restored to Mohacs where Uther, now known as the Red, presided over the newly formed Fourth Republic of Thonia.

The Fourth Republic of Thonia (3330-3000 BC)

“We are free from the shackles of the past.
Free of the burdens of our flesh. Free to
define our own destinies among the stars.”

- *Commencement address to
the University of Blackmoor, 3106 BC*

Although Skandaharian brush wars played out in the far north (3300 BC), and Satum earned a ruinous victory against the Janbu tribes of the south in the Tanagoro Unification Wars (3310-3280 BC), the Fourth Republic began with a sense of calm. Ecclesiastical schisms over the Reformation left the Empire with three competing Churches, but all three groups supported the Edict of Westport, which declared the universal abolition of slavery. A new round of colonizations began under Melyon III (3270 BC), and Thonia signed territorial agreements with the Skandaharians under the Stardock Accords that gave the Thonian world greater access to Norwold (3260 BC).

Imperial leadership declined under the eccentric Merrok II (3255 BC), and beastmen raided the inattentive Republic (3230 BC). Thonian lands were finally freed in 3220 BC. The Second Beastman Crusade continued another twenty years and drove beastmen and brutes out of the Borean Valley and into the Polar Regions. Blackmoor established a series of monitoring posts in this new territory, including Ice Station Urzud. The territorial expansion brought increasing encounters with dragons (3200 BC).



Beastman Crusades

Despite the risk, more and more northern settlements were erected, many of them subterranean. Robotics became the primary focus of technomancy at the University of Blackmoor (3150 BC). A joint human-elf expedition reached the north pole, and they were startled to discover additional Beagle wreckage at this site. A research station was established nearby, while the dwarves built Darmouk closer to the coast. Their activities drew the attention of dragons, both the intelligent and the more animalistic specimens, and the situation erupted into the epic Dragon War (3150-3135 BC). Faced with dragons, faeries, and elven defectors, the Blackmoorians countered with giant steamtech robots, devastating weaponry, and the Dragonlord armor. At the end of the war, dragons withdrew from Norwold for the Midlands while restraints were placed on Blackmoor's further expansion into Brun.

In the years that followed, there was little good will between fairies and men. The Empire of Thonia was noted for its vastness, excess and debauchery, and its allure pulled the elven people from their ancestral ways. Many back-to-nature movements sprang up within and outside of the empire, but despite their agitation, Blackmoor achieved manned space flight (3100 BC). Lunar colonization came soon after (3075 BC), as did discovery of the hidden moon of Patera (3050 BC). Plans were advanced to turn the monitoring stations and the moons into a teleportation network.

By 3020 BC, the University of Blackmoor had begun the study of eugenics, cybernetics and technomantic gate travel. Activist concerns led to increasing confrontations throughout

the world, and bombings and open warfare were common by 3010 BC.

The Great Rain of Fire (3000 BC)

“And the Black Rabbit swallowed the sun, and danced amid fire; He burned brighter and brighter with the rays of the sun; and the Great Serpent slithered into the Earth. All the world cried. Thus ended the Fifth Sun.”

- *Atruaghin oral tradition.*



The Great Rain of Fire

The development of Blackmoorian technomancy accelerated to the point where scientists had rediscovered the principles of the Starship Beagle's engine. Unfortunately, the technology interacted with Mystara's magic in unseen ways. During a proof of concept test, tragedy ensued, and the prototype exploded. Those nearest the City of Blackmoor were instantaneously vaporized, and released energy waves spread across the globe, interfering with, and

occasionally destroying, technological objects in the Great Rain of Fire.

Lush rainforests fell, and disease, famine and pestilence spread. Nearly a quarter of life on the planet died from the Rain. Some men and beasts succumbed quickly from the poisoning effects of the Rain, while for others, the process was a slow, painful debilitation that took its increasing toll across generations. The Blackmoor explosion also affected planar regions drawing spirits into the world.

The initial explosion torqued the planetary axis. The stars danced for centuries as Mystara's rotation stabilized. Earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, droughts and destructive storms swept the planet. The Tanagoro plains were rocked by a series of volcanic eruptions which turned the land into mountainous infertile land. Thonia was torn apart and half drowned in the cataclysm while the skies burned and cities tumbled.

A small remnant of colonial Thonians managed to survive. Arctic settlements went into lockdown, and groups like Norwold's Valharians survived for a time. Others were struck by disease as survivors carried plagues with them. Technological tombs scattered Norwold and the modern Hill and Dale. Settlements such as Windrush faced other fates, when terrifying dragons returned in the centuries that followed and laid waste to mankind.

All across Mystara, technologically deprived survivors risked migrations to escape the dangers of a broken world. Inhabitants of the Ice Station Outposts fled south into the Midlands territory where they become the

nomadic Urduks and related tribes. Along Skothar's southeastern shore, a few Thonians and Ibu tribesmen found refuge with Manwara and were transformed into the primitive merrow. The dwarven people, closest to the nation of Blackmoor, were poisoned by the energy released but marched in vain toward salvation at Darmouk. Survivors of the elven colonies fled via floating cities, but failing technologies forced them to shelter in the deep caverns of the Broken Lands and the Mengul Mountains. Southern elves, too, evacuated their freezing homeland for the doomed land of Grunland (formerly Riverhome), and they were separated from the neighboring halflings.

* * * * *

About 30 feet from the marker stone, Magnar spotted an unnatural vine in the ground. He pulled it up and followed its trail for another 50 yards when it popped from some hidden source in the ground. He dug around the site and produced three metallic eggs. The shells of the eggs were segmented into panels. He peeled back a panel, and found a glass pane. For a moment, he swore he saw a flicker of flame and symbols behind the glass.

Sir Allen came over and threw down a canvas satchel with which Magnar secured the items. He tightened the leather straps and marveled at the embroidered red dragon on its top. "Do you think they are worth anything?" the man asked his companion.

"Only the world."

THE RETURN OF THE EGG

by Giuliano Michelon



From my point of view, beyond its vastness, the Mystara setting relies on some big pillars, and makes it a unique setting compared to all the TSR/WotC products.

What I mean is that it is possible to leave out the turtles or even the whole Savage Coast and the setting would still survive. On the other hand you cannot absolutely leave out the Radiance with all the relations by which it has forged the setting's identity, in the past and in the future.

Trying to give depth and coherence to my campaign, which revolves around the Wrath of the Immortals, I went deep on all the Radiance related themes, especially its alien origin.

WRATH OF THE IMMORTALS

Of course in the main adventure, *The Immortals' Fury*, you may find several references on how the Radiance got to the planet and, through several changes, how it has become what it is now. But for me the main sources are, without a speckle of a doubt, four adventure modules written by Dave Arneson connected to his Blackmoor setting (most of all DA2 – Temple of the Frog and DA3 – City of the Gods).

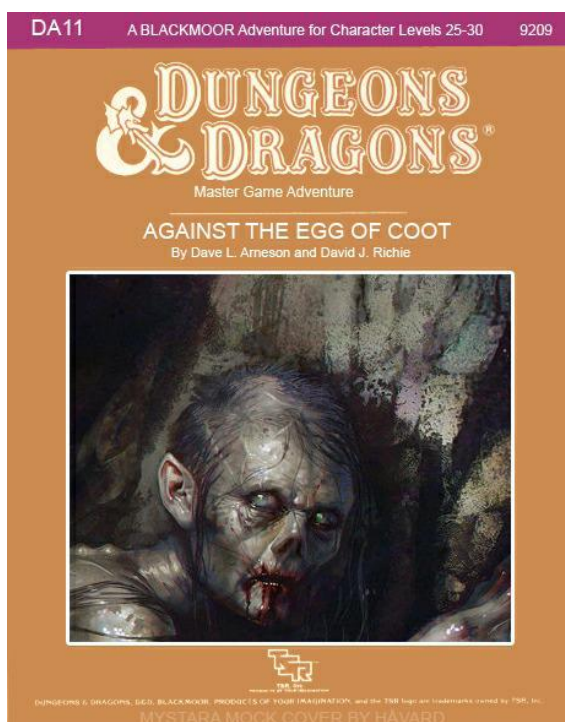
CITY OF THE GODS

I must confess that these were adventures hidden in my gaming chest for many many years and that I bought mostly for collection purposes without any actual intention to play them.

But one day, almost by chance, I found an intriguing image on the internet, that completely turned around any prejudice I could have on Arnesons' modules. It was the cover of a module that I learned, there and then, does not exist! Such a shame!

Better, it would have been a whole series of adventures that could/would have been the natural sequel to the DA series.

Between all of them there was one with this strange creature, difficult to describe and quite weird, It was the Egg of Coot.



Digging through the Blackmoor background, reading more or less all that is available (either official sources or otherwise), I could not find any satisfying answer to its real origin.

The more information I got and the more I tried to get through in this subject to get its secrets, the more I realized that the typical “something unsaid” was left there for the Dungeon Master, to give him the ability to create his own taste of the Egg of Coot.

Thinking about how Blackmoor was also the first setting created for Dungeons & Dragons® and the fact that the Egg was, in a manner of speaking, the first and greatest nemesis, it sure helps to imagine the role of the Number One Enemy for it.

So how is “my” Egg of Coot? What omelette or frittata will you make of it?

Sure it is something “BIG” and unique but before getting to an answer on this I must point out a second peculiar aspect in Mystara, essential to grasp the whole picture.

This world contains, inside itself, a whole hollow world created by the Immortals as an experiment to preserve some races at risk of extinction.

In this cradle of races and cultures we can find everything, from Neathar to Azcans, from Nithians to Milenians.

Everyone was given a second chance, or so it seems.

Everyone, Blackmoor excepted. Why?

There is no Blackmoor

That is the question, but the official sources do not help us at all. Whether this is intended or not by the authors, I do not care at all. Blackmoor does not exist anymore and did not save itself from annihilation. And if someone asks why is it so, as a Dungeon Master I have to answer to this.

The one I got myself is that Blackmoor civilization was not saved by Immortals' will. They got the perfect timing, the Great Rain of Fire, the self inflicted cataclysm the Immortals used to get rid of the Blackmoorians

Maybe the DA series unwritten modules (and perhaps only in Arneson's mind) would have filled the void between the events narrated in the first four modules (the birth of the Realm and the quake that obliterated it). And so it happens that even for those five centuries in Mystara history (between the Beagle's arrival and the holocaust) there is not much written in the sources.

All that we can imagine is that Blackmoor civilization has managed to quickly evolve, technologically speaking, thanks to aliens and their artifacts. This evolution brought Blackmoor to develop the ability to use an energy form that you could easily compare to nuclear energy.

How this kind of energy can be coherently used in an high-fantasy context like D&D and Mystara, it's something that we Master have to understand. To me, for example, the technology developed by Blackmoor mixes and confuses itself with the magic the planet is permeated with. (My) Intention is to have

something that brings to memory a story like the one of Star Wars saga, for example.

Laser swords and gun yes, robots and androids too, even flying ships but without losing sight of magic, the true strength of the fantasy genre. A magic that from a side strengthens the technology but on the other side makes it dangerous and unstable.



The first sign of the danger and the instability of the connection between magic and technology is found on the official sources: the Beagle spaceship coming down due to the *Skyschild*, a magical field that surrounds the planet, the Great Rain of Fire, and then the Blackmoor relics that even centuries after sparkle quakes and various dangers.

Techno-magic developed in Blackmoor has to be something pulsing, nearly alive, unique, like a common source where one is everything and everything is one. Something that, if anything happens in the city of Blackmoor, instantly spreads in the rest of the planet, with no chance to escape its effects.

Who gains from this techno-magic?

RISE OF BLACKMOOR

Well, in the beginning, perhaps, the Blackmoor civilization use it, and starting from a little province in the outskirts of the Thonian empire, it first gains its independence, then grows and finally comes to rule over the adjoining cultures.

I take this from official sources, Wrath of the Immortals above all, and this goes on until Ogdoban Treel wakes up from his induced torpor and choose to do what forced Benekander to act towards the Beagle annihilation.

Was it the end of techno-magic? No, not at all, I should add.

The sources are pretty clear and above all coherent between themselves, but following the stories in the four module adventures from the DA series and in the aforementioned Wrath of the Immortals, I think that the more likely chain of events is something like this.

The ship falls down and from that point on (DA2 and DA3) there are contacts between the Blackmoor Realm and the ship's inhabitants (the so called Gods).

There are few meetings and exchanging of gifts and alien items. Said items diffusion is very limited. Perhaps the King's Companions (Uther Andahar, his cohorts and the Blackmoor University) got their hands on them, and by logic a few of them fell into the hands of some adventurers.

What magic-scientific developments may have taken place in those years (the King Uther era, to be clear)?

From my point of view, that is nothing worth truly subvert a campaign with a definite fantasy connotation. Maybe some lightsabers, some exotic weapons, grenades, some high-tech gizmo (a chronometer, a transmitter, a flying suit, or a jumping suit or a diving one) but still nothing able to stray the setting to the sci-fi genre.

Years goes by, maybe centuries, during which it's possible that Blackmoor University starts manufacturing in large scale one or more of said item, to make them becoming more common and easy to obtain, especially for their own armies. These are the years during which the Realm's wizards learn to conjoin the tech they inherited with the magic they already know.

It's possible that the main event of this period is connected with Treel, the alien's awakening, and with an unlimited access to the Beagle's treasures by the Blackmoor scientists (a more apt title for this new kind of tech-wizards).

When the alien ship actually implodes it's clearly too late. A big part of her treasures has found its way in the various research centers scattered in the Blackmoor Empire.

How much time from this point to the Great Rain of Fire? In Wrath of the Immortals it says a millennium, but I for myself tend not to believe it. Reading other official source materials, it seems more than plausible that the time span, from the Beagle's arrival to the holocaust, is five centuries long.

One, maybe two are the centuries during which Blackmoor accomplishes its technological development at its fullest, reaching the top of its scientific evolution, conquering the whole planet and then ... puff.... disappears.

THE EGG OF COOT

While this all happens, what is the Egg of Coot doing?

We know that throughout the whole reign of Uther Andahar, also known as Uther the Black, the Egg has tried multiple times to invade and overtake Blackmoor. As the situation evolves it becomes way too difficult for the Egg to overcome an enemy getting stronger by the day, thanks to magic and scientific progress, and this becomes even truer because the Egg uses more and more humanoid armies and ordinary weapons too.



So it starts for the Egg a period of apparent inactivity and non belligerency.

While Blackmoor consolidates its own independence and then grows its controlled territories (mostly towards the south into the heart of the Thonian Empire), the unexplored and harsh Egg's Land goes more and more out of focus until becoming of little to no importance for the rulers of what will be the newborn Blackmoor Empire.

Truth to be told, the Egg has always worked on a parallel course, since its first appearance, using secrets services and scheming, and in this time starts the second stage of a really large plot that will eventually bring it to obtain the control of the whole empire.

Thanks to a variety of creatures, human and not, fully subjugated to its mental control (the so called Egg's Progeny), it gains access in a subtle way to Blackmoor society putting its pawns in command's positions.

This mental control will, eventually, put it in contact with the alien technology and its techno-magic evolution. And it can mess with it, modify it, make its evolution further complex.

And this will be the beginning of the end of the known world.

But before going on with my reasoning, let me make another step forward, the last, I promise.

I have to turn back to the Egg's origin and its true nature in (my) Mystara.

NATURE OF THE MULTIVERSE

What do we know about the planet genesis, and above all the Multiverse genesis? We know that in the beginning were the Old Ones. We know that they made the world as we all know it today and they push it from their world, the Sixth Dimension, through a barrier, The Dimensional Vortex. Then they went away but not before creating the first immortals.

The huge and infinite multiverse is a, so to speak, benchmark for new immortals creation and ascension to the Old One's status.



Try to imagine this.

A windowless room with just one exit. Inside it are people dressed in some hazmat suit like the ones we see on the crime scenes in some popular TV shows. These people have arranged the room, furniture and all, even some little animals, some pets. Then they go away, closing forever the only exit, so that they are certain nothing and no one will leave the room. All has been arranged in a

way that whoever is inside the closed room, will retain no memory of their presence. But let's imagine that a tiny hair or an even tinier speck of skin had fallen from one of these people. The crime scene is compromised for as tiny as this pollutant may be.

Now back to our idea: the Multiverse is the room, the Old Ones are the people in the hazmat suits, the Immortals the little pets, the Egg of Coot is the polluting element.

You may say that a tiny hair is still a tiny hair. An organic inanimate object, doomed to become impoverished, dry and in the end dissolve. With no doubt this is sound reasoning for mortal beings and perhaps for Immortal ones too. For me, this may be not true for beings (Entities? Powers?) as mysterious and powerful as the Old Ones.

During millennia, the tiny speck evolves, get a body and finally sentience. It is a progressive and enormously slow process.

When the Egg of Coot rises from the waters in front of the Blackmoor Kingdom, it puts the humanoid tribes of the North under its command and starts its journey to the world domination, it is still in the starting phase of its evolution.

The Egg, just to maintain the theme, has just hatched. But the advent of techno-magic is a steep turning point and a big steer toward the evolutionary development for the **Old One embryo**.

We all know, always from official sources like Wrath of the Immortals, that the alien technology, through a lot of tinkering, first by one of the Old Ones then by the

Immortals themselves, will become the energy form called Radiance.

Through the Radiance use (or influence) we know for sure that at least three Immortals are born: Rafiel, Benekander and then Rad.

With the Radiance then it is possible to create new Immortals!

MACHINATIONS OF THE EGG

All the ruckus between Immortal factions in Wrath of the Immortals rotates around this concept. The Egg understood the techno-magic enormous potential and so it started to bend it to its own purposes. Its objective? It strives to create an immortal race at its command to fight, destroy and take the place of the “legitimate” Immortals.

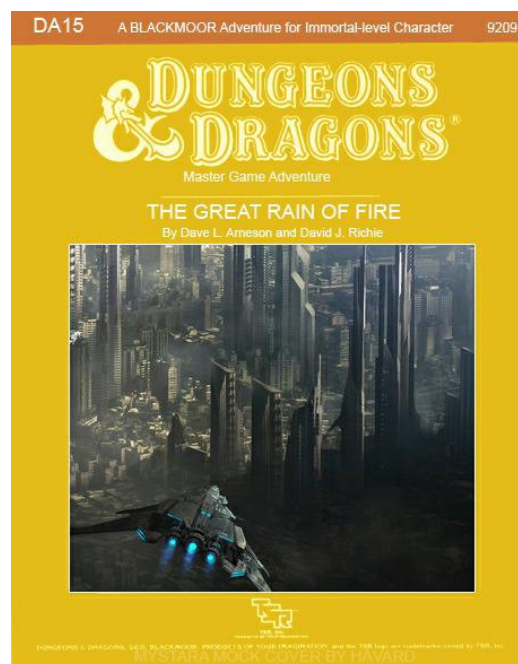
Luckily for Mystara and the Immortals themselves, the Egg never reaches its goal because, as we’ll see later, its work is crushed under the Great Rain of Fire that destroyed the entire Blackmoor civilization and every memory of it.

But during these years, both Blackmoor scientists (in part slaves to the Egg) and the Egg of Coot itself start a series of experimentations bound to the creation of new races. With advanced genetic studies in Blackmoor, the empire creates some of them: the **goliath**, for war purposes, the **deep gnomes** and the **triclops**. Manipulating the four elements, races like the **arakocra** and the **genasi** are born.

The Egg itself conducts its experiments concocting the **aboletths** and the first **elder brains**: creatures born by osmosis with itself and with its aspect. To these creatures it delivers part of its enormous psychical powers so that they can be considered its true progeny. From them, as we all know, the **illithid** race is born and evolves.

The Egg of Coot’s plans are harshly interrupted by the Great Rain of Fire, by an autodestruction process of all the techno-magic artifacts chain reaction of the connected alien technology and Blackmoorian magic that escalates to global size.

This autodestruction process triggered by accident by Rafiel’s experiments even if, a cool idea I want to develop in the future, includes the involvement of heroes coming from the future of Mystara, passing through a space-time traveling artifact known as the Comeback Inn. An idea that came from another MockCover:



Until that point, the Immortals had not been able to present a common front against the Egg, but they took the chance given by the global annihilation to erase every remembrance and every legacy of the Blackmoor civilization from history, because they thought it was too corrupt and too influenced by the Egg to even consider a milder solution.

For Mystara Immortals, the Egg is completely vanished, annihilated by the holocaust. Returning even a tiny part of Blackmoor society in the Hollow World is, for them, too big a danger to even think about.

It is simply fear that prompts the Immortals to leave Blackmoor to its fate and let millions of innocents die.

Is the Egg dead for real? Hell, no. But the Holocaust has a huge knock out effect on it.

For centuries the Egg loses conscience, in some ways it dies, if we compare it to a human being. Planet rotation then, with the polar shift, brings an hell of ice and snow upon Blackmoor and the Egg of Coot territories, condemning it to a sort of lethargic state.

Combined with its position, miles under the sea level, in an icy grave, this helps the Egg to not be detected even by the Immortals

themselves that, by mistake, consider it dead and gone.

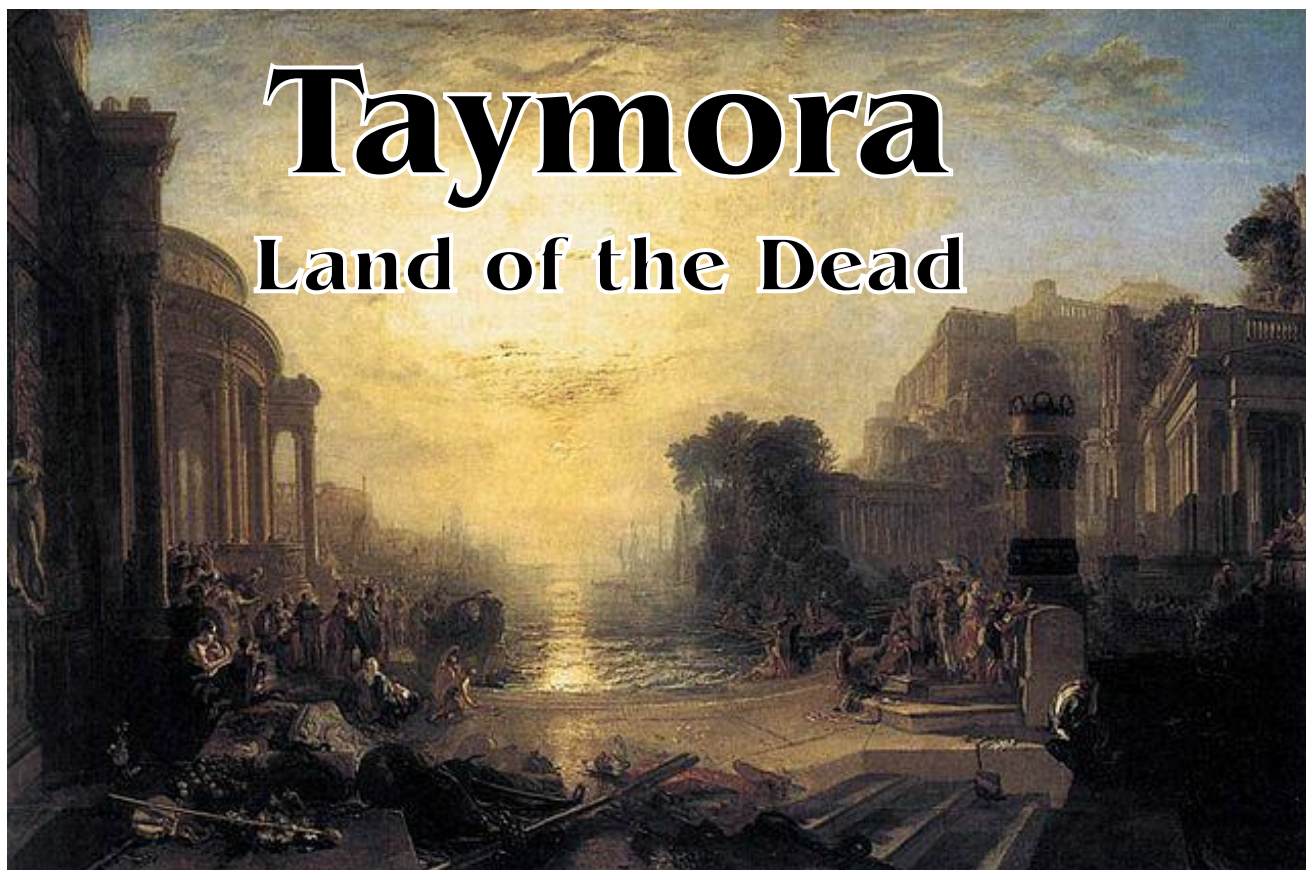
Four thousand years after the Great Rain of Fire and the Blackmoor civilization's annihilation, the Egg's conscience awakens and it is ready again to lay the foundation for a new quest to conquer Mystara.

What are the first steps? First of all, with the aim of restoring its physical form and ability to act directly, it needs some followers to do its will.

Minds open to its calling are summoned by dreams and visions, with a promise of power, knowledge and treasures. The usual, so to speak!

Warlock and Psions can be easily introduced in this way in classical setting campaigns. Following tastes and choices this is also true for all the other aforementioned creatures that could have escaped in little havens, somehow sheltered from the holocaust.

The return of the Egg of Coot gives me the chance, with some little adjustments, to introduce in Mystara the **Elemental Evil** concept that was developed in some classic adventures (T1-4 – The Temple of Elemental Evil) and in the last campaign published by WotC by the title of **Princes of the Apocalypse**.



Taymora

Land of the Dead

by Giampaolo Agosta
(*Agathokles*),

history revised and expanded
by Giulio Caroletti
(*Captain Iulius Sergius Scaevola*)

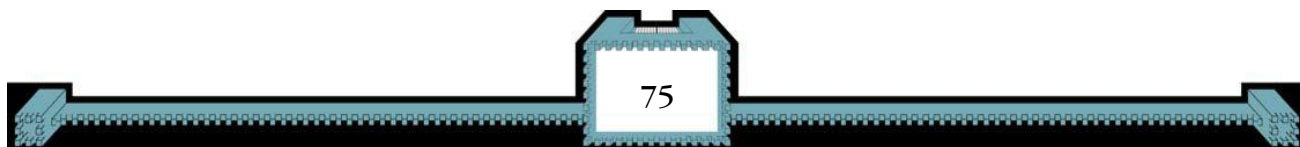


*FROM
THE VAULTS
OF PANDIUS*

INTRODUCTION

In this article, we will explore the “Land of the Dead”, as the Nithians called it, the vast region on the southern edge of Known World which was inhabited by the Taymoran people. Never a unified nation, but rather a shaky coalition of city-states, Taymora nevertheless managed to reach greatness by combining superior technology (for its time) and powerful magics, as well as the guidance of a powerful Immortal, Nyx.

This article describes Taymora on the verge of its disastrous fall, around two millennia before the crowning of the first Emperor of Thyatis, and three millennia before the present time.



TIMELINE OF THE TAYMORAN AGE

The Great Rain of Fire

3'000 BC: Skandaharians from Norwold migrate towards the areas of nowadays Known World. They are the ancestors of a number of ethnic groups, the most famous among which are the Antalians. Scholars and linguists have grouped them in three related linguistic groups, that have been called with similar names to emphasize their close relationship and ease further studying. However, there is no proof that one or more Thantalian, Trantalian or Nantalian tribes ever called themselves in this way.

2'800 BC: After the Great Rain of Fire, the surviving Thonians on southern Brun start rebuilding their civilisation, though most of their technological lore is lost. For the next three centuries, they remain isolated from neighbouring cultures. Many of the people still suffer from destructive forces unleashed by Blackmoor, forces which cause them to slowly rot and die.

The Thantaliens occupy the Northern Reaches.

Rise of Taymora

2'500 BC: Survivors of the Thonian colonies resurface as the Taymorans, a people with bronze age technology among stone age Azcans, Maharians¹ and Skandaharian descended tribes.

Taymoran humans establish bronze age kingdoms in modern southern Darokin, Five Shires, Undersea, eastern Ierendi, and western islands of Minrothad. Most of the eastern Maharian tribes are conquered and assimilated by the Taymorans. There are few exceptions, including the Makai (who remain as aboriginal people in what is now western Ierendi) and those who flee south (eventually to become Varellians).

Taymorans have good metalworking techniques and rich mines of copper and other metals useable for the production of bronze. Probably, they also have rich gold mines.

The knowledge of metalworking and other technological and social advancements were preserved during the Great Rain of Fire age by a cadre of Nosferatu followers of Nyx, who allow the Taymoran priesthood of Nyx - who is considered a mother goddess and a protector against the dangers of "light" by the earliest Taymorans - to access this knowledge and establish a power base for themselves.

Dunharians and Skandaharians of the Nithian areas are at very early bronze age technology, or perhaps at aeneolithic technology--they have copper and perhaps silver, but no other easily accessed metals.

2'400 BC: The Taymorans use their magic and knowledge of metallurgy to establish a number of trade routes to the west (with Azcans and the ancestors of Huleans) and north (to the newly created Antalians holdings in Heldann).

¹ See the [Ethnographic History of Mystara](#) on the Vaults of Pandius for more details

The Antalian culture is now at a Bronze Age stage in Norwold, thanks to its contacts with the Taymorans through the Steel trade route.

Age of the Necromancer Kings

2'350 BC: Taymoran leaders, who are by now mostly priests of Nyx and necromantic wizards, start joining the ranks of the undead, under the tutelage of the original Nosferatu.

2'300 BC: Dunharians fleeing the Skandaharians reach the Isle of Dawn. These become the Dunael².

One of the main clans of Skandaharians, known as the Nantalians, follow the Dunharian tribes to the Isle of Dawn.

2'250 BC: The Sheyallia elves reach Taymora. The local Necromancer Kings offer them the lands to the east of their nation, provided that they help opening new trade routes. Elven mercenary companies, armed with Taymoran bronze weaponry, invade the giant-held forests and mountains. They open up the trade routes to nowadays Ylaruam.

The Golden Age of Taymor

2'200 BC: Height of the Taymoran power. Taymoran city-states dot the southern coast.

Giantish clans (Fomorians) brought to submission by the joined Taymoran - Sheyallia operations are employed to build

² “Dunael” is a name adopted in several works to group the Celtic-inspired peoples of the Isle of Dawn.

megalithic fortresses in Taymora. Silver starts flooding the caches of the ³Taymoran necromancer kings.

Some northern Nosferatu leaders send missions to Hule and beyond, in an attempt to expand their territory.

Meanwhile, southern kings send naval expeditions east, to the Isle of Dawn. They attempt to establish colonies, but they are repelled by hostile giants, elves, and Dunael (a human race of Dunharian ethnicity).

The Dunharians and Skandaharians of Ylaruam and Thyatis have become a new ethnic group, known as Trantalians.

The elven migrations reach Glantri. The Verdier, Meditor, and Vyalia clans (from the Sheyallia nation) settle the forests to the east of Taymora as vassals to various eastern Taymoran kings.

The Nantalian tribes are losing ground to the Dunael. Desperate, they ally themselves with the local Oltec cities, who are in trouble as well. They form a new population, known as Nithians.

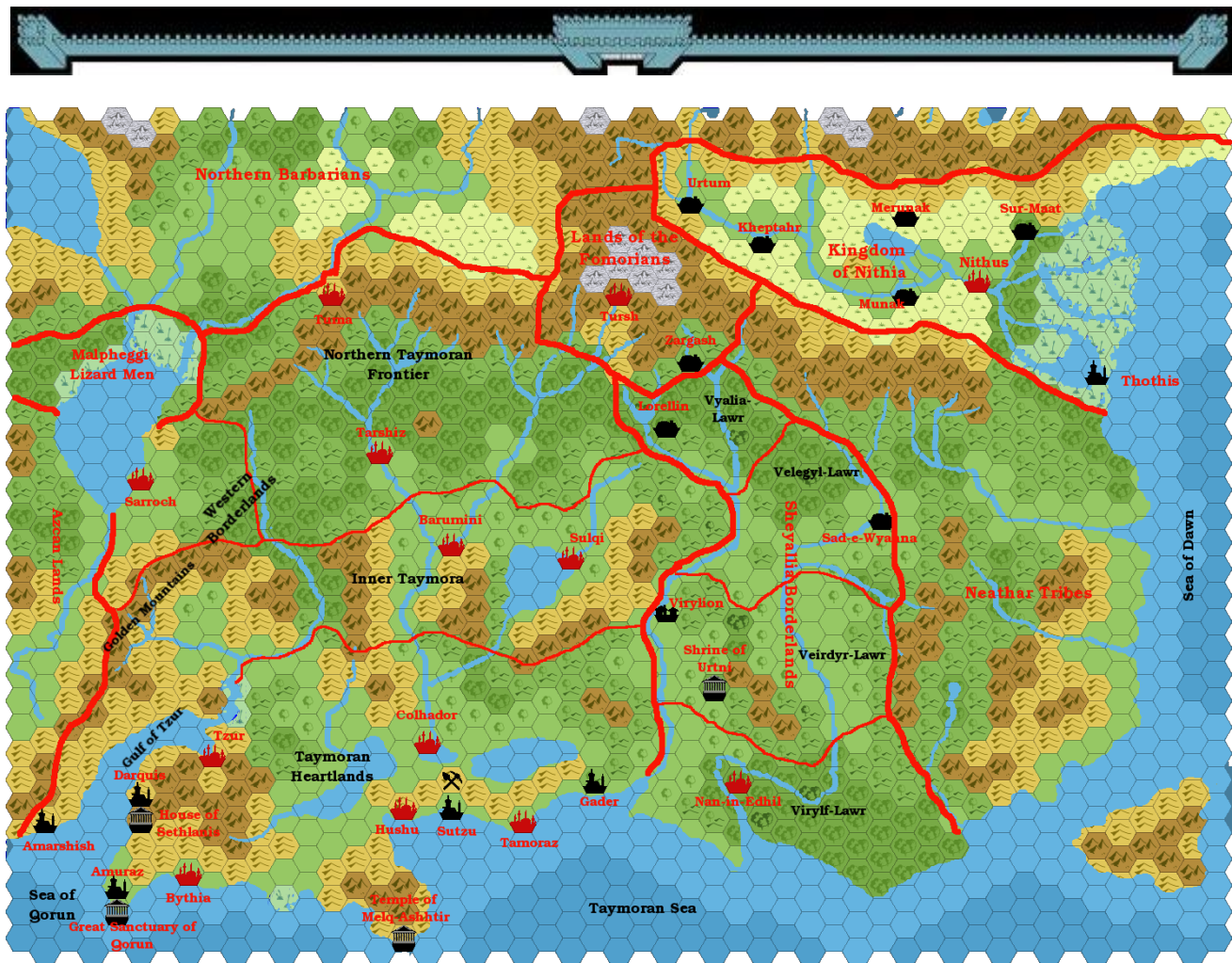
2'100 BC: Various necromancer kings develop special servant races, like the Albarendi and the lycanthropes (they follow one of the beliefs of their patroness, Nyx, who likes creating new races, especially ones accustomed to a night-based activity cycle).

Albarendi were common Taymoran humans bred as albinos by the kings⁴, who desired

³ See Francesco Defferrari [“The Elven Clans and Their Migrations”](#) in Threshold 10 for more details.

⁴ See John Calvin, [Albheldri Islands of the](#)

Taymora Land of the Dead



Base Map of Taymora

servants with nocturnal habits to honor their patroness. They ended up ostracised by their own people in fear of their link with the undead masters.

Lycanthropes are created by some of the most cruel necromancer kings, desperate to keep their minions subjugated. They devise a magical disease which would impart more bestial aspects onto its victims. This is the Mythic Lycanthropy⁵.

[Hollow Moon](#) in Threshold Issue 4 and Simone Neri, [History of Minrothad and Ierendi](#) in Threshold Issue 3, for further details.

⁵ See John Calvin's ["A Treatise on Lycanthropy"](#) for further details

As a response to the creation of lycanthropes, other necromancer kings enlist tribes of primitive lupins, and use magics to enhance their abilities to fight the new threat, giving origin to the Taymoran Hound and Taymoran Hairless breeds⁶.

The region now known as Ylaruam is a verdant grassland. Southern areas are in control of the Taymoran Empire. Northern areas are settled by Trantalian and Thantalian clans (Neathar tribes related to the Antalians).

⁶ See my ["History of the Lupins"](#) for further details

The Rise of Nithia and the Thanatos Heresy

2'000 BC: Trantalian, Thantalian and Oltec barbarians cut the trade routes to Antalian lands.

The northern Taymoran kings use Malpheggi and Azcan mercenaries in an attempt to reopen the Streel river route, with mixed success.

A number of kings try to increase their power by shifting their allegiance from Nyx to Thanatos. The effects are devastating, as the war between followers of the two entropic immortal rages for years. Taymora is politically weakened, and attempts by various kings to expand their holdings in Nithia and on the Isle of Dawn are rebuffed.

Some geological instabilities destroy some peripheral areas of Taymora, sinking some areas and creating new islands and land masses. Most Taymoran cities survive, and the kings foolishly continue their wars.

Thantalian and Trantalian tribes begin their rise, having reached bronze age technology.

The Nithians flee from the Isle of Dawn to modern Ylaruam, under the guidance of the priesthood of Nephthisi.

1'900 BC: The priesthood of Nephthisi guides Nithia to success against the northern threat. A series of conflicts halts the Antalian and Thantalian expansion in the Northern Reaches. Likewise, the Nithians repel Trantalian to the west. Silver mines in the Northern Reaches are exploited. The silver is traded to Taymora, where it pays for the

Taymoran bronze. Like modern Ierendi, Taymora has no silver mines, so silver is quite valuable there.

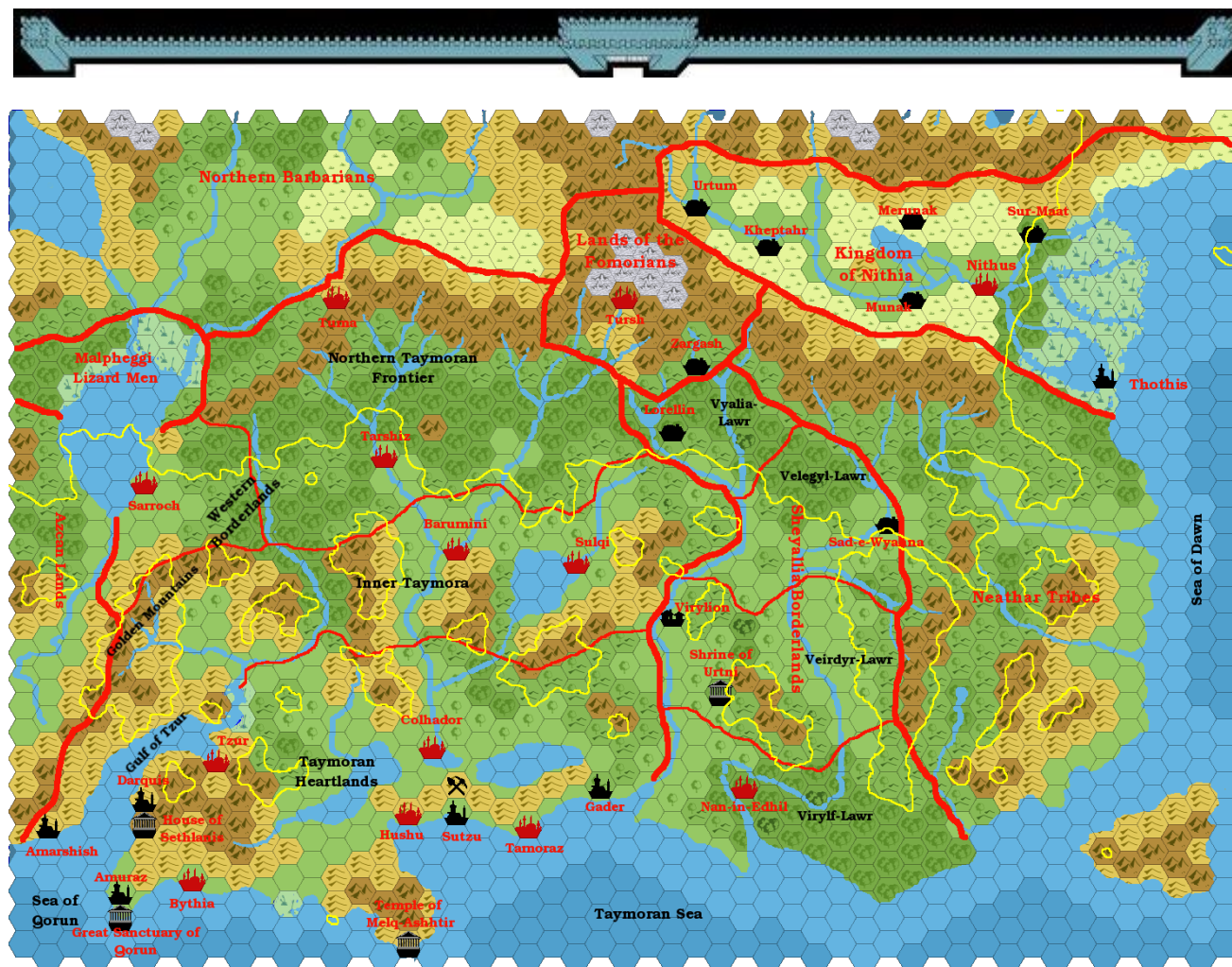
1'850 BC: In Nithia, the militant Priesthood of Rathanos oust the priestesses of Nephthisi from their monopoly of silver trade, as the latter Immortal starts losing interest in the Nithians. Aware of the strife going on in Taymora, the Priests of Rathanos extend the mining techniques of the Nithians beyond silver mining.

The remnants of the Taymoran culture becomes known as the Land of the Dead, or the Land of the Night, among the Nithians. This is due to its western position, to the persisting geological dangers that ravage those doomed areas that still haven't sunk, but also to its undead ruling caste. Taymora is known to the pharaohs as a coalition of many nations - this considers both the Temran (Taymoran) city-states and the vassal or allied nations of elves (Shelash), fomorians (Poymeren), lizard-men (Malepeq), Azcans (Ashkan), and later the Lukka (lycanthropes) and Alpared (Albarendi humans).

The Cataclysm and the Fall of Taymora

1'750 BC: After many years of war between those who had remained loyal to Nyx and those who had turned to the ways of Thanatos (a battle between nosferatu and vampires), the core of the Taymoran Empire sinks beneath the waves. Geological disasters -- volcanic eruptions and earthquakes, enhanced by the massive magical energies invoked by the warring sorcerers -- sink most

Taymora Land of the Dead



Comparison Map Showing AC 1000 Shorelines

of the remaining Taymoran lands into the sea, and splinter off much of the rest south of the modern day Five Shires and the Atruaghin Clans.

This cataclysm marks the end of the Taymoran culture.

The plateau under which the surviving Azcans have been living largely collapses, killing many of them and leaving the survivors in a shattered, hostile land.

1'740 BC: A wave of fleeing Taymorans hits various locations in the east. The armies that are invading Nithia are routed thanks to the

priests of Rathanos, who use fire magic to counter the undead units. Mythic Lycanthropy spreads throughout the Nithian population.

Nithian priests begin to alter the disease, trying to lessen and remove its worst effects. Over several decades they are successful in this endeavour, creating Ancient Lycanthropy⁷.

Fomorian and Taymoran fleets also reach the Isle of Dawn, where they manage to take hold of the western region.

⁷ See "[A Treatise on Lycanthropy](#)" by J. Calvin.

Other Taymoran remnants are found in southern Darokin (Tuma), the Hulean region, Sind (lycanthropes), Ierendi (the Albarendi), Vyalia, and Minrothad. A few Albarendi clans also reach the forested Doulakki lands (these will be among the ancestors of the Cynidiceans).

1'720 BC: Land masses split further away, forming ten islands south of the Five Shires.

1'700 BC: Cataclysms split land masses and ocean floods create islands; Meditor elves are left on the new-made Isles of Dread.

The Albarendi have established modest communities on the western islands formed from the destruction of Taymora. They have occasional trade relations with the lizard men, but no formal government beyond village elders. Because the islands' two species, reptilian and human, are active at different times - one by day and the other by night - the Malpheggi and Albarendi cultures seldom come into conflict.

Having lost their mines, and the sources of their bronze, the Taymoran remnants turn to iron for their works. The Taymoran smiths captured by the Nithian pharaoh bring to Nithia the knowledge needed to push the nation towards the Iron Age, thanks to the rich iron mines of the Alasiyan highlands and the high-temperature fires provided by the priests of Rathanos.

1'600 BC: The Taymorans of the Isle of Dawn move further north, until they settle down founding the new culture of the Aseni. These are the ancestors of the Alaysians.

1'500 - 1'000 BC: Nithia conquers all of the Thantalian and Trantalian tribes of nowadays Ylaruam, and parts of the Isle of Dawn. Many tribes leave for the west and the south to search for freedom, others are sent (often forcibly) as colonizing parties with Nithian leadership or endorsement: these are the ancestors of Doulakki and Traldar (Trantalian-descended populations), and of Hesperians⁸ (Thantalian descended populations). The ancestors of Thyatians, Kerendans and Hattians are Thantalian and Antalian tribes from the Northern Reaches and Heldann, brought to the southern continent in one of these colonizing schemes.

TAYMOR, LAND OF THE DEAD

Government: City-States ruled by Necromancer Kings

Population: circa 1.600.000

The People

The Taymorans are a dark and curly haired people with tanned complexion and dark eyes. The nobles are usually much paler, which is not surprising, since during the height of Taymora the upper strata of aristocracy were made up entirely of nosferatu, the chosen of Tanyt, the Night Mother.

The average Taymoran lives in the countryside hamlets and dresses with a linen or cotton tunic and little else. Clan chiefs

⁸ See G. Caroletti, "*Hesperia, Land of the Setting Sun*", on page [175](#) of this issue.

wear a conical skull cap, and a wide sheepskin cloak. They also wear bandoleers with a single large knife sheathed across the chest, and carry a staff as a symbol of their status.

Priestesses are more common than male priests at clan level. They dress in long tunics, high pointed hats, and braid their hair into two tresses.

Beyond clan chiefs and priests, the other upper class is that of bronzesmiths. Beyond the economic relevance of this activity, the master metalsmiths are skilled in both combat and enchantment magic, allowing them to forge themselves blades of strong magic.

Merchants, warriors, miners, and craftsmen make up the middle class, while farmers are the lower class. Slaves are common only in citadels and towns, and then only among the nosferatu nobility, though owning a few slaves is a mark of especially high rank among the human nobles.

In addition to the Taymorans, other ethnic groups appear frequently in the Taymoran lands, either as slaves or mercenaries. There are the lizard men, lupins and Azcan men from the west, the elven mercenaries from the Sheyallia Borderlands to the east, the fomorian giants, builders of great citadels, that came from the Altan Tepes, and the races created by the necromancer kings' powerful magics: the albino humans known as Albarendi among the elves, and the shapeshifting warriors in the armies of the necromancer kings of Inner Taymora, the werewolves.

The Land: City-States of Taymora



- Tamoraz** (pop. 12000;
3% elves, 5% Taymoran Hound lupins)
- Colhador** (pop. 10000; 15% Albarendi)
- Hushu** (pop. 8000; 10% Taymoran Hairless lupins, 5% Albarendi)
- Barumini** (pop. 9000;
5% elves, 1% giants)
- Sulqi** (pop. 7000; 5% elves, 2% Taymoran Hound lupins)
- Bythia** (pop. 8500; 20% Albarendi)
- Tzur** (pop. 6750;
4% lycanthropes, 5% Albarendi)
- Sarroch** (pop. 8500; 10% lizardmen, 5% Taymoran Hairless lupins)
- Tuma** (pop. 5600; 5% Taymoran Hound lupins, 5% Taymoran Hairless lupins)
- Tarshiz** (pop. 10000;
5% elves, 2% lycanthropes)

The Taymoran society is, at its lowest level, based on small clans or extended families

living in small hamlets. Each clan averages at twenty members. These villages dot the countryside, and cluster around a single tower for protection and trade. They are composed of circular huts with thatched roofs.

The whole Taymoran territory is covered by some ten thousand conical towers, which overlook trade routes, rivers, mines and coasts. They provide a relay network which allows information to flow fast from villages to the main cities, and among the city-states themselves. A tower is usually surrounded by an extended village of some fifty people. It houses a small clan nobility, basically the clan chief and a priest or priestess of some kind.

Larger "castles" are built by connecting four towers through stone walls, filling the resulting courtyard with earth, and building another tower on top. Each citadel is the personal domain of one of the nosferatu nobles during the height of Taymora. Within the citadel, and in dungeons dug under it, live the master of the castle, its second-in-command, who is usually a nosferatu bride or another kind of undead, and a small herd of slaves (around twenty), who make up a blood reserve for the nosferatu rulers. The lower towers house bronzeworking workshops, armouries, shrines, and a small military.

The domain of a nosferatu master covers his citadel, including a larger village of some two hundred people, three to five minor towers, and eight to twelve hamlets.

There are circa one hundred city-states, ten of which are major settlements of at least five thousands, while the others average at about one thousand inhabitants. Each city-state

controls directly a large number of towers and hamlets, adding a rural population of two thousands. Moreover, the nosferatu kings hold the masters of minor citadels as vassals -- they are often vampiric slaves as well, thus boosting a kingdom's population to fifteen to twenty thousands, perhaps more for the largest city-states.

The major cities were Tamoraz, Colhador and Hushu in the Taymoran Heartlands, Barumini and Sulqi in Inner Taymora, Bythia and Tzur on the Western Coast, Sarroch in the Western Borderlands, and Tuma and Tarshiz in the Northern Borderlands.

GOVERNMENT

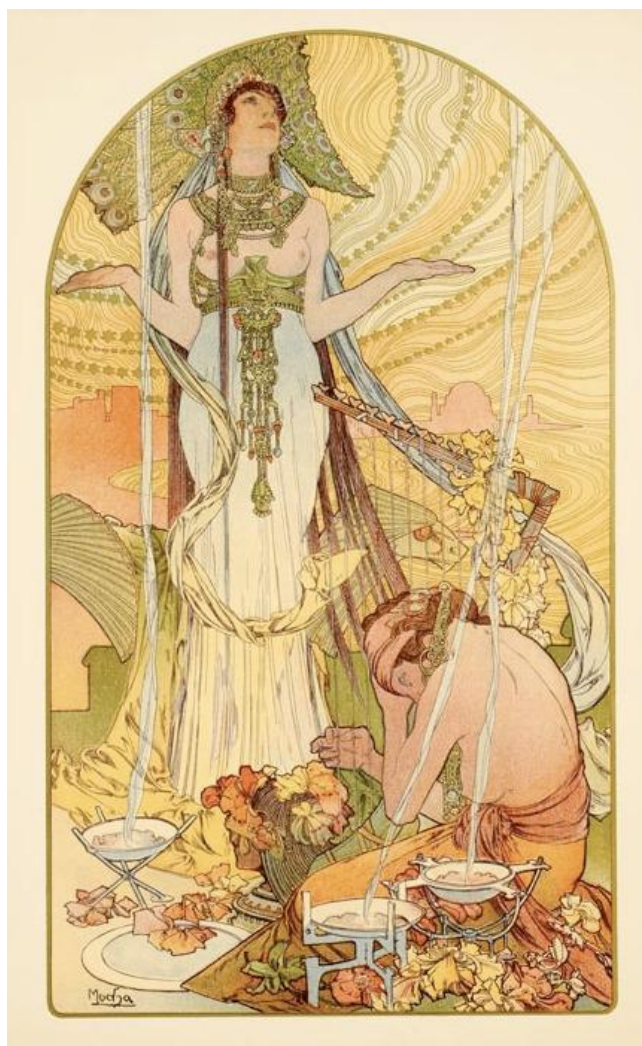
The Taymorans were originally ruled by clan chiefs, advised by the priestesses of Tanyt, the mother goddess, and the bronzesmiths. As they evolved towards civilisation, cities were found, and the clan chiefs became kings. They began dabbling in magic, both priestly and wizardly, and by the time Taymora reached its height they were all led by Tanyt to the Eternal Life. Each ruler became one of undying kings - not only the kings of the city-states, but also the rulers of the minor citadels.

Each king or citadel master usually keeps a single vampiric slave: letting too many of them around would make the competition for food too hard, and the politicking for power too dangerous. Even so, there were more than four thousand nosferatu in Taymora, during its maximum expansion.

The kings are advised by a large clergy, which worships Tanyt as well as other gods, Melq-

Ashtir, Qorun, Sethlanis, and even Sarrattalu, the death god, ruler of a dark, much feared afterlife. Human nobles are charged with the routine duties of ruling, leaving the nosferatu nobles' time free for their political and economical schemes.

The master bronzesmiths compose the third part of the upper class. They are more independent than the priests or nobles from the political power, but they are the key of the economical power, since they hold the secrets of creating metal weapons and tools. Moreover, bronze tools and weapons need frequent maintenance, so even minor bronzeworkers are much wanted.



Taymoran Priestess of Tanyt

Table 1: Taymoran Pantheon

Taymoran Name	Common Name	Portfolio
Tanyt	Nyx	Night Mother, Creation
Sarrattalu	Thanatos	Death, the Otherworld
Melq-Ashtir	Asterius	Trade, Sailors, War
Qorun	Khoronus	The Sea, Rulership
Urtni	Ordana	Elves, Women, Forests
Sethlanis	Wayland	Metalsmithing, Volcanoes

Religion

The Taymoran religion is a primarily matriarchal polytheism, with Tanyt as the head of the pantheon. Other gods play different roles depending on the individual cities -- a mercantile town may favor Melq-Ashtir while a city where the bronzesmith caste is more influential may prefer Sethlanis.

However, the major temples of the Taymoran pantheon are large complexes built far from the major cities. Generally, they control major sea trade routes or large mines of lead or gold.

The Great Sanctuary of Qorun and the Temple of Melq-Ashtir are visible from afar in the sea, marking the beginning and the end of the Western Taymoran Coast, while the House of Sethlanis is built near a volcano in the Gulf of Tzur. The Shrine of Urtni is the only major temple outside Taymora proper, as it was built by the Southern Sheyallia elves north of their capital, Nan-in-Edhil.

There are no single major temples to Tanyt and Sarrattalu, leading to wild speculations on secret, well hidden temples in the underground of the Heartlands.

Tanyt

(Nyx)
CAL⁹ Any N; WAL¹⁰ Any; HS¹¹ A miniature of a woman.

Tanyt is the primary Immortal in the Taymoran pantheon. She is the creator of life, and the patroness of Night, who saved the Taymorans from the Longest Day, when fire rained from the sky.

She is strongest in winter, and her most holy celebrations are held during the longest night of the year and at the autumn equinox. She is also the main patron of the ruling caste.

Tanyt is represented as a pale, beautiful woman with long tresses, either naked or wearing an ankle-long tunic and a large necklace.

Sarrattalu

(Thanatos)
CAL Any E; WAL Any; HS Eclipsed sun.

This immortal is the personification of Death in the Taymoran religion.

His name means literally *King of Darkness*, and he is perceived as the ruler of the Otherworld. The commoners of the Taymoran city-states worship this evil god in an attempt to escape his wrath, and postpone the day of their demise. Only the nosferatu nobles do not worship Sarrattalu,

⁹ Alignment of the clergy.

¹⁰ Alignment of the worshippers.

¹¹ Holy symbol.

for they have been blessed by the Night Mother with the Water-of-Life, the blood which supports their eternal unlife.

Sarrattalu is never represented. His temples hold a giant-sized empty throne of black volcanic rock.

Melq-Ashtir

(Asterius)
CAL N or NG;
WAL Any; HS An ingot in form of a stretched animal skin.



An aggressive, expansionist immortal, Melq-Ashtir is patron of trade and travellers, as well as a patron of warfare and conquest. He is worshipped by all castes, but especially by the upper-middle class, merchants, weaponsmiths, and warriors.

Temples of Melq-Ashtir serve as business centres, and offer arbitration, measurement, storage, and primitive banking services.

Melq-Ashtir is portrayed as a well-muscled, handsome man in his thirties, wearing only an animal skin wrapped around his hips.

Qorun

(Khoronus)
CAL N or LN; WAL Any; HS A man's head covered by a feather headdress.



The Taymor Father, Qorun is the mythical progenitor of the Taymoran gods. He is represented as a middle age, bearded man wearing a crown with a conical feather headdress inside and a long tunic.

An immortal patron of rulership, he is revered mostly by the noble class, including the nosferatu rulers, who see him as the first of the undying kings. Also the merchants worship Qorun, in his role of god of the sea.

Urtni

(Ordana)
CAL N or NG; WAL Any non-E; HS A tree with a short trunk and many branches.



This immortal is a patroness of the Shelash, the Sheyallia elves who have obtained from the undying king of Tamoraz the right to live in the Eastern Borderlands. She is a nature goddess, but represents a solemn, ritualistic, rather than wild or untamed, aspect of nature.

Urtni is revered primarily by the elves, but also by many villagers. Due to the alliance between Tamoraz and the Sheyallia, Urtni is also revered by this city and its vassals, but not much in the other city-states.

Urtni is represented as a green-skinned woman, with long, brown, branch-like hair.

Sethlanis

(Wayland)
CAL LN; WAL Any; HS A forge, or a volcano, or any red-hot metal.

Sethlanis is the immortal patron of metalsmithing and the bronzesmith caste. It is not known how Tanyt convinced him to teach the Taymorans his secret techniques, but it is certain that he does not like them very much. The Taymorans try and appease him with many donations and sacrifices, but his volcanoes are always ready to unleash their deadly fluids over the miners. This ambivalence makes the entire bronzesmith caste (and the related professions of miners and smelters) feared rather than loved, in spite of their critical role in the Taymoran society.

Sethlanis is a patron of the fomorian giants, and is represented as a muscle-bound giant with many tentacles instead of the lower legs, each tentacle ending in a fire-breathing snake head.

FOMORIANS: THE SOUTHERN GIANT-KINGDOM

Government: Giant kingdom
 Population: 8300 giants, various types
 Standing Army: 221 giants, various types

History

During the Taymoran Age, a major giantish nation controlled the Altan Tepes mountains. These giants came from the north before the Taymoran people reached the Bronze Age, fleeing from stronger, rival clans in their homeland.

The Fomorians were a mix of various giant and giant-kin races, including the cyclopskin, stone and hill giants, a large number of the lesser veerbeg giants, and even a few frost giants, who retreated to the highest peaks, where they still live.

The giants of the Land of the Fomorians were not crude nor lacked intelligence like their modern brethren. This was an effect of the Taymoran struggle between followers of Nyx and Thanatos.

The Taymoran nations initially battled the Fomorians and traded with them as well. Neither nation was able to get the upper hand in battle, as the giants were strong but few in numbers, and the Taymorans were powerful sorcerers and priests, but no city-state wanted to risk a full-scale war with the giants, which would have exposed them to attacks from their rivals.

Table 2: Fomorians

Race	Population	Traditional social class
Frost giants	600	Hunters & raiders
Cyclops	2000	Shepherds, winemakers
Stone giants	1500	Philosophers, rulers, builders
Hill giants	1200	Hunters, shepherds
Veerbeg	3000	Farmers, shepherds, craftsmen

Around 2250 BC, a large elven migration reached Taymora. There were four clans, all belonging to the Sheyallia elves, the Vyalia, Veirdyr, Virylf, and Velegyl. The elves were tired of travelling, and wanted nothing more than a forested land where they could settle. The Taymoran necromancer-kings of Barumini, Sulqi and Tarshiz saw this, and decided that the elves could provide them with the strength needed to solve the Fomorian problem. They offered a large slice of wild lands that laid east of Sulqi to the elven chiefs, in exchange for their service as mercenaries.

The elves proved good fighters, and pushed the Fomorians back to their mountains, even reaching the city of Zargash. When Zargash fell, the stone giant leaders sued for peace, and signed a treaty of alliance with the northern Taymoran states.

In the following centuries, giant workers and engineers helped fortify the major Taymoran city-states, building structures that would survive through the ages, resisting even to the cataclysm that destroyed the Taymoran culture.

When the civil war between followers of Thanatos and loyalists of Nyx flared, several hill giant clans were corrupted by envoys of Thanatos, and attacked the other races. The lesser giants were nearly destroyed, and the giant civilisation was shattered. The stone giants and the elves forced the hill giants out of the land, but at an high cost.

Many giants died in the floods while they were fighting the armies of Thanatos in Taymora, and others were killed or enslaved by the Nithians. Others yet migrated to the

Isle of Dawn, were they clashed with the local Firbolg.

Nowadays¹², only frost giants remain in the land, while a few stone giants and several clans of hill giants live in the Cruth Mountains, and some cyclopes are scattered in the eastern Altan Tepes. Veerbeg are likely extinct, at least in the Known World.

The Land: Cities of the giants

Tursh (pop.: 1200, mostly stone and lesser giants), Capitol
 Zargash (pop.: 1000, mostly hill and lesser giants)

The major towns of the Land are Tursh, a massively fortified citadel near what now is the Castellan Keep in Karameikos, and Zargash, a rough hill giant town near the Sheyallia border.

Tursh is the siege of the stone giant philosopher-kings, a centre of great learning in architecture, engineering and geology. It is called the City of Towers by the Nithians. It houses the embassies of several Taymoran city-states, including that of the king of Barumini, whose ambassador is also a powerful nosferatu priest of Tanyt.

Zargash is a battered town composed of wooden buildings. It faced the assault of elven mercenary companies during the Taymoran war, and most of the original

¹² At the present time, 1000 AC. See also "The Legacy of Taymora" on page XX. Note that Storm Giants mentioned in canon in Ierendi and Minrothad are related to the Sea Giants of Undersea, and not to the Fomorians.

stone buildings were destroyed and never rebuilt. The stone giants have all but abandoned the city right after the war, leaving the hill giants to rebuild it with their comparatively poor skills. The elves helped in the rebuilding, and established an embassy and a temple to Urtni. The local hill giants grew resentful of the elven interference in the later years, leading them right into the arms of Thanatos' envoys.

Religion: The FOMORIAN pantheon

Sethlans (LN, Patron of law, the mountains, metals and ores)
Tanyt (N, Patroness of Taymora and the night)
Urtni (NG, Patroness of the elves and nature)
De (NG, Patroness of the forested lands)
Terra (LN, Patroness of the stone giants)
Cadjalis (NG, Patron of the craftsmen)

Sethlans is the major patron of the giants. While he is revered in Taymora as well (under the slightly altered name of Sethlanis), he does not love the Taymorans and their entropic powers. During the Taymoran Age, this Immortal suffered a major setback, as his giant followers were all but destroyed, and his image was later considered by the Nithians as one of their fiendish enemies, under the name of Seth. There he was seen as a power of destruction and evil, since in the end he was the patron of those same volcanoes that destroyed the Taymoran civilisation.

