

# THRESHOLD

The Mystara Magazine

## Exploring Davania



The fifth issue of Mystara's premier magazine features the mysterious continent of Davania, and more Thyatian senators, more history of Ierendi and Minrothad and more secrets of Koskatep!

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# THRESHOLD

## Issue #5

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## *Into the depths of Davania...*

It has been some time since I first saw the name Davania, and I think it was in the *Hollow World* boxed set. I already knew of this continent, as I had seen its shape in the *Master Set* map, but that map had only some mysterious names. It was more than enough to trigger my imagination, but then the *Hollow World* boxed set added a lot, with more geographical locations and a map of migrations. If at first I had only the mysterious names of Adakkia, Arypt, Izonda and Pelatan, after the boxed set I also had the Isle of Cestia, the Vulture Peninsula, the Lost Valley, and I knew that elves and halfling had escaped the continent in the past, and there were also humans, gnomes and humanoids. So I have dreamt of Davania for years, wondering about the people that might inhabit the continent and about the adventures I could devise for players.

Then Davania became much more “alive” to me thanks to the *Princess Ark* series by Bruce Heard, that added so much information about the continent, and the maps drawn by Geoff Gander, the first complete depiction of Davania at 72 miles per hex<sup>1</sup>. These maps were indeed one of the greatest wonders of the wonderful Vaults of Pandius, when I had my first stable Internet connection, back in 1998. Hence the development of Western Davania for the Almanacs<sup>2</sup> was one of my first contributions to the Mystaran community, several years ago.

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<sup>1</sup> In this issue Geoff will relate the history on how he produced his maps!

<sup>2</sup> The fan almanacs can be found in the [Vaults of Pandius](#)

Editing this issue I finally had the opportunity to develop Davania a bit more, making a revised map with some more names on it, the results of the work done over many years by myself and all of the Mystaran community. Now Davania has more names of people, nations and empires, but still enough mystery to fuel my imagination. The great southern continent was and will always be one of my favourite places in Mystara, and I will probably never stop imagining new stories, creatures and adventures.

What more could you ask for in a fantasy land? I hope you will enjoy, as I did, this fantastic voyage exploring the mysterious continent of Davania. This is just a start, as I know Davania holds more stories and mystery than we could ever imagine.

*Francesco Defferrari (aka Sturm)*  
Editor-in-chief, Threshold Issue #5



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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



Issues #1 to #4 of **THRESHOLD** - the Mystara Magazine, is 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.

## This Issue's Contributors

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

**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, and Witchcraft RPG.

**Allan Palmer** (aka *AllanP*) was first introduced to *D&D* a long time ago (but not quite in a galaxy far away) by a work colleague who set up a gaming group using the last version of the "blue book" rules. While dabbling with *RuneQuest* and *Traveller* along the way, he developed a liking for what would become the world of Mystara as the BECMI box sets were released. He has always been fascinated by maps. He is an IT professional and when not indulging in hobbies of panelology, retro tv watching and family history research, uses his various PC skills to consolidate the writings of others into the issues of *Threshold*.

**Joseph Setorius** (aka *julius\_cleaver*) began roleplaying in '79, & besides a few brief intervals is constantly involved in one

campaign or another. Though a longtime Mystaran DM & player; including a thirteen year campaign throughout the eighties & early nineties, which helped create much of his material; he is relatively new to the Mystara online community. Besides Mystara he enjoys original settings & campaigns set in Greyhawk, Harn, and Dark Sun. A map loving surveyor, his other interests include reading, hiking, and playing/teaching piano. **Joey Armstrong** lives in Denver, CO. Holding a bachelor degree in Media Arts and Animation, she works as a freelance multimedia designer and illustrator. In her spare time she casts on [twitch.tv/jooygirl](https://www.twitch.tv/jooygirl) and rages soundly at video games.

**Jesper Andersen** (a.k.a. *Spellweaver*) has been a fan of the Known World and Mystara since his first D&D game in 1991. He enjoys creating new adventures, stories, characters and monsters, much of which can be found at the Vault of Pandius. His latest personal adventure, however, is the launch of his own RPG publishing company called Blood Brethren Games.

**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).

Even though *Sturm* (a.k.a. **Francesco Defferrari**) loves any alternate world, he

## This Issue's Contributors

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.

**Simone Neri** (*Zendrolion*) teaches history and philosophy at secondary school in Florence, Italy. He has mastered Mystara campaigns since 1987, his favourite settings being Thyatis, Norwold, Karameikos, and Glantri. He is an active member of The Piazza community with the nickname of Zendrolion - but don't fear backstabbing from him!

Special thanks to:

Shawn Stanley (*stanles*), Harri Mäki (*hihama*), Alan Shutko (*alanshutko*), Matt (*Carillion*), Patrick Sullivan, Troy Terrell (*CmdrCorsiken*), Giampaolo Agosta (*Agathokles*), Robert Nuttman (*RobJN*) and Simone Neri (*Zendrolion*) for helping with editing and proofreading!

Why not join our team of contributors?  
See page 5 for more information on  
our plans for future issues



### *FROM THE VAULTS OF PANDIUS*

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

## 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 6: The Northlands

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

**Manuscript Deadline:** October 31st, 2014

**Issue Published:** End 2014

Call for proposals for main themes of forthcoming issues (2015):

### Hollow World and the Immortals

The editorial team will accept proposal about the above topics or anything related.

### Glantri and beyond

The editorial team will accept proposal on Glantri and nearby nations (Darokin, Sind, Wendar, Ethengar, the Adri Varma plateau, the Broken Lands) and on Magic too.

### Isle of Dawn, Thyatis and Alphatia

The editorial team will accept proposal on the Isle of Dawn, Thyatis, Alphatia and dependencies (Ochalea, Pearl Islands, Alatians, Bellisaria, Esterhold and any other colony).

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.





# IMAGES OF DAVANIA

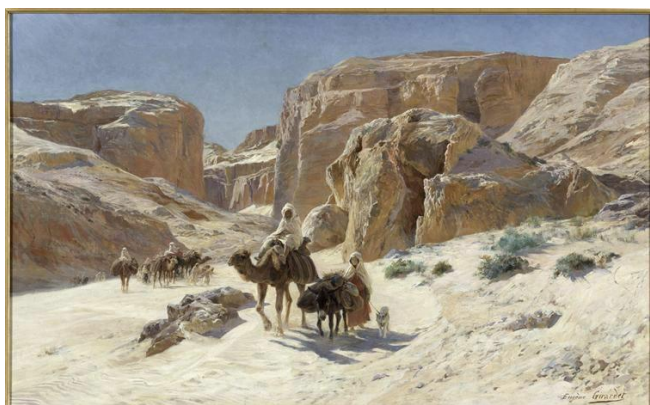
~ A Guide for Dungeon Masters ~

by Geoff Gander

## FROM THE VAULTS OF PANDIUS

Davania - an entire continent, which few people in the Known World (or anywhere else, for that matter) know much of anything about. Although Davania has very little in the way of "official" information, I believe there are some guidelines that DMs should keep in mind when planning adventures in the region.

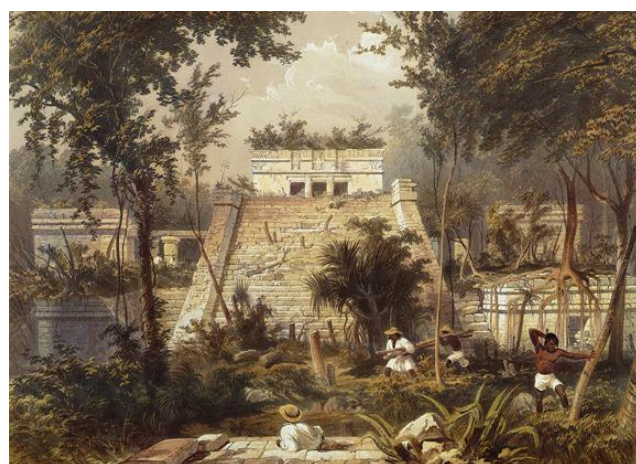
**Size:** One thing that distinguishes Davania from most other regions of Mystara is its sheer scale - it is the largest continent on the surface. In that vein, it should come as no surprise that natural landforms - such as mountain range, valleys, deserts, and so forth - can be on scales that dwarf anything seen anywhere else. Great rows of volcanoes stretching for longer distances than most Known Worlders can conceive of, towering mountains, seemingly endless deserts and plains - all of these things exist in Davania, and the DM should use their imaginations to convey this sense of immensity. This size, once it becomes known to others, might



*Aryptian desert*

entice various nations to colonise the continent; with all that land seemingly free for the taking, someone, somewhere, is bound to decide that it would be a good idea to grab some land.

**Antiquity:** Davania is not only colossal in



*Lost temple in the Izondian Coast*

size; it is home to many cultures that predate those of the Known World by centuries, or even millennia. The elves, for example, built their first great nations in southern Davania, just as the Milenians founded theirs during the height of Nithia, a time scarcely remembered in Brun, in the north. Other cultures have existed there continuously throughout time, sometimes changing their surroundings, sometimes be changed by them. Davania is also the former center of Mystaran civilisation - ancient Carnifex citadels towered over the landscape, and

terrible wars were fought there, some of which made it possible for societies to rise and fall elsewhere. Needless to say, Davania is also home to one of the largest collections of ruins and forgotten artifacts; wherever one looks, signs of civilisation can be found - some more recognisable than others and some which should remain hidden.

**Alienness:** In addition to being home to some of the most ancient civilisations on Mystara, Davania contains some of the most unique and bizarre cultures and races - at least, by Known World standards. Living near the Thyatian Hinterlands are the exotic Emerondians, who are the descendants of a strange alien race with great affinity for plant life. South of them, on the great Meghala Kimata Plains, live the remnants of the once-mighty Milenian Empire, amidst powerful tribes of rakasta, minotaurs, and other creatures. The Adakkian Mounts contain fearsome secrets within their caverns, and the lizard men of the Amalur Lowlands display a level of sophistication unseen among their cousins in most other places. In the east, the Isle of Cestia contains dark secrets of a lost empire, and in the south the enigmatic Divergans keep watch over their lands. Davania is also the home of some more prominent races of Mystara: the gnomes, for example, have several nations on this continent, and have achieved a level of power unseen among their cousins in Brun. This also blends in with the idea of mystery - to a Known Worlder, and to the players themselves, Davania is a great, strange land; every new culture should be unique in some way, and an experience in itself. The best known, and most detailed areas of Davania - that which lies in the northeastern portion of the continent, is only the tiniest fraction of the continent's total

landmass. There is literally no limit to what might live in Davania.

**Proximity:** Take a look at a world map of Mystara. You should see that, contrary to



*Aryptian city*

various impressions, Davania is really not all that far away from the Known World - certainly no farther than Bellissaria for some nations. For others, such as Ierendi or Darokin, Davania is actually closer than such places as the eastern Isle of Dawn, Norwold, or Alphatia. Coastal nations, in particular, might actually be interested in what is going on in Davania, especially those interested in exploration, who might see the southern continent as a great land of opportunity. Looking at it from the other perspective, many Davanians (at least in the north) are becoming increasingly aware of Brun and its civilisations. The Thyatians have been a presence for almost 30 years now, and word has spread of the strange places that lie north, across the Sea of Dread. Those outward-looking cultures might actually begin striving to make contact on their own, or they might react to explorers with open curiosity - albeit one tinged with a sense that there might be something to be gained.



**Civilisation:** Contrary to the initial impressions of explorers, Davania is not filled with grass huts and spear-wielding tribesmen with a penchant for driving bones



*Exploring ships*

through their nostrils. It was home to some of the most sophisticated cultures Mystara has ever seen, and their legacies have not been entirely forgotten. Thus, with its great size and its long history, Davania hosts a number of cultures who, socially (if not technologically) speaking, are at least in the same league as those of the Known World. What perhaps accentuates the continent's uniqueness is the sheer contrast in development - prosperous Milenian city-states can thrive amidst nomadic rakasta tribes, the disciplined Divergans engage in frequent battles against the local gnomish clans, while the enigmatic Snartans seek to expand their own lands, and let's not forget the Citadel, centre of technomantic learning. There really is no limit to the technological levels that may be found here. Likewise, the Davanian cultures may also have considerable knowledge of magic - the Milenian city-states of the Meghala Kimata Plains, for example, might have preserved ancient Milenian spells, the likes of which are unknown in the Known World. Just as easily,

some cultures might have little or no magic; the scale of power is open-ended, with plenty of room for variation. It is *not* a sure thing that, when they encounter Davanians, Known World visitors will immediately awe the natives; it could very well be the other way around!

**Opportunity:** Like Norwold, Davania is a "land of opportunity." Those enterprising souls with courage and tenacity can be the first people to open trade routes with newly



*The ruins of Milenopolis in the Hills of Desolation*

discovered exotic port cities, and cut themselves a nice amount of profit in the process. Being home to many strange (by Known World standards) cultures, Davania is the source of many exotic spices, foods, drinks, and other goods that could be totally unknown elsewhere. Not only is there opportunity in terms of goods; as mentioned earlier, those who know of Davania know it to be a great continent, one so large that an explorer could lose him- or herself easily within its landmass, and never be seen again. Nations could see the continent as fertile ground for lucrative colonies, as well. Just as likely, outward-looking Davanian nations (such as Kastelios, to name but one example) could see the nations of the Known World as potential markets for their own products, or

as sources of goods that are unavailable at home. All this produces the possibility of conflict, as well as new contacts between different races a cultures.

**Not Under Anyone's Thumb:** I see Davania as one of the "last great unspoiled territories" - one of the regions of the world (along with Skothar) that has remained largely free of



*Explorers in the wilderness*

involvement from imperial powers bent on global domination. The Thyatian presence here has been a relatively recent one (compared with the continent's overall history), and even so, Thyatis is expanding prudently, ensuring that its hold on those lands it already possesses is secure. Alphatia's presence here, if any, is pretty much non-existent. As a result, the various races and nations of Davania have been free to develop on their own, by and large, surviving or dying on their own merits. Personally, I think this feel ought to be preserved - outside powers might move in and colonise portions of the continent, but it will not be an easy task, nor will the native Davanians stand by and let outsiders take over everything. One should also keep in mind colonial rivalries - just as Thyatis and Alphatia conducted many wars over their

colonies in Ylaruam, so could a similar scenario take place in Davania. As much as possible, I would like to prevent large-scale colonisation from taking place, at least not without heavy losses to the coloniser.

**Putting it all together:** When we take all of these elements into consideration, we can present Davania as a great continent, full of unknown history, and home to bizarre races and cultures, the likes of which few Known Worlders will have ever seen. Davania should also be seen as a rich land, full of wealth in terms of culture and resources, and, to those who know of it, a potential jewel in any colonial empire. What makes Davania even more special is the fact that, for all its mystique, it lies across the Sea of Dread from the Known World, within reach, tantalisingly close...a veritable paradise for explorers and adventurers, but one which contains its own dangers.



*Vulcania*



# *It Started with a Single Hex-Map...*

by Geoff Gander

*Fall 1996:*

I was starting my final year of undergrad and had been a member of the Mystara Mailing List (MML) for a number of months. I had made a few posts, such as the original timeline of Varellya (my first contribution to the Vaults of Pandius), and was following most of the active threads, even though my campaign at the time did not end up using most of what I was reading. It was a heady time—the Internet was still a new thing for me and the Mystaran community was still in its infancy. It was a free-for-all of ideas because all we had at that time was the “canon” rule set; everything beyond the Known World and Alphatia was pretty much a blank slate. Good quality scans of maps simply did not exist, mapping software like Hexmapper had not been invented yet, and Thorf’s great mapping project<sup>1</sup> was beyond even our wildest dreams. We were still discussing whether we could convince TSR to bring back Mystara.



Then, as now, much of the discussion on the MML focused on the Known World. This was, of course, sensible because that region was detailed in published materials and it was the one thing that united us as fans. But every so often I looked at the world map in the *Hollow World* boxed set, and the map of the Sea of Dread that came with the 1011 AC edition of the *Poor Wizard’s Almanac* (which detailed the northern coast of Davania), and I began to wonder. Wouldn’t it be great if we could someday map out Davania to the same level of detail as TSR had done with the Known World? I thought of the interesting land forms that could be created... the opportunities to create new cultures... and I grew excited at the prospect

<sup>1</sup> See the beautiful replica of Geoff’s Maps by Thorf, at the [Vaults of Pandius](#)

of stepping over the metaphorical border and exploring. And so I decided to do it myself.

The first map was of the Adakkian Sound region. It was the hardest one to do because I knew all the other maps would be based off of it, and any error would only be magnified over time (I had already decided to map out the entire continent), but I saved myself a lot of pain by setting the scale at 72 miles per hex and basing it off of the map from the *Poor Wizard's Almanac*. But what would I do once I ventured off the official maps? The only thing I had to guide me was the Hollow World map, and I developed a formula to convert the distances between the two maps. The rest of it was eyeballing to make sure the contours, major rivers, and vegetation zones of the hex map matched those of the Hollow World map. Amazingly, I managed to recreate the coastlines in larger form with only a moderate amount of cursing. I then headed west to map the southern shores of

the Izondian Deep, and then eastwards to the Isle of Cestia. At the same time, I put down numbered markers for interesting places I had planned to develop later. Some of them, like the major settlements of the Adakkian Sound and Cestia, were fleshed out to at least a basic level of detail. Others, such as those of Izonda and the places in the far south, were developed by others.

The process of mapping was painstaking. In addition to drawing coastlines and rivers I drew each of the hex icons with a pencil—every tree, every reedy swamp, every mountain and hill on all of those maps. And then once I was finished I inked them all. Each map took a couple of hours to do in this way, and I hadn't even started colouring! Ah, colouring... that was both fun and frustrating. Once I had gone through my pencil crayons to determine which shades I was going to use (making sure to buy spares in case a particular shade went out of stock)

I set to work. Each hex coloured took me one step closer to bringing Davania to life, but it was a delicate affair because I had to make sure I used the same amount of pressure when I was colouring - I wanted the hexes to match as perfectly as possible.

I was mapping Davania, on and off, from 1996 until 1998. Each time I completed a map I scanned and





emailed it to Shawn Stanley for inclusion in the Vaults of Pandius. I remember following the MML (and TSR's Mystara Message Board) threads closely to see what people thought about this project of mine. While I don't remember too many people chomping at the bit to run campaigns there, there was a fair amount of appreciation and interest in the work. But ultimately the work was done, and aside from mapping Denagoth and Heldann my hand-drawn mapping days had come to an end. But my Davania maps were not about to be forgotten.

Not long afterwards I ended up getting involved in the *Mystaran Almanac* during an expansion period. The editors wanted to cover more territory—including Davania—so I was offered the chance to manage it. I

started up a project team, portioned out regions covering thousands of square kilometres each to eager fans, and let them go wild. I have to admit, I felt powerful. Here I was, overseeing the development of the largest continent on the planet, free to craft master storylines as I saw fit, and no one else seemed to mind because what my team got up to usually had little or no impact on the rest of the world. We pretty much did what we wanted, within reason, and I think that open atmosphere that we all agreed to foster is part of what helped create the rich mixture of cultures our community's version of Davania exemplifies today. Naturally, we used the maps as our guide, and someone people really got inspired.



“I’ve got an idea for crab-men,” Francesco Defferrari told me once, and he dumped a mini-gazetteer for Tlik’kkil, the Haven of the Crab-Men in my inbox.

“Sounds cool, go ahead!” I replied. Who was I to stand in the way of creativity? Besides, it was thinking outside the box and that’s what I decided Davania should be about. Francesco delivered, and so did Alex Benson (the Divergans), Jeff Daly (the Kwythellar Elves), and Ethan Denault (Thimhallan and technomancy). I did my share as well—mainly in detailing Kastelios and the other Milenian city-states, and of course crafting the *Mystaran Almanac* storyline concerning the Heldannic campaign in northern Davania, which did result in some major changes to how the Order was structured and how it operated. And as we continued our work for the *Mystaran Almanac* a wonderful thing happened: People in the

broader community began to think about Davania. It had finally moved beyond the *terra incognita* at the bottom of a campaign map; it was becoming a place to visit, or even to stage campaigns. People also began creating their own maps, using mine as a base. The maps had truly acquired a life of their own, which is what I wanted in the first place. Looking back at what has been produced by the community over the past 18 (!) years, it truly has been an incredible journey—and to think it may have all started with a single hex map.



## The Piazza

The Premier community  
for discussion of  
D&D Campaign Worlds

<http://www.thepiazza.org.uk/bb/index.php>





# A Map of Davania

in 72 miles per hex

by Francesco Defferrari (Sturm)

Here is the updated political map of Davania that I have produced for this issue of *Threshold* magazine, following the theme of “Exploring Davania”.

It contains all the information on Davania from canon and fanon sources that I could find<sup>1</sup>, and some novel information developed in this issue.

It is an enlarged version of the original maps by Geoff Gander and Thorf<sup>2</sup>, i.e. I made Davania bigger, particularly in the north-south direction, otherwise the continent would not have reached the South Pole (because Geoff worked with the “smaller Mystara” as presented in the *Hollow World* boxed set, as he explains in his article in this issue).

The presentation of Mystara as a planet smaller than Earth, however, was later discarded by the community<sup>3</sup> as it contradicts other canon sources. This map therefore assumes that Mystara has a global dimension similar to Earth, and I also added the island

of Evergrun as imagined by the Italian Mystaran community<sup>4</sup>.

Obviously others could disagree with some or all the assumptions above, but I like to have a bigger Davania, as bigger means more land, more nations, more creatures and more adventures. So I present for you my map of Davania, a map I could not have drawn without inspiration from the work of many people in the Mystaran community. Credit is due to all of them, in particular to Bruce Heard, Geoff Gander (Seer of Y'hog), Michele C. (LoZompatore), Simone Neri (Zendrolion), Christian Constantin (Laokong), Alex Benson, Havard, Thibault Sarlat, Steven Wilson, Jeff Daly, John Calvin (Chimpman), Thorfinn Tait, Ethan Deneault, Sean Meaney, Andrew Theisen and all the others who have dreamt of Davania.

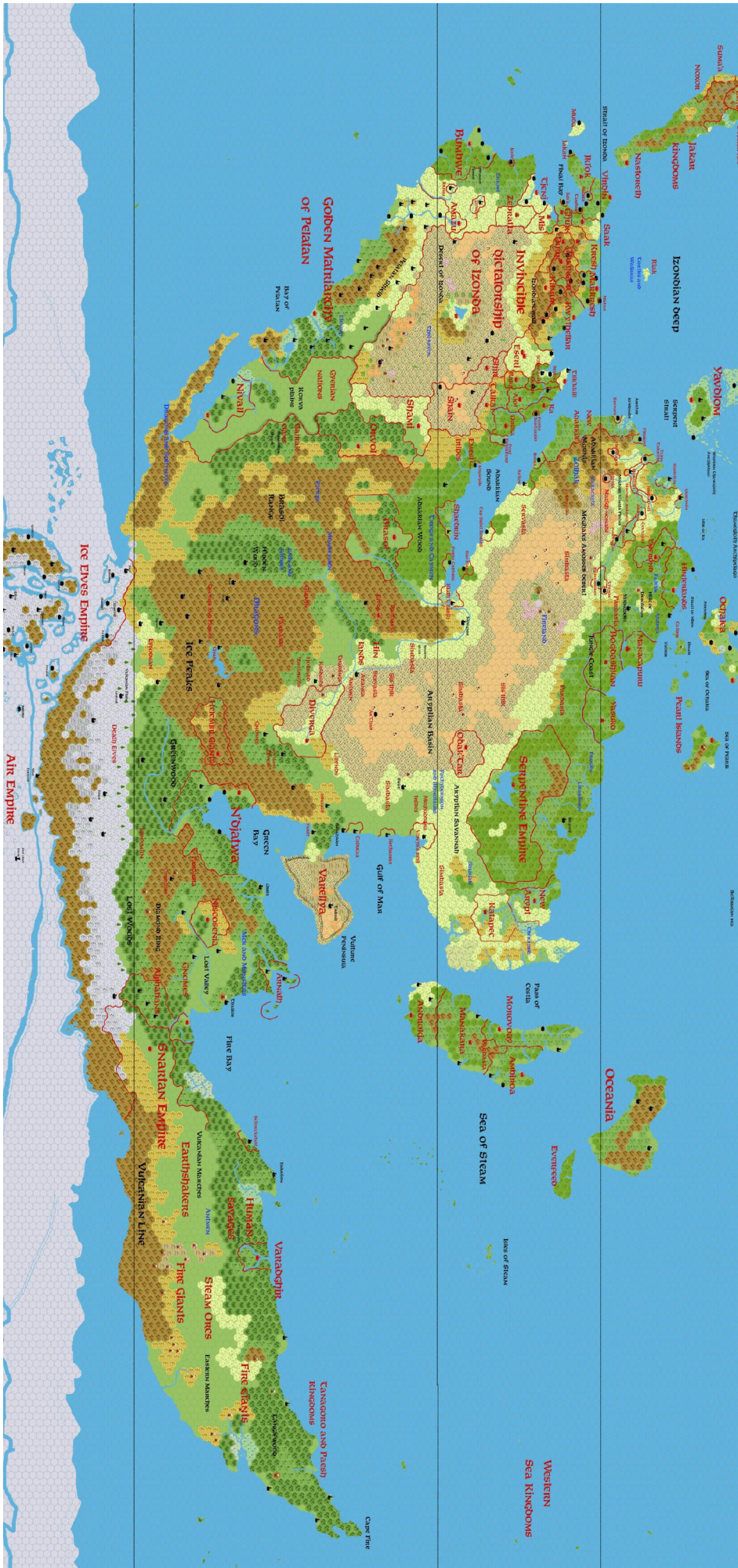
The following page presents a 63x29 cm 200 pixels per inch map scaled to fit our page format. This map has been enlarged and divided into 3 sections (West, Central and East Davania respectively) and these appear on the subsequent pages.

<sup>1</sup> Information which you can mostly find in the “Atlas” section of the Vaults of Pandius, under the section “Davania” or in [recent threads on the Piazza discussion board](#).

<sup>2</sup> Geoff’s original maps are stored on the Vaults under the appropriate Davanian region, while Thorf’s combined replica can be found [here](#).

<sup>3</sup> Several threads are listed [here at the Piazza](#), under Mapping Issues.

<sup>4</sup> The map of Evergrun was drawn by LoZompatore, expanding on [previous work by Zendrolion](#).











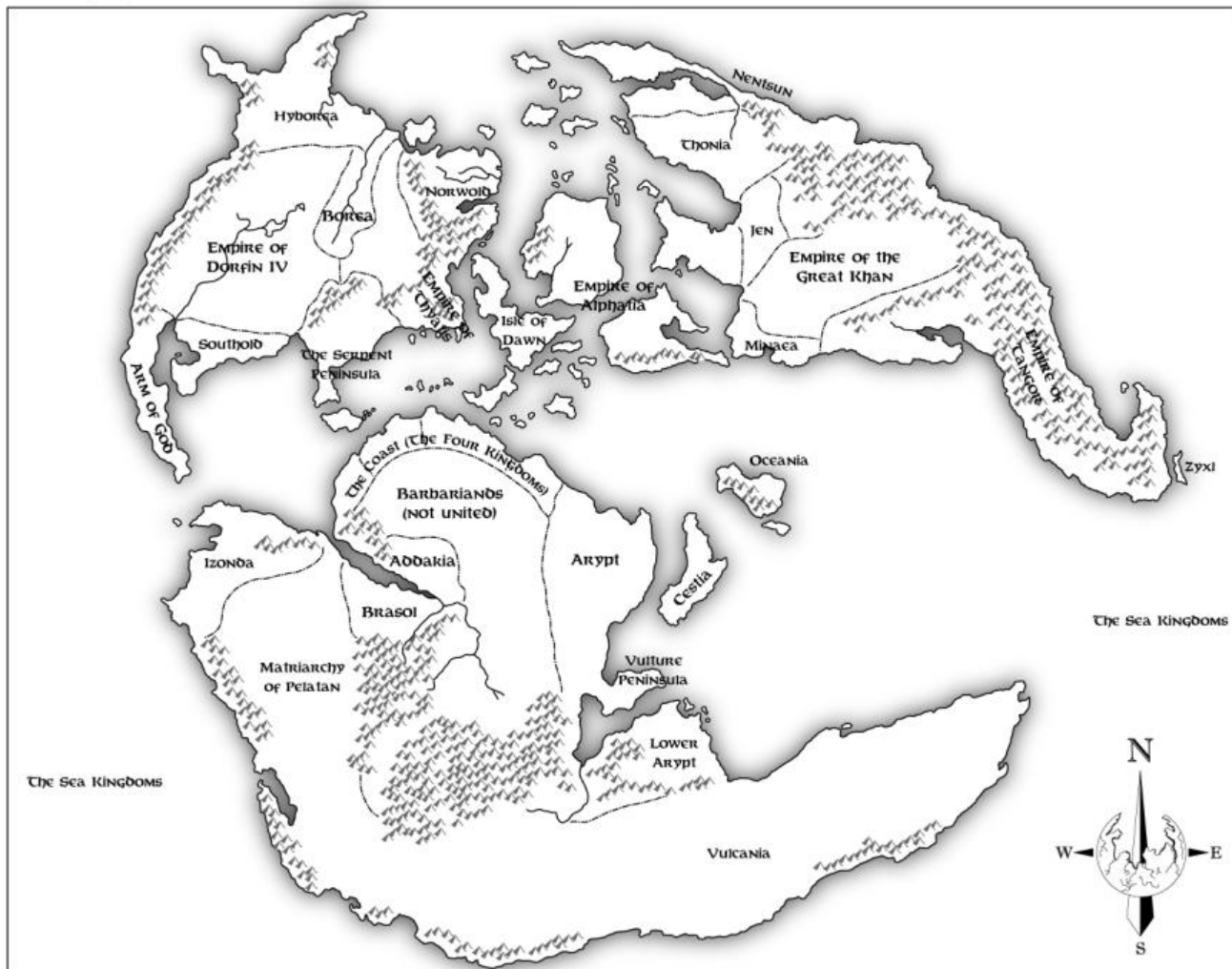






# History of Davania in Mystara products

compiled by Francesco Defferrari (Sturm)



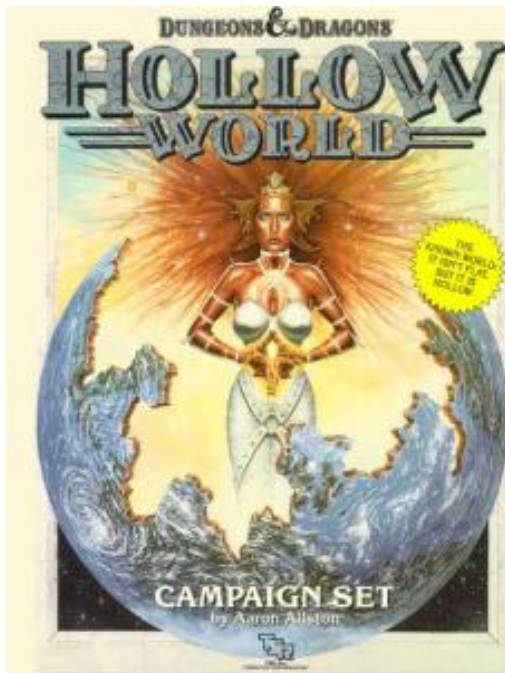
In 1985 Frank Mentzer authored the black box Master rules set. Included within this set was the map<sup>1</sup> for the world of Basic Dungeons and Dragons, which had not yet received the name Mystara. The map was the first depiction of the Davanian continent, with some mysterious lands dubbed the Four Kingdoms, Atrypt, Addakia, and the Matriarchy of Pelatan. However, no detailed

description was given to such places. In 1988, The Elves of Alfheim and Five Shires gazetteers stated that elves and halflings had come from Davania in the remote past. In 1989, the Dawn of Emperors the Thyatis and Alphantian (purple) gazetteer boxed set, written by Aaron Allston was published. It included the Thyatian occupied Four Kingdoms, which became, under the name of Thyatian Hinterlands, the first Davanian

<sup>1</sup> Reproduced by Thorfinn Tait at the [Vaults of Pandius](#)

lands described in detail. Yet the major turning point for the continent came in January 1990, when, in *Dragon Magazine* 153, Bruce Heard commenced the series entitled “Voyages of the Princess Ark.”

**The Map:** In the first Princess Ark article, the protagonist, Alphatian admiral Haldemar of Haaken, mocked the name tags on the “Nithian (Mentzer’s) Map,” attributing it to a Thyatian general who gave fake names to lands, inspired by his wife, mistress, dog, and even a brand of cheap beer. In a later letter in *Dragon Magazine*, Bruce stated that the map could still have some truth in it.



**Snakelike natives:** After the Four Kingdoms, the first people Haldemar meet are the “original natives”<sup>2</sup> of Davania, described as “short, copper skinned with blowguns and snakelike shamans with powerful magic.” This culture of the Manacapuru tribal lands will be further described in similar

<sup>2</sup> At least, those who occupied the Four Kingdoms region before the Hinterlanders

**Timeline of published Mystara products referring Davania**

**1987:** *AC11 The Book of Wondrous Inventions*, Bruce Heard mentions the Land of the Earthshakers.

**1988:** *GAZ5 The Elves of Alfheim Gazetteer* by Steve Perrin The elves came from Evergrun, below Davania and now at the south pole.

**1988:** *GAZ8 The Five Shires Gazetteer* by Ed Greenwood. The halfling too came from Davania.

**1989:** *Dawn of Emperors, Thyatis and Alphatia* by Aaron Allston. Thyatians lived in Davania for centuries, the Milenian Empire is also mentioned.

**1989:** *PC2 Top Ballista* by Carl Sargent, the Kingdom of Katapec in Arypt is mentioned.

**1990:** *Hollow World Campaign Set* by Aaron Allston. The Milenian Empire, once a powerful nation in Davania, is described. The migration map gave hints about the history of Davania, as two Tanagoro colonies from Skothar in Izonda and Vulcania, and more.

**1990:** *Dragon Magazine 153-158*, the first part of *Voyages of the Princess Ark*, set in Davania.

**1991:** *Dragon Magazine 166:* Princess Ark in Emerond.

**1992:** *Poor Wizard's Almanac* by Aaron Allston. In *Geographic Overview* entries about Davania, Emerond and the Hinterlands, giving more details on these regions. Also a



terms by Ann Dupuis in *Poor Wizard's Almanac II*, published in 1993, as inhabited by: “copper-skinned natives who honor snakelike immortals and wield poisonous weapons”, “savagely repelling any intruders.”

**Synn and Night Dragons:** In *Dragon 154* the Princess Ark visits the island of Oceania where Haldemar meets the Night Dragons and Synn, a recurring villain that will have a huge impact on the series and Mystara<sup>3</sup>. Synn was supposed to be the queen of Night Dragons in Oceania, where she guarded a mysterious, ancient secret.

**Wulf, Synn and other dragons:** In *Dragon 171*,<sup>4</sup> Bruce Heard wrote an article about the draconic personalities of the Known World. As he stated that other dragons should view Night Dragons as abominations, Synn moving to Glantri in canon *Almanacs* could lead to some interesting developments. It also seems clear from what is written in *Dragon 164* that Synn could control Wulf von Klagendorf and she placed him as head of the Heldannic order.<sup>5</sup> However in another story that Bruce Heard wrote on the Mystara Message Board about the future of the Heldannic order<sup>6</sup> Wulf picks a fight against the dragon Pyre and (temporarily) wins, and seems to have become a force of law rather than chaos.

**Gulf of Mar geopolitics:** In *Dragon 155* and *156* Haldemar meets the inhabitants of Cestia and escapes with some difficulties the Heldannic Knights in Vanya's Rest. In *Dragon 157*, he visits the fallen kingdom of Varellya on the Vulture Peninsula and meets its cursed inhabitants, the nagpas. Then in *Dragon 158* Haldemar encounters the civilized (but flesh eating slavers) culture of the

color map depicting north eastern Davania.

1992: *HW3 The Milenian Empire* by Anthony Herring. Details on the history of the Milenian Empire in Davania.

1993 *Champions of Mystara* (Heroes of the Princess Ark) by Ann Dupuis, re-published in a box the *Dragon Magazine* series, but with only a brief summary on the first episodes set in Davania.

1993 *Poor Wizard's Almanac II* by Ann Dupuis, as the previous one.

1994 *Poor Wizard's Almanac III* by Ann Dupuis, as the previous ones, although the color map showed the Alphatian Sea rather than Davania.

1998: *Dragon Magazine 247*, article about Rakasta.

<sup>3</sup> She'll even become the main antagonist in the 1996 Capcom videogame *Shadow over Mystara*, even if she appears as a red dragon

<sup>4</sup> The article is also available at the [Vaults of Pandius](#)

<sup>5</sup> See [“Synn and Wulf von Klagendorf”](#)

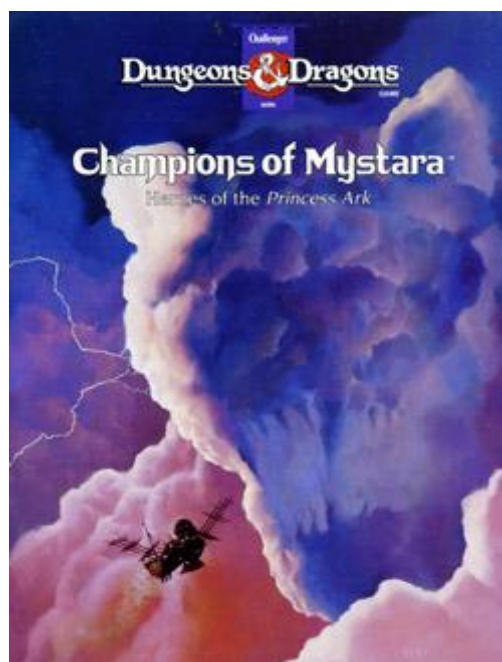
<sup>6</sup> See: [“The Future of the Heldannic Knights”](#)

N'djatwa, with whom he makes a treaty on behalf of the Alphatian empire. Bruce Heard returned to that area between 1995 and 1998 in the AOL Mystara message board discussing the Heldannic Knights, portraying their defeat at the hands of the Simbasta,<sup>7</sup> who became overseers of the order in Davania. Bruce also returned on the nagpas in a recent article on his blog.<sup>8</sup>

**The Snartan Empire:** Another interesting Davanian culture was born in AC11 Book of Wondrous Inventions, where Bruce Heard wrote in the entry “Jaggar’s Transforming Gargantoid” about a land “beyond the Sea of Dread” where Alphatian outposts fight against the gnomes and their Earthshakers. Back in 1987, that could be one of the first developments of Davania. Bruce Heard returned on this topic in 1998 on the Mystara Message Board, introducing the gnomish Snartan Empire.<sup>9</sup> The Earthshaker’s existence was also hinted in Dragon 158. (“Most surprising was the old female’s mention of the lands that lie farther to the east. Ngezitwa said that it was the realm of the titans, huge creatures that seem to spend their time fighting and destroying each other.”)

**Emerond:** After being moved in the future of 2000 AY, Haldemar returned to Alphatia and then visited the Isle of Dawn, Ochalea, and later the Kingdom of Emerond,<sup>10</sup> an alien culture with interesting relations with plants and insects, in Dragon 166.

**Adakkian colonies:** From 1995 onwards Bruce Heard also joined the discussions on



the Mystara Message Board, once again shaping whole areas of Mystara, for example introducing Savage Coast nations’ colonies in the Adakkian Sound,<sup>11</sup> giving a picture of Davania as something of a mirror of 1500-1800 South America and Africa, with multiple colonial powers competing, as in the later story of Doc Purringstone.<sup>12</sup>

**Pelatan and Izonda:** The Princess Ark never visited Western Davania but Bruce Heard has mentioned it twice. Replying to a letter in Dragon 164 he wrote that “Amazons would be likely to be in the region originally called the Matriarchy of Pelatan, on the Southern continent. Perhaps that old Nithian map had some truth to it!” He also returned on the topic in 1995 in AOL Mystara Message Board,<sup>13</sup> writing that “Else, some years ago I did play around with the idea of amazon warriors controlling Izondia (historical inspiration pretty shaky). It was an option

<sup>7</sup> ibid

<sup>8</sup> See: [“About the Nagpas”](#)

<sup>9</sup> See: [“Snartapolis”](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

<sup>10</sup> See: [“Emerond”](#) at the Vaults

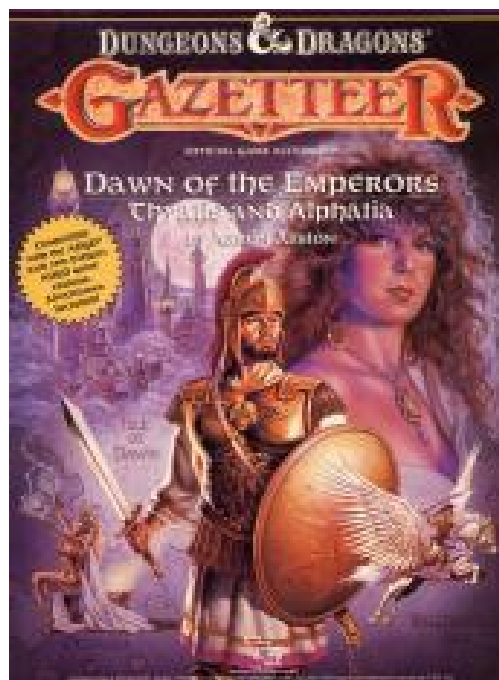
<sup>11</sup> See: [“Colonies on Davania”](#) at the Vaults

<sup>12</sup> See: [“Doc Livingstone I Presume?”](#)

<sup>13</sup> See: [“Davania Ideas: Izonda/Pelatan and Arypt”](#)

for a future trip aboard the Princess Ark. Izondia would have been a militocracy where women dominate society. Early in their history, women of that civilization received a special blessing from their patron Immortal(s) (one of them probably being Vanya<sup>14</sup> of course) which gave them a clear advantage over their males companions. As a result, their society progressively became matriarchal. Since then, however, the effects of the blessing have become very rare, perhaps limited to a small clerical elite. But it no longer matters. Izondian culture is now solidly set in its old ways. Details beyond this are up to anyone's imagination.”

**Rakasta:** Another great, if indirect, development of Davania was done by Bruce Heard in 1998 in Dragon Magazine 247, with an article detailing the rakasta breeds of Mystara, many of which still live on the southern continent.<sup>15</sup>



<sup>14</sup> The choice of patron immortal depends upon when it is decided that Pelatan culture evolved. If the culture is older the Vanya then perhaps Khoronous, Vanya's patron could be a suggestion

<sup>15</sup> Article reproduced and expanded in ["History And Evolution Of Rakastas"](#)



# Secrets of Davania

**Being an introduction to the continent based on rumours and lost history**

by Francesco Defferrari (Sturm)

“The great continent of Davania has been the home of countless nations, as it is more ancient than you puny humans could ever understand. Each of these people thought they were meant to stay here and flourish forever, becoming as powerful as the Immortals. They were wrong. The mountains, the trees, the waters, the sands now grow and flow over their bones, if their bones are left.

Yet, we do know that some of the ancient people are not dead in Davania, only resting, only hiding, only waiting for a time they’ll be back. Some of these ancient people indeed are not hiding at all, and they can’t wait for the time of their return, so you can easily encounter them, and it could be the last meaningful event of your life. There are legends about forgotten people that live in the highest peak and in the darkest forests. Let me tell you that these aren’t legends at all, puny human.

Ancient kingdoms still survive in Davania, alongside the people that thrived before and after them. All these people had a time in which they ruled over countless miles, and they thought they would have been the lords of their land forever. But it wasn’t so, because they all fell,

maybe because they defied the Immortals, maybe for some cataclysm, maybe because invaders destroyed them.

And through the millennia in Davania, many cataclysms struck and many invaders came.

You have no idea how many people came here, each of them claiming to be the rightful rulers of Davania, each claim as valid and enduring as the people doing it can sustain.”

As spoken by Asbeidar, the Ancient,  
The Ruby Overlord.



*Last Day of Thallios*

*Rumors on the ancient people<sup>1</sup>*

These tales could be heard in Kastelios or any city in the Sea of Dread. The DM can select one of them randomly rolling 4d12 (so you can have a use for it beside very large weapons).

4 - There is a region of volcanoes in the southern desert of Izonda, and a city built and inhabited by efreet and other fire creatures is rumored to lay there. The efreet claim they were the original master of all this land, and that once their empire spanned all Davania.

5 - There is a legend about a forgotten city in the Fire Bay of Vulcania, that once was built and inhabited by Fire elementals when this world was young and lava was more common than water.



*Fireland*

<sup>1</sup> For more info on ancient people, check also this article [“99.9999985% Mystara history”](#) by this article’s author. The rumors described here could be true or not as the DM prefers, any of them, heard in Brun or somewhere else, could be a starting point for an adventure in Davania.