Two foreign Immortals are acknowledged by the Fomorians, Tanyt, the Taymoran

immortal, and Urtni, patroness of the elves. Neither is especially loved, but the building of temples to these goddesses was included in the peace treaty between the Land of the Fomorians and their elven and Taymoran enemies.

Other Immortals were worshipped by the giants, especially those of the Sphere of Earth like Djaea (De), Terra and Kagyar (Cadjalis), but this worship was mostly limited to stone giant philosophers and priests.

SHELASH: THE EASTERN ELVES

During the XXIII century BC, the Sheyallia elves (known as "Shelash" in Nithian and Taymoran inscriptions) migrated across the western mountains. These long-lived, nomads had only access to primitive technology. However, most of them were able to wield arcane or, more rarely, divine magic. This made them interesting for the Taymoran necromancer-kings, who began hiring them as mercenaries in their wars against the Fomorians of the northern mountains. Armed with Taymoran bronze weapons and, surprisingly for the Taymorans, who had never seen armored magicians, bronze armor, companies of Sheyallia mercenary troops streamed towards the northeastern battlefields, turning what had become a war of attrition into a full scale invasion. The giant kings were forced to retreat to the highest mountains, where magic could not offset the advantage of size, and the necromancer-kings claimed the lower lands, enslaving several giantish clans.

In a clever political maneuver, the undying king of Tamoraz offered the Eastern Borderlands, a forested wilderness to the east of Taymor, to the Sheyallia. Most of the clans accepted, although some settled within Taymor itself, continuing their tradition of mercenary service to the Taymoran aristocracy¹³.

The People

The Sheyallia are generally of medium built and height for elves, are generally pale, with green or hazel eyes and blond to brown hair. Southern clans tend towards more tanned complexion and darker shades of hair and eyes, while among northern Sheyallia silver hair and deep green eyes are more common.

The elves dress in practical robes in tones of green and brown. Those who can afford it carry bronze weapons, usually spears and short swords. The use of bows is also very common, as the Sheyallia were originally nomadic hunters.

Contrary to later elves, the Sheyallia of the Taymoran age are in general quite friendly towards humans, especially the more advanced nations. They developed an enmity towards giants during the northern wars.

¹³ The northernmost clans of the Eastern Borderlands became the Vyalia, while the southernmost became the forest elves of Minrothad. The elves who settled in Taymor itself are the ancestors of the water elves.

The Land: Sheyallia Borderlands

Nan-in-Edhil (pop.: 6500), Capital
 Lorellin (pop.: 4000)
 Sad-e-Wyanna (pop.: 3500)
 Viryilion (pop.: 700)

The Sheyallia settled a long stripe of land running east of Taymor, from the Altan Tepes mountains to the sea, where Alfeisle is now. The region was heavily forested in the Taymoran age, although in modern days only the Dymrak Forest and Alfeisle remain of it.

The Sheyallia Borderlands were divided into four provinces, or *Lawr*. From north to south, Vyalia-Lawr, Velegyl-Lawr, Veirdyr-Lawr and Virylf-Lawr. The capital city, Nan-in-Edhil, was built in the southernmost province on the estuary of the Laegiol river, which ran across the entire Borderlands. Lorellin and Sad-e-Wyanna were the regional capitals of Vyalia-Lawr and Velegyl-Lawr. Veirdyr-Lawr was a more rural province, but included the Shrine of Urtni, the major religious center of the Sheyallia. The provincial capital was the village of Viryilion.

GOVERNMENT

Politically, the Sheyallia adopted a government not unlike that of modern Alfheim, with a nominal king acting mostly as a figurehead, and a council of clan heads holding the actual power. The Sheyallia Borderlands, however, were a client state of Taymor. Individual Sheyallia clans held allegiance to specific city-states, from which they received bronze and other trade goods in return for military service. This network of

allegiances colored strongly the elven politics, making the government ineffective, especially when the internal conflicts between the Taymoran city-states led to fractures among the clan heads.

RELIGION

Ordana/Urti (NG, Patroness of the elves and nature)

Ilsundal/Usil (LN, Patron of law and the sun)

Calitha/Cel (NG, Patron of the sea and the Aquarendi)

Tanyt (N, Patroness of Taymora and the night)

The Sheyallia primarily worship Ordana, known as Urti among the Taymorans. Northern Sheyallia also worship Ilsundal, known as Usil by the Taymorans, and coastal elves, influenced by the Aquarendi, begin accepting the worship of Calitha Starbrow (Cel in Taymora). At least a formal recognition of Tanyt is also common among the mercenary elves that serve in Taymora.

The elven religion typically revolves around the clan relic, a living artefact provided by the patron Immortal.

LUKKA: THE BEASTMEN OF TAYMOR

During the XXII century BC, several Taymoran necromancer kings concentrated their research efforts into the creation of new races that would fit the roles of soldiers in

their armies and servants in their palace. In doing so, they followed the will of Nyx, their patroness, an Immortal creator of new nocturnal races.

The greatest accomplishment in the first field was certainly obtained through the creation of the dread disease, lycanthropy. According to the most recent sources¹⁴, these first lycanthropes were mostly stuck in a hybrid animal-human form, and were created to match the animal species that the nosferatu could summon and control.

The first, and most successful, lycanthropes were therefore the werewolves, powerful warriors who would end up in the shock troop companies. Wererats and werebats followed shortly, but they were not as successful as their more powerful cousins. Werebats were employed as scouts and raiders, and wererats as underground shock troops or as scouts in the swamplands in western Taymora.

Mortality rates were exceedingly high, both for the violent occupations of most lycanthropes and, more importantly, for the debilitating effects of the disease itself. A few more phenotypes were later devised by nosferatu and vampire kings endowed with the ability to conjure different species of animals, and a few even appeared from random mutations.

When the end of Taymora grew near, the Lukka, the lycanthropic people, formed a major part of the Taymoran armies in the cities of Tarshiz, in the Northern Taymoran Frontier forested lands, and Tzur. Massive

¹⁴ See "[A Treatise on Lycanthropy](#)" by J. Calvin.

use of Lukka troops was indeed the cause of Tarshiz' success as one of the few borderland city-states to become a powerful force in the political scene of Taymora.

The necromancer king of Tzur, on the other hand, devoted much effort to the creation of wererats, which he employed for warfare in the swamps in order to wrestle control of the river trade from his rivals, the kings of Amarshish and Darqis.

A number of the most resilient individuals had been able to survive longer than the few months most would live as beast-men. These lycanthropes started resenting their vampiric masters, and formed a secret society devoted to overthrowing them. A previously unknown Immortal manifested to them, calling himself Lykaion¹⁵, and offered them help against their masters for their worship.

Statistics

These statistics are thought for an AD&D 2nd edition game, but are easily adapted to OD&D.

A Taymoran lycanthrope has usually a single, hybrid form. It gains the HD, AC, immunities and any bite attack of the standard lycanthrope, plus it retains the ability to use simple weapons (maces, clubs, daggers, and axes). All others statistics remain as the standard form, but the character receives a bonus to Strength and Dexterity as do lycanthropes of his phenotype in "Beast at

¹⁵ This is thought to be an identity of Loki. Whatever plan he might have been for his werewolf followers, it likely folded when Taymora sunk.

Heart"¹⁶, and has the same dietary requirements.

In general, Lukka characters (including player characters) can appear anywhere in the Taymoran lands between the XXI century and the fall of Taymora. These characters have a serious disadvantage in that they are extremely vulnerable to the necromancer kings' magic and vampiric powers.

THE LEGACY OF TAYMORA

Even after the fall of the city states of Taymora and the cataclysm that nigh obliterated that land, remnants of the Taymorans and their various subjects remain. These may appear in adventures, as modern-day adventurers try to puzzle out aspects of the history of Taymora, perhaps looking for clues to the nature of artifacts or to the cults of Nyx and Thanatos.

The Taymorans themselves disappeared into obscurity. The few survivors, mostly in the Northern Fomorian Frontier, were soon conquered by Nithian exploration missions, and merged into the Traldar people. Their traditions, in particular the cult of Nyx, were preserved by the "Sons of Night"¹⁷, a mystical brotherhood which passed down knowledge of unusual magics. The nosferatu and vampire curses, of course, survived and

¹⁶ See the [Book of Souls](#), at the Kargatane website

¹⁷ See the Koskatap series by F. Defferrari starting in Threshold Issue 1, and the "In the Dread of Night" module by Ann Dupuis in Dungeon Magazine issue #24.

resurfaced centuries later during the Traladaran Dark Ages. Some Taymoran vampires, the velya, survived under the waters to plague the kingdom of Undersea to this day.

The Taymoran Hound and Taymoran Hairless Lupin breeds migrated north, becoming the Cimarron Hairless of the Broken Lands and south-east, giving rise to the Ochalean breeds - the Shar-Pei, Ogrish Chow-Chow, Ochalean Hairless and Ochalean Houndling.

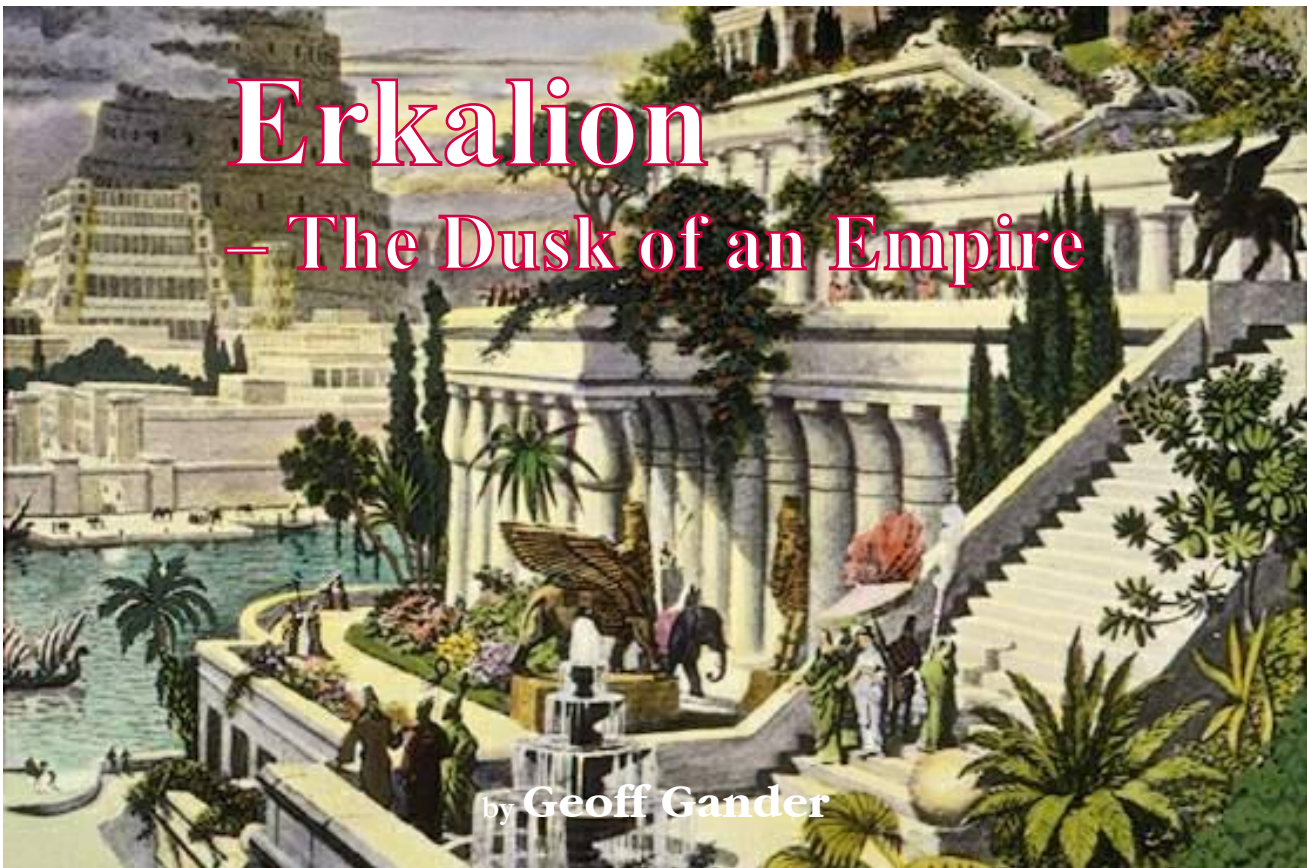
Mythic lycanthropy was curbed through Nithian intervention, and would in time evolve into the modern strains.

A number of Albarendi survived in the islands of the archipelago of Dread, formed by the cataclysm. The migratory waves of the Makai first, and later the Hin, Thyatians and others prevented the Albarendi from ever recovering from the cataclysm. Their culture, however, evolved into an original creation, and is still preserved in Ierendi.

[Continued on page 104](#)



Players' Map of Taymora



“The sun has set on the empire. Let the shining beacon that is our city herald the dawning of a new day.”

- Kelaran, son of Maradan, c. BC 6990

Although records of the time before Blackmoor are scant—at least to scholars in the Known World—there is some knowledge that there was an empire of bold explorers and warriors devoted to a strange Immortal “who held up the Sky and lit the Heavens”. Little is known of this so-called “Land of the Sea”, whose works are mostly lost and whose location is a mystery, save for that it existed in the great southern seas, that it fought mightily against an even more ancient evil realm of sorcerers who trafficked in things utterly unwholesome, and that it destroyed itself in saving the world. Scholars steeped in that ancient lore who have ventured to Davania and the southern seas, and who have dug in certain sites and explored ruins overlooked by the march of time, know far more about Lhomarr and Y’hog, and their

struggle. They know that the Lhomarrians were great seafarers and suspect that there may be forgotten outposts of that lost civilization that, if discovered, could shed more light. Erkalion, a remote outpost in the far south that eventually became one of the last holdouts of the Lhomarrian civilization, is just such a place.

GEOGRAPHY

Erkalion is located on the northern coast of the Vulcanian Peninsula, southeast of the Vulture Peninsula. In its heyday, and even today, the land surrounding it is hilly and lightly forested with mixed deciduous and coniferous trees—predominantly maples, birches, and pines in the Lhomarrian era, which have since been replaced by oaks, maples and a few walnuts as the local climate became more moderate. Coniferous forests now predominate south of what the Lhomarrians called the Ormincarith (Cold River), which is currently known by a variety of names by the barbaric human tribes who now occupy the region.¹ The coasts here are rocky, and the continental shelf drops off steeply.

To the southeast lies a large swamp at the mouth of the river, which the Lhomarrians tried unsuccessfully to drain. Then, as now, the swamp was home to numerous forms of giant insects and poisonous snakes (much

¹ At the height of Lhomarrian power in the region, the Ormincarith was bordered by extensive wheat fields, which, combined with berries and root vegetables such as beets, formed the basis of a large part of local cuisine. Dishes from Erkalion were referred to as “animal feed” by culinary snobs in Lhomarr proper.

more common in the modern era), as well as a small population of swamp hydras which have managed to retain their position as apex predator. Some of the barbarian tribes in the modern era harvest the venom from some of the serpents to coat their blades and arrowheads—a practice their long-dead ancestors adopted from the more sinister inhabitants of Erkalion in its later days.

The sheer drop of the continental shelf along this part of the Vulcanian coast was a boon to shipping in the Lhomarrian era, but that also meant that there was nothing but open sea between Erkalion and the Lhomarrian sub-continent, save for a single island due east of Erkalion known to the Lhomarrians as the Dawn Spire, so named because the first ship sailing in the region spotted its lone peak silhouetted against the rising sun. It was lightly settled by farmers and fishermen during Erkalion's heyday. The island is currently uninhabited (none of the seafaring barbarian tribes will settle there, out of a belief that the island is cursed by restless spirits) and possesses a moderate climate to this day. It boasts a stand of walnut and apple trees in one sheltered valley that are descended from those planted by the Lhomarrians.

At the city's height there were two other settlements of note (the villages of Seressina and Akalanyos), as well as a handful of small fortresses and towers on the frontiers of the lands claimed by Erkalion. Much of the interior of the territory claimed by Lhomarr was lightly farmed; although there were several stands of deciduous forest left untouched.

HISTORY

Erkalion began as an outpost on the northern coast of Vulcania in BC 8350, little more than a collection point for the amber and iron Lhomarrian explorers had already found there. The rugged shores and remoteness of the place attracted few settlers (aside from those who had reasons for leaving civilization behind them), beyond the small garrison and their families – even when the empire began offering generous land grants. Matters changed in BC 8292 when Empress Trestinia²³ re-designated the

² Trestinia, daughter of Marissa, was also known as the “Shadow Empress” in mockery of the symbolic light of Xeron she purportedly represented, as well as the implication that her occupation of the throne was accidental or otherwise illegitimate. She was the fourth child of Emperor Karathas II, and under the traditions of Lhomarrian imperial succession would never have left the clergy. However, the loss of her three elder brothers in battle (the first two) and at sea elevated her to the throne. In many ways Trestinia – a brash, imperious woman who did not suffer fools – was cut from the same cloth as her boldest forebears and under other circumstances she could have been remembered as a legendary empress in her own right, but her fanaticism alienated all but her most sycophantic followers. Her reign (BC 8298 – 8254) was marked by frequent purges, mass deportations of heretics, coercion to adopt the faith, and brutal expansionism.

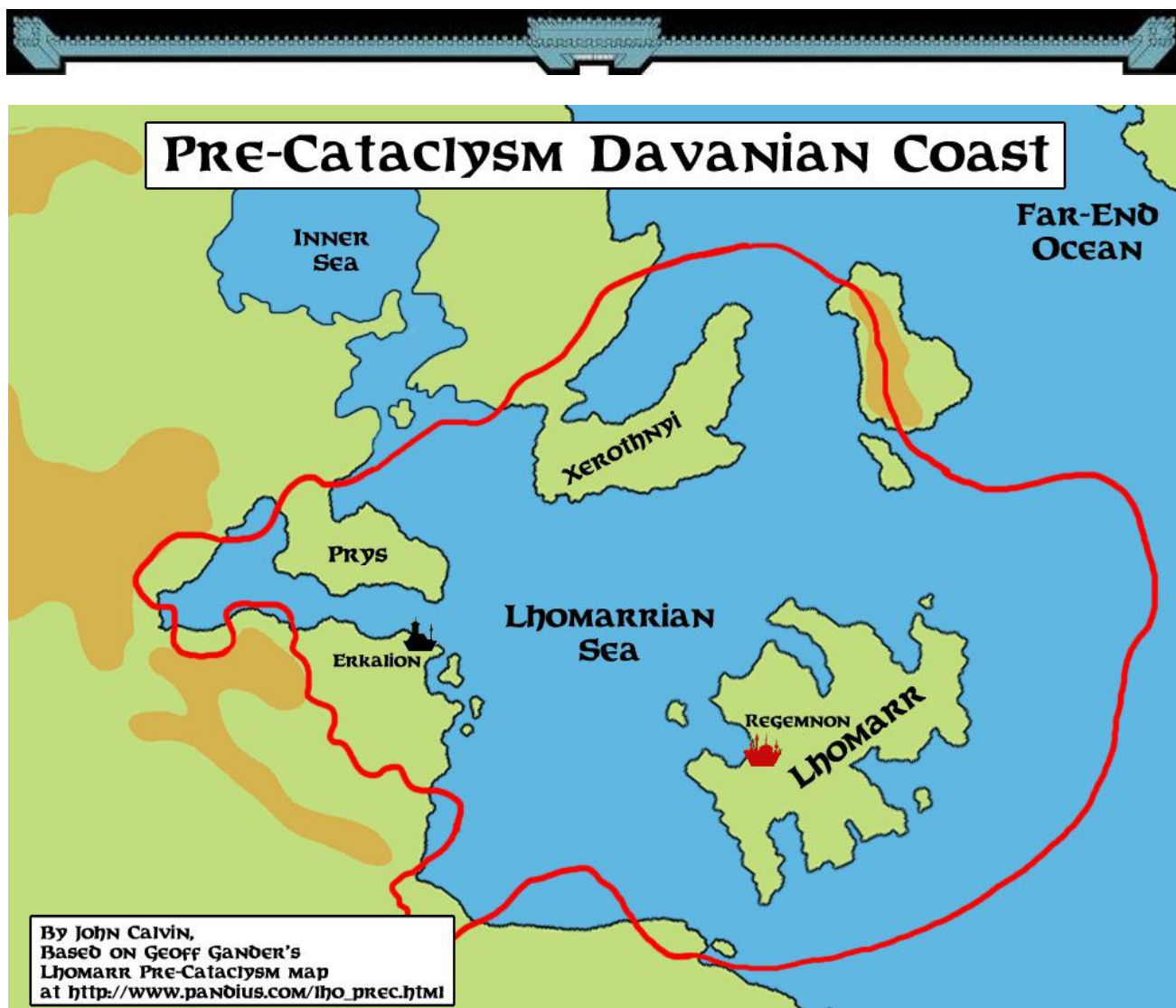
³ From the time of the founding of the empire until the present day in the Hollow World, Lhomarrian dynastic succession has been based on the principle of primogeniture (the crown is passed to the eldest child). Initially male children of an heir-apparent would ascend to the throne before a female sibling, but the tendency of male heirs of fighting age to die in battle brought this

outpost as a penal colony for religious dissidents. Within five years, the population ballooned from roughly 600 to just under 15,000. Disease and starvation were rampant, and the garrison was ultimately forced to flee due to the turmoil. Erkalion became a *de facto* city-state and a ruling council was established to impose order, but it was ridden with factionalism and most of the inhabitants did what they wished. Despite the near-anarchic conditions, enough common sense prevailed that most people focused on building their community and co-operating in a remote, often hostile territory.

The situation did not go unnoticed by Erkalion’s neighbors. Communities of garls and treants, which had been driven away by the population explosion began to move back, and the remnants of the Gok’ket⁴, driven into the region by sis’tthik and other races, also competed for land. Ultimately, the beleaguered people of Erkalion appealed

practice to an end. By tradition, the eldest child (male or female) is the heir-apparent, while the second and third male children pursue military careers (the second child understands that his career will be cut short should he ascend to the throne). Females, and any children born after the third, traditionally entered the clerical orders of Xeron.

⁴ [The Gok’ket](#) were an intelligent race of primates who were distantly related to the indigenous humans of Mystara. They predated the Carnifex by many millennia, and co-existed with the frogfolk of Y’ruth. Originally they lived in the far north, but a remnant of that race survived the sweeping changes of history and made its way south. They were a Stone Age people, and it is possible that some of them were transported to the Hollow World before they went extinct.



to the empire for aid, and a force was sent in BC 8220 to occupy the port. The settlement remained under military administration until the Sinking, but the administrator's position evolved over time into a virtual lordship. As the empire's position in Vulcania strengthened, the lands surrounding Erkalion were secured, and by BC 7900 a stretch of coastline on either side of the city and roughly 50-100 miles inland was claimed, if not completely controlled. After the repeal of Tristinia's laws the population declined, and the remoteness of the location deterred all but the most enthusiastic

colonists. However, Erkalion did grow, and by the time of the Sinking in BC 7022 it was home to roughly 35,000 people, with another 5,000 in neighboring coastal villages. The interior remained largely wild and unsettled, save for a handful of fortresses. A final influx of almost 10,000 people arrived shortly before and after the Sinking itself.

During the centuries leading up to the Sinking, Erkalion enjoyed a period of relative peace. Far removed from the intense fighting in central and northern Davania, as well as the politics and maneuvering in the



The Sinking of Lhomarr

imperial court at Regemnon, the atmosphere of the city was deceptively calm. Food was plentiful, and trade with Lhomarr proper and other southern dominions such as Thallios was lucrative. The only reminder of war with the Carnifex was the routine conscription of young men for the legions.⁵ But it was in the

⁵ Lhomarrian practice was to form “home regiments” (i.e., military units would be formed of people who came from the same city, town, or village) in the belief that soldiers would fight harder to protect their fellow troopers if they were the people they grew up with. For the most part this was true, and an unexpected side effect was that rivalries between units were not uncommon. Troops from Erkalion had a reputation for bravery, and it was widely believed that this was because they wanted to prove that they were just as willing to die for the empire, despite being so far removed from the action. They suffered some of the highest losses – almost as high, proportionally, as the fatality rate for male heirs to the imperial throne, which reached two-thirds during the most intense years of fighting against the Carnifex of Y'hog.

midst of this period of calm that the fateful end of the port city was set in motion.

The religious persecution instituted by Trestinia that led to the deportation of thousands of people to Erkalion was also used as a smokescreen for various Outer Being sects to spread their influence to all of Lhomarr's territories. Some cultists willingly gave themselves away—even to the point of openly summoning unwholesome creatures—in order to whip up even more hysteria. The authorities took the bait and came down hard, executing many and sweeping entire neighborhoods clear. Followers made sure to be among those sent away⁶, and once at their destination would use their magic to aid the deportees, and win over some converts in the process. With a secure foothold, the Outer Being cults insinuated themselves into every level of society in Erkalion, with some masquerading as clerics of Xeron. Such a feat would have been nearly impossible in Lhomarr, but on the fringes of the empire clerical magic was rarer and always in demand—and people were less likely to notice or care if the rituals weren't *quite* how they remembered them. In later years, with war distant and prosperity seemingly everywhere, the Outer Being cults had become so prevalent that some priests began bringing some of their practices into the open. And then Lhomarr sank.

Erkalion's seaward fortifications, and most of the immediate neighborhoods, were

⁶ Under Trestinia's rule, a person who voluntarily went to Erkalion would have been considered suspicious, since only a troublemaker would ever consider settling anywhere near a penal colony populated by heretics. The result would have been a lengthy interrogation, at best.

devastated by the tidal waves produced by Lhomarr's sinking, and roughly one-fourth of the population died (again, the Outer Being cults used their magic to ease the effects of the disaster, with the population none the wiser). Reconstruction was swift, but once the truth of the empire's destruction became known a pall of fear descended over the city. The administrator of Erkalion, Maradan, son of Ardalos, citing the need to maintain Lhomarrian civilization, made his powers permanent. No one opposed, and Erkalion became a kingdom in its own right. Borders were reinforced and the city adopted a more aggressive posture towards neighboring peoples, demanding tribute in exchange for protection. The newly-crowned king sent ships to other former territories of the empire to see what remained—little did, aside from a handful of outposts and Erkalion's sister city, Thallios, which itself was trying to rebuild. The two cities formed an alliance, and between them managed to keep the northern coast of the Vulcanian Peninsula relatively stable for several decades, while all else had descended into anarchy. With the region secure for the moment, Maradan appointed his son, Kelaran, to govern in his stead while he led some of Lhomarr's remaining legions to northern Davania, where he led a vengeance-fuelled, but ultimately fruitless, campaign to eradicate the remaining Carnifex strongholds. He and many of his soldiers met their end in the ruined city of Yath-Khe. When Maradan failed to return after many years, Kelaran assumed the worst and appointed himself king.

Kelaran was very much his father's son, and built upon Maradan's achievements. He ordered his armies to abandon imperial

doctrine and adopt successful tactics used by hostile neighbors, and he withdrew from outposts that were too remote or difficult to maintain. This consolidation allowed Lhomarrian civilization to endure longer in southern Davania than would otherwise have been the case, but other factors sealed the doom of Erkalion. Lhomarr's sinking altered the flow of ocean currents along the Vulcanian coast, bringing more storms. Agricultural yields fell, which, coupled with migrations as neighboring peoples sought better food sources, led Erkalion to become more hostile as it tried to protect what it had. It even began pressuring Thallios, and the former colonies in what is now the Lost Valley region—which were not suffering the same scarcities as Erkalion—for more support. Aid was at first freely given, but when the effects of the worsening climate spread further the other Lhomarrian territories became more reticent. By BC 6600 the city's fleet began blockading, then raiding, the other territories. Erkalion's hostility led the other Lhomarrian territories to form an alliance against it, culminating in the Battle of Gilcarith in BC 6594, a naval confrontation by the wide mouth of that river, near Thallios. The Erkalian fleet, outmaneuvered by the smaller and more numerous vessels of the Thallian Alliance, was soundly defeated.

While the people of the region maintained their freedom, the battle sparked decades of skirmishing and intermittent warfare that sapped the resources of what remained of Lhomarr, and hastened the final decline. Some in the region migrated north in search of better lands, and when Thallios was destroyed by a volcanic eruption in BC 6415 the settlements of what is now the Lost Valley

descended into a new dark age. Erkalion, completely isolated and fending off increasingly desperate neighbors while seeing its population dwindle, withdrew from its borders. A growing portion of the populace turned to nihilism and darker beliefs, and those who venerated the Outer Beings, who had been operating behind the scenes for centuries, finally proclaimed themselves as the true saviors of the people. More people fled, preferring to take their chances in the open world, while the remainder placed their trust in the cultists. But the cultists had other aims than the salvation of the people. Knowing that Erkalion was doomed, they had already decided that their masters' cause would be best served if the populace was consumed. Some cultists stealthily approached the encroaching barbarians and persuaded enough of the chieftains that not only was Erkalion weak; vast amounts of plunder were waiting to be taken. Their greed stoked, the barbarians attacked in force, terrifying the remaining citizenry. The pall of fear and anxiety that hung over the city, combined with the strength of the rituals performed in the catacombs underneath the citadel, was enough to draw the attention of some of the Outer Beings. The souls of thousands were literally sucked into oblivion, leaving behind withered husks frozen in poses of terror. Although many cultists voluntarily shared the fate of their victims, those performing the ritual were not so lucky. Once the barbarians forced their way into the city and beheld what had happened to the populace, they quickly concluded that the cultists were responsible, and that whatever power they possessed could not be allowed to exist if they could not control it themselves. The cultists refused to be enslaved, and met their

ends through more painful and mundane means. The barbarians took the most portable treasures they could find and left the rest, deciding that the empty city was an evil place.

THE CITY — THEN AND NOW

Erkalion was situated on a natural harbor, which was protected from the worst of sea storms by the construction of a heavily-fortified breakwater with a lighthouse. Stone piers encompassed berths capable of accommodating some of the largest cargo vessels⁷, and a wharf and open space that doubled as a market and meeting place ran along much of the length of the harbor. The city was laid out in the typical Lhomarran style: A couple of broad avenues, connected by narrower streets, radiated from the port to the city walls. Alongside the streets, most of the buildings were private homes—single-storey affairs whose outer walls were graced with colorful murals. A courtyard was often located at the centre of each home, where family members could eat and socialize. Taller buildings, up to three storeys, lined the major roads, and these were equally colorful, and often had epic tales depicted on their façades. Each of the main avenues ended at a guard tower that led under a heavily-fortified tower, which in turn housed the exterior gates. The crenellated walls were 20 feet high, with heavily-built watchtowers situated at regular intervals.

⁷ By Known World standards, Erkalion would have a Port Class of "C" (2,000 to 4,999 hull points' worth of vessels may be moored there).



Map of Erkalion

Integrated as part of the walls was Erkalion's citadel, which served as the seat of government as well as a shelter (in the extensive catacombs underneath) for the populace, should the city have been in danger of being overrun. The Lhomarrians also cleared away all of the trees and bushes within 150 feet of the walls. Unpaved roads connected Erkalion to the other communities of the territory, as well as the fortifications further inland.

Today, Erkalion resembles a series of heavily forested, rocky hills rising above a shallow bay. The breakwater has survived, as well as the foundations of the lighthouse, but both are now covered with grasses and hardy shrubs. Nevertheless, the line of the breakwater is too straight to be natural. The stone piers have also survived; although only one is remotely usable now as most of the berths have long since silted up. The main avenues are still vaguely discernible as shallow valleys running between low ridges, but in most places the side streets have been entirely obliterated. Erkalion's formidable walls remain intact in several places, at some points being up to 15 feet tall. The citadel now resembles a steep, tree-covered hill, but the catacombs underneath are partly intact, encompassing a two-level network of tunnels and chambers. The ruins are visited by all sorts of mundane wildlife, such as giant anteaters, peccaries, tapirs, turtles, tortoises, predatory large cats, and numerous species of birds and insects. Local barbarian tribes visit the old harbor to fish on occasion, but do not suspect that there anything special about the site. The catacombs are home to a variety of giant insects, and certain portions are inhabited by lower-level undead.

LOST TREASURES OF ERKALION

Those who fled the city over the years did not take all of their valuables with them, nor were the Outer Beings interested in trinkets when they consumed those who remained. A veritable treasure trove awaits anyone persistent enough to find the ruins. Mixed with Lhomarrian coinage and other artifacts, however, are items that were sacred to the cults that held sway here in Erkalion's final days. Some of these are listed below, but the reader is welcome to devise more:

The Sword of Maradan: For reasons long forgotten, General Maradan left his sword behind when he set out on his ultimately fatal campaign to eradicate the last of the Carnifex strongholds. His sword was made at the same time as his helm⁸, and in fact the two were meant to be used together. This is a *normal sword* +2 made of bronze, and grants the wielder immunity against all illusions (from spells, drugs and/or poisons, and natural abilities). When the wielder is also wearing the *Helm of Maradan*, all saving throws also have a +1 bonus.

Gauntlets of Flame: These red leather gauntlets, originally worn by a battle-priest of Xeron, are fastened about the wrists by leather cords and bear the bronze engraved image of a flame (with a small ruby in the centre) on their backs. When worn, the gauntlets allow the wearer to produce normal flames in the palms of their hands, the intensity of which can be controlled by

⁸ See [“Forgotten Places of Davania: The Pillars of Yath-Khe”](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

thought. A candle-sized flame can be kept alight indefinitely, but once it becomes larger than torchlight there is a limit:

A flame equal in size to a torch's light can be maintained for 30 minutes per point of Intelligence of the wearer. Striking with this flame (roll as an unarmed combat attack) does 1d4 damage, as per a torch.

A flame the size of a campfire can be maintained for one turn per point of Intelligence of the wearer. Striking with this flame is awkward (roll -2 to hit for an unarmed combat attack), and each hit does 2d4 damage.

A flame the size of a fireball can be produced three times per day, but it must be thrown at an opponent (roll to hit) immediately, or it winks out of existence in the next round. If hit, an opponent takes 3d6 damage.

For all attacks, an opponent may save vs. Dragon's Breath to take half damage.

The Shield Star of Galbossian: This is a palm-sized, seven-pointed star made of gold and inlaid with a silvery flame pattern extending down the arms. The Lhomarrian word "Senda" ("shield") is etched in the centre. This is one of five magical stars crafted in BC 8390 for the mad Emperor Galhossian's use, to enhance his own power. He used it, and the others, during the Lhomarrian Civil War (BC 8389-8377), during which he personally slayed many powerful opponents and seemed to overcome injuries that would have killed most warriors. After his assassination, imperial powers were curtailed and the Stars were hidden in separate locations. The

shield star acts as a *ring of protection +5*, and creates an anti-magic shield (10' radius, 50% chance of nullifying any incoming spell, unless willed otherwise) around its owner, that moves with him or her.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

There are a number of ways an adventuring party could find themselves in Erkalion:

Castaways: The easiest way is to have the party's vessel be caught in a storm or blown off-course. In such a case, the ruins could become a shelter and place to explore, and the focus of subsequent adventures would be the party figuring out where they are, what happened to the city, and how they can get back to civilization. Their arrival would not go unnoticed by local barbarian tribes...

Expedition: Some scholars know about Lhomarr and Y'hog, and one or more of them might have learned about the existence of Erkalion. The adventuring party could be hired as guards, or (depending on their skills) they might even be hired to conduct the investigations themselves. This would be a voyage of discovery, with the objective of recovering artifacts and bringing them back to their patron. In addition, the players could contend with pirates, rival academics, and even Outer Being cults. Assuming the voyage is a success, Erkalion could be put on the map (literally), which could lead to more complications as other expeditions to the region are mounted. Competition could become fierce...and violent.



The Rise of an Ancient Menace: The evil acts committed by the Outer Being cultists may have faint echoes in the modern era, and it is possible that the sacrifices summoned one or more servitors of the Outer Beings. If so, it is likely that the otherworldly creatures have been biding their time in the catacombs and, if intelligent, they may be concocting plots to further their masters' aims. The arrival of the party might be seen as a sign. Powerful servitors would likely try to corrupt or control some or all of the party members, which could provide opportunities for intense roleplaying and lay the foundations for a series of high-stakes adventures.

Taymora Land of the Dead

(Continued from page 93)

The Sheyallia Elves were divided by the cataclysm. Only the Vyalia clan of Thyatis and the forest elves of Minrothad survived, although clans that were more strongly influenced by the Taymorans, and who had lived long among them, became the water elves.

The collapse of the Malpheggi lizardman civilization, already in an advanced stage by 2000 BC, was completed by the Taymoran cataclysm. The immortals had already

transplanted the better part of the Malpheggi population to the Hollow World at an earlier time, so the few surviving lizardmen of any magical power went into hibernation with their followers.

The Fomorian kingdom survived, but the defeat against the Taymorans had left it broken. Few giantish clans, mostly frost giants and a few stone and hill giants, still live in the Altan Tepes and in the Cruth Mountains.

The Lost Origins of the Elves

A collection of legends from
the most ancient of times

by LoZompatore

PROLOGUE: A LECTURE IN WINDREACH

**Academy of the Dragons, early
EVENING OF KLARMONT, 1 AC 1000**

On the warm dusk ending the day of the summer solstice many people were already seated in the Great Hall at the center of the Assembly of the Sages, one of the most venerable buildings in the distinguished, ancient Academy.

While a score of young Eldars and, strangely, old drakes occupied the lowest seats, many young dragons sat impatiently in a huge gallery right above. A separate canopy hosted some strangers - old, wrinkled elves of many ethnicities whose insignia claimed they came from Norwold, Alphatia, the South and even farther lands. This was another very unusual sight, for the elves were not usually welcome in Windreach.

They were all waiting for the appearance of Tearentym the Scholar, the wisest of the Eldar teachers in this temple of knowledge. His lecture, the only one he still deigned to perform once every two decades in the

carefully planned ceremonial schedule of Windreach, was one of the most sought events of the Academy..

It was said that Taerentym was almost three thousand years old, a respectful age even for most dragons, and that he was among the founders of the Academy, during a wild ancient epoch when it was clear that a systematic method of transmission of knowledge was necessary if the Eldar and dragon civilizations were to survive.

The audience was eager to listen to the venerable, whatever the subject of his lesson, as his words were meditated upon, the culmination of years of study and full of insight, even for the few, old elven sages from across the world who deserved the honour to attend the speech.

With a soft, glimmering light, like mist slowly coalescing into a humanoid figure, the slender silhouette of Tearentym materialized on the basaltic pedestal in the middle of the half-round room. His public appearances were very limited, so many in the audience were surprised to see how the burden of time took its toll on Taerentym's body since they last saw him.

His skin looked like brown sheepskin, his hair a half-blown dandelion, his eyes two black dots in a sea of wrinkles.

"Welcome to this Vicennial Lecture, my students," said the venerable, his strong, high-pitched voice totally unlike the aged body it came from. "I feel this time is a special meeting, as it is happening in a really peculiar turn of events.

"Many among the short-lived races today celebrate the completion of a millennium of some petty organization of theirs. Others, more savvy of mortal history, remember that in a bright, warm morning of slightly more than four millennia ago, the world was changed. The night sky still tears to commemorate that tragedy¹.

"Finally, other people, those who are more in tune with things from the upper worlds beyond ours, are perceiving an unusual tension among the Immortals themselves². No one knows for sure if this is for the good or for the bad. My personal feeling is that I will be soon relieved of the Burden of Time, and this might well be my last Lecture. That's why I'll devote my speech to our past, to remember what we are and how we became so. I'll talk about dragons, Eldar, elves and their origins."

The whole audience stood in awe, as this subject had always been carefully avoided by the venerable as far as the oldest inhabitant of Windreach could remember, even if no

¹ Meteor showers are expected worldwide on 1 Nuwmont according to all calendars listed in the GAZs and PWAs series.

² Refer to the events in Pandius described in Prologue of "WotI: The Immortals 'Fury" supplement.

one was sure of the reason. It was now clear why the invitation to the lecture was extended also to common - albeit distinguished - elves and drakes. Every soul in the hall stood in deferential silence as the old scholar started his speech.

THE FIRST RACE

"It is said that Eldar and elves were born from the very first intelligent race to inhabit Mystara. Legends say that, in the very beginning, our world was covered by an uninterrupted ocean, all the continents buried under miles of water³. Only marine races lived on our planet: maybe some of them were also able to fly⁴ but, in those times, the most important events of life happened in the seas.

An ancient Eldar myth states that, once this World Ocean was ready to harbor life, the Immortals placed a single intelligent life form on it, which was tasked to keep track of the passing of time⁵.

The true shape of this ancestral First Race is nowadays unknown, for many changes happened in the world since then. The Eldar believe they were this very first race

³ For further information see PC3 module "The Sea People" about the creation myth of the Aquarendi.

⁴ Reference here is to the sea dragons (see DM's book of the *Master Set*) which may both fly and swim underwater.

⁵ See the *Dragonlord Trilogy, Book 2*. The very first race was tasked with the so-called Burden of Time. The Eldar believe that Time itself will stop once there is no one left to mark its passage.

themselves, but the changes needed in their bodies in order to adapt to a life on the continents disprove so.

Maybe the bodies of the First Race were more similar to the present-day water elves, the Aquarendi, although sages say that even this people are but an offspring, created after a dramatic flood submerged the first landmasses⁶.

Marine turtles, those grumpy people we also call snappers, boast that they were summoned from far away by a group of ancient Immortals to compete with the First Race in a contest for the beautification of the oceans and of the whole seafloor⁷. In the end

⁶ See the Original Dungeons and Dragons Supplement, "Book 2: Blackmoor" [1975], for more details on this. A legends related to the Sahaugin says that in its early times the world was flooded at least once (likely twice) so the Immortals created three amphibian intelligent races: the lawful Aquarendi, the neutral Tritons and the chaotic Shauagin to cope with a further sinking of the continents. We could speculate that such races were created by the Immortals through splitting of the First Race following alignment criteria. Sahaugin could be the same creature described in AC9 and PC3 supplements and named "shark-kin", given the similar habits, powers and appearance. The [editorial story of the Sahaugin](#) seems to support this. It is even possible that, as many races of sharks exists on Mystara, then there are many races of shark-related humanoids, all of them with different names and with slightly different shapes and histories. So "Sahaugin", "Sar-Aigu" and "Shark-kin" could correspond to three different breeds of the same species

⁷ This sentence is a reference to Bruce Heard's article "[The Truth About The Ancient Turtles' Frightening Secret](#)" and to his speculation about turtles and snappers as agents of the Immortals who had a pivotal role in early Mystara when oceans and

the First Race proved too weak to complete the task and the snappers won the privilege to inhabit the shallowest parts of the sea, where sunlight is greater and prey is abundant. Oddly, the turtles' race, those peaceable cousins of the snappers, have a similar legend in which they helped the First Race to raise islands and continents when the Immortals commanded so⁸.

Unfortunately, nothing more is known about the accomplishments done by the First Race when Mystara was young, and I firmly believe that no one but the oldest Immortals could shed some light on these bygone ages.

Whatever the truth about their origins and true powers, the First Race is now gone. All sages agree it differentiated and mutated into countless species and creatures who now share its humanoid shape, albeit changed into a wide range of variations. For my part, I believe the Immortals moved some of the First Race into some sheltered sanctuary we know nothing of, or raised the last of this kin to live among them in the Upper Planes."

landmasses had to be "refined" after their creation. It is said that a large number of turtles or snappers may summon enough magical energy to reshape the landscape, raising or lowering mountains, creating lakes, moving coastlines and so on.

⁸ See note 7 above.

THE ELДАР KINGDOMS

“So, some time after the continents emerged from the sea, the Eldars evolved from the First Race. Eldars possibly started as a marine or amphibian species but eventually they moved to the dry lands where they prospered and became the proud and mighty race we all know of.

“As you know, all Eldars were truly neutral towards life and the world, and felt at ease within nature and its manifestations. Soon after they settled on the wilderness of the ancient continents, the Eldars attuned so well to the magic field that permeates Mystara everywhere that, within an amazingly short time for such an inexperienced race, they became powerful spellcasters.

“Sages speculate about the true extent of Eldars’ powers but there is a wide agreement in the belief that their spellcasters were among the most powerful Mystara has ever seen, at least on par with the dreaded Carnifex, the reclusive insectoid creators of the Meks, and even the mightiest dragons of today.”

This last sentence by Taerentym was met with a loud snort coming from the dragons’ gallery. It was Laicanar, a talented young black dragon from the Amalur lowlands who recently moved to Windreach to perfect the use of magic.

“No doubt dragons are the flawless merger among matter, magic and spirit. Any achievement of any ancient culture could not remotely vie with the perfect equilibrium reached by the dragons. After all, no ancient

civilized people lived up to the test of time. Today what we can find of such grand and wise races are nothing but ruins or, at best, scattered, puny individuals who survive thanks to the generosity of superior civilizations like the dragons.”

Such an interruption was not only disrespectful towards wise Taerentym and his lecture, but it also offended all the Eldars in the room. Muttering and grumbling started coming from the seats of the Eldars, while hisses and grumbles of praise came from the gallery of dragons. While a newcomer in Windreach, Laicanar quickly managed to gain some support among his fellow young dragons, especially the greens and the blacks.

Nevertheless, Taerentym simply ignored Laicanar’s interference and continued his speech as if he just paused to have a small rest.

“The Eldar’s knowledge of nature and magic gifted this people with a very long lifespan. It is told that the eldest managed to live for over three millennia, so the Eldars had plenty of time to create many wonders in this and the other worlds within their reach. Like the First People, most of these wonders are now lost forever, or they are invisible and otherwise unreachable to us. But, if you wish to have but a glimpse of the Eldars’ powers just look at the night sky and search for the Shining Islands⁹. Such places, with all their magic, wealth, and their philosophy of protection of neutral beings are widely believed to be one of their many creations.

“It is almost sure that at least some of the Eldar kingdoms had large colonies stretching

⁹ The Shining Islands are described in O2 module “*Blade of Vengeance*”.

into the four Elemental Planes¹⁰; moreover settlements were established among the reclusive Early Dwarves of the underground¹¹. At the apex of their civilization, the Eldars were so admired that groups of fey from the faerie world moved into Eldars' cities to live with them, something unheard of in the following ages¹².

¹⁰ This is to connect the origin of drakes stated in the *Dragonlord Trilogy* with the features of Elemental drakes described in the *Monstrous Compendium: Mystara Appendix* supplement. According to the latter, elemental drakes are related (also) to elemental beings and fey people. In this article it is assumed that elemental drakes come from Eldars and feys who lived in colonies on the Elemental Planes.

¹¹ The existence of a subterranean race of dwarven ancestors of the pre-cataclysmic Kogolor dwarves may be inferred to harmonize some official supplements with the rest of canon material. In detail, accessory AC10: "*Bestiary of Dragons and Giants*" page 64 tells a legend about Grinax, the oldest and wisest of the mountain dwarves, and how his people chose to live within the mountains. The *Penhaligon Trilogy* says that dwarves lived underground when the abelaats appeared on Mystara. Finally, if we assume that the world of Aelos described in module CM6: "*Where Chaos Reigns*" is nothing but a parallel pre-cataclysmic Mystara (see "[Adapting CM6 locations to Mystara](#)" for details), then the episode "Forge of Power" clearly states that dwarves were a subterranean race which only later emerged on the surface. We could call this race the Early Dwarves to distinguish them from the Ancient Dwarves (Kogolor) and the Modern Dwarves (Rockhome).

¹² See Note 10 above for the basic approach. PC1 module "*Tall Tales of the Wee Folk*", page 39 states that fairies may live among other races; this happened, for example, in the kingdom of Blackmoor before it embraced technology.

"With all their powers, the Eldar themselves were fond admirers of another race, a race who was not born on Mystara¹³ but whose members reached our world shortly after it was seeded with life. These were the dragons.

"At that time dragons were already majestic creature to be reckoned with, wilder and slightly less intelligent than the modern specimens here represented. Their use of magic was well developed, but somewhat limited. They had their own path to reach Immortality¹⁴, which was very different from those of the other races, and Immortal dragons were not enlisted in the rankings of the usual Immortals we know of¹⁵."

¹³ As per the original *Immortal Set* dragons already existed in the Multiverse when the first Immortals appeared. See also Note 11 above.

¹⁴ See AC10 "*Bestiary of Dragons and Giants*" for details on how dragons collect treasure to ultimately become Immortals.

¹⁵ See the original *Immortal Set*. Here it is said that dragons are the ultimate challengers of mortals, and that their role in the Multiverse is special. It is also said that, according to Immortal legends, during the primeval war between the first Immortals and draedens, dragons took a neutral stance. As the game we are playing is called "*Dungeons and Dragons*" I believe that dragons deserve such an important position in the Multiverse. In the following I suppose that those dragons enlisted in the Immortal rankings (as per *WotI*) are allowed to do so because of the mixing of Eldar and dragon blood in their bodies. True immortal dragons - as per the original *Immortal Set* - not related to the Eldars are created with the procedure described in AC10 and still roam the Prime Plane and the Multiverse.

The Lost Origins of the Elves

Notwithstanding these minor “flaws” - as the Eldars perceived them - dragons were subject of such great admiration that any Eldar which was gifted with slightly more than the average magic power vested to their race wished to become like them.

Many efforts and resources were devoted to this aim and, finally, the Eldar spellcasters’ elite managed to cast an enchantment so powerful to change overnight their whole race. Suddenly, even the least gifted of the Eldars became able to turn at will its own body into a small, grey, dragon-like form which was able to fly, sleep, eat, breathe and speak like any other dragon of the world¹⁶.

¹⁶ The exact powers of the grey dragon form were never explicitly described in the *Dragonlord Trilogy*. “*Wrath of the Immortals: Codex of the Immortals*” states that the

This flawless improvement was heralded as one of the greatest success of the Eldars’ magic, something unparalleled by all past and present mortal people, possibly including dragons themselves.

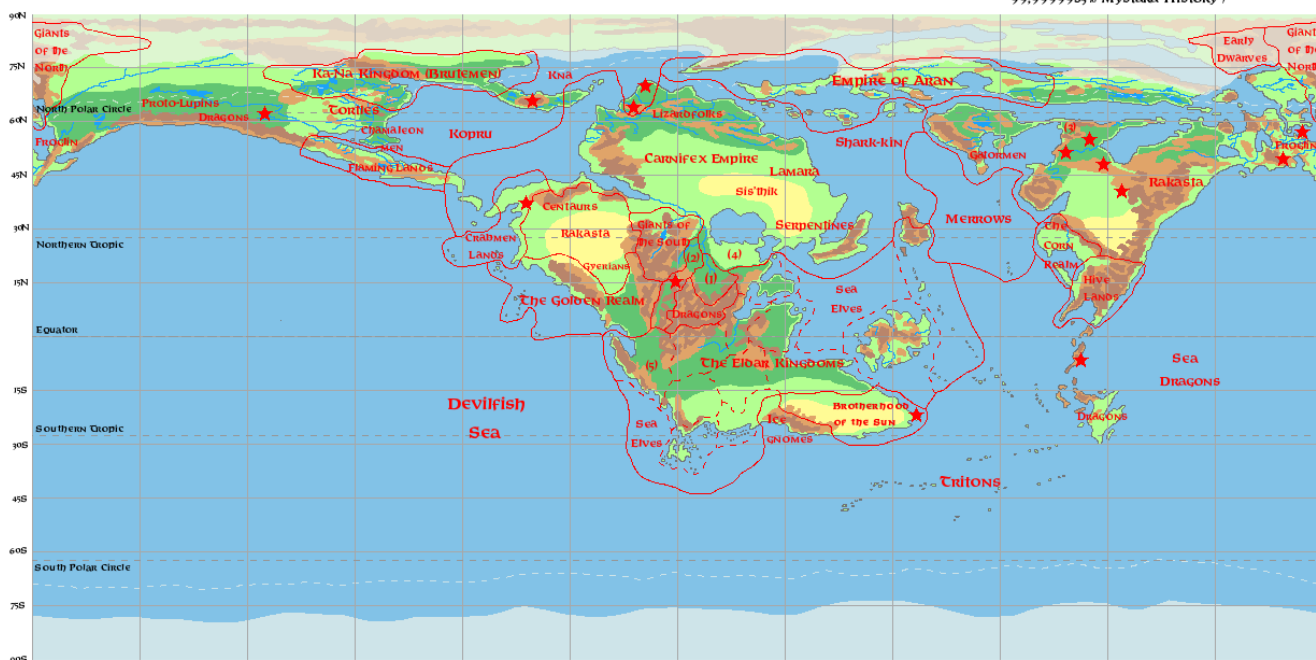
Unfortunately, this was not enough for the most powerful magic-users. Magical people did not content themselves to look, speak and act like dragons. They truly wanted to *become* dragons: a keystone of the Multiverse, all-powerful and free from the control of the Immortals.

It is said that the disaster which befell on the Eldars following this ambition was a punishment cast by the Immortals and

Great One, ruler of all dragons in this part of the Multiverse, was a grey dragon during his mortal life.

Mystara at the height of the Eldar civilization (BC 14500)

(Based on Francesco Defferari article: “99,999999% Mystara History”)



- (1) = Swamp of Omblissa
- (2) = Valley of the Fairies
- (3) = ARQWEN AND ANCESTRAL HAIFING LANDS (FROM CM6 MODULE)
- (4) = PACHYDERMIONS
- (5) = The Faerie Court (WITH AN ELBAR KINGDOM)
- ★ = Elbar Outpost

dragons alike, as the Eldars wished to exempt themselves from the very founding rules of our reality. This curse took the form of a progressive, prolonged split and barbarization of the Eldar race.”

THE ELDAR SPLIT

“According to legends, a terrible catastrophe hit at the end of the 21st generation of Eldars¹⁷ since the establishment of their first great kingdom. Based on the reckoning of the survivors, and of dragons, we have a pretty precise date for the cataclysm, in spite of the chaotic age which ensued. It happened exactly one moon minus one day¹⁸ after the autumnal equinox of 15370 years ago¹⁹;

¹⁷ This is an assumption of mine. In this article it is assumed that an Eldar generation lasts approximately 750 years (approx. double of an elvish generation) so the 21st Eldar generation would correspond to approx. 15750 years since the establishment of their culture. In terms of human life spans the elapsing of 21 generations would correspond to approx 560 human years, which is a typical duration for a culture or a civilization. I supposed that the same duration (in terms of generations) is true also for Eldars.

¹⁸ This date would correspond to 28 Ambyrmont according to the Thyatian calendar. What follows is an attempt of mine to explain the strange celestial activities mentioned for that day on GAZ1 and GAZ3 supplements, which were never detailed elsewhere.

¹⁹ This is another assumption of mine. Eldars and dragons should know the exact date of the catastrophe, as both races actually survived the cataclysm. I chose this date in order to place Thelvyn Foxeyes’ birth - the protagonist of the *Dragonlord Trilogy* - approximately at the beginning of the 21st Eldar generation after their cataclysm - as if this number is somewhat important for

some sages among the Eldars still use a calendar based on this ill-fated day. The sky still changes its color during day or night on the anniversary of this event, as if the magical power unleashed at that time is still echoing in our epoch. Or, maybe, this celestial omen is a sign from the Immortals who just want us - Eldars and dragons - to forever remember the foolishness of our ancestors.

“Only speculation is possible about what exactly caused the cataclysm, as the precise procedure used by the all-powerful mages who performed the spell was banned and neutralized immediately after the event. It is widely believed it was caused by the excess of wild magic accumulated within the most powerful Eldar spellcasters while they were attempting the final metamorphosis of their grey dragon shapes into the new, true chromatic dragon breed they named *the Grey Dragon*²⁰.

Eldars’ destiny.

²⁰ According to *WotI* (background of the Great One entry) grey dragons are an early - and now disappeared - form dating back to an age when chromatic dragons were mostly undifferentiated. I don’t like this explanation because according to the *Dragonlord Trilogy*, the Great One - who became an Immortal around BC 3200 - was a grey dragon during his mortal life. This seems to me too a short timespan to move from an undifferentiated grey form to the full spectrum of chromatic dragons of AC 1000 - assuming 1000 years for a draconic generation this timespan would amount to just 4-5 generations. I believe that is also more in the spirit of the original *Immortal Set* and also AC10 module to have chromatic dragons as very ancient breeds of wyrms. For this reason in the following the Grey Dragons are assumed to be a magic breed of dragons created by the Eldars and soon diluted in the other chromatic dragons breed until it disappeared.

“Eldar magic was so developed and refined at that time that a total failure was simply not possible. The spell actually did succeed but at the expense of the magically weakest members of the Eldar race, which in truth were the majority of their people.

“So the most powerful spellcasters became true Grey Dragons, indeed. At the same time a small number of Eldars managed to resist the spell and did not suffer any modification to their bodies and their powers. Unfortunately, for the rest of the population, the spell turned into a curse. The vast majority of the Eldars were massively drained of their magic and lifeforce, which were adsorbed by the spell and transferred to the magic elite while they were turning into Grey Dragons.

“What was worse, the fallen Eldars were turned into a score of distinct new races, unable to reproduce again with the surviving Eldars and all provided with a shorter lifespan and lesser magic than the previous Eldar form. And this is how the elves, among others, were created on Mystara.

“The spell was so powerful that it did not stop at the planar boundaries of our universe: it sought after Eldars wherever they were found into the Multiverse, and instantly turned most of them into someone - or something - else.

“And this catastrophe was what became known as the Eldar Split.”

Related Races

“This Split did not just create Grey Dragons and elves, other races were created as well: all drake forms - mandrakes, woodrakes, coldrakes, and elemental drakes - spawned from the magical backlash as some kind of intermediate breed between Eldars, elves, dragons and other races.

“It is believed that at least some of the drakes’ species came from those among the faerie folks who were more attuned with the Eldars²¹. The so-called elemental drakes might derive from Eldars who changed their bodies to live in their colonies in the Elemental Planes.

“With respect to the non-elemental breeds of drakes a hsiao sage called Tyrk-tyrk-Hsueh²² found strong evidence that mandrakes, woodrakes and coldrakes come from an unique, ancestral shapeshifting race which differentiated shortly after the Great Rain of Fire. If this should ever be confirmed, this differentiation should be considered as another part of the curse cast on the Eldars following the Split.

“Those among the Eldars who managed to survive the Great Split untouched were, maybe, those more balanced in magic and more attuned to Mystara’s natural forces. However, they were scattered throughout the Eldar kingdoms and the Planes, their numbers too few to keep their civilization

²¹ See the *Monstrous Compendium: Mystara Appendix* at the entry about Drakes for legends about the birth of the many breeds of drakes.

²² This character is cited in *PC1 “Tall Tales of the Wee Folks”*, page 39, as one of the most renowned sages about drakes’ lore.

working. Slowly, they tried to regroup and establish sanctuaries at least in key locations of their culture, but large distances and turmoil caused by the newly created elves, dragons and drakes prevented most of their efforts from succeeding.

“On the dragons’ side, it is currently unknown if related races such as wyverns, dragonflies²³, thunderheads²⁴, dragon turtles, dragonnes²⁵, pocket dragons²⁶ and mythical creatures like the flapsails²⁷ were created during the Split. I believe it is likely that most of them have other origins as the dragon race is among the oldest of the Multiverse.”

“This is incorrect. You know very well the lesser dragon forms were created in the Draconic Cluster²⁸ and sent as servants and counselors for true dragons. Even if the other races believe such kin are nothing but wild, runaway creatures the lesser dragons will always obey commands from a true dragon. Or, at least, they better ought to obey!” Again, Laicanar dared interrupt the speech of Taerentym to state his personal

opinion. He glared at the audience as if to challenge anyone to deny what was commonly held among dragons as a well established fact of nature. No one replied, even if some discomfort could be perceived in the canopy hosting the guest elves, which were starting to realize that Taerentym’s speech was going to disclose very bad news about the origins of their race.

“Well Laicanar, yes, I concede that my last sentence is somewhat a speculation. Too few among the wise dare spending some time with the lesser draconic forms to learn more about their origins - at least if they wish to come back with their lives. True dragons, on the other part, do not care very much on the history and the opinions of what they perceive just as their servants, am I right?”

²³ See *Monstrous Compendium: Mystara Appendix* for a short description.

²⁴ See *Monstrous Compendium: Mystara Appendix* for a short description.

²⁵ See AC9 module “*Creature Catalogue*” for a short description.

²⁶ See AC9 module “*Creature Catalogue*” for a short description.

²⁷ This monster is described in the *Hollow World* boxed set, *DM’s Sourcebook*, page 23. In this entry it is hinted that this creature could possibly be an ancestor of modern dragons or an unintelligent offshoot of red dragons.

²⁸ The Draconic Cluster is the set of external Planes of Existence where the Great One and the Dragon Rulers have established their seats. For further information see the *Immortal Set DM’s manual*.

THE AFTERMATH OF THE SPLIT AND THE RISE OF THE ABELAATS

“But let’s go back to some of the social consequences of the Split.

“Most of the newborn Grey Dragons did not feel obliged to care about the new races: unchanged Eldars could be helped, for sure, but most of the strange beings spawned from the Split were clearly doomed to extinction within a few generations so, why waste efforts and allocate part of the available limited resources to them?

“Many Grey Dragons just decided to selfishly ignore such interrogatives and fled away from the crumbling Kingdoms, eager to use their new powers to explore Mystara and the other worlds on par with the other dragon breeds. They established their own lairs in far away wilderness abodes never to be heard anymore, worsening the lack of powerful spellcasters in the aftermath of the Split, and hastening the decadence of the same Kingdoms they came from.

“And, from their new lairs, they mixed with the rest of dragon society, mating with the chromatics and spawning a mixed lineage.

“The Eldar spell was indeed the finest magical creation of their race, for a grey dragon was able to mate with every possible kind of chromatic dragon and have healthy descendants by them. But something odd happened to the offspring: every time the eggs laid by a grey and chromatic couple hatched, newborns were much more similar to the chromatic parent than to the grey one.

It is now widely believed this was part of the curse the Immortals cast on the Eldars, to slowly remove the grey race from the number of the dragons, while it seems that mixing with the greys indeed enhanced intelligence and magical abilities of most of the chromatics²⁹.

“After ten thousand years - just a few generations in dragons’ terms - the greys as a separate breed were no more. Just a few “pure” members were left, one of the last of them being the mortal form of the current patron of the dragons of Mystara, the Immortal commonly known as the Great One³⁰.”