6 - There are cities still inhabited by earth creatures, such as rockmen, geonids and more, in the deepest reaches of the Brasol range and the Ice Peaks.

7 - Powerful Fire salamander clans claim the volcanos of the Aryptian Basin.

8 - The Great Air Empire still rules in the coldest land of the south. It’s the most ancient nation in Mystara, as it existed continuously for millions of years.

9 - Somewhere under the Sea of Steam the immense coral palace, imperial seat of the ancient Water Empire, still stands under the waves.



*Milenian mosaic depicting Protius*

10 - Medusae, some say, are the secret movers and shakers of north eastern Davania, where once laid their empire in times more ancient that anyone could imagine.



11 - Desert Ghosts roam the Aryptian desert and control gates to another world<sup>2</sup>.

12 - The children of the elements claim to be the original inhabitants of Davania, and they are probably right. Over millennia they have spawned countless genasi races and countless times they have tried to reclaim their lands. Elemental or genasi nations, cities or cabals could be present in virtually every corner of Davania, along with portals to the elemental planes.

13 - There was once an Age of Oceans when most of the continent was underwater and many sea creatures claimed then the oceans and the coast of Davania, some of them, ancient progenitors of jellyfish, squids, koprus, shark-kins, crabmen and scorpionfolk could still live along many seaside nations of Davania.

14 - Crabmen have a nation in north western Davania<sup>3</sup> and still live in great numbers on the coasts and in all the shallow waters between Davania and Brun.

15 - There was then an Age of Worms when strange people ruled the continent, as the decapus, the dusanu, the scamille, now the stuff of legends or denizens of the most remote lands above and under the earth.

16 - The wurmlings<sup>4</sup> are a race of intelligent worms that live and trade from the Savage Coast to northern Davania, and they have extensive underground domains.

17 - During the Age of Insects, araneas, formians, hivebroods and many other insectoid races ruled Davania for millions of years. The stories say that Formian hill cities still dot Vulcania, and the delicate wings of the Flying Nations still catch the sun in the jungles of Pelatan, Arica and northern Izonda, and the Araneas still rule vast lands of the Jungle Coast that once was part of the thrice fallen empire of Aran.



*Depiction of dancing insects*

18 - Over the Green Bay flying ships and strange constructs are searching for traces of a long lost empire of powerful and intelligent insects that once ruled half the continent.<sup>5</sup>

19 - Caymen and Gatormen have powerful tribes in Adakkia and trade with local humans.

<sup>2</sup> A reference to the Hollow Moon, see John Calvin's "Once in a Blue Moon" article published in Threshold magazine issue 2.

<sup>3</sup> See also: "[Tlik'kill \(Haven of Crabmen\)](#)"

<sup>4</sup> Check Savage Coast Monstrous Compendium: "[Wurmling](#)"

<sup>5</sup> The canonical [Mek](#) were created by a long-dead race of inhuman, insect-like sorcerers that I imagine a bit like these guys: [Diopsid](#) and whose remains or descendants could still live somewhere in the area.





*Ancient depiction of a Gatorman*

20 - Somewhere after Yasuko lands there are powerful nations of frogfolk.

21 - A Therapsid<sup>6</sup> civilizations survives in eastern Arypt, guarded by a mighty dragon.

22 - Turtles<sup>7</sup> and wallaras<sup>8</sup> once had powerful and numerous nations in all south western Brun and north western Davania, while now only isolate communities remain.

23 - Saurial tribes<sup>9</sup> roam the Aryptian savannah where once a great jungle stood in ages past.

24 - A survived branch of pteryx<sup>10</sup> hides in the Brasol Range.

25 - Miles south of the Hinterlands rises the Sunlight Tower, that appears in this world only for a day every ten years, the ancient seat of The Sun Court, one of the original fairy courts of Mystara, with its immense treasures and dread guardians.

26 - A strange race of people descended from plants and insects lives west of the Hinterlands.<sup>11</sup>

27 - In the Hidden Wood there is a sacred place that according to Ents is the primeval forest of the planet.



*Aryptian bas relief of a frogfolk warrior*

<sup>6</sup> Intelligent creatures descended from [Therapsida](#)

<sup>7</sup> See [Turtle](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

<sup>8</sup> See [Wallara](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

<sup>9</sup> Intelligent dinosaurs could have [Ka](#) as progenitor, and be modelled after [these creatures](#) in the Wizards of the Coast Archive

<sup>10</sup> They now live in the Hollow Moon, see [“Hollow Moon Cultures: Pteryx of the Apennines”](#) and John Calvin’s article “Once in a Blue Moon” in issue 2 of Threshold magazine.

<sup>11</sup> A reference to Emerond, whose inhabitants are really aliens (see [this article](#) at the Vaults), originally appeared in Dragon Magazine 166.

28 - Under the desert of Izonda there is a massive underground fungal forest where intelligent fungus men dwell. They know when the next major cataclysmic event will hit the planet.<sup>12</sup>

29 - In the western Ice Peaks once stood the capital of a Dragon Empire, a city so big that spans an entire mountain range and little creatures can walk over it without even noticing its existence.

30 - The ancient capital of the Serpent Empire still stands on Lake Arypt. The lake and the area indeed took their name from the reptilian empire than once spanned half of Davania<sup>13</sup>, and the area is still the domain of lizardmen and intelligent snakes.

31 - In the remote past Davania was entirely occupied by a race of entropy-worshipping lizardmen that had an empire larger than all Adakkia and Izonda. All the other races were their slaves, and their descendants still live numerous in these regions<sup>14</sup>.

32 - Bird-men of many breeds have nations in Pelatan, in the Korva plains<sup>15</sup>, the Vulture Peninsula<sup>16</sup> and many other places of Davania, some big as giants.<sup>17</sup>



*depiction of gyerian chief.*

33 - In the Gulf of Mar, elephant men<sup>18</sup>, rhino men, gnolls, and other strange creatures dwell, killing humans on sight. Other beastmen inhabits the most remote lands of Davania.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>12</sup> See [Myconid](#) The reference to cataclysm is due to the fact that in cases of cataclysmic events such as asteroid impacts or extreme volcanism, mushrooms spread where plants dwindled due to cloud cover and difficult photosynthesis: see [“Cretaceous–Paleogene extinction event”](#)

<sup>13</sup> This rumor is inspired by the Serpentine Empire, created by James Mishler, see [“The Age of Blackmoor”](#)

<sup>14</sup> This rumor refer to the Carnifex Empire of Y'hog created by Geoff Gander, see [“Of the Lore and Legends of Y'hog, City of the Unclean Ones, and of that Race”](#) Lizardmen, troglodytes, lamara, sis'thik and other reptilian races of Davania were often themselves slave of the carnifex or the serpentes in the past. Powerful lizardmen with troglodytes subjects canonically inhabit the Amalur lowlands (Poor Wizard's Almanac II and III).

<sup>15</sup> See [“Northwestern Davania”](#)

<sup>16</sup> Check Bruce Heard's blog post: [“About the Nagpas”](#) and [“Varellyan Timeline”](#) by Geoff Gander:

<sup>17</sup> A reference to Terror Birds:

[Phorusrhacidae](#)

<sup>18</sup> See this article at the Vaults for [Pachydermion](#). They aren't probably as hostile as the rumor says. Other creatures similar to [Giffs](#) or Rhino men could or couldn't inhabit the area as the DM prefers.

<sup>19</sup> Other appropriate anthropomorphic animals (buffalotaurs, gnutaurs., llamas, pangolins, armadillos, opossum, sloths could be created by the DM who wishes so)



34 - Leopard men, lion men<sup>20</sup> and other cat men live everywhere in Davania, and they consider themselves masters of the land, as they have lived here much longer than humans.

35 - Dragons, sphinxes, pegataurs, enduks, faenare, centaurs, zebrataurs, fauns, drakes, fairies, and other ancient races had a kingdom in Pelatan that was destroyed in the Great Rain of Fire and is now ruled by human women with great magical powers.<sup>21</sup>

36 - Centaurs, fauns, drakes, dryads and other fairy folks claim all the ancient forests and humans entering them will never find a way out.<sup>22</sup>

37 - The upper reaches of the Brasol Range towards Adakkia are inhabited by brutemen, stone giants and monkey men.

38 - Elves and halflings have left Davania long ago, and only the evil ones have stayed, killing humans on sight.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> About the presence of simbasta (lion rakasta) pardasta (leopard rakasta) and other breeds of rakasta in Davania, check Giampaolo Agosta's article in this issue of Threshold, Bruce Heard's article "Rakasta of Mystara" in Dragon magazine 247 (May 1998) and also Simone Neri's "[History And Evolution Of Rakastas](#)" and Marco Dalmonte's "[History of Rakasta](#)".

<sup>21</sup> That's a reference to the Golden Realm (in James Mishler's "[The Age of Blackmoor](#)" and the [Golden Matriarchy of Pelatan](#) that now stands in the region inhabited now only by humans but also by all the above mentioned races and more.

<sup>22</sup> Centaurs are mentioned by the Poor Wizard's Almanac as common in the Meghala Kimata Plain, and drakes in the forests of Emerond

<sup>23</sup> A reference to [Kwythellar elves](#), the savage elves of southern Vulcania mentioned in the Princess Ark series (Dragon 161) and the unusual halfling of [Platea](#)

39 - A powerful gnomish empire rules the whole of Vulcania.<sup>24</sup>



*Centaurs and Satyr in the Jungle Coast*

40 - Ogres and other humanoids live all over Davania and have powerful empires in Izonda and in the Green Bay. They are powerful and advanced, but breed humans as cattle.<sup>25</sup> Other man-eating orcs live in the Jungle Coast.<sup>26</sup>

41 - An island in the eastern sea was once a mighty human empire, but black dragons destroyed it and now only steam clouded islands with huge treasures remains. But beware, because the dragons still guard them,<sup>27</sup> and often attack the eastern kingdoms of Davania.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> A reference to the Empire of Snarta, that however doesn't rule the whole Vulcania.

<sup>25</sup> A mix up of the Dictatorship of Izonda and the N'djatwa Kingdom. Only the latter actually eat human (and other races) flesh.

<sup>26</sup> A reference to Bogdashan jungle orcs, whose eating habits are not specified in canon or fanon products, and therefore left to the DM's discretion.

<sup>27</sup> This is actually a mix up of the story of Oceania and Lhomarr: the first one was destroyed by Night Dragons, but it's still over the waves, while the latter was sunk by Outer Being magic.

<sup>28</sup> A reference to Cestia, often under the attacks of Night Dragons.

42 - Copper-skinned natives who serve lizardmen inhabit the Jungle Coast and once had an huge empire, whose magnificent and magical pyramids are now hidden in the woods.<sup>29</sup>

43 - Ochaleans have founded a nation called Yasuko in the Jungle Coast that trades through the oceans as far as Skothar.<sup>30</sup>

44 - The Milenian city-states of the north coast were once part of a great empire, from which the Thyatians came centuries ago. The capital of the Empire however is now a cursed city in the Hills of Desolation, between the Hinterlands and Manacapuru lands.



*The Sack of Milenopolis*

45 - Another great empire once flourished beyond the Gulf of Mar, but its inhabitants were all eaten by vulture demons and now the land is cursed.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>29</sup> A reference to Manacapuru and Katapec

<sup>30</sup> A reference to M-orientals and M-polynesian cultures that could be connected in the Sea of Steam

<sup>31</sup> Another reference to Varellya. Note that, according to PC2 Top Ballista, nagpas helped build Serraine long before the fall of Varellya.

46 - The tomb of an Immortal is hidden in eastern Davania, and knights guard it and its treasures, killing anyone who comes too near<sup>32</sup>.

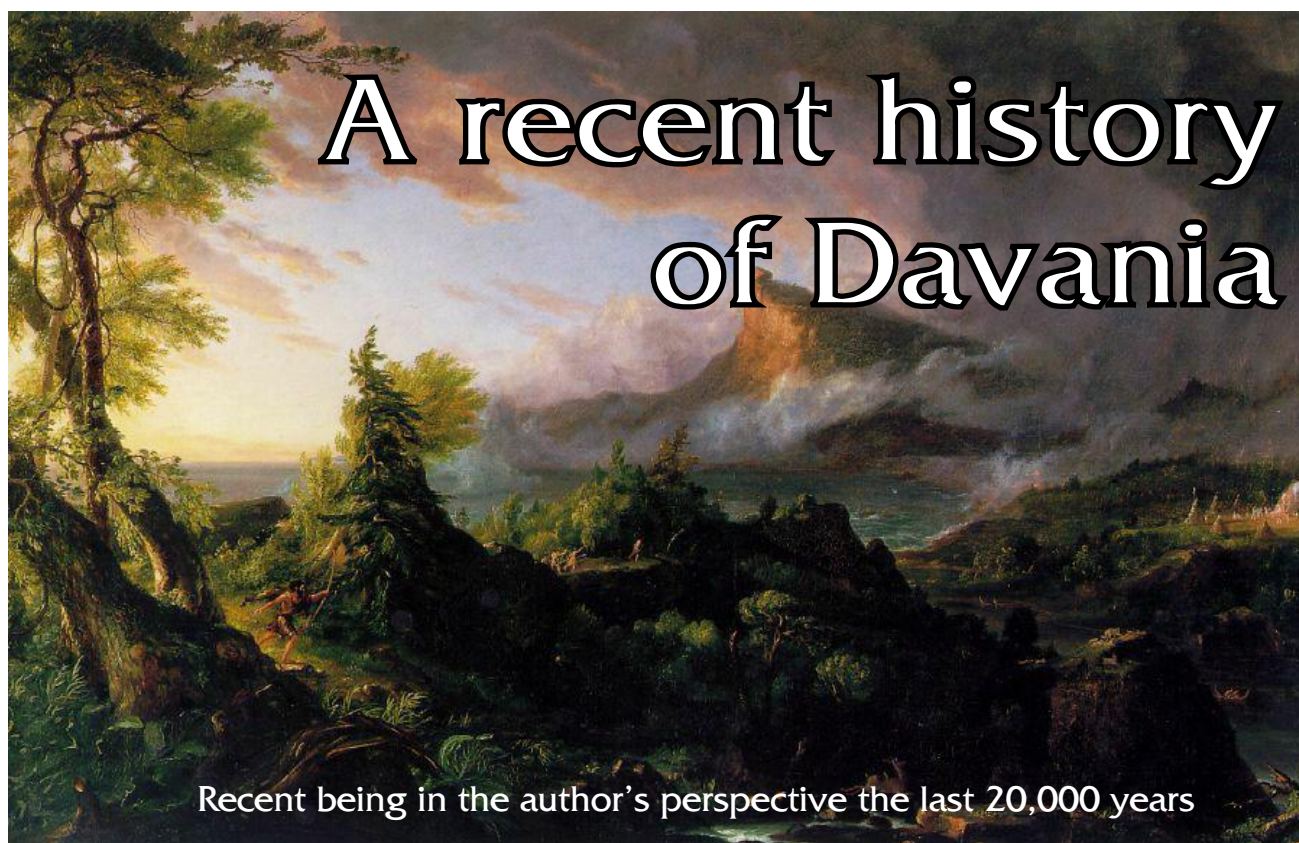
47 - Black men from another continent have conquered north western and south eastern Davania, so that their empire could proceed to the full conquest of the continent.<sup>33</sup>

48 - Insert your own rumor about Davania here.

<sup>32</sup> A reference to Vanya's Rest.

<sup>33</sup> It's true that men from Tangor, in Skothar, have founded colonies in Izonda and Vulcania, but that's unlikely to be an actual imperialistic plan, as the two migrations are a thousand years apart.





Foreword by Sul-hthim, scholar of the Megascops Pelatan Hsiao

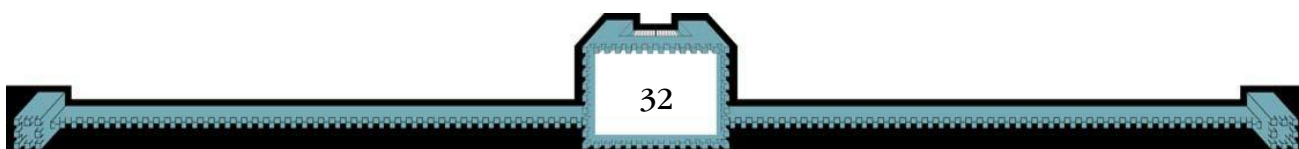
Dear reader, the history of Davania is fragmented at best. Here I have gathered only bits and pieces I could find about the major movement of people, the kingdoms fallen and born. I'm quite certain I'm missing entire regions and times, so consider this only a small glimpse in the great history of my continent. Also beware that some of these entries could be wrong, as I had access to only partial information on several regions of Davania.

#### **The time before men**

Being the time of the last Greater Carnifex Empire, centered in Adakkia and fought bravely by rakasta, fairy races and centaurs.

**20000 BC:** The first Humans living in Davania are Oltec sailors, the Oteino, who come from the east and settle on the north eastern coasts. They usually get along well with natives, consisting mostly of reptilian and fairy races. Mythical date, according to rakastan source, of the reign of Queen Bastet in Arypt.

**15000 BC:** Mythical victories of the simbasta leader Ninfangle against reptilian powers, probably serpentes and carnifex, in eastern Davania.





*Ancient Oltec mural including a depiction of a crabman and other davanian races*

**14000 BC:** Greater carnifex exterminate the Ur-carnifex and the pteryx in Adakkia and Brasol.

**12500 BC:** Rebellious Shovelface troglodytes almost exterminated by Greater Carnifex in Brasol.

**10700 BC:** Lhomarrian humans begin to settle eastern Davania.

**10100 BC:** Supposed end of the last war between Greater carnifex and Immortals. Carnifex of Y'hog arise in the swampy region at the source of the Adakkian Sound.

**10050 BC:** King Chiron's Centaur kingdom dominates the Meghala Kimata plains.

**10000 BC:** Elves and Fairies rise to power in the south, expanding beyond Evergrun. Enduks, pegataurs, sphinxes and other fairies found the Realm of Pelatan and expand in Izonda. The Second Serpentine Empire expand in Arypt (the empire and its capital have indeed given the region its lasting name). Elves establish good relations with the halfling in Brasol and often aid them against serpentine raids.

**9500 BC:** Rakasta fight the serpentines and humans encroaching in Central Davania.

## LHOMARR AND Y'HOG

Being a time in which Humans arrived in great numbers in eastern Davania but reptilian races were still dominant in almost all the continent.

**9000 BC:**After some conflicts with reptilian races and rakasta the Oltecs of Orimul and Nevumm establish powerful kingdoms in north eastern Davania. The carnifex of Y'hog build the city of Y'hegg-T'uath on a island in northwestern Davania.

**8900 BC:** First king of Lhomarr is crowned.

**8750 BC:** The Lhomarr Empire is founded and begins its expansion to the eastern coast.

**8600 BC:** Lhomarr occupies the peninsula of Cestia and shortly afterwards the Vulture peninsula, defeating local rakasta nations and Birdmen populations.

**8500 BC:** Lhomarrian and Oltec people found the kingdoms of Ilarnn and Suur.

**8389 BC:** Civil war in Lhomarrian empire.

**8350 BC:** Lhomarrians reach Vulcania, the Oltecs of the Lost Valley and the human kingdom of Ilarnn in Arypt, with whom they establish peaceful relations.

**8250 BC:** The carnifex establish colonies on the western coasts of the Arm of the Immortals and Davania, as well as underwater. Emissaries from Lhomarr arrive in Y'hog and are sacrificed.

**8150 BC:** Y'hog expansion continues in northern Davania and southern Brun, but is contained in the west by the enduks and in the east by Nevumm.

**8100 BC:** The Y'hog colonies In Adakkia begin building great subterranean cities.

**8006 BC:** Nevumm, an Oltec nation in Adakkia, falls to carnifex and troglodytes. The Halfling of Brasol are hard pressed but resist with elven and fairy aid.





*Caption: Davania about 8010 BC<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> The areas claimed by the human powers of Nevumm, Orimul, Ilarnn and Suur, as well as the Lhomarr Empire and the Carnifex Tyranny, are still inhabited by many other people, mainly reptilian races, wallaras, turtles, crabmen, rakasta, gyerians, fairies and other people, some allied and some hostile to the regional power.



**7962 BC:** Orimul, an Oltec nation in the Jungle coast, falls to carnifex. The Serpentine Empire is forced to ally with the carnifex. Rakasta conduct an all out guerrilla war behind carnifex lines.

**7903 BC:** Ilarnn, a Oltec/Neathar nation in Arypt, is occupied by carnifex. First war begins between them and Lhomarr.

**7540 BC:** The Lhomarr coalition, including humans, rakasta, halfling, elves, fairies and enduks, is at last beating back carnifex and their allies after centuries of war. The turning point is when the Serpentine Empire and many lizardmen also turn against the carnifex

**7460 BC:** Eldamir (present day Kastelios), is founded on the site of the carnifex city of Azhat-Ith by the Lhomarrians.

**7380 BC:** The carnifex have been pushed out of Davania. The fortress-city of Valannir is built on the northwestern coast of Davania by the Lhomarrians. An Oltec colony is founded in northwestern Davania

**7200 BC:** Second Carnifex war, Valannir and Eldamir are destroyed by the carnifex, but eventually they are stopped and begin to slowly lose ground.

**7140 BC:** Carnifex are pushed out of Davania again, the City of Pelenzor is built in Izonda by lhomarrians, Oltecs and enduks to watch over them

**7037 BC:** Third Carnifex war, the lhomarrian coalition invade Y'hegg-T'uhath, and Y'hog is looted and burned six years later. Longlegs troglodytes almost exterminated by lhomarrian coalition troops in northwestern Davania.

**7029 BC:** Fourth Carnifex war, an horde of carnifex and troglodytes from below Y'hog overrun Valannir, Pelenzor, Suur, Arypt, lizardmen, rakasta, Ilarnn and then Lhomarr

proper, destroyed and sunk by the Outer Beings in 7.022 BC..

**7020 BC:** In retaliation for the destruction of Lhomarr, the Immortals wipe out the carnifex in Davania and imprison the others on Y'hegg-T'uhath. Over the next 100 years, the island slowly sinks into the sea, while those living on its surface are unable to leave it.



### Time of the Three Empires

Being a time in which the three great empires of Serpentes, Enduks and Elves dominated Davania.

**7010 BC:** The sudden disappearance of Lhomarr and Y'hog create a power vacuum that is quickly exploited by the Serpentine Empire, whose army soon conquers all eastern Davania. Humans and rakasta have to submit or resort to internal guerrilla warfare. The Halfling of Brasol resist with elven aid, but the serpentes expand toward Adakkia and Izonda, where however the equally expanding Enduk empire stops them.

**6700 BC:** The Serpentine expansion is cut short when internal rebellions of lizardmen, sis'thik, humans, rakasta and other subjects reduce the strength and the size of the Empire.





*Davania around 5000 BC:*

<sup>1</sup> In these times, rakasta and several other races, including reptilians, conduct a permanent guerrilla war against the Serpentine Empire. The Golden Realm and the Elven Empire are more alliances than real nations, and many other races live within their borders in effective independence.



**6415 BC:** The former Lhomarrian city of Thallios in the Lost Valley region is destroyed by volcanism, survivors slowly go to the Adakkian sound.

**6000 BC:** Erkalion and other Lhomarrian colonies in Vulcania have been abandoned due to cooling climate. Descendants of Lhomarrians survive in the Lost Valley region. The Enduk empire is at its peak and includes Pelatan, Izonda and Adakkia, with enduks, dragons, pegataurs, sphinxes, fairies, Oltec humans, rakasta, gyerians and other creatures as citizens. Halfling and elves expand too, while in the east the Aryptian sea is drying and the increasing aridity contribute to the endless wars between serpentines, lizardmen, sis'thik, humans and rakasta.

**5500 BC:** The birth of the aggressive Dragon Empire in Brun prompt the creation of the Golden Realm of Pelatan, that is indeed just a stronger involvement of gold and other dragons in the rulership of the already existing empire. The Realm begin to aid dwarves and Oltecs of Brun against the northern dragons.

**5100 BC:** A new great expansion of the Serpentine Empire in eastern Davania is stopped in the north east by combined Golden Realm, lizardmen and halfling forces.

**5000 BC:** Starting of elven and halfling migrations in the world. Oltecs refugees from Brun arrive in the Golden Realm and Hin lands.

**4600 BC:** Elves and Halfling found a common trading city in Platea, on the Kenaton river.

**4560 BC:** Civil war in the Serpentine empire and new decadence.

**4500 BC:** Mevu<sup>1</sup>, a Maharian Neathar/Oltec civilization, begins in north eastern Davania. Other asyidhian<sup>2</sup> people (a culture originally

<sup>1</sup> That kingdom is my creation, inspired by real world sumerians and akkadians.

from Bellisaria) spread in the eastern coast and to the vulture peninsula.



*The court of the Mevu kingdom*

**3700 BC:** Other Maharian people from Brun, the Eokai, reach northern Davania

**3600 BC:** The Mawa (an Oltec people) slowly migrates from Skothar towards southern Brun and north eastern Davania, founding the Sea Kingdoms.

### The years of Blackmoor

Being the time in which Blackmoorian humans influenced the continent and brought the poisoned gift of their cursed magic.

**3500 BC:** First Blackmoor contacts and colonies in Davania, trade and conflicts with native people. The elven technomagic city of Thimhallan is founded. Ancestors of the ice gnomes, probably kogolor dwarves, appear or arrive in the south. Enduk settle a colony on western Brun.

<sup>2</sup> Asyidhi would be the ancestors of Nithians and Thothians: [“Real World Inspiration for the Isle of Dawn”](#) an Oltec/Neathar culture inspired by real world middle east populations.





*Davania just before the Great Rain of Fire:*

<sup>1</sup> Several blackmoorian colonies have been founded in Davania. The Elven Empire, now much more organized and unified, is the major power of the continent, yet many other races live within its borders.



**3440 BC:** The powerful Oltec wizardess Ninsun found the Kingdom of Katapec in Arypt. Blackmoorians conquer some lands on Davania, but mostly are repelled by the Golden Realm, the Elven Empire and The Serpentine.

**3350 BC:** Serpentine Empire attack against Hin lands, repelled with the aid of the Golden Realm and the Elven Empire.

**3330 - 3300 BC:** All out war between The Serpentine Empire and all the other davanian powers. Blackmoor intervenes and destroys the serpentine capital of Arypt, ending the war and gaining huge territories in eastern Davania. Blackmoorians create the Divergan race in Davania to fight the serpentines.

**3230 BC:** Blackmoorian adventurer Asterius foils a serpentine's plot in Davania and found a colony in the area of modern Hinterland.

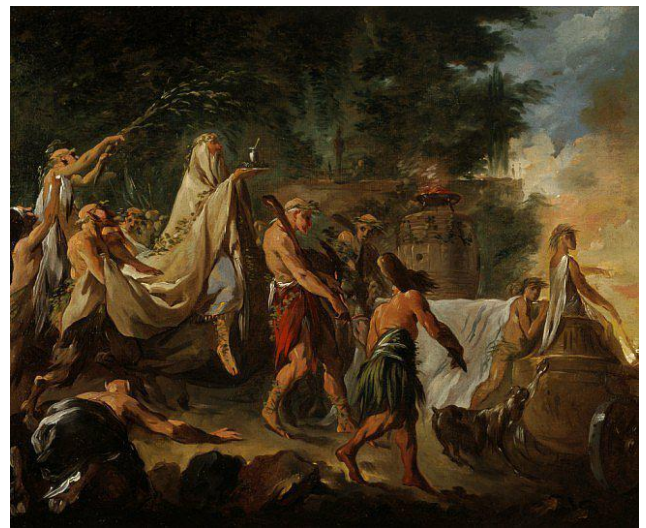
**3200 BC:** Hin civil war ends with the fragmentation of Kenaton. For different reasons the Golden Empire fragments too in allied nations, but remains at peace.

**3150 BC:** The kogolor dwarf Garal, master of a vulcanian colony, discovers the ancient secrets of the Mek<sup>3</sup> and, combining that with Blackmoor technology, begins to build the first Earthshaker. Shortly after he will become an immortal

## The Great Death

Being the time in which Davania was ravaged by the consequence of the Great Rain of Fire and only Death and Despair ruled over all.

**3000 - 2800 BC:** The Great Rain of Fire has devastating effects on Davania, with earthquakes and volcanism ravaging the continent for the following two centuries and more. Many populations are displaced and some, like the Elves, leave. Many carnifex citadels under the Adakkian Mountains are destroyed by the earthquakes. Hsiao population dwindles so much that they risk total extinction. The Golden Realm and the Serpentine Empire, despite their magical powers, are almost destroyed. Divergans survive and carve their dominion in southern Arypt.



*Druidic ceremony in north eastern Davania*

**2950 BC:** Druids sent by the Neathar Empress Djaea of Brun, who reached Immortal status just before the Great Rain of Fire, save many population in north eastern Davania. Her cult (druidism) spread in the area.

<sup>3</sup> See [this article](#) at the Vaults of Pandius



**2920 BC:** A starving tribe of goblins from Brun crash in northwestern Davania with a stolen blackmoorian flyship and found the clans of Kresh.

**2900 BC:** The Immortal Garal creates modern gnomes from davanian kogolor dwarves.

**2860 BC:** Escaping Brun through earth portals, some dwarves arrive in Brasol.

**2800 BC:** Ilsundal elves leave Grunland and begin their migration north, finding refuge in Hin lands. Utnapishtim create the Temple of the Ark in Arypt.

**2750 BC:** Rise of the Kopru dominated kingdom of Adhuza in Thanegioth.

**2700 BC:** After a civil war the dwarves of Brasol split, some go to the northwest where they ally with local Oltec humans and Fairies against Kresh goblins.

**2600 BC:** As the Halfling have scarce resources to share, Ilsundal's elves move north to the Adakkian coast, but are harassed by local Lizardmen and Humans.

**2500 BC:** A second group of elves leaves Grunland and joins Ilsundal's group in Adakkia, but the rising Lizardmen kingdom of Adakkia displace them, most escape toward Izonda, others move east toward the Jungle Coast. Rise of Taymora and Adhuza brings Maharian and Oltec refugees to north eastern Davania

**2400 BC:** Grunland elven civilization is destroyed by volcanism, some elves become the Hatwa, other lives as nomadic savages in the south, embracing Hel and other entropic immortals, Blacklore elves are transplanted to the Hollow World. Others find shelter in hin lands.



*Davania in 2300 BC<sup>1</sup>:*

<sup>1</sup> Several nations are quite powerful in this age, mainly the Enduk Empire and the reborn Serpentine Empire. The Halfling of Shaerdon, the Lizardmen of Shir and Adakkia and the Oltecs of Katapec and Manacapuru are also quite important nations.



**2300 BC:** In Izonda Ilsundal's elves are forced to flee again to the Arm of the Immortal and leave Davania when a splinter group led by Kwythellar decides to found an Empire enslaving local Humans. Some elves settle in Pelatan. The other elven migration sails from the northern coast of Davania to the Serpent Peninsula. Western Dunharian migration from Brun reach Mevu, the kingdom falls and the survivors become the Mazigh<sup>4</sup> people in the Meghala Kimata plains.

**2200 BC:** Tanagoro colonists arrive in the Serpent Peninsula.

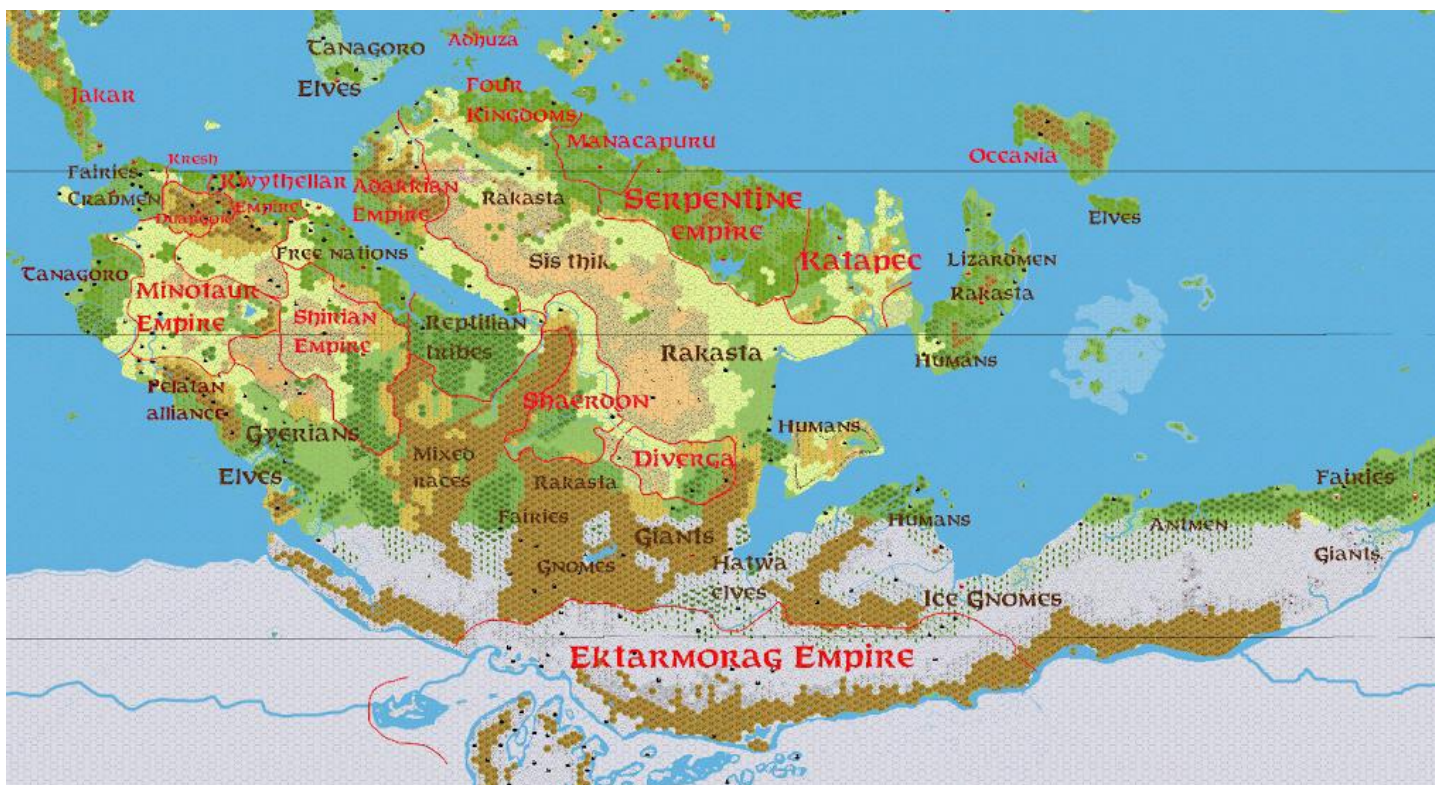
**2053 BC:** The elf lich Ektarmorag and his undead armies conquer vast lands in

Vulcania, endangering the gnome civilization.

**2050 BC:** Fall of the Enduks, Minoides kills Gildesh, his followers lose the wings and become the minotaurs, creating a kingdom that conquers Izonda. Enduks escape to Brun.

**2000 BC:** The Eastern Dunharian from the Isle of Dawn arrive in the Hinterland where they'll become the Thratians mixing with Western Dunharian. Second Katapec Empire in Arypt, founded by Oltecs and Neathars. The fall of the fourth Tangor Empire brings Tanagoro colonist to Izonda and they help Fairies, centaurs and Oltec in fighting Kwithellar and minotaurs, then they found the nations of Arica in the north west.

<sup>4</sup> These people were devised by Christian Constantin, inspired by real world berbers.



*Davania around 1810 BC<sup>1</sup>:*

<sup>1</sup> The Enduk empire has fallen, the Minotaur Empire has risen, as well as the Four Kingdoms of Diulanna, and the Kwythellar empire is expanding. But the greatest power of Davania in this age is the Empire founded by the Elf Lich Ektarmorag in the frozen south.



**1850 BC:** Queen Diulanna creates the Four Kingdoms defeating local reptilian tribes and becomes an Immortal.

**1800 BC:** Begins of decline of the kopru empire of Adhuza in Thanegioth. Using Oltec, Tanagoro and Goblin slaves the Kwythellar elves create the Markresh, but their creation rebels and begin to fight them.

**1790 BC:** Vulcanians gnomes build the Earthshakers to destroy Ektarmorag and his undead empire. Shortly afterwards Gnome clans begin infighting and many refugees flee north, like the Snartan and the Pedhardt, that settle north of the Ice Peaks.

**The first Varellyan empire**

Being the time in which Varellyya and other powerful kingdoms rose and fell.

**1750 BC:** King Tabnit creates the nation of Varellyya in the Vulture peninsula. The Tanagoro of Arica and the people of Pelatan defeat the Minotaur Empire. Minotaurs must flee in the izondian desert where they become slaves of the Lizardmen empire of Shir.

**1750 - 1680 BC:** Volcanic eruption in the Sea of Dread affects north eastern Davania too.

**1500 BC:** Tanagoro colonists arrive in Oceania and form a new civilization with the Oltecs there. Halfling colonists reach the Serpent Peninsula.

**1490 BC:** The Empire of Varellyya colonize Cestia, calling it Androkia, displacing local lizardmen and rakasta.

**1400 BC:** Varellyya begins its expansion in the Aryptian savannah.



*Davania around 1450 BC<sup>1</sup>:*

<sup>1</sup> Varellyya is expanding, while the Serpentine Empire is going through a new decadence. The Lizardmen Shirian empire has become the main power in the west.



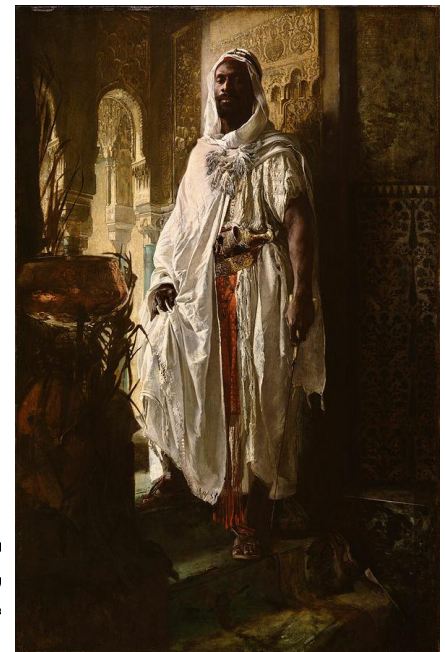
**1350 BC:** Nithian king Apophis escapes in northern Davania and found his kingdom of Humans, medusas and reptilians.

**1314 BC:** Varellya invades Shaerdon and the hin are hard pressed to resist.

**1300 BC:** Brindorhin guides the Hin to leave Davania for Brun. Some stranded hin found the city of Shaedrin in the Adakkian sound. Varellya conquers the area and found the port city of Priallus. Minotaurs of Izonda defeat the Lizardmen and rule over the area, clashing with the Kwythellar Empire and other nations.

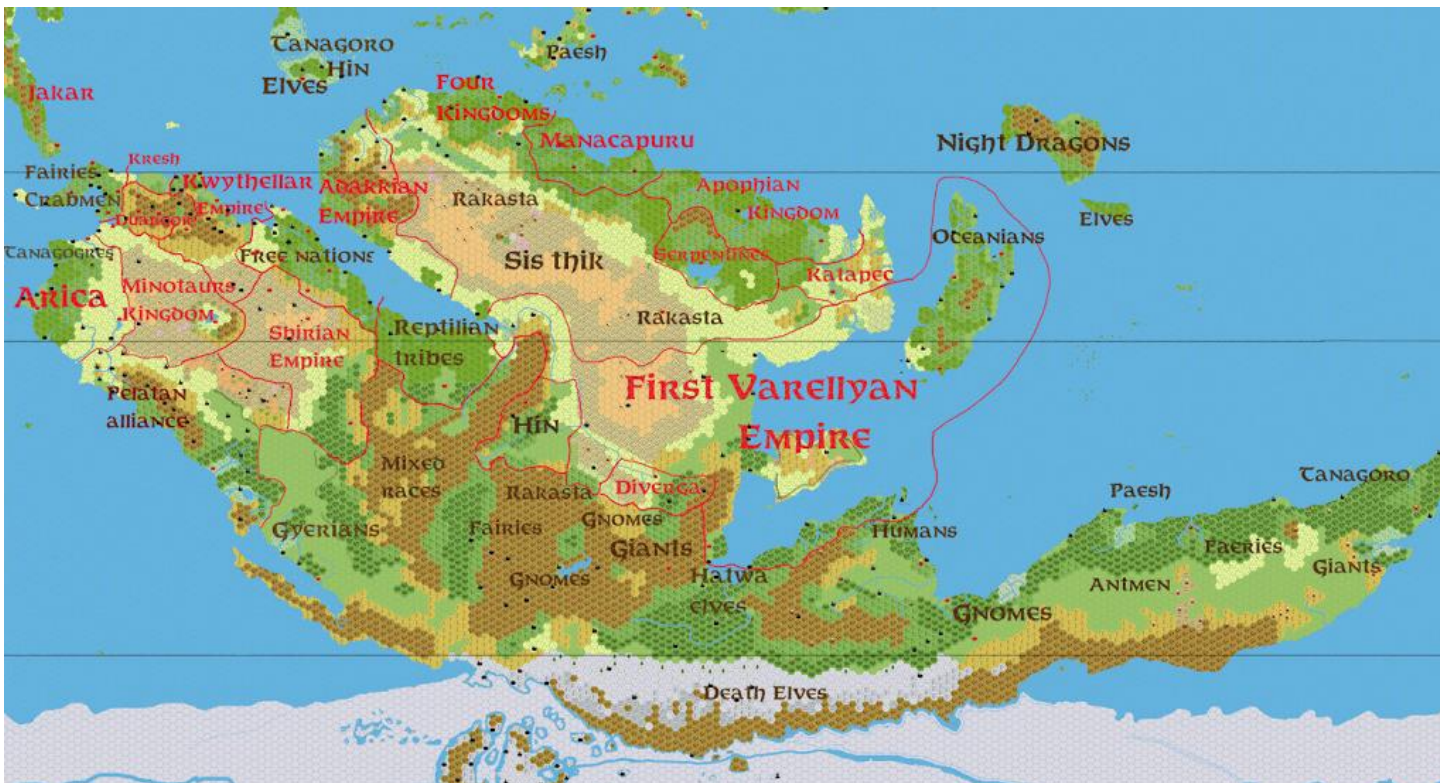
**1250 BC:** Tanagore followers of Sumag arrive in Davania from the Arm of the Immortals, settling in Arica and Pelatan .

**1200 BC:** Oceania is destroyed by Night Dragons, refugees flee to Cestia. Tanagoro colonists arrive in Vulcania. Apophis/Bachraeus weakens the Katapec kingdom in a struggle with Atzanteotl to



*Tanagoro chief in Agypt*

control it. Snartan gnomes reach north eastern Davania.



*Davania in 1100 BC:*

<sup>1</sup> This is the time of maximum splendor of the First Varellyan Empire: Shaerdon has been conquered and most of the Halfling have sailed to Brun.



**1100 BC:** Migrations of Paesh<sup>5</sup> people from Skothar reach Ochalea and Vulcania.

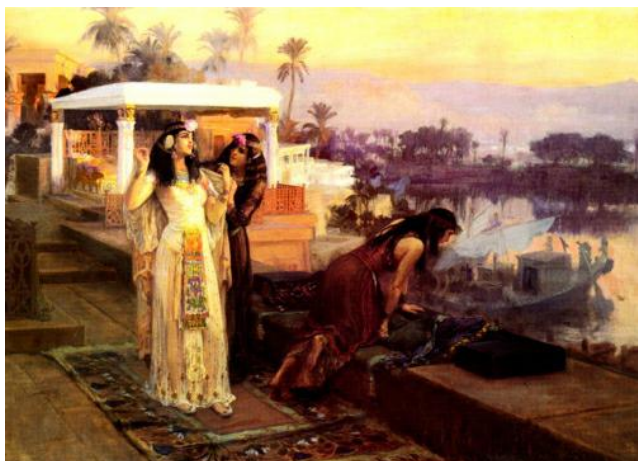
**1050 BC:** The reborn reptilian kingdom of Adakkia attacks Priallus and western Varellya, the port is abandoned in the following years.

**1020 BC:** The offensive of reptilian and rakasta populations in western Varellya is more and more successful, the “barbarians” gain land every year. Many Varellyan refugees find shelter in Brasol and establish good relations with him and other people.

### **Nithia, Milenia, the HUMANOID INVASION AND New Varellya**

Being the time in which nithians came, Milenia rose to power and the continent was swept by the great humanoid invasion, and many things changed forever.

**1000 BC:** Nithia intervenes in Davania against the Apophian kingdom, establish a colony and develop an alliance with Fast runners rakasta. They deport Kerendans, Thyatians and Hattians in Davania. Traldars



*Nithian princess in Arypt*

<sup>5</sup> These people would be related to the ancient Peshwa of Skothar and the Ethengarians of Brun

of King Milen arrive in Davania, some colonize the islands of Vacros and Cathos. Tanagoro reach the Pearl Islands. Raith reaches immortality in central Davania bringing justice and revenge.

**980 BC:** The general Androsar and the seer Tiresias lead the milenians to the Hills of Desolation to escape the Behemoth.

**970 BC:** Unrest in Cestia between oceanians and varellyans make the colony virtually independent, while the rest of the empire is losing ground in the mainland.

**952 BC:** The city of Badghaan, a major varellyan colony in Lower Arypt, falls. Now Varellya is reduced to the Vulture peninsula.

**950 BC:** Rebellions of the Hattians, Kerendas and Thyatians have already reduced the size of the nithian colony in the Hinterlands, where the former slaves have carved their nations.

**900 BC:** Great Humanoid invasion from the Arm of the Immortal spread all over Davania in just a century. Fall of the second minotaur empire in Izonda. After the humanoids, the more peaceful lupins reach north eastern Davania too. Milenia expand around the Hills of Desolation and to the meghala kimata plains, successfully resisting humanoid invaders. Caracasta ally with the Milenians, earning the hate of the simbasta.

**873 BC:** Varellya fragments in several petty kingdoms under humanoid attacks.

**870 BC:** Tanagogres and ogres are chased away from Arica, Dictatorship of Izonda founded. Pure ogres chased away from Izonda too, begin a long migration to the Green bay and becomes the Nunjar ogres.

**860 BC:** More humanoid attacks force the unification of the different people of Pelatan.

**850 BC:** Humanoids invading Brasol push local dwarves and Halfling to the southern mountains, where they found a lasting

kingdom with leprechauns, giants and other Fairies.

**807 BC:** Some Varellyan refugees lead by Iemara arrive in Pelatan, helping to defeat izondian aggression. Other Varellyan refugees travel to southern Pelatan and found the kingdom of Nivall.

**800 BC:** The Milenian empire grows in power and conquer local tribes. Bogdashaan orcs arrive in north eastern davania and fall under the sway of Atzanteotl.

**790 BC:** Snartan gnomes come in contact with mileanian culture.

**765 BC:** Alphatians discover Thimhallan.

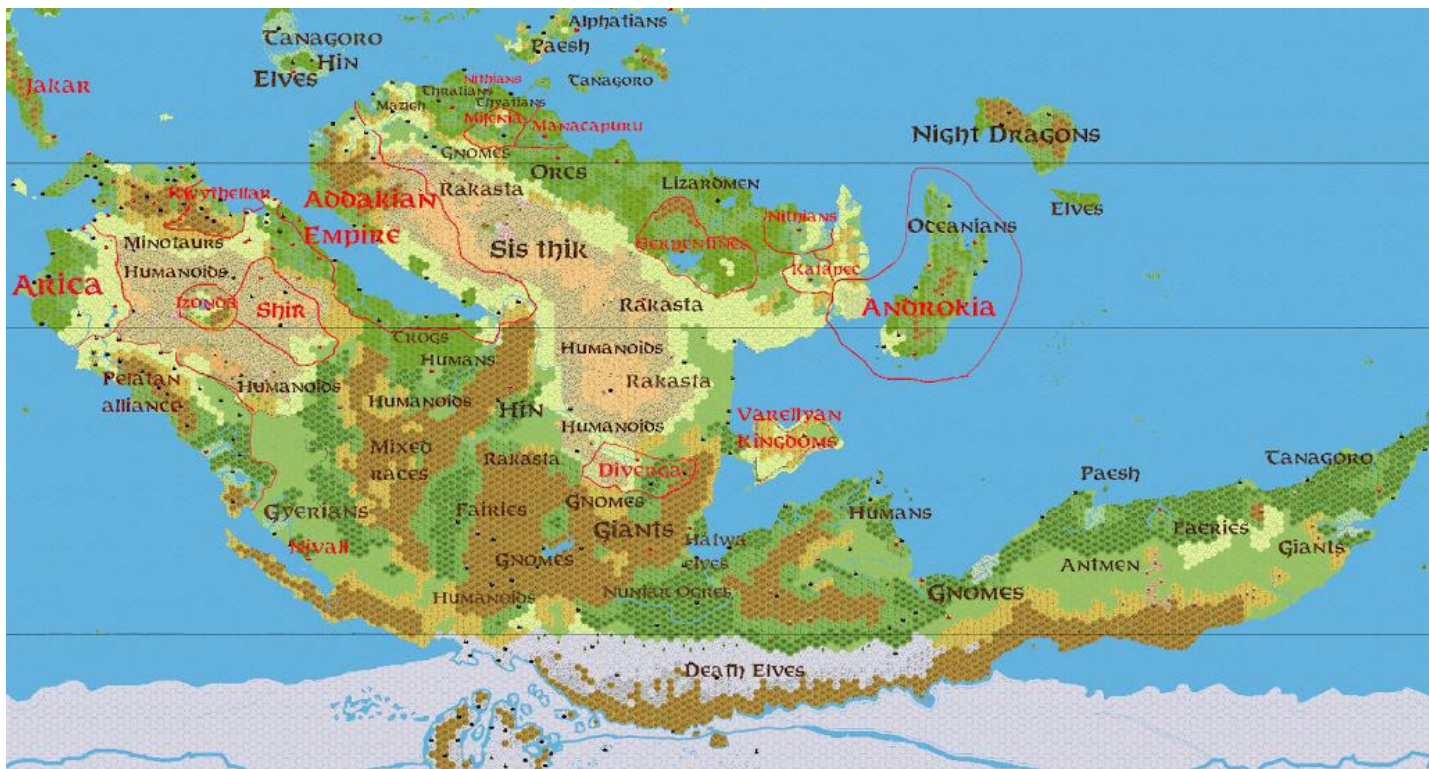
**700 BC:** Izondan raids on surrounding lands are repelled.

**650 BC:** Izonda conquests threaten all the surrounding nations, gains territories in Arica. Milenia expansion continues and Kastelios is founded.

**640 BC:** Splendor of Milenia under Emperor Taroyas (reincarnation of Androsar).



*Milenian soldiers fighting*



*Davania in 800 BC<sup>1</sup>:*

<sup>1</sup> The Great Humanoid invasion swept the continent, empires and kingdoms fall but other rise in power, like the Addakian Empire of the Lizardmen and the first seeds of Milenia and Izonda.





*Splendor of Milenia*

**600 BC:** The expansion of Milenia push Hattians, Kerendas and Thyatians to escape toward Brun. The general Vanya is captured, but later she escapes and fights the milenians again in Arypt, founding a New Varellya. Milenia conquers the remnants of the



*Vanya prisoner of Milenians*

Katapec kingdom in Arypt. In the west the empire reaches Ilioloosti. Snartan gnomes leave Milenia. Traditional date of the creation of the Golden Matriarchy of Pelatan

**550 BC:** Hatwa elves and Nunjar ogres merge into the N'djatwa nation of the Green bay, inspired by Idris and Hel. Nithians leaving their corrupt empire found the kingdom of Odak in Arypt.

**542 BC:** The Snartans settle near the eastern Brasol range, founding the Hoplite republic. They discover their cousins, Clan Pedhardt, and swiftly assimilate

them into the Hoplite republic

**520 BC:** After a war with Jakar rakasta, Ocelotl rakasta settle in Izonda from the Arm of the Immortals.

**500 BC:** Nithia falls and the Milenian Empire conquer what's left of the former Nithian colony in the Hinterland. In the Lost Valley Lhomarrian descendants have formed a stable kingdom, Kone. Great and failed izondian attack against Kwythellar.

**450 BC:** Milenian expansion push humanoid clans to the Adakkian mountains, creating conflict there with reptilians and rakasta. The Odak human kingdom in Arypt allies with K'tar yuan-ti.

**430 BC:** Finidel creates his kingdom of Brasol, west of Halfling territories. Snartan gnomes continue their long march toward Vulcania, often defeating the people they encounter.

**400 BC:** Vanya brings New Varellya to power in southern Mystara and contains the milenians. In the north east Milenia however continues to expand and the city of





*Davania in 500 BC:*

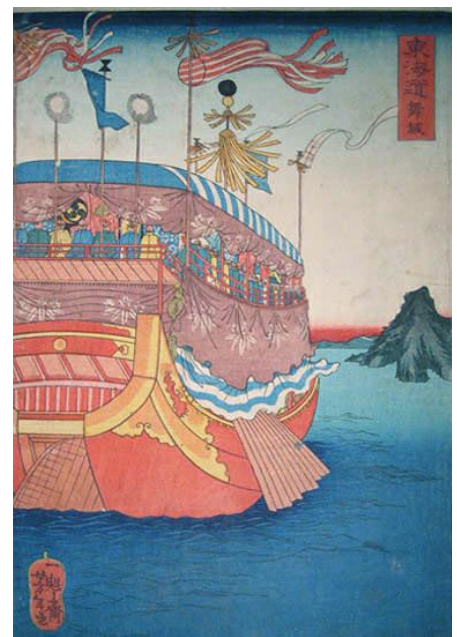
1 The Milenian Empire has risen to great power, controlling an immense territory that is however partially composed of subject populations and client states, particularly in the east, where the grip of the empire is unstable and New Varellya, where Queen Vanya reigns, defy its power. In the west the Matriarchy of Pelatan is born.

Hrissopoli is born. Third Minotaur Kingdom rises to power in northwestern Davania, competing with Izonda. Izonda attacks Pelatan but is repelled, yet gains territories in the desert.

**300 BC:** Ochaleans fleeing the alphantian occupation found Yasuko. New war between Pelatan and Izonda, ends with little border changes.

**250 BC:** Izonda's new assault against Arica, new territories gained. The Odak humans in Arypt merge magically with Yuan-ti to resist milenian aggression, giving birth to a new race and kingdom, Odak'Tar.

**200 BC:** Kingdom of Emerond founded in north eastern Davania by refugees led by



*Yasukan ship*





*Davania in 150 BC:*

<sup>1</sup> The Milenian Empire is now on the verge of collapsing and has already lost some fringe territories.

King Buglore. King Dorfin I the Great (that will later become the immortal Brandan) begins the snartan conquest of Vulcania. Oltec city state of Ixachitl destroyed by milenians, survivors will become the Manacapuru. Izonda attacks Nivall and conquer some territories.

**164 BC:** The Snartan empire subjugates the Pedhardt gnomes, eventually the latter rebel and escape to the Ice Peaks.

**150 BC:** Nagpas, gnomes, tabis and Sphinxes begin the construction of the flying city of Serraine. All out war between Pelatan, Izonda and Arican nations that will last 50 years.

**100 BC:** A failed attempt by Milenia to conquer New Varellyya heralds the final years of the Empire. Minaeans (eastern milenians)

leave for Skothar. In the west Izonda rises to great power again and destroys the Minotaur Kingdom. End of the war with Pelatan and Arica, Izonda has the greatest territorial gains.



*Charge of Varellyyan war elephants*



**50 BC:** Fall of the Milenian Empire to barbarians, New Varellya also falls shortly afterwards. Some milenians and varellyans people become the Meghaddara nomads in Arypt.



*Destruction of Milenia*

### The Third Varellyan Empire

Being a time of new kingdoms, and the last varellyan empire

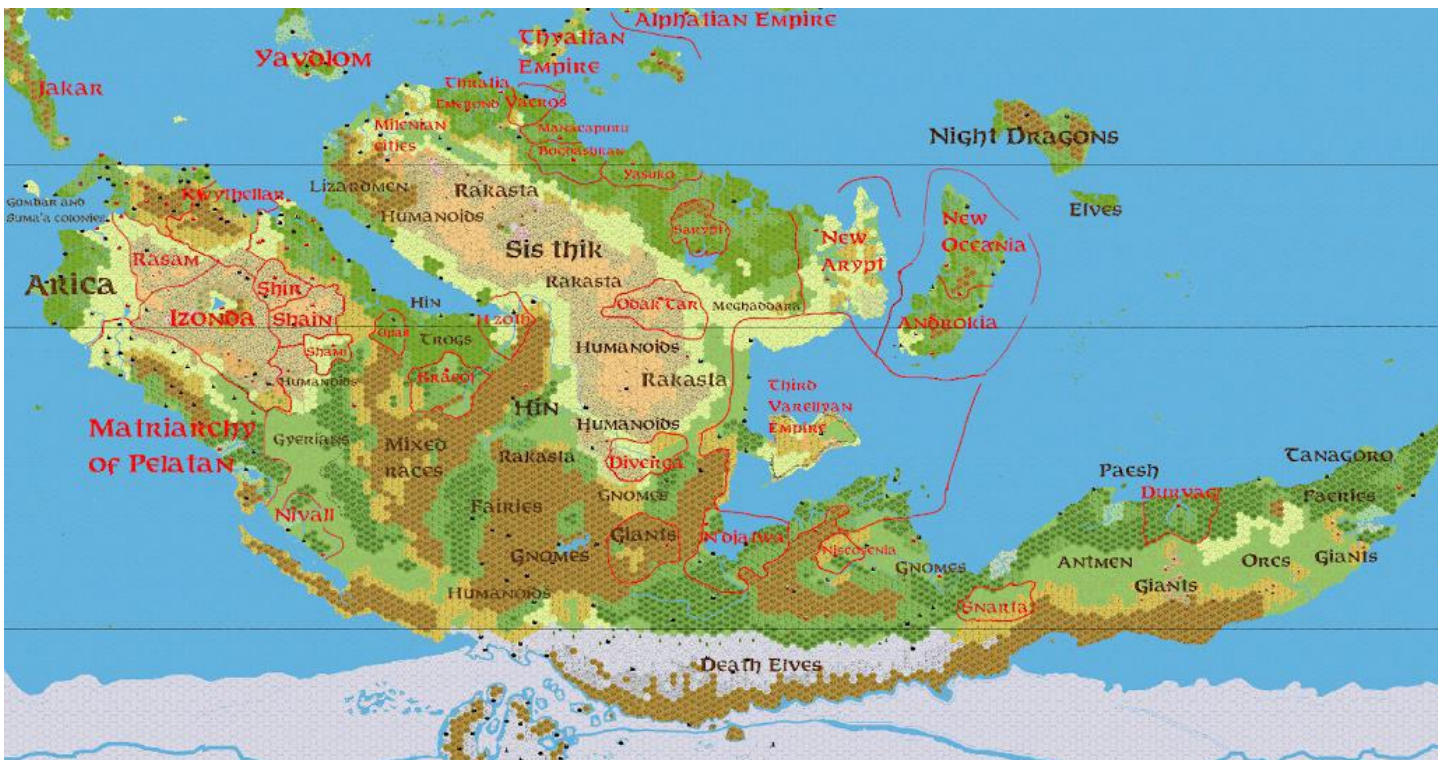
**14 AC:** King Hasdrubal reunites Varellya, beginning an era of stability and relative peace. Shortly afterwards Androkia (Cestia) is brought into the Empire again.

**39 AC:** Serraine rises to the skyes, now inhabited also by faenare and pegataurs.

**50 AC:** An Alphatian wizard creates the Kubitts. They rebel and slay him.

**70 AC:** The Varellyan general Paarkum defeats a slaver sorcerer ready to become an Immortal in southern Davania.

**100 AC:** The jade dragon that will become Opal has her kingdom in a Davanian forest.



*Davania in 300 AC:*

<sup>1</sup> Milenia has now fallen, but the third and last Varellyan Empire is prospering in the east, while Cestia is ravaged by civil war between androkiens and oceanians.



**126 AC:** Androkia declares unilateral independence and civil war ensues.

**159 AC:** Androkia (Cestia) is independent from Varelyya, but the Oceanians rebel and another civil war begins internally.

**200 AC:** The orc wizard Durblaga (Shaper) creates a kingdom of peaceful and civilized orcs in Vulcania. It will develop into the regional power of Varadghir.

**219 AC:** Androkiens are finally defeated by rebellious Oceanians.

**250 AC:** Priest-kings of the Skotharian minotaur Immortal Kiranjo take power in Vacros, the island becomes an haven of piracy. Vacros is also instrumental in bringing minotaurs back in power in northwestern Davania for some time. Androkiens refugees establish the city of Thalla in the Adakkian Sound.

**300 AC:** The confederate kingdom of Niscosenia is founded in the Lost Valley by Milenian refugees and Lhomarrian descendants. The Adakkian Carnifex found Abb-H'zoth over the ruins of Priallus.

**307 AC:** Aelios founded in the Adakkian sound by refugees from Cyclonia.

**360 AC:** King Brandan/Dorfin creates the gnomish empire of Snarta in Vulcania.

**400 AC:** The cults of Koryis and Shaper, introduced from Yasuko, turn the Bogdashan orcs in a peaceful nation that abandons Atzanteotl<sup>6</sup>. Lizardmen in the Adakkian sound defeat the carnifex and found Klath-T'zarth.

**410 AC:** Minroth traders spread the new magical strains of vampirism and lycanthropy in the Sea of Dread and beyond.

**435-441 AC:** A great humanoid invasion from Brasol sweep over Izonda and Pelatan, eventually repelled with some efforts by the two empires.

**450 AC:** The four modern kingdoms of Cestia are born.

**465 AC:** The civil war between princes Abatu and Lothir destroys Varelyya.



### The MODERN times

Being a time of new people coming and new stories in the great continent of Davania

**500 AC:** Cult of Madarua among the amazons of Meghala. Littonian explorers from northern Brun establish the colony of Jelgavpils in the Adakkian sound. Izonda destroys the Minotaur Kingdom in the north west.

**550 AC:** The kingdom of jade dragon Opal is destroyed by Humans. The Vulture Peninsula is now inhabited by Nagpas.

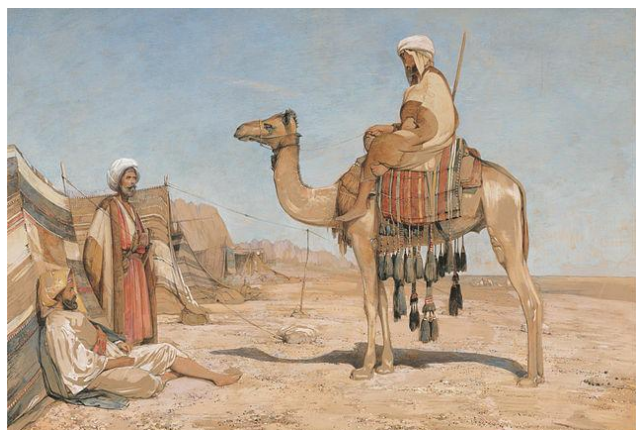
**576 AC:** Short living thyatian colonies on the Green Coast, west of Kastelios,

<sup>6</sup> According to other sources (Codex Immortalis <http://pandius.com/codeximm.html> by Marco Dalmonte) the Bogdashan orcs are still followers of Karaash.

**600 AC:** Surrounding people defeat Vacros, Cathos rises as the new sea power in the area.

**624 AC** Thyatian colonies on the Green Coast are abandoned and absorbed by local Maharian and Dunharian tribes.

**650 AC:** Other varellyan refugees reach Nivall.



*Market in the Aryptian desert*

**665 AC:** Pedhardt gnomes of the Ice Peaks create a new colony in southern Arypt.

**676 AC:** Thyatian explorers discover Cestia.

**690 AC:** The Snartan empire, now with the moving city of Snartapolis and mass soldiers cloning, begins a new campaign of conquest in Vulcania, gaining territories.

**700 AC:** Human attacks almost destroy Varadghir.

**750 AC:** Foundation of hulean colonies (among which there's Garganin, near a former thyatian colony) on the Davanian coasts. Many caracasta clans in this area ally with the Huleans, trying to win new lands against simbasta and pardasta tribes. Izonda attacks Pelatan and Nivall but suffers a crushing defeat.

**800 AC:** Hulean colonies on Davania are mostly destroyed or abandoned because of wars against simbasta and nearby human city-states. Survivors going back to Hule bring with them most Davanian caracasta which had allied with them.

**816 AC:** Snartan are stopped in Vulcania by combined resistance of humans and gnomes.

**850 AC:** Garganin is abandoned by Hule but prosper on its own.

**879 AC:** Renardy creates the colony of Cap Saint-Renard in the Adakkian sound.

**900 AC:** Izonda attacks Kwythellar elves but its army is destroyed.

**902 AC:** Traladaran refugees create Bronev near the Amalur lowlands.

**917 AC:** With great efforts the Izondians stop the Kwythellars and regain territories.

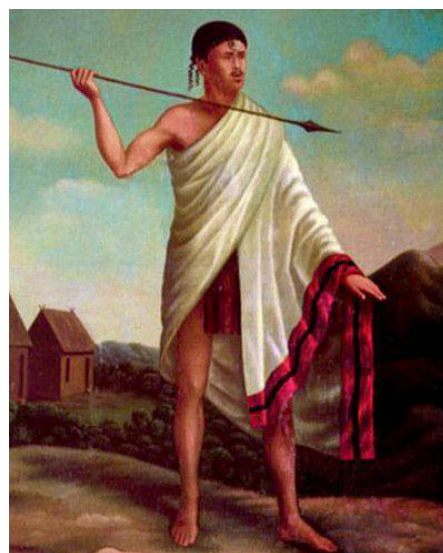
**925 AC:** An Hattian knight discovers Vanya's rest.

**927 AC:** Bellayne creates the colony of Port Elsterbury in the Adakkian sound.

**950 AC:** First Vilaverdan colony in the Adakkian sound.

**952 AC:** Vanya's Rest is founded in Davania by Heldanns. Local Meghaddara humans are defeated and repelled and begin a guerrilla war against the knights.

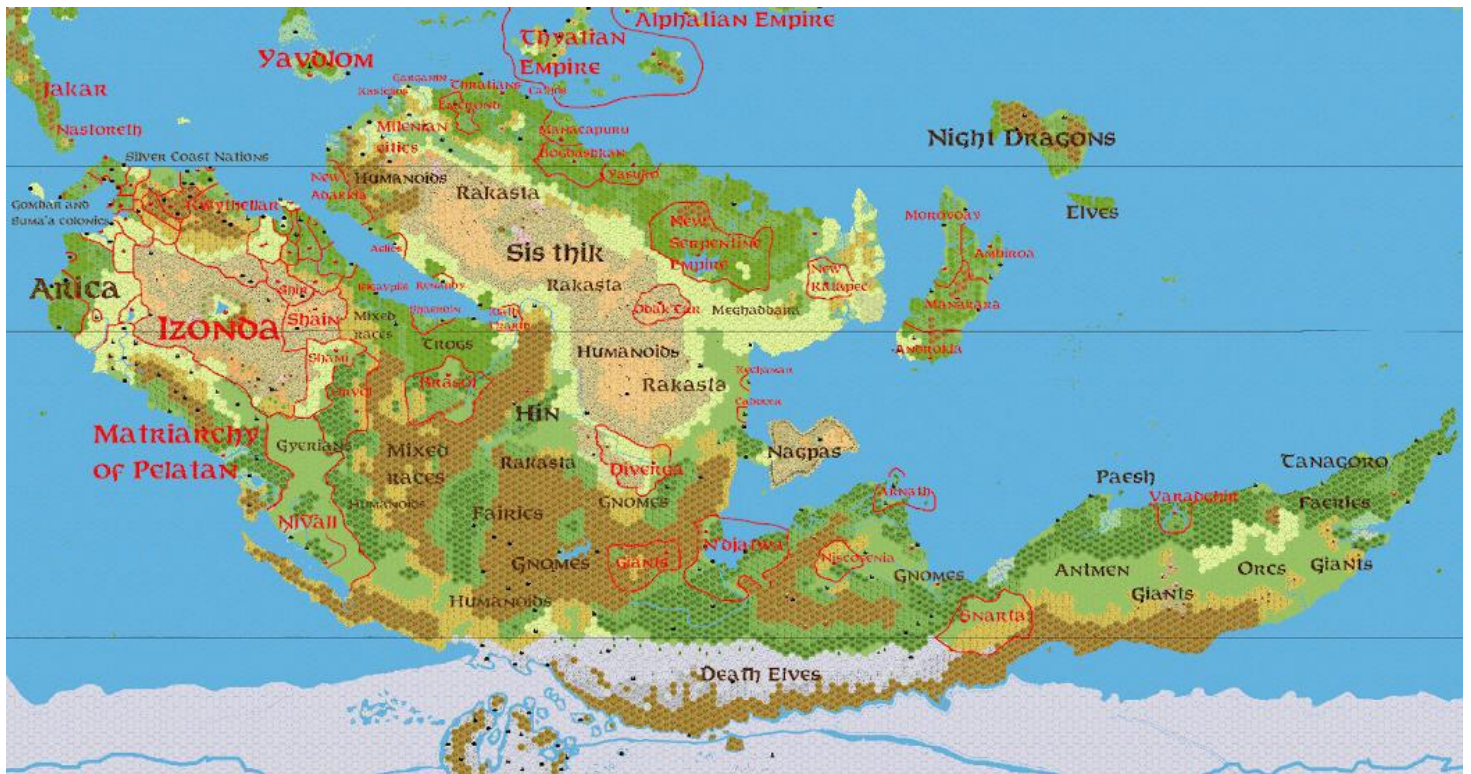
**965 AC:** The Princess Ark visits eastern Davania. First thyatian colonies in the Hinterlands.



*Cestian warrior*



## A recent history of Davania



*Davania in 900 AC<sup>1</sup>:*

<sup>1</sup> One hundred years before present times the situation wasn't much different: the land of Varellya is now cursed, soon the Izondan and the Snartan empires will grow even more, and new colonies from Brun will be created in the Adakkian Sound and the north eastern coast, among them the Thyatian conquest of the Hinterlands.

**968 AC:** First Texeiran colony in the Adakkian sound.

**977 AC:** Heldannic knights create the outpost of Schweidnitz in northwestern Davania, the faith of Vanya reaches Izonda.

**979 AC:** Minrothad begins its trade with Kastelios and Telos Taksidhi.

**980 AC:** Izonda conquers Ediza from the Kwythellar empire.

**986 AC:** All out rebellion of the Thratians against Thyatians in the Hinterlands.

**990 AC:** Thyatian expansion in the Hinterland at present borders. Schweidnitz abandoned.

**1000 AC:** Expansion of the Confederate Kingdom of Niscosenia in the Lost Valley.

**1007 AC:** The Church of Valerias takes power in Izonda, beginning a period of peace with surrounding nations.

**1008 AC:** Selhomarr adventurers from the Hollow World reach the Outer World in southern Davania, and they will eventually begin a long voyage toward the north.

**1010 AC:** The carnifex of the Adakkian Mountains begin rebuilding their civilisation in earnest, after their priests receive messages from a disguised Atzanteotl in their sleep.

**1014 AC:** The Heldannic Order wars with the simbasta, who capture the Star of Vanya. The Heldannic warbird fleet is destroyed by the simbasta Great Shaman. The Heldannic Order in Davania becomes a vassal of the simbasta Chief Ikwanza.

**1015 AC:** Tales are told in several northern Davanian ports of brave, swarthy, strangely-dressed adventurers defeating great monsters, but speaking a language no one understands. Those that have met them learn that they speak an archaic dialect of Milenian, as well, and have learned from them that they come from a land called "Lhomarr", which no one has heard of before. They are believed to be insane by most people.

**1019 AC:** Schweidnitz resettled by heldannic knights.

**1020 AC:** Adakkian Carnifex inspired by Atzanteotl begin their conquest of surface lands, founding the Realm of Zothak in the mountains

**1025 AC:** Word spreads in the ports of Davania of groups of "lizard men" roaming the Adakkian Mountains, and strange buildings of black stone being built up on the peaks.

#### **Main Sources:**

[Y'hog](#) by Geoff Gander

[Lhomarr](#) by Geoff Gander

[Varelyya](#) by Geoff Gander and Bruce Heard

[Heldannic knights timeline](#) by Bruce Heard

[About the Nagpas](#) by Bruce Heard

[Snartapolis](#) by Bruce Heard

[Niscosenia](#) by Geoff Gander & Bruce Heard

[Nations of Cestia](#) by Geoff Gander

[Varadghir](#) by Geoff Gander

[Age of Blackmoor](#) by James Mishler

[Ethnographic History of the Oltec Man](#) by Átila Pires dos Santos and Giampaolo Agosta

[Ethnographic History of the Neathar](#) by Giulio Caroletti, Geoff Gander and Giampaolo Agosta

[Milenian history](#) by Michael Michael Diehm

[Codex Immortalis](#) by Marco Dalmonte

[Hollow Moon](#) by Sharon Dornhoff and John Calvin's articles in previous issues of Threshold magazine

[Extent and expansion phases of the Milenian Empire](#) by LoZompatore

[The Region of Vulcania](#) by LoZompatore

[Thoughts about Platea](#) by LoZompatore

[Central Davania Humanoids](#) by Alex Benson

[Southern Vulcania timeline](#) by Ethan Deneault

[Timeline of Arikkia](#) by Christian Constantin.

My own work on [Izonda](#), [Pelatan](#) and [Mis](#)

[Kwythellar elves](#) by Jeff Daly

And many other fans of Mystara I could have forgotten but that you can find at the [Vaults of Pandius](#) under the headline Davania





FROM THE  
VAULTS OF  
PANDIUS

# Y'hog

## The Blackest Port in the West

by Geoff Gander

*“Think you know all the dens of iniquity, do you? Think you’re a man of renown because you spent three nights in the Black Rajah’s Pit, in the dark heart of Jaibul? Perhaps you are to the blokes walking about around here, but let me tell you that the blackest, filthiest hole you can find is as nothing compared to the ports of ancient times. Ssugath? I’m impressed you know of it, but I speak of a place far darker than that. It’s a place hardly anyone knows about now. And that’s how it should be.”*

*A veteran Minrothaddan trader speaks to a companion*

### FOREWORD:

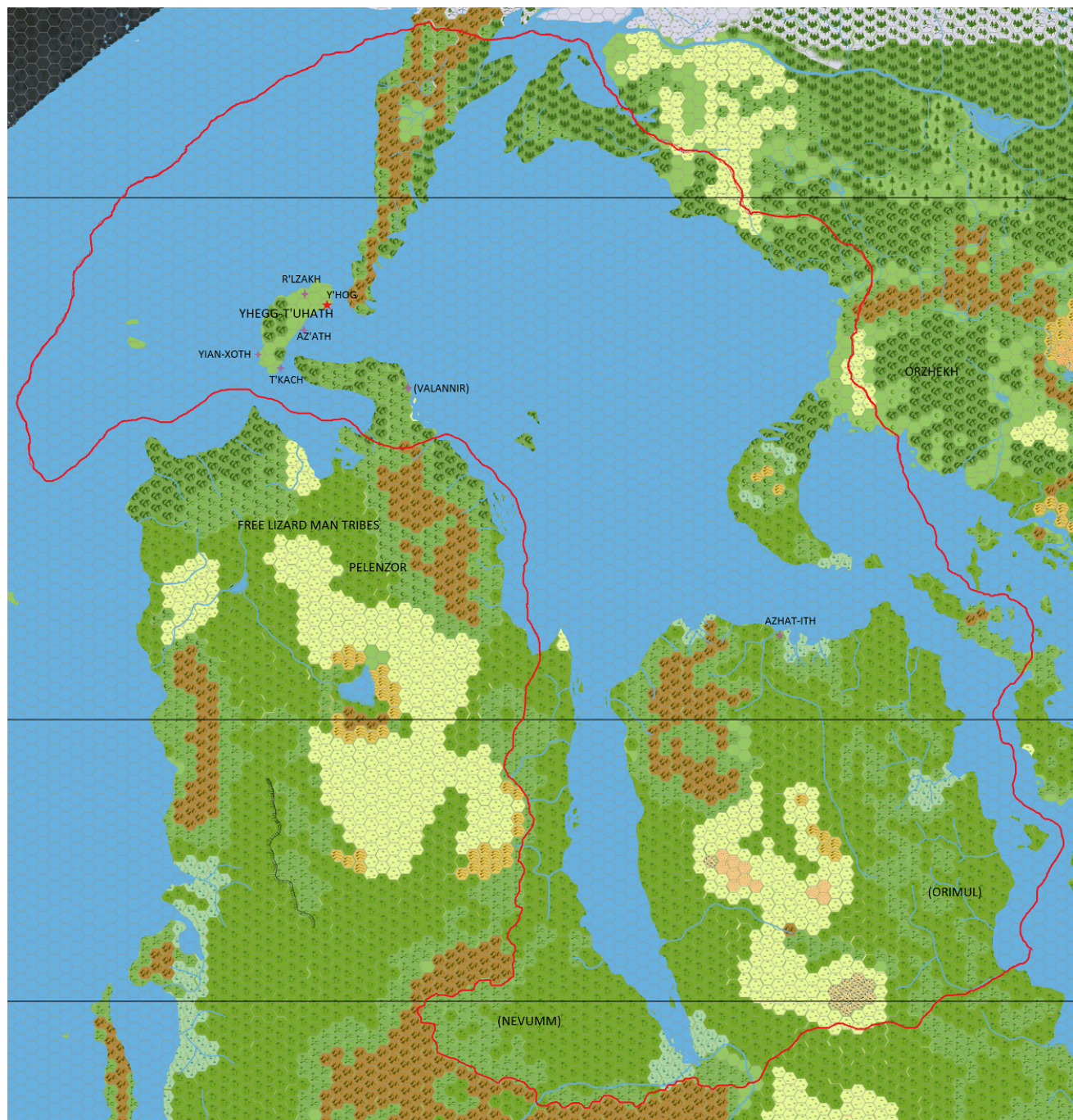
When I first created Y'hog in 1997, I had no idea that I had taken the first step in a journey that would ultimately see me create, more than a decade later, an intricate Lovecraftian cosmology for Mystara. At the time I had been reading a lot of classic pulp adventure stories by the likes of Robert E. Howard, which often featured ancient, evil cities peopled by inhuman creatures. The carnifex were perfect villains, and this blend of horror, fantasy, and hard-boiled action appealed to me. I had thought that Mystara would really benefit by having such a place inserted into it, but I also liked the idea of setting this new city in Mystara’s ancient past because doing so would give me an

opportunity to flesh out the setting’s backstory, and it would allow me to do so without radically changing the campaign setting of the Gazetteer era – thus making the city more appealing to the broader fan community. But I wanted to put my personal stamp on this, and so Y'hog was inhabited by a degenerate breed of carnifex, creatures intended to evoke disgust.

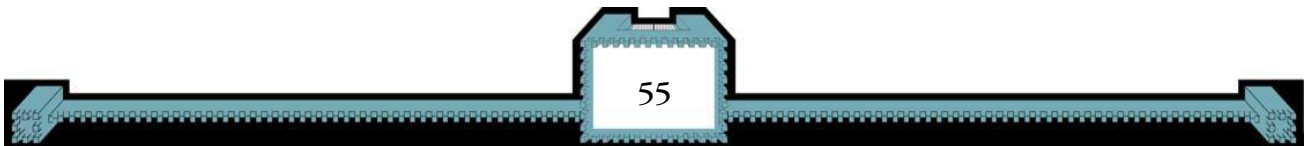
So I started writing about Y'hog over lunch while at work at my first real job after university. And kept writing over subsequent lunch hours. I don’t remember how long it took me to finish that first draft, but I remember the words just flowing. As I wrote more ideas came. I thought about who the carnifex worshipped, what their rites were, and how their abhorrent mind-set affected their dealings with other peoples. In the end I was satisfied with what I had created – a uniquely evil and alien place set in Mystaran antiquity that could be the source of countless legends and adventure hooks to keep players enthralled, and to challenge them.

Although I moved on to create other things, Y'hog stands out to me as the first genuinely unique piece that I wrote for the community, and I like to think it inspired me, and others, to expand on the Lovecraftian elements of Mystara, which in my view enrich the setting greatly. So now I will return to the source, and tell you more of this infamous black city!

# Y'hog – The Blackest Port in the West



*Map of the Carnifex Empire*





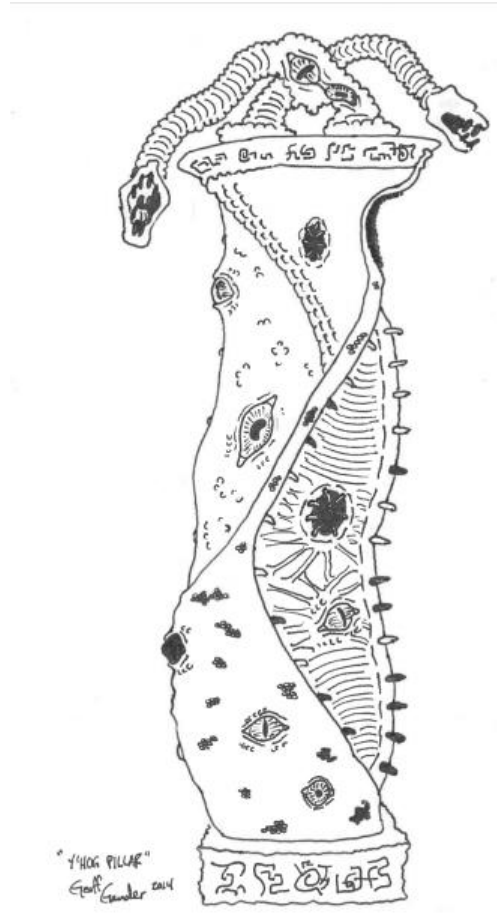
## AN OVERVIEW OF THE CITY OF Y'HOG:

*“Of great size it was, with walls nearly fifty feet tall, and so wide that three horsemen could ride aside each other along their tops. The gates themselves were of purest steel, and graven with images that no mind must conceive, lest the ponderer flee unto the depths of madness.”*

Y'hog – “the most infamous city in history” – was the capital of an empire ruled by a sub-race of carnifex. At their height, these folk ruled a maritime empire that stretched from what is now the Arm of the Immortals to the Serpent Peninsula, and southwards to the shores of the Adakkian Sound. While the majority of the population were troglodyte slaves and lizard man labourers who lived in scattered, fortified villages, the ruling carnifex dwelled for the most part in the great cities that lined the coasts of the mountainous island of Y'hegg-T'uhath, the seat of their power. The oldest, and greatest, of these cities was Y'hog.

The city of was built primarily of basalt, a black volcanic rock that was very common on Y'hegg-T'uhath. Y'hog was laid out in a giant “C” that framed a deep bay, and was bordered on the west by a mountain range, and by plains to the north and south. Although their city was quite remote, and no hostile nations were located nearby, the carnifex built a great wall, dotted with observation and defensive towers at regular intervals, around Y'hog, and sealed the seaward entrance with a massive chain. The inhabitants had enough confidence in their city's outer defences to neglect to build any

inner defences more substantial than city watch outposts. Squads of troglodyte soldiers led by carnifex officers were a regular sight on Y'hog's streets.



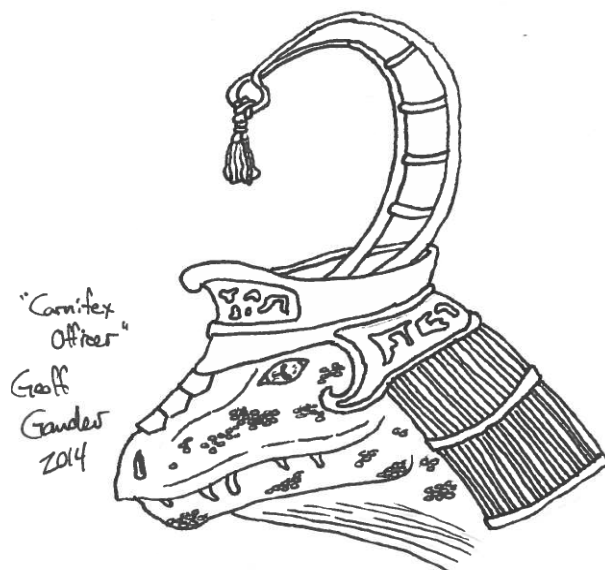
*Pillar of Y'hog*

Y'hog's walls had three gates forged of *marb-ubol*, each of which was 30 feet tall and wide and bristling with magical (powerful wards that activated spell-like effects whenever enemies drew near) and mundane (shielded platforms from which archers could shoot at attackers) defences. From each gate a grand avenue, each 40 feet wide, led straight to the Temple Quarter in the centre of the city. Side streets, each at least as wide as the main roads in modern Mystara's largest cities,

branched off from the avenues. The streets quickly split and grew progressively narrower. Residents of Y'hog were able to navigate this tangled web easily, but outsiders found the layout disorienting. Many of those who visited the city in its heyday and lived to tell the tale remarked that they often ended up at their starting point, and sometimes found themselves in the Undercity without having consciously descended.

The architecture of Y'hog was stark, solid, and grandiose - designed to last for millennia. The buildings in which most of its 650,000 inhabitants lived were angular and constructed of basalt, granite, and occasionally marble, and were many-storeyed affairs – anything with fewer than four floors was a rare sight. The buildings that lined the great avenues and major streets were adorned with intricate carvings depicting their owners and their greatest achievements. No building had windows at ground level, and those that did exist were tall and narrow, and appeared at odd intervals. Rooflines were flat – partly because they were integrated into a network of elevated walkways, but also because they were home to a large number of transient troglodyte labourers who lived in crude huts built on their surfaces. The walkways bridged all but the widest streets, such that it was possible to travel from one end of Y'hog to the other without ever going down to the street level – the exception to this was the Temple Quarter, whose buildings stood far apart and rose above even the walkways. Y'hog (and other carnifex cities) also had many squares and open spaces in which residents could congregate. What greenery existed was obsessively controlled and manicured – if the carnifex could not force a plant to grow

exactly the way they wanted it to, they would not let it grow. Often, public spaces were filled with statues, arches of triumph, and other things to remind everyone of the greatness of their city. The dominant impression a human visitor would probably get if they visited Y'hog would be one of bleak sterility.



"Carnifex Officer"  
Graft Gaudes  
2014

*Carnifex*

Although the carnifex were not much larger than humans (they averaged 7-8 feet tall), their buildings were proportioned on a grand scale because they saw themselves as the first great race to walk the planet. Even the most modest carnifex house would be palatial by modern Mystaran standards, with plenty of space for possessions, indoor and outdoor recreation, pursuing studies, entertaining guests, or whatever else the occupant wanted to do. Plus, even the lowest-ranking carnifex had at least two or three in-house servants and/or slaves.



Y'hog was divided into several quarters:

*Artisans' Quarter:* This part of the city was where Y'hog's crafters (at least the upper-class ones) lived and worked. The ground floors of most of the buildings were used as workshops, with the artisans and their families living above them. Mixed with these workshops were larger factories, where troglodyte workers would churn out common goods. The latter buildings were often found close to the Workers' Quarter, so that labourers did not have to walk through the neighbourhoods of their betters (the authorities would not tolerate troglodytes living outside the Workers' Quarter).

*Market Quarter:* Although the Carnifex of Y'hog seldom traded with their neighbours, they practised commerce among themselves and with cultures that were loosely aligned (or at least not openly hostile all the time) with them. Much of this part of the city was taken up by a massive square where all of the households would acquire what they needed. Goods from every corner of the Carnifex Empire – including spices, live animals, slaves, gems and precious metals – could be found here. Most of the residents of this part of the city were lizard men, lower-class carnifex, and a small handful of troglodytes who had managed to climb the social ladder.

The Market Quarter was also the location of Y'hog's port.

*Temple Quarter:* This is where the main temples to the Outer Beings were located, and where the priests and their servants lived. A canal, in which no water craft were permitted, was excavated to separate this part of the city from the rest, and it was accessible only via three massive bridges, which could be raised during special

religious festivals and in times of need. The few foreigners who were allowed to enter the city unmolested were forbidden from entering the Temple Quarter, under pain of death. The main feature of this part of the city was the Star Temple – a massive step-pyramid constructed of obsidian, which was high enough that a person standing on its top was able to see beyond the city walls. The Star Temple stood in the midst of a great plaza dominated by the Obsidian Monolith (a massive enchanted pillar that acted as a magical battery), which was in turn bordered by lesser pyramids. Lesser servitors of the Outer Beings were a common sight in the Temple Quarter, and many guarded the temples and the homes of the most senior priests.

*Workers' Quarter:* This area, the largest, was where the bulk of Y'hog's troglodyte labourers lived. The buildings here were unadorned, uniform, and crowded, and the streets were crammed with huts and other improvised shelters for those who were unable to secure accommodations in the buildings. Although the troglodytes were thoroughly cowed for the most part by their carnifex masters, the ruling class closely controlled their subjects – to the extent that the troglodytes were severely limited in terms of what they could do and where they could travel. Aside from basic amenities such as public drinking fountains, small plazas where residents could congregate and exercise if they wished, and outlets to the sewer system, the Workers' Quarter was little more than a place to sleep. Most labourers were assigned trades upon reaching adulthood, and were required to stay in the Workers' Quarter when they were not working. Violators were often conscripted into the legions.