“This is utter nonsense!” roared Laicanar amid the discomfited silence of the audience which followed Taerentym’s

²⁹ This is to explain while, according to *BECMI* rule sets (see for example the monsters sections of *Rules Cyclopedica* or *Companion Set*), there are chromatic dragons with the ability to speak and cast spells, while other members of the same color are not able to do so. The idea is that the chromatic dragons with higher intelligence and magical skills are descended from some ancient mating between a grey dragon and a chromatic one.

³⁰ Again, make reference to “*Wrath of the Immortals: Codex of the Immortals*” where it is stated that the Great One, ruler of all dragons in this part of the Multiverse, was a grey dragon during his mortal life. It is also stated that this grey dragon breed is now extinct on Mystara. Notice that, according to the *Dragonlord Trilogy*, the Great One was but a young dragon at the time of the conflict between dragons and the Dragonlord (approx. BC 3200) so the extinction of the grey dragons should be a fairly recent event. That’s why it is supposed here that the Great One was one of the last grey dragons of Mystara.

revelations. “Dragons are a pure race, current dragons are not and cannot be the result of a mixing with inferior blood. Assuming they existed at all, those “greys” were not true dragons and they should have been exterminated on sight by any real dragon worthy of its secret name!”

“That’s right! And what you spoke about the Great One being one of such impure beings during His revered mortal life is nothing short of blasphemy! Our Canon is adamant in explaining that the Old One was born with the grey scales which were his early and revered symbol of kingship among dragons! What you are telling us are nothing but ignominious conjectures.” This cold speech came from Mar-Hillaeth an exotic young blue dragon from the burning sands of the internal Forlorn Lands³¹, very pious and proud of her faith in the Great One.

Before a flaming debate on the real nature of dragons and of the Great One could be started, Taerentym’s surprisingly loud voice stood above the bustle of the audience. A spell was likely used by the venerable sage to

produce this effect, which managed to silence the hall.

“Please! Please! You could check every single word, I repeat, every single word of my speech here in Windreach, by looking at the Academy Library, or at the Grand Temple of the Great One, or even at the Annals of Draconic Generations. You could also ask it to two or three sages currently in the city. My assistants Clevix, Bonnath and Merjelle will be more than happy to provide you with the needed references on request. But now, please let me continue my exposition.

“On this matter I’d like also to point out that Laicanar’s reaction is not different from what many of his draconic ancestors felt when the greys started mixing with their kin. Incidents happened and many greys were killed or treated as outcasts by their fellow chromatic breeds. But, in the end, assimilation prevailed and now the grey’s heritage is visible in most of the draconic line - and, I must say, in all of the most gifted individuals like Laicanar and Mar-Hillaeth.

“So, let’s go back to the chaos befalling the Eldar Kingdoms. Extraplanar colonies were immediately lost, while most of the faeries - out of fear of further metamorphoses - took refuge in the wilderness surrounding the Eldar Kingdoms and refused to help the surviving Eldars.

“The newborn elves, deprived of most of their former magic, abandoned by most of their former leaders now turned into greys and afflicted with a halved lifespan with respect to their previous form, suffered the greatest cultural shock. Within a couple of

³¹ The Forlorn Lands is the unofficial name of the Southern Aryptian Desert shown in the map of *VotPA* Episode 5 (Varelyya), stretching on the eastern coast of Davania between Varelyya and the Aryptian Savannah. To my knowledge this name was first introduced in the [Ambyrmont Events chapter of the fan-produced AC1016 Almanac](#) and I believe it could be a good tag for the dominions of the western Varelyyan Empire (by Geoff Gander in [“Varelyyan Timeline”](#)) turned into wastelands after the curse by the Immortals (see *“Voyage of the Princess Ark”* episode 5 for details about the curse).

generations all the elves living in secluded areas, or just too far from other patches of civilization, had reverted to barbarism and primitive lifestyle³².

“Things went slightly better where helpful Eldars and grey dragons could still be found. Out of honor, pity and guilt those people managed to establish petty nations, ruled by themselves and populated by elves and drakes, where the ancient traditions of the Eldars were kept and observed, albeit with a lesser and lesser interest and belief as the whole population - “nobles” and “peasants” alike - realized that it was now impossible to return to their former glory.

“Within two mere elvish generations after the fall - seven centuries of mortal time - what was left of the mighty Eldar Kingdoms was but a vast wilderness populated by barbaric elves and decadent small dominions populated by frustrated commoners and ruled by a tired and discouraged aristocracy.

“And this is when the Abelaats³³ came to Mystara.”

³² This is also to match the fact that primitive elves are described here and there in many supplements, including the *Dragonlord Trilogy* itself (which refers to primitive elves’ tribes inhabiting the forests of central Brun as of AC 500). Moreover, if the approach about *CM6* module as an alternate ancient Mystara is considered (see Note 7 above for details) then primitive elves roamed the world together with the first humans in the ages which should be subsequent to the Eldars’ fall.

³³ Abelaats are described in the second and third volume of the *Penhaligon Trilogy*. A general description and a summary of their powers is available in [“Abelaat Information”](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

PACTS WITH THE ABELAATS

“One of the side effects of the fall of the Eldars was that Mystara became free game for other beings, extraplanar creatures who were met by the Eldars during their golden age and which were kept at bay by their great powers.

“When it became clear that the Eldar power was now broken, some of these beings decided the time was right to reach Mystara and prey upon the great resources it harbored. One of the most insidious menaces came from an entire living world, an extraplanar maze of tunnels inhabited by the Abelaats³⁴.

The Abelaat Colonization

“The Abelaats of ancient times were themselves highly magical beings, said to be among the fairest humanoids to have ever reached Mystara. Their own world was shaped like a network of blood vessels, and the blood flowing into abelaats’ veins was indeed the source of their powers.

“Some scholars speculate that they were some kind of vampires as they had the habit to suck the blood of humanoids, including other abelaats. As their entire magic system was based upon solidified drops of blood, I believe that this strange inclination was nothing but a way to extract magic from

³⁴ See the third volume of the *Penhaligon Trilogy* for details of the abelaats home world.

themselves but, as abelaats are now an extinct race³⁵, we'll never know for sure.

“The abelaats built many extraplanar bridges connecting Mystara with their home world and crossed them in great numbers³⁶. Even if they did not suffer any hindrance while staying on open ground, abelaats on Mystara preferred building subterranean cities and villages, as they were more reminiscent of the endless network of tunnels and caves their entire world was made of.

“Abelaats’ main colonies were built on a neglected large island offshore the coast of Davania, a former Eldar colony named Lhomarr³⁷ which at that time was mostly populated by fragmented tribes of wild elves. From these colonies small groups of abelaats moved on the continents, to live among the

other intelligent races of Mystara, offering knowledge, lore and magical powers, seemingly in exchange for nothing.

“Barbaric elves, especially those on Lhomarr, became fascinated by the tokens the abelaats provided in exchange for permission to settle part of their land, or for the promise to end a feud with another tribe, or for teaching young elves science, art and magic.

“The tokens usually had the shapes of solidified drops of abelaats’ blood, and were highly magical in nature. They could easily increase the number of spells a magic user could remember every day, emulate some much needed clerical powers by directly communing with the abelaats home plane, or they could easily be cast into jewelry pieces to radiate some permanent magical effect on the wielder or their surroundings.

“The tokens were very versatile and extremely easy to use and - as the abelaats never imbued explicitly evil or offensive powers into them - they also were pretty safe to be handled.

“In short, abelaats’ teachings and instruments were less refined but a lot easier to understand than the ancient, weighty Eldar lore and so the elves became eager to adopt and use anything the abelaats would deign to gift them. As living conditions of every clan who received the abelaats in their land improved greatly in a very short time, the abelaats soon became welcome everywhere among the elves.

“The same happened to primitive dwarves. At that ancient time dwarves were still an

³⁵ This is not really true as, according to book two of the *Penhaligon Trilogy* at least a descendant of the first abelaats is still alive hidden in Karameikos, while an extraplanar invasion of eastern Darokin and northern Karameikos is described in book three. The events depicted in both volumes could be set during *WotI* (a good placement would be in AC 1006 together with the Master’s invasion of western Darokin, to prevent the arrival of reinforcements from Selenica) so some years after the current speech of Tarentym.

³⁶ Just to give a dating to this event we could assume the first abelaats came to Mystara between BC 13800 and BC 13700.

³⁷ Lhomarr is a creation by Geoff Gander (for a general introduction see [“Lhomarr: The Land, Its People, and Their History”](#)), an Atlantis-like island where a mighty human civilization thrived and fell way before the rise of Blackmoor and the current civilizations of Mystara. What follows is an attempt of mine to connect the Lhomarrians to the early humans and to explain how they managed to create the first advanced human culture.

underground race³⁸, hailing from the very mountain ranges and hills of Norwold we are inhabiting now³⁹. They came to appreciate the abelaats so much - likely because they shared the same subterranean habitat - that they established proper alliances wherever distances made it possible. The abelaats helped dwarves enlarge their cities, enrich their food stocks and, possibly, they also started a complex magical procedure involving the extraplanar haephestons that

would have enabled the dwarves to live above ground after a few millennia⁴⁰.

“The other intelligent races of Mystara were indifferent or benign toward the abelaats’ intervention into Mystara’s affairs. In particular, surviving Eldars and dragons were treated with great respect by the abelaats, who appeared to them as fond admirers of Eldar culture, really wishing to help Mystara to find a new greatness.

“Abelaats respectfully avoided trading and interfering with places and peoples where dragons and Eldars still acted as patrons. The most notable of such enclaves was a large forest along the northern mid-latitudes centered on a decadent elvish town called Ringlo Hall, established and governed by Eldars and dragons over an earlier Eldar settlement⁴¹. The abelaats, curious about a

³⁸ This is an inference from various sources. According to the *Penalighon Trilogy* abelaats and dwarves became very close, mostly thanks to the similar underground environment they shared. If information from *AC10* is considered (the legend of Grinax and Zalaj on page 64) then the first dwarves were solely underground creatures, which is supported also by the episode “Forge of Power” of *CM6* module - under the assumption the events of *CM6* actually happened in the ancient past of Mystara, the world of Aelos just being an alternate pre-GROF version of it. In particular, the episode “Forge of Power” narrates how the dwarves first emerged from the underground to live as an above ground race and how they learnt to forge iron and other metals. Now, if the *HW* boxed set information is taken into account, then pre-GROF dwarves of 6000 BC (the Kogolor race) lived above ground as herders and farmers. At the same time the *Pehalighon Trilogy* states that abelaats were destroyed by the first humans (which according to *PWAI* are not much older than 10000 BC). So, by combining all these references, the transition between subterranean dwarves and the Kogolors should have happened between 10000 BC and 6000 BC, placing the “Forge of Power” episode of *CM6* within this timeframe. In the attached timeline the date of 7800 BC is suggested.

³⁹ See *HW* boxed set pre-cataclysmic map: ancient dwarves lived in what is present day Norwold between the Wurmsteeth Range and Frosthaven.

⁴⁰ Reference here is to the “Forge of Power” episode of *CM6* module, see also Note 38 above for details. It is speculated that the abelaats arranged long-term plans for subterranean dwarves to emerge to the surface and become the Kogolor race but then the abelaats became extinct many millennia before this chain of events reached its completion.

⁴¹ Ringlo Hall is the main settlement of the Elves of the North. As detailed in “*Dave Arneson’s Blackmoor - The First Campaign*” setting for 4th Edition pages 183 and 184, the elves living in the Red Woods surrounding Ringlo Hall (of the Cumasti lineage) remember their bloodlines up to at least eleven elvish generations. As it is stated that an elvish generation is almost 400 years and that the setting would be placed around 4000 BC, then there are uninterrupted bloodlines of elves living in Ringlo Hall up to at least 8400 BC. In the same reference it is also said that most rituals and traditions followed by the Cumasti are actually meaningless and devoid of significance as

nearby wild magic source guarded by dragons⁴², settled within the Genander elvish clan⁴³, just outside the borders of Ringlo Hall territory, which they never crossed if not invited to do so.

“Following this and other examples most Eldars and dragons became persuaded of the abelaats’ good intents and gladly left to them the burden of civilizing the barbaric elves.”

“This is rather hard to believe,” the quiet, sober voice of Ellethior echoed in the room. “No dragon, irrespective of its personal

the elves do not remember their origins. Moreover, in “*Dave Arneson’s Blackmoor - The Dungeons of Castle Blackmoor*” supplement for 3.5 Edition, page 9, it is said that, long before the coming of men, the rock where castle Blackmoor will be built (not very far from Ringlo Hall) was inhabited by a large group of dragons. Connecting both references with the relationship between Eldars, dragons and elves of the *Dragonlord Trilogy* it could be assumed that the whole region of Ringlo Hall was an elvish colony where the ancient traditions of the Eldars were observed by a group of “civilized” elves under the patronage of the dragons of the rock of Blackmoor (and likely, of a few surviving Eldars).

⁴² See Note 41 above. The wild magic source is of course, the magical black rock over which Castle Blackmoor would be built when the region was colonized by humans.

⁴³ Refer to the background of pre-generated PC Ismelian Sotadis of *DA3* module (page 47), where the high elves of Genander house (possibly connected with the elves of the Red Woods) are mentioned. In the following it is assumed that the Genander elves are a separate group with respect to the Cumasti and the Westryn elves living in the Blackmoorian lands according to “*Dave Arneson’s Blackmoor - The First Campaign*” setting.

opinions, would recant their duties toward the ‘inferior’ elves once such vows are taken.” Ellethior was the young leader of the Chosen of Vanya⁴⁴, a relatively new group inside the Wurmsteeth dragons who took very seriously their oaths. Laicanar, usually a vocal opponent of the Chosen, seemed to approve of Ellethior’s interruption of Taerentym’s speech.

“Elves were not exactly abandoned by Eldars and dragons to be entrusted to the abelaats.” Came the quick reply by Taerentym. “No duty was neglected and no vow was broken. All patron races still exerted their benign influence on the barbaric clans; Eldars and dragons did not stop visiting elvish tribes providing teachings and guidance when needed. It seems they just accepted the much needed help from the abelaats which took over for themselves much of the burden where Eldars and dragons could not spare enough leaders, such as on the island of Lhomarr. But please, let me continue the story and, before the end, everything will be clear to you.

⁴⁴ A group of 50 Wurmsteeth dragons pledging their loyalty to Vanya is cited on page 29 of *M1* module, and they are considered “a divine force”. The name Chosen of Vanya seemed to me a good choice for this group. I’d say that most of these dragons - if not all of them - are pretty young, to avoid overpowering them.

The High Elves

“The golden age of the abelaats lasted for seven elvish generations, approximately two thousands and a half mortal years. The civilized parts of Mystara were mostly in peace and, to an external observer, all the intelligent races prospered and grew in numbers, although part of this development was plagued by decadence.

“Those elves still under the direct tutelage of Eldars and dragons stabilized their culture in what could be somewhat defined as a mockery of the ancient Eldar traditions: they appeared as progressive, cultivated people very respectful of an ancient and rigid set of regulations which they neither contributed to building, nor fully understood the founding reasons of.

“Their culture was most sterile, albeit dissent was growing in small groups of young elves who started spending more and more time in the woods, to become elves of the wilderness, a compromise between ceremony and barbarism⁴⁵.

“Elves living with the abelaats developed a new grand civilization of their own, and became known as the High Elves. Although they did not manage to reach the heights of the fallen Eldars, the High Elves indeed built a living culture on the ashes of the fall of their ancestors. They lived and traded with the abelaats, on the island of Lhomarr and in other enlightened places all over Mystara. Music, dance, poetry, magic and all kind of

sublime arts were practiced and fondly followed among the High Elves⁴⁶. Thanks to magic and the knowledge of medicine their lifespan soon became very long, possibly spanning more than a millennium; and with the help of the abelaats exploration of the Outer Planes of Existence resumed.

“According to legends, the peak of the High Elves/abelaat civilization on Mystara was reached when the Immortals themselves showed up and selected the High Elves’ queen Amberiel and the abelaat First Witch Belotra the Beautiful to become the keepers of the mystic Sigil of the Cup, one of the Seven Sigils guarding the extraplanar prison of the dreaded Carnifex^{47 48}.

⁴⁶ This follows the description of the High Elves of the External Plane of Alfheim as per GAZ7 page 63.

⁴⁷ If Geoff Gander articles are taken into account (see for example [“Y’hog Carnifex”](#) for details) not all of the Carnifex were banned. Some degenerate and less powerful breeds were spared and survived for some more millennia on Mystara, such as the Y’hog Carnifex or the Deep Carnifex. The original breed who was exiled into the extraplanar prison is made of the so-called Great Carnifex.

⁴⁸ For details about Amberiel and Belotra the Beautiful see M3 module pages 7 and 8. In this module Belotra is described as a beautiful human, here I assume she is actually an abelaat. The relationship of Amberiel and Belotra with the High Elves and the abelaats is just an attempt of mine to deepen the background of both characters and provide some insights to the Green Realm they rule. According to Geoff Ganders’ timeline the Great Carnifex (see note above) were banned from Mystara sometime between BC 10000 and BC 9000 (see [“Of the Lore and Legends of Y’hog, City of the Unclean Ones, and of that Race”](#) for details). Nevertheless, if this banishment is placed two to three millennia earlier, then it

⁴⁵ Elves living in the woods surrounding Ringlo Hall would later become the ancestors of the Westryn elves described in D20 Blackmoor campaign set.

“Amberiel and Belotra the Beautiful moved to the faraway Plane of Existence of the Green Realm, along with a retinue of their worthiest servants, to live forever in the castle of Caer Amberiel fulfilling this most honorable duty⁴⁹.

The Dark Elves

“Nevertheless, this great honour apparently was not enough. Among the High Elves there were also those looking for a greater integration with their patrons, out of friendship or out of the mere search for more wealth and magical power.

“Over the centuries many among those ambitious individuals agreed on a wicked pact with the abelaats to become more

is possible to envision a contribution of the High Elves/abelaat alliance to the fall of the Carnifex. That would explain why there are elves guarding the extraplanar prison and why they were rewarded with one of the Sigils. In the attached timeline I assume the banishment of the Great Carnifex to occur around BC 12700. By the way, the other beings in charge of the other six Sigils described in *M3* module may all be part of this ancient alliance which managed to exile those evil creatures. Possibly even Nabumetis (from the Rainbow Realm), Malkar the Warrior (from the Red Realm), Sorabeth the Lawgiver (from the Blue Realm) and Kerrisar (from the White Realm) could be High Elves or abelaat heroes rewarded by the Immortals with a special place in the Seven Realms guarding the Pits of Banishment.

⁴⁹ According to *M3* module Amberiel is now tired of her endless guard and really wishes to be relieved of such a burden. On the contrary, Belotra developed a strong dislike of any changing and would gladly continue her service forever.

similar to their extraplanar allies. And this is how the feared, brilliant and unpredictable Dark Elves were born⁵⁰.

“This final pact required the High Elves who embraced it to share the same blood with the abelaats. In this way the elves further increased their intelligence, lifespan and magical powers, at the expense of major changes in their appearance and behaviour.

“Their skin became black as night and they acquired a love for cold and subterranean environments, rarely going on the surface during daylight. They also obtained a natural understanding of the currents of life and death; although at first they could not reproduce they soon learned how to bind an errant soul in a new body to create an offspring⁵¹. Dark Elves excelled in arcane fields of study like necromancy, magic related to cold, magical metalcraft, planar travel, and, especially, life-binding rituals⁵². It is speculated that most of the current magical art used to create an intelligent weapon was brought to the world by Dark Elves’ research.

“It is widely believed among sages that Dark Elves have always been few in number, as the abelaats were very discerning about who was eligible for their "gift" and due to the very

⁵⁰ Dark Elves are powerful extraplanar beings based on real world Nordic sagas, mentioned and briefly described in *GAZ7*.

⁵¹ This is a speculation of mine, just to give some more interesting features to the Dark Elves and avoid an overpopulation of such powerful beings.

⁵² This list comes from *GAZ7* description of a magical object called “The Ring of the Nine Svartalven” (page 28 of *DM’s* manual) which was forged by the Modrigsberg dwarves by binding the souls of nine sages of the Dark Elves.

difficult procedure needed to create new children. However few, since their creation and almost until their demise, the Dark Elves became the ruling honoured elite of the High Elves and were taken in high respect by most of the other intelligent races - common elves, Eldars, dragons, ancient dwarves and abelaats.

“In particular, some sages speculate that groups of ancient dwarves became so fascinated with the Dark Elves’ ritual they persuaded the abelaats in establishing a similar procedure also for them. The rites the abelaats used for dwarves were simpler and somewhat diminished with respect to what they used to create the Dark Elves. Nevertheless they succeeded in creating the so-called Shadow Dwarves⁵³.

“Ironically, Shadow Dwarves could freely reproduce as an independent race and so, within a dwarvish generation, instead of becoming the leaders the common dwarves expected them to be, the Shadow Dwarves banded together in a unique clan and exploited a set of deep tunnels to cross the sea south of their ancestral lands, moving

under the glaciers⁵⁴ which then covered the Kerothar Mountains.”

The fraud is unveiled

“But this golden age cannot last, because no one gives anything for free. All the lore and guidance and services provided by the abelaats came with an unknown price, a price the abelaats themselves started collecting since their very first day on Mystara.

“The very extraplanar gates the abelaats used to reach our world acted also as drain channels from which Mystara’s magical energy was transferred to the abelaats’ home plane⁵⁵. This magic was used to create new abelaats and power the very living structure their original world was made of. Some scholars speculate the abelaats’ home world was actually some sort of extraplanar parasite feeding on the magic of other worlds of the Prime Plane⁵⁶.

“At the beginning the loss of magic was subtle and very slow but, over centuries, it turned into an unstoppable flow as the numbers of abelaat colonists and connecting tunnels increased without control. Even then, the amount of magic on Mystara was so great that magical races perceived this loss

⁵³ Shadow Dwarves are a mysterious subterranean race of dwarves introduced by Bruce Heard in his blog. Available information are in [“Lower Stoutfellow -- Alphatia's Underworld”](#), [“Frisland: The Marquisate of Azafeth”](#), [“The Alphatian Province of Frisland”](#), and [“Ar: Walking with the Wraiths”](#) at Bruce Heard’s blog. This article is an attempt to provide some background about their possible origins.

⁵⁴ According to *DotE - Player’s Guide to Alphatia*, (page 5) most of the Alphatian continent - and definitely the Kerothar Mountains - were covered by ice before the Great Rain of Fire and up to BC 1700 - 1800.

⁵⁵ See the *Penhaligon Trilogy* for details.

⁵⁶ Some further details on this theory are available on the article [“Megaliths and the Norns Cycle”](#) by me in *Threshold Magazine* issue #9.

only after 2500 years of abelaat colonization and, by that time, it was way too late to intervene.

“The Dark Elves were well aware of the drainage mechanism, but they did not reveal the scam to the other races, because of their friendship with the abelaats - to which they thought they were more similar with respect to the High Elves - and because of the ill-fated intervention of the Entropic Immortals. Dark Elves meddling with necromancy and life-binding magic soon drew the attention of many powerful evil beings, who managed to corrupt the elite and exchange their guilty silence for more arcane powers.

“As most of the greatest magic was now the prerogative of the abelaats and the dark elves, both of which were clearly unaffected by the magical drainage, it was easy for them to persuade the other races - especially dragons - that the increasing magical weakness they were perceiving was nothing but their own fault, due to the lack of commitment and dedication to the study of arcane power. On occasion, to divert too inquisitive minds from discovering the truth, the abelaats changed the magical flow direction of one or more extraplanar bridges over a specified area for a given amount of years, to give the impression that everything was right and no actual drainage was in place.

“Moreover, entropic intervention managed to conceal for most of the time the real situation to the other Immortals. They managed to silence every desperate lament coming from Mystara itself - in the form of the living megalith Urt and its retinue of

druids⁵⁷, whose calls went unheeded for centuries.

“For a time the brute-men were used by Urt in a desperate attempt to warn the other races of their impending doom. The brute-men were partially successful in persuading the ancient dwarves⁵⁸ - but not the shadow dwarves - who distanced themselves from the abelaats and suspended most of their alliances with them. Nevertheless the brute-men soon found themselves persecuted by the abelaats on the false charge of inciting hatred between the races. As a punishment they were exiled and scattered to the inhospitable areas of Mystara, where the ice was receding from the last glaciation⁵⁹. There the harsh environment greatly reduced their numbers in just a few generations⁶⁰.

⁵⁷ According to the *Immortal Set*, druids are the priests of the megalith which forms the world of Mystara, they are able to understand the language of the megalith in the form of subtle and slow changing of the environment.

⁵⁸ This is to explain why dwarves suffered less guilt than elves when faced with their former relationship with the abelaats, as described in the *Penhaligon Trilogy*. Here I guess this is because dwarves were the first race to act against the abelaats when their treason became clear to the world.

⁵⁹ This is a reference to the events described in *CM6* section “In the beginning”. This section describes how the first humans appeared on the world during the end of the last ice age.

⁶⁰ This is a more fictionalized explanation about the near extinction of the brute-men. Instead of direct competition with modern humans (if so, why do brute-men still exist in isolated pockets throughout the Outer World?) and considering also the refined society of Mystara of BC10000 described in this article, brute-men were actually ostracized and exiled to inhospitable places through false charges produced by the

“And finally the unavoidable truth was unveiled: the magical field of Mystara became so low that all magical races such as fey people, dragons, Eldars and the High Elves became ill and weak. None but the most gifted individuals were able to reproduce or to access arcane spells⁶¹. And then both the abelaats and the Dark Elves showed their true nature: their intent was to drain every single drop of magical energy from Mystara, leading all the other magical races to extinction⁶².

The War of the Gates

“Out of desperation, the High Elves bitterly expelled the abelaats and the Dark Elves from their society and tried to build up a coalition with dragons, common elves, fey people and other intelligent races to wage war on the evil alliance and counter the terrible menace to their survival. This war became known as the War of the Gates, a major conflict mostly forgotten by all but the dragons⁶³.

abelaats, where the harsh environment claimed its toll.

⁶¹ This is what would happen to magical races in case Mystara should lose its magical field according to *GAZ3* (page 79). The Nucleus of the Spheres here is not involved, but the effects should be the same.

⁶² Again, see *GAZ3* page 79 for further details.

⁶³ This is an elaboration from what is described about the demise of the abelaats in the *Penhaligon Trilogy*. According to the books the alliance between the abelaats and elves and dwarves was broken after the abelaats' theft of the magical energy of Mystara was uncovered. Turning this conflict into a centuries-spanning war called War of the Gates is an idea of mine.

“Unfortunately, this war started very bad for the High Elves' coalition. The ancient dwarves expelled all the abelaats and dark elves from their lands, but then declared themselves neutral⁶⁴ and spent the rest of the war facing the piratical incursions of the Shadow Dwarves. As per the other allies, those powerful historical masters of Mystara, they all were too much dependant on magic, and their weakened status was no match for the combined powers of abelaats and Dark Elves, which instead had the almost unlimited supply of Mystara's arcane power to draw stored on the abelaats' home plane.

“The High Elves coalition found early in the war they could use the same extraplanar bridges of the abelaats to reverse the flow of magic and bring it back to Mystara. After the first successful surprise attacks on such strategic positions the evil alliance regrouped around the bridges and fortified them, turning the conflict into a long set of sieges. An so, despite many bloody battles and assaults, the weakened High Elves and dragons were not able to fully displace the enemy out of the lands they occupied.

⁶⁴ In the *Penhaligon Trilogy* it is said that dwarves were allied with the abelaats but they did not reach the same friendship that formed between abelaats and elves, instead. Dwarves (albeit ancient dwarves) are not a strongly magical race so I guess the betrayal of the abelaats was not so critical to them. From the dwarves point of view, I guess the incoming war was just met with the interruption of all relationship and the expulsions of all abelaats from their territory but then dwarves help to the other races of Mystara ended. Nevertheless, I suppose that the same war could have well triggered the animosity between common dwarves and shadow dwarves.

“What was worse, the whole island of Lhomarr - fully evacuated by the High Elves early in the war - became an unassailable fortress from which the evil alliance orchestrated its retaliation campaigns over the continents.

“Abelaats and Dark Elves were well aware that time was on their side: as they firmly held the bridges, the drainage of magic - aided by brute force where necessary - would have led to the extinction of all the magical races of Mystara within just three or four elvish generations.

THE RISE OF THE HUMANS

“And then something really unexpected turned the course of the war. Shortly after the exile of the brute-men, from the very regions the brute-men were confined into⁶⁵, members of a new humanoid people emerged on Mystara. Those were the humans, a race we all know much too well.

“Who created the humans is currently unknown, as the Immortals do not answer to such a question.

⁶⁵ Two theories may be adopted about the origin of the humans. According to the first theory the humans could have evolved independently many millennia before this epoch and lived their history up to this point as a neglected race. They lived in barely habitable wilderness until the exiled brute men forced them to spread into the rest of the world. As an alternative theory the humans were created as a brand new race around BC 11000 by some superior power using the exiled brute-men as “base material”.

“There are some who speculate they were nothing but a neglected, different breed of brute-men, displaced by their cousins when they were exiled by the abelaats.

“Others endorse the theory the humans were shaped by a large group of Immortals, none of which could consider itself the true creator of this race⁶⁶. That would explain their silence when asked about this subject.

“Finally, another group of scholars believe the humans were created by Mystara - by the megalith Urt itself - as some kind of self-defense mechanism to remove the abelaats’ menace and take back its own magic⁶⁷.

“For humans were really the abelaats’ scourge⁶⁸. They hated the abelaats at first sight and attacked their settlements wherever they found them, killing every abelaat they were able to find. Abelaats and their allies of course retaliated - at first using other races like garls as proxies⁶⁹ - but soon they

⁶⁶ A myth about the creation of humans by a group of Immortals was developed by Sheldon Morris in his article [“The Origins of Human Kind”](#) available at the Vaults of Pandius.

⁶⁷ This possibility is also hinted in *Threshold Magazine* #9 article [“Ecology of the Megaliths and the Norns Cycle”](#) by this author.

⁶⁸ See the *Penhaligon Trilogy* for further details. Humans drove the abelaats to extinction on Mystara.

⁶⁹ This is to combine *CM6* episode “*In the beginning*” to the whole setting described above. According to *CM6* the first humans were menaced by a race of huge humanoid brutes called garls. If the PCs manage to solve successfully the events of the first episode, by the second episode garls are nearly extinct on the world. Here it is assumed that garls were unsuccessfully used by the abelaats as a first method to contain

discovered the humans were impossible to eradicate.

“Human were not so dependent on magic and their lives were much shorter than those of elves, dragons, abelaats and fey people. Some humans could also quickly understand and learn powerful magic, if given the opportunity, although this was not the distinctive feature of their race. Their strongest points were their greater intelligence and adaptability compared to brute-men and the fact that they were fast-breeders.”

“How fast-breeding could be considered an advantage?” Old Claemetyl of Deepwood finally interrupted the gloomy silence that fell on the canopy of the elves since the beginning of Taerentym’s speech. “We all know very well the overpopulation issues the humans and humanoids periodically face, and their inability to find a proper solution to them. Such early humans would surely have been exterminated by a highly magical race like those abelaats you are talking about. Moreover the ideal rate of reproduction cannot be very much different from those of elves, dragons, dwarves, Eldars and other intelligent races, as it was tested over endless millennia, even when your imaginative story about our origins is considered.”

The nearby elven representatives seemed somewhat reassured in listening that their most distinguished member did not fully endorse the theories of the old Eldar.

“Venerable Claemetyl, the abelaats existed and invaded Mystara and elves were created by the fall of the Eldars, both of those are

human expansion.

facts. About the fast-breeding humans, luckily proof of what I say is available here in the Academy Library. In fact, from her vantage point on a steep hillock, the treant Alidid the Meticulous followed five centuries of assaults to the abelaat stronghold of the Rock of Cerrtan. She carefully inscribed on her own bark a detailed account of participants and losses, so we could extrapolate her numbers to get a figure of the whole war.

“Just think about how, in the present time, elves or dragons usually wage war. The High Elves and their allies, and the abelaats and their allies, were not so much different in that.

“Any major, organized attack by the High Elves on an abelaat stronghold and the following retaliation by the enemy could have been possible, on average, once every forty or fifty mortal years⁷⁰, giving time to both parties to replenish their numbers and train new recruits. In most cases such operations were distanced by seventy years or more. In the same timespan the primitive humans could double or triple their numbers, thanks to their higher reproduction rate.

⁷⁰ Most of the military in numerical terms would actually be made of common elves, whose lifespan could be assumed 10 times longer than a human. If so, assuming that a major draft in human terms could happen every 4-5 years, then the High Elves coalition could assemble a new army every 40-50 years. Abelaats and Dark Elves, whose lifespan were longer than common elves, were forced to a defensive position as they could not assemble an offensive army before suffering an attack by the High Elves and, later by the humans.

“A human tribe could lead a large attack on the abelaat strongpoint, suffer their retaliation and then come back with the same numbers within thirty years⁷¹ and without asking for any assistance from nearby tribes. And, of course, the High Elves and their allies helped whenever they could.

“The abelaats and the Dark Elves could not simply withstand such rates of conflict. Their numbers dwindled and they were forced to abandon more and more strongholds, which were then secured by the High Elves and the dragons. Magic began to flow back to Mystara and the races who were dependent upon it were spared from extinction.

“And so, even if the humans started as scattered, uncivilized tribes living on the fringe of the habitable lands, within a millennium they spread over large areas of the world, exterminating the abelaats by virtue of this war of attrition. I believe the humans were never fully aware they were fighting a war, for its timescale was too big for them to be easily grasped. Moreover, for most of the time every human tribe acted independently; coalitions formed only where the enemy forces were greater or when some representative of the High Elves coalition managed to appeal successfully to a group of human tribes. More often than not the human tribes waged war on each other in their own petty struggles.

⁷¹ Again, we are talking about major battles, where the bulk of the warrior caste of the human tribes was involved. For every practical purpose, humans must wait a generation - for the young to become accomplished warriors - in order to stage the next attack on an abelaat stronghold.

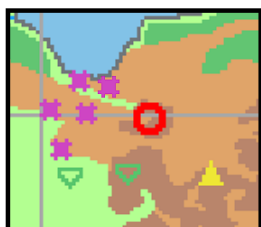
“I think the humans interpreted the whole matter as just a progressive settling of new lands, concurrent with the extermination of an instinctively hated race which occupied the most sought after territories. Apparently, all attempts by the High Elves and their allies to better explain the situation to the humans and to completely enlist them as full allies were never properly understood by them.

“It is to be said that humans were strangely attracted by lands where the abelaats had their largest concentration. Whether this was just out of similar preferences in terms of habitat or out of some mystical command they followed no one could tell. Sages concur that at least in one circumstance the humans acted with an unexpected coordination, as if they were guided by some authority giving them sort of subconscious messages. This happened at the time of the final assault on the island of Lhomarr.

The Lost Origins of the Elves

Details of the Battles for the Rock of Cerran

ORIGINAL RECORDINGS OF ALIDID THE METICULOUS OVER THE BATTLES AT THE ROCK OF CERRTAN								WARRIORS PARTICIPATING IN EVERY BATTLE AT THE ROCK OF CERRTAN ACCORDING TO ALIDID THE METICULOUS AND HUMBLY TRANSLATED BY ZEFRIEL OLGOREMNY IN THE YEAR 4192 AFTER THE SPLIT OF THE ELDARS								
								YEAR	ABELAATS	DARK ELVES	HIGH ELVES	COMMON ELVES	DRAGONS	ELDARS	HUMANS	
[Illegible original recordings]								1	5015	102	1012	10057	20	11	2351	BEFORE
									4521	90	848	8483	17	8	1993	AFTER
[Illegible original recordings]								49	4743	91					3214	BEFORE
									4680	90					1315	AFTER
[Illegible original recordings]								72	4784	90	879	9107	17	9	1637	BEFORE
									4361	82	745	7723	15	7	1388	AFTER
[Illegible original recordings]								113	4539	83	760	8038	15	7	2067	BEFORE
									4155	76	643	6795	13	6	1747	AFTER
[Illegible original recordings]								251	4765	78	688	7792	13	6	6827	BEFORE
									4302	71	610	6906	11	6	6051	AFTER
[Illegible original recordings]								268	4372	71					7096	BEFORE
									4232	69					5382	AFTER
[Illegible original recordings]								293	4335	69					6834	BEFORE
									4200	67					5134	AFTER
[Illegible original recordings]								355	4464	68	642	7655	12	6	9420	BEFORE
									3960	60	584	6963	11	5	8569	AFTER
[Illegible original recordings]								373	4028	60	589	7083	11	5	10149	BEFORE
									3828	57	590	7090	11	5	8600	AFTER
[Illegible original recordings]								395	3909	57					10599	BEFORE
									3700	54					9103	AFTER
[Illegible original recordings]								421	3794	55					11673	BEFORE
									3564	51					10233	AFTER
[Illegible original recordings]								444	3643	52					12737	BEFORE
									3392	48					11366	AFTER
[Illegible original recordings]								461	3446	48					13327	BEFORE
									3183	44					12040	AFTER
[Illegible original recordings]								474	3222	45	620	7835	11	6	13567	BEFORE
									2632	36	590	7457	10	5	12913	AFTER
[Illegible original recordings]								483	2653	36					13983	BEFORE
									2377	33					13022	AFTER
[Illegible original recordings]								494	2401	33					14384	BEFORE
									2117	29					13529	AFTER
[Illegible original recordings]								505	2138	29	599	7684	11	5	14944	BEFORE
									1528	21	583	7480	10	5	14547	AFTER
[Illegible original recordings]								522	1553	21					17058	BEFORE
									1216	16					16567	AFTER
[Illegible original recordings]								537	1233	16					19043	BEFORE
									857	11					18696	AFTER
[Illegible original recordings]								554	871	11					21923	BEFORE
									438	6					21746	AFTER
[Illegible original recordings]								563	442	6	600	7918	10	5	23548	BEFORE
									0	0	602	7953	10	5	23650	AFTER



- LEGEND:**
- ROCK OF CERRTAN
 - HUMAN TRIBE
 - HIGH ELVES STRONGHOLD
 - DRAGON KINGDOM

THE FIRST ASSAULT ON THE ROCK OF CERRTAN HAPPENED SOME 50 YEARS INTO THE WAR OF THE GATES.

THE ROCK WAS ONE OF THE FIRST ABELAAT STRONGPOINTS BUILT TO DEFEND THE EXTRAPLANAR GATES. IT WAS ALSO THE LAST TO FALL OUTSIDE THE ISLAND OF LHOMARR.

NUMBERS REFLECT TRENDS IN THE BALANCE OF FORCES THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE CONFLICT.

THE END OF THE WAR AND THE EXILE

“The assault happened some four centuries into the war, following a full century of buildup. By that time the evil alliance had already abandoned all its outposts on the continents and, except for a few scattered individuals, all the abelaats and Dark Elves were entrenched in Lhomarr. The High Elves coalition was slowly recovering its magic but it lost half of its most powerful members since the beginning of the war, so they did not plan any effective invasion of the island in the short term.

“The humans took the coalition by surprise. Suddenly, everywhere on Mystara, most of the human tribes left their recently-conquered lands, joined with other moving tribes and formed endless columns that migrated by land and sea to a very specific coastline territory in central Skothar, just across from Lhomarr⁷².

“These tribes were led by improvised charismatic leaders of all possible descents, who proclaimed to the masses that the humans were going to claim their prize.

⁷² This is to match Geoff Gander’s early history about the first settlers of Lhomarr, who came from Skothar. For further details see [“Lhomarr: The Land, Its People, and Their History”](#). Geoff Gander does not specify the origin of these people, just hinting they were a fourth human stock (after the Neathar, the Oltecs and the Tanagoro) living in Skothar. In the following I assume the proto-Lhomarrians were actually a melting pot of the other stocks coming from places all over the world under the mystical urge to get rid of the abelaats and of their menace over Mystara.

When asked in more detail by the High Elves these leaders were not able to explain what exactly this prize was, but their followers seemed content with these vague explanations and showed an unexpected unity of purpose in this migration.

“Within three human generations a huge population had reached their destination on the shore. Maybe as much as one-third of all the humans living at that time on Mystara were gathered there⁷³. A koiné language soon was adopted among the various different tribes to understand each other⁷⁴ and, in the end, a new people were born by the intensive inter-breeding of the clans. By the third generation prophets and other visionaries appeared among the people of the shore, talking about the fundamental need to cross the sea and get rid of the abelaats once and for all. To always remind their people of their unfinished task the prophets used to address themselves as “Lhomarrians”.

“The evil alliance suspected some occult force was behind this gathering and tried to disperse the humans by deceiving several powerful tribes of the Tanagoro stock into attacking them and starting a long-lasting

⁷³ Just to figure out a number, let assume that a total of approx. 2 million humans were living at that time on Mystara. This is about half of the total Neolithic human population estimated to live on real Earth some 12000 years ago. So a huge population of some 600’000 - 700’000 humans of all possible ethnicity gathered on the shore at that time.

⁷⁴ This common tongue could have been some hybrid of the Neathar language as, according to *HW* boxed set, it is very easy to learn and understand and it is also used as the common tongue in the Hollow World.

feud⁷⁵. The abelaats' attempt was partially successful in that it pinned down part of the Lhomarrians for a couple of centuries, but it was not enough to stop the inevitable human invasion.

"Hopping across the island chain, which at the time separated the coast from Lhomarr, most of the humans reached the island's shore as a tidal wave, giving no quarter to its inhabitants and relying on their numbers to best the superior magic of the evil alliance. With the help of a High Elves expeditionary force, within one of their generations the humans were firmly in control of part of the island, conquered through bloody battles that decimated the humans and undermined abelaats' supremacy.

"The abelaats tried many times to reconquer the lands they lost but the humans were always able to repel them and thrive in the lands they considered the prize they deserved. Moreover, reinforcements arrived when the Lhomarrians on Skothar managed to disengage from the Tanagoro and were able to reach the island.

"Finally, the reversal of magical energy through the captured gates was so great that now the abelaats' home plane was losing its own magic to the benefit of Mystara⁷⁶. New

abelaats became increasingly difficult to create and all abelaat activities on Mystara and on their own home plane slowed down.

"Less than two human generations after the conquest of the bridgehead the invaders' numbers were again at their original level, so the invasion resumed. Adopting the same tactic used on the continents on a larger scale, the humans waged major wars once every 15 years, switching to once every 5 years in the final part of the conflict, helped in this by another High Elves expeditionary force. The evil alliance was not able to withstand such pressure and utterly collapsed within three centuries since the landfall of the first humans on Lhomarr. Before the final assault on their last stronghold the last few hundreds of Dark Elves dissolved their alliance with the abelaats and most of them escaped to another Plane of Existence they called Svartalfheim⁷⁷. A few were left dispersed on Mystara and retreated to faraway places, avoiding capture, and losing much of their powers, eventually to become the ancestors of Mystara's dark elves⁷⁸.

abelaats' home plane was taken by Mystara.

⁷⁷ The external plane of Svartalfheim is briefly described in GAZ7 and is a direct reference to Norse mythology. Here I tried to give some fanon detail about its in-setting origin.

⁷⁸ In GAZ7 it is said that the Dark Elves of Svartalfheim were the ancestors of Mystara's dark elves, which are not detailed elsewhere in official supplements and modules. These Mystaran dark elves should be another elvish breed entirely different from the shadow elves of GAZ13 (because shadow elves have another origin clearly stated in this module) and possibly more similar to the drow of other *Dungeons and Dragons* settings.

⁷⁵ Again, see Geoff Gander's "[Lhomarr: The Land, Its People, and Their History](#)" for more about the early Lhomarrians. As all humans are natural enemies of the abelaats, the war among Tanagoros and early Lhomarrians on Skothar could have happened only if the Tanagoros were somewhat tricked by the abelaats into believing the Lhomarrians were their enemies.

⁷⁶ See the *Pehnaligon Trilogy* for details. In the end almost all magical energy of the

“The abelaats held out against the invaders until they lost the last of the extraplanar bridges under their control. Facing extermination they used their residual magic to morph their aspect and look like humans so they could disperse on Mystara and live low profile lives among their persecutors.

“The abelaats also cast a powerful curse⁷⁹ over all the humans currently living on Lhomarr and on the land itself: the humans’ reign and the land they conquered would not last more than the time elapsed between the landfall and the departure of the abelaats from Lhomarr⁸⁰.

“Finally, the last abelaats’ leaders in disguise fled from the island, bringing with them the abaton⁸¹, a manifold, powerful magical

device meant to establish another magical portal with their home world where and when the circumstances would allow for it.

“Unfortunately, all these actions were not sufficient to save them, as in the following centuries and millennia humans throughout the world hunted the abelaats down, discovering their real identities and exterminating them to the last being. We currently believe no abelaat still exists in the world⁸², even if some scholar believe that, thanks to their disguise, many abelaats managed to mix their blood with that of the humans⁸³. Maybe vampirism, so common among humans, is some kind of undead disease related to abelaat’s blood, who knows⁸⁴.

“During these persecutions the abaton was captured by an unknown human group. The magical device proved impossible to be destroyed with common and magical methods⁸⁵, so the humans placed a curse on

⁷⁹ In order to be congruent with Geoff Gander’s work about Lhomarr’s demise it should be assumed that this curse had been granted by the Outer Beings, evil entities of Immortal status worshipped by the Carnifex. If we assume that the High Elves contributed to the ban of the Carnifex then the abelaats could have gathered information about the Outer Beings from High Elves which were turned into Dark Elves early during the abelaats’ colonization of Mystara.

⁸⁰ According to Geoff Gander’s [“Lhomarr: The Land, Its People, and Their History”](#), this island was settled approximately around BC 10,500 and fell in BC 7022, for a total duration of approximately 3480 years. Abelaats’ presence on Lhomarr lasted from approximately BC 13,700 to BC 10,200, for a total of 3500 years. Possibly the destruction of the artifact of the Outer Beings during the battles for dominance between Lhomarrians and the degenerate breed of Carnifex of Y’hog (see the above mentioned article by Geoff Gander for details) was nothing but an excuse used by the Outer Beings to set in motion the ancient curse.

⁸¹ For details about the abatons see the

Penhaligon Trilogy and the article [“Abelaat Information”](#) by this author.

⁸² This is not true as, according to the *Penhaligon Trilogy*, at least one original pure abelaat still exists hidden in Karameikos as of AC 1000 - AC 1010

⁸³ This is definitely true according to the *Penhaligon Trilogy*: as of AC 1000 there are several people who unknowingly possess some remote ancestor who was actually an abelaat in disguise. The abelaat lineage is extremely diluted but it is undoubtedly present in humans as of present time.

⁸⁴ My speculation, just to throw in the idea in case a DM wishes to use it.

⁸⁵ The abaton is able to assume many shapes, including the form of a living human (like the son of the evil mage Thelvin Auroch, according to the *Penhaligon Trilogy*), so I believe its true essence is closer to some kind of changing magical energy than a physical object. For this

it. Any abelaat trying to cross the magical bridge created by the abaton would have had its body and mind utterly warped by the passage, impairing the intelligence, powers and exterior appearance of the creature. In particular, their bodies would become easily noticeable by any observer, and they would not be able to reproduce with humans anymore⁸⁶.

“After many vicissitudes, it is now stored in the Museum of High Magic here in Windreach, not to be a threat to Mystara anymore.

“And this is where humans and abelaats leave our story.

“After the great war the High Elves felt they were not worthy anymore of their guidance role among the elves, for they had been too easily deceived by the abelaats and had traded the very magic of Mystara to get their own wisdom, power and wealth. Moreover the Dark Elves, their own former leaders, were still alive and eager to avenge their defeat by the hands of the coalition led by

reason I believe it cannot be easily destroyed - also because otherwise it would have been neutralized by the intelligent races of Mystara in the many millennia following the abelaats' disappearance.

⁸⁶ The curse is an assumption of mine to explain why, according to the *Penhaligon Trilogy* the abelaats crossing the magical bridge created by the abaton reached Mystara just as silhouettes of cold, dark energy with eight saliva-dripping canines, melee weapons protruding from their bodies and a keen sense of smell. According to the books this twisting of their shape is due to the passage through the portal. For further information about the abelaats' shape after their passage across the abaton see [“Abelaat Information”](#) by myself.

the High Elves. This could have exposed Mystara to other disastrous high-magic wars in the future.

“So, for all these reasons the High Elves took a sad but necessary decision and abandoned Mystara by resettling in an external home plane they called Alfheim⁸⁷. From there they provided a distant assistance to elves in times of need and continued their bitter rivalry with the Dark Elves, trying to prevent them from further harming the people of Mystara.

“In order to reduce the unavoidable cultural shock descending from their departure, the High Elves used their own magic to place some kind of “blurring” of their own memories in the minds of all the intelligent beings living on Mystara at that time. They also concealed or brought with them most of the documents and evidences of their former presence on our world.

“The effect of their actions was that, right after their departure, the High Elves were remembered as an ancient, mythical race of a distant past, not properly connected to current events. Some elvish clans came to believe they were some kind of benevolent ancestors⁸⁸, others thought the High Elves

⁸⁷ According to GAZ7 the High Elves live on the external Plane of Existence of Alfheim and they are enemies of the Dark Elves of Svartalfheim. Here I tried to give some fanon detail about the in-setting origin of this Plane of Existence and of the animosity between High Elves and Dark Elves..

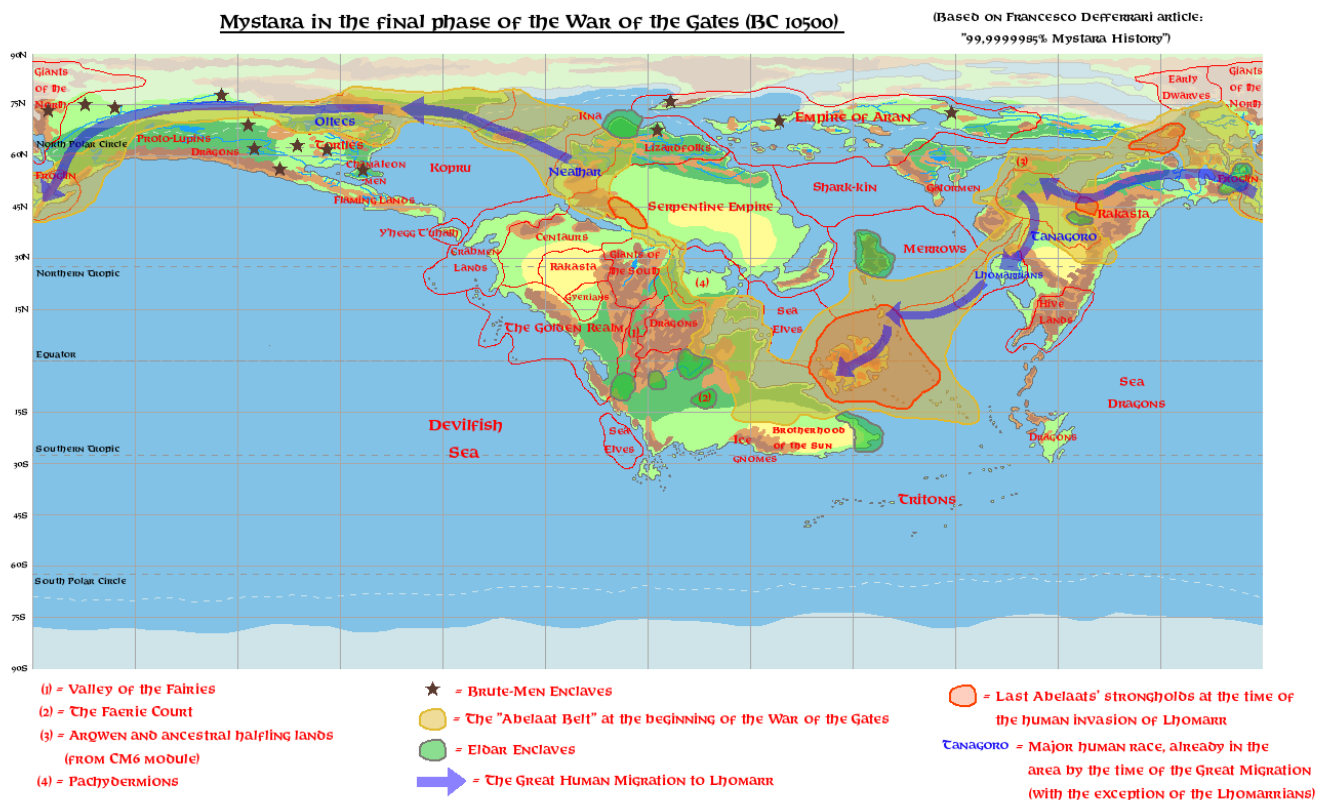
⁸⁸ This may be the case with the Genander elves of Blackmoor, which are addressed in DA3 as the high elves of Genander's clan. To avoid confusion with the High Elves of Alfheim I assumed the title “high elves” referred to the Genander clan is nothing but an honorary title addressed by the other

The Lost Origins of the Elves

ascended to superior Planes to become the servants of the Immortals⁸⁹. Even the High Elves' coalition with common elves and dragons, and the whole war with the abelaats, became somewhat confused in the minds of the Mystarans⁹⁰.

elves of the North to this specific people.
⁸⁹ This is to be more in agreement with the hints about High Elves' nature listed in GAZ7 module, although information available in this supplement is scarce at best.
⁹⁰ Humans of Lhomarr could have been especially hit by this memory-blurring spell due to their great involvement in the final phase of the war, so they actually lost most

of their memories about their early times on the island of Lhomarr. What they believe about their origins could then match well with Geoff Gander's description of the Lhomarrians in his article "[Lhomarr: The Land, Its People, and Their History](#)" at the Vaults.



ORDANA'S NEW AWAKENING

“And this, of course, while removing most of the suffering caused by the bloody battles of the War of the Gates, was not of much help for the common elves. Again, they were mostly left to themselves, with their blurred memories and without guidance. The only exceptions were the preserves - the few spared by the long war - where dragons and Eldars still cared to continue the meaningless traditions of the ancient Eldar Kingdoms, usually because they needed the elves to act as guardians of old Eldar relics or other places of interest to them⁹¹.

“Over the war many elvish tribes were cut off by their High Elf leaders and, again, they turned to barbarism to survive, tightening their bonds with nearby human and demi-human tribes.

“Before this new wave of barbarism could hit the bulk of the elvish culture the Immortal Ordana gathered as many elvish clans as possible⁹² on a secluded island called

⁹¹ As stated before in this article, the elves of Ringlo Hall (the Cumasti, according to *D20 Blackmoor Campaign* book) are one of these groups, sponsored by dragons and Eldars to help in guarding the nearby wild magic source. It would also explaining why, for some time around BC 4000, the elves seized Castle Blackmoor and surroundings, as described in *Dungeons and Dragons supplement II: Blackmoor* and in the *Blackmoor: First Fantasy Campaign* book [1977].

⁹² As clans of barbaric elves are listed in several official supplements (the *Book of Wondrous Inventions*, the *Voyage of the Princess Ark*, the *Dragonlord Trilogy*, the *Shady Dragon Inn*, *CM6* adventure module

Evergrun, just offshore of the southern continent. There the spirits of nature passed the teachings of Ordana to the elves and provided them with their first stable culture - the Way of the Forest, the heritage now shared by most of the elvish clans throughout the world. Evergrun became a quiet, peaceful and isolated place where, for fifteen generations⁹³, the elves were finally able to evolve into an autonomous race.

“The rest is history known to everybody⁹⁴. Six thousands years ago the elves of Evergrun were allowed to leave their island and established a mighty empire on the southern continent. There they met the men of Blackmoor, embraced their wicked technology and shared a similar fate during the Great Rain of Fire. Survivors from the nearby land of Grunland returned to the Way of the Forest and left the ruins of their former empire, again to disperse all over the world, as if the ancient curse cast by the

and others) I assumed that these elves were not brought to Evergrun by Ordana (possibly because they refused to follow her) so reverted to the basic lifestyle they were more accustomed to. Moreover, notice that the all the elves who live in the Blackmoor area around BC 4000 (i.e. the Westryn and Cumasti elves of *D20 Blackmoor Campaign* books and the Genander elves of *DA3* module) are not part of the elves of Evergrun because the first meeting between Evergrun and Blackmoor will happen 500 years later. So even the Blackmoor elves should not be part of the followers of Ordana.

⁹³ Approximately between BC 10000 and BC 5000, which would correspond to 15 elvish generations lasting 350 years each. Notice that, according to *HW boxed set*, elves were still living isolated on Evergrun as of BC 6000.

⁹⁴ Most of the following info is taken from *HW boxed set* and *GAZ5*.

Immortals on the Eldars still did not accomplish all of its goals.

“And this is the end of this humble Vicennial Lecture. I am nothing but an old and decrepit Eldar, and I despair I’ll manage to provide you the next Lecture within my lifetime. You surely noticed I did not limit the subject of this exposition to elves and so now you know some more truth about dragons, abelaats, humans, dwarves and other races.

“This is my gift to all of you, new knowledge for you to meditate upon and to use wisely in your relationship with the other inhabitants of Mystara. Now you know your lineage and your place in the world. It is up to you to accept it or to try to improve it with your skills and intelligence. As I told you my assistants Clevix, Bonnath and Merjelle will provide you guidance in finding references and proof of what I said in the libraries, temples and museums of Windreach.

“With this, my beloved students, and with my blessing for the future, I greet you!”

“Acceptance? Master Taerentym, there may never be acceptance to what you said about dragons’ place in this world ...” Laicanar’s outraged voice overcame the increasingly loud chatting coming from the audience. Some elves looked shocked, while Claemetyl was busy performing a nervous tirade over a group of mixed drakes who were asking if there ever was a confirmation of Taerentym’s words in the Heimsleidh⁹⁵. Ellethior’s voice

⁹⁵ According to the *Dragonlord of Mystara* novel, the Heimsleidh (also known as the Way of the Land) is the compendium of all the elvish wisdom, compiled by Ilsundal himself before becoming an Immortal. The

was also discernible amidst a group of Eldars, who were defending themselves against accusations of hiding precious information about their past and maintaining a pretence of help and friendship towards the dragons. One hundred guests, one hundred shaken souls.

With a serene smile on his face, Taerentym disappeared into a glimmering mist from the pedestal of basalt.

EPILOGUE

Taerentym materialized in his personal rooms on top of the Spire of Scholars, the tallest tower of the Academy of Dragons. There the features of his face slowly melted, leaving nothing but the black silhouette of his head. He also dropped the long embroidered vest of his scholar status revealing a pure-white kilt and a pair of equally white vambraces over a body seemingly made of black energy⁹⁶.

Heimsleidh is made of 48 volumes. Elves are very jealous of these books and even the sight of the volumes is forbidden to non elves. Nevertheless, a complete copy of the 48 books has been secretly stored in the library of the Great School of Magic in Glantri City since at least AC 500.

⁹⁶This description matches the appearance of the Black King of Alphaks’ Volcano according to *DotE*, DM’s manual page 41 (see also Note 97 below). As this description is also matching the usual appearance of a modern abelaat while on Mystara (see [“Abelaat Information”](#)) then I connected the Black King/Black Queen portfolios to the *Penhaligon Trilogy*. So the Black Queen is the human witch who used her magic to wake up a slumbering abelaat in his home plane. This abelaat then became the Black King. The events are detailed in the

The dark figure looked at the drugged body of the real Taerentym, sleeping in his bed in his night dress, his notes on the original subject of the lesson “The Grand Alliance of the Wurmsteeth races” burning in the fireplace. Once awake, he would not remember anything of the last two days, adding his confusion to the chaos and quarreling unleashed by the careless speech the dark being just administered to the distinguished audience.

As a humble servant of Alphaks, the Black King⁹⁷ - that was the name of the silhouette - was very satisfied with his deeds. The Sphere of Entropy likes to play the other Spheres off against one another with a minimal effort, the more so if this is possible by telling just the absolute truth.

For the sake of honor, dignity and decency - all mortal concepts mocked by the Immortal masters served by the Black King - too many races concealed part of their past: the embarrassing one, where humble origins, selfish compromises and mixed blood contributed to the perceived “greatness” of the present. And this represented a very fertile soil on which Entropy could seed dissent.

With a bit of luck - pondered the Black King - his speech, delivered at such a critical time for the events of this part of the world, would have been full of consequences, helping the side of Entropy in the great war

following sections of this article.

⁹⁷ According to *DotE* (DM’s manual) the Black King and the Black Queen are the leaders of the mortal agents of Alphaks, assigned with the destruction of Alphatia through intrigue and secret operations from their main base on Alphaks’ Volcano.

that undoubtedly would have broken out in a few years⁹⁸. The predictable quarreling about origins, alliances, lineages - and the associated mistrust and contempt among races - would split the people of Norwold. Dragons, Eldars, and common elves were now prevented from forming alliances⁹⁹ - among themselves and with the humans and dwarves - and they would fight the war as separate forces.

His assistant Clevix was in charge of helping in this process by providing the bewildered Great Hall’s audience with the most

⁹⁸ Reference is to the great war that will erupt in AC 1004 between the Empire of Alphatia and the alliance signed by Glantri, the Heldannic Knights and the Empire of Thyatis. Details about the course of the war are available in *WotI* boxed set. According to *M5* module (page 41), there is also the possibility for this war to break out in AC 1002 (if the PCs do not manage to avert it) starting from the Isle of Dawn and escalating until all the surrounding lands are involved. In this scenario the war will last for 20 years (while the war described in *WotI* will last only 5 years) and will depopulate Alphatia, Norwold, the Known World and everything in between, plunging this part of the world into a barbaric age. Likely the aim of Entropy is for the latter scenario to happen.

⁹⁹ According to *CM1* and *M2* modules - which describe in detail the part of the great war (see Note 98 above) that will ravage Norwold in AC 1002/1003 - elves, dragons (and so, also Eldars) are neutral forces that will not be involved in the conflict nor will they fight together unless bound by some alliance with some particular PC. As similar alliances are very unlikely, or are not assumed to happen at all, then it is possible to believe that elves and dragons do not intervene in the war because they are weakened or paralyzed by some sort of internal struggle. This article tries to give a possible explanation for it.

compelling evidence supporting Taerentym's statements - after all Clevix did much of the hardest research work. The evidence, formerly hidden here and there on Windreach, would soon be brought back - in elegant copies of the finest parchment. The various sages from each of the communities in Norwold and elsewhere, would soon be spreading scepticism and distrust.

Moreover Laicanar, another of the Black King's faithful servants, had the task of fostering further dissent among dragons, trying to instill in those proud minds a discrimination between "pure" and "tainted" breeds. If successful, this discrimination would isolate the most magically-gifted individuals and break up the group of the Chosen of Vanya of Ellethior. This company of dragons absolutely must be removed from Vanya's commands in the impending conflict¹⁰⁰: it was definitely in the best interests of Entropy to disband it.

Finally Teryl Auroch¹⁰¹, the Black King's own son, was disguised among the audience as a distinguished common elf from a faraway community of central Brun that no one had

¹⁰⁰ According to *M1* module, if Vanya is the winner in the competition with Koryis and Alphaks then the PCs may summon a force of 50 Wrymsteeth dragons devoted to her. This force may be called upon once per character during any war and it has a huge Battle Rating of 503 points. Definitely the involvement of such an army in a battle might well turn the course of any war.

¹⁰¹ Teryl Auroch is the main antagonist in Book 3 of the *Penhaligon Trilogy*. An accomplished mage, born from an abelaat and a human witch, Teryl's final aim is to use the abaton to drain magic from Mystara, awake the slumbering abelaats on their home plane and start another abelaats' invasion.

heard of before. His task was to steal the abaton in the following days, placing this puzzle-box artifact¹⁰² in the heart of the lands of the humans¹⁰³. From there the drainage of magic would start anew and, with the help of the Entropic powers, the abelaats would finally obtain satisfaction on their nemesis.

The Black King allowed himself to remember the course of the events leading to his own presence there¹⁰⁴. Unknowingly to all, his wife the Black Queen - an accomplished witch already devoted to Alphaks and with more than a drop of abelaat's blood in her - succeeded in briefly activating the abaton many decades ago. She carefully transferred a spill of Mystara's magical energy back to the

¹⁰² In the first part of the *Penhaligon Trilogy* the abaton is shaped like some kind of puzzle box. Later in the novels the abaton is transferred into a living being - the young son of the evil mage Teryl Auroch (see Note 101 above for details about him).

¹⁰³ According to the *Penhaligon Trilogy* the abaton is first used not far from the Darokinian village of Armstead, west of Selenica and north of the Black Mountains. In the novels this village is a renowned center of magical studies, inhabited by many wizard and sorcerers. While never explained in detail in the books, it is possible to assume that the location for the opening of the bridge between Mystara and the abelaats' home plane was made possible by the great concentration of magic in the nearby village of Armstead. The village is destroyed by the abelaat invaders shortly after.

¹⁰⁴ What follows is a mix of events described in the *Penhaligon Trilogy* and of *DotE* information about the Black Queen and the Black King, plus a few inferences by me (like the fact that while the shape of both individuals was changed by the passage through the abaton their magical powers were not - this is mostly to explain the very high level of both NPCs according to *DotE*).

external Plane of the abelaats and managed to reach this Plane with her own physical form¹⁰⁵.

With the stolen energy she awoke one of the most powerful abelaats still slumbering on this paralyzed Plane both of them came back to Mystara, but not before she became pregnant. The passage acted on their bodies and changed them into black silhouettes¹⁰⁶, but thanks to their great intelligence and magical powers they did not suffer other consequences. On Mystara they joined Alphaks' forces and became the Lords of his agents on Mystara. In return for their service Alphaks blessed Teryl, their only son, with an unblemished human appearance, to be the instrument chosen for the abelaats' revenge¹⁰⁷.

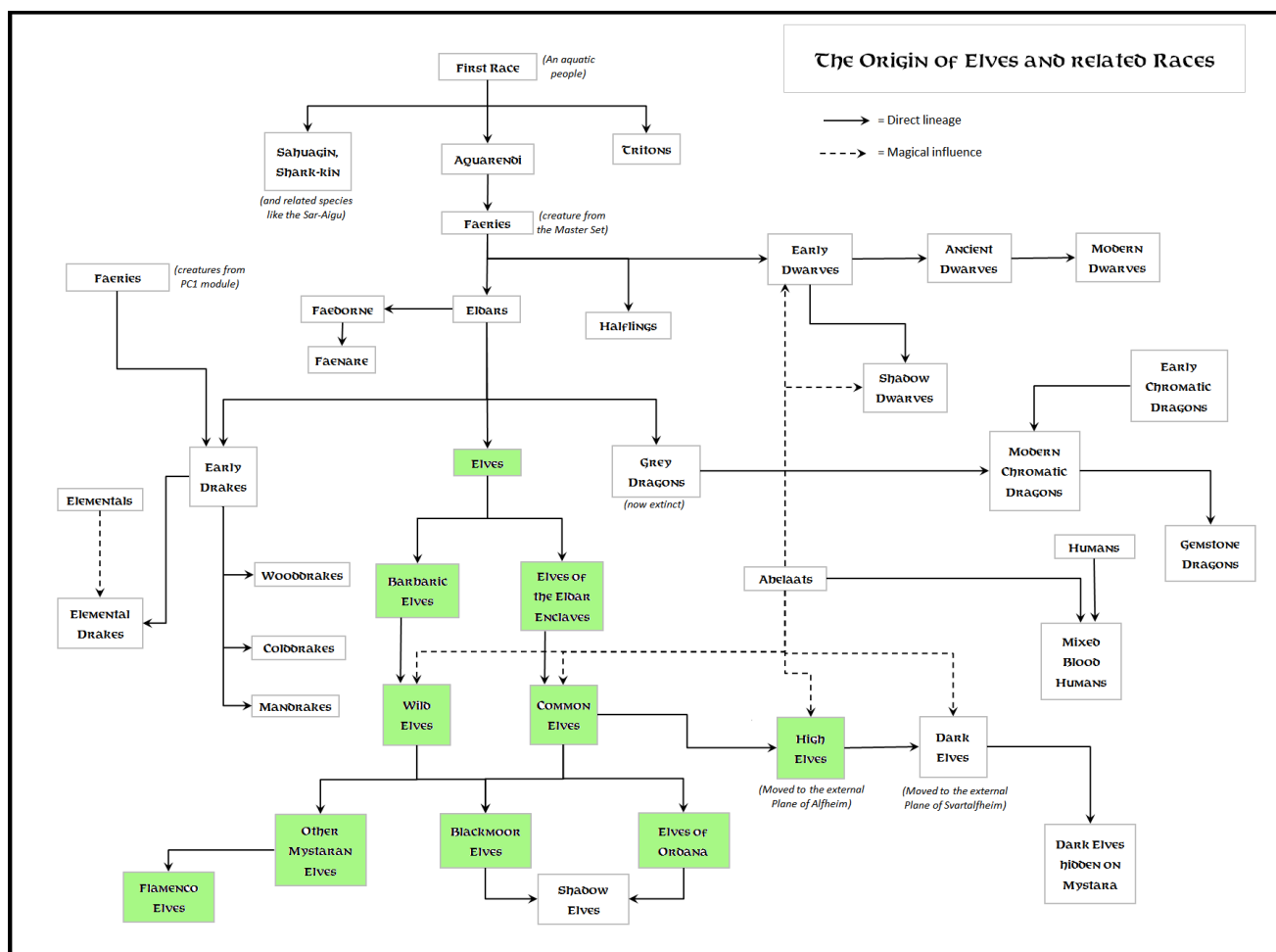
¹⁰⁵ This is to explain why the appearance of the Black Queen is that of a dark silhouette. Likely she was more abelaat than human, so her body reacted to the reverse passage to Mystara like the average abelaat would. Notice that, according to book 3 of the *Penhaligon Trilogy*, a human is able to go back and forth through the gate unharmed (this happens to Johuanna the Squire).

¹⁰⁶ Here I took a little licence as *DotE* specifies that both the Black King and the Black Queen were former human adventurers. Nevertheless an abelaat is definitely able to look like a human, especially if he is one of the individuals who metamorphosed their own appearance to look like a human and have children with them during the final stages of their persecution. This individual could have left Mystara shortly before the fall of Lhomarr and then suffered the magical slumbering in his home plane due to the lack of magic therein, to be retrieved by the human witch/Black Queen some eleven millennia later.

¹⁰⁷ I added this fluff to throw in some

Nighttime was coming. The Black King moved to the terrace of Taerentym's bedroom, awaiting for Laicanar to fetch him outside of Windreach. The King needed a meticulous report from the dragon about the audience's reactions, to plan the next moves for the maximum damage to the cause of life on Mystara.

interesting justification for the alliance between Alphaks and the Black King and Queen. Maybe the death of Teryl Auroch, described in the *Penhaligon Trilogy*, and the defeat of the abelaats' invasion of Mystara could also shake the Black Queen/King's alliance with Alphaks. I believe this could lead to some interesting roleplay opportunity to neutralize the evil nest of Alphaks' Volcano without necessarily defeat in combat the final bosses.



Summary of Elvish genealogy

APPENDIX: TIMELINE OF THE EVENTS DESCRIBED IN THIS ARTICLE

Note: Most events related to *CM6* module are shifted some 700 years earlier with respect to what is stated in [“Adapting CM6 locations to Mystara”](#) at the Vaults of Pandius. I believe current dates in the following timeline are better placed so they should supersede the old article’s ones.

BC 30000: Beginning of the Eldar civilization

BC 14370: The Eldar Split. Creation of common elves, drakes and grey dragons

BC 13800: First abelaats arrive on Mystara

BC 13700: Abelaats settle on the island of Lhomarr

BC 13200: First High Elves are created from the common elves stock

BC 12700: Banishment of the Carnifex from Mystara (tentative date). Queen Amberiel and

Belotra the Beautiful moved to the Green Realm with their retinue

BC 12600: First Dark Elves are created from the High Elves stock

BC 12300: Beginning of the transition from the last ice age to the current warm period

BC 12000: First Shadow Dwarves are created from the ancient common dwarves stock

BC 11600: Shadow Dwarves abandon en-masse the ancient dwarvish lands in current northern Norwold and, moving through a set of deep tunnels, settle below the Kerothar Mountains of the Alphantian continent.

BC 11500: First sightings of large human groups on Mystara (whether they were created now or they just abandoned the barely-habitable lands where they lived so far)

BC 11300: The loss of magic on Mystara is first perceived by the magical races living on it

BC 11050: Early dwarves cuts most of their ties with the abelaats. Exile of the Neanderthals on the fringe of habitable lands

BC 11000: Humans spread over Mystara

BC 10920: Beginning of the War of the Gates. Early dwarves expel the last abelaats from their territory and declares themselves neutral. High Elves and their allies evacuates the island of Lhomarr, which becomes an abelaats' stronghold

BC 10850: First extraplanar gates captured by the High Elves' coalition. Magic starts

flowing back to Mystara, preventing the extinction of its magical races. In the following decades the war turns into a set of long sieges of abelaats' extraplanar gates

BC 10800: Events of "*In the Beginning*" episode of *CM6* module

BC 10600: Humans assemble on Skothar coast just across from Lhomarr. Beginning of the Lhomarr-Tanagoro wars

BC 10500: First human attacks on Lhomarr, helped by a High Elves expeditionary force

BC 10400: End of the Lhomarr-Tanagoro wars. Part of the mixed human tribes living on the coast of Skhotar reaches Lhomarr to help their kin against the abelaats

BC 10215: Dark Elves flee from Mystara

BC 10200: End of the War of the Gates. The last magical bridge is conquered by the High Elves alliance. Surviving abelaats in disguise mix with human population bringing with them the abaton. A curse is placed by the abelaats on the isle of Lhomarr and on its human population.

BC 10100: High Elves depart from Mystara for the Plane of Alfheim. They perform a magical blurring of all High Elves memories in the minds of the intelligent beings currently living on Mystara

BC 10000: Ordana gathers most of the common elves of Mystara on the island of Evergrun and nurtures them through the forest spirits

BC 9800: By this time the last ice age is over

BC 8400: Minimum traceable uninterrupted bloodline of the Elves of the Red Woods families (likely there are much longer bloodlines recorded)

BC 7800: Events of "*Forge of Power*" episode of *CM6* module. Early Dwarves surface on Mystara and start living above ground, becoming the Ancient Dwarves

BC 7300: Events of "*Bronze and Iron*" episode of *CM6* module

BC 7022: Fall of the Lhomarran Empire. The island of Lhomarr sinks into the ocean

BC 5000: End of the infancy of common elves. They are allowed to leave the island of Evergrun and explore the world. Empire of Evergrun established. First Empire of Thonia (likely named as "First Republic of Thonia") established.

BC 4000: Events of *DA1-DA4* series. Uther Andahar's Great Rebellion led to the independence of the Province of Blackmoor from the Empire of Thonia. Rise of the kingdom of Blackmoor. By this time "pure" grey dragons are very rare on Mystara

BC 3500: Events of "*Island of Sorcerers*" episode of *CM6* module. First meeting between elves of Evergrun and men of Blackmoor

BC 3200: War of the Dragonlord. Exile of the gemstone dragons outside Mystara. The Great One - likely one of the very last "pure" grey dragons - becomes an Immortal

BC 3000: The Great Rain of Fire. Fall of the Empire of Blackmoor and Evergrun. Elves of Evergrun move to Grunland.

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EXTERNAL LINKS

[Lower Stoutfellow - Alphia's Underworld](#)

(by Bruce Heard)

[Frisland, the Marquisate of Azafeth](#) (by Bruce Heard)

[The Alphatian Province of Frisland](#) (by Bruce Heard)

[Ar:Walking with the Wraiths](#) (by Bruce Heard)

[Sahaugin](#) article on Wikipedia

[Adapting CM6 locations to Mystara](#) (by LoZompatore)

[The Truth About the Ancient Tortles' Frightening Secret](#) (by Bruce Heard)

[Abelaat Information](#) (by LoZompatore)

[The Origins of Human Kind](#) (by Sheldon Morris)

[Of the Lore and Legends of Y'hog, City of the Unclean Ones, and of that Race](#) (by Geoff Gander)

[EVENTS: AMBYRMONT AC 1016](#)

[Y'hog Carnifex](#) (by Geoff Gander)

[Lhomarr: The Land, Its People and Their History](#) (by Geoff Gander)

[Varelyyan Timeline](#) (by Geoff Gander)



AN ADVENTURE FOR TWO CHARACTERS OF FIRST LEVEL

INTRODUCTION

This is an adventure set in the year AC945 in the village of Threshold. It is designed as an opportunity for the Players to test their basic skills:

For the DUNGEON Master

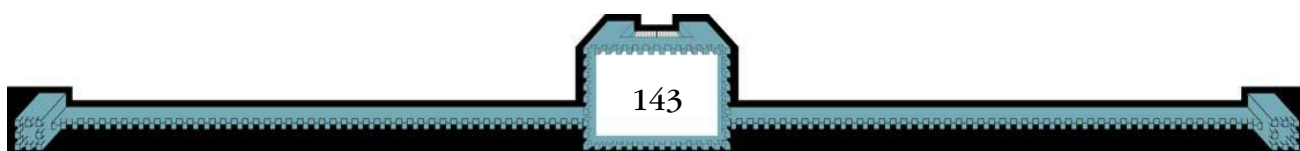
The village of Threshold has for some time enjoyed the residency of an elderly wizard named Bargle. The old fellow lives in a tower on Fogor Isle overlooking the Windrush River. This is not the monstrous wretch who murders Aleena. This is his

great uncle... a rather pleasant fellow... who has unfortunately fallen down a flight of stairs and broken his neck. This has in turn led to his goblin assistant Hurrk being trapped in the tower for the last two weeks. The food has run out and Hurrk has been forced to cook Bargle's remains — rotten as they were. He has burned scrolls and books to feed the cooking fires, and is just on the verge of contemplating falling on his own sword. Unfortunately he is delirious and insane and will attack intruders while wearing his ring of Invisibility.

A harpy with a ring of Shapechange is passing



Inetina



herself off as Inetina, the granddaughter of Bargle the Elder. She is interested in looting the tower, and having noticed that the old wizard has not left it in a week, has decided to employ adventurers to breach the tower. If he is alive... it doesn't fall back on her, but if he is dead she can loot the tower. Inetina will confront the PCs in the Great Hall attempting to charm the PCs out of any magic items. She doesn't know of Hurrk the goblin.

Boxed text below can be read directly to the Players.

Players Introduction

You are approached by a young girl who asks you to check on her grandfather. She tried to enter but the door is locked and no one is answering her knock. His name is Bargle, and he is a wizard who lives in a small tower on Fogor Isle. She offers five gold pieces in payment. She seems quite distressed.

EXPLORING THE TOWER

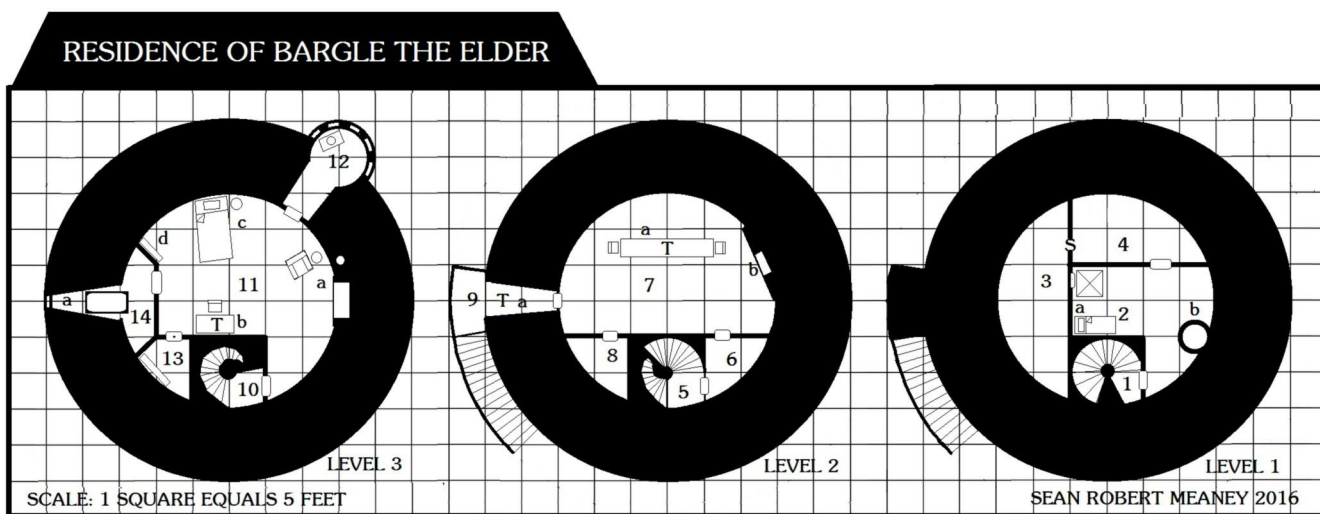
The exterior stairs climb to the entry which is Area 9 leading directly into Area 7.

The tower of Bargle the Elder isn't very tall. Stairs hug the outer wall climbing to an entrance at the second level.

Area 1: Bottom of the Stairs

At the bottom of the stairs is a door. It is not locked. Any noise here alerts Hurrk in Area 2.

At the bottom of the stairs is a door. It is a heavy timber door with iron hinges. It looks quite solid.



Area 2: The Well Room

Hurrk the goblin is currently in this area resting on his cot. If someone opens to door from Area 1 Hurrk attempts to sneak past them to the upper levels without alerting them using his *ring of invisibility*. He will then confront them upstairs in the great hall (area 7).

2a: This is a pit trap which is triggered by anyone attempting to open the false door dropping them down a ten foot deep pit for 1d6 damage.

2b: This is a well that drops fifty feet down to water. A thief might climb the brickwork of the well to climb out.

This room smells like a mix of sweat and urine. There is a well shaft to the right and two doors on the walls opposite the entrance. Immediately to the left around the corner is an empty cot covered in recently cleaned bedding.

Area 3: The Secret Laboratory

This is the Wizard's secret laboratory.

Beyond the secret door is a chamber that contains a collection of strange and wondrous things. A green sludge has erupted from a large jar and spread across a counter top in the wizard's absence. A bowl of powder is every so often erupting in a tiny flash and puff of smoke.

The green sludge is in fact a diseased green slime, and will infect anyone making physical contact with it with a nasty disease that causes a rather foul body odor until a *cure disease* is applied. There is a small ceramic lid on the floor. this will cover the powder that is every so often attempting to explode and arrest the problem. If anyone with a burning torch comes too close (the use of a burning torch on the green slime should do it) it goes bang in the face of the PC for 1hp damage (describe a big flash of light and a giant puff of smoke and everyone in the room is deafened for the next 1d6 turns meaning they cannot hear any noise that might be a vital clue). The player who puts the ceramic lid on the jar earns 1 XP. The various liquids and powders in jars and flasks are worth a hundred gold pieces to another wizard, although

bundling them into a sack would be rather dangerous. Anyone foolish enough to mix these substances will cause an explosion that affects the whole room. All metal in the room is reduced to a powdered state.

Area 4: The Store Room

This was a store room where food and drink was kept.

This room has a number of empty sacks piled up and smashed bottles scattered about. It is otherwise empty.

The food and drink that was here has been consumed. Any barefoot players take 1hp damage from tiny glass shards. There is a secret door here that leads into the secret laboratory (Area 3). Anyone looking for secret doors might find it on a 1 in 6 (2 in 6 for elves).

Area 5: Spiral Stairs

The stairwell leads upward and downward from this point. The door here is reinforced heavy timber and requires a key (though it is currently unlocked). Any loud noise here alerts Hurrk in area 2.

There is a narrow spiral staircase here.

Area 6: The Clean Room

Entering this room and closing the doors triggers a volley of spells where the PCs are cleaned and refreshed, their belongings and person. The only thing that will prevent this from occurring is a protection from magic effect.

This room is white. Spotless to the insane.

[Once the doors are closed] A strange blue aura bathes the room and you quickly feel devoid of grease, grime, sweat, and odor.

Area 7: The Great Hall

One side of the Great Hall is occupied by a long table extending from fireplace to the tower entrance. There are two chairs — on at either end (the rest of the chairs were used in the fireplace). In the ashes of the fireplace is a selection of burned bones (previously Bargle the Elder) and burned paper fragments. There is a key here in the ashes. It can be found if the ashes are searched. It seems burned but is otherwise undamaged.

There is a particular smell in this great hall...one of cooked and burned meat.

Area 8: The Pantry

This small room normally contains a selection of pots and knives hanging on hooks on the wall. Currently there are a number of pots with leftover scraps on the floor that look like gnawed on bones.

There are amongst the cutlery (4) daggers each in need of a cleaning.

Area 9: The Entrance

At the top of a curving staircase is a balcony, five feet wide and ten feet long, some fifteen feet above ground level. From here you can see a rather nice view of the village of Threshold. There is a slight recess into the tower wall which ends at a rather heavy timber door.

9a: A stone pressure mechanism trap which must be detected by a Thief or Dwarf to avoid a falling iron ball (1d6 hp damage) that drops from above. Unfortunately the door is *wizard locked* to prevent intruders and must be

opened by the destruction of the door (50hp).

Area 10: Top of the Stairs

At the top of the stairs is a door - unlocked. There is a problem with the step here. A *detect traps* will reveal the step is loose - anyone climbing the step will not particularly notice the problem - however anyone descending from the top most floor will cause the brick to slip and topple down the stairs. A Dexterity check is required to avoid breaking a neck. Bargle the Elder was conducting an experiment to grind down a gem by placing it under the brick of a step. The gem is worth 30gp.

There is a door here at the top of the stairs. It appears, much like the other doors in the tower, to be of heavy timber with iron hinges.

Area 11: The Wizards Bedchamber

Bargle the Elder spent a lot of time in this room. There is a fine leather seat by the fireplace and a crystal sphere on a small table by it, a large comfortable bed, several other doors, a desk, and a

bookshelf. The room is spotless clean, the bed made.

This chamber appears to be a wizard's apartment with a bed, desk and a cozy leather seat by the fireplace. There is even what appears to be a crystal ball on a stand.

A few anomalies exist:

11a: The Crystal Ball has an indiscernible crack (Hurrk knocked it off its stand after Bargle's death but replaced it). Any Magic User or elf attempting to use the crystal ball will cause it to explode for 1d6 damage.

11b: A locked drawer under the desk which is a needle trap guarding a pouch of fifty gold pieces. The needle can be detected with a successful detect traps and avoided or the PC takes 1hp damage.

11d: The desk and the bookshelf are devoid of any kind of paper documents (There is a Map Scroll dropped down behind the shelf. The DM is encouraged to use this as that next adventure hook).

Area 12: The Toilet

This chamber hangs out over the river - projecting out

from the building. The bench seat in this room conceals a toilet. There is a tiny poisonous spider (1hp) hiding under the lid of the toilet. It bites anyone sitting down here (1 hp + Save v. poison or take health damage - constitution reduced permanently by 1).

This chamber has a beautiful view of the river as it hangs out over the water. The windows are glass. There is also a bench here.

Area 13: Potions



The door to this chamber is heavy, reinforced and locked non magically. It can be opened with a key...found in the fireplace in great hall (Area 7). Bargle the Elder kept a selection of cursed magic items in this room. There is also one of every type of magic potion from the Basic Dungeon Master Guide except poison. The potions all have a flaw:

anyone drinking one experiences an upset stomach for 1d6 turns causing diarrhea (and setting in motion an event that will cause the PC to sit on the toilet in Area 12).

There is a huge selection of potions here.

Area 14: The Bathroom

This chamber is positioned over the entry. The room is occupied by a fine timber bathtub hand carved by elves from Radlebb (value 200gp, 1,000cn weight). Behind the tub, concealed from view is a collection of large metal balls and a mechanism designed to drop one through a hole when the trap near the entrance (9a) is triggered.

This chamber narrows toward a window. It has a fine bathtub of carven wood sitting in the splay.



BALLAD OF TAYMA

by John Calvin

In the days after the Great Rain of Fire, there was a young girl who lived in the shadows of the Black Mountains. Fervently did she pray to her patron Immortal Sol to take away the Wasting¹ that afflicted her people, but day after day, and year after year, her prayers were not answered. Still, even as her people teetered on the brink of destruction, this young girl did not lose hope. She sought out on her own to find a cure for the curse that had been thrust upon everything that she loved.

Finally her prayers were answered... though not by Sol. Tanit, Mother Night, sent the girl a vision showing her how to save her people. Using strength and guile she stole the secret of everlasting life from the dragon Ghaerathelix. With this gift, did the girl destroy her people's enemies and free them from the Wasting. Blood is life. Thus was the girl reborn as Tayma, the Original Nosferatu, hero to her people.

But the ire of Ghaerathelix could not be quenched, and the dragon vowed to destroy Tayma and her people for the insult she had perpetrated upon him. The dragon completed the ceremony given to him by his master Thanatos, following in Tayma's footsteps to become the first night dragon,

¹ The Wasting is a term used to denote the sickness and disease caused in the aftermath of the Great Rain of Fire. For more information see the [Mystara 2300 BC Campaign Setting](#) at The Vaults of Pandius .

MYSTARA 2300 BC CAMPAIGN SETTING

The Mystara 2300 BC Campaign Setting is a historical era campaign set on the world of Mystara 700 years after the destruction of Blackmoor in the Great Rain of Fire. Most societies and cultures of this time period must cope with the devastating aftereffects of that catastrophe, including the dreaded Wasting disease that spread across the globe in the intervening centuries. Survival was paramount during those times, and one of the main themes of the Mystara 2300 BC setting focuses on how these cultures overcame that catastrophe and the Wasting disease that followed it.

Different cultures each had varying ways of dealing with this situation. Giants and humanoids seemed to thrive in the radiance desolation, while the dwarves of the Shimmering Lands ignored it, and even exacerbated it, by continuing to practice technomagic arts. The Inti, ancestors of ancient Azcans in the area, fled underground, as did many clans of elves and even the aranea of Belpheon, as far away as the Savage Coast. Antalians in the north turned to elemental magic, while the folk of the Sea of Dread supplicated themselves before the enigmatic entity Adhuza M'Thaz¹.

¹ Adhuza-M'Thaz was originally developed by Sharon Dornhoff as the primary deity worshiped in the land of Adhuza (a nation controlled by kopru) inside of the Hollow Moon. In actuality this is a fictitious entity created from whole cloth by the kopru in

Ancient Taymorans, led by their hero-queen Tayma, turned to Blood Magic. Legends of the time say that Tayma stole the secret of everlasting life from the ancient dragon Ghaerathelix, and used it to create the Ceremony of Blood, a ceremony in which all participants are cleansed of deadly plagues and diseases (like the Wasting). Performed by Tayma and Tanit's high priestesshood, the ceremony required that a portion of blood from each member of the populace be sacrificed during an annual ritual. It was thus, that the cult of Tanit, and the nosferatu leading it, gained control of the Taymoran populace.

As memory of the Great Rain of Fire fades, and the effects of the Wasting diminish, the Taymoran populace is beginning to see their once noble saviors as parasites. Blood sacrifices that were once required for the survival of their culture, are now little more than coerced tribute for the sustenance of a lavish and corrupt noble class. Yet, for the moment, the vampiric rulers of Taymora maintain their control.

order to help them maintain control over their subjects. In BC 2300 the Outer World nation of Adhuza (not yet moved into the Hollow Moon) also follows this practice.

IMMORTALS OF TAYMORA

Though Tanit reigns supreme as the patroness of the Taymoran nobility, there are many other immortals worshiped in the nation.

Tanit (Nyx, Mother Night): Tanit gave the secret of unlife to her favored handmaiden Tayma, and taught the Taymoran people to practice the Ceremony of Blood, a ritual that has protected them for the effects of the Wasting for centuries.

Sarrattalu (Thanatos, Father Death): Enraged that Tanit would steal his secrets and pervert them for her own purposes, Sarrattalu has been urging his worshipers to infiltrate and destroy Taymora from within since its inception. His worship is illegal, except within the eastern cities from which his followers hold sway.

Sol (Ixion, Inti, Idu, Sollis): Vestiges of Sol's priesthood remain from Maharian times when his was the paramount religion of ancient Uhaara. In Taymora he takes on many roles, sometimes seen as Tanit's paramore and at other times as her greatest adversary. In the freed city of Soleclea, Sol reigns supreme.

Mahes (Ninfangle, The Hunter): Mahes religion can trace its origin along the Savage Coast and into Davania. Espousing freedom and self reliance, his worship is taken up by those living on the fringes of Taymoran society.

Ghaeranatos. Then he set about amassing a host to punish the upstart who dared to steal from him.

Though Tayma fought valiantly for her kin, it was soon apparent that she could not win. Ghaeranatos and his allies, enemies of Tayma's people, both new and old, were pressing upon the last stronghold of Tayma's people, Uhaara², and soon it would be overrun.

Again Tayma prayed, and again her prayers were answered by Mother Night. As Tayma was the Daughter of Tanit, Mother Night showed Tayma the secret of creating daughters of her own. Each of her daughters served a special role in the protection of her people, bringing their innate skills and powers to fruition in order to win freedom and a home for the Taymorans, the people of Tayma.

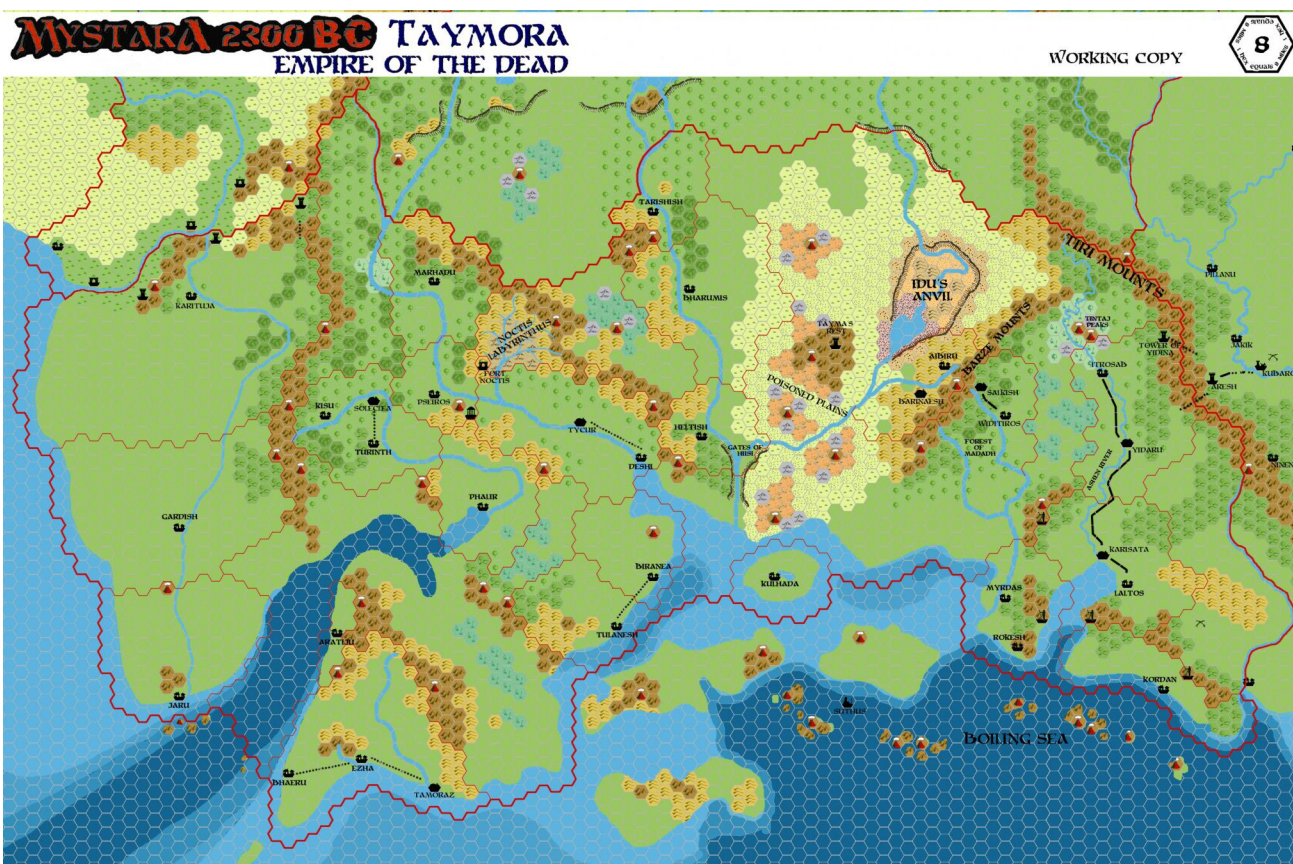
² Uhaara is an invention of the author, the last Maharian stronghold in the shadows of the Black Mountains. This was Tayma's birthplace, and the original homeland of the Taymorans (before they became the Taymorans)

Protius (Old Man of the Sea): A newer religion in Taymora, brought to those lands by elven travelers, the worship of Protius has nonetheless grown in recent years especially in the coastal city states.

Urtni (Ordana): Originally worshiped by the Tudaka of the southeast, Urtni's nature religion offered her chosen a unique way to battle the Wasting disease, by siphoning its effects into powerful totems. When the Taymorans conquered these lands they did

their best to suppress these practices, but the faithful still persist in cloistered pockets.

Minor Immortals: Each of the city states in Taymora has their own unique pantheon, with either Tanit or Sarrattalu at its head and with innumerable other immortals serving them. The DM should feel free to add in any other immortal active during this era, although the immortals listed above have the largest followings.



The BC 2300 map of the Known World is the author's own creation, and may differ significantly from previous maps depicting this era and location. It is based off of maps and other information from many sources including

Gaz 9, Gaz 10, PC 3, X7. For mor information regarding this map please refer to [the map threads](#) at The Piazza Forums

TIMELINE

BC 4000: Blackmoor begins its rise to greatness after having discovered and plundered the City of the Gods.

BC 3000: Blackmoor comes to an abrupt end in the Great Rain of Fire, and the civilized world is devastated.

BC 2990: Civilizations across the planet face the aftereffects of the Great Rain of Fire, as a dreaded Wasting disease slowly kills many of the survivors.

BC 2940: Thonian colonists on Brun have been suffering greatly from the Wasting disease, and their culture looks as if it could be destroyed entirely.

BC 2938: Tayma, a high priestess of the Thonian colonists, sets out on a quest to save her people. Prompted by dreams sent from a mysterious immortal, she seeks the lair of the dragon Ghaerathelix.

BC 2933: Tayma discovers the location of Ghaerathelix's lair and spies the ancient gold dragon as he transforms himself in a magical ceremony. This is the secret her immortal patron wished her to find, that will be her people's salvation.

Now transformed into a powerful undead being known as a night dragon, Ghaerathelix changes his name to honor his own immortal patron, calling himself Ghaeranatos.

BC 2928: Tayma performs Ghaerathelix's Ceremony of Blood, transforming herself into the Original Nosferatu and making her immune to the Wasting.

BC 2913: Tayma perfects the Ceremony of Blood so that it protects her people from the effects of the Wasting. By sacrificing a portion of their own life's blood, all participants of the Ceremony are cleansed of the disease, however to be effective the Ceremony must be performed on an annual basis.

BC 2876: Tayma begins to consolidate her power among the Thonian colonists.

BC 2839: Though healthy once again, the Thonian colonists, now calling themselves Taymorans in honor of their savior, are still not numerous. They face renewed attacks from giants on all sides.

BC 2795: Determined to grow her empire, Tayma begins making overtures to the neighboring Maharian peoples.

BC 2746: Tayma begins recruiting the best and brightest from Tanit's priestesses, preparing to performing the original Ceremony of Blood once again, and create more noferatu.

BC 2730: Tayma once again performs the original Ceremony of Blood, creating the twelve Daughters of Night.

BC 2729: Ghaeranatos is furious when he learns of Tayma's theft and rushes to destroy the upstarts. He is repelled and slinks away to plot his revenge.

BC 2629: Ghaeranatos raises a force of dragons and giants to sack Uhaara. They Taymorans flee the onslaught in three separate exoduses.

BC 2608: At the Battle of Nimidi's Maw, Padihru distracts the attacking army but is destroyed by Ghaeranatos. Sijaru sneaks behind enemy lines killing the night dragon Rhaetos.

BC 2582: Tayma gathers her forces south of the Aterok Mountains. Kikanari is destroyed by Ghaeranatos but the night dragon is ultimately defeated.

BC 2570: The city of Tamoraz is established along the southern coast of Brun, and Tayma again asserts her control across the land conquering nearby peoples.

BC 2510: Tayma mysteriously disappears, and the Daughters of Night quickly divide her kingdom. Tamoraz, Tycur, Salkish, Yidaru, and Karisata all rise up as regional powers under the control of one of the Daughters of Night.

BC 2408: Massive volcanic eruptions in Vulcania destroy the elvish civilizations on that continent and send gouts of black ash swirling into the atmosphere.

BC 2400: The followers of Thanatos begin to insinuate themselves into Taymoran society. These vampires are the disenfranchised "children" (many of them males) of the Taymoran Queens who are tired of taking orders from the Tanit Theocracy.

BC 2395: The Dark Years end as the last clouds of ash settle from the sky.

BC 2340: Soleclea deposes its queen, becoming the first Taymoran city to free itself from the bonds of their vampiric rulers.

BC 2318: Mogreth attacks the city of Kubaros. Arunaru and Lovanara gather troops to repel the lizards and drive them back to Mogreth. Arunaru betrays and destroys Kitash sacking her city.

BC 2317: Coalition of Ariasha, Sijaru, and Lovanara band together to remove Arunaru. They are betrayed by Lovanara. Ariasha flees, and Sijaru is sacked and falls to those loyal to Thanatos.

BC 2316: Yidaru sacked and claimed by Thanatos followers. Lovanara is driven away.

BC 2300: Present day (for this article).

BC 2200: Golden Age of Taymora³

BC 2000: Decline of Taymora

BC 1750: Earthquakes and volcanic eruptions shake southern Brun, sinking much of Taymora beneath the waves⁴.

BC 1720: Land masses split further away, forming ten islands south of the Five Shires.

BC 1700: A Blackmoorian device is set of by elves in the Broken Lands.

³ See Giampaolo Agosta's "Taymora, Land of the Dead" in this issue for more details about Taymora's Golden Age. Although these two visions of Taymora may differ slightly, DMs wishing to use both should be able to do so with only a modicum of effort.

⁴ See Francesco Defferrari's "Past Ages of the Known World" in this issue for more details about the cataclysms from BC 1750 to BC 1700, and how they shaped the coastline of southern Brun.



Name	Title	Status	Powers
Jadikira	First Child of Tayma	Queen of Tamoraz	Divination
Nashane	Second Child of Tayma	Queen of Tycur	Domination
Kikanari	Third Child of Tayma	Destroyed	Greater Undead Control
Samane	Fourth Child of Tayma	Queen of Karituja	Regeneration
Durjas	Fifth Child of Tayma	Destroyed	Psychic
Ariasha	Sixth Child of Tayma	Queen of Salkish	Animal Control
Arunaru	Seventh Child of Tayma	Queen of Karisata	Shapeshifting
Lovanara	Eighth Child of Tayma	Exiled	Illusion
Sijaru	Ninth Child of Tayma	Destroyed	Shadow
Padihru	Tenth Child of Tayma	Destroyed	Elemental Storms
Kitash	Eleventh Child of Tayma	Destroyed	Enchantment
Yidadnh	Twelfth Child of Tayma	Queen of Tarashish	Fey Magic

Table 1: Daughters of Night

DAUGHTERS OF NIGHT

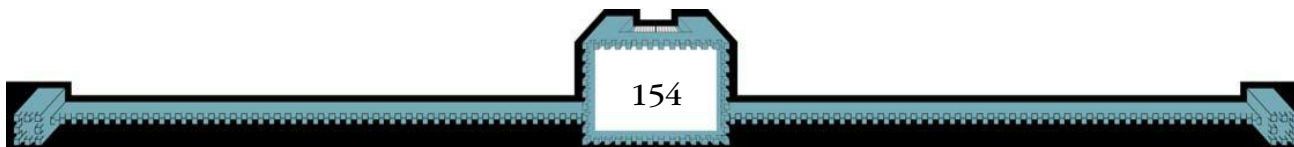
Created by Tayma at the dawn of Taymoran civilization, the Daughters of Night are all powerful nosferatu that have received special blessings from Tanit and have been tasked with using their gifts to protect Tanit's flock. Seven of the twelve Daughters of Night have survived in modern day Taymora, becoming powerful individuals in their own rights, most of them taking up the mantle of Queen and ruling over one of the many city states in the area.

Jadikira

Daughter of Night, First Child of Tayma, Heiress of Darkness, Handmaiden of Tanit, Stygian Queen of Tamoraz, Empress of All Taymora

Daughter of Night, First Child of Tayma steadfast and true, and ever by Tayma's side. In your eyes shine all of the stars of the night sky, brilliant points upon the darkness. Their infinite possibilities shall be yours to claim. Through your wisdom, will the Children of Night be guided. By your vision, will their victory be secured.

First blessing of Tanit



History

Once a priestess of Sol, Jadikira⁵ was the first among the old guard to embrace the Ceremony of Blood that Tayma brought to free her people from the Wasting. Because of this she became



Tayma's most trusted lieutenant, and swiftly set about the task of finding like minded individuals willing to serve under Tanit's new order.

As her reward, Jadikira was given special recognition and took her place as First among Tayma's children. Her prophecies of Ghaeranatos' treacherous assault in BC 2630 were instrumental in saving the Taymoran people from almost certain doom, and in preparing them for their long flight to their new home in southeastern Brun.

Jadikira led a full third of her people on the exodus of Uhaara, fleeing south and skirting the southern coastlands of Brun. It was during this flight that she had another profound vision, leading her followers to the base of the Aterok Mountains⁶. There they

⁵ Jadikira was created by Geoff Gander for use in his personal campaign. For more information see the [Taymora - Empire of the Dead thread](#) at The Piazza Forums. Jadikira ultimately managed to survive the destruction of Taymora by placing her spirit in several magical objects and dispersing them throughout the Known World.

⁶ The Aterok Mountains was the name given to the ancient mountain range that would

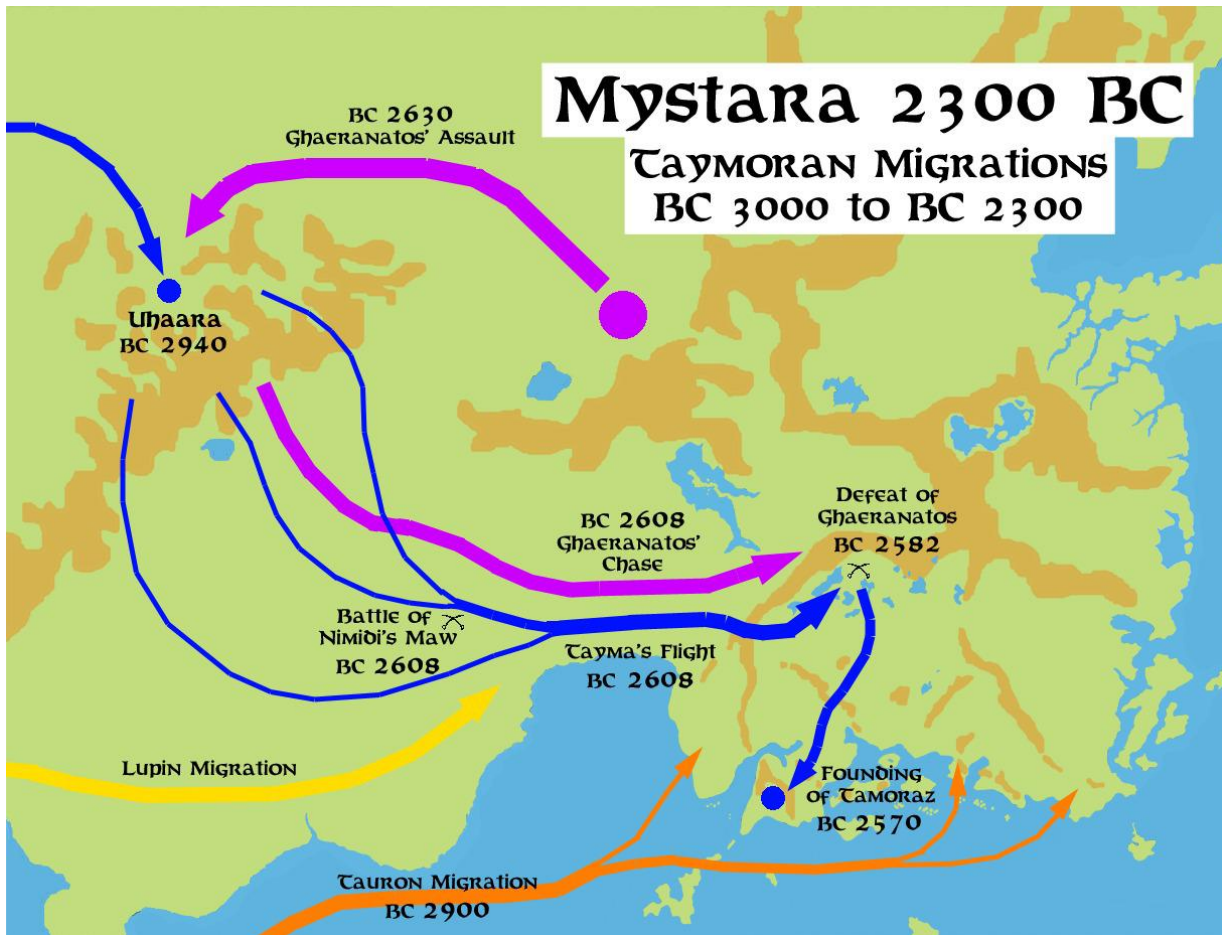
be laid in wait, ambushing Ghaeranatos and his army in the Taymoran's hour of greatest need.

Though accorded the highest honors in Tayma's new order, Jadikira chafed at the restrictions and censure placed upon her position. A master manipulator, using fear, greed, ambition, and jealousy, Jadikira was able to maneuver her sisters into doing her will, regardless of whether they realize it or not. When Tayma disappeared in 2510 BC, she was in the perfect position to take up her mantle.

Laying claim to the capital city of Tamoraz, Jadikira proclaimed herself Empress of Taymora, though none of her sisters recognized her authority. Under her rule the city has become a prospering port with economic ties stretching the length of Taymoran lands and beyond.

In the centuries since Tayma's disappearance Jadikira has seen visions of what she believes to be the eventual destruction of Taymora; a calamity of earthquakes, fire, and floods that will eventually sink Taymora beneath the waves of the Sea of Dread. Unsure of when the calamity will take place Jadikira has set actions in motion designed to avoid that fate, yet still her visions always show her the same thing. She is beginning to grow frantic, perhaps even to the point of insanity. Though she would prefer to preserve her empire, at her heart Jadikira is greedy and narcissistic, and would ultimately sacrifice all of Taymora in return for her own insured survival.

one day become the Cruth Mountains.



Vampiric Line

Nosferatu and vampires from Jadikira's line are masters in the art of divination, allowing them to pull knowledge from mystical sources and making them strategists beyond compare.

Innate Magic: Divination

Vassals: Once during any encounter a vampire of this line may attempt to redo an action which led to an unfavorable result. Her precognitive abilities allow her to glimpse a short vision of the direct future of this encounter and alter her actions to change the outcome. In game terms the DM

may re-roll one action seen in this vision, however the results of the second roll -in reality- must be accepted (whether better or worse than the original).

Elders: Once a month an elder of this line may perform a divining ritual showing them an event that is destined to occur. A general timetable for the event may be inferred, though exact actions and causes of the event are shrouded in mystery.

Progenitor: The progenitor of this line may perform a ritual once a year, granting her a clear vision of the future to come. Some events seen in the vision, though not all, may be altered.

VAMPIRIC POWERS

The vampiric powers listed in this article are intended to be rules light and generic. DMs may flesh them out at their own discretion in order to match with the game system and power levels of their choice. Vampiric powers may also be used on nosferatu or vampires of a lower category. Progenitor powers will affect all but other progenitors and elder powers may be used upon vassals. Vampiric powers are broken up into four different categories, listed below.

Innate Magic: All vampires of a given line have an inborn ability to master magic of the specific type listed. DMs should use their best judgement when assigning powers, and keep in mind that younger vampires will have fewer powers than older, more experienced ones.

Vassals: Vampire vassals fill the ranks of the lesser nobility in Taymoran society. They

are the youngest and weakest example of members of their vampiric line, though even that grants them a special power (often expressible on a per encounter or daily basis).

Elders: Vampiric elders make up the ranks of the high nobility in Taymoran society. In general they are older and have lived for decades or even centuries as vampires. Because of this they gain access to even more powers than the vassals of their line. Elder powers require more effort to manifest, and are often restricted to monthly expressions.

Progenitor/Inheritor: The progenitor of each line is blessed by Tanit with a unique power. Should the progenitor of a specific line be destroyed, the oldest surviving vampire of that line inherits her status, and her powers. The powers of a progenitor require vast strength and effort to manifest, and may also require that specific rituals be performed.

Nashane

Daughter of Night, Second Child of Tayma, Beloved of Tanit, Tenebrous Queen of Tycur

Daughter of Night, Second Child of Tayma regal and unflinching, ever speaking the will of Tayma. Upon the western winds will your words be carried to the multitudes, a boundless whispering zephyr assailing your foes. Through your force of will, the Children of Night shall be heard. By your voice will their enemies be commanded.

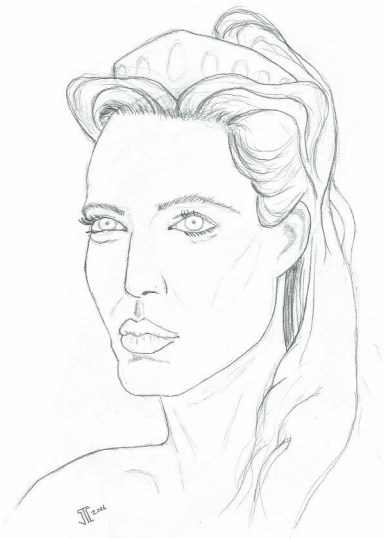
- Second blessing of Tanit

History

After swearing fealty to Tanit and becoming a Daughter of Night, Nashane⁷ set about the task of consolidating her mistress's power. Fond of bullying and browbeating in her former life, she discovered newfound talents for coercing her adversaries to comply with her wishes. It wasn't long before village elders, religious leaders, and even chieftains of nearby giantish tribes were all enthralled to her will.

⁷ More information can be found about Nashane in the [“Secrets of Noctis Labyrinthus Adventure Path” thread](#) at The Piazza, and on the Vaults of Pandius.

When Ghaeranatos began marshalling his armies, Nashane and her children were in the forefront of the conflict. At first they dominated entire cohorts of the enemy, sending them against their fellows, but when the night dragon's forces became overwhelming, Nashane switched her tactics, rushing home to prepare her people for exodus.



As Uhaara fell, Nashane set out with the first exodus, turning Ghaeranatos' front line forces into her own personal playthings. Soon the dragon and his generals became aware of her tactics and set a trap for her at the battle of Shattered Woods. Nashane barely survived a confrontation facing the Dark Dryad and her forest spawn, though she did manage to steal the dryad's heart before escaping.

IN TAYMORA

When her "mother" disappeared, Nashane was quick to seize control of Tycur, one of the oldest and most well established Taymoran cities of the time. There she built the Tower of Night, a dark and ominous spire which spews forth a never ending umbrella of black clouds which blot out the sun. It is rumored that the Dark Dryad's heart powers her foul engine, though none

have entered the Tower of Night and returned to tell tale of it.

Nashane has also been working in secret with her sister Ariasha of Salkish, despite the fact that she despises Ariasha as a coward. The two seek a way to combine their powers and create the ultimate servitor race using a bestial curse that can be quickly spread among the Taymoran population. Once they succeed, the curse of Mythic Lycanthropy⁸ will be unleashed upon the world, and the two will have a pliant army large enough to win Taymora. Of course Nashane does not plan to share such power with her sister.

Of more immediate concern is the city of Soleclea, which recently wrested their independence from her sister Durjas. Though she curses Durjas for a fool, Nashane secretly believes that Jadikira had a hand in her downfall. Should Nashane be able to reclaim the city and reveal such treachery about Jadikira, she would be one step closer to fulfilling her plans. Once she has dealt with the infidel rebels and her pretender sisters, she plans to crown herself Empress of Taymora, however the Cult of Sol is proving even more resistant to her powers than they did to Durjas'.

Vampiric Line

Nosferatu and vampires from Nashane's line have the ability to subvert the will of their enemies and make them work against themselves.

Innate Magic: Domination

⁸ See "[A Treatise on Lycanthropy](#)" by J. Calvin at the Vaults of Pandius

Vassals: Once during any encounter a vampire of this line may suggest any action to an opponent, which they will attempt to carry out to the best of their abilities. Such actions can not be inherently life threatening.

Elders: Once a month, an elder of this line may task an individual with a quest. That individual will attempt to complete that quest to the best of their abilities, regardless of the danger to themselves.

Progenitor: The progenitor of this line may perform a ritual once per year that allows her place a portion of her life force in another body. Any body so inhabited can be completely controlled by the progenitor. Only a single such individual can be controlled at any one time.

Kikanari

Daughter of Night, Third Child of Tayma

Daughter of Night, Third Child of Tayma restless yet devout. Cold as the grave is your heart, yet the fires of fervor gleam in your eyes. Nor shall the rigors of death hinder your commands. Those who fall to the cold by your hand shall rise again with your fire inside them. Through your zeal shall the Children of Night be defended. By your fervor will the slain be made servants.

- Third blessing of Tanit

History

Keeper of the ancient Mysteries of Tanit, Kikanari oversaw all nightly operations of the great temple in Uhaara. Her undead minions, free of the type of ambitions and passions that would lead to corruption of the spirit, were tasked with all of the sacred duties of their order. As their overseer, Kikanari herself had power that rivaled her elder “sisters” and even Tayma herself.

When Ghaeranatos’ forces fell upon Uhaara, Kikanari found new applications for her abilities. The undead that once served the Uhaaran populace found a new purpose as front line troops in the vicious battles that followed. Though such minions fell quickly, there were always fresh corpses after each conflict to replace their numbers. Kikanari soon became recognized as Tayma’s leading general in the fight against the night dragon and its forces, and the Uhaarans loved her for it.

Her newfound fame would be short lived however, when the first and second Uhaaran exoduses were caught in a trap at the base of the Aterok Mountains. For five days and nights Kikanari and her forces kept Ghaeranatos and his legions at bay, but eventually Kikanari’s army dwindled as new corpses became more and more scarce. With only herself and a handful of her own progeny standing between Tayma and the dragon’s forces Kikanari threw herself into a frenzy, cutting down all before her. Just as the tides were turning once more, the dragon Ghaeranatos himself flew to the front, sweeping Tayma’s last defenses aside. Yet even as the dragon’s claws bit into Tayma’s side, Kikanari did not relent. In a

desperate act of defiance, she threw herself at the dragon though she could not overcome his power. Kikanari's final act of loyalty enabled Tayma to escape, though her freedom was bought with Kikanari's destruction.

Kikanari's sacrifice was not in vain however, as her tactics and final battle with the night dragon bought the Tayma and the Taymorans vital time... time that Jadikira and her last exodus used to outflank and rout Ghaeranatos' forces. Some say that Jadikira arrived just in time to save her people, though others speculate that Tayma's First Daughter waited just long enough to see her sister Kikanari vanquished before entering the fray.

Vampiric Line

Nosferatu and vampires of Kikanari's line have the ability to generate and control armies of the undead.

Innate Magic: Increased Undead Control

Vassals: Vassals of this line may control up to twice the normal number of hit dice of lesser undead (zombies and skeletons).

Elders: Once a month, elders of this line can perform a ritual to create and control an undead minion (ghoul, ghast, wight, or specter). One to three of these minions can be controlled simultaneously depending on the strength of the vampire.

Progenitor: The progenitor/inheritor of this line may perform a ritual once per year to create and control a greater undead minion (ghost, mummy, or lich). Only one such

minion may be under her control at any given time.

Inheritors

Though Kikanari herself was destroyed by the night dragon, several of her own daughters have survived and prospered in Taymora. Many vampire queens seek their special skills to help bolster their own armies with undead legions, while others hunt them down in the hopes of combining their own powers with those of this vampiric line. Some few of Kikanari's daughters have found power in their own rights.

Samane

Daughter of Night, Fourth Child of Tayma, Cherished of Tanit, Atramentous Queen of Karituja

Daughter of Night, Fourth Child of Tayma
supple as the reed yet sharp as a dagger in
the back. Selflessly do you stand between
Tayma and her foes. None shall witness
your deadly dance and survive. Those who
pierce you shall not spill blood. By your
skill and prowess shall the enemies of the
Children of Night be decimated.

- Fourth blessing of Tanit

History

Samane and her ilk served the ancient Uhaarans first as temple guardians, and then as constabulary and city guards. When the war came, they took to the front, defending the Uhaarans from Ghaeranatos'

depredations and harassing his legions at every opportunity.

When Tayma led the first exodus from their ancestral lands, Samane was by her side, cutting a swath through enemy forces big enough for the Uhaaran's to flee through. On two separate occasions Samane fought Ghaeranatos in personal combat during their flight across the wilderness. Though she escaped destruction both times, her last encounter with the night dragon was beyond even her ability to fully heal, and left her scarred in both mind and body.

At the Aterok Mountains, Samane stood in protection over Tayma, determined that the dragon and his forces should never touch her mother. The two rushed to Kikanari's side when she battled with Ghaeranatos, but arrived too late to prevent her destruction. With the arrival of Jadikira's forces, and with Tayma's aid, Samane gravely wounded the night dragon, sending him fleeing over the mountains.

IN TAYMORA

When Tayma came into her new land, she set Samane the task of bringing unruly natives to heel. This Samane relished, perhaps too greatly, seeing enemies and agents of Ghaeranatos in every corner. Though she and her progeny were able to subjugate local populations quickly, their viciousness and brutality won them no love.

Tayma's disappearance ended her campaigns, and when Samane rushed back to Tamoraz to find her mother, she was instead met by the forces of her sister Jadikira, as they consolidated their power over the city. Rather than challenge Samane, Jadikira

begged her to continue their mother's work along the western borders of Taymora. This plea took hold in Samane and she returned west to claim the city of Karituja as her base of operations.

Dismayed at the lack of support her sisters send her, Samane is barely holding her own against the enemies of Taymora. Incursions from Intua, Grondheim, and Adhuza constantly sap her resources, while her sisters further inland seem to reap the benefits of her labors. The betrayal of Lovanara in BC 2317 sent Samane into an almost paranoid rage. Already dissatisfied with her lot, she has begun plotting to attack Tamoraz and usurp the power of Jadikira so that all of Taymora might be bound under a strong and unified leader.

Vampiric Line

Nosferatu and vampires of Samane's line have increased martial powers, as well as the ability of regeneration, which makes them excellent warriors and soldiers.

Innate Magic: Regeneration

Vassals: Once per encounter a vampire of this line may roll to save against any effect that would automatically destroy her.

Elders: Once per month an elder of this line may completely shrug off any effect that would automatically destroy her.

Progenitor: The progenitor of this vampiric line can perform a ritual once per year to bind her soul to that of an inanimate object. As long as that object exists, she cannot be destroyed.

Durjas

Daughter of Night, Fifth Child of Tayma, Despised of Tanit, Former Queen of Soleclea

Daughter of Night, Fifth Child of Tayma coy of smile and piercing eyes, advising Tayma of friends and foes. None can peer into the void of the dark and flee from haunting secrets. Souls shall be laid bare before your eyes, their mysteries revealed. By your sight the Children of Night shall know their enemies and prepare.

- Fifth blessing of Tanit

History

Even in life Durjas had an uncanny ability to sense the truth in the actions of others. After receiving the Blessing of Tanit, her powers grew tenfold, to the point at which she could see into the hearts and minds of those before her. As the power of Uhaara grew, Durjas and her progeny served dual roles as both judges to the populace and as secret police routing out the enemies of Tayma.

When the night dragon attacked, Durjas turned her attentions away from the thoughts of her own people and actively sought out traitors and enemies to interrogate. Often she and her children journeyed into enemy territory seeking information of troop movements, and about Ghaeranatos' plans - information that was vital in keeping the Uhaarans one step ahead of their adversaries.

Durjas followed Jadikira in the last Uhaaran exodus, serving her sister well as a military

lieutenant and spymaster. In large part it was the combined efforts of Durjas and Lovanara that kept the third exodus hidden from the forces of Ghaeranatos, and allowed them to strike a fatal blow to the dragon's forces at the battle of Aterok.