## The DENIZENS OF Y'hog:

*“Of their aspect we know little, save that they were of reptilian stock, and walked upon two legs. Truly they were a fearsome people, such as they learned to stride and run where they ought instead to slither and crawl.”*

The Carnifex Empire counted many races among its inhabitants, who catered to the whims of the sorcerous and degenerate carnifex, most of whom lived on the island of Y'hegg-T'uhath. carnifex society was highly stratified, with almost no prospect of social mobility whatsoever – one's race determined what roles one could occupy. This societal model was re-created by the lizard man sorcerer-kings of Mogreth thousands of years later, but brutal as that realm was it was only a shadow of Y'hog.

*Carnifex:* The Y'hog carnifex are the undisputed masters of their empire, and have structured their society solely for their own benefit. Comprising 20% of the city's population, most dwelt in the Temple Quarter, and occupied the most palatial homes in the Market Quarter (but these carnifex considered the dregs of their own kind). Most of them lived lives of leisure, and spent much of their time socialising, broken by an hour or two of official business if they had any responsibilities to govern anything – most routine work was delegated to lizard man assistants. A large number of carnifex had an abiding interest in genetics, and as a result there were a large number of “clubs” where like-minded carnifex could gather to discuss their research. Carnifex rarely left their neighbourhoods, preferring instead to send servants to conduct their business for them.

*Lizard Men:* Lizard men were a rare sight in Y'hog, comprising only 10% of the population; most of them lived on the mainland, where they represented their masters. Considered to be the most advanced of the servant races, lizard men were given considerable freedom, and many had privileges that allowed them to live at levels approximating those of their masters as long as they were circumspect. Lizard men acted as low- to mid-level administrators, commanded squads of guards, and ran carnifex households. Ever conscious of their elevated status, and the ability of their masters to take it away at any moment (rebellious lizard men often found themselves commanding squads of troglodyte conscripts in the legions), most lizard men were devoted to preserving the regime at all costs. The carnifex raised the stakes for the lizard men by punishing a rebel's family, as well (good administrators being hard to find, by their reasoning). This enforced zeal often hindered the efforts of rebels, as troglodytes found little reason to trust lizard men.

*Outsiders:* Most of the non-reptilian inhabitants of Y'hog (8% of the population) was comprised of slaves. Most of these were humans taken from the Davanian nations that bore the brunt of carnifex aggression, and their often brief lives were those of back-breaking labour, ending in being sacrificed on a dark altar. They were kept in vast holding pens located in Y'hog's Undercity, watched by troglodyte guards. Although most of the guards took out their frustrations on their prisoners, those who quietly opposed the regime often found common cause with the slaves – resulting in many escapes. Former slaves often returned the



favour on their way out of the city by passing information to sympathetic troglodytes that helped the latter in their own efforts to revolt.

*Sis'thik:* Although most sis'thik preferred the arid regions of Davania some settled on Y'hegg-T'uhath where their inherent toughness made them useful temple guards, and enforcers in what passed for Y'hog's constabulary. They appreciated their relatively exalted status in Y'hog society, and the freedom of movement that their duties permitted them, and as a result discharged their duties with relish. The humid and relatively cool climate of Y'hegg-T'uhath was not agreeable to the sis'thik, however, and few of their eggs hatched – despite the ministrations of the carnifex, who saw in them a replacement for the ubiquitous troglodytes. As a result, the sis'thik were never numerous, comprising roughly 2% of the population of Y'hog.

*Troglodytes:* The majority (60%) of the population of Y'hog, as well as the other, lesser cities, was comprised of troglodytes who kept everything running. They cleaned the streets, performed most of the manual labour, prepared the meals, disciplined slaves, and submitted to sacrifice if there were not enough prisoners. Most of them were so thoroughly indoctrinated from infancy to revere the carnifex as deities that few of them questioned their lot in life – it was enough to be alive and under the protection of their masters. The fact that the troglodytes themselves had been genetically manipulated over several centuries by the carnifex, and no effort was made to conceal this, only emphasised their subservient status. If any of them got “uppity”, as happened from time to time, the carnifex dangled the prospect of being conscripted

into the legions and being used a cannon fodder. Often, a couple thousand would be shipped to the mainland – regardless of whether they had done anything wrong – to drive the point home. The carnifex also cultivated informants among the troglodytes, and rewarded these toadies with favours such as improved living conditions, opportunities to climb the social ladder (to a limited extent), and wealth. However, favours and recognition were given out so seldom that anyone displaying any sign of improved status was immediately suspected by his or her fellow troglodytes as being a spy. These suspicions were rarely wrong, and the few who actively opposed the regime simply went deeper underground.

## Law and Government:

Y'hog, and the Carnifex Empire as a whole, was highly centralised. The Great Conclave, which consisted of the seven highest-ranking priests, ruled the empire from their chamber near the summit of the Star Temple. All decisions were made by them, and then implemented by a small army of lizard man bureaucrats. In addition to their duties towards the empire as a whole, the members of the Great Conclave also oversaw the day-to-day administration of the Mainland territories, which were divided into seven provinces – one for each member. Y'hegg-T'uhath, being the political centre of the empire, was governed by the Great Conclave as a whole, with each member taking a turn once every seven days. Although efforts were made to ensure consensus on major policies, each member had his or her unique governing style and focus. Criminals reacted accordingly, and as a result it was often possible to predict what sort of criminal

activity would occur on which day in Y'hog. So long as the criminal element kept a low profile, bribed the right officials, and targeted low-status individuals, the “long arm of the law” was rather short.

The legal system devised by the carnifex, which survived in modified form in the Empire of Mogreth, imposed severe penalties on all lawbreakers except their own kind. The accused was hauled before an Inquisitor (usually a lizard man but occasionally a low-ranking carnifex) to have their crimes, as well as their likely punishment, read out. The accused was then provided an opportunity to beg for mercy, after which a judgement was rendered. Carnifex who broke the law often ended up in prison, or exiled to the mainland territories, for a decade or two – after which all record of their wrongdoing would be erased. Other races were punished with mutilation or imprisonment for minor offenses such as theft, or execution for major offences (which included any crime in which a carnifex was a victim). If the Inquisitor was feeling merciful, he or she might commute particularly harsh sentences to a lifetime of service in the legions.

### Features of the Black Port:

*“Their black towers cast long shadows upon the land, and there was nowhere where their touch was not felt. Many a living thing today bears in some way the mark of their tampering, a mute testament to their audacity.”*

As a city conceived by inhuman minds and dedicated to beings that were, by their very nature, inimical to reality, Y'hog boasted many features that set it apart from any other Mystaran city at that time. Many of these

were destroyed prior to, or during, the sinking of Y'hegg-T'uhath.

*Altar of Akh'All:* This altar, which rested at the summit of the Star Temple, was carved from a single piece of basalt and measured eight feet long and three feet wide. It was inlaid with 40 palm-sized rubies along its edges and contained a shallow depression in its centre, from which narrow, deep grooves radiated outwards. Auspicious sacrifices were carried out with this altar, and the carnifex believed that the souls of those who were put to death on it were wholly consumed by Akh'All Himself (rather than the Outer Beings as a whole, as was the case for lesser altars). As such, fervent devotees of Akh'All would sometimes ask to be sacrificed here, just so they could be close to their patron forever. There was some truth to those beliefs, as the altar was actually attuned to Akh'All. After a sacrifice the soul of the victim was trapped in one of the rubies, where it would remain until the priest invoked Akh'All, who then consumed it. Alternatively, a priest could drain a ruby in order to heal themselves (each ruby restored 1d6+1 hit points), or to increase the effectiveness of any spell cast within 20 feet of the altar. Each ruby drained would add an additional damage die to a spell (damage could exceed 20 dice), improve protective or offensive modifiers by +/- 1, penalise the saving throws of all opponents within range by 1, or ensure maximum healing for one spell recipient. Draining a ruby in this way destroyed the soul trapped within it. The priests of the Star Temple made sure that the altar was “full” as often as possible.

The altar was destroyed during the sack of Y'hog, but so infamous was its reputation that no effort was made to recover its rubies.



Most of the rubies sank to the sea floor with Y'hegg-T'uhath, but some found their way to the mainland before the sinking. These could easily be found in a treasure hoard.

**DM Note:** Trapped souls are conscious and retain all of their memories up to the moment of sacrifice. They are not aware of the passage of time outside the ruby. When a ruby is picked up, the person holding it has a 50% chance of receiving flashes of the occupant's memory, and if this happens the soul becomes aware that someone is "outside" and they may communicate telepathically with them. Naturally, a soul will seek to return to mortal life, and will try to enlist the aid of the person who found the ruby. Doing so is possible, but requires powerful spells — such as *wish*, *reincarnation* or *magic jar*.

**Obsidian Monolith:** The Obsidian Monolith was a pillar measuring 100 feet tall and 20 feet wide at its base, which rotated slowly several inches above its base (one revolution took ten minutes). Its entire surface was covered with softly-glowing runes in the carnifex tongue that seemed to writhe when viewed in one's peripheral vision; they moved elsewhere on the monolith's surface when the viewer looked away, even for a second. The monolith was crafted by the carnifex to act as a battery for magical energy, and it was linked to all the temples in Y'hog for this purpose. Priests would discharge unused spells at the end of each day into obsidian statues of carnifex bearing wide-lipped cups, and the monolith would absorb the energy instantly. The monolith was capable of storing 10,000 spell levels, and its store of energy could be determined by examining specific runes that did not move — specially-appointed priests were responsible

for tending the monolith, and ensuring that its magical stockpile remained high. Spellcasters had to be within 200 feet of the monolith, or within 50 feet of ten-foot-tall replicas, in order to draw on its energy. The replicas (which weighed 2,000 lbs. each) were moved as necessary by slaves.

The Obsidian Monolith was taken as booty by victorious Lhomarrian armies following the sack of Y'hog in BC 7031. The ship bearing the prize sank in a storm while en route to Lhomarrian lands, and its whereabouts remained a mystery until all of the nations of that epoch fell. Since that time the monolith has become forgotten, and now it lies buried along the northern shores of Davania, awaiting discovery.

**DM Note:** If recovered, the Obsidian Monolith would require extensive study to decipher, but once its nature becomes known it would become a desirable prize for many nations. Although crafted by the carnifex, the monolith is not irrevocably attuned to the Outer Beings. The careful removal of the right runes would sever the connection to them, after which the monolith would become a battery for arcane magic (no Immortal would allow their holy energies to touch the device, even if the connection to the Outer Beings was severed). However, Outer Being cultists would certainly learn of the monolith's rediscovery, and would take steps to acquire it.

**Horn of Yurrgh-Thal:** The Horn of Yurrgh-Thal sat on a landing halfway up the Star Temple, and pointed towards the sea. It measured seven feet long from end to end and was shaped like a corkscrew with a widely-flaring end, and was fashioned of *marb-vo*. Only specially-appointed priests

were permitted to blow the Horn, and when they did so they could sacrifice their own life energy in order to summon servants of Yurrgh-Thal to do their bidding. The priest decided exactly how much life energy (i.e., hit points) to sacrifice, and each hit point sacrificed summoned one Hit Die worth of servants, who immediately attacked the nearest non-believer unless ordered otherwise by the priest. Such summoned creatures remained on the Prime Plane for one hour per level of the priest, after which they returned to their home dimensions. If a priest sacrificed his or her own life in blowing the Horn, creatures were summoned permanently.

Lhomarran soldiers destroyed the Horn during the sack of Y'hog, and sought to cart the scrap *marb vhol* away as treasure. However, the unwholesome nature of the alien metal sickened all who touched it, and so it was left behind. The remnants sank with Y'hegg-T'uhath, and now lie buried under the sand.

### The Black Port Today (the Gazetteer Era):

The former location of Y'hog is now marked by a great whirlpool, which has never entirely stopped raging since the sinking, near the Strait of Izonda. Local sailors do not know what lies at the bottom of the maelstrom, but all give it a wide berth. If one were to enter the whirlpool and survive the ride, they would find themselves floating roughly 500 feet above the silt-choked ruins of Y'hog.

The island of Y'hegg-T'uhath broke up after it slipped beneath the waves, and now it is a vast, sandy plateau whose monotony is broken by the occasional rocky outcropping – remnants of the mountain range – and the ruins of Y'hog itself. All of the other cities of the carnifex, lacking the favour and protection of the Outer Beings, have long since been buried under several metres of sand and debris.

The massive walls that guarded Y'hog for centuries still rise high above the seafloor; although they are broken in many places. Undersea plants and animals have colonised the outer face of the walls, but life ends abruptly on the inner face, which, although heavily cracked, still bears the millennia-old towering carvings depicting decisive moments in carnifex history. Most of the outer districts of the city, including the original port, are now buried under a thick layer of sand and rock – save for the remnants of some of the taller structures which rise from the seafloor like bony fingers. Most animal life, sensing the unwholesome presence of the Outer Beings, avoid the ruins if they can. Anything



encountered is there by choice, or by compulsion.

The portion of Y'hog that remains largely intact is the Temple Quarter, where the influence of the Outer Beings remains strong. There, the top two-thirds of the Star Temple rises above the sea floor; although the plaza that surrounded it is now buried – except for the depression in which the Obsidian Monolith once rested. The lesser temples also still stand.

The reason why animal life avoids the sunken city is because it is bathed by the mental emanations of its inhabitants - at least, those who have survived millennia of suspended animation. In the last days of the Carnifex Empire, when it had become clear that Y'hegg-T'uhath was doomed and the Immortals would not allow the inhabitants to escape a watery grave, the most powerful carnifex retreated to their refuges beneath their palaces. There, they sought a means of protecting themselves until such time as their followers (or their descendants), could free them and begin the process of restoring the empire. Most of those who entombed themselves have long since died - their enchantments gave out, their ruined homes collapsed on top of them, or in some cases their spirits wandered away from their bodies, and have long since become lost. Those who fled to the catacombs beneath the Star Temple, however, managed to survive, and it is these carnifex (who number slightly less than 100) whose dreams of empire and the glory of the Outer Beings cause such disturbances.

Most intelligent species will feel uneasy once inside the walls of Y'hog, but those with an Intelligence of 10 or higher will be able to understand the thought-emanations on an intuitive level. Prolonged exposure (i.e., more than six hours) will require a saving throw vs. Spells to be rolled once per hour. A failed save means the victim suffers the effect of a *fear* spell, but remains in that state until they manage to leave the city. The saving throw is penalised by 1 for every point of Intelligence higher than 10 - thus, an explorer with an Intelligence of 17 will make a save with a -7 penalty. At the DM's discretion, prolonged exposure to the carnifex' thoughts, or failing a save by a wide margin, could result in some form of insanity.

The other part of the city that largely escaped destruction is the Undercity, the network of sewers and catacombs that was frequented only by the truly desperate (such as escaped slaves) back in Y'hog's heyday. Nothing sentient lives there now; although the ancient spirits of those who once lived here do roam the flooded tunnels and caverns. Some of the grander homes of Y'hog had specially-designed sub-levels that their owners used for storing important treasures. Although many of these have collapsed, a handful survived to the present day and some are accessible via the Undercity. What kind of treasures await discovery, and whether recovering them will do more harm than good, is something for the DM to determine...



Statue of Bastet

# History and Origins of the **RAKASTA**

by Giampaolo Agosta (Agathokles)

*FROM THE  
VAULTS OF PANDIUS*



## INTRODUCTION

The feline rakasta, originally introduced in the X1 “*Isle of Dread*” module as tribal, sabretooth tiger-riding hunters, have evolved to become one of the setting-specific player character races for Mystara. They appeared, still as monsters, in X2 “*Castle Amber*”, as part of André-David Ambreville’s “Wild Hunt” party, along with the first Lupins, and in the “*Rage of the Rakasta*” Thunder Rift module, but their bid to playable status and setting-wide relevance came with Bruce Heard’s Voyage of the Princess Ark series on *Dragon Magazine*, where the Empire of Myoshima, entirely populated by this feline near-human race, was introduced, as the series eponymous skyship travelled outside the planetary atmosphere and to the invisible moon of Matera. Along with that off-world Empire, another nation of rakasta, Bellayne, was soon introduced in the series.

The extent of the rakasta diffusion on (and off) the planet of Mystara was finally delineated in the “*Rakasta of Mystara*” article on *Dragon Magazine* 247, which introduced several rakasta subraces, and revealed a large rakasta presence on the southern continent of Davania, where the powerful simbasta culture appeared as the strongest rakasta presence outside of Myoshima.



## History of the Rakasta

The origins of the rakasta are lost in the prehistory, well before the Great Rain of Fire. In this article, an exposition is presented of two mainstream theories about the origins of the rakasta conceived by Known World scholars. These are not necessarily “true” within the context of the setting, but can be used by the DM as plot devices for adventures pitting academic or explorer PCs against rivals looking for proof of such theories, *Indiana Jones* style.

The “modern” history, on the other hand, is fairly well established. This article provides a consolidated timeline starting from 3500 BC, five centuries before the Great Rain of Fire.



Ancient rakasta  
wood sculpture

## The origin of rakasta

Excerpt from "An essay on intelligent feline species", by Herr Franz Löwenroth, Baron of Adlerturm, Klarmont 1000, Glantri

*“...as we could verify from accurate interviews of natives of the Khurish Massif, the rakasta do not have a clear memory of their history, believing to be autochthonous to the mountains they inhabit today. This is all but accurate, as we have been able to establish through the accurate analysis of the rakastann migratory fluxes that their origins must be located in the southernmost jungles of the continent known as Skothar, which lies in the Far East, beyond the Empire of Alphatia.*

*We were able to obtain clear evidence of this, thanks to two valiant contributors, who prefer to remain anonymous. They brought from that region the skull of an outstanding specimen of the rakastan kind, a giant among the felines, whose race is clearly extinct from the most ancient times, as no record of a similar being can be found even in the oldest chronicles of Skothar.*

*From this primordial progenitor, the mighty sberkasta came, who ranged far in the eastern regions, reaching the mountains which form an impassable border to the steppes of Skothar. There they thrived, giving birth to new breeds. As they moved northwards and later westwards, these proud felines adapted to the frigid climate of the arctic lands, and the lynxman was born, a Rakasta able to cross the frozen wastes to the Norwold, were they currently live.*

*This lynxman must be, we have no doubt about it, the ancestor of the common rakasta found here in our mountains, and adapted to a climate that was warmer but somewhat drier climate.”*

### **The Simbasta**

Confidential report by Herr Berndt Von Staufenberg, AC 1016, Vanya's Rest.

*“...since the last forays of Heldannic explorers in Norwold, we have proof of the existence of rakastan tribes in Northern Brun. We were already aware of the presence of these felines in Southern Brun and Ochalea, though this information was usually considered useless.*

*Now, we are able to link all those rakastan tribes to a single root: the simbasta of the Davanian Savannah. The lesser breeds of Brun are, apparently, the regressed descendants of the simbasta. The clue which leads us to this conclusion is a custom deeply rooted in the simbasta traditions, that is the ousting of known cowards.*

*We believe that groups of outcast simbasta, unable to join other prides, due to the simbasta habit of cutting the cowards' tails, the equivalent of branding among humans, were forced to move outside the borders of the ancestral lands of their kind. There, they had to adapt to different conditions, and some more successful groups were eventually able to survive, acquiring physical forms which resembled their lifestyle and low moral fibre.*

*eventually, a growing fear of their former kind pushed these tribes to overcome their innate fear of water, and cross the Sea of Dread to Ochalea and Thanegioth. From there, they moved on to the continent, but were dispersed by the more powerful human tribes.”*



*Heldannic depiction of the simbasta king Ikwanza*



**Rakasta IMMORTALS**

During the course of history, several rakasta have reached Immortality, but they are all young, as far as the Immortals reckon. The most ancient rakasta Immortal is Bastet herself, the first rakasta. Her companion and former master, Kumrah, is now an Exalted servant of Ka. Bastet is known as Bao Tian-niang, the Heavenly Maiden, in Ochalea, and as Ayatori, the Cat's Cradle, in Myoshima. She is also recognized by most other rakasta cultures, with the notable exception of Bellayne.

Kata Ng, the White Sherkasta, is the second oldest Immortal. This follower of Ssu-Ma had a huge influence on the rakasta of Selimpore, Rajahstan, and Tangor. He is also worshipped as one of the Six Immortal Heroes, Byakko no Kata, along with Kitahara Hirameki, Kitahara Jiro, Nekotakai Myojo, Daishou Sennin, and Kyriogami.

Kyriogami is the name given by the Myoshimans to Ninfangle, or Ning Feng-Li, a roguish rakasta Immortal from Mystara, whereas Daishou Sennin is the Myoshiman name of the Eternal General. While this Immortal was originally the human warlord Guthbrand, he was reincarnated as the rakasta Sohei Abbot Shingen.

Immortal	Source	References
Bastet	DM247	Codex Immortalis
Kata Ng	Patera Files	A Gazetteer of Myoshima, Hollow Moon Exploration
Kitahara Hirameki	Patera Files	A Gazetteer of Myoshima, Hollow Moon Exploration
Kitahara Jiro	Patera Files	A Gazetteer of Myoshima, Hollow Moon Exploration
Nekotakai Myojo	Patera Files	A Gazetteer of Myoshima, Hollow Moon Exploration
Ninfangle	IM2	Codex Immortalis
Eternal General	IM3	Codex Immortalis



*Agyptian depiction of Bastet*

*Table 1: Rakasta Immortals*

### The two Theories

Both theories are inherently flawed, in that they miss the dual origin of the modern Rakasta from both the descendants of Ba-stet and Kum-rah, the original rakasta couple created by the Immortal Ka.

Löwenroth's theory fails in the end, where it does not explain well the origin of mountain rakasta of Glantri. Moreover, it is unable to explain the origin of western Brun rakasta, who are clearly unknown to the author.<sup>1</sup>

On the other hand, the second theory describes the Davanian migration, though the Heldannic writer is unaware of the westernmost rakastan population. The major migratory route was through the Arm of the Immortal, while the Sea of Dread migration was slower, and most rakasta remained in Ochalea. Also, it fails in explaining the origin of the lynxmen, who came from northern Skothar.

### Prehistory of the rakasta

The first rakasta appeared in the Isle of Cestia, before the Great Rain of Fire and the Varellyan invasion. The tale of their creation by Ka is exposed in "Rakasta of Mystara".

When the Varellyans arrived, the rakasta breeds had already differentiated enough, with proto-simbasta (essentially advanced Cave rakasta) leaving for the western continent of Davania, and proto-sherkasta (an advanced breed of Rakastodons) navigating through the daedalus of islands north-east of Cestia.

<sup>1</sup> For a "Skotharian origin" option that takes into account Davanian rakasta, see "History and Evolution of the Rakasta", by Simone Neri.

The ancestor races still lived on Cestia, but were hunted to extinction by the Varellyan colonists.

### Davanian Migration

This first migration started from the coastal region near Cestia (which before the Great Rain of Fire was connected to the continent), then it moved to the Meghala Kimata plateau, to the northern regions of Davania and to Ochalea. Meanwhile, wild rakasta species started appearing in the northern regions, as the offsprings of outcast simbasta, as explained by Von Staufenberg.

From the Meghala Kimata, the rakasta moved to Izonda and the Arm of the Immortal. As the northernmost species reached the sea, they developed into the Domestic and Mountain pardasta breeds, which crossed from Ochalea and Northern Davania to Bellayne and the Known World.

A few Davanian rakasta later crossed the seas to Bellissaria, and then moved to the Steppes of Jen, where they became the local fast runner breeds. The northernmost tribes then mixed with the Skotharian rakasta coming from Nentsun.

### Skotharian Migration

This migration started from the south-western Tangor, then moved north and east. As they reached farther, the rakasta were subjugated by the rakshasa – evil, rakasta-like spirits<sup>2</sup>. By this time, the sherkasta had fully

<sup>2</sup> Rakshasa are not available in the BECM/RC iteration of D&D. They can be converted from other versions of the rules with little difficulty, or they can be modeled on the Evil Spirit from *GAZ12 The Golden Khan of Ethengar*. It is worth noting that the original Rakshasa of Hindu mythology are more similar to Ogre Magi than to the D&D monster. In this article, Rakshasa are assumed to conform to the D&D description,



evolved from the original Rakastodon Fatalis breed, and struggled to break free from the fiends' control.

Many weaker sherkasta, unable to fight the rakshasa, were pushed north-west, toward Nentsun, giving origin to Wild rakasta breed. From there, they moved west, mixed with Davanian rakasta coming through Alphatia, and developed into the lynxman and snow pardasta subspecies, who then crossed the frozen seas to Norwold.



*Simbasta statue, unknown subject*

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i.e. tiger-like humanoids (similar to Sherkasta), with inverted hands (palms outside).

### Timeline of the rakasta

**3500 BC:** Beastmen fleeing from the Blackmoorian crusades reach the land that will become Ochalea. They find an existing pardasta population, which arrived from Davania centuries before.

**3400 BC :** The pachydermion Immortal, Ssuma, brings knowledge of writing and magic among the sherkasta of Skothar, as well as the means to contact the pachydermions of Kompor-Thap on the invisible moon, Patera.

**3200 BC:** Skotharian sherkasta and pachydermions from Kompor-Thap build a magical gate, the Svargadvara, that links Mystara to Patera. The Northern sherkasta Tagh culture arises.

**3000 BC:** The Great Rain of Fire obliterates the Blackmoorian civilisation. In Skothar, the sherkasta sages gather their people and use the Svargadvara to transport them to Patera, where the sherkasta settles in the jungles south of Kompor-Thap.

As a result, Kata Ng, the White Sherkasta, becomes Immortal, but the Svargadvara is destroyed.

The land around modern Ochalea is flooded, separating the island from Brun. Pardasta and beastmen tribes are blocked in Ochalea by the rising waters.

The Great Rain of Fire also affects the border between the material and spirit worlds - spirits find it easier to reach the material world in the forests, lakes and mountain of Ochalea.

**2900 BC:** On Patera, the wilder sherkasta rebel against the Tagh leaders and the Ssuma pacifist teachings. They migrate to nearby islands and found the nations of Surabayang and Malacayog. Many pachydermions retreat to the mountains of Kompor-Thap.

The more peaceful sherkasta remain in the area now occupied by Rajahstan.

**2600 BC:** Despite the differences, the Beastmen and rakasta cultures in Ochalea have grown closer by this time, thanks to the influence of the nature and animal spirits. They speak variants of the same language, and steady trade exist between ogre magi settlements and rakasta towns.

**2400 BC:** With the prompting of Ssu-ma, rakasta and pachydermions on the Far Side continent of Patera begin to trade and share ideas with one another. The sherkasta tribes begin adopting many of the ways of their pachydermion neighbours.

**2100 BC:** By this time, the Plaktur civilization, a rakasta culture centered in the city of Plaktur, dominates the Yazak Steppes.

**2000 BC:** The ogre magi send slave armies against the coastal rakasta towns of Ochalea. They are slaughtered by the well-ordered tactics of rakasta archers and tiger-riders.

**1700 BC:** The destruction of Taymor causes a tsunami. Foreseeing the disaster, and hard pressed by a renewed attack of the Ogre Mage kingdom, pardasta sages open gates to other places, including Myoshima and the Savage Coast, saving most of their population. Only a few pardasta clans remain in Ochalea.

**1700 BC:** The massive invasion of hordes of goblinoids destroys the Plaktur civilisation and forces the rakasta to escape southwards. Powerful sorcerers and nobles instead use a collective spell to escape en masse and are transported to Myoshima, where they lay the basis for the foundation of a rakasta empire.

**1500 BC - 1000 BC:** Wogar's goblinoid hordes sweep the Yazak Steppes and the Savage Coast, forcing rakasta tribes, survivors of Plaktur, to migrate closer to the coast.

**1500 BC:** The rakasta adventurer Ninfangle reaches Immortality. He brings to Myoshima a number of his descendants.

**600 BC:** Danel Tigerstripes is given command of the Rakshasa by Atzanteotl. He sends the evil spirits to corrupt Sind. Weakened by the desertification, the rakasta civilization of Sind dies out slowly in the following centuries.

**500 BC:** Outcast simbasta mercenaries, formerly in the service of the Milenian Empire, migrate to Patera following a priest of Ninfangle.

**400 BC:** In Myoshima, a central government is formed in the city of Mara. The Shujin, or clan masters, define the policies for their own lands, but take nation-wide decision by majority. A Shogun, or military leader, is elected to lead the nation in wartime.

**200 BC:** The survivors of the Sindhi rakasta move to Patera in a bid to survive the demographic pressure of the humans and shapeshifters of Sind.

The Milenian Empire becomes corrupted. More simbasta mercenaries leave the Empire, which falls within the next 150 years.

**0-83 AC:** The Kamakura Shogunate imposes central control over the aristocrats in Myoshima, but is overthrown by a rebellion of the Great Houses.

**100 AC:** The Yazakan goblinoids settle in the Yazak Steppes, displacing the local tribes. The rakasta settle along the Savage Coast in the land that would later become known as Bellayne. The rakasta tribes come into contact with the elves, and are introduced to the cult of Calitha and Ordana.

**120-435 AC:** The Three Hundred Years War rages among the Great Houses of Myoshima, until daimyo Kitahara Hirameki unifies the land under his imperial banner.



During the early years of the war, the southern Great Houses also repel attacks from Malacayog raiders.

**400 AC:** The Lawful Brotherhood, a missionary order originally sponsored by the Way of Law, a major religion in the Kavkaz and Midlands regions, sent numerous missions to convert the tribes of the Savage Coast. They met significant success with the rakasta, converting many of them to the worship of The Judge<sup>3</sup>.

**410 AC:** House Nueteki matriarchs opposed to daimyo Kitahara leave Myoshima by sea, landing in what now is Selimpore.

**425 AC:** Minrothad merchants bring lycanthropy to Sind. Taking advantage of the situation, numerous shapeshifters already present in Sindhi society, including rakshasa, begin to subvert control of the land to their own ends.

**435 AC:** Hirameki is proclaimed first Emperor of Myoshima.

**450 AC:** The Sindhi rise up against their oppressors. Many rakshasa flee to Patera, where they land in the realm now known as Rajahstan. They bring stronger elements of Sindhi culture to Patera. Rise of the "Sindhised" Kingdoms in Rajahstan.

**490 AC:** A four-class system is instituted in Myoshima by the newly ascended third Emperor Myotori. Kakureshi Kuromaru becomes the Shikken (prime minister), and institutes isolation policies, closing the Empire's frontiers.

**500 AC:** The matriarcal nation of Selimpore is established by Domestic rakasta from Rajahstan, Myoshima and Surabayang. Ruled by a dissident branch of House Nueteki, it quickly becomes a trade hub among the Pateran nations.

<sup>3</sup> The non-culture-specific name given by the Lawful Brotherhood to the Immortal Tarastia.

On the Savage Coast, a plague hits the elves and humans of Bellayne, leaving the kingdom in the hands of the rakasta.

**508 AC:** The Shikken is revealed to be the son of evil Rakshasa Dvapinakumara. Clan Kakureshi is disgraced, Kakureshi Kuromaru is neutered and retreats from public life.

**527-528 AC:** *Sbotobai Uprising.* Groups of impoverished ronin rebel against the imperial rule in Myoshima.

**541 AC:** The Myoshiman hero, Nekotakai Myojo reaches Immortality in the Sphere of Thought.

**594 AC:** Kakureshi Kuromaru, now a lich, sends a massive undead army to conquer Myoshima. He is defeated by loyalist armies led by Abbot Shingen<sup>4</sup> and crown prince Myomura at the Battle of Inada.

**600 AC:** Kitahara Hirameki attains Immortality in the Sphere of Energy.

On the Savage Coast, the Code of the Honorbound is developed by merging the rakasta, human and elvish traditions.

**610 AC:** By this time, the power of the daimyos is firmly entrenched, and the feudal age of Myoshima reaches its climax.

**620 AC:** Guthbrand, the Eternal General, reaches Immortality in the Sphere of Matter after being reincarnated as the Myoshiman war priest Shingen.

**624 AC:** Myoshiman Prince Kitahara Jiro attains Immortality in the Sphere of Matter.

**650 AC:** The noble houses usurp much of the power as a young, weak-willed descendant of Hirameki sits on the Imperial throne of Myoshima.

**850 AC:** A renovation movement (Shinsei) begins in Myoshima aiming at the restoration of imperial power and a change in foreign policy.

<sup>4</sup> Actually the fourth and final reincarnation of the Polymath Guthbrand, the Eternal General.

**900 AC:** A stronger Kitahara clan member, Myotomo, takes the throne of Myoshima. He ends the period of isolation and institutes a new campaign of expansionism.

Along the Savage Coast, contact with Thyatian missionaries and merchants colours the Bellaynish language with a number of Thyatian loanwords, as well as leading to the adoption of the worship of Belbion<sup>5</sup>.

**903 AC:** The Myoshimans lay claim to the nation of Selimpore and send an expedition corps there, but is defeated by a coalition of Rajahstani city-states and Selimpore.

First contacts between Myoshima and Bellayne.

The Myoshiman Empire attempts a colonization of Malacayog, but the fierce headhunting Sherkasta that inhabit the land repel them.

**920 AC:** Bellaynish rakasta first reach Patera, and open a trading outpost in Selimpore.

**925 AC:** Responding to increasing aggression from surrounding nations, the various city-states of Rajahstan agree to an alliance proposed by the priests of Ganetra<sup>6</sup>. Together, they form the Spiritual Council.

**952 AC:** Emperor Myotomo dies. His grandson, Myotaro ascends to the throne. Daimyo Ashai Kamaggi named Sessho (Regent) for the young Emperor.

**956 AC:** Myoshiman forces intercept an unknown flying vessel, a Neh-Thalggu skyship, and assault it. The brain collector vessel, heavily damaged in the attack, crashland on Mystara. In light of a possible alien invasion, Ashai Kamaggi assumes the role of Shogun right before the Emperor comes into age.

**963 AC:** Heldannic Knights, exploring beyond the Mystaran Skyshield, discover the

invisible moon of Patera. Landing on Near Side, they encounter the Myoshimans.

**964 AC:** War is declared between the the Heldannic Knights and the Myoshiman Empire.

Shogun Kamaggi is confirmed in his position to lead the war against the Heldannic Knights, who are soon expelled from Patera. Prince Haldemar of Haaken arrives in Myoshima, and establishes the first formal contact between the empires of Myoshima and Alphatia.

**995 AC:** *Ashai rebellion* in Myoshima. The ultra-conservative Ashai clan tries to force the emperor to reinstate the isolationist policies, but is defeated by the combined forces of the Katayama, Kojima and Do families. Shogun Ashai Kamaggi, the head of the main branch of the family, flees his province with a large number of followers<sup>7</sup>.

**1013 AC:** Settlers from the Heldannic Territories establish themselves in the vicinity of Vanya's Rest, the tomb of that Immortal's mortal form. They soon meet the simbasta.

**1014 AC:** The Heldannic Order wars with the simbasta, who capture the Star of Vanya. The Heldannic warbird fleet is destroyed by the simbasta Great Shaman. As the outcome of the war, the Heldannic Order in Davania becomes a vassal of the simbasta Chief Ikwanza.

**1015 AC:** The Myoshiman Empire stages an invasion of the Heldannic Territories. They are defeated at Freiburg by a combined army of Heldannic knights, simbasta and Wurmsteeth dragons.

*See page 91 for table of references relating to this article.*

<sup>5</sup> Vanya

<sup>6</sup> By this time, Ssu-ma is known as Ganetra in Rajahstan.

<sup>7</sup> Kamaggi and his followers flee to Thunder Rift, where they cause the events described in "Rage of the Rakasta".



# The Lexin

by Joseph Setorius  
art by Joey Armstrong

**No. Appearing:** 1  
**Organization:** Solitary  
**Frequency:** Very Rare  
**Climate/Terrain:** Any  
**Activity Cycle:** Any  
**Diet:** Omnivore  
**Intelligence:** Genius (18+)  
**Size:** S (1'-3')  
**Morale:** 8  
**Alignment:** Neutral  
**Armor Class:** 8 Until assuming mien  
**Hit Dice:** d10 per century lived  
**THACO:** 12  
**Movement:** As per mien  
**No. of Attacks:** As per mien or weapon  
**Damage per Attack:** As per mien or weapon  
**Special Attacks:** Nil  
**Special Defenses:** See below (Affect Destiny)  
**Save as:** See below  
**Magic Resistance:** Nil  
**Treasure Type:** H,V  
**XP Value:** HD\*\*



*Fox Lexin*

Beyond the political borders of men and demi-folk, a hidden mosaic of intricate alliances exists among fantastical beasts. Mysterious though they might be, solitary individuals moving outside the network of civilization are familiar with their existence. Amidst these veiled societies, yet uninvolved in their politics, a race of beings endure on the periphery. Their participation is relegated to documenting historical events, without direct involvement in them. These diminutive creatures, among those aware of their presence, are styled Lexin. Lexin being the correct term for both singular and plural forms.

Alluded to in ancient and rare texts, little is understood about lexin behavior. Despite scarcity of evidence, certain details regarding their nature are infrequently reiterated in rare manuscripts. It is believed lexin were originally created by Khoronus as avatars of his power. Wandering Mystara far and wide, lexin restlessly seek to satiate an instinctual spiritual craving. Lexin eventually become attuned to a particular geographical locale, rooting down for the remainder of their lifespan, this communion with the land satisfying their intense metaphysical craving.

## Lexin as Avatars

I realize Aaron Allston was trying to be amusing with Khoronus' history, and he was, but I assert Khoronus became Immortal at the first spark of life, though he existed in another form before this (WOTI-Book 1: Codex of the Immortals, Pages 25-26). As did Ixion, Odin, Thanatos, Hel, and Valerias. The verdict is still out whether Korotiku was indeed a planar spider! Lexin were originally conceived by Khoronus, as a way for the Sphere of Time to monitor and record activity taking place around the globe. With lexin tomes existing out-of-time, it allows Khoronus to peruse their contents at his leisure, keeping tabs of plots hatched by rival Immortals. This explains why lexin have an instinctual drive to spread themselves round the globe. Intensity of events happening in an area forewarns the Sphere of Time to position a lexin in one of these locations. Geography and the geopolitical state of affairs define the scope of territory a lexin observes, or how many lexin might exist in a vicinity. Though Khoronus originally created lexin as avatars unknowingly tasked with conveying history to the Sphere of Time, in the aftermath of the Great Rain of Fire, Khoronus; strangely enough, forgot all about them. Ssu-Ma the "Father of Written Knowledge" is now their caretaker, maintaining the magical power it takes to sustain them. Of course lexin are unaware of where their instinctual instructions originate. Nor do they understand the draw towards a particular locale. At times, more than one lexin could conceivably be wandering the globe; however, there is no rhyme or reason to which lexin is attached to any given location.

## Lexin Asexuality

If two lexin encounter one another, one may simply assume a sex in order to fulfill mating rituals, yet that lexin may not truly relate with its chosen sex. Therefore after a mated pair separates, either lexin may find it no longer associates with its assumed sexual orientation. In these very rare cases, a lexin reverts to its asexual form, perhaps possessing a procreant quality comparable to species such as starfish. It is more usual for a roaming lexin to return to its asexual form until finding a perch of its own, as a sense of belonging helps most species find their place in the world, how they associate with their neighbors, and form their own identity. However; once a sex is regained, it remains set for life. There is no explanation for these exceptional circumstances; however in a world of magic, much is unexplained. It is possible to explain, lexin breed in the manner of the animalistic mien they have assumed. There is also the slightest possibility a lexin will mate more than once in a lifetime. Once as the traveler, once as the "rooster." Though no lexin is known to have assumed more than two orientations, many are known to have never taken a sex at all, hence the slow decline of this long-lived species...

In the off-chance they encounter another lexin during their travels, lexin are bound by physical laws and nature to reproduce. After concluding procreation rituals, however, the roaming lexin moves on. Asexual until mating, a lexin's sex is determined to accommodate its mate. If a wandering lexin



## LEXIN YOUNG

“After birth, reaching an age where they are able to strike out on their own, lexin start out with a blank tome, given it by the parent raising him.”

Though incredibly unusual, a few lexin mates remain to help raise their young. An exceptional experience indeed, should one happen upon an entire family of lexin! Lexin are neither predominantly raised by male or female parents, whichever parent having roosted typically raising the young. Lexin develop physically to a height of approximately a kubitt around fifty years, and by roughly a century old achieve their full stature of three feet. Intellectually lexin young mature at a somewhat accelerated rate, reaching an adult mentality around age twelve.

Besides learning the rudiments necessary for any sentient race to survive, lexin are educated on subjects of local interest. Native flora and fauna, regional history, and indigenous dining habits. This naturally teaches lexin which plant and animal species are safe for consumption, which to avoid, as well as how to prepare them. This knowledge is woven into the area's history, and how the resident societies came about their customs. All this leads lexin to understand what is imperative when recording history! Of course, as is frequently common in most human and demi-human cultures, despite having fully-grown mentally by age twelve, teen aged

stumbles upon an unmated lexin, meaning both are asexual, time and the nature of their relationship will determine sex. It is even possible for both to remain asexual! Once a lexin's sex has been determined; however, it is set for life. Still every lexin, before breeding or taking a mien, resembles a large hairless rodent, reminiscent of beaver or nutria. Afterwards, lexin maintain this form, yet retain their sexual orientation. Though most lexin encountered are male, female lexin are known to exist.

Lexin young lodge with their parent an undisclosed length of time before travelling forth into the world. Whereupon, the parent lexin provides adequate items for their progeny's upcoming quest. Yet lacking specified length, it is impossible to provide everything essential during a lexin's journey. Nevertheless, elder lexin provide the most important article necessary for a roosting lexin to begin its chronicles—an empty tome. This blank slate, along with an ampoule of ink and quill of the finest quality, is carefully hidden within a lexin's belongings. If this volume is lost or destroyed during its voyages, the book will reappear among the lexin's effects once settled. The same cannot be said of quill and ink, and these items will be first acquired before a lexin nestles within its quarters. Should a wandering lexin be killed or taken captive, kept from completing its spiritual passage<sup>1</sup>, a similar fate applies as though capturing a rooted lexin. Time is aware of all inconvenient loopholes!

Although diverse in form, certain similarities exist among lexin. All lexin are petite, standing no higher than three feet, taking form and features of small animals inhabiting the ecosystem to which they've become attached. Most lexin have different modes of mobility depending on

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<sup>1</sup> This refers to a lexin's spiritual journey, not its future role as a historian.

lexin develop certain bad habits. Pipe smoking among them!

Lexin young have only a hit point or two, and save at minus two, until their "hemi-centennial" anniversary. After reaching kubitt stature; however, they achieve ½ hit die and save at minus one. Gradually a lexin senses the instinctual pull that will eventually lead it out into the world. Initially a lexin of this age scours the surrounding countryside, learning the ways of wilderness and travel. Finally the day will arrive when the progeny is ready to set forth on its own spiritual journey.

As lexin record little if anything about themselves or their personal lives, it is unknown if roosted lexin leave to seek out their young, or journey to exchange information with neighboring lexin, though ultimately returning to resume their epics.

environment and aspects of their mien. Though their method of movement does not always match the physical limitations of the frame they have adapted. A lexin taking the form of a mouse, for instance, might move through the trees with a prehensile tail. However; a lexin's physique is a real physical body, unlike the shell of a doppelgänger or changeling.

With near-immortal life spans and a metaphysical attachment to the land, in addition to principle duties as historians, it is

## Lexin Mien & Stature

Living incredibly long lives, yet remaining in the same location, an accelerated evolutionary process allows lexin physiology to change over time in order to adapt to the changing environment in which it makes its home. As an example, Lexin Sivthn Theevthn [Pronounced (Siv?Then Th?ve?Thin)-meaning "times past" in ancient Fiaer. The language of the pure Neather people living in the city of Fiaer Giamond. A city laying on the Southern Shores of The Cradle on Brun] has inhabited the Great Waste since it was a Glorious Forest [Faldagorium is the author's name for the forest which once stood where The Great Waste now lies. It is a combination of the words Falda (meaning forest) and gorium (meaning glorious, or great)]. He therefore has retained the features of a lynx, its coat and coloration as well as almost all physical features, yet since the transformation of the great forest into the Great Waste he has "grown" the legs of a jackrabbit to cover the long distances of the desert. His coat also transforming to one more suitable to warmer climes, yet retaining its pigmentation. This change is a slow manifestation, taking months or possibly even years to complete. Consequently is not unprecedented to find a lexin in an in-between stage of taking its mien. Either from its bare nascent form, or transfiguring itself from one mien into another frame more suitable to its changed environment.

All lexin are around three feet, though all races have some range. It would not be inconceivable to find a lexin anywhere



between two and four feet tall. Yet these would probably be the racial extremes. Even taking the form of a creature larger or smaller than its size a lexin would remain somewhere between two and four feet. Accordingly, a lexin taking the form of a mouse could wind up being four feet, while another could assume the form of an elk and stand three feet tall. Customarily a lexin's height and weight are determined from its parents' genes, not after its assumed mien, yet as with any race there is a chance for unexplained divergences.

no wonder a lexin's domicile is a place of extraordinary comfort. Once connecting to a place, lexin seek sites bearing some defensive merit, a presentiment ability able to reveal positions of some prominence. Conceivably, it could consist of a gigantic stump striking their fancy, or massive sarsen outcropping. Whatever geographical feature is chosen, lexin gather the barest necessities for habitation and roost. Thus begins an unbiased account of regional history. Eventually the bulk of its residence is crafted by individuals or groups looking for lexin favour<sup>2</sup>. Of course, destiny is beyond the province of lexin, but this needn't be disclosed to concerned parties. Most lexin dwellings are initially constructed with native materials. Yet ultimately, lexin accommodations take on a cosmopolitan atmosphere. Embroidered cushions and silken pillows embellish ornately carved

<sup>2</sup> Many lexin live in quite primitive conditions during their first years in a location. It is only after they are discovered those wishing their favor offer to construct their homes.

## Lexin Dwellings

A lexin residence isn't constructed immediately, and many lexin live in quite primitive conditions during their first years in a location. It is only after they are discovered, those wishing their favor offer to construct their homes. Originally fashioned from native materials by indigenous races, later additions are often designed by distant visitors, from quite foreign materials.

Despite stature, given as their homes are constructed by fervent followers, most lexin dwellings are built to larger dimensions, often human or elf sized. Lexin, being clever creatures, craft contraptions scattered about their homes to overcome this obstacle. In addition to ordinary objects of technological design, several features within a lexin's home may confound present company, a few lexin having lived before the age of Blackmoor.

It is possible nonetheless, for diminutive lexin dwellings to exist. Hidden among the undergrowth of the forest these more primitive styled dwellings could well be the home of youthful lexin. Built to their proportions, a lexin's library could prove problematic to access, as well as the lexin itself!

settees, while Ochalea tea cups decorate mahogany lacquered end tables. Nonetheless, central to every lexin's residence are its historical archives and utilitarian drafting table, behind which sits an elevated armchair of exceptional luxuriance, for indeed lexin spend most hours here. Besides missing the comforts of home, no ill-effects befall lexin leaving their dominion, yet they bear a powerful desire to return. Any mortal forcibly removing a lexin from its domicile suffers the same fate as though slaying it, until escorting or allowing the lexin to return home.

A lexin's modest library, on local history of course, is an intriguing compilation to behold. Shelves crowded with volumes of elaborately illuminated parchment line walls of its home. Many lexin covet unique local inks, to give their texts another level of distinction, tapping native populations for the latest dyes and pigments. Although lexin take pride in their creations, they are unburdened by pressures of achievement. Lexin tomes may be destroyed, but like artifacts, require a specific series of actions to annihilate them. Lexin tomes destroyed without the proper procedures taking place merely reappear upon a lexin's shelves after unspecified time elapses, usually rematerializing once needed. Of course a lexin and its tomes may be destroyed by catastrophes altering the entire realm it inhabits. An obliterated lexin tome may be read only by means of a read magic/wish spell combination.

Despite near-immortality, lexin suffer all disadvantages being a carbon-based lifeform. Omnivorous, lexin typically become accustomed to the ethnic food and drink of their indigenous neighbors. Few lexin are

## LEXIN TOMES

Although lexin tomes record linear history, the books exist out of time. In order to destroy a volume, it must be taken to the very location where the chronicle began. In this way, the book becomes "pinned", or fixed to its appropriate place in time, causing it to exist as a real object in the Prime Plane. If the tome in question starts by describing the Golden Age of Josta, then an example of how that tome might be destroyed could thus read:

*"The tenth book of the 3rd Millennia BC chronicling the Golden Age of Josta must be taken to a bookstand resting in the precise center of the Grande Reading Room of the Basilican Library, and there soaked in the sap of the rare Jarna Tree. After which, a garland of Desert Lupine must be placed upon the volume and set aflame with magical fire."*

Oddly, and inexplicably, an explanation providing means to destroy a book often lays at the very location where the book must be taken. Unlike lesser or greater artifacts; however, precise objects (such as a specific weapon) are not required, with all components spelling the book's demise being found within the lexin's dominion. Concerning the bookstand, generally no particular lectern will be mentioned by name. Therefore, any podium or like object would suffice, so long as it is placed in the center of the Grande Reading Room. Assuming the reading room is destroyed, only the location need be ascertained. The conceptual space of the library itself is not necessary in order to complete the task. If



all else fails, a divination or wish spell could certainly reveal the means!

Lexin tomes "reappear" because lexin are able to mentally or instinctually "reach" for them in a non-linear space, out of the time-space continuum. If a lexin tome is burned, disintegrated, or otherwise destroyed without adhering to the proper procedures, the book is transported to this timeless dimension. The opening volume of a lexin's accounts, denoting the book given by its parent prior to departing on its spiritual journey, rematerializes at the location where the lexin has roosted, and indeed this is the place an initial manuscript must be destroyed. Of course, ironically, in order to complete this task, the lexin itself must be eliminated. Woe toward those attempting such a task!

will, allow them to function covertly. Unnoticed and overlooked amid the rush of events, lexin dedicate themselves to the arduous task of chronicling history, while remaining apart from it.



*Lexin meditating*

discontent with local fare; nevertheless, many lexin develop a yen for exotic cuisine. Though not pertinent to a lexin's diet, they have predilection towards tea, often going to ridiculous lengths to obtain it! Many lexin are prone to enjoy pipe smoking as well, a soothing habit to accompany the daily routine of inscription.

Characteristic of their race, or perhaps their origins, all lexin are bestowed with incredible sight and recollection. Though similar to eidetic memory, their ability to recall past events, down to the most precise details, stems from an instinctual aptitude, not a genetic anomaly. The essence of lexin sagas narrate significant episodes seeming to play into the greater scheme of history, not what the emperor had for breakfast! A lexin's small stature and superlative eyesight, besides having an ability to turn invisible at

Lexin do not fear fate, or if they will fail to fulfill the task of recording history. As a result a lexin's subconscious has few fears to feed off. Without these aspirations of accomplishment to be destroyed during unconscious hours of the day, lexin have no nightmares. Indeed their dreams are merely actual events taking place while they sleep.

Upon waking, lexin record these tales along with other notable events occurring that day. A lexin's view of the land to which it is attached is similar to scrying, yet with unspecified time delay. Lexin cannot

describe events currently happening, nor events having immediately taken place<sup>3</sup>. That being said, lexin have excellent facility for predicting what events may transpire from affairs recorded in their tomes. Thus an individual looking at weather patterns over the next few years, or perhaps where a particular Urduk tribe might be at any given time, more specifically what events might befall them, they're in luck. A lexin; however, cannot predict who might win the lists at The Golden Dagger Tournament, held in the County of Garette.

Lexin have the gift of *truesight*, a paramount ability when recording history's proceedings. Lexin ability to see the true nature of things allows them to view all mortal, and immortal beings on the prime plane for what they are. Additionally, lexin are able to identify all shapeshifters' true form. This ability also extends to spells capable of producing similar effects, including *invisibility*. Lexin are immune to all forms of sleep and charm, and illusionary effects seeking to change observed reality. They are further immune from psionic abilities and scrying of any kind. Factual record occurs outside the realm of observable intervention! Unfortunately, Lexin haven't any defensive mechanism to ward off martial magics. Yet their best defense may lay in the indirect facility to shape the destiny of entities wishing them harm.

<sup>3</sup> The time delay associated with Lexin scrying ability, exists in order that events pass beyond present intervention, thus becoming history—"concluded" and "affected" by time—and preserved as such by Lexin.

## Lexin Truesight

"Lexin ability to see the true nature of things allows them to see all mortal, or immortal beings on the prime plane, for what they are." If a lexin were to observe Dolores Hillsbury, it would at once know she was dragon. Yet this ability does not extend to knowledge a lexin might not have being rooted/attached to a particular planet. They would recognize all forms of life in their true form, yet might not recognize what creature they are observing. Especially those from off-world locations. Though for Mystaran Lexin, creatures from Mystara's moons would be within their realm of comprehension. Like any species; however, familiarity breeds understanding. Moreover, lexin do not have the ability to know or understand knowledge privy to the Immortals. A lexin does not understand the nature of Blackballs, Draeden, and Old Ones. They are as mystifying to it as they would be to any mortal creature. Perhaps if a Lexin were to view an Outer Being the experience might drive the Lexin mad!

If a Lexin were used in a White Wolf campaign, a lexin would observe all entities in their truest forms—vampires, werewolves, changelings and the like—even a True Fey would be observed for what it was...even if the lexin could not fully comprehend what it was observing!



***(Lexin Truesight continued)***

However:

Truesight is not Second sight! Though a lexin's truesight works like a fairies extrasensory perception, they have no prophetic visions of future events that might take place. Nor is their ability a "intuition involving time", but an instinctual aptitude held being creatures of time. This perception does extend into the ultraviolet, and includes use of infravision, but all of these abilities work within the linear timeframe of the universe. The only presentiment ability lexin possess is the ability to discern a suitable location for habitation.

Carefully concealed from the surrounding world, it is unusual for lexin to entertain guests, yet wizards and patriarchs often travel great distances seeking lexin knowledge or advice. Perhaps inquiring after obscure magical components or inimitable artifacts, even idiosyncrasies of individual Immortals. Rulers and crusaders desire lexin favor on similar grounds, hopeful lexin blessings will grant triumphant conclusions. Mysterious creatures known as Adaptors<sup>4</sup> travel and observe civilization throughout the planes, having their own network of accumulated knowledge, and occasionally call upon lexin to expand this knowledge base. Nonetheless, they are aware any wisdom gleaned from lexin accounts must be matched quid pro quo.

<sup>4</sup> Adaptors are further described in the rules Cyclopedia, page 157, or here: <http://pandius.com/adaptr4e.html>

**Lexin Solitary Nature  
(AND how they may be  
ENCOUNTERED)**

Just because lexin are solitary, does not mean they are reclusive. Like a lion amongst the herds of the savannah, or an eccentric mage lurking among the populace, lexin coexist amidst their contemporaries. They remain independent, yet not detached and isolated.

It is important to note, though most all lexin live in wilderness areas surrounding the nations or localities they are recording, some lexin live right in the midst of it all. One of the oldest, or perhaps the oldest living lexin, resides in Giamond Diep, the Great Library in the shining city of Fiaer Giamond, resting upon the Southern Shores of the Cradle on the continent of Brun. This doesn't; however advocate the acquaintance of their existence. In a world filled with unusual anthropomorphic species, it is easy to overlook the unexplained. A lexin living on the Savage Coast could just as well be mistaken for a stunted or diminutive Mugumba Mud-Dweller! (The Mugumba Mud-Dweller is described in *Champions of Mystara: Explorer's Manual* by Ann Dupuis, Page 57).

Lexin were more common and well known throughout the world in ancient times, especially before the Rain of Fire. Yet after the catastrophe many fell in the fires that followed. Because numerous populaces believed lexin were prophets of future events, many in fact blamed them partially for the Rain of Fire! Countless lexin were sought out and destroyed. Afterwards general populaces ceased to have

knowledge about lexin, only the learned races and literate humans remained aware of their presence. As time progressed, less and less was transcribed concerning lexin. Today probably less than two thousand lexin remain, and knowledge of them is scarce. Besides spoken of in musty tomes, in reference to holding knowledge of Immortals and artifacts long gone missing, knowledge of lexin could be acquired by several means.

The Lighthouse of the Hollow World, not only has many documents describing their presence, but in fact has at least one lexin known to reside there. Unfortunately few know of The Lighthouse to begin with. Easier means available in a campaign might be provided through a local scholar or hermit considered foolish by the local inhabitants, and even the characters, until of course a lexin is discovered. Of course the easiest method is to have a party stumble upon one, not realizing what they have encountered. Slowly revealing more of its nature as time goes on...

Anyone hoping to uncover a lexin, accessing the vast knowledge contained within their archives is liable to be disappointed. When opened, a lexin's tome is merely a blank slate. Only upon offer of tribute and protection do words appear upon the pages. Yet this is the instance when most potentates gaze an objectionable past or impending outcome of their present efforts, spelling doom for many a lexin. Consequently, despite promises of tribute, it remains rare for a lexin to reveal the ancient texts of its memory!

Those pursuing harm upon lexin should well heed history. A precedent passed down from antiquity, hints at the punishment for harming a lexin or its scrivenings. In times past, rulers holding disinclination towards a lexin's account of regional history, and endeavoring to revise historical description to a version more to their liking, suffered a fate more than fatal. The rulers not merely absolutely destroyed by their adversaries; but their kingdoms, monuments, and people met a common end. Wholly and entirely erased and eradicated from the memory of Mystara as it were<sup>5</sup>...

After the Rain of Fire, one crusade to exterminate a Lexin is known to have taken place<sup>6</sup>. Transpiring in exceedingly unsuccessful fashion for the crusaders. It is also said a Lexin once occupied the region now known as the Plain of Skulls near the Great Hollow<sup>7</sup>. Whether stemming from an established principle of the universe, or

<sup>5</sup> Yet Lexin may have recorded history of facts now lost to anyone else, like in the case of Nithia, which memory was erased in the outer world by the Immortals (as explained in Gaz2, the Emirates of Ylauruam, The Hollow World boxed set and HWR2 Kingdom of Nithia). Lexin and their tomes perhaps are the only source left about ancient Nithian history on the outer world! Yet the Spell of Oblivion may have affected lexin as well, depending on DM's decision.

<sup>6</sup> Some may wonder how it remains known a campaign took place to destroy a lexin after the lexin perished, as these men and their entourage were surely removed from collective memory. Populaces are aware the crusade took place because another lexin recorded the events! The crusade crossed this lexin's dominion, thankfully unaware of its existence!

<sup>7</sup> The Great Hollow is another name for the Great Pit, a location on Brun. It is described on Vaults of Pandius and may be found here: <http://pandius.com/midland.html>



wrath of the Hierarchy of Time remains unclear. Yet such is the fortune of those willing to hazard a lexin!



## DM NOTES

Important aspects for creating a lexin: Sex, mien, mobility, domicile, dietary peculiarities, unusual habits, location, age, magical items, rare or unique possessions, appearance, personality.

It should be noted, not all lexin mate. Many wander the earth in solitude, discovering their idyllic setting without ever encountering another lexin. Due to their passivity and solitary nature, the lexin race has been in constant decline since the first days of Evergrun. Lexin still take a mien, and develop their own mobility, but remain asexual until mated.

It should be obvious lexin acquire foreign tastes and possessions from foreigners coming to seek their knowledge. How they came to enjoy tea or pipe smoking; however, is anyone's guess! If lexin leave home, whether by force or to attain desired or needed supplies, they dream of events missed while away upon their return. Yet in most instances these items are gained through charity of local inhabitants. Lexin do not take on apprentices, but it is conceivable a creature might cohabitate with lexin for various reasons. The most plausible being knowledge contained within its library. This lends excellent motive for some being to begin an adventuring career, as the lexin will assuredly send this colleague on missions for provisions.

Although lexin are truly neutral, this does not preclude them from saving their home or friends from disaster, the same actions any neutral Druid would take to ensure protection of their domain. In fact, Druids establishing a woodland home, and meditating the required four months, often

become aware of lexin within their territory. Lexin create variances within a forests life force allowing Druids, Woodland Creatures, and Fair Folk to ascertain their presence. Lexin do make friends among their natural and magical woodland friends, just as any creature would; however, they recuse themselves from providing opinions or becoming involved in local politics!

Lexin provide an excellent plot hook, conveying knowledge otherwise impossible to obtain, or the final mystery of an epic quest. Perhaps being the facilitator of the final stage of an heroic journey, providing the hidden location of sites to petition an Immortal, or specific location of a rare magical component or unique magical beast. Used as a more mundane aspect, a lexin is the strangely anthropomorphic inhabitant of an ecosystem that is far more than it appears.

Lexin have one HD per century lived. Unfortunately most lexin have inadequate armour class to protect them. Lexin may wear any manner of armour, yet the greatest obstacle may simply lay in acquiring a set modeled toward someone of such small stature and unique form. Though lexin are immune to charms, a hold person spell will affect them, yet the duration is limited to  $\frac{1}{2}$  normal;  $\frac{1}{4}$  with a save vs. spells. For every five hundred years lived, lexin save as an elf of the appropriate tier. Hence a mature lexin, a century old, saves as a first level elf. A six hundred year old lexin saves as a fourth level elf, and lexin aged sixteen hundred years save as tenth level elves. There is; however, one additional tier for lexin living beyond two thousand years! At this level lexin only fail saves, minus any modifiers, on a natural one.

Some may think a lexin's HD excessive. Yet putting it into perspective, one is not merely destroying the flagship of the royal navy, or a gargantuan troll, but the entire history of a region...and that takes time!

Characters or creatures killed or dying fifty years after slaying a lexin will be erased from memory upon funeral proceedings. If a particular Immortal is actually watching over a lexin within a geographical location of interest, and the lexin is killed by a character, the Immortal will refuse to arrive or "answer" that character's petition. As well as initiating one Immortal plot to destroy the character!

Of course when creating the domicile, dietary peculiarities, unusual habits, location, age, magical items, possessions, appearance, and personality of lexin; imagination might be the only obstacle! Appearance is meant to describe sartorial styles and accoutrements worn by lexin, rather than its physical being, which should already be covered in describing its mien. Having lived eons, many lexin wear outdated apparel of unusual design, or possess ordinary objects of technological design absent from the present world!

A final note: It is thought lexin "arrived" on Mystara sometime briefly before elves, as the elves came into possession of a lexin tome describing these events. Whether the original of this tome, or its validity, is still in existence is a source of much heated debate amongst scholars.

Hopefully this lexin entry in Threshold will provide plenty of ideas on where one might exist! Most importantly, with some inspiration it may add an interesting element to your game.



## FURTHER ECOLOGY OF THE LEXIN, AND OTHER QUESTIONS

### Lexin & Their Forest Neighbors

Though lexin have almost no direct involvement with their woodland neighbors' political affairs, it is important to relate their passing interactions with these denizens. In general lexin live amongst their woodland friends yet seldom interrelate with them. Nevertheless, from time to time lexin form lasting friendships with woodland residents, often lasting the lifetime of the forest creature. Here are some of the particularities and anomalies between lexin and their woodland cohabitants.

Dryads occasionally reside temporarily with lexin, in order to learn the nature and history of a forest before permanently setting down roots<sup>8</sup>. The charms of dryad; however, are lost on lexin, as is the impetuous music of fauns. Given a lively enough tune, a lexin might draw on its pipe a little quicker, possibly write faster, but history has its own impulses...most of them quite unnatural! In fact, given the impulsiveness of fauns, it is improbable one would enter a lexin's sagas<sup>9</sup>. Of all woodland creatures and fairies only shargugh are brash enough to steal from lexin, but are cautious never to pilfer objects of historical value. Wood Imps conversely, completely shun the immediate environs of lexin abodes. In addition to enjoying their

<sup>8</sup> Sorry about the pun!

<sup>9</sup> Author is unaware of any legendary Satyrs. Does one exist?



homebrew, treants are a valuable source of information for lexin, imparting their knowledge of times past before a lexin became attached to a particular forest. Given their impulsive nature, centaurs have little time for either, finding treants and lexin too laborious to tolerate. Though given a common threat...

Though lexin live long lives, fairy presence on Mystara has been much longer. Lexin are unaware the Little People once existed as something much different than what they are today. Good People, not being true Immortals and existing on the Prime Plane; however, are always visible to lexin. Lexin are also immune to the curses of Fair Folk, yet there has never been need to sanction one. Given lexin intelligence and wisdom, astute

sidhe royalty may seek lexin for their advice, but prudent gentry never ask lexin political opinions concerning woodland society<sup>10</sup>. Brownies are known to occasionally reside with lexin, but given their opposite schedules seldom interact. Lexin being fairly finicky eaters, food and drink left out is always considered satisfactory, and the household chores a brownie completes greatly helps a lexin concentrate on its transcription. As most lexin do not sew, it is remarkable should a brownie ever leave a lexin's abode<sup>11</sup>. Most likely brownies become attached to a lexin household in a manner similar to a lexin rooting in a particular place. Given the nearly endless life of lexin it is more likely a brownie would tire of its mortal form before finding reason to leave. Though given the introverted nature of both species their cohabitation makes for an agreeable symbiotic relationship. Redcaps on the other hand are somewhat repelled by lexin residences. As lexin have no need of treasure, they pose no impairment on a leprechaun's existence. Thus, leprechauns are known to manufacture finely crafted magical tomes as thanks for a lexin's presence, which somehow repels the undead<sup>12</sup>. Naturally these tomes remain blank until lexin scrawl history's course upon the sheets. The fantastic abilities of pooka are

most ineffectual in the presence of lexin. Lexin being creatures of time, pooka ability to warp time or age objects is wholly nullified in lexin presence<sup>13</sup>. Moreover nightmares are irrelevant concerning lexin. Despite these debunks, lexin are most likely to be mistaken for pooka among all fairies and woodland races, for indeed pooka are able to assume many anthropomorphic shapes. Only a pooka's greater stature might set them apart from lexin. Yet their appearance is the only similarity they share. Lexin cannot shapeshift, and pooka do not possess true sight. Nor do they have the aptitude for recording history, just as a lexin would be unlikely to participate in mischievous adventures. If there is truly one species with a similar rational function it is the hsiao, and their similarities and differences with lexin are described below.

## LEXIN & HSIAO

Having related focusses, some may wonder at the similarities and differences between these analogous species. Many similarities do exist between the two species. Both lexin and hsiao mate seldom, or but once in a lifetime, though this urge strikes hsiao much later in life. Though long lived, both are mortal, and must seek sustenance. Both seldom entertain guests, though hsiao are

<sup>10</sup> Lexin are unable to provide complex opinions because of their unbiased nature. They have no estimation as whether something might turn out good or bad, because in the long run, the nature of the universe balances all. The wise, perhaps, do not seek outcomes of the future, because to do so would possibly tempt fate to change them!

<sup>11</sup> See PC1 by Jon Nephew for the particularities of Brownies and Redcaps.

<sup>12</sup> Explained in the section Lexin and the Undead.

<sup>13</sup> This is due to lexin truesight ability, their nature as creatures of time, and this from the original lexin entry: "This ability also extends to spells capable of producing similar effects." Including "illusionary effects seeking to change observed reality." Though the nature of time, or the spells ability to alter it may not be considered "illusionary," our observation of it is certainly subjective! This is further explained in the Truesight sidebar.



probably more likely to do so, after all, hsiao are known to most races, lexin are not! Both have trouble obtaining armour, yet lexin have an easier time of this being anthropomorphic. They mutually loath violence, and equally prefer to avoid contact with younger races, choosing to live in peaceful wilderness areas far afield from civilization. Yet the similarities end there, and many differences exist to illustrate the distinctions of these two species.

Lexin are, for the most part, anthropomorphic, while hsiao are actual avians. Hsiao participate in local economies, exchanging spell-casting for services, while lexin rely on the abundance of the forest and the generosity of its denizens. It is said Hsiao uphold collaborative connections with most non-chaotic woodland races. Cooperative relationships are maintained with lexin as well, yet often conflicting philosophical differences create friction between these two species. While hsiao are the ultimate warrior-priests, living Spartan lives of study, contemplation and prayer; lexin prefer comfortable accommodations, and relaxing recreations. Aside from documenting history, lexin enjoy cuisine and smoking, gathering new recipes for both; in contrast hsiao devote themselves as passionate crusaders for the cause of law. Hsiao study to divine the secrets of the multiverse's hidden order, whereas lexin just don't give a hoot.

Though most interactions are cordial and productive, hsiao just cannot comprehend the noninterventionist metaphysical rationale of most lexin. This occasionally leads to courteous attempts at conversion, though a few notable occurrences are known when a lexin extricated a hsiao from his habitation with a standing instruction never to return!

One can only tolerate clergy at the door in controlled doses.

For the most part; however, these two species find common ground among intellectual pursuits. Hsiao's gathering and recording of knowledge, is of intense interest to lexin, as are a lexin's historical accounts to hsiao. Of course, the rare dissident neutral hsiao would find a companion of simpatico temperament in lexin. Even chaotic hsiao are tolerated, assuming they still possess the desire and value they once attached to knowledge. Residing in the forests and woods of the world, both maintain relationships with local druids, coming to aid these defenders of the forest<sup>14</sup>. Together these races pursue enlightenment through knowledge, even if the conclusions lead them down different paths.

On a side note...some opinions concerning hsiao. Hsiao colonies are still led by the eldest of a mated pair, despite references to the contrary. The urge to mate every fifty to one hundred years still produces one to four eggs, not a single golden one. It is dubious any Immortal would stoop to consorting with mortals, no matter their intelligence and wisdom. This would seem to disregard the credo of "Direct Action Against Mortals is Forbidden."<sup>15</sup> Though no age is listed in any hsiao entry, four to six hundred years seems plausible for a hsiao's life expectancy, yet perhaps a millennia is more appropriate?<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Explained in the section Lexin, Druids, and Foresters.

<sup>15</sup> WOTI—Book 1: Codex of the Immortals, Page 5 Column 2.

<sup>16</sup> See PC1 by Jon Nephew concerning the nature of Hsiao.

## Lexin & the Undead

The Sphere of Time encompasses change. As time moves forward; or perhaps better said, as events take place on the Prime Material Plane; change happens. Lexin are creatures of time, in contrast to creatures of life and matter, and they were fashioned to withstand it; however, even lexin change. Yet not all change is chaotic. The, some would say, lawful nature of the order in the universe progresses along predictable lines, as do the governments of nations and civilized lands; offset by the chaotic occurrences of irrational sentient behavior, and the natural world. What random chance will cause the “stupid brutality of crowds” or the forces of nature to act?<sup>17</sup> A volcano erupts, floods or insect plagues devastate the land, extremist philosophies overtake the populace, natural catastrophes and foreign armies lay waste to civilizations. Sometimes even the Immortals are perplexed by the seeming randomness of the cosmos. Yet all events bring change, which perchance lies within the scope of Time. Many of these events also bring death and suffering, which lies within the province of “Entropy.”<sup>18</sup> In fact the process of change might just be one area of philosophy where Time and Entropy “agree.” Then again, maybe not.

For the undead, creatures of that Sphere, are impervious from the effects of time. Their motives, assuming they could be said to have any, are not harried by the progress of time and the change it brings. They haunt areas undeterred by natural progression. Lexin abhor the undead because of their senseless

unending nonexistence. Despite lexin divergences from life and matter, undead still present significant problems for lexin. Primarily the undead’s absence of existing in living memory, which discourages most living beings from eliminating a lexin. Having a metaphysical attachment to the land, lexin will generally not root themselves to an area already haunted by undead, given their lack of protective abilities towards them, as well as the moribund nature the undead instill in an area.

However; if a lexin first establishes itself in an area, undead are equally repulsed by lexin presence. History being a living thing, weaving itself into the lives and events of the lands denizens, undead are repulsed by this outpouring of recorded life. Lexin dwellings therefore, act as a repellent to those forms of undead and compelled to haunt a location. For this reason druids, woodland creatures, and Fair Folk feel fortunate to have a lexin settle within their woods. It is not uncommon for a Druid and Lexin to work together to oppose an undead threat!

Lesser mindless undead (skeletons, zombies, and ghouls)<sup>19</sup>, do not haunt areas and therefore are not repelled by this effect, but are more easily dealt with than more powerful forms of undead. Wights, wraiths, and spectres on the other hand are not powerful enough to repel this turning effect, and must remain twenty-four miles from a lexin dwelling. Phantoms and haunts<sup>20</sup> may save versus spells at -4 to enter the territory

<sup>17</sup> Quoted passage taken from final paragraph of Chapter 7, Lord Jim by Joseph Conrad.

<sup>18</sup> The author postulates that Entropy has always been a poor name for this sphere.

<sup>19</sup> Includes these undead creatures: elder ghouls, topis, and lesser wynds.

<sup>20</sup> Includes these undead & enchanted creatures: lesser banshee, darkhood (rorphyr), ghostly horde, and greater wynds.



of a lexin, and at -2 at twelve miles.<sup>21</sup> Yet the chance to further approach at six and three miles leads respectively to a save at +2 and +4. Once overcoming these obstacles, they may advance unhindered. Liches, nosferatu, and vampires cannot really be said to haunt a location, having physical form, nonetheless must save with twice the chance of success of phantoms and haunts to progress towards lexin homes.<sup>22</sup> True undead dragons, beholders,<sup>23</sup> and other special forms of undead may approach as per liches, yet all undead constructs are destroyed upon entering lexin territory.<sup>24</sup>

Nightshades are among the most feared of all undead confronting lexin. As they seek to spread death rather than imbue an area or location with malevolence, they are completely unaffected by lexin life force barriers. Spirits, being travelers, also share an immunity from lexin barricades, though due to their powerless state during daylight hours may only approach lexin abodes from dusk 'til dawn. Mummies, despite being lesser undead, may evade lexin life wards if seeking trespassers of once guarded tombs, yet after eliminating the intruders are induced to leave. Lexin greatly fear the rotting disease of

mummies, for aside from a wish, no healing (magical or otherwise) seems to arrest the disease. Yet instead of affecting a lexin's ability to heal, it ostensibly erodes a lexin's memory, eventually leaving it in a vegetated state until wished away. Yet during this comatose period a lexin has no memory of events that transpired. Perhaps amnesia<sup>25</sup> being the cause of the only apprehension a lexin might experience.

Regardless of certain weaknesses, this barrier against the undead makes lexin a boon to any ecology. Moreover, in order to permanently reside in any lexin dwelling, undead must destroy the heart of this welling of recorded life...a lexin's library. In order to accomplish this, each tome must be destroyed according to its instructions.<sup>26</sup>

It should be further noted, lexin cannot be brought back from the dead. Once history has been written it cannot be unwritten!<sup>27</sup> This is unfortunate for those accidentally dispatching a lexin, and striving to rectify the error. Additionally; history being a living thing, lexin cannot be made into undead. Lexin dread death just as any living creature would; death and what transpires in the afterlife residing within the realm of the unknown; thankfully, lexin at least do not fear unending continuation in an undead state.

<sup>21</sup> A lexin territory refers to the twenty four mile (thirty six kilometer) hex in which the lexin's home appears.

<sup>22</sup> Correspondingly: -8 at 24miles, -4 at 12miles, +1 at six miles, +2 at three miles topi

<sup>23</sup> Though most forms of undead dragons and beholders are constructs or spirits inhabiting them, true undead dragons and beholders are rumored to exist. Brought into being either by powerful liches, clerics, or necromancers.

<sup>24</sup> This is supposedly because constructs are in effect magical illusions of a sort. This is also why supernatural/enchanted beings haunting an area are repulsed by lexin presence.

<sup>25</sup> I forgot what I was going to put here...but seriously, another wish could conceivably restore this loss of memory.

<sup>26</sup> Explained in Lexin Tomes sidebar.

<sup>27</sup> Perhaps only a wish could alter this outcome.

## Lexin, Druids, and Foresters

As stated in the previous article, Druids establishing a woodland home and meditating the required four months, often become aware of lexin within their territory, through lexin creating variances within a forest's life force.<sup>28</sup> As previously mentioned, it is not uncommon for a Druid and Lexin to work together to oppose a threat! Their similar alignments making them likely allies. Often both petitioning actaeon heroes to join the fray! If catastrophe threatens their home and friends, lexin will work to ensure preservation of the forest. Lexin are not resigned to just suffer their fate! However; they understand the transitory and cyclical nature of the universe, accepting the aftermath of inevitable tragedy. Laying in a place of prominence a lexin residence may serve well as a rallying point for forest folk.

At this time (1000 AC) the Foresters' Guild is unaware of lexin presence on Mystara, and no lexin currently exists within the Known World.[?] Still this may soon change...

*Continued from page 73*

## HISTORY & ORIGINS OF THE RAKASTA

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<sup>28</sup> See also Note 1: Lexin Attachment to the Land



# Mystaranomicon



## » » » Exploring the Books of Mystara

by Jesper Andersen (Spellweaver)

*At one time or another, most Dungeon Masters have had their group of player characters enter a library, a sage's office, a wizard school or a noble's study and heard the dreaded question: 'So, what are all these books about?' Mystaranomicon is a regular column that provides Dungeon Masters with books ready to be inserted into any game with a moment's notice. Use them simply as colourful fluff or to provide clues and books to adventures. This time we look at books related to the faraway continent of Davania.*



### **BOOK RARITY REFERENCE TABLE**

**Unique:**

Only the original copy of this work has ever been known to exist

**Collectible:**

Less than 20 copies of this work are known or rumoured to exist

**Very Rare:**

Less than 200 copies of this work are known or rumoured to exist

**Rare:**

Enough copies of this work exist that it may show up in private collections and very large libraries across the world. Only rarely is one sold, rather copies are preserved and passed on.

**Uncommon:**

This book is difficult to come by but not impossible. If you can afford it, libraries or sages will probably allow you to have a copy made from theirs.

**Common:**

This book is readily available in most major cities. Books are often common if they are reproduced for teaching purposes.



## WHITE GOLD<sup>1</sup> — THE LURE OF ZAJUJH, THE ELEPHANT GRAVEYARD

**Author:** Ultan Crom of Westrourke

**Rarity:** Very Rare

**Year:** 983 AC

**Language:** Thyatian

**Contents:**

Allegedly, this book is the true tale of one of a few survivors who returned from an expedition upriver from Raven's Scarp in the Hinterlands to find the legendary Elephant Graveyard – a place called 'Zajujh' in the local folklore. Supposedly littered with the bones and tusks of hundreds of huge elephants, this hidden valley has tempted treasure seekers since before the arrival of the first Thyatians.

<sup>1</sup> See also [“White gold, long tusks: looking for ivory in Davania jungles”](#)

Ultan Crom did return, however, with enough ivory to at least partially support his claim that he had found Zajujh. His story warns of bloodthirsty natives using poisoned darts, large river monsters that can swallow an entire canoe including its crew, and strange diseases that burn out a man's body in less than a day.

The graveyard itself is believed to be under some kind of curse, yet each year new expeditions gather, using Crom's book as a guide to go up river in search of fortune. Most never return.

**Legality:** Legal

**Number of pages:** 100

## THE CURSED CITY OF THE SPIDER CHILDREN

**Author:** Arsoro, captain of the *Sunlit Venture*

**Rarity:** Very Rare

**Year:** 967 AC

**Language:** Originally Minrothad, but translations do exist

**Contents:**

his book is a transcript of the ship's log of the *Sunlit Venture*, a Minrothad vessel that set sail down the jungle coast of Davania in 966 AC bound for Cestia. She never reached her destination, however, as bad weather forced the ship to take shelter in a hitherto unknown coastal town with magnificent domes and white marble towers.



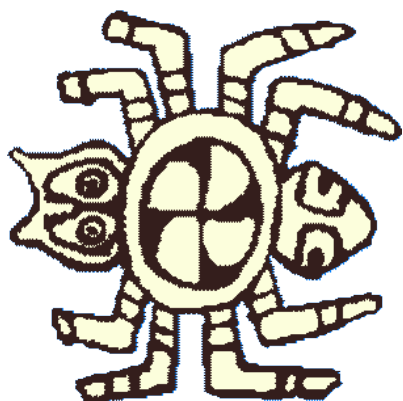
Much to their surprise, Captain Arsoro and his crew were welcomed by the rulers of the city – a council consisting entirely of bald-headed children, none of whom seemed older than 13. These strange child rulers wore magical gold torcs – heavy neck rings – that allowed them to speak the language of Arsoro and his men. While the rulers wore beautiful bright garments, the rest of the city’s population appeared to lead lives of squalid and fearful servitude. Arsoro learned that the city worshipped a strange arachnid deity unknown to the captain and his men.

Eventually, the full horror of their situation became clear to them, when most of the crew were taken prisoner and eaten alive by the cannibalistic child rulers of the city! To the sound of his crewmen’s screams, Arsoro and a few others managed to flee the city and after a long year made it back to the Minrothad Guilds.

No other ship from the Known World has ever returned with verification of the exact position of the city.

**Legality:** Legal

**Number of pages:** 125



## REMEDIES FOR SURVIVING LUPIN<sup>2</sup> FILTH AND FLEAS

**Author:** Ritter Johann von Nagel

**Rarity:** Rare

**Year:** 991 AC

**Language:** Thyatian

**Contents:**

This short book was written by a Hattian pilgrim, Ritter Johann von Nagel, who did not enjoy the company of a group of lupins on the voyage to Vanya’s Rest. His book contains various dubious methods for getting rid of fleas and even goes as far as suggesting drugging the food of lupins with various concoctions to rid their fur of fleas and smell.

Any serious alchemist, herbalist, or apothecary will dismiss the so-called ‘remedies’ in the book as useless and indeed, the book appears to have been written out of malice rather than an attempt to help people.

**Legality:** Legal, but Lupins will be unhappy if they see it

**Number of pages:** 75



<sup>2</sup> See [“History of the Lupins”](#) for more detail.

## WHEN STARS ALIGN – THE MANIFESTATION OF LEGENDARY ARYPT<sup>3</sup>

**Author:** Eris Balthazar

**Rarity:** Very Rare

**Year:** 967 AC

**Language:** Thyatian, may have been translated to other languages as well

### Contents:

Far west of Vanya's Rest, deep in the Aryptian Desert lies a number of ruins and strange obelisks that enclose a circular plain more than 20 miles in diameter. The plain is flat, arid and empty. The width of the external ring of ruins is only about a mile or so and the ruins are spaced out so far apart along the edge of the circle that most people would never connect the dots so to speak. But that is exactly what the scholar Eris Balthazar did.

Travelling in his youth from the recently founded Vanya's Rest, he explored the Aryptian Desert and became intrigued by local legends of a 'kingdom from the stars' named Arypt. Although Eris turned up several ruins and transcribed ancient texts on weathered obelisks that all pointed to the existence of Arypt, he never found the city itself. After nearly two decades of searching, Eris' quest took a dramatic turn when he uncovered primitive tribal hieroglyphics that described how Arypt has not been lost to



*Aryptian ruins*

sandstorms or earthquakes as was thought but had 'returned to the heavens.'

Revisiting and mapping every clue he had ever found, Eris discovered the circular pattern and concluded that this was the outer edges of the previous legendary kingdom of Arypt that had disappeared. Using a star calendar he was also able to predict the anticipated return of the magical realm.

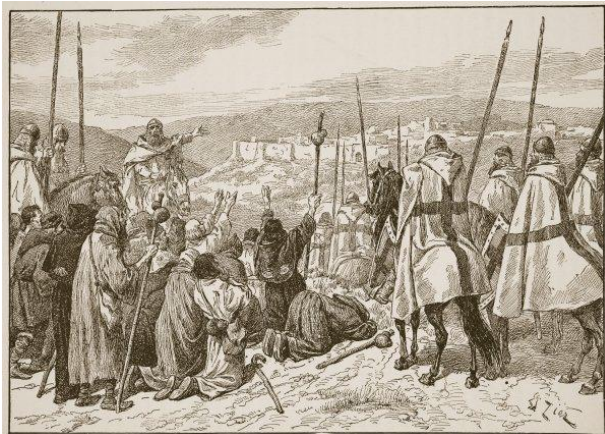
Eris published his book in the hope of getting a wealthy patron to support further studies, but alas, he received only scorn and ridicule. Today, Eris is an old man in his late 70ies, living in a small settlement on the edge of the desert. And the predicted time for when the stars will align just right is rapidly approaching...

**Legality:** Legal

**Number of pages:** 200

<sup>3</sup> See also ["Davania Ideas: Izonda/Pelatan and Arypt"](#) and the "History of Davania" article in this same issue of Threshold magazine.





*Pilgrims arriving at Vanya's rest escorted by knights.*

## ONLY THE PURE OF FAITH

**Author:** Grand Knight Walter Sternhammar

**Rarity:** Special (see below)

**Year:** 928 AC

**Language:** Thyatian (translations exist in many languages)

### Contents:

This popular book is the thrilling first-hand account of Walter Sternhammar, one of the original pilgrims whom Vanya spoke to and who undertook the great quest to Davania to recover the mortal remains of their patron Immortal. The book describes the pilgrimage to the Gulf of Mar and how the devout knights drove away the 'infidels' and liberated the area in the name of Vanya.

The original book goes on to describe how the knights discovered the artefact known as the Star of Vanya<sup>4</sup> along with Vanya's mortal remains and used the artefact to power their flying warbirds and more. Only five copies of

<sup>4</sup> See also: [Vanya's Artifact](#)

the book still include this original chapter. One is in the great library in Freiburg, one is in the citadel at Vanya's Rest and the remaining three are lost – but members of the crimson-clad Anvil of Blood sect<sup>5</sup> of the Hammer of Vanya scour Mystara for them and will not rest until they are recovered!

Copies without this most secret knowledge are very common and very popular, especially in areas from where pilgrims depart for Vanya's Rest.

**Legality:** Special (see above)

**Number of pages:** 150

## TALES ABOUT THE FABLED LAND OF THE EARTHSHAKERS

**Author:** Beridia Varor

**Rarity:** Very Rare

**Year:** 993 AC

**Language:** Glantrian

### Contents:

If you sail south from Vanya's Rest past the desolate Vulture Peninsula across the Green Bay, you may eventually reach the Confederated Kingdom of Niscosenia<sup>6</sup>. The Glantrian wizard Beridia Varor did this about a decade ago, while she was on a quest for unique magic. While there, she heard the unbelievable tales of a land even further

<sup>5</sup> See ["Heldannic Sects and Groups"](#)

<sup>6</sup> See ["The Confederated Kingdom of Niscosenia"](#)



*Heldannic depiction of an Earthshaker*

south known as the ‘Realm of the Earthshakers’. Supposedly, gargantuan constructs of magic and steel do battle there, uprooting forests and smashing mountains in their path of destruction.

Beridia collected several of these incredible tales while visiting Niscosenia and was shown chunks of what was allegedly earthshaker scrap metal from the battles. Eager to see this land for herself, Beridia departed for the south soon after, but not before mailing her diary to a family member, who published it<sup>7</sup>.

**Legality:** Legal

**Number of pages:** 100

<sup>7</sup> The family of Beridia has offered a substantial reward to anyone who’ll bring back her or certain news of her fate, whatever they may be.

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# Davania, the Izondian Deep

## *Stories from the Silver Coast*

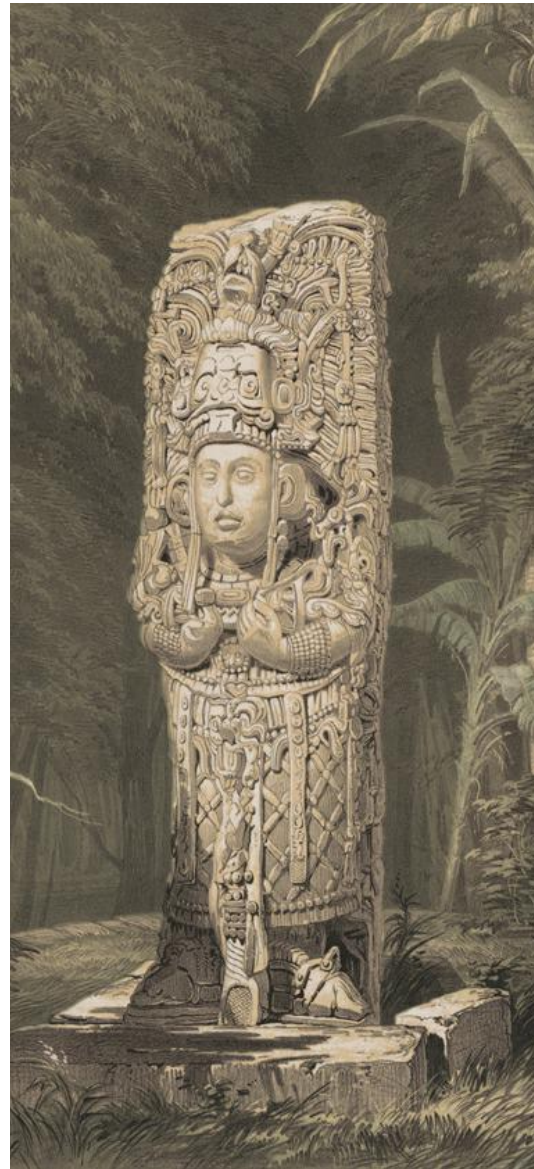
by Francesco Defferrari (Sturm)

### **FROM THE VAULTS OF PANDIUS**

**Foreword:** This article is based on several ideas I wrote for the AC1019 Almanac, so many years ago, and since then hosted on the [Vaults of Pandius](#).

*That's not the Known World, traveller, that's Terra Incognita. Here be dragons, and much, much more...*

The Izondian Deep Coast, also known by the locals as the Silver Coast, is the northwestern area of the continent of Davania, just under the Arm of the Immortals. Inhabited since unmemorable times by ancient people that still call it their home, the Coast has been invaded countless times during the centuries, from Brun through the Arm of the Immortals, from eastern Davania and even from western Skothar. All of these invasions have shaped a unique world where humans and demihumans are just some of the many people that inhabit this wild and mysterious land. Explore the mysteries of the Silver Coast, from the peaceful crabmen and orc tribes of Jkl'ok to the civilized and noble troglodytes of Ka, but beware the cruel and powerful light elves of Kwythellar!