IN TAYMORA

With Tayma's mysterious disappearance, Durjas claimed the city of Soleclea, Jewel of the North, as her own, despite two of her elder sisters who also coveted the prize. Ultimately it was the backing of Jadikira that solidified her claim, although she and Durjas had been at each other's throats since the defeat of Ghaeranatos. In certain circles, far away from Tamoraz, floated whispered rumors that Durjas held some dark secret of Tayma's first daughter in ransom, and used that threat to coerce Jadikira into doing her will.

For decades did Durjas and her progeny terrorize the inhabitants of Soleclea, making that once great city into a playground of intrigue and horror. None could hide from the vampire queen of Soleclea, for she could hear the thoughts of others as if they were spoken aloud in an empty temple. Ironic it was then, when in BC 2340 the upstart Cult of Sol managed to wrest control of the city from under her nose, destroying Durjas and driving her progeny and the rest of Tanit's faithful from the city in a single night.

The few of Durjas' progeny who escaped Soleclea sought sanctuary far to the south, in the city of Tamoraz, but these were dispatched by an enraged Queen Jadikira once she heard of her sister's blunder. Now Durjas' name is anathema to her sisters, and she is known only as the Despised of Tanit,

reviled for losing supremacy over one of the richest cities in the nation.

Vampiric Line

Nosferatu and vampires of Durjas' line, if any still exist, have psychic and psionic powers allowing them to read the thoughts of their enemies.

Innate Magic: Psychic/Psionic

Vassals: Once per encounter a vampire of this line may discern the general attitude and disposition of an individual she is interacting with. Once per day they may discern if an individual they are interacting with is telling the truth.

Elders: Once per encounter an elder of this vampiric line may read the thoughts of a single individual they are interacting with.

Progenitor: The progenitor/inheritor of this line may perform a ritual once per month in order to delve into the memories of a targeted and present individual. Such memories are traversed as if in a dream, though the further back a memory, the longer it takes to find it.

Inheritors

All inheritors of Durjas are believed to have been destroyed, either by the Cult of Sol, or by Jadikira herself. Though official tales describe the Queen of Tamoraz slaughtering Durjas' progeny in a fit of rage, others whisper that their fate was sealed in order to keep Jadikira's darkest secrets safe.

Ariasha

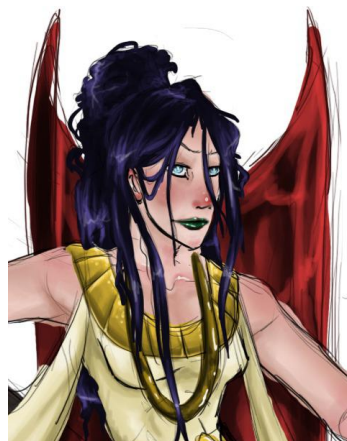
Daughter of Night, Sixth Child of Tayma, Treasured of Tanit, Jewel of the Eastern Realm, Sable Queen of Salkish

Daughter of Night, Sixth Child of Tayma who speaks softly and who's eyes and ears are always open, waiting and watching, and reporting all to Tayma. Moonlight shall be your umbrella, and all those who travel by its light shall be known to you. By your vigilance may the Children of Night never be surprised by their foes.

- Sixth blessing of Tanit

History

A wild child who grew up on the outskirts of Uhaaran society, Ariasha always felt more at home wandering the forests of her homeland than the streets of Uhaara. Tanit however favored her, and with that favor Ariasha's bond with the natural world only strengthened. As her sisters consolidated their power amongst the Uhaaran people, Ariasha spent her time speaking with wolves, and frolicking with other creatures of the night.



Despite the disdain of her sisters, Ariasha's wild behavior was the very thing that saved her people, for her creatures told her of Ghaeranatos' gathering forces long before

the dragon brought them to bear on the Uhaarans.

Ariasha fled with Tayma in the first exodus of Uhaara. The animals she commanded, rats, bats, and wolves, served the exodus well as scouts and spies along their dangerous journey. Despite their vigilance Ghaeranatos' legions constantly harried the Uhaarans as they fled south, picking off strays and the sick and weak whenever the chance arose. When Ghaeranatos' final assault came at the base of the Aterok Mountains, Ariasha and her familiars fled into the night never expecting any of her sisters to survive.

IN TAYMORA

Branded a coward after the defeat of Ghaeranatos, Ariasha spent years fleeing the punitive campaigns of her sisters. Finally she found shelter in the small frontier town of Salkish, nestled along the spine of the Barze Mountains and blanketed on all sides by the Forest of Madadh. Slowly, and in secret, she built up her power base in the area, until the day that her mother disappeared and she finally declared herself Queen of Salkish.

Yet, despite the bad blood between them, when her sisters, Lovanara and Sijaru, called upon her help in dealing with Arunaru, Ariasha joined their cause. When Lovanara revealed her deception and turned upon Ariasha and Sijaru, Ariasha did the only thing she could... she ran once again, leaving Sijaru to her fate.

Now Ariasha is one of the few devotees of Tanit left standing in eastern Taymora in BC 2300. She is surrounded by enemies on all sides. Vampire kings of Sarrattalu have usurped control of Barinaesh and Yidaru,

and her sister Arunaru in Karisata has turned apostate. Rebels and freedom fighters infest the countryside, and Ariasha is feeling pressured on all fronts. Her last desperate hope is an alliance with her sister Nashane and the gamble that their secret lycanthropy project will pan out.

VAMPIRIC LINE

Nosferatu and vampires of Ariasha's line are masters of enchantment and domination, especially over the wild creatures of the world (rats, bats, and wolves).

Innate Magic: Animal Control

Vassals: Vampires of this line may control animals of the night (rats, bats, and wolves) as if they were controlling lesser undead minions. At any one time a vampire may control a number of animals whose hit dice total is no more than twice her own. This is in addition to the number of undead she can control⁹.

Elders: Elder vampires of this line may control dire forms of rats, bats, and wolves. In addition, once per month, they may attract a dire minion that will do their will. Dire minions may or may not control an entire pack of their normal animal type.

Progenitor: The progenitor of this line may transform herself into a normal or dire rat, bat, or wolf at will. While transformed she maintains all memories, and special powers of her original form, however she may not have access to spell casting abilities.

⁹ Use the standard rules for controlling undead based on the D&D rules version being played with. In Basic D&D this would be a number of undead whose Hit Dice and * total is no more than twice her own.

ARUNARU

Daughter of Night, Seventh Child of Tayma, Apostate of Tanit, Queen of Karisata

Daughter of Night, Seventh Child of Tayma elegant and beguiling, walking undetected in the midst of her enemies. As the face of the moon shifts, so shall your appearance. By your cunning shall the Children of Night deceive their enemies.

- Seventh blessing of Tanit

History

The real Arunaru was murdered in secret by Ghaeranatos, three days before he launched his initial assault on Uhaara. Since that time the night dragon Synn¹⁰, Ghaeranatos' own daughter and foremost among his servants, began masquerading in her stead¹¹. Patient and conniving, Synn insinuated herself into

¹⁰ Synn was first introduced as a night dragon in Bruce Heard's Dragon Magazine series The Voyages of the Princess Ark. Later she adopted the identity of Lady Dolores Hillsbury of Glantri. This article supposes that Synn was in fact the "daughter" of the original night dragon Ghaeranatos, created by him at Thanatos' request in order to help destroy the Taymorans.

¹¹ Dragons who take humanoid form, generally appear as the same individual whenever they do so. When Synn first took humanoid form to masquerade as Arunaru she captured the vampire's likeness exactly, and since then she appears as Arunaru whenever taking the form of a human. Because of this, individuals who recognize or remember Arunaru from this age, may also recognize Synn in the modern era as Dolores Hillsbury.

Kikanari's counsel, delaying the second exodus through treachery even as her father pursued Tayma and the first exodus.

Neither did she betray her true intentions throughout the entire war with Ghaeranatos. When it was clear that Tayma and her children would be victorious, Synn's mission became one of long term subterfuge - she would infiltrate the highest circles of Tayma's nobility and destroy it from within.

IN TAYMORA

When Tayma consolidated her power in Tamoraz, after the defeat of Ghaeranatos, Arunaru became one of her closest confidants, and one of her most vocal supporters... at least in public. In private she continued to scheme against the woman who stole from and humiliated her father. Synn however, could not contain her true feelings indefinitely. Soon her hatred of Tayma became apparent to many, including Tayma herself, but before Synn's true nature could be revealed Tayma mysteriously disappeared.

With Tayma's fledgling empire in disarray, Synn fled east, claiming the city of Karisata and establishing a power base there. Karisata became the new gateway into Taymora for Ghaeranatos and his minions, and soon the eastern city states were in turmoil.

A coalition of the eastern vampire queens sought to oust Arunaru and quell the unrest spewing forth from its borders, but by then it was too late. Just as the coalition's armies were poised to attack Karisata, they were betrayed by one of their own - Queen Lovanara. One after another the Vampire

Queens of the east fell to the night dragons and their allies.

Vampiric Line

Nosferatu and vampires of Arunaru's line have the ability to change their shape and appearance, which allows them to be excellent spies and saboteurs.

Innate Magic: Shapeshifting

Vassals: Once per day vampires of this line may alter their form in order to look like a generic individual of any race with a similar size and shape.

Elders: Once per month an elder vampire of this line may alter their form to take on the likeness of another specific individual. Only an outward appearance may be mimicked in this way. The thoughts and personality of the individual being impersonated are not acquired by this power.

Progenitor: The progenitor/inheritor of this line may perform a ritual once per year to take on the appearance and mannerisms of a specific individual. The ritual creates a psychic link between the progenitor and the target of the ritual, granting the vampire access to all of their knowledge and memories.

Inheritors

Few of Arunaru's true progeny yet remain, and those that do have long since determined to steer far clear of their erstwhile "mother". A small cadre of these vampires have sought shelter in Salkish, and another in Tarashish. Others have determined it is best to keep a low profile, and have made solitary lives for themselves across Taymora and in neighboring lands.

Fadhadi, Child of Arunaru, Guardian of Hiisi's Gates, Queen of Heltish, is one of Arunaru's few progeny to actually be in a position of rulership. Secure in her city, and growing in her own powers, Fadhadi is beginning to suspect that her mother Arunaru may no longer exist. Should she come into her full potential, inheriting all the powers of a progenitor of her line, her suspicions would be proven true. Synn may go to any lengths to prevent this from happening.

LOVANARA

Daughter of Night, Eighth Child of Tayma, Forsaken of Tanit, Exiled Queen of Yidaru

Daughter of Night, Eighth Child of Tayma dreamer and storyteller, and chronicler of Tayma. May the tales upon your lips be as full as a starlit sky. May the stories you weave be believed by all who hear them. By your words may the Children of Night know their heritage, and may their enemies be confounded.

- Eighth blessing of Tanit

History

Sought after by many suitors in Uhaara, it was said that the beautiful Lovanara¹² would

¹² Lovanara has gone by many names throughout the centuries including Lovanara, Luvarshalla, and Lovaara. More information can be found about her at the Vaults of Pandius in "[Kaarjala \(Kingdom of\)](#)", and "[Kaarjala, Land of the Saamari](#)" by James Mishler, and [The "Vampiric Bloodlines of Mystara"](#) by Giampaolo Agosta. While those sources list Luvarshalla's vampiric



grant her chosen paramour their every desire. Even before she was blessed by Tanit, Lovanara was able to trick, fool, and deceive nearly anyone she met. The wealth and power she managed to acquire afforded her a luxurious and lavish lifestyle, but despite her shortcomings Tanit saw great potential in her.

Upon her induction into the Cult of Tanit, Lovanara ascended the ranks of the priestesshood quickly. She and her acolytes were tasked with collecting the first Blood Tax, along with the added burden of reassuring and appeasing the general populace. When Uhaara fell to Ghaeranatos, Lovanara's skills were put to the test in hiding and protecting the fleeing Uhaaran survivors.

Jadikira knew that Lovanara's powers of illusion would aid her in escaping their doomed homeland, and so she convinced

transformation circa BC 300, this article supposes an even more ancient origin for the figure, making her one of the original Vampire Queens of Taymora. Given her propensity for deceit and subterfuge Lovanara's true history may remain forever a mystery.

Lovanara to shield the third exodus from the legions of Ghaeranatos in their journey. During the final assault upon the night dragon near the Aterok Mountains, Lovanara and her acolytes were able to disguise Jadikira's army amongst the landscape, allowing them to finally ambush and rout the dragon and his forces.

IN TAYMORA

Incensed at the way her "eldest" sister treated her during the exodus, Lovanara journeyed to the east in order to establish Tayma's laws in the far borders of her land. When her mother mysteriously vanished, she claimed the city of Yidaru for herself and immediately began plotting revenge against Jadikira and her older sisters in the west.

When Arunaru approached her with plans of sedition, she jumped at the opportunity to strike out, and betrayed the eastern coalition when they marched upon Karisata. Unfortunately for her, Arunaru/Synn had no intention of keeping their agreement and sacked the city of Yidaru before Lovanara and her forces could return to defend it.

Having been abandoned by Tanit for her crimes and with Synn's puppet in control of her city, Lovanara has been forced to wander the eastern lands. Broken and homeless, she lashes out at whomever is unlucky enough to cross her path.

VAMPIRIC LINE

It is believed that most of Lovanara's line were destroyed during the sacking of Yidaru, and in fact many of her original progeny perished in that conflict. Some remain however, masters of deception and disguise. Other enclaves spring up from time to time,

as Lovanara desperately tries to rebuild a family for herself.

Innate Magic: Illusion

Vassals: Once per encounter a vampire of this line may alter either their personal appearance or the appearance and perception of the terrain around them in order to gain a tactical advantage.

Elders: Once per encounter an elder vampire of this line may alter the perception of a targeted individual, removing or augmenting one of their senses, in order to gain a tactical advantage.

Progenitor: Once per month the progenitor of this line may perform a ritual to alter the perception of reality of a targeted individual. That individual will see, hear, and feel exactly what the progenitor wishes them to for the duration of the ritual.

Sarrattalu's Taymora

Enraged that Tanit would encourage her favored supplicant Tayma to steal one of his most prized secrets, the Ceremony of Blood, and pervert it for her own purposes, Sarrattalu has vowed to destroy the nation of Taymora.

Several of the eastern Taymoran city states, have either been sacked or conquered by the followers of Sarrattalu, including the cities of Barinaesh, Yidaru, and Karisata. Though those cities still exist (and even thrive in particular instances), they are controlled by minions of Ghaeranatos and devotees of Sarrattalu.

As such individuals are neither one of the Daughters of Night, nor one of the faithful of Tanit, it is beyond the scope of this article to detail them, however they may be detailed in subsequent articles, or in the upcoming DM's Guide to Taymora (for the Mystara 2300 BC setting).

Sijaru

Daughter of Night, Ninth Child of Tayma, Former Queen of Barinaesh

Daughter of Night, Ninth Child of Tayma whose footsteps fall like silk in the dusk, ever searching for secrets in Tayma's name. Paths shall be unfurled as when twilight presages the dark, and you shall traverse where others may not. You shall be the vanguard of the Children of Night, leading them where their enemies may not follow.

- Ninth blessing of Tanit

History

Sijaru began her life on the streets of Uhaara, fighting for every scrap of food and sliver of shelter in order to survive. Before Tayma brought the Ceremony of Blood to her people, Sijaru's once beautiful form started to succumb to the Wasting, but still she would not relinquish her life. Tanit saw her determination and rewarded her as one of Tayma's daughters.

In undeath, Sijaru regained her vitality, however the Wasting had taken its toll and Sijaru kept her face and form constantly shrouded in shadows. She and her temple acolytes were charged with rooting out elements of the old guard, priests and followers of Sol who continued to oppose Tanit's new cult.

After Ghaeranatos' attack, Sijaru's focus changed. She and her acolytes often crept behind enemy lines to kill soldiers and assassinate the night dragon's lieutenants and generals. When Kikanari led the second exodus from Uhaara, Sijaru helped clear the way for them. At the battle of Nimidi's Maw¹³, with Padihru distracting the pursuing army, Sijaru snuck behind enemy lines and slew the night dragon Rhaetos, son of Ghaeranatos. As a trophy, she took the night dragon's wings and crafted them into a flowing robe of darkness known as Rhaetos' Mantle.

IN TAYMORA

With Kikanari slain, Sijaru took her place as one of Tayma's premier generals. Stealthy

¹³ The Battle of Nimidi's Maw took place approximately at the location of the Nawmmiddi Sand Flats in modern day Sind.

and secretive, she journeyed across the new land of Taymora along shadowy roads, silencing dissidents and putting down rebellious elements in the native populations. When Tayma disappeared, so too did Sijaru. Fearing jealous reprisals from her sisters Jadikira and Nashane, Sijaru sought refuge in the distant city of Barinaesh between Idu's Anvil and the Barze Mountains.

The true threat would not come from either of her sisters to the west however, and once Sijaru realized that Arunaru was plotting sedition she joined forces with Ariasha and Lovanara to crush the fledgling rebellion. Unfortunately for Sijaru, her sister Lovanara betrayed the alliance, and Ariasha fled like the coward she was.

Barely escaping her own destruction, Sijaru fled to the city of Aibiru, controlled by one of her own progeny, however the queen there did not meet her with open arms. Rather than give her mother succor, Queen Dorsha of Aibiru murdered Sijaru, seizing her power for her own.

Vampire Line

The vampiric powers of this line are both respected and coveted by many of the current Queens of Taymora. Their unique powers make them well suited to the tasks of espionage and intrigue, and those that have not carved out a power base for themselves serve the already entrenched nobility.

Innate Magic: Shadow

Vassals: Once per encounter a vampire of this line may bend shadows around them, making them harder to target and giving them a tactical advantage.

Elders: Once per day an elder vampire of this line can traverse from one shadow to another. Such travel is extraplanar, moving them through the Outer Plane of Shadow. The distance that can be traveled is dependant upon the vampire's relative skills and abilities.

Progenitor: The progenitor/inheritor of this line can command shadows¹⁴ as if they were undead under her control. At any one time the progenitor may control a number of shadows whose hit dice total is no more than twice her own. This is in addition to the number of undead she can control.

INHERITORS

Inheritors of Sijaru still walk freely in Taymora, many of them centered around the city of Aibiru and in lands further west.

Queen Dorsha of Aibiru

Padihru

Daughter of Night, Tenth Child of Tayma

Daughter of Night, Tenth Child of Tayma singer and dancer, and envoy. Tempest winds and starless nights ride upon your heels, just as the winter blusters away the last leaves of autumn. The frozen northern winds shall heed your call. You shall stand between the Children of Night and their doom, tormenting their enemies on the battlefield and savaging their crops at home.

- Tenth blessing of Tanit

History

Once a slave to the High Priest of Sol in Uhaara, Padihru acquired her freedom when her master took ill with the Wasting. She lost little time exacting her revenge upon her hated master, and spent every waking hour hounding the priesthood of Sol and its followers. The blessing of Tanit lent authority to her quest, but did little to quell her rage.

As Uhaara fell to its enemies, Padihru and her progeny lashed out against the world. Torrential floods crashed through the forest canopy felling trees and churning the ground to mud. Hail assaulted the unsheltered, pummeling both beasts and humans alike. Lightning tore from the sky to leave charred blackness in its wake. The minions of Ghaeranatos were indeed thrust into disarray, however the Uhaarans suffered much the same fate.

¹⁴ It is important to note that in Mystara, shadows are not undead, but instead beings made up of shadow-stuff, however in other versions of D&D (AD&D, 3rd Edition) they are considered to be undead. This article assumes that shadows are not undead.

Padihru's rage struck more indiscriminately than she had intended, and while Tayma and her followers were able to escape the main brunt of Ghaeranatos' forces, a full two thirds of the Uhaaran populace were left floundering in their wake. As penance, Padihru stayed behind with several of her sisters and gathered what faithful they could to their banners.

Joining with Kikinari in the the second exodus, Padihru and her progeny brought up the rear of the column, using their control over the weather to muddy roads and trails and cause mayhem among the ranks of her pursuing foes. When it became clear that Ghaeranatos would overtake them despite her best efforts, Padihru set forth to confront the night dragon directly.

What would have amounted to a small skirmish at the Battle of Nimidi's Maw¹⁵ intensified when Daughter of Night clashed with the Child of Sarrattalu¹⁶. Though Padihru was no match for her adversary, the battle and subsequent destruction caused by it, bought enough time for the second exodus to break away from Ghaeranatos' legions and eventually converge with the forces of Tayma.

Vampiric Line

The vampires of Padihru's line have the ability to control the elements, bringing storms and blights to their immediate areas. Skilled vampires of this line are often coveted as lieutenants and generals and easily find a place in service to more powerful Taymoran nobles.

¹⁵ See the footnote on Nimidi's Maw above.

¹⁶ Another name for the night dragon Ghaeranatos.

Innate Magic: Elemental Storms

Vassals: Once per encounter a vampire of this line has the ability to discharge an elemental force against their enemies. Common manifestations of this power include dust devils, geysers of scalding water, or lightning bolts.

Elders: An elder vampire of this line may alter the weather patterns around themselves once per day. Conditions from monsoon to parching drought can be created in this way.

Progenitor: The progenitor/inheritor of this line may perform a ritual once per year to permanently alter the weather patterns in a targeted location. Only one such location may be altered and maintained at any given time.

Inheritors

Few of Padihru's progeny survived the confrontation with Ghaeranatos during their flight from Uhaara, however some remain. A few have even risen to positions high enough to be noteworthy.

Kitash

*Daughter of Night, Eleventh Child of Tayma,
Former Queen of Kubaros*

Daughter of Night, Eleventh Child of Tayma with voice and smile are the souls of Tayma's flock captivated. Promises you weave like moonlight on a cool breeze, enchanting even the hardest of hearts set against you. Desire shall be your sword, and ardor your shield. You shall transform the enemies of the Children of Night into allies, and those who love you shall refuse nothing entreated.

- Eleventh blessing of Tanit

History

Kitash¹⁷ was little more than a child when Tayma returned from the wilds bring the Ceremony of Blood that would save her people from the Wasting, but somehow she found a place by her side. Always elegant and alluring, Kitash was instrumental in convincing the populace of Uhaara to accept Tayma's gift, and helped to usher in the Age of Tanit.

As Ghaeranatos' assault came crashing down on the Uhaarans, Kitash found she could do little to stop them. Instead she stayed by Tayma's side to soothe and comfort the faithful, always encouraging to trust in the

¹⁷ Kitash was developed for the author's Citadel of Aresh campaign. More information about her can be found at The Piazza in the [Taymora, Empire of the Dead](#) thread, and the [Mystara 2300 Pbp](#) thread at the Piazza Forums

Handmaiden of Tanit. Never did she leave Tayma's side, and for good reason. On three separate occasions was she able to quell unrest amongst the exodus, keeping the faithful focused on their task and averting almost certain doom.

IN TAYMORA

Once the night dragon was defeated, Tayma set about the task of recreating her empire and Kitash was once again by her side during each step of the way. After the construction of Tamoraz was completed, Kitash was given the duty of subduing neighboring natives and bringing them under the fold of Tanit.

At Tayma's behest Kitash soon found herself in the furthest flung reaches of Taymoran influence, proselytizing to the heathen tribes in the eastern frontierlands between Taymora and Mogreth. Shortly thereafter Tayma disappeared, leaving Kitash heartbroken but not without purpose. To honor her mother, Kitash gathered several native tribes together and constructed the city of Kubaros just beyond the Tiri Mountains.

When Mogreth mounted a major assault against Taymora in BC 2318, Kitash and her city of Kuberos faced the brunt of their attack. Her sisters Arunaru and Lovanara rallied to her side, repelling the invaders and routing them from eastern Taymora¹⁸. As Lovanara and Kitash's combined forces harried the lizardman army back to Mogreth, Arunaru (actually Synn in disguise) turned her forces on the undefended city of Kubaros, destroying it utterly. Kitash

¹⁸ Before Kubaros fell, eastern Taymora stretched east from the Tiri Mounts and covered the western portion of what is now the Frontierlands.

suffered a similar fate once she returned to her ruined stronghold.

Vampiric Line

Nosferatu and vampires of Kitash's line are especially skilled in the areas of enchantment and diplomacy. Their abilities allow them to turn even the most staunches of enemies into willing allies.

Innate Magic: Enchantment

Vassals: Once during any encounter a vampire of this line may befriend a single individual. That individual will do anything within their power, and within reason, to keep their new friend safe and happy.

Elders: Once per month an elder vampire of this line may enthrall a single individual. Enthralled individuals still act under their own will, however they will act in the best interests of their vampire enchantress whenever possible though the actions they take will never cause direct harm to themselves or their loved ones.

Progenitor: The progenitor/inheritor of this line may perform a ritual once per year that will completely enthrall a single targeted individual. The enthralled individual still acts under their own will, however they will take any action suggested by the enchantress, regardless of the direct personal danger to themselves or others. Only one individual can be enthralled as such at any given time.

Inheritors

Kitash had few progeny of her own when she left for the east, and many of them were destroyed along with her during the sack of Kubaros. Her last remaining daughter,

Durane, lurks in the region of Aresh, plotting to rebuild her mother's realm and rule over Kubaros as its new Queen.

Yidadnh

Daughter of Night, Twelfth Child of Tayma, Revered of Tanit, Warden of the Northern Plains, Umbral Queen of Tarashish

Daughter of Night, Twelfth Child of Tayma a reverie of blackest night cavorts upon your smile. The secrets of others are known to you, but none of your own shall pierce the misty veil. Beloved of Tayma, yours is the precious unknown. By your thoughts shall stars move, by your laughter shall darkness fall. By your deeds shall Tanit's favored daughter rise.

- Twelfth blessing of Tanit

History

None know from whence Yidadnh¹⁹ came, only that she appeared mysteriously by Tayma's side just before the Blessings of Tanit were bestowed upon the faithful. Just as cryptic were her comings and goings, with Yidadnh always



¹⁹ Yidadnh was inspired in part by some of RobJN's work in Thorn's Mystara (as yet unpublished), and Francesco Defferrari's work on [Koskatop Level 9](#) (in Threshold Issue #11) regarding the Troll Queen and her court.

appearing where needed and always missing when there was a price to pay.

Out of all her sisters, Ghaeranatos' attack caught Yidadnh the least off guard. With Uhaara burning down all around her, Yidadnh simply smiled and waved her hands in mild annoyance. Many of the Daughters thought her mad when she strolled idly into the midst of the oncoming onslaught. Though reluctant to leave her to her fate, the other Daughters of Night clung to their own responsibilities, ushering as many of the faithful from harm as possible.

As Yidadnh's form faded amidst swirling embers and ash, the only sounds that could be heard were those of screams interspersed with faint laughter. None ever expected to see Yidadnh again.

IN TAYMORA

Relief at seeing their sister mysteriously appear, the day after Ghaeranatos and his forces were routed at the Aterok Mountains, was the furthest thing in the minds of the Daughters of Night. Though they chafed at the fact that Yidadnh was nowhere to be seen during the conflict, many secretly shuddered at the thought of what role she played behind the scenes. Yidadnh never spoke to them of that time, though she would constantly be seen whispering words in Tayma's ears when no one else could hear.

With Tayma's disappearance, Yidadnh was drawn to the north. None of her sisters opposed her when she claimed the frontier city of Tarashish for her own. The land is

infested with rogue lizardmen, and bands of fey and giants, though none of those facts seem to perturb Yidadnh.

VAMPIRIC LINE

Nosferatu and vampires of Yidadnh's line have always been cloaked in mystery. While the following suggested powers can be applied to her line, DMs are encouraged to develop vampiric powers that are tailor made to suite their specific campaign.

Innate Magic: Fey Magic

Vassals: Once per encounter vampires of this line may touch a targeted individual, causing them to fall into a deep slumber. While sleeping that individual experiences intense dreams of the vampire's design.

Elders: Once per month elder vampires of this line may enter into the dreams of an individual that has suffered previously from their bite. The dreams are vivid and interactive, and the more experienced the vampire, the more control she can exert upon the dream landscape.

Progenitor: Once per year the progenitor of this line can enter into the Dream World, traversing through the dreams of all who are sleeping. In addition, if the proper rituals are performed, the progenitor can make a specific dream reality. Actions and effects experienced in the dream (including death) will transfer over to the waking world once the dream has ended.

Hesperia, Land of the Setting Sun

*A Gazetteer of
the Thyatian Region, 250 BC*

By Giulio Caroletti
Maps and additional ideas
by Francesco Defferrari

In 250 BC, Thyatis was the most important city state of the region of Hesperia, the land that today is known as Mainland Thyatis. This Mini-Gaz will shed a light on the people and city states of the area and the conflicts between the peoples of Hesperia with the rising Aseni north, the declining Traladarans west, the imperialistic Milenians south and the alien Alphatians east.

Welcome to Thyatis and Hesperia, the year is 250 BC!

Foreword by the Author

Dear readers, it is a pleasure for me to write once again about Thyatis and its regions and cultures. This time I will delve into the mythical past of the Empire, at a time when the Empire did not even exist and the area was the playground of many small city-states fighting for supremacy on land and on the Seas of Dawn and Dread, where their trading vessels roamed and pirate ships set sail to

plunder the riches of the Alphatian Empire. The piracy ultimately brought the Thyatians and their neighbours and rivals down, in 192 BC, when the south-eastern corner of the Known World fell under the Alphatians' rule.

This campaign setting describes the area later to be known as Thyatis in 250 BC, about sixty years before the Alphatian conquest, and about 250 years after the fall of Nithia, an event that had a major impact on the populations of the Known World.

If you have read some of my other works for Threshold Magazine, you know the premises on which I base my campaign-supplements writing, but I will summarize them shortly here: I prefer to add as much depth as possible both in the "horizontal" (or spatial) scale, and in the "vertical" (or temporal) scale. One of the most common errors in fantasy and science-fiction writing is to build immense empires whose extension in space and time often drowns any attempt to detail and characterize cultures and nations in the manner they deserve.

This is certainly not the case for Hesperia, the name I chose for the Thyatian region at this point in Mystara's past. Remnants of ancient, dwindling cultures (like the Traldar-related Doulakki, the Neathar-descended Etrusna, Albai and Kartana, and the scattered, decadent remains of the Taymorans) mix with the new blood brought by the Three Tribes (Thyadians, Kerendans and Hattians) around 600 BC, just before the fall of what will be remembered in Mystaran history as the Thothian (but was actually the Nithian) Empire.

Maybe it will give headaches to readers - players, DMs and/or Mystaran 'scholars' alike - to find a full assortment of new cultures, and so many new names for old regions and cities as they were known in the past. I can only hope that one day some players and a DM might be so inspired by this work, to actually play an adventure or two during the ancient history of the Empire of Thyatis.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work takes most of its inspiration from the ancient history of Italy, from the VIII to III century BC, and the rise of Rome as the main power in the Mediterranean region. However, as is so often the case, many excellent ideas are lifted directly from the works and thoughts of many fellow Mystaran writers: first and foremost I have to thank my usual partner-in-crime of so many years, Giampaolo "Agathokles" Agosta; then the 'furious historians' Simone "Zendrolion" Neri, Francesco "Sturm" Defferrari (who also provided maps and added a lot of further ideas to the work) and Michele "Lo Zompatore" Carpita, that have described past and present demography, history and

migrations of Mystara; Atila Pires dos Santos for the information on lupins. I have also to thank John Calvin for his work on Taymora and the Known World in 2300 BC; John and Geoff Gander (among the authors who developed the Doulakki on Mystara) are surely those who have given me the desire and inspiration to write a 'historical' setting for Mystara; last and not least, James Ruhland, who wrote the first-ever ultra-detailed history of early Thyatis - I have used much of his work although in heavily modified forms. Several descriptions of the geography and land are indebted to the fan-made Mystaran Almanacs. And I am sure I am forgetting many others, among whom I must include all the setting's 'official' writers, especially Aaron Allston, Bruce Heard and Ken Rolston, given the region and cultures we are describing in this article. Some more credits are found in the next paragraph.

For those curious about the real world equivalents of Hesperia (mostly are populations who were living in Italy in early Roman times, from VIII to III century BC), here is a list:

- Thyadians and Kerendans are obviously modelled on Latins and Romans;
- Kartana, introduced in my previous Carytion Gazetteer as the ancestors of the Carytians, are the equivalent of the Sardinian nuragic culture (sometimes called Shardana);
- Etrusna, invented by Francesco Defferrari, are modelled on Etruscans;
- Albai, originally created by Francesco in discussions with John Calvin as subjects of

the 2300 BC Taymorans, are based on Ligurians, an Indoeuropean tribe occupying north-western Italy;

- Canians, introduced by Francesco, are the equivalent of Sicani and Elimi, two Latin-related populations who inhabited the inland regions of Sicily during the wars for the control of Sicily between Greeks and Phoenicians;

- Retians, introduced by Francesco, are the equivalent of Veneti: culturally and linguistically close to the Latins and Romans, they were living in north-eastern Italy;

- Sabelli and Vitalians are based on the Osco-Umbrian tribes living in central and southern Italy (which included Sannites, for example); they were the other big ethnic group of Italy after the Roman-Latin-Venetic-Sicanian one, to which they were related through intermingling and common Indoeuropean origin; numerically the Osco-Umbrian was the major group of tribes in Italy;

- the Tauri lupins are based on the north-western Italian Celts of the Taurini, Insubri, Boii, Cenomani and Senoni tribes;

- the Karn hobgoblins are based on the north-eastern Italian Celts of the Carni tribes;

- Taymorans, introduced in PC3, whose Phoenician cultural traits were devised by Giampaolo Agosta, are based on the late-period Phoenicians and Carthaginians; Zyz in particular is a cross between Palermo and Carthage; and Mosya is an island-variant of Carthage;

- Doulakki, often used as an umbrella term for all the Traldar-related people outside of Traladara, are clearly based on the Greek colonists in southern Italy; Sarausa in particular is based on Siracusa, the most powerful Greek city in Italy in the IV and III centuries BC; but Italians and lovers of ancient history will easily recognize many other city names;

- Brutii, Hirpines, Iapyges and Messapians lupins are based on the similar-named Italian tribes who lived in southern Italy.

The Hattians are totally different from the others, as I modelled them on early feudal Franks and Germans.

The Aseni have not much to do with early Italian history either; they are the ancestors of AC1000-Alasiyans. They were introduced in various ethnography/demography articles on Pandius. Like the Minrothians, ancestors to the Minrothadders, they were too close to the region (and too involved in warfare and trading with the Thyatians, respectively) to be left out. They make a cool addition to the area and prevent it from becoming too much a carbon copy of ancient Italian history.

And if that's not enough, I added a short compendium of what various areas of Mystara were like, from the Known World to the Alphatian Sea, so that you can introduce with ease Nuari sailors, Alphatian wizards, Milenian fighters and Thothian philosophers to the game.

It was a long, hard work to write this supplement. I hope that you will enjoy it at least half as much as I enjoyed writing it.

THE PLAYER'S GUIDE

WHAT EVERYONE KNOWS

“Once upon a time there was an Empire, an Empire controlled by a distant king called the Pharaoh, from a land known as Thothia. The Empire sent colonists and troops to Brun. It brought there a people of vicious fighters, the Aseni, and subjugated goblinoids and orcs and gnolls to use them as shock troops against the peoples of the south, the peoples of Hesperia.

They subjugated some and asked tributes from most. But with time things changed. The Etrusna civilization bloomed. The Doulakki colonies prospered and we, the descendants of old Taymora, grew stronger in our strongholds on mainland and islands alike. While the main possessions of the Thothians in the West faltered, as the land suffered a climatic shift towards inhospitable, arid steppes and deserts, and became more of a burden to control, than an asset to keep, in the eyes of the distant Pharaoh.

So the Empire left Brun, uninterested in regions they had depleted of all resources, leaving its former Aseni and humanoid slaves to themselves or to the whim of ambitious masters who thought to carve their own domains on Brun.

Then the Three Tribes arrived from the south: they mixed with some of the native cultures - and clashed with others; new

cities like Kerendas and Thyatis were built, others were conquered or destroyed.

And then the Sand Deluge came: a Great Drought ravaged from the Northern Reaches to the island of Hattias; and it is known that it rained sand all over the region for weeks, and rivers in Assinia shifted their course, drying up most of what remained of the once fertile central lands.

It is said among the Doulakki that the Immortals wanted to cleanse the land and to punish humankind. That the Immortals who once had walked among the mortals, had left the company of humankind forever; and that many powerful spells and unthinkable magicks were forever lost since then.”

*Melkiot, Taymoran schoolteacher,
to his class in Lilithei*

“Our Empire left the west several centuries ago. Only a few remained: the Land of Sunset, the Land of the Night, the Land of the Dead attracted them and corrupted them. There is nothing that a pious Follower of the Fire can find on Brun, especially after the Great Drought stroke the only barely tolerable place there - Nithia, our colony in Assinia. I have been to Hesperia and to the desert lands, and I have seen what remains of our Empire there: brutes with little comprehension of science and magic, who spend their lives in petty wars - brother against brother, sister against sister. The descendants of our proud race, and the remains of the once proud Traldar and Etrusna, are a sorry thing to look at; the descendants of our

subjects in Hesperia are even worse: they beat their women, their laws follow the whims of their squalid kings and petty aristocracies, and they share the same pathetic racial deficits of the scum who lives on Dawn, beyond the Thothian Escarpment - there is nothing redeemable about them. They can only be used as slaves - or mercenaries, if we hadn't given up war long ago to spend our lives concentrating in more useful activities."

-- *Mekrat, Patriarch of Ratbanos in Edairo*

"Hesperia? I'd never go there for all the spell components in the world. It's just savages, a mess of barbarous villages that are called cities, witchdoctors who call themselves wizards and useless pirates. Brun is such an uninteresting place, and Hesperia is the worst of it all. An Alphatian noble should stay in her homeland, practicing the fine arts and concentrating on the most delightful pleasures. If you need to have a look at those brutes, send some adventurers to kidnap a few specimens, that's all you need to do."

-- *Lofara the Conjuress, Alphatian wizard, to her niece and apprentice Kyla*

"Oooh, those Hesperian guys brew trouble. Sooner or later the pirate princes and the petty kings, the decadent heroes and the upstart warriors, will find a true leader who will unite them, build an army, and conquer the world. You don't need a prophet to make this prophecy. You just have to take a good look at them."

-- *Sigmalline, Meditor Diviner from Alfeisle*

"Hesperia is a young land, and we arrived here just in time to exploit the consequences of the Great Drought. Our folk grew stronger; we watched our elders and we learned from them. That is our greatest skill: adaptation. Seafaring we learned from the Doulakki, architecture we learned from the Etrusnans, the art of intrigue from the Taymorans, and how to fight from Orcs and Goblins. And we still have much to learn. And learn we will, by conquering them all, one after the other."

-- *Tiberius Merula, Pontifex (Patriarch) of Vanya in Thyatis*

"The Great Drought and the armies of the northern barbarians crippled our country; the Immortals left our lands, and now we are almost strangers in our own homes. The young upstarts are more numerous than us and stronger, their blood untainted by the dark powers of Taymora and by the morbid influence of Alphatia and Thothia. We traveled around the world and caught too many diseases. But we are passing them on to the Three Tribes, and we might still find a way to resist to their domination."

-- *Ieron II, King of Sarausa*

"Hesperia is a tormented area, it really is. We pulled off all that a long time ago, when we fled Assinia and the Thothian colonies. We found freedom on the sea. They can't control the sea, that's why we got our freedom with our ships, and bonded with the elves. Hesperians they just keep fighting each other all the time. They look for power over the land, but

what do they know? There is in fact more sea than land.”

-- *Innifer Paisios, Minrothbian merchantess*

THE LAND

Geography

Hesperia is the name given to the south-easternmost area of Brun. Originally the name was the Traldar name for the whole western continent, and through Milenians and Doulakki it passed respectively to Alpathians and Thothians. Traldar and Milenians called Brun “Hesperia” and Dawn “**Hemeria**” - the first term meaning “Sunset land” and the second “Sunrise land”. Later on, between 1000 and 800 BC, Hesperia became the name only of this part of the western continent; and the elven term **Brun** became the one used for the whole continent.

While the Sea of Dread and Sea of Dawn limit Hesperia respectively to the south and the east, and the northern border of Hesperia is set at the Altan Tepes mountains, the western limit is not precisely determined, although it is conventionally considered to be the border between the human communities and the elven clans to their west.

Hesperia is a fertile land, made up of rich, often hilly farmlands, with higher hills and mountains filled with mineral wealth to the north. All along the southern and eastern coast, from the terraced hills of the Albai to the easternmost shores of Vitalia, from the islands of Hattias and Kartanya to the shores

of Cania, olive plants and vineyards are a common sight.

The native vegetation of Hesperia reflects the diversity of the physical environment and climate. The coastal areas and islands have mild and rainy winters, and very warm and dry summers; the closer to the Altan Tepes, the lower winter temperatures are, and the rainfall distribution is more uniform during the summer. There is also an increase in temperature along the mainland from west to east, with Cania and Vitelia being the warmer areas of the mainland.

The inland areas have marked differences between summer and winter temperatures, and the main natural vegetation consists of forests of broad-leaved deciduous plants (oaks, beeches, chestnuts), substituted by coniferous evergreens (larches, pines, firs) on the higher mountains; the coastal areas, especially on the warmer, eastern parts and on the islands have mixed woods of evergreens (eg., maritime pines, laurels), deciduous species (eg., cork oaks), and maquis shrubland (eg., myrtles, sage).

The western region of the mainland is known as the Kerendan Plains: rich flatlands used for horse-breeding, tillage, pasturage, that gradually give way to a more hilly region (central Thyatium), dotted with small farms, olive trees and small woods.

In the areas toward the north of Kerendum and central Hesperia, but more removed from the coast, crops of grain are grown, along with vegetables like tomatoes, lettuce, sugar beet and fruit trees like plums, cherries, peaches, apricots and pears. Around the Trevanion and Mesonian rivers it is



possible to find mixed forests of oak and hornbeam, with flood-plain vegetation (poplar, ash, willow, elm). West of Kerendium lies the woodland domain of Vyalia, where elves live following their own rules close to nature.

To the southeast is Vitalia: from the west, where the fertile, volcanic soil is grown into orchards and market gardens that produce tomatoes, squash, broccoli, artichokes, lemons, pears, figs, the land to the east gradually gives way to grazing hills for sheep and goats, where lemons, oranges, tomatoes and grapes are the most common products. The Sea of Dawn here is excellent fishing water.

In the Altan Tepes, there are mountainous and hilly regions, rich in minerals, where humans struggle for control of the area against hostile humanoids; apples are grown successfully in the mountain valleys; while in the river plains of the north-west rice is the most common cultivation.

To the northeast lies the peninsula of Cania, one of the most fertile areas of the region, also called 'the grainland of Hesperia'; its warm climate, mitigated by the sea, allows for great yields in crops and fruits of many kinds.

Last but not least, the seas close to Hesperia are dotted by islands who are culturally and geographically linked to the mainland. The biggest one is Hattias, a somewhat infertile island, with vineyards and orchards in the north and sheep herding practiced further south. The western shores of the island are given to barley crops, and ale and beer are produced instead of wine.

Fauna

Among the domestic animals found in the region are dogs, cats, sheep, goats, cattle, hares, pigs, hen. On Mosya, the Taymorans have small elephants originally brought from Sind. Hunting is popular all over Hesperia, boar hunting being the most dangerous and respected game among hunters. Wild mammals found on the mainland are: fox, wolf, jackal; lynx; mouse, rat, mole, porcupine; boar, wild pig; bat; marmot, red squirrel; weasel, stoat, marten, otter, pine marten, ferret, mink, wolverine, badger; chamois, ibex, moufflon (on Kartanya and Borydos); roe, red and fallow deer. Wolves and bears are not found on the eastern islands.

Sea mammals include dolphins and whales; the bigger whale species live in the Sea of Dawn.

Birds include: blackbird, nightingale, robin, thrush, skylark, chaffinch, goldfinch, song thrush (winter only), bluethroat (winter only), blackcap, turtledove, rock dove, swallow (summer only), cuckoo (summer only), hoopoe (summer only); various species of woodpecker; pheasant, quail, ptarmigan (on the Altan Tepes), reg-legged partridge (Albai, Kerendium, Teria); moorhen, sultana bird, avocet, stilt, woodcock (winter); kingfisher; greylag goose, mallard, swan; heron, stork (summer); seagull; raven, crow, magpie, chough, jay, spotted nutcracker (on the Altan Tepes); various species of owl; eagle, falcon, black kite, buzzard, sparrowhawk, osprey; griffon vulture (in Cania and on the islands), bearded vulture (on the Altan Tepes); ibis (in Cania), flamingo (on Kartanya).

Reptiles include many species of lizards and gekks; snakes; vipers (not found on the eastern islands); turtles and tortoise; while amphibians include several species of frogs, toads, salamanders, newts, and the small, cave-dwelling proteus.

Saltwater fish include: sharks, rajiforms (like the stingray), seahorse, angler, seabass, mullets, mackerel, tuna, dentex, seabreams, swordfish, flatfishes, scorpionfish, eels, moray, pilchard, anchovy. Freshwater fish include: lamprey, tench, pike, marble trout, Hesperian trout, arctic char, sturgeon, eels, Hesperian chub.

THE PEOPLE

HUMANS

Humans of Hesperia belong to several ethnic groups; the biggest one is known as *Southerner-Hesperian*, and it includes the two main groups of **Thyatians** and **Kerendans**, descendants of the intermingling of the *Southerners* (members of the Three Tribes that crossed the Sea of Dread to reach Hesperia from Davania around 600 BC) with many of the aboriginal *Hesperian* tribes who lived in the region before their arrival.

The two ethnicities spoke similar languages to begin with, and they believed they had the same origin. The Southerners brought new blood and strength to the Hesperians in their resistance against the other powers of the region. Now, more than three hundred years later, the result of the mixing are the

Thyatians, in the east of Hesperia, and the Kerendans, in the west.

Thyatian and Kerendan languages are mutually intelligible, and they constitute a *de facto* language continuum. In the areas of eastern Kerendium and western Thyatium, the difference between the two groups are so blurred, both on ethnic composition and linguistic account, that they are on the point of being undistinguishable.

Hattians, although Southerners, seem to belong to a drastically different language group than their Thyatian and Kerendan kin; some speculate that they retained much more of the original Antalian culture from which the Three Tribes and Southerners alike belonged many centuries ago. The matter is hotly debated by sages and scholars.

The biggest aboriginal population that did not mix with the Southerners are the **Etrusna**, whose origin is shrouded in mystery, and who have a completely separate culture and a language unrelated to all the other aboriginal Hesperian cultures. The Etrusna occupied the coastline of central Hesperia and the interior from the lands of the Albai to the Mesonian river, but have lost much ground under the pressure of the Thyatians and the Kerendans, and they are struggling to retain control over their remaining lands. Fierce descendants of the Etrusna called Halatians, struggle to retain the mountain regions north of Thyatium against humanoids attacks.

Two other aboriginal populations did not intermingle with the Southerner tribes. On the Mainland, there are the **Albai**, an aggressive and barbaric tribal population; on

the island of Kartanya there are the **Kartana**, a small population of shepherds, stonecutters and smiths.

Another major human group of Hesperia are the **Doulakki**: related to Traladarans and Milenians, Doulakki came to Hesperia by sea from the west, the north and the south, in different migration waves now lost to pre-Thothian history. A seafaring population, they were never interested in occupying the interior of the region, remaining content to trade with the locals and to establish their walled cities and market towns near the coastline.

Last but not least, there are the **Taymorans**. Descendants of a long-lost Empire, they considered themselves the most erudite and civilized population of Hesperia. However, most of their lore has become superstition, and they are very removed from the ancient power they were. They are now reduced to a minor sea trading population with a few strongholds in the eastern part of Hesperia, but cling almost desperately to the memory of what they were (or - to what they think they remember they were).

Apart from these, there are other human races that are strong players in the region: the most important of these are the fierce **Aseni** who roam the deserts north of Hesperia, and the seafaring **Minrothians** who inhabit most of the islands south of the region. They are distantly related to each other, as both are populations who were formerly subjects of the Thothian Empire.

Technologically speaking, humans of Hesperia are in the Iron age¹.

¹ Probably the second Iron age, after the

Albai

The Albai² live in the westernmost region of coastal Hesperia, and are one of the aboriginal people of Hesperia. The Albai are the fiercest human population of the area; of medium height and strong, powerful build, they have light skin, mostly light brown hair, with blonde and brown not uncommon - a few have red hair. Although most of them have dark eyes, about one in four have green or blue eyes.

The Albai used to living in many small villages and towns, and to war amongst one another. This made them especially vulnerable to invasion and colonization; in the past they probably occupied a bigger part of Hesperia, but they are now reduced to a small area in the west, where they are friends of the Vyalia Elves. The most important Albai city is Stalia, the capital of the Genuati tribe.

The Albai have a strong spiritual side: they build menhir stones which represent gods, clan heroes and ancestors; and most of the druids of Hesperia are of Albai ethnicity. Albai worship Immortal protectors in three pairs of consorts: Beg (Djaea) and Penn (Odin), the Sky Lords, whose temples are on the highest mountain peaks; Belenus (Asterius) and Cicne (Diulanna), the River Lords, whose shrines are in the forests, close to rivers or lakes; and the Great Mother (Terra) and Byll (the Bull Father; Ixion), the Earth Lords, whose temples are built at the beginning of farmlands outside the Albai

Blackmoor-era Iron age.

² Albai were introduced by Francesco Defferrari as the Mystaran equivalent of the RW Ligurians, an ancient Italian population. They are described in [Threshold #2](#) and [Threshold #11](#).

towns and villages. They also honour Ordana, that they call Breig, in her role of mother of their elven allies.

Albai cities are major trading points between Traladarans, Vyalia, Callarii Elves, and Highforge Gnomes and Dwarves (from the west) with Doulakki, Etrusnans, Kerendans and Thyatians (from the east). Albai who live by the sea are mostly fishermen; those of the interior raise crops and olives on the terraced hills of the region. Albai women share the same social position of the men, and, probably because of the elven influence and the widespread worship of Cicne, they can be warriors and sometime even clan leaders or city rulers.

Last but not least, Albai are also fierce pirates; they sail with small boats and conduct hit-and-run piracy on smaller cargo ships, or kidnap rich passengers for ransom.

Aseni

The Aseni are a desert population which lives in the Assinian desert north of Hesperia. They are one of the main enemies of the Hesperians, although, as they say, "Nobody can be as fierce an enemy of Hesperians than Hesperians themselves". Aseni are tall, lean, with light olive skin and black hair; most have black and brown eyes, but hazel, honey and green are not uncommon, while blue eyes are extremely rare.

The Aseni culture is mainly nomadic; a few farmers live in the east of Assinia and some live sedentary lives in the oases of the interior or as olive farmers on the northern side of the Altan Tepes. Aseni with Thothian or Doulakki blood, generally found in the

coastal and mountainous areas, are often shorter and of darker complexion, looking very much like Minrothians.

The Aseni have lived in Assinia for many centuries, although they originally came from the Isle of Dawn following their eponymous hero Assan. In Assinia, they were subjects of the Thothian Empire, living in the arid zones of the region. As the arid zones increased and the central Empire abandoned the region, the Aseni occupied more and more of the land. Aseni have fought the populations of Hesperia for as long as they can remember, either as subjects of the Thothians, as mercenaries (for Thothians or Alphantians), as raiders or to defend themselves from Hesperian raids.

Aseni can easily be found in Hesperia as mercenaries, adventurers and merchants, especially in coastal cities; a few might even be found as pirates on Hesperian ships.

Among the most important Aseni Immortals, there is a group known as the Guardian Immortals: Qeb (Terra), Zephyr (Asterius), Farath (Protius), Orisis (Ixion), Horon (Ixion), Maat, Amon (Odin) and Balsam (Chardastes); another popular Immortal in Assinia is Sinbad, a patron of adventurers, pirates and travellers.

Doulakki

The Doulakki of Hesperia are the remnants of a wave of colonists and invaders that settled the southern coasts from the north in times lost to history, and that included the Traldar, ancestors of the Traladarans west



of Hesperia, and of the Milenians of the southern continent. Over time, Doulakki in Hesperia mixed with their fellow descendants of the Traldar in the Sea of Dread region and with Milenian migrants and adventurers from the south who hoped to find freedom in the old city-state system when Milenia became a centralized Empire.

The Doulakki have fair to olive skin complexion; generally they have brown hair, but blonde, red and black can be found. Brown or light brown eyes are the most common, with blue and green being present in about one-out-of-ten persons. Their faces have bony features with sharp noses, which tend to be straight from top to bottom. Doulakki are of medium height and average built, if anything tipping more towards a lean and resistant body than the sturdier appearance of Kerendans and Thyatians.

Many Traldar and Doulakki colonies dot southeastern Brun; at the height of Doulakki and Traldar expansion, there were about a 1,000 city-states in Brun, in the Sea of Dread

and in the Sea of Dawn. In Hesperia, they have founded many colonies; the most important are Parthenope, Taras, and especially Sarausa. Outside of Hesperia, the most important Doulakki-Traldar colonies are Athenos (in Malpheggi), Akorros (near lake Amsorak), Cynidicea, Salonikos (on the other side of the Altan Tepes, west of Hesperia and north of Traladara) and Tameronikas (in Assinia³).

The Doulakki belong to an aggressive city-state culture with a complex mythology, philosophical interests and a tradition of seafaring trade and colonization. However, their political fragmentation and warlike attitude is also the reason of their decadence. Doulakki are currently an ethnic minority in the area and retaining control of only a handful of walled cities. Much of their magical and scholarly knowledge was lost about 250 years ago, during the Great Drought.

The main Immortal of Doulakki is Fos (, “light” in Doulakki; Ixion). Just but colleric, Fos is said in legends to have taken mortal forms and mingled with the Traldar and the Doulakki, often having affairs with mortal women who then gave birth to heroes and demigods. After the Beastmen invaded the Traldar lands in 1000 BC, the so-called Age of Heroes ended: the gods left Brun, and the Traldar decline began, while the ‘new

³ Cubis and Fabia are Thyatian-sounding names for two more cities in modern-era Ylaruam. The author leaves it to the individual DM to decide whether they already existed as Doulakki colonies in 250 BC, or if they were founded later on, during the era of Imperial control over southern Ylaruam (AC 200-800).

generation' of Doulakki and Milenians prospered.

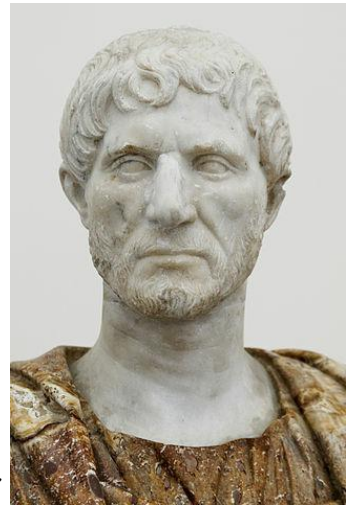
Doulakki males keep women in disdain. Women are mostly confined home, except for shopping, and are allowed only housekeeping activities and raising children; on the other hand, male homosexuality is considered completely normal, and is especially spread among the upper and intellectual classes. Doulakki cities are also known to host a caste of upper class prostitutes known as hetairai (ἑταίραι, sing. hetaira), are free women who renounce all family ties. Whereas all over Hesperia prostitutes working for brothels or pimps are often poor, uneducated, foreigners, slaves, or sold by a poor family, hetairai are companions only to a few men at a time (or even to a single one), often of their own choice. Hetairai provide intellectual conversation, and accompany politicians, generals and intellectuals in private social events like banquets, dinners and parties. Hetairai can become very wealthy, and control their own finances. However, their careers can be short, and if they do not earn enough to support themselves, for instance to buy farms or other commercial activities, they might be forced to work in brothels, or as pimps, as they become older. The life of a hetaira is dangerous; and the slide from hetaira to common prostitute is a major professional risk.

Etrusna

The most important aboriginal population of Hesperia are the Etrusna⁴, a sophisticated culture who benefitted from the many contacts with Taymorans, Thothians,

⁴ See also [Threshold issue #9](#).

Doulakki, and Milenians, becoming the dominant power in the region until the Great Drought. Like the Doulakki, the Etrusna are a race in decline, crippled by the effects of that cataclysm.



The Etrusna are of medium height and slightly leaner than the Thyatians in built. Most have brown or hazel eyes, but about one in four have green or, more rarely, blue eyes. Their hair ranges from bronze or blonde to black, and their skin has generally a light olive complexion.

The Etrusna are great architects and craftsmen; they are known to build vast underground tombs (necropolises); the richest sarcophagi are decorated with marvelously painted statues. They are credited with the invention of the modern arch (from which the word "architecture" comes) and were powerful diviners before they lost almost all their prophetic powers after the Sand Deluge and the years of the Great Drought, something that the superstitious Etrusna attribute to the loss of favour from the Immortals. The most important animal in the Etrusna culture is the horse, that is also their symbol.

The main Etrusna Immortal is Otinia (Odin). Their pantheon includes twelve gods, and twelve is a sacred number, often found in their culture, from the number of city-states of the Dodecapolis (their main political

structure) to the number of representatives in assemblies, military or administrative subdivisions. An Etrusna city-state king is known by the title of *lucumon*. However, most cities have now switched from the old monarchical regimes to aristocratic ones.

One of the peculiarities of Etrusna is that their women are almost on equal standing with men, something that differentiates them from most other human cultures of the area. Etrusna women can own land and commercial activities; they can become traders, adventurers, and even pirates, although they are not allowed to join the military, and cannot rule, but can be entitled to some minor political and governmental role in some cities. Etrusna have a free sexuality, and women choose their own companions and husbands. Sexuality and the role of women is a major factor of contempt and dislike between Doulakki and Etrusna; on the other hand, that ideology has also favoured contacts, intermingling and political alliances with the Albai.

A sub-group of the Etrusna, the Halatians, live around the city of Antenora, located on the road between Thyatium and the central Altan Tepes. They speak their own dialect of Etrusna and are a stern population because of their constant struggle with the nearby humanoids of the mountains, but their culture is Etrusna at heart.

Hattians

One of the Three Southerner Tribes who arrived on Brun before the Great Drought, Hattians seem to belong to a different culture than Kerendans and Thyatians. They are taller and of more powerful built than their

THE ETRUSNA DODECAPOLIS

Since before the arrival of the Three Tribes, the Etrusna have been organized in a loose confederation whose elected leader is known as the zilath mech rasnal. For religious reasons, there must always be twelve cities in the confederation, that is called the Dodecapolis (although minor cities and towns might be part of the Dodecapolis by putting themselves under the protection or control of one of the twelve). Over time, the fact that several of the main Etrusna cities have been conquered by Thyatians and Kerendans have led to the promotion of minor cities to the position.

The Etrusna Dodecapolis alliance was decisively beaten by a Kerendan-Thyatian alliance in 295 BC. After the battle, many Etrusnan cities passed under the political influence of Kerendas or of the League of Thyatis, although enough of them have remained formally independent to maintain the Dodecapolis at least in name.

The original Dodecapolis was made of: Vipsl; Veii (replaced by Rusle and then by Tlamon); Clevsin, Perusna (replaced by Kurtun); Aritim; Caisra; Velzna (replaced by Tusena); Tarchna; Velch (replaced by Faleroi); Vatluna; Fofluna; Velathri.

fellow newcomers, tend to have jet black or blonde hair (while red and brown are quite uncommon), and either blue or dark eyes. Some speculate these traits might show two different ancestries of the original Hattian tribe.

Hattians are among the most aggressive of the populations of the area. Luckily, this attitude results in their extreme fragmentation in small clans and families that spend most of their time fighting against each other. Hattian leaders are violent and war-dedicated, and their society is strongly hierarchical. Hattian nobility is organized in a patriarchal feudal system where a local king, called Herzog⁵, rules over vassals known respectively - in decreasing order of importance - as Grafs⁶, Barons and Knights.

Baron, Graf (Comte) and Herzog (Duke) titles are passed to the eldest son, while property of the land is traditionally partitioned among all sons, in decreasing proportion, something that has led to bloody family feuds and to the habit of forcing sons to renounce their part to become free Knights, mercenaries, colonists, or priests, in order to avoid partitioning too much of the family land. Knighthood is not an hereditary title, and only a Duke, Comte or Baron can appoint a new Knight, although most Knights

⁵ In Thyatian the word is usually translated as “dux” (pl. “dukes”), a word which means ‘leader’; Doulakki and Taymorans, who derived the use of the word from Thyatians, use “duke” (pl. “dukes”).

⁶ In Thyatian the word is translated as “comes” (“companion”), but “comte”, the Belgi lupin distortion of the Thyatian word, has become the most widespread in Hesperia by the time we are writing of.

will try to help their male offspring to enter the service of their feudal lord.

Below the Knights are freemen, who don't own any land, but can own houses in towns and are generally craftsmen or shopkeepers; a few might be merchants and pirates (and often both). These freemen can be called upon as footsoldiers for the petty local wars of the Dukes. The rest of the population is mainly made up of peasant serfs bound to the lands owned by the nobility. Ethnically, the serfs descend from a mix of lower-class Hattians with Hesperian or Doulakki humans who lived here before the arrival of the Three Tribes; or, they are humanoids (mostly lupins).

Hattian women are not entitled to own activities, to own land or to rule; they are thus second-class citizens in all respects. Daughters of feudal lords and knights are often married away for political reasons, to settle a feud, to unify adjoining fiefs, or to make an alliance.

Kartana

The fierce Kartana are another aboriginal population of Hesperia who speaks a language unrelated to that of other cultures of the region (although some scholars have suggested a possible common ancestry between Kartana and Etrusna languages). They occupy about half of Kartanya, the island which takes its name from them east of Hesperia, and most of Borydos.

Kartana, of light olive complexion, black-haired and dark- or green-eyed, with often wavy or curly hair, are the shortest and leanest of the populations of Hesperia:

expert mountaineers and stonebuilders, good fishermen but better shepherds, they worship first and foremost Setlanni (Wayland), an Immortal enemy of both Taymorans and Thothians.

Kerendans

Kerendans are the offspring of the intermingling of western Hesperian aboriginal populations (Etrusnan citizens, Albai clans, and members of other minor populations) with members of the Three Tribes from the southern continent.

The mix of the original Hesperians with Southerners was favoured by the significant language proximity of the Southerners' speech with many of the minor languages of the tribes. The western Hesperian tribes found kinship with the invaders and took the chance to ally with them against the Etrusnans and Albai, that speak languages which are unrelated or much farther removed from their own. This has been the starting point of the legend that says that most of the Hesperian tribes descend from members of the same Antalian-related tribes who originated the Southerners, and that were able to escape from the Nithian enslavement.

Kerendans are of average height and medium-to-stocky built, with light olive to fair skin; they tend to have brown or black hair, with blonde not uncommon, and brown eyes, with about one-to-three in ten green- or blue-eyed, the proportion depending on the city, clan or tribe of origin (those closer to Albai tend to be fairer in hair and eye colour).

Kerendans, more influenced by Etrusnans and Albai than by Doulakki, have more relaxed customs towards women than the Thyatians and Hattians. Although their women cannot join the military, and adventurers and pirates are looked down upon, they can own commercial activities and even divorce their husbands in case a court finds a married man guilty of misgivings, beatings or cheating upon his wife.

Minrothians

Related to the Thothians and the Aseni, the Minrothians are the descendants of Thothians who left Assinia many centuries ago as the ruling class deteriorated and the land progressively desertified. Their seat is the Shode ("trader", in Minrothian) Island.



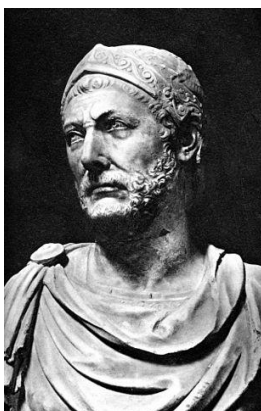
Minrothians are of medium-to-short height and lean built. They have wavy brown or black hair and brown eyes, although one in five has green eyes, and they have a fair-to-dark olive complexion.

Minrothians were influenced by the seafaring Meditor elves and Taymoran humans of the region, and have become expert seamen themselves. However, their peaceful religious philosophy, created by their former ruler and namesake, the Immortal Minroth, has led them to resort to piracy much less than the

other human races of the Sea of Dread and the Sea of Dawn.

Taymorans

The few descendants of the ancient Taymorans live on the eastern Hesperian islands, especially Carytion and Borydos, and in the mainland area known as Cania.



Taymorans are of medium height and lean built, with black or dark brown hair, and generally black or brown eyes, although green are not uncommon and blue eyed Taymorans can be found. Curly hair and aquiline noses are not uncommon either; they are distantly related to the Aseni, and Taymoran scholars have proven that the Aseni and Taymoran languages belong in fact to the same language family.

Taymorans descend from the original Taymorans of 2500-1700 BC; since almost two millennia have passed from that era, they are very different from their ancestors. They do not dabble in dark or necromantic magic: although Nyx remains one of the main deities of their pantheon, the main Taymoran deity is now Melq-Ashtir (Asterius); the Taymoran language is a distant relative of original Taymoran; and most of their ideas about their mythical past are mere legends or speculations.

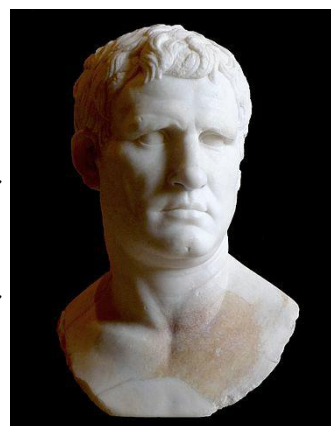
Today Taymorans are mostly sailing merchants; their small communities and cities used to dot the Sea of Dread and Sea of Dawn around 800-600 BC, before their

decline became almost irreversible due to Thothian and Milenian aggressive policies that led to their absorption or vanquishing. Thanks to the Great Drought, Taymorans managed to keep the control of Zyz in Hesperia, their only resisting major settlement on Brun, but they feel they are increasingly on the defensive - pressured by the Thyatian newcomers, as well as still fighting a war they cannot win against the Doulakki, their traditional rivals on Brun; moreover, the pressure from the Alphatians in the east and Hattians to the west puts at risk the control of their island strongholds on Kartanya and Mosya.

Taymorans are a dreamy, self-absorbed and decadent lot, the most fatalistic of the Hesperian peoples, and ready for the demise of their millennial culture, whether it will come from the Aseni to their north, from the Alphatians in the east or from the wars with Doulakki and Thyatians in the west. Their only fast allies in the region are the Minrothians, another mercantile culture with whom they recognize a distant form for kinship.

Thyatians

Thyatians are the result of the intermingling of eastern Hesperian aboriginal tribes (from the regions of the Mesonian river, and the areas known as Retia and Halatia)



with members of the Thyatian tribe from the southern continent, and as thus are strongly related to the Kerendans.

The mix of the original Hesperians with Southerners was favoured by the significant language proximity of the Southerners' speech with many of the minor languages of the tribes. The eastern Hesperian tribes found kinship with the invaders and took the chance to ally with them against the Goblinoids of the Altan Tepes and the Orcs of Halatia. This, along with the analogue of Kerendans in the west, has been the starting point of the legend that says that most of the Hesperian tribes descend from members of the same Antalian-related tribes who originated the Southerners, and that were able to escape from the Thothian enslavement.

Thyatians are of slightly less-than-average height and medium-to-stocky build, with light olive to olive skin; they tend to have brown or black hair, with blonde not uncommon, and brown eyes, with about one-to-two in ten green- or blue-eyed, the proportion depending on the city, clan or tribe of origin (those closer to the Altan Tepes mountains tend to be fairer in hair and eye colour, while the coastal Thyatians of the east have traces of Doulakki and Taymoran blood).

The name 'Thyatians' is now an umbrella name for a big number of Southerner-Hesperian sub-populations. These include Thyatians proper in Old Thyatium; Vitalians in New Thyatium and east of Thyatis; Retians north of Thyatium; Canians, in the interior regions of Cania; and Tallians, less of a mixed between aboriginals and newcomers, as they constitute the conquered serf class to the Hattian conquerors of the island of Hattias.

The cultural influence of Milenians and Doulakki is felt more towards the south-

eastern coast; the more you move farther from the Etrusna homelands, the role and freedom of women decrease. However, women who are subjects of the League of Thyatis have several legal rights: they are citizens, although they have no right to vote and to be elected to office; and they can conduct commercial activities, own land, write their own wills, appear in court even acting as defendants, and divorce. No domestic abuse is allowed by a husband to his wife. Marriage is allowed between all citizens of cities belonging to the League of Thyatis, but not with citizens of cities outside of the League, or with people belonging to other foreign tribes or states.

Elves

Elves of Hesperia belong mainly to the Vyalia clans, whose lands signal the north-western border of geographical Hesperia. Meditor elves (and, to a lesser extent, Verdier) are a common sight of harbour towns and islands of the area. The Verdier and Meditor elves' seat of power is the island of Alfeisle, but they control parts of Teria and Actius.

Vyalia

Vyalia elves (sometimes called *silver elves* to differentiate them from the Verdier and from other clans living westwards in Alfheim and Traladara) have fair or pale skin, and can have hair ranging from white and silvery to golden blonde to black, with red not uncommon; they have generally deep green or black eyes.

The Vyalia are mainly followers of the Immortal Ilsundal.

Verdier

Verdier elves, often called *wood elves*, are 5 to 5½ tall, have fair skin which tends to tan under the sun, hair ranging in colour from silver, white and blond to brown, with green or hazel eyes. Their features bear a distant resemblance to the elves of Alfheim.

The Verdier are more serious-minded than their mainland cousins, more inclined to stick with long-term projects and tirelessly pursuing them until complete, for months or years; equally renowned is the long vacation they take after these projects, when they can spend months or years travelling or relaxing while they wait for a new project to absorb them.

The Verdier elves are chiefly followers of the *dainrouw* ("the forest way"), the philosophy taught by the Immortal Ordana.

Meditor

Meditor elves, often called *water elves* by humans, are slightly taller than wood elves, have pale skin, and pale blond hair that bleaches almost white in the sun. Their eyes are blue-grey and their complexions are pale in spite of constant exposure to weather and sun.

A Meditor's first love is the sea: water elves are fascinated by its ever-changing moods and love to travel on the ocean. The Meditors' system of beliefs is called *elendaen* ("the ocean path"). Created by their patron Immortal Calitha Starbrow, it holds that water is the cradle of life.

HUMANOIDs

Humanoids are found in many areas of Traladara and in the Altan Tepes range - as well as in the northern half of Hesperia and in many parts of Assinia. This includes trolls, ogres, gnolls, and kobolds, which are already firmly in possession of the Hardanger range. The most common humanoids of Hesperia, and the only ones which possess a tribal or clan organization, are goblins, hobgoblins and orcs. Most of the members of the other races (especially ogres) can be found in small warbands, or as parts of tribes or clans of goblinoids and orcs.

Goblinoids

Hesperian Goblins belong to the **Goblinus** subrace; they have chalky tan skin and rusty-brown hair. Hobgoblins are of the **Goblinus Grandis** subrace; they are of light tan skin, very short rusty-brown or black hair, toad-faced, with grey or black lips and protruding eyes.

Goblins and hobgoblins live mostly together on the slopes of the Altan Tepes, on the border between the region of Hesperia and that of Assinia, north-east to the Tauri lupins and north-west of the Halatian humans. Many of them arrived in the region circa 492-490 BC, after the Battle of Sardal Pass which drove them away from the dwarven lands of Dengar: some were remnants of the Queen Ubdala's armies, while others came from the plains of Assinia, as the Great Drought that hit the region forced them to retreat to the mountains. Now many goblinoid tribes live on both sides of the Altan Tepes mountains. In a few instances, goblins and hobgoblins have been employed as mercenaries by

Aseni, Taymorans and Doulakki, especially in the ongoing wars for the control of Cania.

The goblinoids of Hesperia speak a crude, broken language which seems related to the language of some human clans on Hemeria, and to the lupin clans of the Tauri subspecies. Many also speak Thyatian or Assinian, depending on which side of the mountains they live on.

Apart from the savage goblinoids of the mountains, there is also a civilized goblinoid population, the **Karns**, hobgoblins that control the city of Karntica. They act as the aristocratic government and military of the city, and are loosely allied to the Doulakki city-state of Sarausa.

Orcs

Belonging mostly to the **Orcus Porcus** subrace, with porcine features, pink, brown, black or gray-greenish skin, sometimes with spots, orcs of Hesperia are violent savages who have their bases in the northwestern part of the Altan Tepes and spend the time fighting against each other and raiding lupins, elves and humans alike.

Some clans are known to practice human sacrifices and ritual cannibalism; others are less aggressive and have even been known to be friendly towards the lupins and to help them against the more brutal members of their race.

The orcs speak their own brutish variants of the local languages, and use as their own pidgin language made up of Taurian lupin, Altenian goblinoid, Albai human and Elvish. The proportions of the different languages in

the pidgin varies from clan to clan depending on the geographical position and of the frequency of contacts with the other cultures of the area.

Lupins

Lupins of Hesperia belong to the **Mastinus Rex**⁷ and **Taurus Foveae**⁸ subraces.

Generally of great strength and dignity, the Mastini are powerful mastiff-headed lupins of great resilience, and medium to big height and size. Mastini are renowned because they are naturally immune to any form of fear.

The Mastini are divided in four main clans: two in central Vitalia, the Hirpini (whose main capital is Valeria, dedicated to their patron Immortal Valerias) and the Brutii (whose capital is Constantia), who have traded and lived close to the



Hesperian tribes for so long that they have adopted the Thyatian language; and two in northern Vitalia (the Iapyges, devoted to the Immortal Terra) and Cania (Messapians, whose capital is Lupiae), who speak their own related languages. These breeds share similar facial features and are generally of black or fawn color.

⁷ King Mastiff.

⁸ Thyatian Pitbull.

The Tauri are a little shorter and leaner than the powerful Mastini. Excessively aggressive, proud, impatient, and unpredictable by nature, their fighters are known to be often prone to a fighting rage similar to that of the Northerner berserkers. They have pitbull heads and can be of any colour.

The Tauri live mainly in the plains and hills close to the Altan Tepes mountains, from the Trevanion river to the lands of the Vyalia elves and the Albai humans; they have settled these areas since the times before the Sand Deluge in Assinia. Once, many Tauri lived on the northern slopes of the Altan Tepes, but after the Battle of Sardal Pass in 492 BC, most of them fled to their cousins on the southern side. This move was seen with favour and encouraged by the Hesperians, in order to have a buffer between the orcs and goblinoids and their lands.

Another big Taurian clan, the Belgi, live in Hattias. Many have been subjugated by the Hattians, but a certain number continue to oppose the intruders with a fierce guerilla force in the central hills of the island.

The Tauri lupins speak yet another language, related to a number of other Neathar languages of uncertain origin, like the language of the Karn goblins of Halatia and the language of the Dunael tribes of northern Hemeria. Scholars suggest that these populations might have lived closely together in the past, with this resulting in having some similar cultural traits - language among them.

AN ATLAS OF HESPERIA

We have seen the land at a glance, and described its flora, fauna, agriculture and people. Now we will look in detail at the regions of Hesperia, its cities and its political entities.

Our trip will start from the mainland, from the region known as Thyatium⁹, where the city of Thyatis lies; then to the areas under the control of the League of Thyatis; to the peninsula of Cania, the northeastern corner of Hesperia, where Doulakki and Taymorans have long fought for power.

From there we will take a look at the humanoid populations of the Altan Tepes, lupins, orcs and goblins, then move south to the lands of the Vyalia elves and the Albai tribes. Last but not least we will move back east along the coast to watch the conflict between Etrusna and Kerendans for the control of the fertile plains and hills of the western Hesperian coast.

Then we will embark on a voyage by sea to all the islands under the control of the Hesperian populations: starting from Teria in the Sea of Dread, to Hattias and thence to the many islands in the Sea of Dawn - Kartanya, Mosia, Borydos, Actius and Sakhla-Rhas.

⁹ Mesonia around 1000 BC. See [Threshold #11, page 133](#).

Magnum Thyatium

Population: 420,000

Languages: Thyatian (Thyatian dialect, Vitalian dialect); Etrusna; Doulakki.

The main power of Hesperia is now the League of Thyatis, controlled by **Thyatis**, the most important of the Southerner-Hesperian cities. The whole area is now collectively known as *Magnum Thyatium*, but there are three main sub-regions - *Tuska*, *Thyatium Vetus*, and *Sabellia*.



Eos

Thyatis is located in the region known as **Thyatium Vetus** ("Old Thyatium"), comprised between the city and the port of **Eea**, so-called from Eos, a powerful prophetess-witch who was said to be a daughter of Solarios (Ixion), and who supposedly lived - and still lives - in the area, although there is no confirmed sighting of her since the time of the Great Drought. It is a relatively fertile area, with wheat-cultivated valleys and plains, surrounded by hills where olives and grapes are the main cultivation, sheep are a common sight and boar hunts and fighting sports are the favoured pastimes respectively of villagers and city-dwellers.



Thyatis (pop. 167,000) is the city in control of the League, and all other members are basically subject cities at various levels. The city has two military leaders, called *consules*, but it is ruled by an aristocratic Senate. The population elects two *tribuni*, magistrates who have some legislative powers and can apply some form of control over *consules* and Senate. No representatives in the City of Thyatis come from outside the city itself.

Thyatis is considered the first city built by the Southerners on Hesperia, and the Thyatian Calendar counts the years from the establishment of the city in 600 BC. Currently we are in 350 AUC¹⁰ (Ab Urbe Condita, "since the foundation of the city"). It was ruled by a king until 498 BC, when the last, corrupt king Tarlin was exiled and replaced by the aristocratic regime.

¹⁰ It corresponds to BC 250 in the New Thyatian Calendar used in the Gazetteer-era Known World.

Tibur (pop. 5,600), located at the foot of the Thyatian hills on the banks of the Mesonian river, is the second city in Old Thyatium. It is considered the first place on Brun where members of the Three Tribes forged an alliance with aboriginal Hesperians in order to fight the Etrusna Dodecapolis.

Old Thyatium is dotted with many towns, great and small, all either subject to the direct control of Thyatis, or part of the Thyatian League. Among the most important are **Lavinia**, **Tusculum**, and **Antium**. Politically, these cities and towns follow the blueprint of Thyatian politics, with aristocratic families as main rulers but with a few minor political magistrates reserved for election to the urban and rural population.

North of Old Thyatium, lies **Sabellia**, a region settled by the Sabelli clans, belonging to the Thyatian subgroup known as Vitalians. In the inland areas, hills and low mountains allow for good pastures for sheep and cows, and a moderate yield of wheat and olives, complemented by specialized cultures like sunflower, farro and lentils. Towards the Sea of Dawn, red grapes are cultivated for wine, and the sea is rich in fish. Higher hills and mountains south separate Thyatium from Vitalia proper.

The many Vitalian communities living in Magnum Thyatium are grouped together in several territories, each one ruled by an elected meddix ('magistrate' in Vitalian Thyatian), a yearly-elected sheriff who is responsible for upholding law. Each territory ruled by a meddix is called touto ('state' in Vitalian Thyatian). The sheriff administers justice and is responsible for the safety of the touto by fighting brigands, or pirates if it is a coastal touto.



Vitalian cities in Thyatium are not so much *dominating* territories as considered *part* of them, so villagers, farmers, hunters and shepherds of a touto are entitled to vote and even be elected as meddix. For military purposes, each touto has local troops and reserves that are subject to the Thyatian Leagues' military hierarchy. The main settlements in the region include:

Perusna¹¹ (pop. 8,000), formerly an Etrusna city, was conquered and occupied by Vitalians. It controls an area famous for its black truffles and its hams and sausages of pork.

Agkon (Ἀγκών, in Doulakki; pop. 4,500), a Doulakki city founded by Sarausan exiles in 387 BC, is the most important fish market on the Sea of Dawn. It is the only city in Magnum Thyatium not directly or indirectly controlled by Thyatis.

Corfinium (pop. 3,600), the biggest city of Magnum Thyatium on the southern hills, home to a sanctuary dedicated to Djaea, in her role as healer and serpent-queen. Here, a small but important hospital and a medical school consecrated to Chardastes have been established.

¹¹ Hillfork in AC 1000.

Picenum (pop. 2,500) allied itself to the Thyatians in 295, officially on an equal standing, although it is in practical terms a protectorate of the League. Picenum, a Vitalian city, asked for protection from the army of **Sena**, a Tauri lupin city that was located on



the coast north of Agkon. The intervention of the League led to the defeat of the Tauri of Sena, who were mostly killed, enslaved or deported. The League plans to build a colony on the ruins of the city. Not far from Picenum, there is an important sanctuary, **Kypra**, dedicated to **Valerias**, its patron deity. The symbol of Picenum is the green woodpecker, whose Thyatian name (“*picus viridis*”) gives name to the town.

Before the arrival of the Three Tribes, the Mesonian river was the border between the Etrusna-controlled coast and the lands of the Hesperian tribes. This eastern Etrusna



territory, known as **Tuska**, was the first area of expansion of the Southerner-Hesperian alliance, and is now under Thyatian or Kerendan control. Its main centers are:

Tarchna¹² (pop. 4,300), part of the League of Thyatis since 294 BC, has always been in close relationship with Thyatis: the family of **Tarlin**, the last king of Thyatis, was originally from Tarchna. The city is the major port of the League on the Sea of Dread. At least one olive treant is known to live in the olive fields outside the city, and to act as an ambassador of treelife to the citizens. Every two or three years he will take a couple of weeks travelling through the countryside and then ask for parley at the aristocratic council which rules Tarchna. He will hide among the olives otherwise, sleeping most of the time, but he is rather friendly and is known to entertain human and elven visitors sometimes.



Velch¹³ (pop. 3,900), an important market town, is nominally independent, but subject to Kerendas since 294 BC. It is the usual meeting point for Kerendan and Thyatian representatives to discuss treaties, peace, war, and the political situation of Hesperia. **Caisra** (pop. 5,100) is the easternmost coastal city of the Etrusna Dodecapolis. It

¹² Aes in AC 1000.

¹³ Julinius in AC 1000.

was once allied with Zyz in order to have an external naval support against the Doulakki of Vitalia, but as the Thyatians ate into the Doulakki possessions there, it switched allegiance to Thyatis in 274 BC.

Tusena (pop. 3,500), a member of the Thyatian League since 270 BC, never fought against Thyatis, judging it better to opt out of the Etrusna-Thyatian wars until the winner could be determined. The treaty with the League was signed by the current tyrant-king, Lars the Cripple, a strict but just ruler who is loved by his people. Seldom seen in public, in his mid-fifties, he is said to be a leper, cursed by the Immortals for an unknown crime. Sometimes he travels with a chart to a sacred cave near the sea to pray for repentance, and people passing by during the nights have sworn they could hear the king wailing in pain. The rumors of his ailings have led to two attempts at ending his rule, one by some opposing aristocratic families, and one by a band of cold-blooded adventurers, but both failed - in part given the popular support that Lars has.

Veii, one of the original Dodecapolis members, was destroyed in 396 BC by the Thyatians; in its place now there are only farmlands and pastures. The ruins of **Velzna** can be seen on the road from Perusia to Caisra; the Etrusna city was completely destroyed by the Thyatians in 264 BC, and its surviving population has been divided among the surrounding League cities.

Velzna is a dangerous place for travellers, as it is said that ghosts of the leaders who challenged the power of Thyatis and risked the life of their fellow citizens haunt the ruins. Others say it is only brigands. In any case, the aristocratic councils ruling Perusna

and Caisra have had several disturbing reports (missing persons, dead crops, persons gone insane after passing through Velzna) and are considering the possibility of summoning the League for an expedition in the ruins.

Future geographical reference: Duchy of Thyatis (Old Thyatium, Tuska and Sabellia).

Vitalia and Iapygia

Population: 120,000

(90,000 humans, 30,000 lupins)

Languages: Thyatian (Vitalian dialect); Doulakki; Lupin (Iapygis dialect).

Along the southern Hesperian shore, east of Eea, lies a region that was called **Vitalia** ("Land of Calves") by the Doulakki, because of the abundance of cattle they found when they first arrived there. The Doulakki founded several cities and towns on the coast but, as was their custom, they left the control of the hills and mountains of the interior to the aboriginal Hesperians. With the arrival of the Three Tribes of the Southerners, the Vitalians mingled with the newcomers to form a new population that is now part of the Thyatian stock.

Here the Vitalians of the big cities have an aristocratic, oligarchic ruling class, while those of the smaller towns and rural areas share the ruling system of the populations of Magnum Thyatium, with a *meddox* elected by the whole population of a territory. These minor cities and towns are all either directly subject to the League of Thyatis or to the major cities of the region.



conquered and occupied by Vitalians in 421 BC, and became part of the League of Thyatis in 334 BC. The sanctuary of the Sybil, a few miles out of Kyme, is one of the most important shrines in Hesperia. Dedicated to Nyx, it is presided over by a single virgin priestess at the time, who is known to prophesize in divinatory trance, although her prophecies are rare and obscure. According to Doulakki lore, the Sybils were able to divine much more often and more clearly before the Sand Deluge. Doulakki and Etrusna interpret this as a clear sign of the newfound disfavour of Immortals towards humankind.

The most fertile and strategically important area of Vitalia is on the west side to the Vitalian hills, where the volcanic soil favours the growth of wheat, and many types of fruits and vegetables. Cattle is the most common farm animal; famous are the Vitalian buffalos, used to produce the famous mozzarella cheese. In this area are no less than four major settlements:

Nuvkrinum (pop. 9,000) was founded by Etrusna in 603 BC as their easternmost colony in the south, with the explicit intent to stop Doulakki colonization in the west. It was defeated by a Doulakki-Vitalian coalition in 474 BC, and occupied by the Vitalians. It has been a member of the League of Thyatis since 307 BC.

Kyme (Κύμη, pop. 15,000) was founded in 740 BC by the Doulakki, who had in Kyme their westernmost settlement on the southern shore of Hesperia. Kyme was

Kapwa (pop. 12,000) founded by Etrusna, was occupied by Vitalians in 425 BC and has been a member of the League of Thyatis since 338 BC. An artistic, sprawling cultural city, it is one of the most liberal places in Hesperia, with advanced civil rights and freedoms, including total gender equality. It is a haven for the persecuted, the exiles and the losers at the political game from all of Hesperia: a land of peace and freedom or a place of dissolution and indecent sexual customs, depending on your take on the matter. Despite its membership in the League, it has managed to uphold its values and traditions even when this put it at odds with other cities of the League, including the major partner.



Parthenope¹⁴ (Παρθενωπη, pop. 16,500) was founded by Doulakki from Kyme, and had a boost in population and importance after Kyme was conquered by the Vitalians. It joined the League of Thyatis in 326 BC.

To the east of the hills, in south-eastern Vitalia, there are two major Traldar-Doulakki colonies:

Rhegion¹⁵ (Ρήγιον, pop. 7,800), was founded in 730 BC, and have been subject to Sarausa since 387 BC. Sarausa took control of the city because of its strategic position, which controls access both to Vanya's Girdle and to the Gulf of Karn.

Kroton (Κρότων, pop. 12,000) was founded in 718 BC. One of the most powerful cities of the region, it lost much of its political importance after being defeated by Sarausa in 383 BC. Its ambitions curtailed, it developed as an important center for the study of philosophy, mathematics and medicine. It joined the League of Thyatis in 277 BC, after another military defeat. Kroton also hosts one of the biggest religious units

¹⁴ Close to the site of ancient Parthenope, the Imperial Thyatians will found the city of Lucinius. Parthenope is now the name of the quarter of the new city that corresponds to the site of the old city.

¹⁵ Lucinius Outpost in AC 1000.

in Hesperia, the Sanctuary of Djae Lacinia, made up of a holy forest, pastures for holy animals used for sacrifices and divination, several temples and a lighthouse. The Sanctuary is managed by the priesthood of Djaea, although there are other priests living and performing religious duties in the minor temples of the area.

In this part of Vitalia there are also the ruins of **Sybaris**, once one of the mightiest Doulakki cities in Hesperia (founded in 720 BC and destroyed by Kroton in 510 BC).

In the hilly areas between Kroton and Parthenope, there are also two clans of Mastini lupins. Their main cities are:

Valeria (pop. 5,200), located in an alluvial basin at the foot of the hills, is the capital of the Hirpines lupins, who were defeated in 292 BC by the League of Thyatis and forced to join it. The area is very green and the main cultivations are nuts and chestnuts, traded with the coastal cities of the south. It is not so much a city as a group of close villages and farms, who meet as a town council for rule, and in the Temple of Valerias, the patron of the Hirpines, for religious rites (hence the name of the "city"). The anarchical and communal organization of the Hirpines has much to do with the worship of that chaotic, free-spirited Immortal.

Constantia (pop. 7,000) is the capital of the Brutii lupins, founded in 356 BC to establish a central, unitary stronghold to defend themselves better from the other populations of Vitalia. Constantia was conquered in 270 BC by the League of Thyatis and it was annexed into the League. The heavily fortified city sprawls over hills of around 200-



250 m asl of height, and is characterized by close houses with narrow and tortuous roads. Its position, very close to high mountains, gives it a somewhat unpleasant climate, with hot, dry summers with little to no wind nor precipitation, and cold, snowy winters. The main cultivations of the area are olives, figs, red and white grapes.

North of the hills, to the north-east of Vitalia, lies the region known as *Iapygia*, from the name of the Iapyges, the lupin tribes that are its oldest settlers; their capital is **Hyria** (pop. 6,000).

The Iapyges lupins and the main city-state of the area, the Doulakki city of **Taras**¹⁶ (pop. 9,000, founded 706 BC), fought a long series of wars against each other. This led to both of their demise: divided and enfeebled, they were finally subdued by the League of Thyatis ten years ago (in 260 BC).

Future geographical reference: County of Lucinius.

Retia and Halatia

Population: 94,000

Languages: Thyatian (Retian dialect); Etrusna (Common Etrusna; Halatian dialect); Doulakki; Lupin (Iapigian dialect); Karnic.



North of Thyatium, the land is known as **Retia**, from the name of the Retians, the Thyatian-Hesperian clans living here. Retia was one of the first areas of expansion of the Thyatian tribes, who joined the locals in trying to repel the goblinoids from the hills of the region. The Etrusna also have several strongholds in the area. The main cities of the region are:

Verona (pop. 17,000), capital of the Retians, is one of the most ancient Hesperian cities of Brun. It has been allied to Thyatis (but as an equal partner, and not as part of the League) since 390 BC. Built on the Polythius river, the city is famous for its mills, bridges and canals.

¹⁶ Hillcape in AC 1000.



Polythius River

Spna¹⁷ (pop. 15,000), founded by the Etrusna in 540 BC, survived a major goblinoid invasion after the Sand Deluge and remains independent to this day, being the only mainland Etrusna port on the Sea of Dawn.

Felzna (pop. 14,700), is the main settlement in the region between the Trevanion and Mesonian rivers, in a valley that connects Kerendum with Retia. Felzna clings to its independence thanks to its strategic position, although it is under constant threat of goblinoids from the Altan Tepes. It is closely allied to Spna. In the plains between the two cities, many types of ham, cheese and sparkling red wines are produced, making the area one of the most renowned in Hesperia for food.

Hatria (pop. 13,000), originally an Etrusna city founded in 530 BC; many Sarausan exiles found refuge here in 385 BC; the unlikely Etrusna-Doulakki alliance prospered, and Hatria expanded its port and emporium, becoming the most important city of the region; however, Hatria was then conquered by a Sarausan expedition which employed a vast army of goblinoid and Aseni

¹⁷ Retebius in AC 1000.



Felzna Plains

mercenaries. Since then, the city has belonged to the Sarausan kingdom.

Karntika¹⁸ (pop. 14,500, 60% hobgoblins, 30% humans, 10% goblins), stronghold of the civilized goblinoids known as Karns, the only goblinoid enclave of the region. The Karn hobgoblins constitute the aristocracy and military of the city, while Hesperians and Doulakki make up the merchantile class of the city and goblins are used as slaves and cheap labour force. The city has a loose alliance with Sarausa and is used as a sort of enforcer towards Hatria. In recent years, elves from Vyalia have visited Karntika and have been seen to act as advisers to the hobgoblin leaders, something that has puzzled most.

North, towards the mountains, is a region known as **Halatia**, where the Halatians, hardened frontiersmen of Etrusna ethnicity, strive to keep goblinoids away from the Thyatian lands to the south. Halatia is mostly occupied near the Altan Tepes. In the northern part there are impressive carbonate rock dolomite mountains, with eighteen peaks that rise above 3,050 m (10,000 feet) of height above sea level.

¹⁸ Kantridae in AC 1000.



The main city of the Halatia is **Antenora** (pop. 11,000), a trading city where the Halatians trade with the Retians and Etrusna. According to legends it should be one of the most ancient settlements of Hesperia, as its foundation date is given as 1132 BC.

Future geographical reference: Duchies of Retebius and of Kantrium (Retia), and County of Halathius (Halatia).

Cania

Population: 250,000

Languages: Taymoran (Zygian dialect); Doulakki; Thyatian (Canian dialect); Lupin (Messapian dialect).

Cania is the northeastern peninsula of Hesperia, and the most fertile area of southeastern Brun, insofar it is sometimes called 'the grainland of Hesperia': Cania produces all types of grains, fruits and vegetables. It is a rich and varied land, with plains, hills, mountains, so that almost any possible type of cultivation is produced here. Cania even has an active volcano on the eastern slope of the Altan Tepes towards the sea: the Setla, located about halfway between

Tameronikas and Karntika, was considered by the Doulakki to be once the seat of the Immortal Setlannis on Mystara, before the Immortals shunned forever the company of humankind. On the extraordinarily fertile slopes of the volcano, pistachios, lemons and oranges are cultivated with exceptional yields. The important agricultural center of **Katane** (pop. 4,000), a Doulakki colony founded in 729 BC, is located at the feet of the volcano. Given its strategic position, Katane has had a troubled history, having been invaded and occupied alternately by Sarausa and Zyz. Currently it has tried to improve its standing by applying to join the League of Thyatis in 263 BC. The Thyatians occupied the city with a garrison and imposed a tax, while pretending to still be 'considering' the application. In fact, the League is thinking to use Katane as a staging point for a possible expansion to the east.

Cania has been a major area of strife between Doulakki and Taymorans for centuries, since the Thothian Empire left Assinia and they started warring against each other. In the interior, as is often the case where Doulakki and Taymoran cities control the coasts, there are aboriginal Hesperians called Canians, now heavily mixed with Southerners from the Three Tribes. The northern part of Cania, where Tameronikas lies, is a major battlefield between Doulakki and Taymorans, and between people of Hesperia and hostile goblins and Assinians from the north. In one instance, a major Assinian invasion managed to take for some time Sarausa before one of the earliest coalition of all Hesperian peoples managed to take the city back.



Lilithei (pop. 6,800) was founded in 397 BC by refugees from the island-city of **Motye**, whose ruins remain outside the coast in front of Lilithei. Motye was an ancient Taymoran city, later destroyed by the Doulakki of Sarausa. The people of Lilithei have since put themselves under the protection of Zyz.



Motye before its Destruction

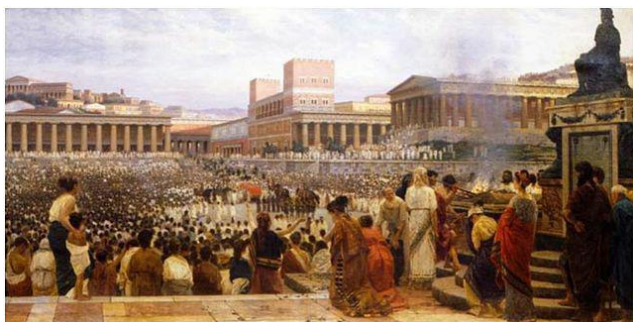
The city of **Zyz**¹⁹ (pop. 83,600) is the strongest Taymoran outpost in Hesperia. It is a cosmopolitan trading centre, the passageway between Hesperia and Hemeria, and the biggest center of Taymoran lore in the world. Zyz is ruled by an aristocratic council, presided over by two *sufets*, democratically elected for one year by the citizens' assembly. Military leaders are elected separately and raise mercenary armies with public funds. Most of the mercenary forces of Zyz are made up of Aseni warriors. Zyz was founded by Taymorans coming from Mosya, and is still strongly linked to the Taymoran island-state in the western Sea of Dawn. Zyz and the Taymorans are the main rivals of Thyatis, Kerendas and Sarausa as the major regional power. Tension between Zyz and Thyatis has built up much in later years, and since 264 BC the two cities are *de facto* in a state of cold (and sometimes even real) war.

It is said that in the underground of Motye, in some caves of the island, there are still ancient Taymoran horrors, like werecreatures, giants, albinos used for experiments, and secret temples to beings much older than the Immortals. The Taymorans sneer at these rumours, waving them off as Doulakki propaganda. However, it is true that a few Taymorans visit the city from time to time, and some scholars, priests and wizards from Zyz and Lilithei hold estates in Motye.

East of Zyz lies the Doulakki city of **Sarausa**²⁰ (Σαραύσα, pop. 100,000), which has been the major rival of Zyz since before the Great Drought, and is the second biggest city of Hesperia. Sarausa, founded in 734 BC, is by now the most important Doulakki city of eastern Brun; a major center for science and arts, with several theaters, a philosophical

¹⁹ Tel Akbir in AC 1000.

²⁰ Punta Aurorae (Dawnpoint) in AC 1000.



Funerals of Daimon Angelos, a Sarausan general who triumphed against the Zygians.

school, a technology college and a mathematics and astronomy school that even Alphatians and Thothians don't dare look down upon.

Sarausa is the major agricultural center of Hesperia; the Sea of Dawn is especially rich with fish here, and the Sarausan tuna is renown to the point that Alphatian vessels risk the pirate-ridden seas to buy tuna fish for their gourmet masters.

Sarausa is ruled by the brilliant and devious Ieron II, a 58-year old military leader who was elected tyrant in 270 BC, and is considered one of the most influential personalities in all Hesperia.

Segesta (pop. 5,300) is a Canian-Doulakki town allied to Zyz. Founded by Canians around the VIII century, it moved under Doulakki influence as the Thothian control over the region dwindled. Rivals of Sarausa, the Segestans put themselves under the protection of the Zygians since 409 BC. The history of Segesta is filled with tragic episodes, like the sack of the city in 307 BC by the Sarausan tyrant Agathokles, who killed or sold as slaves half of its population.

Hybla (pop. 6,000) is a Canian center that is subject to Sarausa since 664 BC. It was historically the capital of a major kingdom which controlled all the central part of Cania; nowadays it is settled by descendants of the original population of the city and of colonists sent by Sarausa. Contrary to the nearby **Mene** (pop. 2,000), who led a rebellion against the Doulakki of the region in a long war (460-440 BC), Hybla never rebelled to Sarausa, and prospered because of this. Although two centuries have passed, and Mene is now firmly under the control of Sarausa, the rivalry between Meneans and Hybleians is still very strong. Many Meneans fled to the Taymoran-controlled part of Cania, and several have established mercenary dynasties based in Zyz, Segesta and Lilithei.

Nisa (pop. 5,500) is the most ancient city of Cania: historical documents say that the town already existed as a major settlement when Thothians started exacting tributes from the Hesperian tribes around 1000 BC. Founded by aboriginal populations related to the Albai, it is now mostly of mixed Canian (i.e., Thyatian) and Doulakki ethnicity, although blondes, gingers and light-eyed people are more common than in other areas of Cania, betraying the blood of the ancient founders of the city. Another connection with the Albai lies in the fact that the main patron of Nisa is Byll (Ixion). Nisa is the name of one of seven stars in the constellation of the Bull, so named from the names of seven nymphs who, according to Canian legends, lived in the woods around the hills of Nisa itself. Some Doulakki priests say they are still there, although they have cut out any contact with common mortals after the Sand Deluge and the departure of the Immortals from Hesperia.

Culturally, another city geographically located in Assinia is also part of the Doulakki Cania: **Tameronikas** (Ταμερόνικας, pop. 20,000), founded by Doulakki colonists in 581 BC. It was almost destroyed in 406 BC by Zyz, and its population and power in the region was much diminished, until it was subjected to the power of Sarausa as a protectorate in 339 BC. The Sarausan tyrants enlarged the city and sent many colonists to Tameronikas, but the city's aristocracy tried to wrest themselves away from their neighbours' influence. This led to a new war with Sarausa, after which Tameronikas lost and was put directly under Sarausan rule in 280 BC.

In the western part of Cania, at the border with Retia, is a buffer state controlled by the Messapians, a major clan of Mastini lupins, whose main settlement is the stronghold of **Lupiae** (pop. 5,000), founded according to lupin legends as far back as 1200 BC. The Messapians speak their own language, related only to the lupin language of the Iapygian lupin tribes that live in Vitalia.

Future geographical reference: Duchy of Tel Akbir, Emirate of Nicostenia.

Western Altan Tepes

Government type: Lupins are organized into confederated tribes, sometimes led by a powerful city-state king. Goblins live in communities most often led by hobgoblin kings.

Population: 54,000 (32,000 lupins, 12,000 goblinoids, 7,000 orcs, 3,000 humans)

Languages: Taurian; Altenian (a goblinoid variant of the Taurian language); Albai; Etrusna

The region comprised between the Trevanion river and the lands of the Vyalia and the Albai is the fighting ground of goblinoids and lupins. The Tauri lupins of the area have managed to repel the orcs and goblinoids, who have been a major problem



in the region since 492-490 BC, and to contain their activities.

Most of the area is wilderness and mountains; however, there are fertile lands cultivated by the lupins, and there are several important settlements: from east to west, the main cities are **Brixia**, **Biania** and **Taurasia**, located on the Kerenda river, which prospers from the control of the pass to the Traldar trading post of Salonikos on the western side of the Altan Tepes. This area is often called simply **Tauria**.

A few humans of Albai or Etrusna ancestry have farms or villages in the areas closer to the southern plains, and live free and

dangerous lives near the lupin clans or among them.

The Altenian goblinoid clans live mostly on the mountain areas, in caves and dungeons, and often have strongholds that are only partly on the surface, extending further underground. Smaller or less powerful tribes live on the surface in small villages made of huts or underground in big natural caves.

In the westernmost part of the northern Altan Tepes, orcish clans dominate the region. These orcs occupy lands that, according to Taymoran scholars, were once under the control of a declining giant race. Even though the occasional giant has been seen in the Altan Tepes, no trace of giant strongholds have been recorded since the time of the Great Drought and the arrival of the humanoids. As it is extremely difficult to venture in the orc-controlled mountains, it is not known whether the giant clans live there in total isolation from the rest of the world, if they have migrated, or if they are extinct.

The buffer states of the lupins were a major factor of growth for the coastal cities, mostly untouched by the goblinoids' activities. However, the game went terribly sour for them in 394-390 BC, when lupin clans led by Brennan, a particularly skilled war leader (counseled by Sarausan tacticians), descended on the unsuspecting central cities: they lay siege to Verona and sacked Clevsin and Thyatis before retiring north undefeated.

After that, the lupins dedicated themselves mostly to fight the goblins and consolidate their grip on the fertile areas. However, in recent years a flurry of messengers and

caravans to and from Sarausa and Karntica have made the Thyatians and Etrusna wary. It might be that the Tauri will become a problem again soon.

Future geographical reference: Barony of Biazzan, Barony of Buhrohur, northwestern Imperial Territories, central Imperial Territories.

Vyalia

Government type: Several independent clans, ruled by a clan master presiding over a clan council.

Population: 10,000 (99% elves)

Languages: Elven (Vyalia dialect)

The western forests between Traladara and Hesperia are the home of the elven clan of the Vyalia. The Vyalia are the most powerful wizards of the region: Doulakki, Taymoran and Etrusna mages have noticed that the elven powers have increased after the Sand Deluge and Great Drought, contrary to their own. Some scholars have pointed towards the increasing power of the Alheim elves further west in Brun, but if there is a relationship it must be indirect, as the Vyalia are no more than on mildly friendly terms with their distant brethren. On the other hand, Vyalia have very close relations with the Meditor and Verdier elves of Teria and Minrothad.

The Vyalia's stronger allies in the region are the Albai: the Vyalia have representatives in all the coastal Albai ports, in order to ease the trade and other common activities with the Meditor and Verdier. The Albai respect for forests and nature have greatly smoothed



the relations with the Vyalia, contrary to those with the Traladarans more west, who have a superstitious, fearful and often aggressive behaviour against forest creatures and elves alike.

The Vyalia elves also keep friendly relations with the Tauri lupins at their north. Contrary to the coastal human cities, the Vyalia know that they must provide something back for the role the Tauri play in the political balance of Hesperia: they send scouts, magic-users and even elven weapons and armour to the lupins to help them secure their lands and keep off the goblins.

Although most of the elves live in small communities in the forest, there are a few major centers, mostly trading posts where the most open-minded and friendly Vyalia live, sometimes used for important clan meetings. These are **Ryasia** in the far west, bordering with the lands of Traladara; **Vyalia**, the outermost post of the elves where humans and lupins trade; **Calentaen** (“green heights” in the Vyalia dialect), the

main meeting point for the clans, also used for all political and diplomatic meetings with the Albai and Tauri; and **Taurost** (“forest town”), the main place of contact between the Vyalia elves and Albai. An important market takes place in town once a month, when Albai from Stalla and Tauri from Taurasia bring their goods to town and stay for three days. A couple of human-owned taverns and a lupin guesthouse can be found in Taurost, and a few families of Albai have settled in town permanently.

Future geographical reference: County of Vyalia, Vyalia lands in Karameikos

Alba

Government type: Free tribes, scattered in villages and cities that can have a tribal council, or a king, or both; some of the tribes and/or cities are loosely allied against the Kerendans.

Population: 35,000

Languages: Albai, a language distantly related to Antalian and Thyatian.

A heavily forested region, Alba, the land of the Albai Tribes, is comprised between the Sea of Dread and a long series of low hills to the north. It borders the lands of the Traladarans to the west and of the Vyalia elves to the north, making it one of the most exposed to dangerous monsters coming from the forest of Dymrak. However, Albai and Vyalia have managed to dodge most of the dangers coming from the forests and to exploit them for defensive reasons against menaces to their independence whether they came from orcs and goblinoids further north, or from Kerendans and Etrusna east.

Where Alba is washed by the Sea of Dread, the climate is typically coastal, with warm but pleasant summers and mild winters; more in the hinterlands, it can be much colder during winter. Alba is one of the most rainy areas of Hesperia, especially from late autumn to early winter. On the terraced farmlands of Alba, olives, grapes, lemons, chestnuts are produced. Most Alba living on the shores are fishermen or pirates (many are actually both).

The most important settlement of the area is **Stalia**²¹ (pop. 7,000); the gateway to the western interior, it has an important fluvial port, well-connected to Velathri. Its strong fortified walls and perfect position makes it well-capable to halt any aggressive Etrusna or Kerendan activity towards the Albai. **Kainua** (pop. 1,600) is the main naval port, connected to Stalia by a paved road patrolled regularly by Albai warriors. **Albinga** (pop. 1,200) is the westernmost settlement of the Albai, on the coast far into the Dymrak forest, and a trading outpost with the Traladara.

Future geographical reference: Duchy of Machetos

KERENDIUM

Government type: The city-state of Kerendas controls directly several cities in the area; others are city-states, nominally independent but in fact under Kerendan control; still others are truly independent city-states.

Population: 200,000 (99% humans)

Languages: Etrusna, Thyatian (Kerendan dialect)

Kerendium is the name given to the area of influence of the Kerendans, in western Hesperia, and takes the name from the major city of the region, mirroring the 'Old Thyatium' name given to the area controlled by the Thyatian populations in the east. The old name of the region is Etrusna, although



with the increase of power of the Kerendans and the decline of the Etrusna civilization, it is used less and less to indicate the region.

Kerendas (pop. 75,000) was the Doulakki name of an Etrusna port close to a city known as **Vipsl** (pop. 3,300), built on the hills behind the current Kerendas. The area was conquered by an alliance between the Three Tribes and local Hesperians of central Thyatis; after the conquest they expanded the port into a whole city from which they started the expansion into the area. Vipsl still exists as a formally independent Etrusna-Kerendan settlement close to the main capital of the Kerendans, and is still a member of the Etrusna Dodecapolis. Kerendas is ruled by an aristocratic council, whose members are the leaders of the families which descend from tribe and warband leaders who conquered Kerendas and Vipsl in 596 BC in the first place,

²¹ Machetos in AC 1000.

including a good number of families of aboriginal Hesperian or even Etrusna origin.

The second most important Kerendan city is **Ad Pisas**²² (pop., 5,000). Formerly an Etrusna portal town, its harbour is built at about 4 km (2,5 miles) from the city proper. The Kerendan shipbuilding facilities are all located in Ad Pisas.

Rusle (pop. 3,400) is a portal city which trades mainly in timber and grain from the interior. The port is associated with a temple dedicated to Ordana, set on a rocky promontory to the south, which acts as a marker for the coastal trade in the area. The city was founded in the VII century, and its cyclopean walls were built by a giant clan recruited from the Altan Tepes (one of the last times giants were ever seen in coastal Hesperia). Rusle was a member of the Etrusna Dodecapolis from 396 BC (when it replaced Veii) until it was conquered by the Kerendans in 294.

Tlamon (pop. 8,000) is a fully independent city which holds one of the most important

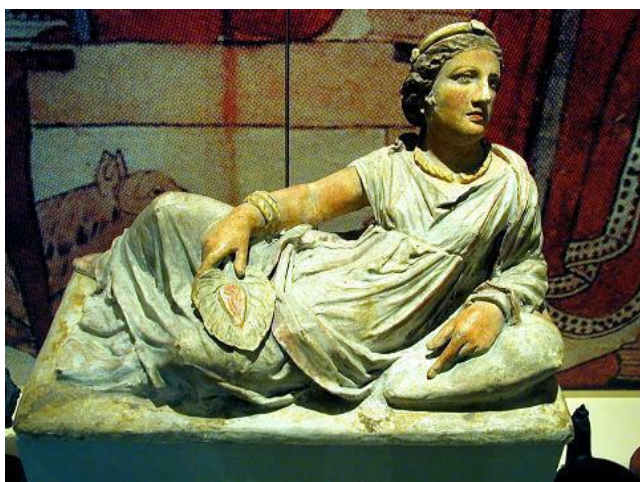


²² Bridleton in AC 1000.

Etrusna religious sanctuaries, dedicated to the head of the Etrusna pantheon, Otinia (Odin), and is especially holy to all Etrusna. The presence of the sanctuary and of holy warriors, disciples of Otinia, has been associated to two VI century sieges that ended very badly for the aggressors (Etrusna once, Kerendans the second time): it is said that Otinia himself assumed mortal form to fight for the city on those two occasions. This myth has contributed to Tlamon keeping its independence. The city is built close to long, beautiful sandy beaches, lined by pine trees, and is walled only on the sides towards the interior, to allow more easily for sea traffic and supplying in case of siege.

Clevsin (pop. 19,000), located at about 400 m of height on the north-eastern hills of Kerendium, was the major Etrusna city from the VI to the IV century BC, before the rising star of Kerendans and Thyatians shadowed its prestige and power. Like most other Etrusna cities, it lost its independence but in name, becoming a member of the League of Thyatis since 294. Clevsin has the most advanced drainage-sewer system in Hesperia. The system, located under the city, is part of a major dungeon, which hosts among other things a labyrinthine necropolis, at the center of which is a sanctuary to Nyx. The dungeon continues far into the interior of the hillside. It is said that the aristocratic families who rule Clevsin deal here with dark creatures from the underground - a demon, an undead lord, or some other strange creatures of the abyss.

Kurtun (pop. 5,000) is located on the north-eastern hillside of Kerendium, at about 500



Sarcophagus beneath Clevisin

m of height asl; a trading center of the interior, it hosts a big market where Tauri lupins and Etrusna from Faleroi and Felzna meet to trade; the city is under Kerendan control since 294 BC, but nominally independent; it is famous because it is allied with a sphinx lineage which has lived nearby for centuries.

Aritim²³ (pop. 13,000), is also under Kerendas rule since 294 BC, but still nominally independent; it is the seat of the Chimaera, an organization of monster hunters and adventurers devoted to Laran (Ixion) that takes its name from the fact that its founders killed an enormous chimaera which harassed the people travelling to Aritim; the horses bred in Aritim are known to be of exceptional quality.

Faleroi (pop. 17,600) is an independent city of mixed Etrusna-Hesperian ethnicity, which has risen in importance since 294 BC, taking the role previously held by Clevisin. Although mostly aboriginal Hesperian, the population

²³ Acestes in AC 1000.

sided with the Etrusna after the arrival of the Three Tribes, and is now a major member of the Etrusna Dodecapolis. The city is extremely well-defended, as it is located on a plateau, about 1100 m by 400, not higher than the surrounding country (140 m) but separated from it by gorges over 60 m in depth, and only connected with it on the western side, which is strongly fortified with a mound and ditch. The rest of the city is defended by walls constructed of rectangular blocks of tuff. Numerous tombs hewn in the rock are visible on all sides of the town.

Vatluna²⁴ (pop. 4,100), under Kerendas since 294 BC, but nominally independent, is located at about 300 m above sea level, at 16 km (10 miles) from the Sea of Dread. It is a rich city, known for its goldsmiths and metalworkers.

Fofluna²⁵ (pop. 9,300) has managed to retain full independence up to now. It is the portal city that controls the iron trade with the island of Teria, and a haven for Etrusna and Albai pirates; thanks to its ties with the island and its alliance with the Albai and with the city-state of Velathri, it is very difficult to conquer. Besides the iron trade, it hosts the main stores for Minrothian and Meditor merchants that wish to trade with the interior; merchants pay hefty sums for the Foflunian protection from pirates, something that the powerful navy can insure all over the northern Sea of Dread - not least because many pirate ships are from the city itself, or are its allies.

²⁴ Bayville in AC 1000.

²⁵ In AC 1000 Fofluna, known as Popluna, is a small town located near the fortress of Kerendas Outpost.

Velathri (pop. 24,000) is the most important westernmost Etrusna city, and maybe the most important Etrusna city in Hesperia. Velathri, a powerful ally of Fofluna, controls the area from the border with the Albai, on the road from Kerendas to Stalia, to the port town of Vada (pop. 2,200), which lies across Kerendas on the other bank of the river Kerenda. Fully independent, the city has signed a treaty with the League of Thyatis - but on an equal basis, in anti-Kerendan function. Velathri is ruled by an aristocratic regime, and its most important family are the Ceicna, who say they descend from Cicne (a mortal form of the Immortal Diulanna, worshipped by the Albai with that name). The Ceicna family have branches in Felzna and Spna, where they still have a major say in the local politics.

From the cultural point of view, Velathri is famous for the mining of alabaster, silver and copper, and for its artisans. It is known that the Doulakki desert city of Cynidicea, in southern Assinia, has a pyramid completely covered in Velathrian white alabaster, in order to reflect the moonlight.

Future geographical reference: Duchy of Kerendas

Teria

Government type: Elven families rule themselves; Etrusna villages and strongholds are under the authority of the city of Arge, ruled by a council made up of representatives of Velathri, Fofluna, of the population of Teria and of iron miners.

Population: 12,000 (60% elves, 40% humans)

Languages: Etrusnan

Teria is an island southwest of Kerendas, controlled partly by Etrusna and partly by Verdier Elves. Originally it was settled by a small clan of Albai, but these have long since been absorbed by the Etrusna colonists. The discovery of iron on the island was one of the factors that led to the rise of the Etrusna society during the time of the Thothian Empire.

The isle itself is very beautiful, with wide beaches of white sand. Bluffs rise up from these coasts, and much of these uplands are densely forested. The hills and low mountains of the island reach a height of about 1000 m asl. Like most coastal islands of the Sea of Dread, its climate is mild in winter and not exceedingly hot in the summer; however, during the summer, humid sirocco winds blow often from southeast, making the weather uncomfortable. Waterspouts on the sea close to the coast are not infrequent. Much of the island is ringed with coral reefs, home to a multiplicity of fish.

The biggest settlement of the island, **Ilva** (pop. 3,000), sits in a sheltered cove on the northern coast of the island, facing away from major storms that occasionally sweep through this part of the Sea of Dread. The Etrusna have built small forts in strategic positions on Teria, in order to be able to prepare defenses in case of northern



invasions. The Verdier who live on the forested slopes of the south and west are allied to the Etrusna and their ties with Alfeisle and the Minrohians makes it difficult to expect invasions to the south.

The strategic position of Teria, both for the iron trade and for military naval operations, have favoured the rise of Velathri and Fofluna, probably the two most important independent city-states of the southern Hesperian coast.

Future geographical reference: Terentias

Hattias



Government type: The land is divided in a patriarchal feudal system, with dukes at the top. Counties and baronies are all formally tied to a duchy, but every noble strong enough to defend his land on his own is *de facto* independent.

Population: 130,000+ (110,000 humans - 43,000 Hattians, 67,000 mixed Hattian-Tallians; 20,000 Tauri lupins; plus an unknown number of gnomes)

Languages: Hattian; Thyatian (Tallian dialect)

A hilly, somewhat infertile island, Hattias is the biggest Hesperian island. Vineyards and cherry and lemon orchards dominate the northern shore, closer to Vitalia and more fertile. The west is mostly barley crops, as Hattians, contrary to the other Hesperian peoples, prefer beer and ale to wine; pears and peaches are also grown here. The more south, the less land is cultivated; the main product here are potatoes, and sheep and goat grazing becomes a common sight. Forestry and hunting are practiced especially in the eastern hills, and Hattians sell timber for shipbuilding to the Taymorans of Mosya and Actius.

The island is ruled by Hattians, one of the Southerner Three Tribes, who renamed the island formerly known as Tallia after themselves. Hattians occupied the area and conquered the pre-existing populations: most of these are now serfs in the feudal structure of the island. Among the subjects, the local Tallians were co-opted into the Hattian serf class, that is now mostly the result of a mix of Hattian serfs and aboriginal Hesperians.

There is also a significant number of Tauri lupins, who call themselves the Belgi (singular *Belg*). A significant number is part of the serf class, but in the **Arduenna**, the eastern and southern forested hills, most Lupins live free, although all of their territories are claimed by this or that Hattian

feudal lord. The Lupins have also been joined by a few Tallian refugees; however, most humans who escaped from the hands of the Hattian rulers have long since left Hattias for the Doulakki and Thyatian lands, where a few still harbor the dream of building an army to reclaim their ancestral lands.

On the southern coasts of Hattias, there were several Doulakki colonies, but they too were conquered and the population enslaved, driven away, or killed. Contrary to Kerendans and Thyatians, the Hattians are not interested in co-opting the cultured, aristocratic Doulakki into their possessions. The Hattians fear them, considering them a potential challenge to their dominating role, and a possible source of backstabbers in the (mostly undeclared) naval war between Hattians, Doulakki and Taymorans in the Sea of Dawn.

The island is divided into a number of independent feudal kingdoms, ruled by kings called Herzogs, translated as 'Dukes' in the Thyatian language. The most important of these is the Duchy of **Hattias**. The Duchy's capital Hattias (pop. 23,900) is located inland, in order to be better defended in case of attacks from the sea. The Duchy controls also the Baronies of Port Hatti (pop. 8,300) and Vinton (pop. 4,360), and the County of Pilion (pop. 9,700), formerly a Doulakki colony.

The second most important fief on the island is the Duchy of **Graustein**, with its capital **Grau Bucht** (pop. 15,580), which also controls the former lupin city of **Trier** (pop. 4,400). The previous Duke of Graustein, Hamlet von Grauenberg, has enraged his peers and many of his subjects by trying to



A ceremonial oath during a clan leaders meeting

co-opt the Belgi lupins in his kingdom: he has granted the Lupin lords of **Divodurum** (pop. 3,200) and **Durocortorum** (pop. 3,300) the title of Barons about twentyfive years ago, in the hope of calming down the lupin guerrilla. However, the lupins of **Noviodunum** (pop. 4,000) refused the same offer, and have since taken the lead in the guerilla operations. Admittedly, the lupin guerillas have turned their attention to the duchies of Hattias and Sudenfeld, and been reluctant to attack Graustein, whose troops now often have lupins with the status of freemen on its side.

Close to the lupin city of Noviodunum is a major gnomish dungeon, known as **Iniectum** ("inserted", referring to its underground location) to the aboriginal populations since before Hattians arrived on the island. The dungeon hosts an unknown number of gnomes belonging to the Brinnisril ('shining jewel') clan. The Brinnisril shun every contact with the Hattians and continue the tradition of a long-time isolationist policy towards humans, but it remains on friendly terms with the surrounding lupins. The Belgi consider them the progeny of the Immortal Toutatis

(Wayland) - something that the gnomes have always found amusing, and tried countless times to explain the lupins it is not so - and so the lupins have always had a special respect for their privacy and their underground territory, to the point that they consider their duty to protect the little people from enemies. In exchange for this, the gnomes provide the Belgi with fine weapons, shields, jewelry, and the occasional help with civil engineering (wells, mills, roads - and even a few war machines, like catapults and ballistas).

The third major fief of the island is the Duchy of **Sudenfeld** (with its capital town of the same name, pop. 5,330), in the south, which has the ambition to control the traffic between the Sea of Dread and the Sea of Dawn. However, the Sudenfeldan navy is not strong or big enough to prevent the Taymoran and Meditor vessels from circling around cape Hattias; while the Doulakki prefer to sail through Vanya's Girdle.

The Barons and Comtes who rule the interior and the eastern coast are *de facto* independent, and often at war against one another even when they are vassals to the same ruler. This is seen as especially inconvenient to the rulers of Graustein and Hattias, who would want to concentrate their efforts on attacking the eastern islands instead.

Kartanya

Government type: Thirteen independent "city-states" (often little more than small towns) rule over most of the island. Smaller villages on the mountains are *de facto* independent, although they might be

claimed by one of the city-states.

Population: 29,000.

Languages: Kartanya, Taymoran (Karalis dialect), Doulakki



The northernmost of the eastern Hesperian islands, Kartanya is ancient from a geological point of view, seismically stable and not earthquake-prone. Its highlands average at between 300 to 1,000 metres (984 to 3,281 feet), with the highest peak being 1,834 m (6,017 ft) high. The coasts are mostly high rocks, but several large, shallow, salt-water lagoons can be found on the western and northern shores.

Kartanya is literally the feminine adjective for "Kartanian", as the island takes its name from the aboriginal Kartana people who rule over approximately two thirds of the island. The other third is settled by a mixed population resulting from the mingling of Taymoran refugees and the Kartana who were subject to their rules for centuries.

Kartanya is a turbulent island where an uncertain truce between Taymorans and Kartana dominates the regional affairs. The city-states trade and war with one another periodically; pirates from the island often raid the coasts of Cania or of the Isle of Dawn.

The Kartana city-states are **Turrulva** (pop. 3,000), **Nora** (pop. 6,400), **Selene**²⁶ (pop. 700), **S'Orcu** (pop. 520), **Nurr** (pop. 560), **Izzana e Maiori** (pop. 2,000), **Palmavera** (pop. 700), **Andreolu** (pop. 1,240); the Taymoran cities are **Karal**²⁷ (pop. 5,480), **Sulcis** (pop. 2,500), **Sulcis Medusae** (pop. 1,200), **Othoca** (pop. 1,060).

Karal, the Taymoran capital on the island, is allied to Zyz on Cania, as are all the Taymoran communities on the island, something that doesn't prevent them from warring against one another if some issue arises. The Taymoran refugees that arrived here many centuries ago brought with them some Fomorian giants when they arrived; a few fled to the mountains, where their descendants carve out a solitary existence and shun all humans; others are still in service to the Taymorans. There are probably about 60 giants left on Kartanya all in all.

Villages of the Kartana are built of round thatched stone huts around cylindrical tower-fortresses called nuraghi (singular nuraghe), often reinforced and enlarged with

²⁶ In AC1000 these cities are respectively: Turrulva, Nora, Lanuse, Jersu, Nugoro, Tempiu, L'Alguer and Torres (see *Carytion Gazetteer*, Threshold Issue #11).

²⁷ In AC 1000 these cities are Casteddu, Sulcis, Tortuelie, and a minor town in Arborea (see [Carytion Gazetteer](#), Threshold Issue #11).

battlements. Smaller nuraghi are used as lookout fortresses and indicate the approximate territorial extension of a community, as crop fields and pasture land is generally found between the lookout nuraghi and the central village. Nowadays, over 1,000 nuraghi dot Kartanya.