*Ancient Oltec statue*

## HISTORY OF THE SILVER COAST

Legends say that in distant ages only elementals, ents and crabmen lived in this land. Then many others came, in times so ancient you could hardly imagine them. The wurmlings and the flying nations with their colorful wings. The early fairy folks, who once had a non humanoid form, the scorpionfolks and the araneas. Most of these people lived in peace and formed alliances with us, the dragons. Some tried to conquer us and lost.

So came our time, the Time of Dragons and, as happens to all times, it also came to an end. But it was still the time of the many people we created, the saurians, the turtles, the gatormen, the froglin, the serpentines, the wallara. Some of these people became powerful, so powerful they thought they could defy any other power in Mystara, like us, or the immortals. They were wrong, and so they were beaten, and became hateful, and they searched for more power in places beyond the stars and the planes where no sane creature should tread. There were terrible wars and there was the harvest of war, massacres and death, famine and pestilence, and pain. We disowned some of our children as they became cruel, and chose instead others as our friends.

The children of the air founded with us a great kingdom in the land that is now known as western Davania. The sphinxes, the faeries, the faenare, the hsiao, the pegataurs, the enduks. Other people who could not fly were accepted too: crabmen, turtles, wallara, lizardmen, troglodytes, zebrataurs, centaurs, fauns, rakasta, gyerians, all the new people of

the Time of Birds and Mammals, the new age that had followed us and our children.

But some of our forsaken children did not want to go into the peaceful night where all suns must set, and they continued to fight. Against us, against the immortals, against everything.

**From 8900 to 7020 BC (Pelatan Year 8300 to 6420 Before Iemara):**

### **The Tyranny of Y'hog**

During this time the Carnifex of Y'hegg-T'uhath, the island off the northwestern tip of the continent, invaded and ruled this land, trying to enslave any other race that inhabited it. We, the dragons, and all the races allied to us fought them for almost two thousand years, eventually defeating and destroying them.

**From 7010 to 3000 BC (Pelatan Year 6410 to 2400 BI):**

### **The Golden Realm**

For 4 thousand years we, the gold dragons, ruled northwestern Davania bringing justice and peace to all the races that lived in our Golden Realm: enduks, pegataurs, centaurs, crabmen, turtles, faenare, gyerians, rakasta, Oltec humans from the north, lizardmen, troglodytes, halflings and elves, and many, many more. We had to fight many battles against the Empire of the Serpentine to the east, even if it was never as cruel and corrupt as the Carnifex were, and against the Dragon Empire to the north, and sometimes against the humans of the distant land of Blackmoor - but those we should have fought much more. We should have destroyed them to the last man indeed, because they brought the

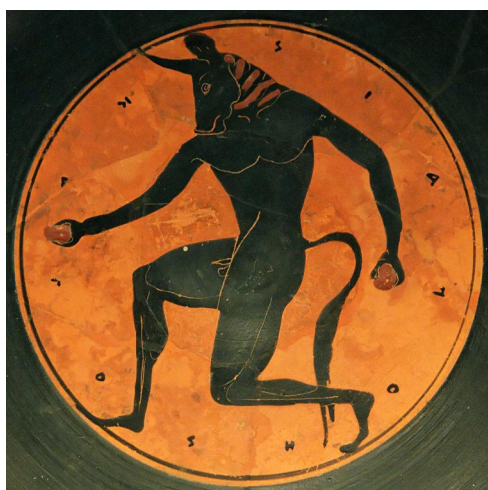


Great Rain of Fire upon us and destroyed the world.

**From 3000 to 2300 BC (Pelatan Year 2400 to 1700 BI):**

**The Time of Death**

We tried to save as many as we could, but we could not save all. In the earlier years after the Rain, often we could not even save ourselves. The world was fire and ice and its creatures, big and small, died by the thousands. In the latter years of this time we thought we were near to an end of our suffering, we thought we could bring at least peace and prosperity again to this land. But it was not so.



*Ancient depiction of a minotaur*

**From 2300 to 600 BC (Pelatan Year 1700 to 0 BI)**

**The Time of many invasions and a thousand wars**

When the elves came from the south we rejoiced, because we believed them to be our friends. But an elf named Kwythellar swayed many into enslaving the other races, and war

ensued. Some of the elves who allied with us stayed, but many others followed Ilsundal to the north. Kwythellar became an empire that we had to fight. That was not the end of our suffering, as Minoides killed Gildesh and the Enduks were defeated, and left us to search for a new home in Brun. Kwythellar elves, minotaurs, humans and lizardmen fought each others for centuries, and many suffered.

The peaceful tanagogres came from the north, and they became allies against more violent races, but the good times did not last because many other races, orcs and ogres and much more, came from the north with swords and wars. And the tanagogres became bitter and darkness entered their souls. They attacked us to steal our secret and our treasures, as many other have tried before. The people of Pelatan fought with us but Queen Eshala was killed in battle and it seemed for a time we were going to lose everything. But then Iemara came, a pale warrior girl with a retinue of warrior maidens, leader of a people without a home, and she killed the dictator of Izonda, saving the land of Pelatan and becoming its first Golden Matriarch.



*Iemara addressing her soldiers*

From 600 BC to 1019 AC (Pelatan Year 1 to 1619 After Iemara)

**Pelatan and Izonda, or the present times**

The presence of Izonda and Pelatan defines the history of the Silver Coast. The powerful dictatorship has continued to expand, conquering nation after nation: gyerians, zebrataurs, minotaurs, orcs, sis'thik, lizardmen, troglodytes, sollux, humans, and scorpionfolks still live in the great desert, now under Izondian rule. Some, like the thri-kreen, still fight back. Others are now fully integrated in Izondian society. The Manticore knights and the Steam Airships of Izonda rule the skies and only Pelatan's dragons have proven to be strong enough to contain them. But the Silver Coast? How long before it falls into Izondian hands? Now Izonda is at peace,<sup>1</sup> but how long it will last?



*Recent Heldannic depiction of an Izondian warrior*

<sup>1</sup> After 1007 AC, as described in [“Izonda \(Invincible dictatorship of\)”](#)

**TIMELINE OF THE SILVER COAST**

**7020 BC:** Y'hegg-T'uhath is partially submerged, Carnifex disappear, other races of northwestern Davania can breath easy and no single race can dominate over the others. The Serpentine Empire expands in the east, but doesn't reach the Silver Coast.

**5000 BC:** The Golden Realm of Pelatan, created by dragons, enduks and other races, expands as far as the Silver Coast to help fairies, centaurs, turtles and crabmen against corrupted troglodytes kingdoms. The Oltec colony of Tikal is established in the eastern part of the coast (modern eastern Kwythellar and Eseri coast).

**3200 BC:** Northwestern Davania is now a peaceful area, a small Blackmoorian colony is founded between the Adakkian sound and the Silver Coast (modern Alol).

**3000 BC:** The Great Rain of Fire wreaks havoc on northwestern Davania and destroys whole cities and regions.

**2920 BC:** The goblin of Kresh crash into the mountains and begin to carve their nation.

**2900 BC:** The Viridin Alliance is formed in the northwest to resist Kresh goblins and troglodyte tribes expansion.

**2700 BC:** Duargor dwarves arrive, allying with Viridin against the goblin of Kresh and the troglodyte clans.

**2500 BC:** Ilsundal's elves begin to arrive in Pelatan and Izonda, aiding enduks, humans and fairies against lizardmen, sis'thik, troglodytes and scorpionfolk.

**2300 BC:** Kwythellar's rebellion forces Ilsundal to leave Davania, the Empire of Kwythellar is formed and begins to conquer the surrounding lands aggressively. A part of the former Oltec colony is conquered by the elves.



**2050 BC:** Minoides kills Gildesh, the enduk flee to Brun and minotaurs form an empire that soon clashes against Kwythellar.

**2000 BC:** Tanagoro humans arrive from the west and ally with fairies against the Minotaur Empire and the Kwythellars, and form the nations of Arica.



*Arican warrior*

**1800 BC:** Kwythellars create the Markresh to fight the minotaurs, but the plan backfires when their creation rebels and attack them.

**1750 BC:** Aricans and Pelatians unite against the Minotaur Empire, which suffers a crushing defeat and is occupied by the lizardmen empire of Shir.

**1300 BC:** Minotaurs rebel and return to power, and commence new wars against the Kwythellar.

**1250 BC:** Peaceful tanagogres, followers of Sumag, arrive in Davania from the Arm of the Immortals, settling in Arica and Pelatan.

**900 BC:** Great Humanoid invasion from the Arm of the Immortals spreads all over

Davania. Fall of the second Minotaur Empire in Izonda. Small groups of lupins arrive too.

**870 BC:** Tanagogres and ogres are chased away from Arica, Dictatorship of Izonda founded. Pure blood ogres chased away from Izonda too, begin a long migration to Green Bay. Izondians conquer the minotaurs of Tsin and Gord, begin to raid Pelatan.

**807 BC:** Some Varellyan refugees lead by Iemara arrive in Pelatan, and help to defeat Izondian aggression. Other Varellyan refugees travel to southern Pelatan and found the kingdom of Nivall.

**700 BC:** Izonda conquers the scorpionfolk of Bal and the lizardmen of Lis'da, raids gyerian territories and Nivall. Kwythellars create Kilmur to attack Izonda.

**650 BC:** Izonda conquers the Tanagoro realms of Ogba and Awari.

**600 BC:** Creation of the Golden Matriarchy of Pelatan.

**520 BC:** Clans of Ocelasta refugees from the Arm of the Immortals arrive in Davania after a war with jakar rakasta followers of Atzanteotl.

**500 BC:** Izonda occupies the Kwythellar cities of Lasin and Selain but is eventually repelled.

**400 BC:** The Minotaur Empire of Ras is created and threatens Izonda, but Izonda resists, defeats the zebrataurs of Adan and expands toward Pelatan.

**300 BC:** Izonda attacks Pelatan but is repelled.

**200 BC:** Izonda conquers several territories of Shir, Lalis from Pelatan, the scorpionfolk and sis-thik realm of Soda, the gyerian kingdom of Gyda, and raids as far as Nivall.

**150 BC:** Izonda attacks in the west and, after 50 years of war, destroys and conquers the minotaurs of Ras, the Tanagoro kingdom of Drazah, and the Pelatan province of Sishu.

100 AC: Gombar and Suma'a establish several colonies on the Silver Coast.  
 250 AC: Minotaurs conquer back large chunks of western Izonda, founding Rasam.  
 420 AC: Werereatures begin to spread in Davania too.  
 435 AC: Humanoid horde invades southern Izonda and eastern Pelatan, but is eventually repelled.  
 500 AC: Izonda destroys and conquers Rasam. Ashamr, capital of Shir, falls to the Izondians. Large territories of Shain and Shami are conquered too in the east.  
 700 AC: Minotaurs of Tamar, reptilians of Zhar and Javag troglodytes fall to Izonda, which reaches Duur and also conquers several territories of Kilmur.  
 750 AC: Failed attack by Izonda against Pelatan.  
 900 AC: Kwythellar advance toward Izonda but are eventually stopped.  
 977 AC: Heldannic knights establish the outpost of Schweidnitz and defeat Mogluur.  
 980 AC: Izonda conquers the southern province of the Kwythellar empire.  
 992 AC: Heldannic knights abandon Schweidnitz and Mogluur expand.  
 999 AC: Izonda conquers the orc kingdom of Mokghar, reaching the borders of Ghuur and Kresh.  
 1007 AC: A priestess of Valerias become dictator of Izonda, beginning a period of peace with surrounding nations.  
 1019 AC: Heldannic knights return to Schweidnitz.

*Compiled by Ehamakeribb the Ancient,  
 Advisor of the Golden Matriarch of Pelatan*

## Trading alliance of Muda and Jakan

**Description:** The northwestern tip of Davania and the islands in front of it were once inhabited only by turtles and crabmen, but subsequently the great island of Y'hegg-T'uhath<sup>2</sup> became the power center of the Carnifex of Y'hog. After their demise most of the island was submerged, but was later inhabited again by turtles, crabmen and troglodytes, and renamed Tliath. More recently the island and the tip of the nearby Jakan peninsula became colonies of Gombar and Suma'a, then the two colonies joined together to become a major trade hub, that now receives merchandise from all over the Silver Coast, the Savage Coast, the Yezchamenid Empire, Nastoreth, the gyerians, faenare, enduk, winged elves, pegataurs and rakasta of the Arm of the Immortals, from Tangor and Zyxl in Skothar, from Pelatan and Nivall in Davania. It has food, silk, spices, gems, metals, red steel, silversteel, and even blood obsidian, which is illegal almost everywhere. It's a trader's paradise, if only there wasn't something so very wrong with this place...

Below the waves the city of Y'hog still exists, and its inhabitants always search for a means to escape the confinement decreed by the Immortals. The Outer Beings, too, have not relinquished their taint on this land and so there is something wrong with the crabmen, turtles, wallara, snapper and orcs that inhabit the great island of Tliath and the minor islands around it. It's also common that the

<sup>2</sup> See the article "Recent History of Davania" in this same issue: the modern island of Muda was once much bigger, extending to the north toward the Arm of the Immortals.





*Map of the western part of the Coast<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> This was originally a 24 miles per hex map but, as I updated the dimensions of Davania in my 72 miles per hex map (see on page 12 of this issue), it should now be considered that the north-south direction of each hex is a length of 30 miles instead of 24. A complete view of this part of Davania could be at the [Vaults of Pandius](#) , and a more beautiful one (by John Calvin) is also available at the [Vaults](#). Both maps however were done before the dimensions update and therefore underestimate north-south distances.

humans, tanagogres, rakasta and others who trade here to have very vivid and disturbing dreams. Many are so scared that they never return here, but many instead experience a sort of dark attraction to Tliath.

**Rulers:** Ujahi of Muda, the tanagore inspector of the city and the great island of Tliath, descendant of the first colonists of Gombar. Holds little real authority beyond the city walls, but is extremely rich and influential. Rumors about him being member of a dark, unholy cult are certainly malicious gossip of trade rivals, aren't they? Isn't that a common rumor indeed in the fair city of Muda?

Laeai, High Chairwoman of the Union of Jakan and direct descendant of the first families of Suma'a, is a beautiful and imposing tanagore female in her forties, proud to be able to maintain peaceful relations and advantageous trading agreement with all of her neighbours. She's also trying to develop more trade with the far away Renardy, Bellayne, Texeira and Vilaverde, and to open a more stable relationships with Nastoreth and the powerful empires of Izonda, Pelatan, Yezchamenid and Zuyevo. She's also trying to arrange a marriage with Ziande of Amara to reunite the Suma'aian colonies, an idea that Ujahi of Muda would disfavor much, maybe to the point of sending assassins.

**Dimension and populations:** The island of Tliath alone is more than 13,000 square miles and with the surrounding minor islands has a population of 200,000 tanagogres, crabmen, turtles, wallara, ocelasta, orcs, ogres and troglodytes. The area of Jakan has 4,000 square miles and around 50,000 inhabitants between tanagogres, crabmen, orcs, turtles, jakar, jakarundi, ocelasta and other races.

**Cities:** Muda and Jakan, both busy ports that can house hundreds of ships from half the world, have

### Silversteel

Silversteel is a particular alloy of metals, blended with magic, that only the fairies of Virdin, and the elves of Kwythellar, know how to make. It has exceptional durability and can hurt magical creatures, and it also has small curative powers (it heals 1 hp each hour when in contact with skin), so it's coveted by all the warriors of the Silver Coast.

### Blood Obsidian

A magical kind of black volcanic glass that has a red hue inside, blood obsidian has incredible powers that increase the larger the piece is. Each cubic inch doubles the number of spells a wizard can cast each day. The material however, is dangerous, as it slowly changes those using it, filling their minds with strange nightmares. Also, each time it's used, the obsidian randomly summons 1d2 strange monsters nearby (less than 1d100 feet): the monsters will not attack the caster for that day, but will have no regard for anyone else, including his allies and friends. If the wizard encounters the monsters again the next day, they could attack him as per the normal reactions table.



roughly 12,000 permanent residents each but can house at least twice that amount at the height of the shipping season. Here, just below the equator, the best season is the Sun season, from the month of the Giant to the month of the Chimera (Kaldmont to Yarthmont), with a warm climate and slow wind from the north, despite sporadic heavy rains. The Fog season, from the month of the Gorgon to the month of the Warrior (Klarmont to Eirmont) has a colder climate, frequent rains and dense fogs, yet traffic from the south has better winds. Every five years or so, an event known as “The Sea Dragon’s Wrath” causes thunderstorms and floodings in all of Western Davania from the month of the Basilisk to the month of the Pegasus (Flaurmont to Sviftmont).

**Adventure opportunities:** Enterprising adventurers have found strange magical artifacts in the shallow sea floors of the northern part of the island. To retrieve all of them they will just need some more help against the local, unfriendly snappers.<sup>3</sup> Inspector Ujahi seems very interested in the discoveries and is willing to finance such an expedition.

## Free cities of Jan’a, Amara and Tambar

**Description:** These three cities, along with Edarin in Viridin, are the greatest ports of the Final Bay, moving goods to Muda and Jakan, Pelatan, Brun and Skothar. The goods come here by land from all of western Davania, but not by land only. The shallow waters of the Bay are in fact also the home of organized groups of crabmen, merrow, kna and omm-wa<sup>4</sup> that happily trade undersea goods with the cities: mostly pearls, lost ship cargoes, fish and crustaceans, edible algae, dyes and more exotic goods. The cities have another unusual trade route with The Storm Realm, a clouds skyhome inhabited by faenares, storm giants and others that moves above Viridin, Saak and Ghur. Muda and Jakan are quite jealous of these trades as their waters are infested by unfriendly snappers and even cläu-rin<sup>5</sup> and they have no sky realm above, so they are suspected of funding a bit of piracy against the three cities. Other piracy comes occasionally from the dangerous Water-Air Kwythellar vessels.

Amara, being in Viridin, is a city of tanagogres but full of fairy folk of different races, with impressive and elegant buildings. Originally founded by Gombarians, it has now just friendly ties with the homeland as it is more loyal to the fairy Queen of Viridin than any other power.

Tambar is inhabited mostly by tanagogres, orcs, ogres and troglodytes. It was another Gombar colony later taken by Suma’aians, Saakians and Izondians, until it became

<sup>3</sup> Evil turtles described at the [Vaults of Pandius](#)

<sup>4</sup> Intelligent manatees, described at the [Vaults of Pandius](#)

<sup>5</sup> See description at the [Vaults](#)

virtually independent. Although it takes into careful consideration both the will of the Queen of Virdin and of the Council of Saak.

Jan'a was a Suma'aian colony which was later occupied by Aricans and then by Izondians. Its population is a mixture of tanagogres and Tanagoro humans with some orcogres from Ghur. The latter nation has tried to retake Jan'a for centuries, always failing due to the particular conformation of the city, a high cliff with a secluded natural port. In the last two hundred years however the leaders of the city have become more and more tied to the clans of Ghur, to the point that now they consider themselves to be one of them, although an unusual type.

**Rulers:** She'ada, Princess of Amara, is a young tanagore with sidhe blood and great magical abilities, known to be willing to face enemies and pirates herself at all occasions.

Muon, Lord of Tambar, is a cleric of Sumag who strongly believes in peace, negotiation and respect. He needs all of his great patience to deal with the pugnacious lords of Saak.

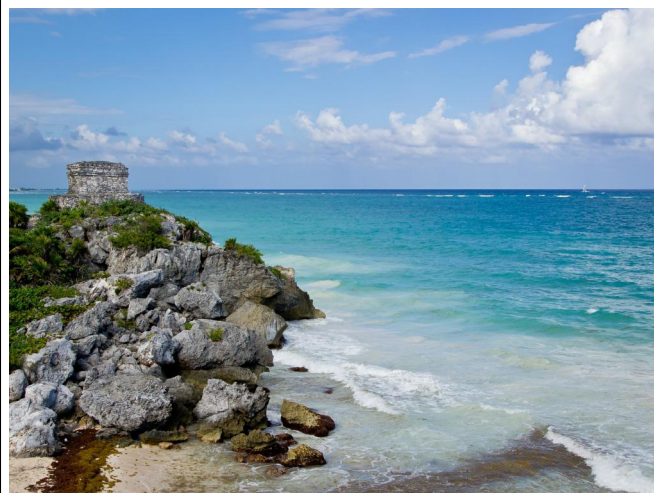
Ishin, First Speaker of Jan'a, is a Tanagoro human with some orcogre blood who used to be a great navy admiral. Now he often enjoys flying on the Armed Balloons that defend the city.

**Dimensions and populations:** The cities control surrounding territories of almost 4,000 square miles that house about 50,000 people of several races each.

**Cities:** Around 15,000 citizens live in the cities proper, all secluded ports which are very easy to defend, particularly Jan'a which rests over a cliff. Amara is also known for its fairy glass towers and its flying defenders, the

Emerald squad, composed of drakes and strange gargoyles, which is lead by a jade dragon. Tambar relies on its sturdy stone towers and storm giant mercenaries for its defense against airborne Kwythellars or Kilmurians raids (Izondian have stopped their raids in recent years after the revolution that brought Valerias' church to power<sup>6</sup>).

**Adventure opportunities:** A Kwythellar air raid just kidnapped the daughter of First Speaker Ishin and several of her friends, all siblings of the noblest families. The whole balloon fleet of Jan'a is moving in pursuit, and all available mercenaries are welcomed to join. The best team will be granted the mission to immediately seek the aid of the airborne defenders of Amara and Tambar.



*Ruins on the sea of the Final Bay*

<sup>6</sup> That would be after 1007 AC, see note 1.



## Allied tribes of Jkl'ok

**Description:** Jkl'ok is a surprisingly peaceful nation formed by a federation of different tribes with a unifying religion that includes seven immortals: Ka, Sumag, Korotiku, Valerias, Ixion, Koryis and Shaper. Crabmen, the original inhabitants, were able to include other people that came later, notably the hill orcs who came in 900 BC and the jungle orcs who came from Brun too but several centuries later. They had also included aranea, turtles, fairies, troglodytes, ocelasta and kobolds in their society. Each people has its own role: crabmen and turtles as fishermen and traders with undersea races, orcs and troglodytes as hunters, gatherers, loggers and farmers, fairies and araneas as wizards, breeders and artisans, kobolds as miners and smiths and ocelastas as internal traders.

The nation is organized in ten tribes, three comprised of crabmen who have also adopted turtles, araneas and drakes, four comprised of hill orcs that have adopted troglodytes, ocelasta, kobolds and alux (local brownies), and three are comprised of jungle orcs that have adopted centaurs, dryads and fauns. They also have a common central temple. In the last few decades, jikoloks have developed a great eagerness to trade, mostly in Jakan and Amara, because foreign silk and textiles have become a status symbol among the population. Apparently simple and even naive, jikoloks were enslaved by carnifex in ancient times but haven't been conquered since, relying on crabmen and turtle undersea troops to fight sea raids and on a vicious breed of trained griffons against air raids. They have good relations with Viridin and the trade cities around them.

**Ruler:** Each tribe is ruled by a Council of Wise Ones that includes the elderly, priests and wizards of the primary and secondary population that form the tribe. The Council of the Seven High Priests in the Temple of Jkl'ok is the informal final authority, mostly to resolve tribal disputes or to decide common external actions.

**Dimension and population:** At slightly less than 60,000 square miles, Jkl'ok probably has a number of inhabitants exceeding 600,000, but there is no available census. Orcs are the majority, followed by crabmen, with sizeable minorities of turtles, araneas, fairies, ocelasta and kobolds.

**Capital and other cities:** Jkl'ok has no capital, but the great Temple complex of Jkl'ok could be considered one. Inhabited by thousands between priests, acolytes, students and the faithfuls, it occupies a whole valley and is dedicated to the Seven Immortals. The other cities of the nation are the tribe holds, different in architecture and materials depending on its population, but all well hidden and spread throughout the jungle.

**Adventure Opportunities:** In the Rain Season (Klarmont to Eirmont), Jkl'ok territory is subject to violent floods, but the people have learnt to control and use them for water play. Unfortunately this year the season has become a field day for hydras. Is it true that a troglodyte shaman who roams the land speaking of strange prophecies is controlling them?

## Unwithering Court of Virdin

**Description:** As old as the earth herself, Virdin is the traditional home of the Court of Spring, one of the four original fairy courts of Mystara. Over the millennia, the fairies welcomed into their lands an incredible diversity of people, so it's said that there is no race of people in the world that doesn't live in Virdin too. The nation has good trade relations with Jkl'ok and with the enclosed Suma'aian colony of Amara and Gombarian colony of Tambar. It has fought low intensity battles in the past with Saak but more often it has aided them against Kwythellar raids. Virdinians hate viscerally the cruel elves of the east and have a "soul feud" (an un-mending enmity) with them, as they consider the Kwythellar to be traitors of the fairy people. The powerful empire of Izonda to the south, even if not directly neighbouring nor threatening, for now, has always been a major concern of the Court.

As a consequence, the Court long ago fostered and created the Silver Alliance, that includes Virdin, Saak, Kresh, Markresh, Duargor and Duur, to contain Izonda and Kwythellar raids and aggressions. Virdin has an effective sea fleet which includes sidhe, turtle and crabmen crew, and an aerial force which includes drakes,

sidhes mounted on giant dragonflies, wyverns and dragons.

Virdin also mines and sells the much coveted silversteel, effective against any creature.

**Ruler:** Queen Mabel, the fairy ruler of Virdin is an incredibly old and beautiful sidhe that looks like a fifteen years old girl. Her favorite pastime is to travel alone in the world to punish the occasional aggressor that mistakes her for a vulnerable youngster. Geas and transmutation spells are the best that can happen to such people. Mabel is always meek and light hearted, but rumors say that she could battle immortals with her left hand, and has even done it in the past. It's also rumored that she has a mysterious and unknown lover that visit her from time to time. That happens in "fairy time", so sometimes even centuries apart, but when it happens, everything blossoms in Virdin, stars shine brighter and all the waters of the realm have magical, curative powers. The last of these Bright Seasons happened 53 years ago.



*Enchanted land of Virdin*

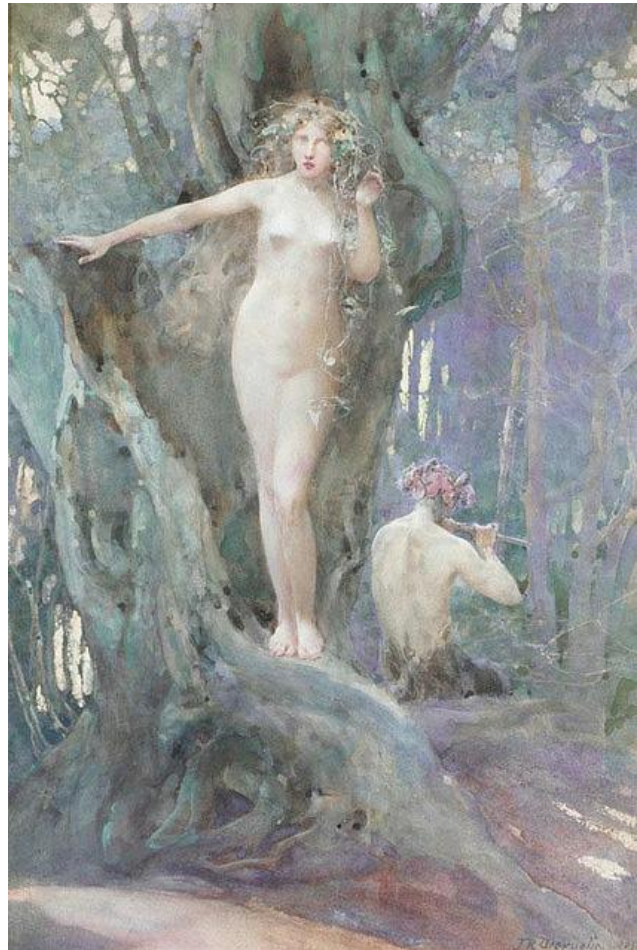


**Dimension and Population:** More than 65,000 square miles, more than 800,000 inhabitants including fairy folks, ent, dryads, hsiao, crabmen, orcs and ogres, kobolds, ocelasta and other rakasta, turtles, lupins, phanaton, aranea, wallara, gyerians and many other unique people, like insectoid races and groups of dwarves, elves and halflings. Almost all of these people have developed during the centuries and millennia the unique fairy abilities of glamour or shapeshifting.

**Capital and other cities:** Maderin, with 50,000 inhabitants is probably the greatest fairy city of Mystara, a relic of ages past and also the harbour of the enchanted ships that the Virdinians maintain to defend themselves from Kwythellar raids. At the centre of the Realm there is the Saved World, where the Jade Dragon Dimelian has gathered an incredible number of races on the verge of extinction, shaping the land around her palace of Nive in an incredible and otherworldly way. Intari, the easternmost city of Virdin, is the home of the Exiled Court, the fairy folk that 3,000 years ago had to leave their ancestral land for the cruelty of the Kwythellar elves. They are millenia away from forgetting or forgiving however, and Intari is therefore the more militaristic city of the nation.

**Adventure Opportunities:** The Discordance Court, rebellious to the queen, has made an unholy pact with Kwythellar agents to stage attacks by ravenous werereatures against non-fairy citizens of Virdin. This is meant to undermine the fairy party that advocates full acceptance of werereatures in the nation and to spread hate against the impures ones (those with

human and humanoid blood, like the tanagogre colonies of Amara and Tambar).



*Faun playing for a dryad*

## New guilds of Saak

**Description:** Once upon a time, only wurmlings, crabmen, turtles and fairies lived here. Then troglodytes came too, and all these people were later enslaved by the Carnifex. After the Carnifex fall, the divided people lived in peace for a while, but later the goblins of Kresh pressed them hard until orcs and ogres arrived in 900 BC. Since then a working military alliance was established between the different races living in this land, also including ocelasta. With time the influence of neighbouring nations made Saak gradually less warlike and more focused on trade instead also transforming their society from a tribal one to a partial democratic alliance with a central government. They have a strong dependency on Tambar, their main trading partner, and recently have been pushing from a stronger Silver Alliance, mainly because the powerful Izonda, once 500 miles away, is now just 60 miles from them.<sup>7</sup> They have recently been building sturdy ships to trade with Viridin, Kresh, Markresh and mostly Makra, and to strike back against Kwythellar piracy. Shipbuilders have been hired from surrounding nations and cities, and even from Texeiras, to that end. They have never had an aerial force, yet they manage to repel (with difficulties) most of the Kwythellar and Izondian raids with a supply of fireball wands bought from Viridin and lightning wands bought from Kresh. Saak has small deposits of blood obsidian, a type of glass-like black purple stone with magical properties that many

desires but is illegal to sell, as it's known to create monsters and nightmares.

**Ruler:** An elected Council of representatives from each community rules Saak from Liinok, the only true city of the nation. The travellers, as traders are called in Saak, also enjoy considerable prestige and fame. These daring people are a mix of merchants, adventurers, explorers and occasionally pirates.

**Dimensions and population:** With almost 40,000 square miles, Saak probably has a total population of over 400,000 people.

**Capital and other cities:** Liinok, as the seat of the Council, is the informal capital and the only big city of Saak; with over 15,000 inhabitants. Its most interesting feature is the Great Market, with people from all over the nation coming to trade and barter.

**Adventure Opportunities:** Local stories say that an extensive underground cities of insect people and other ancient creatures lies below Saak. The Council would be very interested to know if such people exist and if so, whether they could be convinced to be willing allies against a possible future Izondian invasion.

<sup>7</sup> After the fall of the orc nation of Mokghar, that become the northern part of the Izondian province of Edizaro in 999 AC.

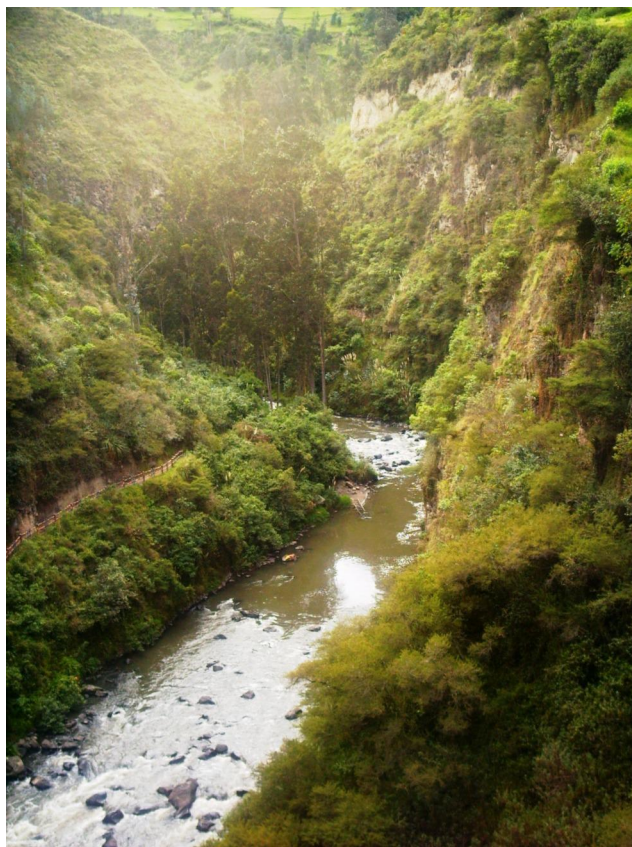


## Glorious clans of Ghur

**Description:** According to ancient sources, this rugged land of jungle cliffs and gorges was once inhabited by corrupt troglodytes and dark fairies, but after 900 BC a scattered tribe of orcs and ogres began to hide here. Since then, they have stubbornly clung to their land, despite innumerable attempts by aggressive neighbours to destroy them. The land of Ghur is indeed so rugged that invading armies have always been divided and destroyed by the clans: minotaurs, Aricans, orcs, goblins and, in the last years, the Izondians. Ghur is now one of the possible obstacles between the powerful empire and the long desired direct access to the western sea, but the terrain and the inhabitants are so rugged that Izonda could well choose an easier prey, like Mis or Kresh, even if these two nations aren't really easy either. Despite their fame of invincible warriors who do not need any help, the clans of Ghur are now seriously considering the option of joining the Silver Alliance, and the debate is causing much discussions and first-blood honor duels in the nation.

The clans of Ghur have since formed a new mixed race that others call orcogres, even if normally the two races are not compatible. That's indeed the work of the Black Chain, a group of araneas and dark fairies that live in the center of Ghur. Known to the clans but unknown to outsiders, the Black Chain has always aided the clans, as they are very effective in protecting the land against outside meddling.

**Ruler:** Each of the four clans of Ghur has its own chief, its mother and its shaman. The chiefs often meet to discuss joint military



*Canyon in Ghur*

operations, the shamans to discuss priestly or wizardly matters, and the mothers discuss all the other matters. The common meeting place is Ghur-sa, a big fortress in the center of the nation, just above the subterranean city of the Black Chain, whose rulers are often consulted as advisors.

**Dimensions and population:** With 36,000 square miles, Ghur has a population oscillating between 300,000 and 500,000 inhabitants, depending on how bad the war is with external enemies. Any excess of population is almost immediately employed in attacking Mis or Izonda and rapidly depleted.

**Capital and Cities:** The informal capital of the nation is the fortress of Ghur-sa, where manticores are also bred by the Black Chain as aerial mounts to fight Izonda. The four clan holds are heavily fortified towns, built below the trees of the jungles and carefully hidden from any enemy approaching by land or air. The external perimeters of the towns are also filled with various traps and full of sentinels and archers ready to kill intruders on sight.

**Adventure opportunities:** No outsiders willingly enters Ghur, as to do so will mean becoming prey of the local warriors in the unforgiving jungle. But some do so nevertheless, because deep in the lands of Ghur there are deposits of the rare white obsidian, that has precious curative and creative properties.

*White Obsidian:*

A glasslike white stone, white obsidian is known to exist only in Ghuur, and it has wonderful powers too, each cubic inch doubling the number of curative and creative (like create food) spells a priest or a wizard can cast each day. It hasn't any known side effects. Unfortunately it's quite rare and Ghuurians consider it their exclusive property, leaving the heads of those who tried to steal it hanging from the trees along their borders.

## UNYIELDING CLANS OF KRESH

**Description:** After the Great Rain of Fire, a ragged band of goblin-like beastmen was starving to death in the frozen steppes of Hyborea. The abandoned Blackmoorian skyship they found was their lucky break: somehow they raised it into the skies, steered it to the south as best as they could, and crashed it in Davania. At this time the Oltec humans, crabmen, turtles and troglodytes living in Kresh were few and scattered, and so the goblins were able to carve a big realm. Unfortunately with time many more people came: dwarves, elves, minotaurs, humanoids. All tried to conquer Kresh, but the unyielding clans defeated them all.

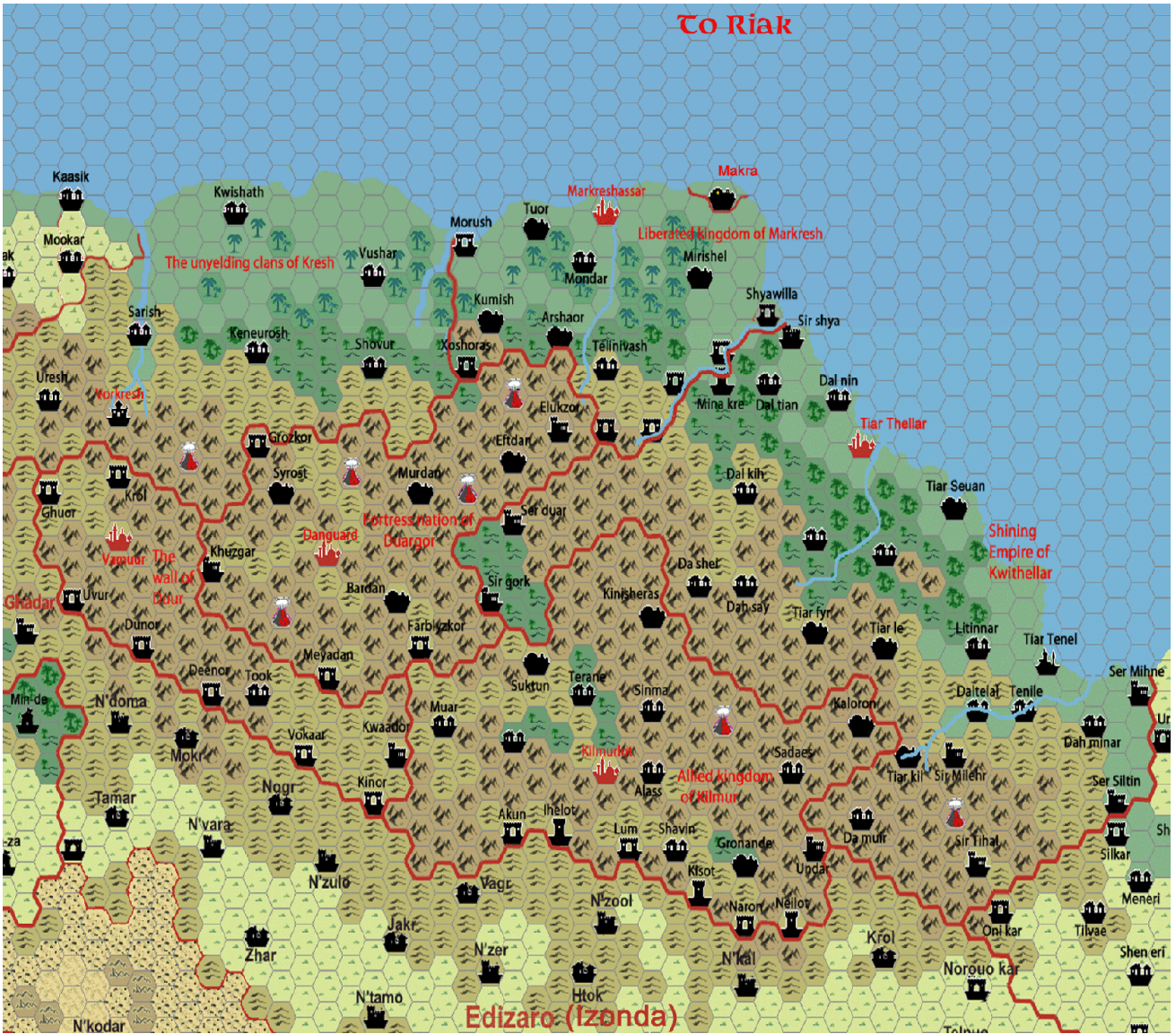
The Kresh do not look like normal goblins. They are taller, have bronze skin and are well organized and disciplined. Each clan and community rules itself, but they have a central government, led by a clan chief and by a shaman elected by the elderly, in Vorkresh.

The Kresh have developed a small sea force to trade, engage in some piracy and defend against Kwythellar raids. Their ships are similar to the crabmen "shells" and often have crabmen sailors. They have also a small air force mounted on flying creatures similar to skinwings.<sup>8</sup>

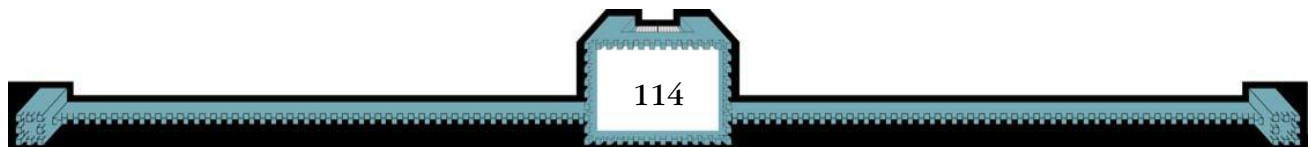
Historically they have been at war with all of their neighbours, usually not all at the same time, but mostly with Kwythellar. Since the Silver Alliance has come into existence, however, they have been focusing on

<sup>8</sup> See [this article](#) at the Vaults





Map of the central part of the Coast





sending troops to Markresh and on resisting Izonda directly, as the dangerous dictatorship now has a border directly touching Kresh. A sizable minority of lupins have settled in Kresh, all Carrasquitos and Hairless who came from Brun after 900 BC, while the Guarà, that claim to be the original lupins of Davania, live mostly in Pelatan.<sup>9</sup>

**Ruler:** Sheg'vak, a tall and lean warrior who fights with a trident, has been elected high chief of Kresh for several years in a row, popular for his courage in battle and his skills in finding mediations and common grounds even between bitter rivals.

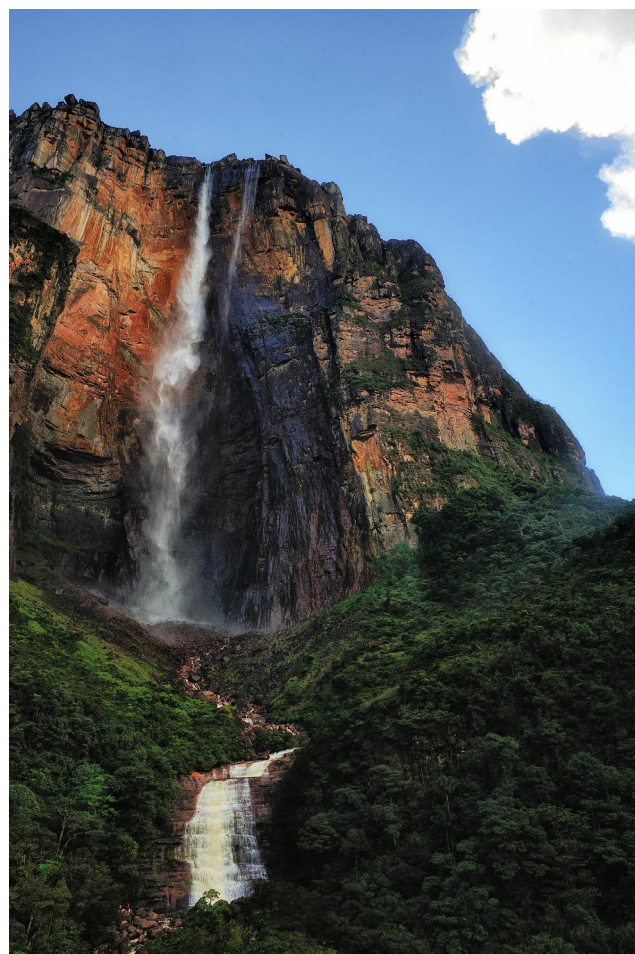
A'dei, a diminutive but powerful female shaman of Wogar, already elected three times, knows much of everything and everyone and is both trusted and feared. She often hires outsiders to deal with dangerous missions for which she doesn't like to risk Kreshian lives.

**Dimensions and population:** With around 110,000 square miles, Kresh is a big nation and its total population likely exceeds 1 million, mostly goblins but with sizeable minorities of crabmen, turtles, lupins, troglodytes, ocelastas, drakes, and centaurs. There is also a relevant population of monsters and dangerous creatures that the Kresh preserve, because their threat is useful to bring out the strong will of the people.