Although Turrulva is the most important economic center of the Kartana, Nora is their political and cultural capital. According to Kartana traditions, it was founded by the eponymous hero Norax, who fled the cost of Brun and the evil monsters of a land called Mogreth around 2000 BC. Nora has a big harbour, as it is on the trade routes between Thyatis and Dawn; an amphitheatre and a theatre; public baths; and the major religious complex of the island, with two shrines dedicated to Eshmun (Chardastes) and Tanit; originally established for the Taymorans living in Kartana lands, now it is also a place of worship for many Kartana. The temple, the baths and the amphitheatre are all located on an island connected to the mainland through two isthmuses.

The major temple of Setlanni, the patron of the Kartana, is not in Nora, but at Izzana e Maiori, in the eastern part of the island. It is said that the free giants of the island also have a secret place of worship in the remote areas of the central massif.

L'Asinara (pop. 90) is a small island close to the north-eastern corner of Kartanya. It is sacred to Melq-Ashtir (Asterius), the main Taymoran deity. The name Asinara comes from the Thyatian name for donkeys ("asini"): white donkeys sacred to Melq-Ashtir live freely on the island, tended by the small population made up of the Taymoran

high priests and their attendants. The priests of Melq-Ashtir live humble lives out of the products of the land, and welcome visitors of any race that want to seek shelter or ask for their advice or spells. Among the animals there is an amber golem shaped like a donkey, a gift from Asterius to the priests, to help them protect the island.

Future geographical reference: Judicates of Carytion Gazetteer, Threshold Issue #11, replaces the original entry for Carytion as source for 250 BC Kartanya.

Borydos

Government type: Independent clans living in villages and towns. Adiaciu and Alalia are ruled by people assemblies.

Population: 5,000

Languages: Kartanya (Borydan dialect), Etrusna, Taymoran



Borydos

Borydos is, with Kartanya, the easternmost Hesperian island, and is likewise populated by humans of Kartana ethnicity and language. The island rises from the Sea of Dawn as a chain of ragged mountains, with rocky cliffs overlooking dangerous, rock-strewn shores, with only a few plains and sandy beaches, and surrounded by jagged reefs and shoals²⁸. Several peaks rise above 2,000 m of height, and are snow-laden during the winter; the mean height of the island is above 500 m. The highest mountain is Monte Cintu (2700 m asl).

Borydos has warm dry summers and wet winters, cold on the interior's mountains while mitigated by the sea on the coasts. Precipitation is concentrated in autumn and winter - Eirmont is the wettest month -, while the months from Klarmont to Sviftmont see little to no rain. The Kartana of Borydos are fishermen, herdsman and pirates, who live in small mountain villages or seaside coves, often with no more than 25-50 people each, although the bigger ones reach a few hundred inhabitants. The main Borydan settlement is **Adiaciu** (pop. 1,500), while descendants of Etrusna and Taymoran colonists live mainly in **Alalia** (pop. 2,000).

The harsh, uninviting island remained outside the games of conquests and

²⁸ In DotE, Borydos is such an uninteresting place that it is merely a plain island with a penal colony, without even a full description.

colonization played in the area, until the Doulakki established Alalia in 562 BC, in order to disturb the insular Taymorans of Kartanya, Mosya and Sakhla-Rhas. A violent reaction from Taymorans, who created a strange coalition with the Etrusna and the Borydan Kartana, drove the Doulakki away in 535 BC.

After the victory, the Borydians decided to forge an alliance with the Etrusna, who were allowed to occupy Alalia. The Borydians didn't trust the Taymorans, who were too close and had an ongoing conflict with their Kartana brothers on Kartanya. The Etrusna cities were more distant, and thus less dangerous to the Borydians' independence, and the Etrusna were happy to have an ally on the outskirts of the Hesperian Sea of Dawn, in order to use Borydan ports to increase their trade to the east and south.

As the Kerendans and Thyatians ate into the Etrusna power and land, and the Hattians became more and more dangerous, the Borydians allowed also Taymorans to trade and settle on the island. After the victory in 295 BC of the Thyatian-Kerendan alliance that brought most of the Etrusna cities under control of the Kerendans and Thyatians, this turned into a full-scale collaboration.

During the ongoing naval wars between the Thyatian-Hattian alliance and the islander Taymorans, Alalia was sacked violently in 259 BC, something that has enraged more than ever the Borydians, and reinforced the alliance between Taymorans and Borydians.

Future geographical reference: Protecorate of Borydos

Mosya

Government type: Taymoran island-state aristocracy

Population: 50,000 (95% humans, 5% giants)

Languages: Taymoran

Mosya is a Taymoran-controlled island, one of the last strongholds of the Taymorans in the western Sea of Dawn; it was wrested from Traldar or Doulakki control around the VIII century BC. It is a long, gently curved island with beautiful beaches and exceptionally good weather. The island is good vine-growing country, and is known for its wineries. The northern head of the island is hilly, leading up to a semi-active volcano that sits at the centre of the island.

The rest of the island consists of beaches surrounding verdant plains, given over to vineyards and orchards. The main city of the island, **Qart-adašt** (pop. 35,000), is built at the foot of the volcano, and is magnificent, a rich, luxurious, slightly decadent center of trade and pleasures, with a sprawling night life: there are many taverns, where gambling is a favourite pastime, and any possible sexual pleasure can be found in the discrete brothels. On the north side of the island is a major naval base, where the powerful Mosyan fleet is at anchor. This provides security for the island from attacks from the north, while the naval base in the island of Actius protects the island from dangers coming from west and south.

Mosyans breed elephants for use in hard work and for military support. It seems they first brought them to Hesperia from Sind. Elephants are tended by the giants, as they prove a tough species to control, especially the adult males, that can be very aggressive during the mating season.



Mosyan politics are dominated by the obsession for the decadence of Taymoran culture and hopes for a new era. Relegated to the side by the Thothian dominance, the Taymorans' ambition to gain control of Hesperia after the Thothians left was thwarted by the presence of the powerful Doulakki and Etrusna first, and then by the arrival of the Three Tribes. Although they founded Zyz, a powerful colony on the mainland, the Taymorans have not gained much power or stability since the times of the Thothian Empire. The Taymorans of Mosya do not see themselves as conquerors: they just fear for their survival, and desire a political stability in which they can prosper and recover.

That is very far from the current situation in Hesperia, as has been proved since 264 BC, as the hostilities between Thyatis and Zyz reached a new scale. In 256 BC, a Hattian-Thyatian alliance even staged an invasion attempt of the Taymoran islands, but their army was crushed close to Qart-adašt after several months of war. The Thyatian League general Attinius has since been prisoner of the Taymorans.

Future geographical reference: Duchy of Mositius

Actius

Government type: Actius is directly administered by Mosya

Population: 3,000 (60% humans, 30% Meditor elves)

Languages: Taymoran; Elven

A hilly and infertile island, Actius is suitable only for grazing by goats and growing hearty vines. Actius has an unusually good harbour, around which lays the town of Actius. The harbour also hosts a naval base which controls the waters that lead to Mosya.

The town of Actius was once an early Traldar colony, founded around 900 BC, but Taymorans took over many centuries ago, after they had also conquered Mosya from them. The vast majority of Actians are fishermen, naval personnel or shipbuilders. The town of Actius contains most of the population. The rest are farmers and herdsman living in the hills around the town.

A community of Meditor elves lives on the island. They keep an official delegation in Actius, although most live in small homes by the sea. The elves take care of Alfeisle's interests in this part of the Sea of Dawn, travelling as envoys if needed to Mosya, Borydos or even Karytion.

Actius was briefly occupied in 256 BC during the failed invasion of the Taymoran islands by a Hattian-Thyatian alliance.

Future geographical reference: County of Actius

Sakhla-Rhas

Government type: Unknown, but it is controlled and protected by Taymorans of Mosya

Population: Unknown

Languages: Taymoran

This small island consists of rolling forested hills perched atop high cliffs that ring its coasts. The island is controlled by the Taymorans of Mosya, and is used for religious and magical functions only.

Rumours run aplenty about the island: that Taymorans perform human sacrifices here (especially virgins or infants), that they raise werewolves on the island, that they change slaves into werewolves, that they evoke demons, that they host unimaginable herds of gold, that they serve a huge dragon living on the island. More reasonably, it is thought that the island hosts sacred grounds with temples where priests live and perform important rituals to the Taymoran pantheon.

Future geographical reference:
Protectorate of Sclaras

Neighbouring Nations and Players

The western continent of Mystara is known as Brun. Between the Alphatian Landfall (1000 BC) and their expansion into Hemeria (500 BC), Brun was mostly known as Hesperia, from the name given to the region in the Traldar, Doulakki and Milenian language, but by now the elven name Brun has become commonplace, while Hesperia indicates the south-eastern tip of the continent.

Alfheim

Elves from the far west of Brun arrived in the region around 800 BC. Their first king Mealiden abdicated in 350 BC in favour of Alear of the Grunalf clan, who has ruled peacefully since. The elves have little contact with races beside their own, although they are carefully reaching out to the Eastwind human clan to see if there is some potential for an anti-orc collaboration.

Alphatia

The Empire of Alphatia is firmly established on the Alphatian continent, where the alien magocratic population made their landfall from another world in 1000 BC.

The Pearl Islands and Ochalea are in Alphatian possession, and so is most of Hemeria (the Isle of Dawn), including the former Empire of Thothia, and of Bellissaria.

The main conflict of the Alphatian Empire is with the Milenians, whose colonies on Hemeria and Bellissaria are being systematically conquered one after the other

by the Alphatians. Milenians try to disturb Alphatians also by paying Doulakki and Thyatian pirates to focus on the Alphatian ships and to attack Alphatian coastal cities, something that is slowly attracting the attention of the Alphatian rulers to Brun²⁹.

Amsorak

It is known that an ancient Doulakki or Traldar colony was established in Akorros. Given the presence of the Orclands in between the Lake and the lands of the Durrankin, it is difficult to tell whether the Lake and its shores are still in the control of civilized people or not. Rumours from merchants who have travelled to Sind say that they trade in the north with elves and humans that might actually be living in the region; but it might also be they refer to people from a different mountain region north of Sind and of the western deserts.

Assinia

Assinia is mostly occupied by the **Aseni**, whose desert culture has been described in the first chapter. Most live in desert basins as nomads, while others live as farmers in the oases or as farmers and merchants along the coast³⁰. Another population known as **Nithians**, Thothians who remained in the northern strongholds of Assinia, carve out a sustenance existence, as shadows of their former selves.

In a southern oasis, the Traldar-Doulakki colony of **Cynidicea** has been ruled by King Diomenesius since 262³¹.

²⁹ See TSR #1037, "Dawn of the Emperors".

³⁰ See GAZ2, "The Emirates of Ylaruam".

³¹ See Gazetteer of Cynidicea.

Dengar

The borders of Rockhome (or Dengar, as the dwarves call their land) were finally secured after the Battle of Sardal Pass in 492 BC (the Year 0 in the dwarven calendar). Dwarves started their trading and colonizing program around 475 BC and the first people they met and befriended were the Aseni (GAZ6).

The first dwarven colony outside of Dengar was established as junior partners of a coalition with gnomes in Highforge (Traladara), founded around 450 BC.

Dwarves of Dengar are divided into five clans: Everast, Skarrad, Syrklis, Torkrest and Buhrodar, the latter established just recently (287 BC)³².

Durrankin

The Durrankin humans living south of the Orclands and of Alfheim live mainly in small villages and raise good crops in the excellent farmland. The best organized of the human groups is a clan called **Eastwind**, which inhabits the area between the Streel River and Alfheim. There are some cautious relations between the Eastwinds and the Alfheim elves.

In the southwest, the Doulakki port of **Athenos** is an important gateway for any trade towards the western coasts of Brun³³.

Ethengar

Most of the steppes north of Rockhome are home to a major war for their control

³² Annals of the Dwarves.

³³ See Demografia Mystarana.

between nomadic orcs and humans, that mostly share a similar language and culture³⁴. Orcs have the upper hand at the moment, and are in control of most of the land³⁵.

Five shires

The land of the Hin is in the midst of its Golden Years after Gunzuth the Clanless liberated their land and became their ruler in 609 BC. After his death in 572 BC the Five Shires were established, ruled by a Council of five Sheriffs. The hin are starting timid attempts at naval trade and exploration³⁶.

Hemeria (Isle of Dawn)

Hemeria (the Doulakki name for the Isle of Dawn) is mostly in Alphatian hands. The Empire of Thothia has been subjugated. Some Thothian colonies, Doulakki-Milenian city-states, and barbarian clans of Antalian or Dunharian ethnicity have managed to retain their independence, but their demise seems to be only a question of time. As a retaliatory measure against the invaders, piracy is at an all-time high in the Sea of Dawn and Alphatian Sea, and the Hemerians gladly welcome Hesperian merchants and pirate ships into their waters. The Milenian Empire also sponsors the Hesperian and Hemerian pirates in the area as part of their undeclared war against Alphatia.

Ierendi

The Makai aboriginal people are the main settlers of the islands, although there are also albino humans³⁷ of Taymoran origin. The

Makai are engaged in a major feud against goblins brought to the islands centuries ago by Thothian colonists³⁸. The wars for control of the islands started at the time of the Sand Deluge, when the last Thothian goblin masters fled Ierendi. This has left the seafaring Makai little time to leave their islands for colonization or trade, although their ports welcome Minrothian, Hin, Doulakki and even Zygian vessels.

Milenia

The Milenian Empire is in full bloom on the southern continent. Alphatians and Milenians have an undeclared war at this time, with the Milenians angry at the Alphatian interference on their colonies in the Isle of Dawn and Bellisaria. The Milenians sponsor piracy against the Alphatians: such pirates are normally Traladarans, Thyatians and Doulakki from Hesperia and from the few surviving independent city-states on the Isle of Dawn. The Milenians trade with all the Hesperian races, although they favour the Doulakki, given their common ancestry.

Minrothad & Alfeisle

Verdier and Meditor elves have lived on Alfeisle and Teria for over a millennium now. They have befriended Minrothians, Thothian-descended human followers of the Immortal Minroth³⁹, who live on most of the other islands of the region, to which they have given the name of Minrothad. Elves and humans alike have become trader-colonists. They can easily be found in the coastal cities and in the seas of Hesperia and beyond.

³⁴ See GAZ12, "The Golden Khan of Ethengar".

³⁵ See GAZ11, "The Republic of Darokin".

³⁶ See GAZ8, "The Five Shires".

³⁷ See GAZ4, "The Kingdom of Ierendi".

³⁸ See Demografia Mystarana.

³⁹ See GAZ9, "The Guilds of Minrothad".

Minrothian coin depicting the Immortal Minroth



Northern Reaches

The Northern Reaches are a wild and untamed area where human life is especially difficult. Humans live on the coast and along the fjords of the region, living a sustenance agricultural life and occasionally raiding the southern coasts and the northern part of Hemeria with their underdeveloped longships. The rest of the area is mostly under the control of giants, although the south-western mountains host an important kobold population. The kobolds, fleeing Rockhome after the Battle of Sardal Pass, overran and exterminated the gnomes of these subterranean areas around 490 BC⁴⁰.

A significant halfling community existed in the southern parts of the country before it migrated to Norwold around 350 BC, led by the hero Usamigaras⁴¹.

Ochalea

Ochalea is an island in the southern Sea of Dawn and a “protectorate” of Alphatia, which invaded and defeated the ruling Wang dynasty about 50 years ago.

The Ochalean culture is an original mix of Alphatian Cypric, Rakastan and Lupin cultures. Their language is based on the old Rakasta and Ogre Mage tongue. A resistance movement, mainly composed of warlike Shar-Pei and Chow-Chow lupin clans, keeps the Alphatians out of the badlands.

At the same time, the Alphatians are beginning the colonization of southern Ochalea, which was previously a wilderness inhabited by few Pardasta rakasta tribes.

Orclands

Orcs are firmly in control in a region that goes north and west of the Streel River and the city of Corun’s Glen until the Doulakki city of Akorros⁴². These large orc holdings are divided among 17 different orc tribes.

Most of the Cruth Mountains and of the Altan Tepes are under their control after the dwarves kicked them out of Rockhome once and for all (492 BC)⁴³.

Orcs also control all of the ragged Broken Lands, and the mountains between Ethengar and Alheim. Yellow orcs and hobgoblins fight for the control of the steppes of Ethengar with the Ethengarians⁴⁴. The Highlands north of the Broken Lands were once an icy waste, but by now the ice has receded far north. The land remains mostly uninhabited⁴⁵, except for its southern parts, where tribes of orcs fight among each other for the control of the land⁴⁶. Rumours have it

⁴² See GAZ11, “The Republic of Darokin”.

⁴³ See GAZ10, “The Orcs of Thar”.

⁴⁴ See GAZ12, “The Golden Khan of Ethengar”.

⁴⁵ See GAZ3, “The Principalities of Glantri”.

⁴⁶ See GAZ11, “The Republic of Darokin”.

that elven and human clans live beyond the mountains, or even in milder, secluded valleys in the north, but these rumours are impossible to confirm.

Pearl Islands

The Pearl Islands are an archipelago in Alphatian possession, settled a long time ago by the Nuari, a peaceful population of black-skinned explorers, sailors and artisans. The Nuari dislike the Hesperians, whom they see as inherently violent and brutal. Many Nuari board Alphatian anti-pirate patrolling ships; even though they don't have any particular love towards their masters, they don't condone the misanthropic and destructive behaviour of Hesperian pirates. The Nuari are mostly followers of the Immortal Korotiku, with whom they share a playful, romantic and generous love for life.

Salonikos

An important trading center located in a strategic position between Hesperia, Assinia, Dengar and the lands of the Alfheim elves and the Durrankin humans, this city was founded by the common ancestors of Traldar, Doulakki and Milenians. It is a cosmopolitan city which prospers given its favourable location, although it lives always under the threat of hostile humanoids living on the borders of civilization south and east in the Altan Tepes and north at the border with Rockhome.

Traladara

To the west of Hesperia and the Vyalia elven lands, lies Traladara. Traladara is the name of the land of the Traladarans, descended from

the Traldar. Their legends talk of an ancient crusade against the beast-men, who destroyed the ancient Traldar kingdom about 750 years ago. Communication between the communities is difficult and local dialects vary much⁴⁷. Many Traladaran clans have mixed with an immigration population from the north known as Vandari, which arrived in the area around 700 BC⁴⁸.

Traladara is also home to a number of non-human races. Callarii elves arrived in the central forests around 800 BC. Many humanoids fleeing Rockhome after the Battle of Sardal Pass (492 BC), led by the monstrous Leptar, found shelter in the woods and wilderness. They were also responsible for the destruction of the ancient city of **Krakatos**, which still lies in ruins⁴⁹. Tordal dwarves and Highforge gnomes founded the gnome-controlled city of **Highforge** in 450 BC.

SLAVERY

One of the most common customs of Hesperia is slave possession. All rich and powerful families have slaves, especially those who own land. Most of the agricultural production in big landowners' estates close to the cities is performed by slaves, totally dependant on the whims of their owners and often abused and exploited in order to increase production; free men and women generally have small farms further away from the centres of power.

⁴⁷ See GAZ1, "The Grand-Duchy of Karameikos".

⁴⁸ See Demografia Mysterana.

⁴⁹ See Demografia Mysterana.

In the countryside, about 5% of the Hesperian population is made up of slaves, but this proportion rises in big cities like Thyatis, Sarausa and Zyz, where they can make up to 15% of the population. Urban slaves are generally well-treated, and work as butlers, valets, house cleaners, gardeners, cooks, wet nurses, private tutors etc., in rich families.

Slaves are generally prisoners of war or their descendants, and about 99% are ethnically natives of Hesperia (including Doulakki, Taymorans, Lupins, etc.). A certain proportion of exotic slaves is bought in slave markets of the east, especially in Doulakki, Milenian and Taymoran controlled cities.

Slaves have a few rights, however. They cannot be put to death without a trial (although they can be physically punished by their masters). They can own properties (although not directly - their properties are considered as belonging to their masters) and many of the urban ones also have a salary, if their master allows them;

sometimes they save enough money to buy their own freedom.

It is possible to free a slave with a public ceremony, called *manumission*, performed before some sort of public official, usually a judge (in the City of Thyatis, for example, the owner touches the slave on the head with a staff and he or she becomes a free citizen; and a felt cap called the Pileus, symbol of the Immortal Saturnus, is given to the former slave as symbol of the newfound freedom).

Although the free slave will not be entitled to vote (if he is a man), he will have all other rights of citizenship, and his or her children (born after becoming free) will have full citizens' rights. Children of a free woman are always full citizens, even if their father is a slave; children of a slave woman are always slaves.

Mystaran Almanac
AC 1019

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<http://www.pandius.com>

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IMMORTALS

Hesperia is a polytheist region. Many cults are present and very little is organized beyond the level of a city patron; there are no set pantheons and precise boundaries to the Immortals worshipped. The Thyatians generally worship Tarastia, the patroness of justice, and Vanya, a young goddess of war who encouraged the Three Tribes to flee

north. Kerendans also worship Tinia, the major Etrusna Immortal. Most of the populations of Hesperia worship in a form or another Asterius, Ixion, Khoronus, Nyx, Odin, Ordana and Terra. Asterius and Nyx are the main Taymoran deities, while Valerias is especially popular among the Vitalian Thyatian tribes.

Known World AC1000	Thyatian		Albai		Kartanya	
	Kerendan	Etrusna	Karn	Doulakki	Minrothian	Aseni Taymoran
	Hattian		Taurian			
Asterius	Asterius	Turms	Belenos	Asterius	Melq-Ashtir	Zephyr
Chardastes	Chardastes		-	Chardastes	Eshmun	Balsam
Diulanna	Diulanna	Artume	Cicne			
Djaea	Djaea	Uni	Beg			
Faunus	Lupercuus					
Frey			Lug			
Halav			-			
Ilsundal			Ilsundal		Usil	
Ixion	Solarios	Laran	Byll	Fos	Adon	
Khoronus	Khoronus		Ogmios	Khoronus	Qorun	
Minroth	-	-	-	-	Minroth	-
Nyx	Nox			Nyx	Tanit	
Odin		Tinia	Penn			Amon
Ordana		Horta	Breig		Urtni	
Protius			-			Farath
Tarastia	Tarastia	Mnrva				
Terra	Terra	Cel	Terra	Gea		Qeb
Thor			Taranis			
Valerias	Valerias	Turan	-		Ashtart	
Vanya	Vanya	-	-		-	0
Wayland			Toutatis		Setlanni	

CALENDARS

There are several calendars used in Hesperia. Thyatians, Kerendans and Hattians use the **Thyatian calendar**, which starts from **600 BC**. Taymorans count the time from the mythical ascension to demigod status of the sacred king of the city of Tamoraz under the

patronage of the Immortal Tanit; the **Taymoran calendar** starts from **2350 BC**. Albai, Aseni, Doulakki, Etrusnans and Minrothians use the **Alphatian calendar**, which starts from their Landfall in year **1000 BC**.

Gaz Year	1000 BC	600 BC	500 BC	250 BC	AC 0	AC 1000
Alphatian	0 AY	400 AY	500 AY	750 AY	1000 AY	2000 AY
Taymoran	1350 YT	1750 YT	1850 YT	2100 YT	2350 YT	3350 YT
Thyatian	400 AUC	0 AUC	100 AUC	350 AUC	600 AUC	1600 AUC

APPENDIX 1: ETHNIC CLASSIFICATION CHART

<p>HUMANS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hattians <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Freeman b. Serfs (mixed with Southerner-Hesperians) 2. Southerner-Hesperians <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Thyatians <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Thyatians ii. Retians iii. Canians iv. Vitalians b. Kerendans 3. Aboriginal Hesperians <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Albai b. Etrusna <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Halatians c. Kartana 4. Traldar <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Traladarans b. Doulakki c. Milenians 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Hemerians <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Post-Thonians <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Taymorans ii. Aseni b. Thothians <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Thothians ii. Minrothians iii. Nithians 	<p>HUMANOIDS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Goblini <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Goblini b. Grandes <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Karns 2. Orci <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Porci
	<p>LUPINS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mastini <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Iapyges ii. Messapians b <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Hirpines ii. Brutii 2. Tauri <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Mainland Tauri ii. Insular Tauri (Belgi) 	<p>ELVES</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Meditor 2. Verdier 3. Vyalia
		<p>GNOMES</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Brinnisril

APPENDIX 2: CITIES AND POLITICAL AFFILIATION

Since it can be very confusing to sort out the mess of alliances and control of the city-states of Hesperia, here is a nice resume for use of players and DMs alike. The cities highlighted in pink are the cities which currently make up the Etrusna Dodecapolis.

MAINLAND HESPERIA

POLITICAL ENTITY	CITIES	REGION	POPULATION
League of Thyatis	Thyatis	Old Thyatium	Thyatians (Thyatians)
	Tibur	Old Thyatium	Thyatians (Thyatians)
	Caisra	Tuska	Etrusna
	Tusena	Tuska	Etrusna
	Tarchna	Tuska	Etrusna
	Perusna	Sabellia	Thyatians (Vitalians)
	Corfinium	Sabellia	Thyatians (Vitalians)
	Picenum	Sabellia	Thyatians (Vitalians)
	Nuvkrinum	Vitalia	Thyatians (Vitalians)
	Kyme	Vitalia	Thyatians (Vitalians)
	Kapwa	Vitalia	Thyatians (Vitalians)
	Parthenope	Vitalia	Doulakki
	Valeria	Vitalia	Lupins (Mastini)
	Constantia	Vitalia	Lupins (Mastini)
	Kroton	Vitalia	Doulakki
	Hyria	Iapygia	Lupins (Mastini)
	Taras	Iapygia	Doulakki
Clevsin	Kerendium	Etrusna	
Katane	Cania	Doulakki	
Kerendas	Kerendas	Kerendium	Kerendans
	Ad Pisas	Kerendium	Kerendans
	Vipsl	Kerendium	Etrusna/Kerendans
	Rusle	Kerendium	Etrusna
	Aritim	Kerendium	Etrusna
	Vatluna	Kerendium	Etrusna
	Velch	Tuska	Etrusna
	Kurtun	Kerendium	Etrusna
Fofluna	-	Kerendium	Etrusna
Tlamon	-	Kerendium	Etrusna
Velathri	Velathri	Kerendium	Etrusna
	Vada	Kerendium	Etrusna
	Ilva	Teria	Etrusna
Felzna	-	Retia	Etrusna

Hesperia, Land of the Setting Sun

Spna	-	Retia	Etrusna
Verona	-	Retia	Thyatians (Retians)
Faleroi	0	Trevonian region	Etrusna/Thyatians
Antenora	-	Halatia	Etrusna (Halatians)
Sarausa	Sarausa Tameronikas Hatria Rhegion Karntica Hybla Mene	Cania Cania Retia Vitalia Retia Cania Cania	Doulakki Doulakki Doulakki/Etrusna Doulakki Hobgoblins (Karns) Thyatians (Canians) Thyatians (Canians)
Zyz	Zyz Lilithai Karal Segesta	Cania Cania Kartanya Cania	Taymorans Taymorans Taymorans Doulakki
Lupiae	-	Cania	Lupins (Mastini)
Nisa	-	Cania	Thyatians (Canians)
Tauria	Brixia Biania Taurasia	-	Lupins (Tauri)
Vyalia	Ryania Vyalia Calentaen Taurost	-	Vyalia
Alba	Stalia Kainua Albinga	-	Albai

HESPERIAN ISLAND

Duchy of Hattias	Hattias	Hattians
Duchy of Graustein	Hattias	Hattians, Lupins (Belgi)
Duchy of Sudenfeld	Hattias	Hattians
Noviodunum	Hattias	Lupins (Belgi)
Iniectum	Hattias	Gnomes (Brinnisril)
	Kartanya	Kartana, Taymorans
	Borydos	Kartana
	Teria	Etrusna, Verdier
Mosya	Mosya Actius Sakhla-Rhas	Taymorans



Portrait of Quehuar

Intitepetl,

Gem of the Sun

by Francesco Defferrari (Sturm)

The Gem of the Sun, the most beautiful city, it was so named because it was built over the ruins of the Gem of the Mountains, the ancient city sacred to Inti. The area was purified from the taint of beastmen and evil. For as long as 125 suns the beautiful city lived in the light, until the Sunset people came to defile it, and then the Night people came to cast it into the utter dark. The chosen of the Sun many times tried to take the Gem back, because the Sun cannot be quenched. Many times more they will try again, until the return of the light. Remember, the Sun has just gone under the earth but, as in every morning, it will come back.

Codex of Ancient Intua,
approximately 1750 BC¹.

¹ Intua was developed by John Calvin for the 2300 BC setting, see the [Known World 2300 BC Map](#), [Intua 2300 BC Map](#) (both at the Vaults of Pandius) and the [“Intua - Kingdom of the Sun”](#) topic at the Piazza for more information

SECRETS OF KOSKATEP, LEVEL 10

This level can be reached going down from the closed and trapped hatch of area 10 on Level 9 or even through the chasm in area 6 on Level 9 (Krystallac, published in Issue 11 of Threshold magazine). The PCs will find themselves on Level 10, Intitepetl, once a city of the ancient Realm of Intua, now under the Last One's control.

The text below repeats the original description of this level in issue 1 of Threshold Magazine (Mirror of Eternal Night article). Read on to discover more on this level of Koskatep!

(See [page 247](#) for an index to the levels of Koskatep published in issues of Threshold Magazine)

This level was the Inti city 3500 years ago. Not much is left of that time except for some decorations of the sun that have been defiled by The Last One. He found some Inti mummies on this level and animated them. The mummies were priests of Ixion and so despise him so much that they are slowly breaking away from his control, and one day soon they will be able to rebel.

The secrets: Quehuar, the most ancient mummy and shaman, has a useful weapon hidden in a secret compartment in his old sepulchral room, the Gem of the Sun, an enchanted item that can turn undead as a 36th level Lawful Cleric. Once he gains his freedom from The Last One's control, he will use it.

After the Darkers take control, The Last One hides here, commanding the Inti mummies to hide as well, and casting a powerful illusion to make this level look empty. The Darkers fall for it, but sooner or later they will make plans to use this level and The Last One will be forced to fight them again. To prepare himself he is arranging the summoning of several demons and vampires faithful to the Most Dark One.

What he does not know is that Quehuar is planning his revolt, and when the time is right he will receive huge support from the thirteenth level. Once Ixion's followers have destroyed The Last One and his minions, they will destroy Nyx's followers as well. After that, Ixion's plan is to bring Koskatep into the world as his most important temple, making it a centre of learning for his clerics, fully integrated in the young nation of Karameikos. He now believes it is worthless to try to keep it a secret any longer.

TIMELINE

5100 BC: Precious and semi-precious gems are found in the area and the local people, ancestors of the Azcans, build mines nearby. Slowly the temple becomes a town, and later a city, that falls under the influence of the Oltec empire and is named Koskatepetl, the Gem of the Mountains.

3525 BC: The Azcan empire is formed and Koskatepetl becomes not only a source of gems but also of metals, to build new lethal weapons for the war.

3057 BC: The Azcan emperor declares that the underground, secret temple of Ixion has to be opened to share its secret with the people. The priests refuse and destroy the city to seal the temple. A revolt of the Church of Ixion throws the empire into civil war and chaos; the site of Koskatepetl is abandoned and for several years infested by bandits and monsters that try in vain to occupy the place.

2998 BC: Human refugees hide from the Great Rain of Fire in the ruins of Koskatepetl, but are soon slaughtered by a group of beastmen that take residence among the ruins. The inner temple survives the cataclysm and the invasions unscathed.

2504 BC: The Inti, led by the church of Ixion, occupy the ruins and rebuild the city of Koskatepetl. As is common use among the Inti, priests and important personalities are mummified and kept inside the city, to be contacted if necessary.

2379 BC: The Troll Queen of Grondheim conquers the city, renaming it Krystallac. The living Inti leave and only the mummies

remain. The fairy folk leave their tombs alone. Just a few years later sidhe priests discover the existence of the inner temple and begin a century long negotiation with the Sollux and the Brutemen below to gain access to the artifact. The Troll Queen also creates the Crystal Lake, a permanent gate to the Border, the area between the Dreamlands and the Nightmare dimension.

2282 BC: As the Queen grows impatient about the unwillingness of Ixion to compromise, she sends her best troops to open the temple. Inti troops soon attack the place, and Taymora intervenes shortly thereafter. This is the beginning of the War of the Empires, or the Twilight Wars, or the War of Southern Grondheim, that will last decades and will devastate the region. Mogreth intervenes as well a few years later. Some Inti mummies are awakened, but soon defeated or destroyed by minions of the Troll Queen.

2170 BC: Some fairies of Krystallac turn to the Unseelie, and decide to tell Elienor about Ashira's tomb. The Troll Queen discovers them and exiles them, and manages to scatter the essence of Elienor after a terrible magical battle near the Crystal Lake. But she is gravely wounded by Elienor's magic, and will never be able to recover. The Crystal lake is also damaged and its capacity as a portal greatly reduced.

2080 BC: In a time of crisis in Grondheim due to the Troll Queen's malady Taymora and Intua, lizardmen and troglodytes, escaped from the Mogreth, occupy Krystallac and keep it for a hundred years. As the lizardmen cannot locate all the portals left by the fairies in Level 9, they try to seal it

completely, and likewise they ignore Intitepetl and its mummies.

1976 BC: After a long siege Taymora conquers Krystallac and renames it Kosmoteiros. Nyx knows about Ixion's artifact but rather than try to steal or destroy it she decides to exploit the magical aura of the place to build her own strongest artifact that will bring fulfillment of her Dream. The followers of Nyx leave alone the levels below.

1777 BC: To prevent Kosmoteiros from falling into the hands of Thanatos, the priests of Nyx destroy the city with a terrible earthquake. Thousands die and the place is abandoned for many years as seismic activity increases in the area. The earthquake damages Level 10 too, stirring the Inti mummies.

1664 BC: After the destruction of Taymora fairies of the Unseelie court, former exiles of Krystallac, take possession of the place and try to use the Starlake, but do not discover Ashira's burial and are not able to reach Elienor until much later. The dark fairies of Kundrak do not reach Level 10.

1597 BC: Lord Keiros, a Tal nosferatu and follower of Nyx, conquers Koskatep from the dark fairies. Vampiric followers of Thanatos attack several times but are defeated. Lord Keiros briefly explores Level 10, but does not use it.

1412 BC: Hutaakans conquer the site for Ixion and Pflarr, a seriously wounded Lord Keiros is forced to hide, and his followers are exterminated. The hutaakans slowly explore the levels below, reaching Intitepetl and its

mummies, and succeed in communing with them.

1021 BC: Orcs sack Koskatep, some hutaakan priests survive hiding in the lower levels, and will become more guardians for the hidden temple of Ixion. Some hutaakans stop in Level 10, to tend the ancient Inti mummies.

954 BC: After several battles a dwarven army defeats the orcs and conquers Koskatep, but they are soon in constant warfare with the gnolls that rule over the region. They do not explore the lower levels.

912 BC: The dwarves are finally defeated by the gnolls, who build their own city over the ruins. Shamans of Ranivorus and Thanatos begin to study the Starlake. The Gnolls do not reach Level 10.

841 BC: Followers of Nyx, aided by ogres and giants, attack Koskatep but are unable to conquer it from the gnolls. Yet they succeed in killing the most powerful shamans of Thanatos and burning their notes.

603 BC: The ogre king Kulfan conquers Koskatep in the name of Nyx and ogres rule over the area for centuries. Human priests of the Lady of the Night live in the city along with them. They have some contacts with Level 8 and 9 and reach Level 10, but do not use it.

95 AC: The Darkers almost complete the ritual to use the Starlake and bring forth the Eternal Night, but are stopped at the last moment by priests of Ixion, who drive out the ogres and occupy Koskatep for years. The priests of Ixion occupy all the levels down to

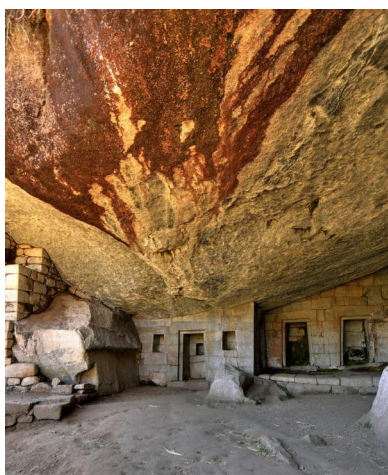
the 10th, where they contact the Inti mummies and establish an outpost.

227 AC: The priests of Ixion have repelled several attempts by ogres, giants and followers of Nyx trying to reclaim the ruins, but are destroyed at last by a very powerful and ancient vampire sent by Thanatos, The Last One. Some priests of Ixion escape to the lowest level and become defenders of the inner temple. The Last One occupies Level 10 and awakens all the mummies, taking control of them. In the following centuries ogres, giants, followers of Nyx and even adventurers sent by Ixion try to reclaim Koskatep, but The Last One destroys them all. He however fails to control completely Level 9, and so Quehuar and the other mummies of Level 10, left mostly alone, soon begin to plan their rebellion.

912 AC: Traladaran freedom fighters hide in the ruins for some time, but are destroyed by the Thyatian army. The Thyatians soon leave the place.

998 AC (or later if the DM prefers): Lady Sonya, the Grand Daughter of the Night, a powerful priestess of Nyx, and her followers, are able to defeat The Last One and reclaim Koskatep. The Last One is not destroyed, but escapes to Level 10 with some faithful followers, to plan his revenge. Quehuar has however his own plan to stab The Last One in the back and destroy the Darkers too, with the aid of the followers of Ixion in Level 13.

1031 AC: The next alignment. On this date the Starlake could be used to bring forth The Eternal Night.



*Intitepetl
buried
houses*

The **Random Critters** table and the **Wandering Parties** table of level 2B (in issue #3 of *Threshold* magazine, pages 207 and 208) may apply here if the DM so wishes. In this case there is a 1% chance in each room that a Wandering Party will be encountered.

The **Followers of The Last One** encounter table of level 1 (in issue #2 of *Threshold* magazine, page 122), can also still be used here if the DM so wishes. One such follower could try to join the PCs to explore this level, with the final purpose of bringing them in the presence of The Last One himself (in Level 7). After the Darkers take control (see issue 1) Followers of The Last One will be numerous and strong on this level and will quickly obtain reinforcements. Quehuar and his followers however may be able to help the party.

Spells that provide magical transportation, such as teleport, passwall, dimensional door, magic door, travel, gate and spells such as clairvoyance and find the path do not work on this level as on Levels 5-9 due to powerful wards placed by The Last One and others before him. The DM could decide to apply the same rule to the levels above the 5th, at least from Level 2 and below, particularly if

the PCs are of a high level.

In addition, Quehuar will immediately perceive any spell cast here and will likely try to invisibly follow the PCs to discern their motivations. After the Darkers take control The Last One too will be able to do the same, and his agents may be sent to capture the PCs, unless Quehuar reaches them and helps.

The map and the inhabitants of this Level

The area in dark grey on the map is solid stone, very difficult to dig, even though it may contain small tunnels dug by critters and wandering monsters. The area in light grey is partially clear, but full of rubble, rocks and collapsed structures which cannot be recognized anymore.

The area in the west of the city, light grey and black, has partially collapsed, creating a maze of natural caverns and hidden passages.

The black “scar” in the middle of the map is the Chasm opened by the Kosmoteiros earthquake of 1777 BC, which goes all the way down to Level 12.

The structures in yellow are the original constructions of Intitepetl at its height.

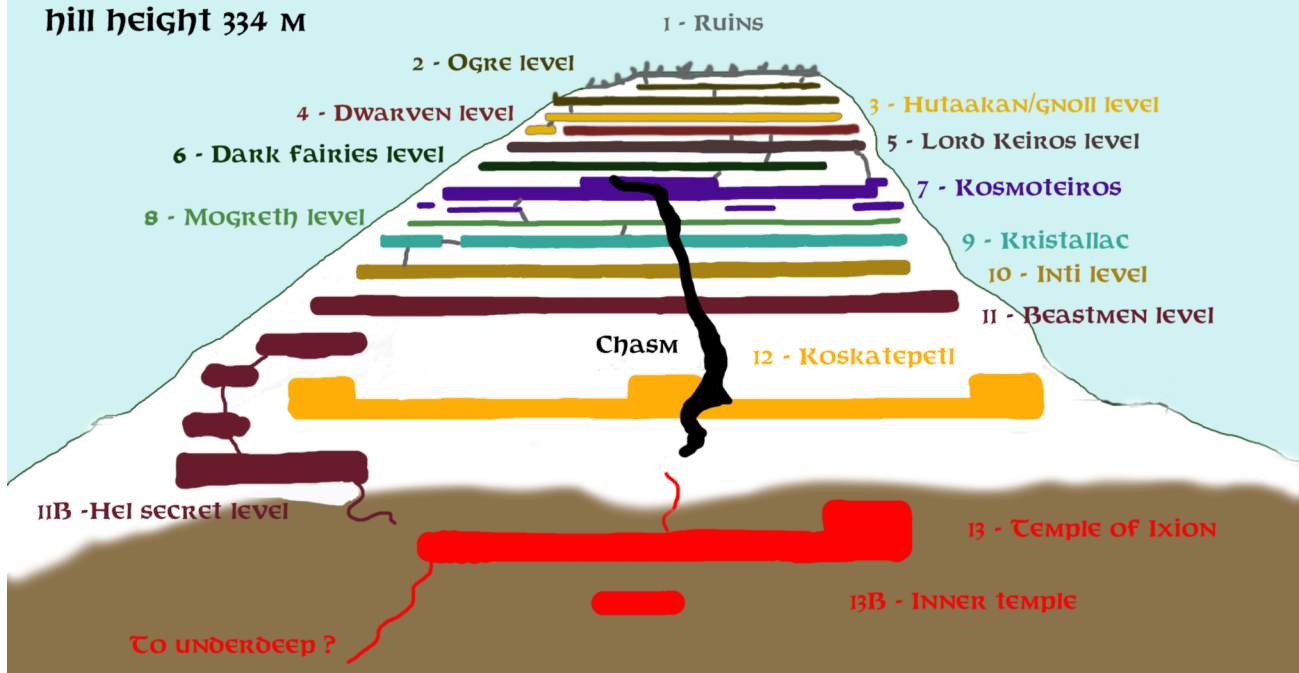
This level appears empty but has its hidden undead inhabitants.

The DM could decide that the PCs will be able to cross this level without encountering anyone, particularly if Quehuar thinks they are aligned with Nyx. In fact, he will not hinder enemies of The Last One, but neither he will be willing to help followers of the Lady of the Night, as he is still loyal to the Sun god.

koskatep, level 10



Koskatep sections hill height 334 M



1 - The passage from Level 9 and the tunnels

This is the only passage to and from Level 9, bolted and trapped (See area 10 of Level 9). It leads to a series of tunnels which were once the part of the city with the palace and the temples. Now it's all collapsed, with many impassable areas and dead ends. **Critters** could be numerous in this area (see above).



Gold and silver statuette depicting an Intua warrior

After the Darkers arrive and defeat The Last One in Level 7 (see Threshold issue #9), The Last One himself will hide in this level. He will then leave at least 10 powerful **undead guards** in this area (from wraiths to mummies). If intruders arrive the guards will attack only if they think they can destroy them, otherwise they will just secretly follow them, while some will go to The Last One's hideout in area 9. Agents of Quehuar may also be able to intercept and warn them.

(1) - A lot of treasures, from gems to magical items, are still here, buried among the rubble. To uncover them, it would be necessary to dig and search for hours to obtain just a 2% chance of discovering something. If someone has the time to dig and search for a week, the chance to find something valuable may be increased to 12%.

2 - The Isolated Caves

These caves, created by the collapse of a large part of the city, are apparently abandoned and there is no visible means to reach them, so PCs could easily be unable to find them. In truth, there is a secret tunnel from Area 1 very difficult to find (only a 5% chance to spot it even passing near to the entrance, 10% for dwarves and thieves). In the isolated caves, there are many **Critters** (see above), but they have all been gathered by several **Inti Mummies** (2d20+2 Special mummies with spellcasting abilities as Clerics of levels 3-9) who will try to hide unless the PCs show some clear sign of allegiance to Ixion. If the mummies believe the PCs to be intruders, they will send the critters to drive them away.

After the arrival of the Darkers the minions of The Last One will probably not discover these hidden caves, unless they are very lucky. The mummies here mean to attack The Last One and his minions from their hiding place once The Last One decides to strike back against the Darkers.

3 - The collapsed Palace

Here was the ancient great Palace of Intitepetl, now partially collapsed. **Quehuar** (as Mummy but with Clerical powers as C18) waits normally here along with several **Inti Mummies** (all also Clerics level 3-12) and 2 hutaakans (as Nosferatu, and Clerics levels 7 and 9). Quehuar was not the high priest of the city at the time of the Troll Queen's conquest, as that man and his clerics were killed or driven away, but he was his predecessor. He died of natural causes in 2483 BC, 21 years after the creation of Intitepetl, and was mummified in the basement of the temple (see Area 4). He was awakened by the earthquake of 1777 BC. The other mummies are all priests who died for various

(2) - The Inti mummies are a group hidden here by Quehuar to strike against The Last One, who doesn't know of their existence. The mummies have also gathered some magical objects to be more effective when the time comes. Unless they believe the PCs to be minions of the Last One, they will try to avoid them or drive them away with critters. They will not give away their items without a fight, not even to potential allies, but may be persuaded to follow PCs who are clearly followers of Ixion (whom they call Iqaru).

(3) - Quehuar and his followers have a treasure trove of magical objects dating back to the times of Intua. Many of these items are sacred to Ixion and would be harmful to followers of rival Immortals. Also if a PC who is not a follower of Ixion takes one of these objects, eventually the Church may be able to track him and demand the return of the item. If Quehuar and his followers take control of Koskatep defeating the Last One and the Darkers, he would be interested in meeting the descendants of his

reasons, mostly natural reasons, before the Grondheim conquest. The hutaakans are instead part of a group who arrived here after the orc conquest of 1021 BC and became willing undead to aid Quehuar and the other mummies. The exact number of Quehuar's followers may be decided by the DM. Quehuar and his followers will not raise unintelligent undead, as they consider them abominations in the eyes of Iqaru (Ixion), but may use their clerical powers to control or destroy existing undead. It's more probable they will use magic to create or control normal animals.

The Darkers probably will not have the chance to speak with Quehuar, as after their arrival The Last One will come to Level 10, commanding Quehuar to be ready to strike against the Darkers. Quehuar would rather strike against The Last One, and he will be interested in finding allies to do that. Should the Last One be defeated, Quehuar probably will not try to parley with the Darkers, but will try to destroy or drive them away too, unless the PCs are able to establish a truce between him and the Darkers. Such a truce can only be temporary, as Quehuar wants Koskatep for the Church of Ixion, and will not stop until this happens, or he is destroyed.

4 - The Great Temple

Here was and still is the Temple of Ixion, or at least most of it. The Troll Queen left the temple alone when she conquered Intitepetl in 2379 BC, and further explorers did not destroy it. What damages the temple has sustained were mostly due to the earthquake of 1777 BC. When the Last One came down here he tried to desecrate the temple, but failed. Distracted by more pressing concerns, he then forgot about it. From time to time Quehuar and his mummies come here to silently worship

people, the Atruaghin clans. He will not be happy to learn that most of them are no longer faithful to Iqaru and follow instead other Immortals. He could consider Atruaghin a possible ally, but will probably consider Atzanteotl an enemy.

(4) - By touching the statue of Iqaru/Ixion it is possible to commune both with him and with the higher priests and priestesses in Level 13 below, even if the one who is touching the statue is not a cleric. However communication can happen only if the person knows about this power of the statue. Quehuar is the only one who knows this, and he uses this power very

their god. A statue of the Sun god, partially damaged by collapses, still stands in the middle of the temple.

The temple has two levels, the main worship area above and the cemetery below. The cemetery holds the remains of at least **50 Inti mummies**, buried with most of their items and magical objects. These mummies are not only clerics, but also warriors, nobles and wizards of Intitepetl. They will not awake unless Quehuar or the Last One call them.



Inti mummies

The Last One will leave the temple alone after the Darkers arrival, more concerned about a way to strike back against the followers of Nyx. He will awaken all the mummies still in the temple and take control of them. Quehuar however will be able to wrest away its control of the Inti mummies once he decides to fight against the Last One. Quehuar will also come here at least one time, to use the statue of Ixion and tell the priests in Level 13 about the arrival of the Darkers. This will probably precipitate the events, as the priests will decide to open the tunnel they are digging toward Level 12 to help Quehuar and destroy the Last One, then deal with the Darkers. If for some reason Quehuar cannot speak to those on Level 13, he may still decide to strike against the Last One anyway once he is busy fighting against the Darkers.

rarely. He also knows a secret room where magical objects once part of the temple's treasure are still hidden. He may be willing to lend some of them to worthy followers of Ixion.

5 - The Plaza and the Chasm

Here once was the main plaza of Intitepetl, with temples and palaces of noble houses. Now the Chasm created by the earthquake of 1777 BC occupies the eastern border of the area. The Chasm is the only way to go down to Level 11, as the Inti chose to bury completely the Beastmen city after they conquered it in 2504 BC. As said for the levels above, climbing up and down or tying a rope could be quite dangerous as the water dripping from Level 7 has random teleportation effects, see sidebar.

The Last One, Quehuar and the Darkers will keep on ignoring Level 11 below as they have done so far. Only when the followers of Ixion open Level 13 to come up (if called by Quehuar as detailed in Area 4) a permanent passage will probably be built from Level 10 to 11. The actions of the beastmen in the hidden parts of Level 11 will obviously come into play too (as will be explained in the next issue of Threshold).

(5) - There is the Dark Waterfall coming down from above. As the walls of the chasm are wet, it is extremely dangerous to try to reach Level 11 and below going down from here, but on this level it is also the only way.

Touching the Dark Waterfall may also cause random teleportation effects to Annwyn, particularly the areas where it borders the Carnifex prison¹.

¹ This idea comes from RobJN in a post on his blog, [Thorn's Chronicle](#); for more information about the Carnifex, see ["Of the Lore and Legends of Y'hog, City of the Unclean Ones, and of that Race"](#) and ["Carnifex"](#) (both at The Vaults of Pandius. Annwyn is the homeplane of the Dark Fairies, see the previous levels of Koskatop in Threshold issues [#8](#) and [#9](#) about the Dark Waterfall. The chance of teleportation could be very low (only 5% of the times that someone touches the waters), or much higher, depending on the DM's preference.

6 - The Lake and the rivers

These waterways once went down the hill, as there is a pool which also arrives to Level 12 below. As Level 12 is contaminated, anyone drinking this water has a 50% chance (- constitution) to develop nausea and vomiting after 1d6 hours, which will last 1 full day, with minor headaches, and -3 to all rolls. The PC so affected will also feel weak for a full month hereafter, and suffer a -2 to all rolls and a 20% decrease of his/her hit points. After this month, she or he should recover fully, but there is a 5% chance they will develop a mysterious malady which will bring them to death in 1d6+2 weeks. The malady can be cured only with clerical healing of the fifth-seventh level.



The Giant Sturgeon

The Last One cannot obviously use the undead fish to attack the levels above, so they will remain there until the Church of Nyx or the Church of Ixion, if victorious, destroys them. The contamination of the waters will be however much more difficult to defeat (see Level 12).

6) - The Last One discovered the contamination of the waterways, and raised several **electric eels**² here as undead (HD2), **10 giant catfish** (HD8+3) and **1 giant sturgeon** (HD10+2). They have orders to attack any living being approaching the waters.

² Electric eels and giant catfish are from the 1993 Creature Catalogue, while the giant sturgeon is in the BECMI boxed sets and in the Rules Cyclopedia. 3ed conversions are also available, e.g. "[Electric Eel](#)" at the Vaults of Pandius

7 - The Noble Quarter

This area hosted the Nobles' quarter at the height of the city and, just to the north east of it, the extensive warehouse of goods owned and managed by the noble houses. Now very little remains of the luxury of more than three thousand years ago. Inside one of the warehouse lie about 20 (or more, if the DM so desires) **undead orcs**, apparently dead, their bodies hidden among the rubble, waiting for orders by the Last One. Their level should be decided by the DM, from simple zombies (HD2) to vampires (HD10). They will not awake unless attacked, and their presence will be spotted only on a roll of 1 on 1d6 by anyone who enters the warehouse and spends at least a turn searching it.



Intuan ceremonial mask in gold

When the Last One comes to this level after the Darkers' victory in Level 7, he will awaken the undead orcs and use them as guards. The orcs will patrol this area and will remain awake and ready for his counterattack.

(7) - The former palaces and the warehouses do still contain some treasures from the time of Intitepetl. Such treasures includes gold, gems and magical items. For every turn spent searching a palace or a warehouse there is a 2% chance for each person searching that such a treasure may be found, buried under debris or the dust of ages.

8 - The Market

Former great market of Intitepetl, this area also contained several palaces and public buildings. Now most of the palaces are ruined, but one of them, still in a good shape, contains what will appear to visitors like a **menagerie**. The main hall in fact has a collection of creatures, apparently dead and unmoving like stuffed animals. The collection includes a wyvern, some rock toads, a bear, some ogres, gnolls, orcs, halflings and humans, a manticore, a werewolf, a stone giant. These are all creatures who reached as far as Level 7 or even here, during the centuries, and were killed by minions of The Last One. He later preserved and hid their bodies here, to be reanimated if necessary. All these creatures could be awakened as unintelligent or intelligent undead as the DM prefers. PCs with holy water or clerical abilities may be able to destroy the bodies before The Last One can awaken them.

After the Darkers win in Level 7, The Last One will awake all these creatures for his counterattack. Quehwar may be able to speak with some of them, if they are raised as intelligent undead, and bring some of them to his side.

9 - The Warehouse

This former huge warehouse is completely abandoned and empty. The northern side is partially collapsed, but apparently a lot of debris has been piled up to close the wall to the outside. There are some big coffins around the walls, but they are all empty. There is nothing else in this area.

This area was emptied by minions of the Last One to be the ultimate refuge of their master. After the arrival of the Darkers the Last One will escape here with all the followers he is able to save from the

(8) - Most of the intelligent creatures placed here still possess their equipment, with items dating back centuries. If robbed they will not awake, as only the Last One (or another powerful necromancer) will be able to call them back.

(9) - Even searching the room for a long time, still nothing of value or interest can be found here.

battle. The huge warehouse will still appear completely empty to anyone examining it, even with magic, due to a powerful Periapt of Concealment that the Last One will leave here. Powerful clerics or wizards (level 20 or above) can still feel an undefined sensation of discomfort if they visit this area. If the Last One is discovered before he is ready for his counterattack, he will try to kill the interlopers with all the minions he still has, calling also the creatures from area 7 and 8 and all the mummies of this level.

10 - The Artisans Quarter

This was the quarter inhabited by artisans at the height of the city, full of workshops and small stores. Items dating back to those times can still be found and recognized among the rubble of the ancient and partially collapsed streets. A lot of **carrion crawlers and rust monsters** dwell in this quarter.



Door in the Artisans Quarter

Nothing will happen here after the initial victory of the Darkers, as neither the Last One nor Quehuar are aware of the existence of the Cult of Shadows here.

(10) - The critters are not wandering monsters, but guardians left by an organized group of **Inti mummies** who are hidden here. These mummies defied Quehuar centuries ago and were defeated. He believes he has destroyed them, but one survived and was eventually able to raise the others again. They belong to an ancient Intua faction called The Cult of Shadows, who would like to ally with the Church of Nyx, once they become aware of the arrival of The Darkers. They will not aid Quehuar when he rebels against the Last One, but whatever party wins, they will then intervene in support of the Darkers.

THE BATTLE ON THIS LEVEL

There will be no initial battle on this level, but the Last One will come down here from his defeat on Level 7 with all his remaining minions. Here he will plan his counterattack against the Darkers, probably from six months to one year after his initial defeat.

PC actions should be instrumental in determining what will exactly happen during the second counterattack, as the possible parties go beyond the Darkers and The Last One, which also have several allies:

» The Darkes can count on the Ogres of the Cruth Hills, and may be able to bring on their side also Traladaran freedom fighters (see Level 1 in Threshold issue #2) and several undead they will meet from Level 1 to Level 9, as detailed in each level, in particular Lord Keiros in Level 5 (issue #7 of Threshold) and Kirish in Level 8 (issue #10 of Threshold).

» The Last One can count on the live orcs in Level 1, the undead gnolls in Level 3 (issue #5 of Threshold), the undead orcs in Level 5 (issue #7 of Threshold) and Akrash in Level 8. He may also be able to call allies from the outside world, like humanoids or followers of Thanatos and other entropic immortals.

» Quehuar and the Inti mummies of this level, with all the allies they could find in the above levels (I'd estimate all the characters connected to the Church of Ixion as detailed in each level, like Hasiq in Level 3 and the hutaakans in Level 8) and the allies he can call from Level 13.

» The dwarves in Level 4 (in issue #6 of

Threshold) are their own faction and, as explained, they will probably join the Darkers against the Last One, but could be persuaded to join the Ixion faction later.

» The Dark Fairies of Level 6 (in issue #8 of Threshold) are again their own faction, as are the different fairy agents of Level 9 (in issue #11 of Threshold). The Dark Fairies could temporarily ally with the Darkers, while some of the fairies of Level 9 could temporarily ally with the Church of Ixion. Both will probably turn on their allies eventually, as explained in their description.

» The Beastmen in the hidden parts of Level 11 are another faction, ready to strike as soon the chaos has reached its peak.

Therefore a possible timeline of the final fight for Koskatep may be as follows, with the advice to modify it depending on the PCs actions:

» The Darkers attack and surprise the Last One as detailed in Level 7, forcing him to escape to Level 10 with all his remaining allies.

» The Darkers explore Level 8 and 9, probably gaining allies as detailed in each level.

» The Last One strikes back from Level 10 with all his might and allies.

» Quehuar and the Inti mummies stab him in the back, aided by the followers of Ixion from Level 13.

» Caught among two enemies, the Last One is defeated again and escapes, probably with a few remaining allies, to Level 12.

» The Church of Ixion and the Darkers start fighting among themselves for the control of Koskatep. The dwarves of Level 5 could change alliance at this time and the fairies of Level 6 and 9, and the lizardmen of Level 8 create further mayhem.

» Different factions could control Koskatep up to 1031 AC, when the alignment will occur and it will be possible to use the Starlake in Level 7 to open a permanent portal. If the Starlake's corruption is not discovered in time (as detailed in area 5B of Level 7, in issue #9 of Threshold) the portal will open to the home plane of Thanatos (or to Annwyn).

» Before or after that, the Beastmen of Level 11 attack Level 13. Hel may also call more humanoids from the outside world to aid them. They will probably try to persuade the Darkers to join them. As it will be explained in Level 11 however, the Last One may be able to take control of them and strike back again.

» A final huge battle among the different factions may occur in the depth of Level 13. Mystara could be changed forever or Koskatep be destroyed by the Immortal to avoid this outcome.

The levels of KOSKATEP in issues of THRESHOLD Magazine

- #1: ["Mirror of the Eternal Night"](#) (Overview)
- #2: ["The Debris"](#) (Level 1)
- #3: ["The Akropolis of Kotesh"](#) (Level 2B)
- #4: ["The Lower Ruins of Kotesh"](#) (Level 2A)
- #5: ["Ranesh, city of four people"](#) (Level 3)
- #6: ["Karrast, dwarven gold"](#) (Level 4)
- #7: ["Dark secrets of Ieronyx"](#) (Level 5)
- #8: ["Shadows of Kundrak"](#) (Level 6)
- #9: ["Signs of the Universe"](#) (Level 7)
- #10: ["Mokrath, serpent eye"](#) (Level 8)
- #11: ["Krystallac, Crystal Heart"](#) (level 9)



Lining up the maps, Part 2 (central region)

By Hausman Santos and Alexandre de Luna

This article presents and compares the versions of Limn maps published in the *Mystaran Almanac* (AC 1018) with those developed by Bruce Heard on his blog¹ circa AC 1000/AY 2000 with a brief general description (with this part focusing on the central lands) and proposes an alternative to unite the unusual passages in each version of the maps in order to put them together. This article also makes extensive use of the material previously developed by Jamuga Khan², Rodger Burns³, Francesco Defferrari⁴

and Geoff Gander⁵ in their descriptions of the region.

INTRODUCTION

More than 3000 years in review

As explained in the previous issue⁶, despite being a very small kingdom, by Alphatian standards, Limn is indeed a very special one and during the centuries the Alphatian Empire allowed many unusual and monstrous races to dwell in this stretch of land. The central region of Limn (between the Bay of Torpes and the Bay of Trollhattan) experienced similar conflicts between Antalian tribes, goblinoids, lizardmen, undead, sylvan folk and occasional monsters

¹ More info see topic [“The Alphatian Province of Limn”](#) on Bruce Heard’s blog

² [“The Conquest of Alphatia”](#) developed by Jamuga Khan on the Vaults of Pandius

³ [“Alphatia: Kingdoms Before Landfall”](#) developed by Rodger Burns on the Vaults of Pandius

⁴ [“Lost Civilizations of Thyatis and Alphatia”](#) in Threshold issue #11

⁵ Accordly to the articles [“Torpes”](#), [“The Fall of Ilmaryl”](#), and [“Antalians of the East”](#) developed by Geoff Gander on the Vaults of Pandius.

⁶ [“A Gazetteer of Limn”](#) in Threshold issue #11

from the region, and those coming from the mountains such as giants, dragons and the like.

“The History of our beloved great island of Alphatia is more complex than many Alphatians realize,[...] What I know is that fairies, dragons and giants are most certainly among the oldest inhabitants of Alphatia. But not only them. Several reptilian races [...]”

*(Compiled by Thiserstian of Alphatia, magician and scholar of the Imperial University)*⁷.

TRACES AND HISTORY ON CENTRAL LANDS

In the old times (earlier than 3000 BC), the Alphatian Sea on the coast of Limn (and along the Kerothar Mountais) was ruled and inhabited by the Gandhar Empire of the giants. They maintained their power in the northern Kerothar Mountains (from the Kerothar Spur near Maskin-Xul Forest and to the north near the Glacier of Kazarn) and extending south on the Ridge (probably until Mogban Ranges and Bolgrim Mounts).

The region suffered successive raids and migrations through the mountains and the coast over the centuries and millennia, which contributed over time to the weakening (in addition to the insulation) and decline of the

⁷ As explained in [“Lost Civilizations of Thyatis and Alphatia”](#) by Francesco Defferrari in Threshold issue #11

giants of this region until finally almost extinguishing the traces of culture of this civilization and its historical records. The information still keeps that there are a few locations where the giants still live.