**Capital and cities:** Clanholds are mostly wooden, but with an architecture more elaborate than many would expect from goblins. Vorkresh is a great temple and sprawling complex that houses more than 100,000 people, as the elderly of Kresh gather there at the end of their lives to serve the Immortals, i.e. Wogar, Hel, Ka, the Shaper and others.

<sup>9</sup> For lupin breeds see [this article](#) at the Vaults of Pandius; about the Guarà refer to "[Maned Wolf](#)":

**Adventure opportunities:** The original Blackmoorian skyship still lies under the temple of Vorkresh. The elderly need adventurers willing to study it and possibly reactivate it, so that it can be used as an effective weapon against the threat of Izonda and Kwythellar.



*Waterfall between Duargor and Kresh*



## Liberated Kingdom of Markresh

**Description:** Vaguely similar to hobgoblins, but even more human-like, the Markresh are a noble race that the Kwythellar created around 1800 BC with the purpose of having the perfect soldiers. They mixed the goblins of Kresh and the dwarves of Duargor, who were too stubborn to be good servants (even if raised from infancy), with simu (Oltec and elven hybrids) and captured Aricans (Tanagoro humans). Their plan backfired when the Markresh lead a rebellion that allowed them and all the remaining captured dwarves and Tanagoro to escape Kwythellar, while also freeing the last pocket of the original Oltec inhabitants of the nation. As Duargor dwarves refused to accept all of them, the Markresh were forced to fight back the Kwythellars trying to recapture them, and they have fought them ever since. Almost 3,000 years of resistance have forged one of the strongest and more unified people of the entire world, even stronger than the tough Izondians, the clans of Ghur or the minotaurs of Mis. Only in the last decades, with the creation of the Silver Alliance, the nearby nations of Saak, Kresh and Duargor have fully recognized the importance of Markresh as the first defense line against Kwythellar, regularly supplying the nation with weapons and troops. Still the Markreshians do not fully trust outsiders, because none of them could ever be a brother, or a sister, like the dwarf or the human that fights beside you, and whose fathers have fought beside yours for 150 generations.

To define Markresh as a militarized nation would be a gross understatement. Children, males and females, listen to the stories of how their ancestors were killed in their cribs. The word for dying in Markreshian is kwythis, as a Kwythellar sword (or magic bolt) is the most common cause of death for an inhabitant of this nation. Kwythellars have not tried to capture Markreshians for centuries, as a Markreshian will not surrender to the Kwy, their word for enemy. Ever. Kwythellar soldiers, wizards and wizard-priests are promoted according to the number of Markreshians, of any age, they have killed, and Markreshian ranks work in the opposite way.

Despite efforts to develop an aerial fleet employing skinwings, pterodactyls, rocs, manticores, wyverns and other flying beasts, and the recent aid of other nations, the Kwythellar Darterships still have dominion of the skies. That doesn't mean that the Markreshians do not fight back any chance they get. The eastern half of the nation is in all effects a permanent battleground, and isn't scorched barren only because Kwythellars refuse to use magic that destroy vegetation. However, it's devoid of any community except for the heavy militarized city of Mirishel.

**Ruler:** King Mar-Djut is a young warrior of 20 springs, who recently succeeded his father after he and his mother died fighting the Kwythellars. He has two brothers, seven cousins, two children and ten nieces ready to supplant him when he'll be killed in battle. Markreshian kings and queens rarely last more than a few seasons, as it is their duty to be always first in the line.

**Dimensions and population:** With almost 60,000 square miles Markresh has a population of slightly less than 600,000, mostly hobgoblins but including sizable minorities of humans (Oltecs and Tanagoro), dwarves, crabmen, turtles, troglodytes, ocelasta and fairies.

**Capital and cities :** Markreshassar is a beautiful and heavy fortified city with slender towers and about 45,000 inhabitants. Mirishel, the most important eastern city, has more than 65,000 inhabitants and is the seat of the army and half of the air fleet. Rarely a day and a night pass without a Kwythellar attack.

Makra has its own particular story and is the only city in the area that the Kwythellar rarely attack, as it has effective magical beams that can hurt flying attackers. Once an ancient ruin, then a Kwythellar town, it was captured by Markresh and then granted to Gombar and Suma'a merchants in exchange for weapon supplies. The tanagogres tried to reach an agreement with Kwythellar to trade in peace, but as that was not possible, they established contacts with the mysterious island of Riak, 500 miles north into the sea, rumored to be a magical realm inhabited by fairies, crabmen, turtles, wallara or other races, depending on the rumor. The tanagogres however received their protection and now the city is an important trade hub where even ships from the Savage Coast come. Markreshians occasionally go there as well to have some respite from the endless war.

**Adventure opportunities:** A Kwythellar noble wizard, and two of his soldiers have been captured. Once the Markreshaians just

used to kill captives Kwythellar outright, but this changed some years ago and they are now shipped alive to Virdin, where the Fairy Court has decided to try to rehabilitate them. Kwythellars know of this, however, and will try their best to free the noble, a cousin of the Empress. Besides, mercenaries will always find work in Markresh, if they have enough guts to face Kwythellars swords and bolts.

## FORTRESS NATION OF DUARGOR

**Description:** These ancient dwarves came from Brasol around 2700 BC after a civil war split their nation in two. Initially they aided local Oltec humans against the goblins of Kresh, and fought troglodytes that lived in the area. They became more and more isolationist after the arrival of Kwythellar in 2300 BC, even exiling any dwarves that didn't fit perfectly into their society. After the creation of Duur around 800 BC from the exiled dwarves and orcs, their attitude began to slowly change, mainly because they found themselves on the verge of being destroyed by the Kwythellar on at least two occasions. Slowly the Duargors became more and more integrated into Silver Coast society and trade. This new attitude paid off as eventually they were able to conquer a big chunk of mountains, at the northeast of present borders, once belonging to Kwythellar, therefore connecting their borders to Markresh. Now the Duargors send troops to Markresh, when needed to





*Lamas in the mountains of Duargor*

fight the Kwythellars, and to Duur, when needed to fight back the Izondians. They also forge silversteel weapons of the utmost quality, and sell them to Duur and Markresh at cost price, and to Saak, Kresh and Viridin at a very convenient price. They do not trade with Kilmur and Izonda (and neither with Kwythellar, that doesn't trade at all), but do sell their weapons to private buyers that are not a direct threat to them. That is as far as it's possible to know: the weapon market of Danguard has strict controls, but some Duargor weapons have ended up in enemy hands during the centuries. In these cases, dwarven adventurers have done their best to retrieve them.

Duargor has also other weapons which so far no outsider has been able to steal, and which are never sold, not even to close allies. The Blacksmoke cannons are incredible weapons that effectively defend the Duargor cities against aerial threats, making Kwythellars raids very difficult here (yet they still occasionally occur). The high

mountains are also inhabited by aerial creatures and giants who have several times fought back against the Kwythellars themselves.

Duargors are slightly taller than dwarves from Brun, dress somberly and seem quite reserved and detached people with outsiders but, if one manages to become their friend, they are more fun, joyful and loyal than any friend could be. Dwarves of other continents however would find them odd in many ways: they have Oltec humans, giants, troglodytes, lupins, rakasta and other races in their nation, fully integrated into dwarven society. They follow some customs of these people, like: greeting the rising and setting sun; crying when listening to poetry; (Oltec), wild dancing, naked and painted, at the new moons; discretely sniff one another when meeting; (troglodytes), hold great fairs each season to meet, trade and marry; (giants). They do produce a distinctive type of beer, but it is nothing like the ones made by dwarves of Brun. They worship many immortals, not only Kagyar but also Valerias, Ixion, Ka, Terra, Ordana, Korotiku and many other,

and sectarian discussions are quite common in their society, as religious affiliation is more important than family or clan.

Wizards and thieves do exist in their society, the first being quite a powerful lobby, and the latter quite common as theft, providing it does not include too much violence, is considered a petty crime in Duargor society, almost a game of skills. Their history does not explain why they left Brasol and there is a serious prohibition to speak about it, a mystery that has always puzzled scholars of all western Davania.

**Ruler:** Ajirgi The Bright, cleric of Ixion, is the queen of Duargor. A council of representatives from all the other faiths advise her, much to her suffering. Almost all the existing immortals are represented in the council, no matter how small their following is in the nation, and as each faith has one delegate the work of the Council is very slow and laborious, and violent arguments are commonplace.

**Dimensions and population:** 75,000 square miles of mountains, valleys and volcanoes are the home of 700,000 inhabitants. Besides dwarves (the majority), there are Oltec humans, troglodytes, giants, fairy folks and other minor races, with an almost endless supply of dangerous monsters.

**Capital and cities:** Danguard is a mostly above ground but heavily fortified city of 75,000 inhabitants. Duargor has 4 other great cities with less than half the population of the capital. No town in the nation can have less than 1,000 inhabitants.

In addition, all towns must have a cannon to keep the Kwythellars away and enough people and silversteels to fight obsidian monsters.

**Adventure opportunities:** Duargor is the territory with an abundance of metals and precious stones, including blood obsidian. The presence of this material in Duargor often creates portals to unpleasant other worlds, from which dangerous creatures come. Also smugglers and traffickers from other nations are endlessly roaming around trying to find the obsidian, to the point that Duargor has a special military unit to deal with them and a constant demand for adventurers to stop them.

## The Wall of Duur

**Description:** During the centuries of harsher isolationism and xenophobia in Duargor, some dwarves unwilling to fit in were sent to the southwest, along the border with ferocious minotaurs and troglodytes. In times they developed a separate society and, after 900 BC, they did what Duargor saw as an unspeakable blasphemy, they welcomed an orc clan among them. Attacked by orcs to the south, dwarves to the north and Kwythellars to the east, the Duurians received some support from the goblins of Kresh, but it wasn't enough to survive. So they prayed to any immortal who would listen, and one responded to their prayers. In just one or two generations, the two races mixed, giving birth to children who had the best attributes of both races and an incredible





*Volcanic lake in Duur*

number of gifted sorcerers, wizards and priests. Almost two thousand years later, the Duurians have still survived and now are members of the Silver Alliance. This is an alliance they will need, as now that both the troglodyte clans of Javag and the orc kingdom of Mokghar have fallen into Izondian hands, they have a 500 miles long border with the dictatorship. Every other nation of the Silver Coast thinks Duur is doomed, but haven't they all thought that for almost 2,000 years?

Duurians look like shorter orcs with beards, or taller dwarves with orcish feature and dusky skin, depending on who you ask. To themselves, they look like Duurians, the best people in the world. They honour the immortal who saved them, an immortal who doesn't have a name nor images, but has temples and clerics. No one knows who this immortal might be, he or she doesn't have particular requirements for Duurians,

only that they pray to him or her, be kind to each others and forgive enemies when it's feasible to do so, and fast one day a week.

For most of their history they have been attacked daily by orcs, troglodytes, minotaurs, Izondians, Kilmurians, Kwythellars and others. They have always resisted. When possible they capture prisoners that are later exchanged or given the choice to

join Duurian society. That has created interesting consequences with nations that do not exchange prisoners, like minotaurs or Kwythellars, as the Duurians didn't kill them and the captives eventually became full Duurians, so now the nation has people from all the surrounding nations, even elves. To fight Kwythellar Darterships, the Duurians employ griffons and hippogriffs, and even several dragons that for unknown reasons decided to help them.

**Ruler:** Aveghan and Kadhj are the high priest and high priestess of the Immortal, married as tradition demands. They are in their fifties and have 6 children, Foiki the first one, a female priest herself, is already 29 years old. They are gentle people that often speak informally with foreigners, enjoying the surprise when they reveal their status.

**Dimensions and population:** Over 50,000 square miles of mountains and hills, with

more than 500,000 inhabitants consisting of Duurians and minor races, as dwarves, elves, goblins, minotaurs, troglodytes, Tanagoro humans, orcogres, orcs, giants and others.

**Capital and cities:** The capital Vamuur has around 35,000 inhabitants and is quite a militarized city, that however welcomes visitors and trade whenever possible.

**Adventure opportunities:** Duur is dotted with ancient ruins, dating back to ancient civilizations, and the priests are always looking for adventurers willing to explore them, as the nation needs all the magic and the artifacts it can find.

### The SHINING EMPIRE OF Kwythellar

**Description:** The Shining Empire was founded in 2300 BC by Kwythellar, one of the early followers of Ilsundal who had become bitter and angry after roaming in Davania had killed his beloved wife, his children and most of his family. Convinced that lesser races, and particularly humans, were a threat to the very existence of the world, he managed to persuade a sizable part of the migration that the only way to defend nature was to adopt a more aggressive approach. Ilsundal tried in vain to reason with him, and eventually was forced to leave northwestern Davania altogether to avoid a disastrous elven civil war. After centuries of aggressions, raids and magical experiments on other people,

Kwythellar is a very strong nation hated by all its neighbours.



*Kwythellar jungle*

Over the centuries some dark fairies, centaurs, turtles, crabmen and other races have willingly joined Kwythellar, but half of the population is made of simu, the name Kwythellars use for the half elves - half Oltec humans hybrids obtained long ago by magic. Simu are for all purpose slaves, but as the Kwythellars raise them as such from infants, they really love their masters, would give their lives for them and harbor no thoughts of rebellion at all. To a simu just being in the presence of a Kwythellar is such an honour and pleasure that they ask nothing more from life. Simu are indeed happy slaves, a condition that horrifies the surrounding people but which the Kwythellar consider the right way, as inferior races must be treated as such, i.e. like pets. The Kwythellars indeed do not mistreat their simu, except on rare cases, as doing so would be considered inelegant and gross. Other subject races are more independent, and usually work as specialized artisans in Kwythellar society,



but they too are raised regarding the elves as superior beings, so they have few, if any, rebellious thoughts.

Kwythellars have the utmost respect for nature, including monsters and the small dinosaurs that still inhabit their land. Elves and subject races can defend themselves from predators in a non lethal way, but simu will not, as it's an honour to be devoured by wild animals or monsters.

Kwythellar has strong naval and aerial forces that indeed coincide, as their magical vessels can sail both the waves and the winds. These Darterships<sup>10</sup> are a sight feared in all the Silver Coast, as Kwythellars

<sup>10</sup> So called because they look a bit like darters; see ["Anhinga"](#)



*The Darter bird, inspiration for the shape of Kwythellar water-air ships*

frequently raid surrounding nations to steal magical objects, kill leaders, priests and wizards and kidnap female children. The latter will then be given to subject races or to simu to bear children who will then be raised as subjects or simu.

Now they're developing a submarine force too, with the purpose of conquering local merrow and kna tribes and to attack ships of surrounding nations, a great threat for all the Silver Coast.

Kwythellars honor no immortals and have no clerics, but they have a strange caste of wizard-priests which has led outsiders to think that Kwythellar himself became an immortal. There is also a small resistance movement that follows Ordana, Terra and the elven immortals and hopes to change the nation's attitude towards its neighbours. A small sect of Atzanteotl is also trying to get a foothold in the nation. Kwythellars do not trade, at all, but through some of their subject races they traffic in blood obsidian, knowing well the adverse effects of the material. They mine and forge their own silversteel and are self sufficient for any other good.

Even if most of the nations of the Silver Coast would define the Kwythellar as the true embodiment of evil, they do not see things this way: they do not consider themselves the aggressors, they are never cruel, they are affectionate and kind between themselves, and even towards the subject races. They never raise a hand, or even their voices, with a simu. They are truly convinced that their subjects and simu are happier with them, as they indeed are. They kill cleanly in the battlefield, they do

not spy, betray or torture. They simply have the same concern and regard for non-subjects as they have for pests: it's not cruelty, sometimes lice must be eliminated. Since the Kwythellars reputation is so dire in the Silver Coast the saying "meet the Kwythellars" is a sarcastic expression for something awful happening, there are elves from Pelatan and sidhes of Virdin who have formed a group, the Apseen (seeking forgiveness) that help nations which have been attacked by Kwythellars or secretly enter the Empire to sabotage ships or retrieve kidnapped children. If discovered, they are executed as traitors.

**Ruler:** Tariman (excellent queen, empress) Ilmayai (steel flower) is beautiful and elegant, powerful in magic and highly intelligent. She is considering the stopping of all the raids to establish diplomatic relations with surrounding nations and is willing to join a great alliance against Izonda. Once the dictatorship is crippled, it will be easier to focus on the others. If they aren't willing, it could be done the other way around.

**Dimensions and population:** With a territory of 165,000 square miles, Kwythellar is the biggest nation of the Silver Coast, and it's only half of what it once was, when it included also Markresh, Kilmur and parts of northern Izonda. Its population is over 2.5 millions, including 1 million elves and 1.5 million simu, mostly of half elven descent but also several dark fairies, crabmen, turtles, centaurs, dwarves, goblins, hobgoblins and other races.

**Capital and other cities:** Tiar Thellar is a wonderful city of 150,000 inhabitants,

which unfortunately few outsiders have seen as the only way to get to its port would be to be a simu, crabmen, turtle or member or other subject races sailing a Kwythellar vessel.

**Adventure opportunities:** Outsiders do not enter Kwythellar unless they're daring spies on a vital mission, like retrieving a kidnapped child, and to survive they would have to mask as a subject race (dark fairies, turtles, crabmen, centaurs and others) or as a simu. In the latter case the difficult part will be to pronounce in the right way all the endless honorific titles that simu use when speaking with the excellent ones (the elves). Being hunted by soldiers, magic and monsters in Kwythellar is not a pleasant experience and those who were discovered and still managed to escape with their lives can be counted on a single hand, in the last millenium.

### ALLIED KINGDOM OF KILMUR

**Description:** Once part of an Oltec colony from before the Great Rain of Fire, these lands were on the verge of being occupied by reptilian races from the south when the Kwythellars "rescued" the humans. Eventually all of them became simu and, after 900 BC, Kwythellars began to also breed them with orcs. The new race proved successful, almost too successful as the Kwythellars found their new creation a bit too noisy and smelly to have around. Therefore they graciously granted them independence, i.e. they placed them on





*Sunset over a Kilmur volcano*

their southern border to take the brunt of outside aggression. Despite that, in time both Kilmur and the Kwythellar empire were pushed further to the north as Izonda expanded, conquering territory after territory until it reached the Izondian mountains.

Kilmurians have bronze skin and elven ears, but orcish frames. They imitate Kwythellars in fashion and customs, and have flying ships too, called Kiteships.<sup>11</sup> They raid for magic like the Kwythellars but do not kidnap only female children, they kidnap everyone to obtain slaves. They do not treat them too harshly but punish rebellions and fugitives cruelly. If they suffer a great defeat they are known to seek gruesome revenge

<sup>11</sup> Inspired by this [Gray-headed Kite](#)

as soon as they get the chance, massacring entire villages or setting fire to huge territories. Kilmurian raids against Izonda and the other way around are almost a daily occurrence for the two nations, but Kilmurians also raid everyone else as far as Pelatan, the Adakkian sound or the Arm of the Immortals. Fortunately, they haven't got a great number of flying ships and they aren't as skilled and powerful as the Kwythellars, so their raids are usually less common and less disruptive, but quite dangerous nevertheless.

**Ruler:** Taquen (High Speaker) Sutem is the new emperor of Kilmur as the previous one was recently killed in his palace, along with half the court, by Izondian retaliation. Sutem has since reduced raids against Izonda and is insistently asking Kwythellar

for more skyships and magical defences for his palace.

**Dimensions and population:** With more than 112,000 square miles, Kilmur is big and inhabited by 1 million Kilmurians and at least 100,000 Kwythellars that enjoy staying in the nation as it is much wilder than their homeland. A large part of the territory is indeed inhabited by monsters, centaurs, giants, dragons, fairies, troglodytes and other minor races that Kilmurians were never able to submit.

**Capital and other cities:** Kilmurlot is a pretentious city of 90.000 inhabitants, always in construction as Izondians bomb it regularly. The Kilmurians' defences are good enough to repel them, but not good enough to keep them away.

**Adventure Opportunities:** Kilmurians are known to hire foreign mercenaries for various reasons, mostly to handle the dangerous blood obsidian or to do something against Izonda. Other nations too always look for adventurers willing to go inside Kilmur to rescue slaves or search for lost artifacts. Kilmur is not as dangerous as Kwythellar, but it's not exactly a playground either.

## Free prairies of Eseri

**Description:**<sup>12</sup> Eseri is a nation of bronze skinned humans and centaurs that were unified into a single entity by the hardship of the Great Rain of Fire, and even more so by minotaurs, Kwythellars, Shirians, Izondians and Mogluurians attacks. Indeed their great unity has allowed them to survive for centuries despite being surrounded by enemies (except for Rakasi and the humans of Makal and Tikul, with whom they have always had good relations). Recently things have improved, as the Mogluurians have been contained, the Shirians are now quite weak, Izonda is, at least for the moment, at peace, and Eseri is also the only nation of the Silver Coast that Kwythellar does not raid very often. The centaur tribe living in the northeast even has a bit of trade with Kwythellar, which is a strange occurrence as the elves do not normally trade with any other peoples. Many other nations wonder why this is happening, and none like it much, as they fear the Eserians could ally with the dangerous elves. No one in Eseri however is planning such a move, largely because the seven centaur tribes and the four human clans have a common external policy only in time of crisis (normally each community rules itself).

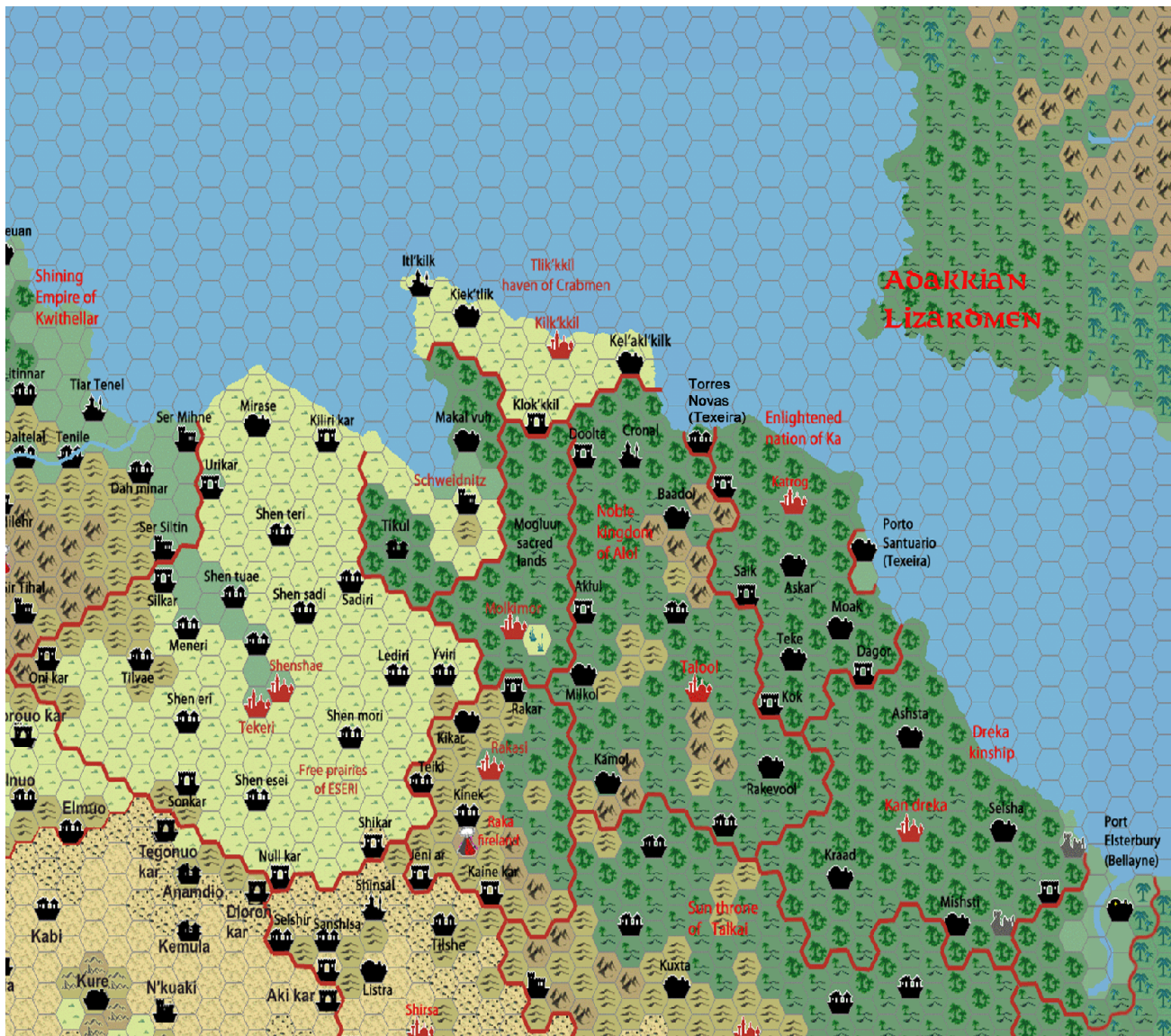
Despite being a great plain without natural defenses, Eseri has shown incredible resistance for centuries against Kwythellars, Izondians, lizardmen, minotaurs and humanoids due to the courage of its people, the capacity to unite in difficult times and

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<sup>12</sup> A first description of this nation appeared in the AC1019 Mystara Almanac, as stored on the [Vaults of Pandius](#)



# The IZONDIAN Deep



Map of the Eastern part of the Coast



*The prairies of Eseri*

the aid of a very effective air force composed mostly of pegataurs, dragons and pegasi (some with human riders).

Beside the bronze skinned humans and centaurs who are the main population of Eseri there are many other people living on the coast and on the plains, like crabmen, turtles, ocelastas, wallaras, some Carrasquitos and Hairless lupins, fairies, troglodytes and lizardmen, and even some humanoids. Usually these people are at peace with each others, but the centaurs have devised centuries ago a ritualized battle to resolve disputes, called the Shak, that normally ends without bloodshed.

**Ruler:** Tek'eseri, the King Speaker of the Prairies, a centaur warrior, is now the elected ruler of Eseri. Sis'ari, the High Priestess of the Prairies, a centaur female priest of Chiron, is the elected religious leader, with the obligation to represent all the other faiths too. Daliree, the General of the Army, is an Oltec human female, and famous adventuress.

**Dimensions and population:** Eseri has more than 125,000 square miles and a

population of 1.3 million people, of which around 600,000 are humans, 350,000 are centaurs and the rest divided between more than 10 minor races.

**Capital and other cities:** Eseri has two capitals, the human one, Tekeri, and the centaur one, Shensae, and many other important human and centaur communities. The centaur cities are quite peculiar, as centaurs do not use much furniture, or walls.

**Adventure opportunities:** All Eseri is a land of adventure with plenty of strange animals and creatures, old ruins from carnifex, Lhomarrrian, Oltec and Blackmoorian times and occasional raids from Kwythellar or Mogluur.



*Centaur*



## Oberherrschaft of Schweidnitz, OR the Land of Makal and Tikul

**Description:**<sup>13</sup> Once this land was part of the Oltec colony from before the Great Rain of Fire, and this is the last corner where the Oltec culture has remained similar to the original one, while in the surrounding nations it was changed much by the contact with other people. The original Oltec colony of Tikal from before the Great Rain of Fire in fact was much larger than the modern day area of Makal and Tikul, as it included most of the eastern Silver Coast.

The descendants of the Oltecs however aren't the only people living here, as there are several ocelasta clans, crabmen and turtles and the jungle is rumored to be inhabited also by araneas, drakes, troglodytes, some humanoid clans, jakars and werejaguars.

In recent years Mogluur attacks have threatened the very existence of this land, which was saved the first time in 985 AC by recently arrived Heldannic colonists and the second time in 1019 AC, when the colonists returned after being almost destroyed by Mogluurians in 992 AC. In the 27 years between the departure and the return of the Heldannic knights (992-1019 AC) the Oltec humans and other native people fought an endless guerrilla war to survive Mogluurian advances. Mogluur clans had indeed effectively occupied the central part of the nation, separating Makal and Tikul territories. The two cities managed to survive only because the first one was

heavily aided by the crabmen of Tlik'kkil and the second one by the Eserians.

The Oltecs of Makal, followers of Ixion, are the more militaristic and once dominated over Tikul, where many are followers of Ordana. The recent, renewed alliance with the Heldannic knights has saved them from Mogluur, but native shamans are starting to dislike Heldannic proselytism.



*Oltec wall paintings in Makal*

**Ruler:** Eric Folgen, Heldannic leader from 977 to 992 AC, Wilhelm Folgen, the Castellan, his son, from 1019 AC onward, Harald Brunnen, General of the Knights, Atokul, the Tikul Chief, Tijala, the Tikul Shaman, Mitukal, the Makal Chief, Kiaka, the Makal Shaman.

**Dimensions and population:** With 23,000 square miles, this nation isn't very big and has a total population of about 250,000 people. The Heldanners for now are just slightly more than a thousand, but hundreds more are expected to arrive in Davania soon. The Oltecs are about 200,000, the rest of inhabitants made of the other races that live in the land.

<sup>13</sup> This nation also was included in the AC1019 Mystara Almanac at the [Vaults of Pandius](#)

**Capital and other cities:** Schweidnitz is a strong castle and has around 5,000 Heldann and native inhabitants. Makal has almost 10,000 inhabitants, while Tikul has slightly more than 5,000. The other communities of the nation are small, even if Mogluur raids have forced them to have at least 500 inhabitants each.

**Adventure opportunities:** Wilhelm Folgen has few people to spare so he's always searching for adventurers willing to explore the territory, forge new alliances, search for lost cities and treasure or spy on Mogluur and other possible enemies. The list of things to do for a new colony is so long that he could keep adventurers busy for years!

## Tlik'kill, the Haven of Crabmen

**Description:**<sup>14</sup> Inhabited by crabmen since times so ancient that no one can remember them, Tlik'kill is the only place that is still completely theirs, even if this race is numerous in several other nations of the Silver Coast (especially in Jkl'ok where they are almost a third of the population). Crabmen lands are quite strange for many humanoids and even for reptilians: the architecture, customs, behaviour, politics and society, yet most nations of the Silver Coast agree that crabmen are one of the more agreeable and friendly races of the region. They have always tried to maintain

<sup>14</sup> Also this nation was already include in the AC1019 Mystara Almanac at the [Vaults of Pandius](#)

good relations with all of their neighbours, but in certain cases that has proven to be impossible, like with Mogluur and Kwythellar. The half-orcs of Mogluur have been defeated countless times by the crabmen, yet they never learn and try to raid crabmen lands every season or so. The same goes for Kwythellars: crabmen can attack enemy ships from under the sea and their sturdy "shellships" are tough nuts to crack, yet elven raids are not uncommon, especially at sea. Kwythellar raids on land are much more uncommon as crabmen have strange giant catapults that are quite effective in defending their communities, which are also very well concealed from above and are located partially underground. It must also be noted that the crabmen land is not on land only, as they are amphibious creatures and so an unknown, but supposedly quite large, part of the shallow sea in front of the nation is inhabited by them.

Other races inhabit this land beside crabmen, including dragons, centaurs, turtles, wallaras, shark-kins, several reptilian races that inhabit the central lands of the nation, scorpionfolks, fairies, ocelastas, jakarundi, jakar and others. Crabmen have good relations with almost all of them, but not all of them are friendly with trespassers that aren't crabmen.

**Rulers:** Ekli'tke (She of the Magic), Lirk'kil (He of the Immortals), Kai'klie (She of the Shadows), and Mik'hkol (He of the Sword) are the four members of the Council that rules Tlik'kill.

**Dimensions and population:** No one knows for certain, but many surrounding nations suspect that the true extension of Tlik'kill is at least three times the 20,000



square miles of emerged lands, and the real crabmen population is therefore something like 600,000 people or more, with at least 50,000 inhabitants of other races in the dry lands and probably many more below the waves.

**Capital and other cities:** Kilk'kkil, with a population of about 25,000 crabmen, is the official capital of the nation. There are at least three other crabmen cities with around 20,000 inhabitants each.

**Adventure Opportunities:** Beside the fact that Tlikk'kkill is a land as exotic as you can find in Mystara it's also a gateway to the nations below the waves that dot the Adakkian sound and the Izondian deep, and a trade hub between air breathing and water breathing people. Crabmen also know the location of many underwater ruins and lost cities.



*Oltec temple in the jungle*

## SACRED LANDS OF MOGLUUR

**Description:**<sup>15</sup> Mogluur is such an unpleasant place that it keeps people away, even if no one knows exactly why. Even Kwythellars and Kilmurians almost never raid here, despite the fact that the local half-orcs haven't much of an aerial defence, except for their shamans' powers. Mogluur is a dark, corrupted jungle inhabited by corrupted people, claimed by a tainted power that no one understands but that everyone fears.<sup>16</sup> The few people that enters Mogluur do not wish to do so a second time, and go to great lengths to avoid it. The numerous generals of surrounding nations that, during centuries, decided to end the Mogluur threat once and for all entering the jungle in force, disappeared into it along with all of their troops.

Present days Mogluur was founded around 880 BC by a scattered clan of orcs that lizardmen armies had almost destroyed. They found a temple in the jungle, where IT spoke to them and promised power and triumph over their enemies. They listened and obeyed, and have been loyal servants ever since. With time they mixed with human captives taken from Alol, Rakasi, Makal and Tikul, no one knows why, and now they are a strong race of half-orcs.

Earlier Mogluur was inhabited by corrupted troglodytes, destroyed around 920 BC by an alliance of Makal, Tikul, Alol, Rakasi and

<sup>15</sup> This land was already described by me in the Mystara Almanac AC 1019 several years ago, as seen at the [Vaults of Pandius](#), but this description adds to the original one.

<sup>16</sup> If you dare, see "[Insanity, Horror, and the Outer Beings in Mystara](#)"

Tlik'kkil. Unfortunately the jungle was not purified of its evil, which therefore returned just a few decades later, finding new servants. Troglodytes still live among the half-orcs in the jungle and below it, and are possibly even more dangerous and corrupted than the half-orcs. The latter seem to revere the troglodytes, supplying them with goods and captives. The half-orcs raid quite constantly the four nations that surround them to take captives that are soon sacrificed to their unholy immortals, or whatever it is they worship.

Since Rakasi, Alol and Tlik'kkil have created quite an effective surveillance at their borders, Makal and Tikul had become their favorite target and were almost destroyed, until the recent arrival<sup>17</sup> of the Heldannic Knights, that for now have repelled the half orcs to their old borders.

**Ruler:** Mor'Uan, The Ancient Priestess, is the one who sacrifices captives to IT in Molkimor. Urd'mog, Great Chief and Chief of Mokloor Tribe, is the actual warrior chief elected to lead all Mogluurians in battle. Four more tribes exist, each with its own chief.

**Dimensions and population:** With almost 25,000 square miles, Mogluur population probably exceeds 250,000, split between half orcs and a small population of troglodytes. It's possible that other twisted and corrupted intelligent beings live in the

<sup>17</sup> The Knights arrived in 977 AC and defeated Mogluurians in 985 AC, holding effectively against them until 992, when they were overwhelmed and fled the colony. They returned in 1019 AC, driving away Mogluurians again, see [this article](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

jungle too, beside the abundance of monsters, poisonous snakes, hydras and carnivorous plants.

**Capital and other cities:** Malkimor is the informal capital of the nation, where the great temple and the market are, where most prisoners are sacrificed in lavish ceremonies and where the tribes gather when needed. There are six other big towns, hidden in the jungle, one of which is comprised of the ancient ruins of a carnivex city called Koarul.

**Adventure opportunities:** Staying alive is a real adventure in Mogluur. Some are foolish enough to willingly enter this land, maybe because they are stupid, or maybe because they're trying to rescue a captive. In the first case they'll die, in the second one it will probably be too late for the captive, and they'll die too.

## Noble Kingdom of Alol

**Description:** Alol, also spelt as Aloor, is one of the few human nations of the Silver Coast. Its inhabitants are mostly descended from two different human colonies from the Great Rain of Fire, the Oltec colony of Tikal and the blackmoorian colony of Alor. After the cataclysm the two people merged and now the typical Alol citizen has tanned skin, slightly lighter than the Oltecs of Makal and Tikul. Nobility is an important feature of Alol society, but the original Blackmoorian concept merged with the Oltec one, and the nobles rather than rich and privileged are more a class of people dedicated to the service of the community; this includes



warriors, wizards, priests and other specialized people that can be useful to the kingdom in any way, as ship captains, daring merchants or excellent artisans. Nobility is therefore bestowed by merit by the Queen, it therefore isn't hereditary and can be revoked if one proves to be unworthy. A council of nobles advises the queen in all matters of government. The title of Queen is hereditary but as it's common that the best non-hereditary nobles marry into the royal family, even the latter is hardly a monolithic caste.

Alol has flying ships like Kwythellar, and the aerial duels between the two nations have become the stuff of legends, as the elves seem to have a particular hatred against Alol and have often targeted it with their raids. Alol maintains good relations with all of its neighbours except for Mogluur, whose raids have always been a thorn in its left side. There is a friendly rivalry with Rakasi as Alol wizards are quite specialized in air magic, but that has never meant much more than some public contests. In the surrounding nations there are rumors that Alol is often visited by foreign looking wizards, strange skyships, odd looking beings and there are also some Alolian wizards wielding unknown and mysterious magic.<sup>18</sup>

Other people inhabit the jungles of Alol, as rakasta, humanoids, araneas, fairies, troglodytes, lizardmen, frogfolks and even giants, some of them are on peaceful terms with the humans, some just want to be left alone, and some are occasionally belligerent.

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<sup>18</sup> The DM can use these rumors to introduce Alpathian, Spelljammer, Psionic and/or Sky Creatures contacts as he or she prefers.

**Ruler:** Queen Adera, a wizard of renown, is the ruler of Alol. She is in her sixties and has ruled for more than forty years, has a husband, the prince consort, and 4 children, of which 1 male and two females have distinguished themselves in the air fleet.

**Dimension and population:** With 80,000 square miles and at least 900,000 inhabitants, Alol isn't a small nation and, despite being mostly covered by the jungle, has an efficient system of internal roads.

**Capital and other cities:** Talool, with 65,000 inhabitants, is the magnificent capital and the biggest city of the nation. Cronal in the north, with almost 50,000 inhabitants, comes next. There are four other major cities with 20-30,000 inhabitants each. A Texeiran colony, Torres Novas, was built on the northern coast in 1007 AC in exchange for a fair share of the trade.

**Adventure opportunities:** Only some time after the Great Rain of Fire did the Alolians realize that the Blackmoorian devices were poisonous, and so they buried them all deep under the earth. Now some nobles have discovered a path to these ancient hideouts and, as no one now remembers the danger, an expedition will be soon sent there.

## ENLIGHTENED NATION OF KA

**Description:** An ancient and sophisticated nation of troglodytes that were once slaves of the Carnifex Empire, Ka later included in its population Oltec humans, turtles, crabmen, wallaras, ocelastas, jakar, jakarundi, frogfolks, lizardmen and orcs. Humans and orcs eventually merged into a single population and are now the main bulk of the peasants and laborers of the nation. For centuries only troglodytes could become nobility in the realm, but in the last two centuries the attitude of the ruling elite has changed as they realized they needed the friendship of surrounding nations to survive. Raids from Kwythellars and lizardmen from the other shore of the Adakkian sound had in fact become so frequent as to endanger the survival of Ka. Now the nation has humans and other races among its nobility, albeit just a few, and a quite effective navy to defend itself from lizardmen and pirate raids, and an aerial force mounted on pteranodon to defend itself against the Kwythellars and Kilmurians.

The wars with Alol and Dreka are now almost forgotten in the past, even if there are still fortresses along the borders. Ka even granted a large tract of their coast to



*Stone troglodyte head on a temple in Ka*

Texeirans, so they could establish the colony of Porto Santuario, a choice they haven't regretted so far as the

Texeirans have helped much in fighting pirates and lizardmen.

As in its history Ka has always strived to be "more civilized" than the others, the Great Library of Scrolls in Katrog is indeed one of the more interesting cultural centers in all the Silver Coast, drawing scholars, priests and wizards from as far as Pelatan and eastern Davania.

**Ruler:** High Sceptre Bearer (Emperor) Va'lish'aken'tiaj, an aged troglodyte and powerful wizard, is the ruler of Ka. He is proud of the safety he has given to his nation and is ready to leave the throne to his niece, Heiwa'ekris a young priestess of Ka, as his son died fighting Kwythellars years ago.

**Dimension and population:** Over 35,000 square miles and a population of about 450,000, of which over 400,000 are troglodytes and the rest are of other races.

**Capital and other cities:** Katrog is the capital of the kingdom, a refined city of 30,000 inhabitants. Three other cities in the south have from 10,000 to 20,000 inhabitants each. Porto Santuario has 20,000 inhabitants including the city and its outskirts, more than half of them troglodytes and other Ka natives.

**Adventure opportunities :** Enterprising Texeiran merchants have discovered some ruins in the jungle and are exploring them. The only problem is that they have forgotten to ask permission of Ka's government, and now the Most Wise (a council of wizards and priests that advise the king) are concerned that Texeirans could unearth ancient and dangerous secrets of the Evil Ones, the cruel masters that in the remote past had enslaved the Kaians.



## Rakasi fireland

**Description:** This nation was created in ancient times by an alliance of fire creatures, jakarundi and jakar rakasta. In time, some ocelasta, pardasta and lynxman came too, and other people or creatures who were somehow connected with fire or fire immortals, so the nation now has a population of several rakasta breeds with fire genasi bloodlines and other fire genasi races, plus fire giants, dragons, efreet, fire elementals, flame salamanders and fire drakes. Obviously Rathanos, Zugzul, Ixion, Firelord and other energy immortals are the ones most worshipped here. Due to its particular nature as a center of learning and preservation of fire races, Rakasi has always tried to maintain peaceful relations with all, and so has a tenuous alliance with both Eseri and Talkai. When Shir was an aggressive empire in the past, it tried several times to conquer Rakasi, but now the Rakasians supply Shir with fire magic almost free of charge because, even if they haven't



*Mural depicting a jakar rakasta*

got particularly bad relations with Izonda, they still do not want to have the powerful dictatorship right at their doorstep. Rakasi has good relations with Alol too. The orcs of Mogluur, while not a really dangerous threat, are however a constant annoyance at the northern border.

The nation has almost never had to use it, but it does have, just in case, a wonderful aerial defence force made of fire dragons and phoenixes.

**Ruler:** Alvafyrsha (great fire keeper) Yew'maye is a fire touched Oltec woman in her forties, a priest of Rathanos, and one of the two rulers of Rakasi. The other is the great wizard Ja'kenafyr, a quite old jakar of great power and wisdom, who has extensively travelled the elemental planes.

**Dimensions and population:** With 33,000 square miles, Rakasi isn't big but it has stood for centuries, maybe more, as a centre for fire creatures and fire magic which the interested immortals want to protect at any cost. It has a population of about 400,000 inhabitants, mostly rakasta and fire creatures, but with many others fire touched races.

**Capital and other cities:** Rakasi is a city of 35,000 inhabitants and is famous for its particular products (all kind of objects made in the plane of fire) and the Academy of Fire Magic, that draws wizards from as far as the Yezhamenid empire in Brun, Izonda, Nivall and Pelatan, the Milenian cities of eastern Davania, and even Kwythellar. For a fee or an interesting magical object, the fire mages accept all, and this attitude has spared Rakasi for centuries from Kwythellar and Izondians raids.

**Adventure Opportunities:** Rakasi obviously has access to the elemental plane of Fire, and daring adventurers can always find employment to deliver something there or bring something back here, if they can deal with the many factions and creatures of the plane.

## Dreka kinship

**Description:** This nation is mainly inhabited by jakar, jakarundi and black pardasta rakasta, who according to their sources have been here since the beginning of the world. Probably the fairies, the small insectoid people and the troglodytes that inhabit the same jungle are the true ancient inhabitants, but the different races of Dreka get along quite well. Among them there are even some halflings and elves, who came from the south centuries ago. The biggest threats to Dreka are outside the nation, the usual Kwythellar raids, several Adakkian pirates, lizardmen raiders from the other shore of the Sound and, more recently, the Bellaynish rakasta of Port Elsterbury. Founded in 927 AC with Dreka permission, the colony began soon to attract the more shady Bellaynish, who began to think that the Drekans were savages who should be civilized by them. Sporadic fights broke out and turned into a full war, two Drekan cities were burned, Drekans were enslaved and now the relations could not be worse. The Bellaynish employ orcs and human mercenaries from the eastern lands of Emesi to raid the Drekans, who have already besieged the city twice and are now preparing a third full assault against Elsterbury to conquer the city once and for all.