"There is a peculiar case in the ancient culture of the giants that interests me; I had the opportunity to learn about it in the court of Limn. The descendants of the colonies of giants believe that the high concentration of trolls in the Bay of Trollhattan is due to an invasion by a Gargantua beast coming out of the sea; defeated at the time by the ancient kingdom of the giants, and thrown in the bottom of the pit, parts of the dead Gargantua corpse had multiplied, originating the trolls. Their children were living in the caves below, which were called by some Trollmark, since the time before the formation of the current capital of Limn"

*(Lord Vantor
- imperial scribe visiting Trollhattan)*

COMING OF LIZARDMEN TO LIMN

Ancient lizardmen (probably from the Old Repth civilization on the Haunted Marches in Haven) crossed the mountains coming from Southeast Plains and swamps led by a great dragon despot (circa 2100 BC) invaded Limn and seized the plains along the Great Bay (now the Bay of Trollhattan).

Limn, 1000 AC

Based on Dawn of the Emperors and maps by Bruce Heard

Cartography by Thorfinn Tait, May 2012; last revised June 2012

www.thorf.co.uk



With the arrival of the dragon H'ssar⁸ and its horde of troglodytes, lizardmen and giant lizards, the trolls of the shaft were subjugated and the dragon made its domain in Trollshaft⁹ (Trollmark) and the swamps north (between the river Dar-Engal and the bay).

The structure of Trollmark (Trollhattan Pit) consists of lizardmen buildings in the upper



The Dragon H'ssar

levels, and trolls in the lower part of the shaft, under the command of the dragon, now in his new lair underground.

Having established their main colony next to H'ssar's domain (The Older), the lizardmen built another new colony years later in the northern part of the Bay of Trollhattan where the terrain tends towards that of swamps and marshes. This outpost eventually becomes the city of Theraba.

The arrival of H'ssar brings other dragons over the years as they begin to establish dens in several places in the valleys and

⁸ Known as "The Dragon" this character was presented in the [Mystaran Almanac AC1019](#) (available on the Vaults of Pandius).

⁹ Trollmark and Trollshaft are alternate names used to this trolls under caves. See at ["Lower Stoutfellow -- Alphatia's Underworld"](#) map by Bruce Heard on his Blog.

mountains, which starts a territorial confrontation in Kerother with the giants of Gandhar. This succession of conflicts beyond the bay initiated by the lizardmen generates an isolation of communications as well as trade between the giants in the north and south of Kerother Mountains. From there many smaller cities and colonies are abandoned or destroyed in the ensuing conflicts.

"On a final note about this age, I should add that the Great Rain of Fire also caused a temporary resurgence of some non-human races. For example lizardmen ruled the modern Haunted Marshes of Alphatia and all the lands around it, possibly allied with the nation of Mogreth in eastern Brun."

(compiled by Thiserstian of Alphatia, magician and scholar of the Imperial University).

NEW MIGRATIONS

Northern lands beyond Limn still dominated all of northeastern Brun and northwestern pre Alphatia. The Yannivey ruled the northeast, while the central forests were again dominated by fairy and sylvan folk.

Immigrants, formerly from Taymora, established the colony of Ymathra in the current Kingdom of Haven (these already had enmity with Mogreth before¹⁰) Western

¹⁰ See some of this description of Mogreth in ["Lost Civilizations of Thyatis and Alphatia"](#) by Francesco in Threshold issue #11 page 118.

Alphatia, in the hills south of the Kerothar Mountains (Approximately 1700-1750 BC).

The Ymathran¹¹ nobility were colonists/refugees from distant Taymora, but far reduced from their ancestors' days of glory - they focused mainly on enhancing their own power and status, ruling from the shadows and keeping the common folk as terrorized feeding stock. In spite of this, they were a definite threat to the Alphatian newcomers - many Ymathrans were powerful necromancers, others were skilled in combat and able to use their vampiric talents to infiltrate and assassinate. The Ymathran underclass also fought against the Alphatian interlopers (probably between AY 65/935 BC until AY 100/900 BC) with desperate strength, more afraid of their lords' punishment than any vengeance the Alphatians might visit upon them.

The Lords of Ymathra and settlers also came to see the Limn region as a probable domain after seeing the decrease in strength of the giants of old Gandhar.

After this period (BC 1750) were the first waves of goblinoids into Alphatia, in particular on the west coast, and also by Kerothar Mountains where many settled in Limn. During the migration of Traldar and Taymorans to the Alphatian mainland, the goblinoids traversed from Brun to Alphatia over the natural land bridges that existed at

¹¹ The Ymathran colonies in Alphatia emerged with goblinoid invasions in Brun and the Island of Dawn. See more on [“Alphatia: Kingdoms Before Landfall”](#) developed by Rodger Burns on the Vaults of Pandius and again in [“Lost Civilizations of Thyatis and Alphatia”](#) by Francesco Defferrari in Threshold issue #11.

the time. Such bridges were later destroyed by climatic changes and rising sea levels after the earthquakes that destroyed the Taymora civilization from 1750 to 1700 BC. Giants and fairies in the north took the worst brunt of this invasion. For the most part, the goblinoids settled in the plains near the foothills of the mountains of Kerothar, but managed to stay near the coast.

The giants of Gandhar in part repelled the goblinoids who came to Limn, but were betrayed by tribes of lowland hill giants that had allied themselves with the goblinoids. The giants in Kerothar became increasingly isolated from the southern mountains because of the migration plains flooding and dragon domains established in the mountains.

CLASH OF MIGRATIONS

Among the first wave of goblinoids and their expansion in Alphatia, and before the arrival of the second migration (BC1300 -1000), Antalians from the north began to establish colonies on the west coast (Terkyn, formerly named Grønborg, being one of them) coming from the realms and domains of Ystmarhavn and Yannivey.

The disadvantaged geographical terrain of the goblinoid tribes forced them into an alliance with the lizardmen of Trollmark (Trollhattan Pit) so as to not be driven by attacks from various sides of the plains which were favoured by the lizardmen who were strengthened on it.

The arrival of the second wave of goblinoids who came by sea in the west (AY 0 /1000 BC) creates a beachhead in the hills of Nin-Marag

and another in the Sound of Ishme (Hills of Akh-Kharu). This starts many confrontations on the coast of Limn against local human tribes (mostly Ystmarhavners).

The north beyond the Bay of Torpes (AY 200/800 BC) is readily resisted by Terkyn/Grønborg limiting the beachhead of goblinoids who came by sea to the hills of Nin-Marag. The hordes in Ahk-Kharu also lose the coast and relocate among the foothills. Disputes rage over the hills with the iron mines, with the hordes occasionally being repelled back to the Winterfall Hills.

The Antalians further south of Limn (as far as Hundraal) are limited to the margins of a few territories Sheb-Nigosh and now have a hard time living on land close to the goblinoids.



Antalians

This situation only improves when Ystmarhavner seafarers (Current Seahome Guard) secure the domain of Aroth-Dag Hills and when the Ymathrans establish a hold in the south (near Hundraal River) and mediate (through his powers of manipulation and

charms) for a peaceful coexistence with the goblinoids on site.

GANDHAR LAST TRACES

After the numerous migrations in the plains, the area of H'ssar's lizardmen, more dragons established themselves in the Kerothar Mountains and after several attacks, the Gandhar core territories became increasingly isolated; both in the north and the south. Thus, Ymathrans choose a faction of the giants in the north and through their magical powers charmed them to help secure victory in the north, stabilizing the area in the mountains and setting a hold in the nearby regions of Dag-Atûr along with their new allies (giants of the foothills, dragons and some goblinoids tribes). At this point what remained of Gandhar was finished.

YMATHRA AND THE LIZARDMEN

Realizing the lizardmen were arraying for war in the Bay of Trollhattan, the Lords of Ymathran from the Kerothar Mountains cast their hosts of goblinoids and allies against Trollmark (Trollhattan Pit), but its defenses are very well prepared. H'ssar had established a firm area in the pit-city with its own goblinoids, troglodytes and lizardmen (plus a gross rag-tag army of trolls). However the biggest surprise was revealed by the presence of beholders as allies of the lizardmen, who succeed in pushing back the minions sent by Ymathra (which must then rethink a new course of action against Trollmark).



Torllhattan Pit

ELVES FROM THE GREAT FOREST

“The vast majority of the elves fled south to Shiye-Lawr, where they rejoined their brethren in peace - the antagonisms aroused during the war being relaxed in this time of need. The humans found no welcome in Shiye-Lawr, and many either fled south into Alphatia or, along with a small number of elves, westwards to what is now Norwold. Many of the Foresthomes of modern Norwold were in fact founded by these elves. By the first weeks of AY 734, or BC 266 by the Thyatian calendar, Ilmaryl was no more.”

(From a lecture at the University of Wendar¹²)

In this period after the end of the elven kingdom of Ilmaryl in the north, some Shiye were reestablished in the forests of Shiye and Alfleish while others left for Norwold due to various political problems within the elvish culture. A few houses had teamed up to create a hometree between the forests of Tal-Burud and Maskin-Xul south of Limn. Conflicts and clashes in the plains

¹² As related in [“The Fall of Ilmaryl”](#) by Geoff Gander on the Vaults of Pandius

encouraged sylvan folk to ally themselves with the Shiye elves in exchange for mutual protection. This model followed until the arrival of the Alphatians on Limn.

THE ALPHATIAN INVASION

With the arrival of Alphatian armies in AY 884/116 BC the recognition and consolidation of allies and enemies finally began to define the territory of Limn. Various groups and races had different positions:

Trollmark – Enemies of all, and opposed to any invasion of the plains or the Bay of Trollhattan.

Goblinoids of Plains - Non allies to lizardmen, they start light clashes against both Antalians and Alphatians, but many are too unorganized to resist long against Alphatia.

Giants - In this period, Gandhar has already been undone, and the giants are too few. They stay out of the fighting during the invasion.

Celebryn Elves (Shiye) - Refugee Shiye/Ilmaryl (after falling AY 734/266 BC) the elves were severely limited and driven back into the forests due to raids by goblinoids of the plains of Limn. Seeking allies with sylvan folk, they see the Alphatians as a chance of survival against the goblinoids.

Antalians / Ystmarhavner / Qeodharians - See alliances with the Alphatians as an opportunity to maintain their coastal

territories and rid the plain of goblinoids. Grønborg in the north resists hard against both the goblinoids and Alphatian assistance (circa AY 890/110 BC) on the Torpes Peninsula (an independent kingdom since AY 350/650 BC). All territory east of the foothills, connecting with the plains, is subjugated circa AY 940/60 BC.

Ymathra¹³ – At first the goblinoids are used against Alphatians in battles on the plains, but are soundly defeated and retreat to the nearby mountain hills, leaving the plains in Alphatian hands (except Trollmark in the Bay of Torpes). With Alphatian alliances in place (elves, Antalians south of Limn, and a few sylvan folk) the goblinoid tribes are defeated and ultimately surrender to the Alphatians saving them from extinction. Finally, the strongholds and homes of the Lords of Ymathrans are located and destroyed in Alphatian attacks. Alphatian armies in the area, supported by the Draconic Orders sent from Randel, come into conflict with undead troops just as often as they do with Ymathrans. The main positions to fall are Sheb-Nigosh (now Castle Zychnier), around Dag-Atûr Mountains and Castle Sheb-Talai on Winterfall Hills.

Ultimate Fate to Ymathra

Alphatian war-wizards eventually scourged Ymathra from history, executing the noble class and subjugating the peasantry (which was still likely a kinder fate than continued Ymathran domination). Aasla (already on her Path to eventual Immortality as Alphatia) was

¹³ The Ymathrans was presented by by Rodger Burns at [“Alphatia: Kingdoms Before Landfall”](#) on the Vaults of Pandius.

at the forefront of the war against Ymathra - and her horror at the tactics used by the Ymathrans, as well as her disgust at the way other Alphatian wizards tried to overawe the Ymathran peasant folk with similar displays of brutality, contributed greatly to her belief in pacifism and constructive study of magic. To the extent that the Ymathran war was a just one, it was Aasla's doing, and part of her Trial and Testimony was creating a network of enchantments and magical wards that sealed away Ymathran curse-magic and made the land lush and bountiful once more. The nexus-crystal of this ward network still exists, in a secluded valley some 250-odd miles northwest of the city of Aasla ... whether any ill force would be unleashed if the crystal is damaged remains unknown.

Lizardmen – After the end of Ymathrans, Alphatian attacks are focused against Trollmark. The defeated lizardmen initiated a negotiation of peace agreements with the Alphatians and Draconic Orders from Randel (which were crucial in H'ssar's defeat). Later the place name was changed to Trollhattan though the moat below remains known as Trollmark¹⁴.

THE MID LANDS AFTER ALPHATIAN INVASION

After the Alphatian invasion and the taking of Trollmark, Alphatians established some order in the region. Hundraal established Alphatian cities in the south of Limn's coast and settled the Ystmarhavner seafarers on En-Hadoth

¹⁴ A brief map can be seen of Trollmark on [“Lower Stoutfellow -- Alphatia's Underworld”](#) by Bruce Heard on his Blog.

building a naval port in conjunction with the Alphatians in Aroth-Dag (Seaguard Tower). The goblinoids were allowed to assemble in communities and villages provided they remain at peace with Alphatia's allies and soon, Nin-Marag and Nergath were established north of Trollhattan Bay. Dul-Marag was another goblinoid community established by the Dar-Engal River as well as the sylvan folk village of Zerantha.

Having lost the war (AY 915/85 BC), most lizardmen preferred not to remain under the direct control of the Alphatian guardpost in Trollmark and settled on the north side of the Dar-Engal river in the swamps where the current village Theraba exists.

The northern region of Limn along the ruins of Grønborg stayed disavowed and long forgotten (serving as a refuge place for goblinoid survivors of the battles, which were very bitter to stay under the eyes of Alphatian guard further south) until the founding of Torpes in AY 1180/180 AC.

TIMELINE OF LIMN

Below is a summary of Limn chronology from the beginning to the present day¹⁵.

5000 BC: Gandhar extends from the northern to southern Kerothar Mountains with Serpentine expansion contained by the Gandhar Empire of the Giants, which at the

¹⁵ This proposed timeline is compiled of all data used as reference in this chapter and can be checked (with the exception of what has been developed here) one by one on the Vaults of Pandius

time ruled also over fairy and human populations.

2300 BC: Fight to the coast and plains of Limn between the giants of Gandhar and a sea troll-like Gargantua coming from the Alphatian Sea.

2100 BC: Lizardmen are established along the Bay of Trollhattan and dominate the trolls. H'ssar establishes his lair in Trollmark (Trollhattan pit).

1990 BC: Dragons in Kerothar. Period of conflict with Gandhar giants defending their domains.

1750 BC: Ymathra is established in modern Haven and the Kerothar Mountains.

1745 BC: First invasion of goblinoids in Alphatia; they concentrate on the plains of Limn.

1740 BC: Confrontation between the dragon alliance (H'ssar and the dragons of the Kerothar mountains) and the giants of Gandhar. Although, the giants were more organized, the overwhelming numbers of the dragon alliance (boosted by lizardmen and goblinoids) gave them the upper hand.

1400 BC: Kingdoms and domains formed by Ystmarhavner explorers north of Alphatia.

1300 BC: Goblinoid expansion mostly in Alphatian Sea and Eastern Brun.

AY 0 /1000 BC: Expansion of Antalian Tribes in Limn is limited by the coast with lizardmen in Bay of Trollhattan and goblinoids in the plains and foothills. Arrival

of Alphatians on the continent (Landfall); last Goblinoid invasion coming by sea (Beachhead were today stays Nin-Marag).

AY 4/ 996 BC: Prince Aaslon and his troops are attacked by city states and possibly Ymathrans Ostmarks when crossing the Kerothar Mountains¹⁶.

AY 35 / 965 BC: Alphatian expedition explores the west coast up to modern day Limn. There they met by ships from the island of Qeodhar and were driven back.

AY 52-60 / 940 BC: Alphatian imperial navy attacks and invades Stonewall (sea and land); Colonel Aaslon founded a naval base (actually Draco¹⁷).

AY 62/938 BC: After a few victories at sea, Qeodharian fleet sailed south to crush their Alphatian enemies completely. Unfortunately they underestimated the reserves of the Empire. Most Qeodharian units were captured or sunk.

AY 65/935 BC: Antalians from the south coast of Limn (Hundraal) established an alliance with the Alphatians. Wizard War of

¹⁶ As related in [“The Conquest of Alphatia - The Early Years”](#) by Jamuga

Khan and Captain Ebenezum on the Vaults of Pandius. This event was included Ymathra and Ostmark accordly to development to History of Limn on this article.

¹⁷ According to Jamuga Khan and Captain Ebenezum *“In AY 52 the Qeodharians started a counter-attack. Over the next years some minor naval battles occurred, and bases were constructed and destroyed. In AY 60 the Stonewall base was conquered by the Qeodharians”*. See more on [“The Conquest of Alphatia - The Early Years”](#) on the Vaults of Pandius.

Alphatia against Ymathra in Kerothar continues.

AY 90 / 910 BC: Alphatian Imperial Marines burned down Ystmarhavn, the greatest settlement of the Qeodharian jarls; the Jarls never fully recover again.

AY 100 / 900 BC: Ymathra defeated and officially under Alphatian rule by AY100. A few individual domains still remain in Limn mountains.

AY 200 / 800 BC: Ystmarhvner colonies founded on Alphatian west coast.

AY 350 / 650 BC: Ylsa founded Grønborg Realm¹⁸ (over Terkyn city).

AY 400 / 600 BC: Markland established as a realm.

AY 734 / 266 BC: Fall of elven kingdom of Ilmaryl¹⁹.

AY 740/260 BC: Several Shiye elves united as a minor clan (Celebryn) move out from Shiye-Lawr (after conflicts with the king) and establish a domain (Treehome) between Alal-Xul and Tal-Burud Forest (Limn).

AY 884 / 116 BC: Alphatian invasion of Limn.

AY 890/110 BC: Brief conflicts with goblinoids; Alphatians make alliances with Shiye Celebryn (and sylvan allies) in addition to the already established alliance with the Hundraal on the south coast.

¹⁸ See in [“Antalians of the East”](#) by Geoff Gander on the Vaults of Pandius.

¹⁹ As registered in [“The Fall of Ilmaryl”](#) by Geoff Gander on the Vaults of Pandius.

AY 900/100 BC: The few surviving Ymathran leaders launch their goblinoids, peasant militia and several undead against Alphatians.

AY 910 / 90 BC: Last Ymathrans destroyed; Alphatia takes the plains and begins to fight and make siege against the lizardmen in Trollmark (Trollhattan pit).

AY 915 / 85 BC: Alphatian army joins with units of Randel Draconic Orders and defeat the lizardmen. Lizardmen remain only in the town of Theraba and surrender to the imperial troops. Trollmark (Trollhattan pit) pass to be watched and guarded.

AY 950 / 50 BC: After nine years of siege, Grønborg was taken and destroyed by Alphatia.

AY 1150 / 150 AC: A group of Traldar sailing in a vessel founded the Tarpanades settlement over the ruins of Grønborg.

AY 1180 / 180 AC: Alphatians and Traldar families from Tarpanades²⁰ established an imperial alliance.

AY 1900 / 900 AC: The elven Lord Drushiye (with the support of Dracor and Mitrestu families) manages to convince the Emperor Tylion IV to establish the kingdom of Limn and allow him to rule. His new capital will be established in Trollhattan.

AY 1928/928 AC: Ambitious Alphatians plan to redraw the borders of Limn (to include the city of Torpes). Several imperial

²⁰ The Tarpanades was described in [“Torpes”](#) by Geoff Gander on the Vaults of Pandius.

representatives sent to allied groups in the region. Economist Xandaram sent to Torpes (administrator and imperial representative).

AY 2000 / 1000 AC: Time of the Gazetteers series.

LOCATIONS OF THE MID LANDS

Castle Dracor²¹

Traditional Dracor family castle, that rises on a hill in the mountains like a black spur amid a mist that darkens until daylight, at the foot of ensconced Kerothar in the mountains on the way between the Bay of Torpes and Keep Dagan. It has a small road winding between the passage of the mountains to the castle. Around an old petrified tree forest are spears with heads stuck on the tips interspersed with hanged bodies. In the midst of fogs and mists lurk denizens such as wolves, bats and giant bats, that scan the region from above and serve as spies for the “Count” in his castle.

Central Quarter Order of Dracor

60 inhabitants (with another 60 scattered around the kingdom in small patrol units). A bastion tower-like barbican blocks the way before reaching the castle Dracor (serving as

²¹ Castle Dracor was presented as seen in Limn map in [Mystaran Almanac AC1018](#) (available at the Vaults of Pandius). See more about Dracor on [“A Gazetteer of Limn”](#) part 1 on Threshold issue #11

an outpost and general quarter to the Order of Knights and Dracor Avengers) with their gates being opened or closed after investigating any visitors.

Castle Mitrestu²²

200 inhabitants - In the mountains north of Nergath the path is protected by a dense temperate forest rumored to be haunted by ghosts and wandering souls who drag the unwary from the track into the forest depths. A stone tip connects the road up to the castle. The land around the castle is a large pit filled with corpses. Most of the Mitrestu family takes refuge in this old place (dated from the time of Ymathrans), with few family representatives allocated in Torpes and Trollhattan. As an extension of its territory there is Nergath village south of the castle. Although, the land belongs to the Mitrestu, the goblinoid population is politically aligned with the city of Dul-Marag, but out of sheer fear, they pay their taxes and obey the commands of the lords in the castle.

Great Temple of Nyx

Inside the forest north of Nergath, rituals and offerings are dedicated to Nyx in the large central chamber. The high priests gather here and from this point also manage their smaller temple in Nergath.

²² Castle Mitrestu was also presented as seen in Limn map in [Mystaran Almanac AC1018](#) at the Vaults.



Castle Mitrestu

Nergath

620 inhabitants - Commanded by a tribe of bugbears (the Draw Skin) which subjugates a lesser tribe of goblins that works in the coal mines. The city has its economy based on livestock in the fields, fuelwood collection, charcoal creation and coal extraction with the coal and charcoal supplying the forges of Nin-Marag and Baenil. These activities led to numerous conflicts with fairies, druids and the sylvan folk of Zerantha. Enraged by the clearing of forests to make way for pasture and firewood production, they have required King Drusyie's mediation more than once, to avoid more serious conflicts. A small contingent of minotaurs, servants of the royal house, was allocated to the city, following the real ambassador responsible for regulating the extraction of firewood and pasture improvement over the forest. They remain in compliance with the city representatives of Mitrestu and a small patrol (outpost) of the Order of Dracor.

Nin-Marag

800 inhabitants - Inhabited by a large tribe of hobgoblins (Iron Fangs), who reject the influence of the circle of the elders of Dul-Marag and adopted for themselves the customs of the more "civilized" Alphatians, which are reflected in the city's architecture and the garments of its inhabitants. Nin-Marag is heavily fortified and marked by a constant gray haze coming from countless forges and workshops. The sound of metal being worked sharply resounds through the muddy alleys as an incessant mantra. In the city center, a huge building stands, it houses the beating heart of Nin-Marag, the High-Oven that produces the Ulfberht²³, a special steel from the lost old Gandhar Empire, which feeds the city forges. The building is extremely well kept and access to the site is controlled.

Theraba

530 inhabitants - One of the oldest Villages of Limn, its stone buildings withstood both time and Alphatian invasion when it was spared. The flooded areas have several caves where most of the population lives. The commercial district is the driest area and highest in the city (populated by lizardmen, troglodytes, kobolds, trolls, ogres and some goblinoids; the old allegiances of Trollmark). Its inhabitants are a bit more reclusive and insular because of their history. The village is surrounded by stone walls and lightly fortified. A local lineage descended from the Limn primordial lizardmen line is responsible for the village government. The

²³ See more about Ulfberht description on the "[Medieval Histories](#)" website.

main buildings and the temple have a similar construction to the Azcan culture.

Great Temple of Ka

Up a hill north of the main avenue of Theraba stays the great temple of Ka, where rituals, offerings and services are dedicated to the immortal in the main chamber. The high priests gather here, and at the central temple in Trollhattan, on dates sacred to their culture, and the ethos of Ka.

ECONOMY OF LIMN

BAENIL	Iron (Refining) Tools (Production)
REMINA	Iron (Mining) Drugs (Kala)
ISHME	Iron (Trade) Obsidian (Jewellery)
DAGAN	Obsidian (Mining)
THERABA	Fishing (Giant Crab) Leather Goods (Production)
TORPES	Iron (Export) Weapons (Export) Armors (Export) Jewelry (Production / Export) Books (Production / Export)
NIN-MARAG	Weapons (Production) Armors (Production) Tools (Production)

NERGATH	Leather Goods (Production) Firewood (Production) Coal (Production)
DUL-MARAG	Monsters (Production) Potions (Production) Magic Components (Production)
ZERANTHA	Crafts (Production) Ceramics (Production) Bows and Arrows (Production)
TROLLHATTAN	Monsters (Export) Flint (Export) Ceramics (Export) Paints (Production / Export) Potions (Production / Export) Magic components (Production / Export)
CELEBRYN/ NIN-BURUD	Flint (Mining) Ceramics (Production / Export) Bows / arrows (Production / Export) Hardwood (Fine woods)
EN-HADOTH	Fishing (Octopus / Squid / Sepia) Paints (Sepia Ink)

2. FIREWOOD / COAL - Produced in Nergath, supplies the forges of Nin-Marag and Baenil

3. ARMS AND ARMOR - In Nin-Marag the Remina iron is processed and transformed into *Ulfberht* (high quality steel of the Gandhar Empire) being worked in the countless forges of the city, for the production of weapons and armor of exceptional quality. These are produced in series, following a basic model, valuing functionality rather than appearance. Weapons and armor are transported by sea to Torpes, from where they are exported to the whole Empire.

4. OBSIDIAN - Extracted in the mines of Dagan, it is polished and made into jewelry in Ishme and Torpes, from where it is exported.

5. BOOKS - The Sage's League on Torpes produces cheap copies of the most popular books of the Empire and deluxe editions using rare materials and special inks produced in Trollhattan.

6. TOOLS - Produced in Baenil (mining) and Nin-Marag (forgery) to meet the insatiable local demand.

7. MONSTERS - Caught in the Kerothar mountains, in the Tal-Burud forests and the hills of Akh-Kharu by the Hunters Guild in Dul-Marag, they are sold in markets in the city and exported to all over the Empire from Trollhattan.

8. POTIONS - The Trollhattan alchemists and the Shamans of Dul-Marag produce a wide variety of potions, especially for the

ECONOMY DESCRIPTION²⁴

1. IRON - Extracted in Remina and refined in Baenil, it goes by barge to Ishme and from there to the forges of Nin-Marag and to the port of Torpes, from where it is exported.

²⁴ Most of this information was collected according to "[The Alphatian Province of Limn](#)" (industry summary info) on Bruce Heard's blog.

control of monsters, which are used to appease the beasts in fairs in Dul-Marag and the Trollhattan Zoo, the surplus production is exported through the capital, and the Blackheart kingdom is its main consumer market.

9. MAGIC COMPONENTS - A lot of magical components, especially those derived from monsters (Half a kilo of basilisk scales? Right away!) can be found in Dul-Marag and Trollhattan, from where they are exported to the rest of the Empire.

10. BOWS AND ARROWS - The elven clans Celebryn, sylvan folk and faeries of Zerantha produce a wide variety of bows and arrows of high quality and rich decoration, which are marketed locally and exported to Stonewall and Aurora Island. Especially coveted are the rare pixy arrows arriving at Celebryn markets.

11. FLINT - Extracted from the mines of the Kerothar Spur, it is prized in Celebryn, and exported through the port of Trollhattan to Stonewall, Frisland and the Isle of Dawn.

12. PORCELAIN - Produced in Celebryn and Zerantha is highly prized for its unusual strength, vibrant colors and "ethnic paintings" being fairly valued in Aasla, to where it is exported, and by the Trollhattan alchemists, who use them for transportation and storage of potions and magical components.

13. PAINTS - Produced in En-Hadoth (sepia) and Trollhattan (derived from monster pigments) are coveted throughout the Empire due to their remarkable resistance to water, especially paints produced by the Guild of Alchemists in Trollhattan, whose

magical properties facilitate the spelling of scrolls and grimoires.

TORPES: ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTION

As described briefly in the first part of this gazetteer²⁵ Ylsa of the Sharpened Blade conquered the citadel of Terkyn, and renamed it Grønborg. There were several conflicts with Markland in the north (the capital of which was Taraldstad) whose King was Tarald the Black. Grønborg, which, though it was sparsely populated, more than made up for this weakness through the ferocity of its warriors.

There were also some goblinoid tribes that dominated the foothills of the mountains and occasionally settled the hills of Ankh-Kahru (between the Bay of Eanna and the Sound of Ishme) and imposed their will on local tribes and take control of the iron mines for crafting weapons, until finally being driven back to the passes in Sheb-Talai.

Roughly 200 years after Grønborg was taken and destroyed by Alphatia, a Traldar sailing vessel founds Tarpanades settlement over the Grønborg ruins.

Eventually, after the Alphatians learned of the displaced Tarpanadeans' history, they offered the Traldar the possibility of establishing a local colony in exchange for fealty to the Empire. The Tarpanadeans accepted, on the

²⁵ Not only in the first part of "[Gazetteer of Limn](#)" (in Threshold #11) but also described in "Torpes" and "[Antalians of the East](#)" developed by Geoff Gander at the Vaults



City of Torpes

condition that they were allowed to govern themselves as they saw fit. The Alphatians agreed, so long as taxes were paid, finding this reasonable under the circumstances.

Today, it is now known as "Torpes", a corruption of its old name, "Tarpanades." Technically it is a part of Limn, but is a semi-independent city in its policy and economy of everyday life. A council of families and clans govern the city under the guidance of an imperial representative, Lord Xandaram. Actually Torpes has a population around 7500 inhabitants and a military force of 1795 troops in AY2000.

CITY OVERVIEW

1. Dockside

Port gate with chains and towers of lights; Composed by a minor port exclusively for imperial affairs and a larger port for trade (with an exclusive wing for local noble families).

2. Warehouse District

Neighboring the docks and divided (after the renovation of the port) into imperial and merchant sections.

3. Foreign District

Adjacent to the port, has some inns, general shops and service shops (the district has a curfew at night and guard patrols).

4. Guard Outpost

In addition to a citadel along the bastion tower of the imperial envoy, there are several stone buildings with guards using the imperial and Limn kingdom coat of arms that patrol the city and communicate through cavalry and messages.

5. City Meeting Hall

Built on a hill nearby the citadel, the structure is stylized like the great halls of the Antalians; But nearby buildings are a mix of Traldar and Traladaran design. Some small service shops provide the district with minor magical services (detections, order incantations, apothecary, books and scroll services).

6. ORC ENCLAVE

Separated and watched by guards, the enclave is walled and its accesses are to the outer gate and the Dockside (for cargo services, storage and stevedores from goblinoid guilds). A group of chieftains maintains a hierarchy of control over the enclave.

7. Citadel

Fortified on a hill beside the central avenue, this bastion is where the imperial administrator Xandaram resides. Besides the guard barracks and an annexed aerodrome, the bastion consists of administrative offices to oversee the city and imperial bureaucracy.

A square in front of the bastion has a magical accessory to detect sudden changes, such as weather or fog and ashes from Alphaks' Volcano (like a magic alarm bell).

NPC GALLERY

Castle Dracor

**KRISNAK, DRAGON LORD IN DRACOR –
(CE male red dragon 15 HD)**



He was sent by his master²⁶ many years ago to assist Lord Mzilikazi and guard the skies of the Dracor. Occasionally he serves as the Count's mount. Unwanted visitors and defeated victims are turned into the main course in his cave in the mountains.

Mizildravish

See more info in *Torpes City*.

²⁶ See more information in ["A Gazetteer of Limn"](#) -Part 1 (Threshold issue #11) page 158 within the DM Plot Information section.

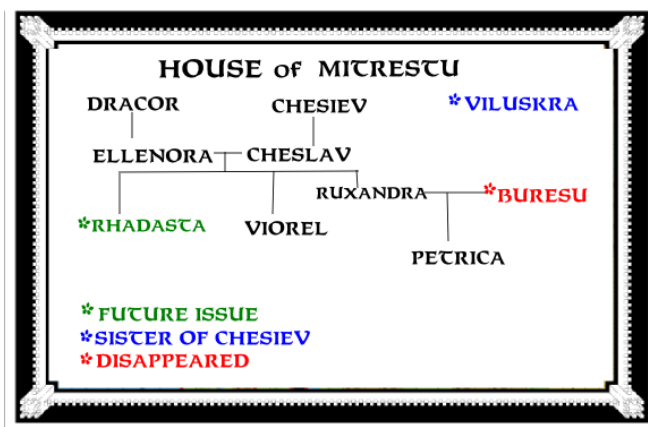
RIKHAR -
 (CN male human F/Avenger 14 lv)
 Captain Order of Dracor

Rikhar has white hair and dark hazel eyes, and sharpened teeth. He wears dark plate armor and wields a bastard sword. Rikhar seeks revenge against the kingdom of Stonewall which exiled him some years ago.

Castle Mitrestu

The Mitrestu, as a house, originated from marriage between Traldar peasant families coming from the lost areas of Ymathran (Alphatia post-invasion). Connoisseurs of Traldar mysticism and Ymathra culture, The Mitrestu have magical abilities, especially within the arts of necromancy.

Political alignment: favors the Traldar families (especially Dracor and others in Torpes) Occasional allegiance with Marthedren. Supporters of King Drushyie.
Duties: Oversees the Bay of Torpes and Kerothar Mountains



Personalities:

HIGH LORD CHESLAV -
 Head of Mitrestu
 (NE male human W/necromancer 20 lv)



With great responsibility to carry on the family tradition, he has the help of his father, Chesiev, and the support of his wife in matters regarding good relationships with the Dracor and diplomacy with King Drushyie. Sponsors research on the Ymathran lost culture and magic, and has developed concerning dialogue about the matter with Argaloth on his personal basin in Mitrestu castle. Member of the Great Council, even being a man of few words, fiercely defends the interests of Limn (from Mitrestu point of view, of course).

LADY ELLENORA
 (CN female human Avenger 12 lv)

Ellenora was promised in marriage to Cheslav by Lord Mzilikazi from Dracor as a means of keeping the houses united. Her relationship with her husband is a bit cold

and something morbid. Makes good use of her connections from Dracor to guide the diplomatic policies of Mitrestu to good relationships with the royal house of Limn. Occasionally goes to the capital, Trollhattan, where her daughter Rhadasta lives.

VIOREL (THE YOUNG)

See more information under *Torpes*, below.

RUXANDRA

(CE female human C13 Nyx)

High Priestess on the Great Temple of Nyx. She has a short blonde hair and green eyes, and a prominent face. She wears dark garments and an ornamented mantle. She desperately seeks the secret of immortality in serving Nyx and the Lords of Limbo.

ARCHMASTER CHESIEV

(CE male human lich

W/Necromancer 22 lv)

This old Mitrestu established the current domain of the family. After attaining lichdom he devoted his time to magical studies and to sponsor the investigation of Ymathran civilization. Part of the success of his research was the capture of an ancient Ymathran vampire, currently magically trapped in the basement of his castle. Now he leaves the leadership of Mitrestu in the hands of his son Cheslav.

PETRICA

(CN male human C10 Nyx)

Priest of Nyx at the temple in Nergath. He disseminates the doctrine that redemption can only be achieved after the big night



(death). A Skillful orator and strong charismatic man, Petrica is the main representative of Mitrestu in Nergath. His mother Ruxandra runs the Great Temple of Nyx hidden in the forest.

KATHRADOR THE OLDER

(CE male human wraith Lord 11 HD)

(Elder Ymathra Spirit) An old Ymathran who obediently served his masters in life and was preserved after death. Trying to regain secrets of his people (and the truths that lead to knowledge of the remains of Taymora culture). He joined Viluskra and extended his condition to her, so she could help him in his plans.

LORD SVOJAR (MITRESTU)

(NE male human undead 6 HD)

Revived a few years ago as a Zombie Lord²⁷, Svojar commands the undead in special detachments on family missions. The most important warriors of the undead unit serve

²⁷ See more info on *Monstrous Manual* AD&D, TSR publishing page - 373.

as skeleton warriors²⁸ under his command (personal escort).

GREAT MATRIARCH VILUSKRA
(NE female human wraithlord 16 HD²⁹)

She lived there centuries ago as the main thrall of Lord Chesiev, and lost her life while investigating the past Ymathran culture. While still alive she had contacted the Kathrador spirit to dig up and recover old Ymathran secrets. Her thirst for power to house Mitrestu and the desire for eternal life are her main passion and motivation to remain among the livings. She can contact the old deceased Mitrestu relatives (something like a speak with dead ability) to retrieve knowledge and information.

Nergath

CHIEF GULMUD, Grizzly Bear
(LE Male Bugbear 7HD)

Smarter than most bugbears, Gulmud knows how to pick his fights and only attacks a target when he is certain that he can defeat them. Extremely superstitious, he only makes decisions after consulting the oracles of the shaman Saath, which makes him a marionette of the circle of elders of Dul-Marag.

SAATH
(NE Female Red Orc Shaman 6)

Cunning and cynical, this young shaman aims to gain power at any cost. Devout of

²⁸ See more info on *Monstrous Manual AD&D*, TSR publishing page - 317.

²⁹ More info about Wraith Lord in module X11 "Saga of the Shadow Lord" (TSR publishing) and [GAZ F2 "The Denagoth Plateau"](#) and its [map](#) at the Vaults



Jamudaru, she advises Gulmud on the interests of the circle of the elders, but always takes into account her personal gain.

DIKO
Undertaker of the Cult of Nyx
(N male human T7 lv)

Diko has tangled black hair and amber eyes. He is responsible for collecting corpses and carrying them to the Temple. He wears black leather armor, a strange top hat and wields a poisoned dagger and darts. Diko is cursed with traumatic nightmares (always related in some degree to his masters in the Great Temple of Nyx).

NAHZIR
(LE Male Minotaur 8HD)

Proud commander of the personal diplomat escort of Master Ardabryn, a position that he plays with great competence and greater arrogance. He never forgives the mistakes of his subordinates, punishing them severely for trivial faults, as well as for his own mistakes (and they are many), always finding a way to hold anyone else accountable for them.

MASTER ARDABRYN
(LN male elf W8 lv)



Diplomat and ambassador of the royal house of Limn sent to mediate the conflict between Nergath and Zerantha, Ardabryn wants to resolve the issue as soon as possible, in order to "return to civilization", as he is often ranting from time to time.

VOJTA
(CN Male Human Avenger10 lv)

Order of Dracor member in Nergath. Vojta has red hair and dark brown eyes, and a cropped moustache. He wears leather armor and wields a poisoned short sword and dagger.

PETRICA
Priest of Temple of Nyx in Nergath

See more information under *Castle Mitrestu*, above.

NIN-MARAG
Great Chief Whungar
(LN Hobgoblin, F6 lv)



The tough task of modernization and technology for all local goblinoids is on his shoulders. His ancestors had invested in the construction of the city and the same was expected of him. To stay in power and be free from opposition he signed an alliance with the Baluk family in Torpes and so secured one of the widest goblinoid trade networks in all of Limn. Has carefully studied alliances with Thorberg (so that he does not end up becoming a puppet). His visionary nature has caused him to strive as a swordsman and he has trained with great ability to defend his position as chief.

EHINAR

(LN Male Hobgoblin, Wokan 6)

This old wizard has seen many winters, calm and soft-spoken, he hides a sharp mind behind the fragile facade. True to his people and to his boss, Ehinar strives to achieve his goals and never forgives those who fail to fulfill his orders or threaten his tribe.

RAJMUND

(N Male Hephaeston³⁰, 25 HD)



Years ago Rajmund was attacked by giants led by Martoth who wanted to plunder his stock of weapons and armor to attack Limn. During the attack his mate was killed and the children that they were forging together were destroyed. He managed to escape after killing some of the giants and ogres and wounded, sought refuge in Nin-Marag, since he had an old business relationship with the hobgoblin clan, to which he sold weapons and armor in exchange for food and iron. He taught them the secret of Ulfberht and built

³⁰ See more info on *Monstrous Compendium Mystara*, TSR publishing page - 50.

the High-Oven, and in exchange, Rajmund received protection from the Iron Fangs clan and their allies of Baluk family from Torpes. The tribe sent troops to help the Dracor contain the Martoth rebellion. He resents that the Dracor have spared the leader of the giants after his rebellion was defeated.

THERABA

Her "Scaliness" H'Ssarri

(NE female lizardmen 7 HD)



The ruler of Theraba harbors a certain pride that the seed of her lineage dates back to the times of the lizardmen horde. She is a little severe with failures and tries to show strength against her enemies. Her need to bear influence and power ensures neither she nor her people (of Theraba) can be intimidated by other races and houses. She believes these "invaders" will one day be humiliated in Limn (when lizardmen will have the opportunity to regain their influence in Trollhattan).

GLASHAKK**Master of Hunting****(N male troglodyte 8 HD)**

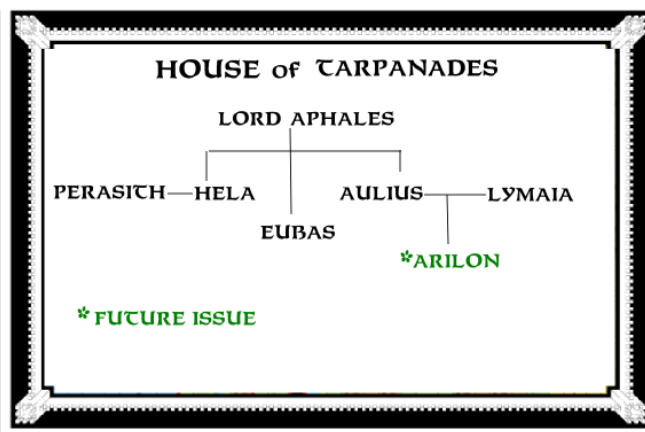
Glashakk patrols the marshes with scout groups and keeps the region free of unwanted invaders (which are trapped in the city dungeon). He still maintains the city guard and can gather the flock for armed struggles in times of need. Currently he is the longest lasting master of hunting to stay in the position and to meet the demands of his master H'ssari.

PSS'HAZZ**Priest of Ka****(LN male lizardmen P6 Ka)**

Pss'hazz was blessed by the immortal Ka with the ability to progress as a priest³¹ with great access to the common spells of Ka's clerics³². He works for the preservation of the memory of his people, with tomes and documents written in a small library in his temple and emphasizing the cultural and religious memory through the religious festivities of the temple calendar.

³¹ You can use the rules presented on "*The Complete Book of the Humanoids*", TSR publishing.

³² More info about spells to Priests of Ka, see on "*Wrath of the Immortals*" TSR publishing and "[Codex Immortalis](#)" by Marco Dalmonte.

**TORPES CITY****Tarpanades Family**

Torpes began as the village of Tarpanades, named after their only surviving Traldar clan leader. Over the years, Tarpanades grew, slowly influencing the entire region around it and is still one of the major clan houses in the city.

Likely location: City of Torpes

Political alignment: Favors the small families in the city and common allegiance with Marthedren, Mitrestu and Dracor.

Duties: Oversees the Bay of Torpes and Oversea Trading Market

Personalities:**MASTER APHALES****the Old Patriarch****(NG male human W10 lv)**

Oldest surviving person from the Tarpanades tradition, Master Aphales is a skilled Alchemist. He is slender, with white hair and



green eyes. He wears modest garments and a gold amulet. He compulsively clenches his left fist.

LORD AULIUS THE PRIMOGEN
(NG male human C9 lv Zirchev)



First son of Lord Aphales, he has a long face, with white hair and green eyes. He wears dark robes and wields a dagger and short sword. He is the main figure of influence in the family.

LADY LYMAIA
(LN female human W5 lv)

As a member of an aristocratic family and representative to the City Council. Lady Lymaia has delicate mannerisms and calm voice, and is a skilled politician. She wears well-made clothing and large dresses.

EUBAS, THE YOUNG LADY
(N female human NW)

This young girl is very naive and shy. She has been much courted but has not yet promised her hand in marriage to anyone. She remains most of the time in the household.

SIR PERASITH

(NG male human F8 lv)

Master of the Port of Torpes. Sir Persith is concerned about the progress of trade on the harbor docks. He oversees and assists the royal guard. Occasionally some cases that require greater care are referred to Lord Aulius or the City Council.

HELA, THE WISE ONE

(NG female human W6 lv)

She has red hair and green eyes, wears green robes and wields a quarterstaff. Hela seeks to become an instructor at the guild of Magicians of Torpes (and is actually a member of Sage's League).

House of Dracor

MIZILDRAVISH

(NE male human w/ necromancer 9 lv)

He is pleasant in appearance but steadfastly represents the Dracor in Torpes. With matted gray hair and brown eyes. He wears fancy clothes and wields a rapier and dagger. Mizildravish is thoughtless and callous and always accompanied by a household escort.

House of Mitrestu

LORD VIOREL

(CN male human W7 lv)

Viorel has black hair and hazel eyes. He was recently sent to Torpes to learn some of the city politics (to represent the interests of Mitrestu there) and observe their customs. He wears leather armor and wields a short

sword. He seeks to continue the noble legacy of his father.

House of Thorberg

HALVIK

(CN male half Orc F4 lv)

Halvik was sent by the old crow (Asmund, his father) from Ishme, to build influence for Thorberg in the city through agreements with the Iron Guild led by Hanna Marthedren and to further enhance alliances with the family of Baluk (which holds strong relations with the Iron Fang clan from Nin-Marag). He has silver greasy hair and large gray eyes, and numerous horrific scars. He wears leather armor and wields a longsword and dagger. Halvik has an animal companion, a raven named Katla.

House of Marthedren

SINDRE

(NG female human W6 lv)

Sindre is the direct daughter of Hafthorr Marthedren and she provides significant magical aid to the House of Marthedren and the historical research of her father in particular. She enjoys her stay in Torpes to study magic at the local guild and develop her skills. Her close relationship with Hogni³³ (the ravensfolk sage) led her to ask for his help with studies of ancient Grønborg items

³³ These mysterious seers are in fact kin of the ancient Fey, and thus remain bitter opponents of the Ogam as related in ["Foresthme : Burwyn, Orfeander, & Rathmore"](#) on Bruce Heard's Blog.

in possession of her father Hafthorr in Marthedren tower, east of Torpes.

GUNNAR

(LN male human C7 lv Thor)

Gunnar is in Torpes in order to represent his father on the Council, keep the union of the minor Antalian families, and ensure the family financial affairs in the city. He wears expensive clothing and a copper amulet (house coat of arms).

MINOR FAMILIES

Medesyas

Traldar family of maritime merchants with a tradition of building ships. Descendants of the ancient Traldar sailors and navigators who built ships with skills and techniques to cross the deep water between the continents. Most boats and ships of the city bear their mark.

ENEMOS

Traldar family of builders and bricklayers. They made their renown and considerable influence by helping to build the city on the ruins of Grønborg and are constantly consulted on urban reform issues. The family manages several estates and some places to rent.

Cymia

The Cymia family invested its resources in the various businesses developed in the city and now has a tradition as investors. They have significant representation in the Imperial Bank in the city and hold several financial businesses with other local families.

Horgi

From Antalian heritage, Horgi holds its influence hunting and raising cattle in the field. Magic is a family tradition and they have a small guild of magicians (with a mixed of old Traldar sympathies and sorcery of the wise woman and wokans) located in the foreign district. They provide services to the Cymia family (which financed them to set up their guild) and the traditional Tarpanades, who sponsored the vote for the guild establishment in the City Council.

Eimarvik

Antalian family from maritime tradition of seafarers. They are responsible for the defense of the coast, the sea mercenaries and protectors of the Bay of Torpes (along with major house of Seaguard to the south protecting the Bay of Trollhattan). They also have many warriors hired as guild guards, soldiers and personal escorts for other families.

Sigebyr

A traditional Antalian family related to the Marthedren. Civilized and diplomatic. They are responsible for the good relations between the Antalian and Traldar families. Their main allies in business is the Iron Guild, and the iron trade coming from Remina is their major source of revenue.

Baluk

From the Baluk house came the support which enabled the Thorbeg clan to unite and civilize some of the local hill tribes and thus they succeeded in reducing the chaos of violent power struggles between those tribes; a situation that ended up having a nice result for the other families in Torpes since those

hill tribes now work in various menial jobs (dockers, miners, transporters) vital to the city's economy.

The Baluk family structure is actually a coalition of prominent tribes which established a commercial structure that controls a large share of Remina iron transportation business and the weapons production in Nin-Marag.

MINOR NPCS

SH'LARR (THE VOICE)
(CE male Lizardmen 7/Wo2/Sh3)

Leader of the Circle of Repth, he dedicates his life and efforts to rekindle the power of his people in Limn, through secrets he found in ancient records, dating back to the time of Repth (an ancient lizardman civilization in the Haunted Marshes, east of Kerothar mountains) and their former Carnifex lords. Currently his cult tries to recover an artifact, The Eye of Repth, that was lost during the chaos of the Alphatian invasion, in order to restore communion with their former masters and bring doom to those responsible for the fall of his kind (his Cult now has 20-30 worshipers).

BLACK HAGS OF THERABA SWAMP
(CN female Hag 12 HD)

The Theraba Marsh also serves as a shelter for a group of three hags seeking isolation. Visitors pay a high price for the visit (or their services).

JAHMADRYS
(N female adaptor 8 HD)



Leader of the League Sages in Torpes, she has assembled a good group of allies to collect tales and legends of the region (Hogni, Master Dulnor, Sindre, Hela and others in Trollhattan). Her liaison with the Empire is the scribe Lord Vantor Pendrike (an adaptor serving as royal scribe to the court in Theranderol) that has occasionally investigated ancient facts about Limn, Ilmaryl, Frisland, the Wizard War and the north lands of the old Argonath on behalf of the Empress, and used the league to keep a low profile. The league has developed a small library for study of exotic themes. The main purpose of Jahmadrys is to gather knowledge for the order of their race, the adaptors, who live on a plane outside Mystara, and she uses her small group to achieve that.

SIR QUINTHINAR**(NG male human F/ Knight 12 lv)**

Quenthinar is originally from Theranderol and was a paladin before failing his duty. After being removed from his original home, he spent some time wandering Haven and then went on to serve in Stonewall. There, he was assigned to journey to Torpes and spy on the actions of Mitrestu and Dracor and report to his masters in Draco. More than that, Quenthinar is waiting for an opportunity to cause serious damage to these undead sires and regain some of his former glory as a paladin and, maybe, attune for his sins.

LORD ALTHREZAM,**Officer of the Imperial Army
(LN male human W5 lv)**

Captain of the Alpathian Reserve Unit stationed in Torpes, he despises Limn, but when Lord Xandaram settled in the city, Althrezam saw a golden opportunity to improve his career in the Imperial Army, and despite that he has proven to be up to the task. Harsh and cold he keeps his men sharp and disciplined with uncountable drills and military exercises.

**“HIS IMPERIAL ENVOY” LORD XANDARAM
(LN male human W14 lv)**

Xandaram comes from Greenspur and due to his knowledge in history and economy of various civilizations and cultures, was recommended to take over the management of Imperial representation in Torpes. Recently he developed a passion for local history and with the help of the League of

Sages, he has obtained information about the magical practices of the region before the Alpathian colonization. His current study focuses are dating old rune stones (monoliths) from the old Grønborg/Terkyn period.

ARGALOTH**Minion of chaos³⁴****(CE male undead 11 HD)**

Argaloth was sent by the Lords of Chaos in Limbo (by the request of Nyx) to establish agreements and negotiations on the dead who are offered in worship to the immortal in his temple near the city of Nergath (the more souls he negotiates with the priests, the stronger are his manifestation powers on the primary plan). He is also one of the main protectors of the Great Temple and is occasionally called by Lord Cheslav to castle Mitrestu for unknown purposes.

³⁴ See description about Lord of Chaos and Minions of Chaos (and Limbo) on “*Voyage of the Princess Ark*” series, Dragon Magazine issue #180, page 48.

DM PLOT INFORMATION

Rajmund plans revenge

Vraakhys³⁵, a cleric of Alphaks, met in secret with the hephaeston and made a strange commission, in exchange for the service he promised Rajmund revenge against the mountain giants' leader, Martoth³⁶. Every lunar cycle the cleric uses a submersible ironclad to journey into the city from the northern coast on moonless nights, and picks up mysterious objects. Parts of the pieces he collects suggest some kind of metal golem made of Ulfberht. The truth on this process remains unknown.

Rune Monoliths

Stored in dungeons in the imperial bastion of Torpes, Xandaram seeks the support of rune wizards to unravel the ancient secrets of the stones. This fact attracted the attention of Jahmadrys (Leader of the League of Sages on Torpes) who has offered her services (knowledge of many languages and old records) to find clues about the connection between the ancient history of Limn, the goblinoids and the old monoliths.

Underground Vaults

In some underground ruins of ancient Terkyn/Grønborg, hidden by magical protection, still lie some rune monoliths not

³⁵ Vraakhys was described on ["A Gazetteer of Limn"](#) in Threshold issue #11 page 157

³⁶ Martoth was described on ["A Gazetteer of Limn"](#) in Threshold issue #11 page 156

yet located. Undead warriors still inhabit the ruins, watching the stones for their long dead leader, Ysla. They roam and keep these passages and chambers with the support of old beasts, and will destroy any one who disturbs their sacred duty.

League of Sages

A small guild of sages, scholars, and researchers based in Trollhattan and in Torpes. They study the past history and legends of Limn, particularly the north, Ahk-Kharu Hills, Grønborg, the mythical Gandhar and legends of Ymathra (this last subject made some members investigate the Mitrestu and Dracor). Xandaram is consulting the members of this guild on its collection of monoliths recovered from lost tombs.

Group of Suppression

A Group of Antaliens trying through the influence of the Iron Guild, agreements with goblinoids, and alliances with Thorberg, to weaken the strength of the Tarpanades and other Traldar families in the City Council of Torpes. Its main articulator is Hanna Marthedren.

The Nyx undertakers

All the unclaimed corpses (such as slaves, convicts, thieves, murderers, etc.) are collected by acolytes of the cult of Nyx and delivered to the great temple in the forest north of Nergath. Here they are used for ritualistic activities or stored underground in the catacombs of Mitrestu Castle, as part of

an agreement between the Immortal, the Lords of Chaos from Limbo and the Mitrestu family.

The Mitrestu Catacombs

In the lower levels of the castle lies a huge catacomb where thousands of embalmed corpses are stored for use in the defense of Limn (as a secret army) whenever King Drushiye so needs³⁷. Priests and necromancers are instructed to turn them into undead in small amounts at a time. This dead army has another secret purpose (known only by the heads of Mitrestu family), the digging of more tunnels and galleries. Parts of these new galleries are justified with the explanation of expanding the space of the catacombs for storage. In fact, the Mitrestu are digging tunnels and secret paths to remote locations abandoned or forgotten by the old Ymathrans colonies in Kerothar. One of those tunnels, in particular, led then to the recovery of the body of a former Ymathran lord imprisoned in some kind of magical stasis (actually an old nosferatu³⁸ lord). They also found clues that there are more secrets to be recovered around Dag-Atûr. Inevitably this operation will end up entering the territory of Stoutfellow.

³⁷ Hordes of Limn: Regular Division, Regiments 6-7. Accord to *Poor Wizards Almanac I & II* (TSR publishing) "Armies of the World" section.

³⁸ The Nosferatu was initially presented in GAZ1 *The Grand Duchy of Karameikos*.

Worship of Nyx and the Lords of Chaos

After the Alphatian invasion and the chaos that followed the conquest of Trollhattan, the Mitrestu end up in possession of an artifact from some obscure lizardmen cult: *a mirror to contact other planes*³⁹. The Cult of Nyx (led by members of the Mitrestu) through ceremonies and rituals used the artifact to establish a direct contact with the Lords of Chaos in Limbo, and this resulted in an alliance. A herald was sent to assist them in the work of necromancy: Argaloth (a Minion of Chaos). Inside the main chamber of the temple, during the ceremonies, Argaloth can use his powers as if he were using them in Limbo itself. The more souls and bodies sacrificed in the ceremonial basin of the temple, the stronger the power Argaloth can manifest. Thanks to magic preparations of the ceremonial basin, the manifestation powers of Argaloth can be reproduced in a replica of the basin hide in a secret chamber in Mitrestu castle.



Circle of Rept

This lizardmen cult had in its possession ancient clay tablets dating back to the time of

³⁹ See on CM5 *Talons of Night* (TSR publishing).

Repth (an ancient lizardmen civilization) and their former Carnifex lords. The tablets contained Carnifex ritual instructions to contact the **Outer Beings**⁴⁰, and the cult intended to use it as a secret weapon against the Alphatian invaders during the siege of Trollhattan (AY 915), but the city fell before the rituals were finished, and an artifact used as focus to the ceremony (The Eye of Repth) was lost in the chaos that followed the breach of the city walls. The artifact is actually a ⁴¹ and no one knows for sure how it ended up in the hands of the cult, since many of its members were killed by the Alphatian invaders, this knowledge is lost forever. The Circle seeks to recover the artifact since then, but still hasn't found any clues to its whereabouts. The clay tablets remain secretly hidden in a building in the capital, guarded by cultists.

The envoys of the Night

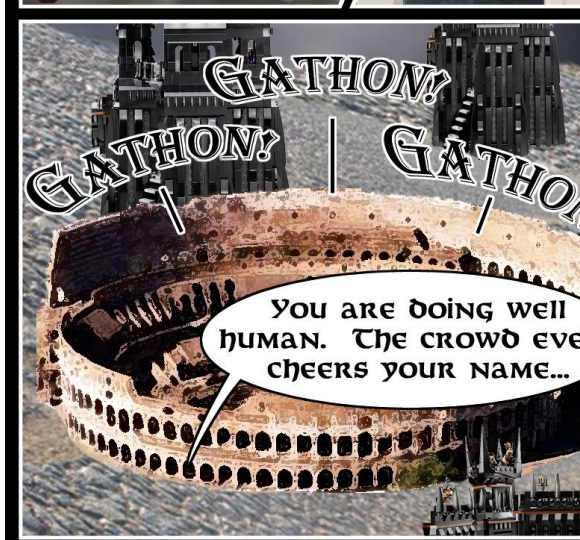
Some spectral beings connected to entropy had periodically visited and probed the castle Mitrestu and its catacombs, spying on the family activities. Occasionally, two of these "specters" have been captured and magically interrogated, however their purpose and the identity of their master remains unknown.

⁴⁰ See "[Insanity, Horror, and the Outer Beings in Mystara](#)".

⁴¹ Initially used by Araneas on Thothia to contact their masters on Plane of Isle of Night.

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- Geoff Gander "[The Fall of Ilmaryl](#)" from the Vaults of Pandius.from the Mystara Mailing List posted 16 September 1998.
- Geoff Gander "[Insanity, Horror, and the Outer Beings in Mystara](#)" from the Vault of Pandius





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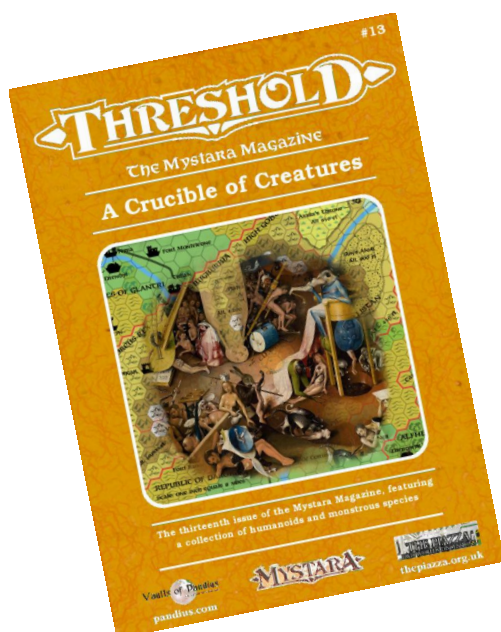
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NEXT ISSUE



Cover may be subject to change

The thirteenth issue of *Threshold*, will explore goblinoids and other non-human sentient beings of Mystara. Feature articles will cover lycanthropes, vampires, and goblinoids. Even our recurring megadungeon, Koskatep, will follow the issue theme, with the Beastman level. Submissions are open for more articles on any kind of critter, as well as general articles.

Prepare to open...

A CRUCIBLE OF CREATURES

Anticipated contents include:

- Goblinoid Tribes of Karameikos
- Bhut of Sind
- Vampiric Bloodlines of Mystara
- An Extended Treatise on Lycanthropy
- The Unknown World Trail Map
- More from Limn and Hesperia
- Another level of Koskatep

... and much much more...

Your Opinions?

The Editorial Team welcomes your feedback on this issue of THRESHOLD are welcomed. Please post your comments either by posting in [The Piazza Forums](#)

Please begin the subject line with the tag "[LETTER]"

Or by email to the Editorial address:
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Submission Guidelines

Proposals

All proposal submissions can be sent by mail to the editors at the following address Threshold.Mystara@gmail.com, and must be received by the proposal deadline[†]. 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:

- Proposed article title
- 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).

Manuscripts

Manuscripts should only be submitted after you proposal has been accepted by the Threshold editorial staff, and must be received by the manuscript deadline[†]. When submitting a manuscript file, please use the following naming convention:

threshold_#_your_title.<extension>
(extension: see below for recommended file formats)

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[ISSUE#][Manuscript]<title of your article>

The mail content should include the following:

- The article title.
- An attached document containing the article contents.
- The final word count of the article.

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.

The following guidelines apply to different types of submissions:

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.

[†]Refer to "Call for Contributions" (page 5) for next issue deadline dates.

#Insert relevant issue number in place of '#'



THRESHOLD

The Mystara Magazine



The past can come alive!

Ancient empires, horrors, miracles, catastrophes... Mystara's past is a rich treasure trove of such experiences, just waiting to be plundered. Most Player Characters learn about history from musty scrolls and crumbling clay tablets... but no more. Now they can live through those ancient mysteries directly.

Within these pages you will find adventures that span from mere decades before the modern era, all the way to the remote beginnings of humankind itself. While Geoff Gander and OldDawg explore two of the oldest human empires, LoZompatore delves into the origin of the elves. Other articles focus on darker times, in ancient Taymora, and we even delve into the past of the Mystaran community itself in an interview with James Mishler.

Even more can be found within, for this isn't the end of the story. Nor is it the beginning. You can always go... further back...

www.pandius.com



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