As in Ka, Drekans rely on flying reptiles similar to pteranodons as their air force, but that hardly gives them an edge against Bellaynish rakasta, who somehow have obtained the aid of some strange looking rakasta on flying tigers.<sup>19</sup>

In Dreka society jakarundis are usually, but not always, wizards, priests, rulers, artisans and traders, while jakars are warriors, miners and laborers, while black pardasta and other races are hunters, farmers, sailors and fishermen.

Except for Port Elsterbury, Dreka has good relations with the other bordering nations.

**Ruler:** Sintae, a jakarundi priest, is the elected leader (for five years) of Dreka. As he come from one of the cities the Bellaynish destroyed, his hatred for the invaders could not be greater, going as far as persecuting the more peaceful party that would try to have a settlement with the Bellaynish.

**Dimensions and population:** With over 60,000 square miles, Dreka has a population around 700,000 people and had an even larger territory before the Bellaynish stole it.

**Capital and other cities:** Kan Dreka, a city of 45,000 inhabitants, is the capital of the kinship, where all young rakasta are sent to learn and often to find their mate. Dreka has four other big cities. It had six but two were destroyed by the Bellaynish and, while the Drekans retook them, they haven't been rebuilt yet due to Bellaynish harassment.

<sup>19</sup> These would be Myoshimans, see ["The Moons"](#) at the Vaults of Pandius The DM may decide that Port Elsterbury, effectively abandoned by Bellayne, has now been occupied by Myoshima.



**Adventure opportunities:** The south frontier to Port Elsterbury is a wild land that Bellaynish have filled with monsters and Emesian mercenaries, so the Drekan always need willing adventurers to contain such raids.

## The Lands Beyond

South of Eseri and Rakasi there is the **Exalted Land of Shir**, a reptilians nation dominated by lizardmen that has been in the past one of the greatest empires of the region, but now is on the verge of being destroyed and occupied by powerful Izonda, and still stands only because bordering nations aid it in any way they can.

South of Rakasi, Alol and Dreka there is the **Sun Throne of Talkai**, an Ixion theocracy inhabited by humans, giants and sollux.

The **Adakkian Sound** is dotted by powerful city states and savage coast colonies.

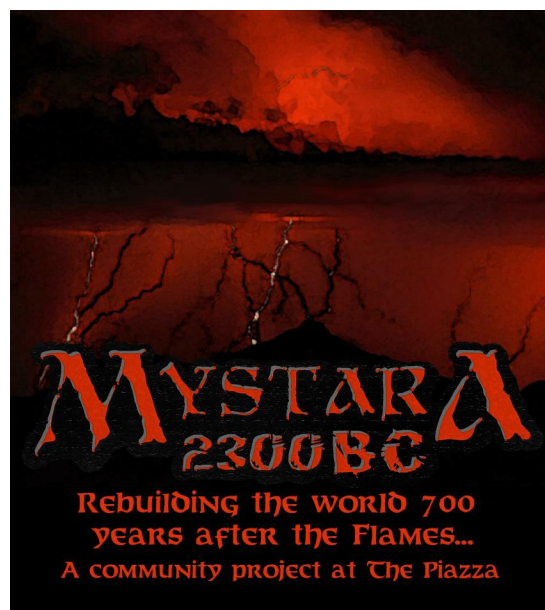
In the west lies the fabulous lands of **Arica** and the **Golden Realm of Pelatan**.

But mostly in the south there is the fearsome **Dictatorship of Izonda**, which has always been expanding in the last two thousand years, and is eager to reach the Silver Coast.



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*THE HISTORY OF*  
**Ierendi** and **Minrothad**

**Part Three: *The Age of Pirate Kings and  
the Birth of the Minrothad Guilds***

by Simone Neri (Zendrolion)

In the two previous issues of "Threshold" we have delved into the most ancient history of the archipelagos known as Ierendi and Minrothad, in the northern Sea of Dread. We have learned about the islands' first inhabitants, ancient civilizations, and native cultures, following their history until well after the dawn of the age spawned by the coronation of the first Emperor of Thyatis, when both archipelagos fell under the control of the Thyatian Empire, and up to the 6<sup>th</sup> century AC, when they managed - albeit in different ways - to acquire their own independence as sovereign nations. In this third installment of "The History of Ierendi and Minrothad" we will learn about the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries AC, which saw the beginnings and development of the Kingdom of Ierendi, and the formation of the Minrothad Guilds.



*Ierendi city south beach*

**THE SEVENTH AND  
EIGHTH CENTURIES**

The 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries were a time of consolidation and internal transformation for the Colony Islands' trading combine, and for the newly-created Kingdom of Ierendi. Both areas experimented with a change of political structure or a reshuffling of social classes to power; in the Ierendian case amidst serious internal turmoil and in both cases with results which produced increased internal stability.

With the Ierendian rebellion and internal upheaval in the Five Shires, Thyatian political and trading power - despite various failed efforts to reestablish it - waned from this part of the Known World, this allowed the rise of the two new trading and maritime-oriented powers of Minrothad and Ierendi, which imposed themselves over competitors both old and new - and each other. Their rivalry, from this age onward, will dominate trade and international relations in the Sea of Dread for the time to come.



## The Ierendi Islands during the Age of the Pirate Kings

The birth of the Kingdom of Ierendi under the rule of Mad Creeg marks in the Ierendian history the beginning of the so-called "Age of the Pirate Kings" (AC 602-735). In this age Ierendi was ruled by kings who were directly descended from the kingdom's founder, the former pirate Mad Creeg; they also continued the tradition of their ancestor by sponsoring piratical activities and even becoming pirates themselves on occasion. These kings, ruling from Ierendi town, held theoretically absolute power, but were actually advised by a number of the most influential and powerful pirate captains, plantation owners, and financial stakeholders. Kings have always needed to satisfy and take into account their interests because of the weak power of the crown which depended on their support. After a few decades, it became evident that Ierendi was a kingdom in name only, as the country was de facto ruled as an oligarchy.

During this time the kingdom evolved from an anarchic, barely-controlled island domain, considered a hostile haven for criminals and cast-offs by other countries, to a more stable state with a growing bureaucracy, a reputation for sea fighting prowess, and as a more-or-less reliable trade partner. Only the human government of Minrothad recognized Mad Creeg's title and kingdom as early as AC 603. During the initial stages of its existence, the kingdom experienced various attempts by mainland powers - the Thyatian Empire and the Five Shires - to bring it under their influence again. Unexpectedly, Ierendi's miscellaneous ruling class managed to

humble the ambitions of those foreign powers and to bring an independent Ierendi into the modern age.

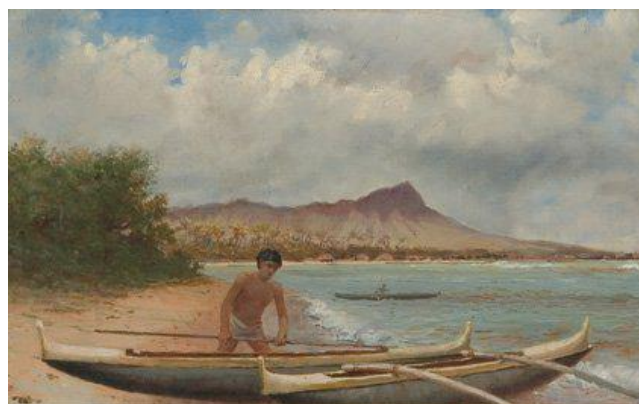
From an economic and social point of view, the independence did not alter the structure of the archipelago that much. Most plantation- and mine-owners of Thyatian origin who had become rich through exploitation of convict labor fled to Thyatis during the rebellion; their lands and properties went in the hands of the allies of Mad Creeg and the rebellion leaders who had helped the former pirate and supported his rise to kingship. Thus a new landowner generation, mostly made up of former prisoners, was born.

Pirates had helped the success of the rebellion, and many others, flocked in great number to the newly-born kingdom during the reign of Mad Creeg; most of them continued to practice piracy - sometimes even against their compatriots' ships - but some started to implement their piracy profits with regular trade activities.

The shipbuilding facilities which had produced so many ships for the Thyatian navy in the last years slowly fell into disuse, after an attempt by Mad Creeg to keep them working. The lack of Thyatian shipwrights and the common view of the facilities as symbols of Thyatian oppression made their activity decrease, and they reverted to the status of small shipyards, mostly manned by halflings, as they had been in the first years of their existence.

It's worth noting that, contrary to what one may think, the Kingdom of Ierendi continued to use slave labor. Mad Creeg had freed all the prisoners and convicts kept in the islands, and had formally declared illegal

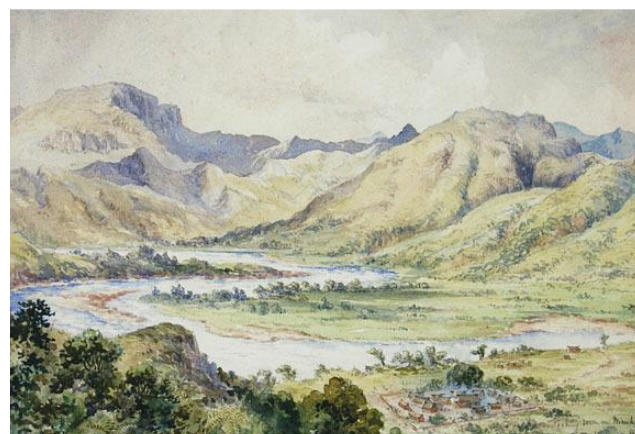
the enslavement of the archipelago's natives and the keeping of anyone as a servant against the latter's will. But the real situation was very different. Work on plantations was still done by slaves, captured from nearby vulnerable coastal areas like those of the Atruaghin Lands, the Barren Plain or the Serpent Peninsula. Often pirates brought slaves bought from Thyatian markets to the islands, and sold them to plantation owners - while the most cruel and daring pirates even raided the most isolated reaches of Ierendi Islands' own coasts to capture Makai and sell them to landowners with properties far away from the capital. As slave labor was not enough, plantation owners began to hire Makai labor, binding them with disadvantageous contracts, paying them in kind, and thus submitting them to a sort of indentured servitude.



*Makai fisherman*

Still, during the new regime, the Makai usually fared better than earlier; slavery and pirate raids still troubled them sometimes, but not anywhere near the way they had done in the previous centuries. As long as a Makai lived within his or her clan or tribe, things went on more or less well: he needed not fear to be dispossessed by the Thyatians

and he lived in a realm whose laws allowed him to mostly do as he pleased. If a Makai - as many did after the rebellion - went to search employment in a plantation or in one of the growing towns, his or her life could suddenly experiment an unpleasing turn, as Makai both in the plantations and in the urban communities ended up doing the most humiliating, wearing, and poorly-paid tasks. So, in those first centuries of the Kingdom of Ierendi, the Makai continued to be perceived as backward, second-class subjects by other Ierendian inhabitants. This unavoidably sparked some conflicts between "settlers" and Makai.



*Makai village on the interior of Ierendi Island*

As for the other minority, the halflings, they became one of the most economically active factions of the new kingdom, pursuing trade, piracy, crafting, and even becoming landowners. Most of the halflings who felt some degree of affection to the Shires had left on the eve of Thyatian conquest or immediately afterwards. Those who had stayed were mostly independent-minded halflings (and often former criminals in the Shires) who had no wish to fall again under the rule of the Five Shires, so they



supported and favored the development of an independent Kingdom of Ierendi, even when this risked to bring the realm into conflict with the Hin motherland.

### The Reign of Mad Creeg

Mad Creeg's long reign (AC 602-637) was a time of consolidation for his newly-born kingdom. The intelligence and charisma of the former rebellion leader helped to mediate between the various factions - pirate captains, landowners, Makai tribes, merchants, halfling clans, and so on - which threatened to rip the country apart without the immediate external threat of the Thyatian Empire. Many of the leaders of the various factions, in fact, were bound to Mad Creeg one way or another due to events during the rebellion; most of them were not willing to go against him, and these individuals formed an effective power block which helped to keep united such a heterogeneous country as Ierendi.

Nevertheless, the king had also to resort to harsher ways when his mediation skills and sheer persuasion or blackmail did not work. In a couple of cases Mad Creeg showed no mercy toward his supposed friends or allies when they turned against him. This happened in AC 607 with the execution of Ortwin Silverhook, his former fellow prisoner and mate during their days as pirates, who had ignored the king's order to avoid attacks against the Minrothaddan lands; Also in AC 621, when the Makaka and Aoli tribes of Makai rebelled against the way their kinsmen were treated in the kingdom, the unrest was quelled violently.

In international relations, Mad Creeg had to face the wish of the Five Shires to win their

former cast-off colonies back for themselves. Many halflings who had contributed to the improvement of these colonies now lived in the Shires, and even if the new regime which had taken power after the High Sheriff's ousting was a more liberal one, it nevertheless considered those colonies as rightful Hin possessions. Mad Creeg had no intention of giving those settlements back - just because this would have meant falling under the influence of the Five Shires - and rejected all offers from the Shires aimed at buying them back. He also felt strong thanks to the support of most Ierendian Hins, mostly former criminals and cast-offs much more inclined to live under a freeway realm such as Mad Creeg's Ierendi than under the Shires. On the other hand, the Five Shires refused to recognize Creeg's royal title unless the former halfling colonies were given back to the Hins.

After some years of failed diplomatic negotiations, the Shires resorted to force to win back the colonies, and war was declared in AC 606. Cleverly, Mad Creeg negotiated the financial support of the humans of Trader's Isle in exchange for the suspension of pirate activity in their waters and the allowance to pass undisturbed through the archipelago toward western markets. The war lasted a couple of years until AC 608, and was fought mostly between the two nations' pirates; land actions were limited to the brief Hin occupation of Ierendi town (AC 607), to the Hin invasion of Fletcher Island and to the subsequent Battle of Natula which liberated it (AC 606). On the other hand, sea raids on coastal communities were plentiful, in particular on the Shire Coast. The Five Shires' government, which had hoped for an uprising of Ierendi's halfling population in

its favor, found itself fighting a war which was unpopular at home (many Shires' halflings felt sympathies for the Ierendian peoples who had fought the Thyatians) and its difficulties increased when it had to face an internal uprising of the landowners faction who wanted to restore the previous regime in the Shires. In AC 608 the Shires agreed to a treaty which left Ierendi in possession of the colonies in exchange for a monetary compensation to be paid during the next twenty years. Also, the Shires had to recognize the Kingdom of Ierendi as a sovereign nation. Nevertheless, relations between the Shires and Ierendi continued to be tense during the reign of Mad Creeg, and clashes between the two nations' pirates continued at sea for the time being.

Another very important event happened during the reign of Mad Creeg, that was the settlement of a group of Alphatian wizards on Honor Island. In AC 629, a group of sorcerers fleeing from the Alphatian Empire<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> According to GAZ4 they were "refugees from an Alphatian subject nation southeast of the Isle of Dawn"; this means that they might have come from one of the Alatian Islands. Possibly they were a losing faction during one of Alphatia's internal squabbles between magic-users; given their aptitude for fire magics, and their Common Alphatian ancestry (their skin tone is described in GAZ4 as "deep, bronzed tan"), they might



*View of Makai river in Ierendi island*

came to Ierendi and asked the king permission to settle an uninhabited island dominated by an active volcano which were the remains of the ancient Kikianu Caldera's cone; only a few goblin clans roamed that barren rocky isle in the middle of the archipelago. Mad Creeg struck a deal with these mages, allowing them to settle what would become Honor Island in exchange to their help in defending the archipelago from outside attacks; Creeg also consented to issue a prohibition for anyone else to land on the island without the mages' permission. Thus the mages settled Honor Island, ruthlessly enslaved the goblins, built their port of Filtot and soon earned a reputation of absolute secrecy and mystery, executing and killing anyone violating their

even be somehow linked with the Followers of Fire or the Flaems. Note also that their choice to settle Honor Island was due to the fact that they already knew of the existence of a gate to the Plane of Fire there.



privacy. No one, not even the king, ever knew what the sorcerers were doing on the island, nor why they wished to settle on that undesirable island, but the crown was intrigued by the magic items the Alphatian mages brought as gifts. In the course of the years, the secretive wizards of Honor Island became the subject of local rumors, which began to speculate about what kind of horrible experiments and forbidden rituals were taking place in their inaccessible haven.

### The Matringle Dynasty Begins

Mad Creeg led a wild private life, enjoying the company of a lot of concubines and at least three of them for a certain time could be considered his “wives”, even if he did never formally marry. The first of them, a Makai girl named Kaikala, had given birth to a son called Black Toes (*Manabiwa* in Makai tongue) in AC 609. Creeg reveled in the infighting caused by the presence of multiple concubines and children, and enjoyed the way all of them struggled to get his favor. Around AC 630, however, realizing the kingdom needed an able leadership after his demise, he chose to raise Black Toes as his successor on the throne; in the following years, besides teaching Black Toes the ways of ruling, Mad Creeg ensured that the most influential peoples of Ierendi would transfer their fealty from him to his successor once he himself would have passed away.

Mad Creeg ultimately died in AC 637 and Black Toes was hailed as the second King of Ierendi, at the age of 28. The new king was quite learned, if compared to the rest of Ierendi’s ruling elite, and had a vision of turning the ragtag realm of former criminals born after the rebellion into a modern

nation governed by the rule of law. He was also a smart and practical man, however, and realized that trying to force such a change on his subjects would only led to growing tensions, so during his reign he enacted small and gradual reforms with the aim of favoring and benefiting the most modern elements of the Ierendian society, such as honest merchants or landowners who treated the Makai with respect, over pirates and exploiters.



*Old Ierendian depiction of the Battle of Honor*

To set a first example of civilized behavior to his subjects, Black Toes decided to formally marry. He chose a native woman of the Flaem Highlands, far to the north, called Kerhy Matringle. Historians speculate that his choice of Kerhy over other women belonging to influential Ierendian families was influenced by the sorcerers of Honor Island and has something to do with the help they lended to Black Toes later on.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Further speculation about this link can be found in *Ierendian Government and Aristocracy* by G. Agosta, in “Threshold” issue no. 3, pages 52-53.



*Portrait of King Black Toes*

Black Toes had nevertheless to face opposition from a couple of his siblings who were not willing to see him bypass their right to sit on Ierendi's throne. Despite Mad Creeg's best efforts there were factions still interested in setting their own puppet king on the throne. The so-called War of the Siblings (AC 637-639) raged in the archipelago for a couple of years; Thyatian money was behind one faction, while another was directly aided by the Five Shires (to whom cession of half of the former colonies had been offered). Black Toes, however, was able to keep the fealty of the native Makai (thanks to the efforts of his mother), and to get support from the Minrothaddans of Trader's Isle and, most importantly, from the Alphatian wizards of Honor Island. In AC 639, after the defeat of the Five Shires' navy in the Battle of Seagull Reefs, he was victorious over the other factions, and again in full control of the kingdom. Internal unrest in the Shires also

brought to power a faction which favoured an alliance with the Kingdom of Ierendi, so enmity between the two nations ceased after the War of the Sibling and the Shires never again contested Ierendian sovereignty over the old cast-off colonies.

After the war, a grand crowning ceremony took place in Ierendi in AC 639, in which Black Toes wore the crown of Ierendi together with his wife, whose surname he took as his own, thus setting the start of the Matringle dynasty.<sup>3</sup>

As soon as peace was regained, the king began to introduce in his realm what his father had not deemed necessary or had judged untimely for his time: formal institutions and a set of realm-wide laws. His first step toward this goal was to transform the loose assembly of relatives, cronies, allies, and influential individuals who periodically advised the king into a formal council of individuals representing the most important interests in the country or the king's most valuable and expert advisors. Thus in AC 642 the Council of Lords was born. During Black Toes' reign the Council was still very much formed by trusted henchmen and faithful captains of the king, but gradually it became more and more the place where the most important families of Ierendi limited and corrected, when necessary, the crown's policies.

<sup>3</sup> This "second crowning" has been devised to solve a discrepancy found in GAZ4. On page 4 it is said that "Three years after Black Toes assumed the throne [AC 637, that is at the death of Mad Creeg], he established the Council of Lords", but in the timeline on page 5 the Council is established only in AC 642, thus five years after Black Toes' ascension. The "second crowning" inserted here happens in AC 639, so it somewhat saves both of GAZ4's sentences.



This reform process was halted by one of the most dangerous challenges the Kingdom of Ierendi had faced in its history. After the victory of Black Toes in the Siblings' War, Thyatis - which still did not recognize the kingdom as a sovereign nation - had not abandoned hopes to bring Ierendi back under imperial rule, especially after the ascension of a new, young, and aggressive emperor to the Thyatian throne in AC 643. The empire chose not to renew the truce which was in place since the end of the rebellion in AC 602, and hastily prepared a naval expedition to reconquer the archipelago. Minrothaddan money again helped Ierendi to field a sizeable fleet, while the Shires allowed "volunteer" captains (i.e. pirates paid by the Shires' treasury) to join the battle against Thyatis. However, unknown to the Thyatians, Black Toes could count on a strong ally: the wizards of Honor Island. The mages were true to their vow to help defending Ierendi against foreign powers, and fielded their own war fleet on the side of Black Toes. The Thyatian expedition, which had been hastily-prepared and was poorly-led, penetrated undisturbed into the Ierendian waters before being attacked and utterly defeated in the Battle of Honor (AC 644); later that year, another naval expedition sailed from Thyatis and again this was defeated in the Battle of Utter Strait. The magic of the Honor Island mages was instrumental for the achievement of these victories. The kingdom was safe, the king had earned his own glory fighting at sea, but most importantly the Thyatian government finally agreed to sign a peace treaty with Ierendi in Crossbones (AC 645), recognizing the archipelago as an independent kingdom and the royal title of its kings.

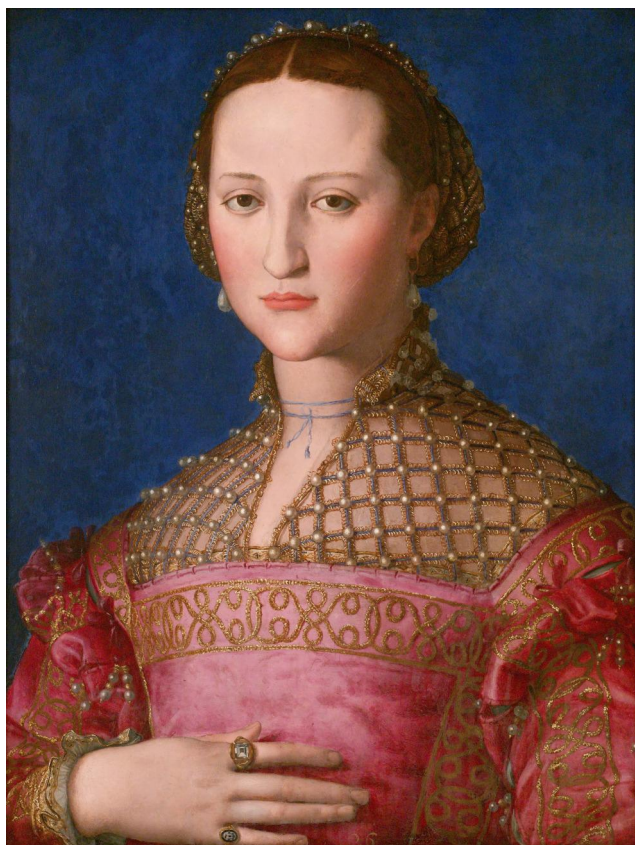
The military success gave Black Toes the support he needed to carry on his reforms. In AC 650 he decreed the opening of a naval school in the capital to train sailors and marines in seamanship and fighting at sea. Then, in AC 653, he issued the so-called *Matringle Code*, a set of laws inspired by the juridical traditions of Darokin and Thyatis. The king knew well that it would have taken years to change the wild ways of his Ierendian subjects, but was confident that his code - which regulated succession, inheritance, trials, and taxation - could provide a guideline for the conduct of the future generations. The *Code* is still considered the foundation of Ierendian law today - even if later lawmakers did not always stand true to the clarity of the *Matringle Code*.

### The Successors of Black Toes

Black Toes died in AC 663.<sup>4</sup> His wife Kerhy - perhaps backed by the mysterious wizards of Honor Island - assumed regency for their son Jan, who took the throne only after his mother's death in AC 670, when already 32 years old. Black Toes' successors learnt from him the lesson that Ierendi's independence depended on the kingdom's ability to field a powerful fleet, and spent efforts and money to build a sizeable and strong Ierendian navy. Jan, started a program of fleet-building and successfully completed it in AC 681, when the Ierendian navy was deemed capable of defending the archipelago by itself. Besides this, Black Toes' successors did not follow the same moral principles as their ancestor did: they strongly supported piracy in order

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<sup>4</sup> This article uses the list of Ierendian kings and queens, and the chronology of their reigns, found in *Ierendian Government and Aristocracy* by G. Agosta, in "Threshold" issue no. 3, page 44.



*Portrait of Queen Kerhy Matrongle*

to discourage the activity of foreign merchant fleets into Ierendian waters. This, however, brought the kingdom intermittently into naval conflict with neighboring coastal nations, such as the Five Shires, the Minrothaddans of Trader's Isle, and the Traladaran states. King Jan himself died in AC 684, in one of these sea battles.

Also, the growing size and strength of the Ierendian fleet allowed the crown to offer the services of a part of her navy for hire during conflicts between other sea powers. Alongside piracy, the selling of mercenary services became one of the main sources of profits for the Ierendian treasury. The kings of this age used this as a way to keep balance among the sea nations of the Sea of Dread, lending support under payment to sides

whose victory would disadvantage their most dangerous opponents.

During the reign of Queen Halia (AC 684-701), Black Toes' oldest surviving child, the Ierendian fleet was considered one of the most dangerous and reckless navies of the Sea of Dread, and its captains had a reputation of ruthlessness and bloodthirstiness. In AC 691, Halia reorganized the fleet and renamed it the Royal Navy. In that same year, the wizards of Honor Island and the crown entered into secret negotiations with the Supreme Symposium of Gnomish Syndicates, an underground international organization linking the major gnomish communities in the Known World.<sup>5</sup> Their aim was to exchange some magical knowledge of the Honor Island's mages with techno-magical devices of the gnomes which might be used to improve the power of the Royal Navy. The agreement led to the development and construction of the famous Honor Island's "fire-ships", the powerful, fire elemental-driven warships which still today represent the main asset of Ierendi for the kingdom's supremacy in its territorial waters; their construction was carried on in the sheltered harbor of Filtot, on Honor Island, and the knowledge about the existence of those "fire-ships" did not reach the general public.

<sup>5</sup> To learn more about the Symposium, look at *The Demography of Ierendi and Minrothad*, in "Threshold" issue no. 3, sidebar on pages 141-143.





*Mount Kala in Honour Island*

The end of the 7<sup>th</sup> century AC brought also some changes in the international situation. The unification of the Colony Islands into the Minrothad Guilds in the same year, AC 691, worried the kingdom; as the Minrothad confederation consolidated and began challenging Ierendi's control over the western sea routes. Some years later the Council of Lords persuaded Queen Halia to act ruthlessly in order to halt the strengthening of the eastern neighbor. Thus in AC 700 assassins secretly sent by Queen Halia killed Minrothad's "Second Uniter", Gregus Verdier, during a sea voyage, masquerading the whole happening as a sea accident.

But this move had been carried out too late, and did not stop the raise of the Guilds as a trade and naval power. Quite the contrary, Minrothad's Guildmasters decided to react to Verdier's assassination through the aggressive pursuit of sea trade within Ierendi's very own sphere of interest. Also, a third competitor entered the fray; the Thyatian Empire, in fact, having rebuilt its fleet after the defeats suffered in the past century and thanks to a prolonged time of peace with Alphatia on its eastern borders, felt confident enough to try to challenge Minrothad's rising trade prominence and to cripple Ierendi's naval power. This threefold struggle sparked the so-called Corsair Wars in AC 701.

### The Birth of the Minrothad Guilds

In the 7<sup>th</sup> century AC, the prosperity of the Colony Islands' trading combine further increased, taking advantage of their neutrality in the wars which raged between the two eastern empires of Thyatis and Alphatia, and also managing to keep a low profile in Thyatis' attempt to keep control over the Ierendi Islands. In fact, the combine's allies were mostly interested in reducing the empire's power in the Sea of Dread, and were more than happy to secretly lend some money to Mad Creeg and his rebellion against Thyatis in order to help the western archipelago to free itself from Thyatian rule. That same money would have fueled Black Toes' hasty construction of a fleet to counter the Thyatian invasion of AC 644. After this defeat, even if Thyatis was still the main naval power of the Sea of Dread, it seemed quite unlikely - barring a decisive military effort - that the empire could restore its political dominance over the two archipelagos. Thus, competition between the two island realms and the empire transferred to the trade field.

A weak and disunited Ierendi was the future the elites of the Colony Islands has envisioned for the western archipelago, but things did not go exactly as they wished. Ierendi became quite stable internally during the second half of the 7<sup>th</sup> century AC, and the kingdom's traders and pirates put the other merchant fleets of the Sea of Dread under some pressure - first and foremost the Colony Islands' one.

Of the Colony Islands under Thyatian control in this age, Terentias fared quite well from an economic point of view, preserving closer ties both to Thyatis and to the other islands of the archipelago. The other two, North

Island and the barren Fire Island, had lost any attractiveness for Thyatis since the loss of the Ierendi province, and were left to themselves. The villages in North Island began to rule themselves autonomously after about AC 615, despite the island being still formally part of the Thyatian Empire. In AC 625, a mysterious character known as "Lord Ingram" - a lycanthrope able to change into a monstrous hog - took control of North Island, terrorizing the local villages with the help of dozens of fellow lycanthropes and becoming known as the "Devil Swine".<sup>6</sup> According to lycanthropy scholars, this is the first recorded case of devil swine lycanthropy in the Known World (two years before the strain had been discovered in Alphatia). Lord Ingram ruled North Island for some years, until a Traladaran were-hunter by the name of Viktor Tschorba destroyed him in AC 628.

### The Drive Behind the Confederation

Competition from Ierendi was one of the main drives behind the process of political transformation which changed the Colony Islands' trading combine to a confederation. This political change was being increasingly advocated by the most wealthy and powerful elites of the various islands. These elites were made up by families and clans whose economic interests extended to the activities and the markets of two or more islands, and who wanted to remove any restraint still left to trade between the islands; moreover, they

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<sup>6</sup> The story of Lord Ingram is briefly mentioned in PC4 Night Howlers, *DM's Guide*, page 4, where he is said to have "ruled a small island nation in the Sea of Dread", without specifying which one. I decided to set his story in North Island. The character of Tschorba was my creation as well.



believed that the only effective way to protect the islands against Ierendian pirates and a resurgence of Thyatian power was an united fleet and army for the whole Colony Islands.

These clans and families had become very powerful in the archipelago, and gathered around them a large number of minor client families. This way, they formed true factions which controlled whole areas of political and trading life. Their main instrument of control were the various trade guilds which, through monopoly over a trade area, allowed them to make their sphere of influence nearly impervious to outside interference. Gradually, due to unbeatable competition over trade and prices, most minor families were obliged to ally with one of the most

powerful ones. The system slowly increased the oligarchic and plutocratic traits of the Colony Islands' government.

Initiative toward a political change came from the most conservative and aloof members of the trading combine, that is the wood elves of Alfeisle. While their cousins the water elves had always been an enterprising lot both in trade, exploration, and relations with other cultures, the wood elves had kept quite close to their traditional lifestyle. They had to come to terms with the circumstances of their life on an island, and accept trade with outsiders - something which had led them to establish closer relations with the water elves and welcome individual traders in their lands. But the



*View of Alfeisle*

traditional clannish structure of the wood elven society had been preserved through the years and, despite some periods of union toward a common goal (such as the foundation of Verdon was), for most of the time each clanmaster ruled his or her clan without any special consideration of the wood elves as a whole.

The increase of trade in wood elves' products (which the other Colony Islands' peoples needed for their ships), however, forced a number of change-oriented wood elven clanmasters to establish common trade policies to organize production and selling of their crafts and goods. Thus, the clanmasters' interest in trade and in other islands' activities increased, and they were inevitably drawn into the political field - but they did not fare well in this field because no strong alliance or united political faction backed the various clanmasters' requests or proposals.

### The Career of Gregus Verdier

So, even among the conservative wood elves, a faction pushing to establish closer ties among the various clans emerged. One of the leading personalities of this faction was a young and progressive wood elf Gregus Verdier,<sup>7</sup> who belonged to the oldest and

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<sup>7</sup> According to the GAZ9, Dungeon Master's Booklet, page 6, Gregus was born in AC 601. This means that he would have enacted his first reforms when he was only 45 years old - an age which, by elven standards, is still halfway from adulthood. Perhaps the GAZ fails to address a correct conversion between elven and human age (the guidelines for which are found in GAZ5), so Gregus could be considered an elf of an age equivalent to that of a 45-years old human - which means he had around 430 years when he enacted his first reforms in AC 646, thus being born

most influential clan. Gregus had spent part of his youth among the water elves, had been from time to time on the other islands, and had visited the mainland coastal countries. Taking the reins of the family timber and woodworking activities, he established ties with many halfling and human families of Open Isle and Trader's Isle, becoming a sort of unofficial representative of the wood elves' clans at the meeting with other members of the combine.

Gregus was persuaded of the necessity of a closer union not only among the wood elves' clans, but among the other members of the combine as well. In AC 646, he scored his first great political success when he managed to convince other wood elf clanmasters to approve his idea to establish joint government institutions for the whole wood elven clans, to support with much more effectiveness the wood elves' trading and political interests.

From AC 660 on, Gregus began to cultivate friendships and alliances with individuals and families who advocated the closer union among the Minrothaddans, the halflings, and the water elves. Actually he was edifying the political foundations for his subsequent aims, gathering enough support to win his battle against the families who did not understand that the future of the Colony Islands depended on their unification as confederates. The increasing aggressivity of Ierendian pirates under the successors of King Black Toes, and the rebuilding of the Thyatian sea power were instrumental in bringing to his faction the additional support he needed.

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around AC 217.





*City of Minrothad with The Landfall Peak behind*

At the end of AC 690, the time was ripe for his goal to come true. Gregus, who by now had become the most influential individual in the Colony Islands, summoned a meeting of the representatives of the various islands' governments in the city of Minrothad, on Trader's Isle. After much debate, the confederation reform proposed by Gregus was approved and it became effective in AC 691.

#### **The Reform of the "Second Uniter"**

The reform turned the trading combine into a true confederation. Each of its members - the halflings of Open Isle, the human domains in Trader's Isle (plus the attached, sparsely populated Fortress and Blackrock islands), the water elves, and the

wood elves - was allowed to rule itself in internal affairs as he saw fit. But the reform also established a confederated government which ruled over inter-islands relations and affairs, international policies, and general trade policies. Basically, the whole system was governed like a network of main and associated guilds.

The main body of the confederated government, the General Council of Guilds and Estates, was seated in the city of Minrothad, which substituted the existing General Estates of the Minrothaddan government.<sup>8</sup> The General Council was an

<sup>8</sup> In my article *The Demography of Ierendi and Minrothad*, in "Threshold" no. 3, pages 153-154, this assembly was wrongly called

assembly formed by representatives of the various political (domains, clans, cities and towns) and economic entities (guilds) which gathered in the capital two times a year and held legislative power and also the right to decide on most important issues for the confederation - peace and war, general taxation, and so on.

Day-to-day executive power was however put in the hands of a smaller assembly, called the "Council of Dread" (from the old name of Trader's Isle in elven tongue). The Council of Dread was formed by the guildmasters of the four Family Guilds, which represented the point of the whole pyramid of the government. Each Family Guild was both the leading family of an ethnic group or island from a political point of view, and had monopoly over one or more trade areas through control of a number of lesser guilds. The four leading families - the Minrothaddan Corser, the water elf Meditor, the wood elf Verdier, and the halfling Quickhand - were thus both the head of the most powerful guild networks and the political leaders of the confederation.

As lesser interests and families - represented at the General Council - were generally tied to or allied with one of these families, chance of conflicts between the General Council and the Council of Dread were minimal. Also, the General Council still preserved enough power to represent the true ruling body of the government, so most political debate went on there and the assembly was in no way overshadowed by the Council of Dread.

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the General Council of Guilds and States.

Gregus' reform also instituted the need for a confederation-financed navy and army, which would replace the old, ineffective local armies and fleets, while the islands' governments had the duty to provide local peace and security through town watches and police forces.

The reform marked the birth of the Minrothad Guilds, the new name of the confederation which put an emphasis on the nation's trading nature. Gregus was hailed as the one who had carried on the unification process started by Hadric Corser back in AC 488, and given the honorific title of "Second Uniter".

The Minrothad Guilds' raise, however, worried the nearby Ierendian crown, who feared that an united confederation in the Colony Islands might successfully challenge Ierendian primacy in this region of the Sea of Dread. Before allowing the work of the "Second Uniter" to consolidate, Queen Halia of Ierendi decided to have Gregus Verdier assassinated. The Ierendian agents carried out their duty in AC 700, when Verdier disappeared during a sea voyage - they were able to masquerade the happening as an incident at sea, but the shrewd guildmasters of Minrothad secretly managed to learn who the true mandator of the assassination was. From that moment, the guildmasters knew that their chance to see the confederation prosper relied on how much they could challenge Ierendi's aggressiveness and ruthlessness.





*Minrothad coast*

### The Corsair Wars (701-726)

The Corsair Wars was a three-decades time of endemic privateer and pirate activity at sea, mostly carried out by the Kingdom of Ierendi, the Minrothad Guilds, and the Thyatian Empire.<sup>9</sup> The conflict represented an increase in piratical activity, now supported by those realms' navies, in regard to the preceding two decades which had seen the raise of Ierendian pirate actions. Even if there were no formal declarations of war, the three powers were locked into an unofficial struggle to achieve dominance or preserve their power in the northern region

<sup>9</sup> The Corsair Wars were created by the author as an attempt to link together the foreseeable reaction of Ierendi to the unification of Minrothad (GAZ9 only mentioned the assassination of Gregus Verdier), the campaign of privateer attacks carried on by Thyatis against Minrothad "in the early 8<sup>th</sup> century" (GAZ9, Dungeon Master's Booklet, page 12), the more famous defeat of the Thyatian "patrol" (GAZ4) or "privateer probe" (Hollow World Campaign Setting, Dawn of the Emperors) against Ierendi in AC 713, and the pirate attack against Sindhi newly-built navy in AC 726 (Champions of Mystara).

of the Sea of Dread. Other minor powers, such as the Five Shires, took occasionally part to the wars. In general, these thirty years were an unsafe and dangerous time for all sea trade routes crossing the waters around the northern archipelagos of the Sea of Dread.

### A Threefold Conflict on the Sea Begins

The conflict sparkled in AC 701 when a well-escorted Minrothaddan merchant convoy was attacked by a flotilla of Ierendian privateers east of Safari Island; the attack was repelled with heavy losses, and this convinced the Ierendian government that a stronger stance would be needed to restrain the Guilds' trade. The Guildmasters of Minrothad, on the other hand, had already begun to man their ships with elven wizards, and to accompany their merchant ships with warships. From this point on, war on the sea escalated.

The Thyatian Empire entered the fray dispatching its own privateer fleets, which most often were vessels of the imperial navy going to action without showing the empire's banners. The Thyatian government wanted to put to use the time of relative peace with Alphatia to reassert its control over the western archipelagos, destroying the naval and trade power they had acquired in the past century.

The Guilds had to fight on two fronts - against Ierendi in the west and against Thyatis in the east - and were on the point of collapsing when their best effort did not manage to shield their trade from the foreign corsairs' plunderings. The Guilds had to withstand terrible moments, such as the bombardment of Harbortown by Ierendian pirates (AC 708) and the sack of

Malfon by a fleet of Thyatian privateers (AC 710); after this event only Alfeisle - thanks to the elves' magic - was partially shielded from the Thyatians' raids, while all other islands of the Minrothad chain suffered because of them.

So, in that same AC 710, the Guildmasters approved the decision of some enterprising sea captains to establish a Minrothaddan Privateer Guild to counter the attacks of Thyatian privateers in their waters. The Guild sponsored the use of a new ship design, which allowed for greater speed at sea while still preserving enough room for a sizeable cargo; these new ships could carry on both trade and pirate actions at the same time. So the season of Minrothaddan piracy started.

### **The Battle of Midpoint and its Aftermath**

As the Thyatians were getting the upper hand, their attacks against Ierendian ships

became more frequent. King Michelozzo of Ierendi was worried enough to reduce attacks against Minrothaddan shipping in order to preserve his ships in case of Thyatian invasion. Eventually, the Thyatian government decided that it was time for an attempt to lure the Ierendian navy into combat and break the kingdom's sea power. In AC 713, a privateer fleet supplemented by vessels of the imperial navy sailing without banner bypassed from the south the Colony Islands with the aim to penetrate into Ierendian waters and head for Ierendi town itself. South of Trader's Isle, the fleet was hit by a storm which disrupted its tight formation and made some ships (most of those carrying supplies) lose track with the main group; the Thyatian commander decided to go on, with the aim to attack Aloysius Island in order to resupply and regroup the fleet there. Unfortunately for him, the Ierendian Royal Navy, together



*Battle of Midpoint*



with the powerful “fire-ships” of Honor Island - which were brought to proper battle for the first time - had swiftly sailed against the Thyatians and met them between Utter Island and the Aloysius Reefs. The Battle of Midpoint (AC 713) was an utter defeat for the Thyatians; even if still superior in number, caught by surprise by the Ierendians’ daring move and by the sheer power of the “fire-ships”, the Thyatian fleet lost more than half of their ships (sunk or captured by the Ierendians).<sup>10</sup> Even worse, the rest of the dispersed Thyatian squadron was chased by the Royal Navy into Minrothaddan waters and to avoid capture had to flee south into the high sea - where some additional ships were lost due to bad weather.

As news of the battle reached mainland courts, the fame of the Royal Navy soared and it came to be considered the most powerful fleet of the Sea of Dread. Most importantly, thanks to this victory King Michelozzo now could impose his own terms on the Minrothad Guilds, threatening to carry on the war against them. The two sea powers signed an agreement in the city of Minrothad in AC 714, which basically ousted Minrothaddan ships from western trade routes in exchange for the halt of Ierendian piracy against the Guilds.

From the signing of the agreement, the Minrothaddans could freely devote itself to repel Thyatian privateer attacks without having to look at their back. The vessels of the Privateer Guild rapidly got the upper hand and began systematically raiding the slower Thyatian merchantmen, crippling the

empire’s westward trade. Thyatis was also experiencing serious problems in the far south, where a seaborne guerrilla war was going on in the Davanian Shallows between the empire and the underwater merrow Kingdom of Twaelar; the commitment of most of the empire’s ships against Ierendi and Minrothad left Thyatis’ Davanian colonies undefended and the contact with these faraway settlements was slowly severed.

### **The Treaty of Bayville and the End of the War**

Ierendian privateers got the opportunity to hit the Thyatian ships as well after the agreement of AC 714. In AC 717 a combined Ierendian and Minrothaddan privateer fleet captured Crossbones, which was the main base of the Thyatian corsairs. With this additional setback, Thyatian efforts to reestablish the empire’s prominence in the western Sea of Dread waned, as did any chance to bring back Minrothad or Ierendi under Thyatian control. The Thyatian government tried to get Terentias back through diplomacy, but ongoing difficulties on the Davanian area spurred Ierendi and Minrothad to make no concessions. In AC 720, foreseeing a new conflict against Alphatia (which effectively broke out in AC 726), the empire agreed to sign the treaty of Bayville, ceding Terentias, North Island, and Fire Island to the Minrothad Guilds, halting any privateering action, and opening trade with its Davanian colonies to Ierendi.<sup>11</sup>

After the treaty of Bayville, open privateering actions formally ceased, but piracy was still

<sup>10</sup> The trend of the battle was borrowed from [“History of the Thyatian People”](#), (by J. Ruhland)].

<sup>11</sup> The loss of Terentias as a consequence of this war was taken from [“History of the Thyatian People”](#), (by J. Ruhland)]; I modified some details to make it fit better with the rest of the article.

carried on in peripheral areas of the Sea of Dread. Ierendi appeared to be the real winner of this war, but the kingdom did not manage to capitalize this success and become a dominant sea power. Nevertheless, it was able to carry on unscrupulous actions to dissuade any other nation to challenge its primacy. The most striking of those actions was the attack against the newly-built Sindhi navy - carried on by a pirate flotilla (in which a future king of Ierendi, Artalus Rackham,<sup>12</sup> also fought) and backed both by Ierendi and by Minrothad - which was completely destroyed in the Battle of Jaibul in AC 726. The Sindhi fleet had in fact returned from her maiden voyage to Tanakumba, on Thanegia Island; the two sea powers wanted to cut at the root any possible competition against their control of sea routes to the west, and they were successful. This battle is usually considered the final act of the time of sea conflicts known as the Corsair Wars.

The Corsair Wars are remembered in pirate stories for a strange event called “The Vanishing”, that is the disappearance without trace of an unprecedented number of pirate crews and vessels from the waters of the northern Sea of Dread. Disappearances especially hit halfling and human crews, and took place mostly in the first years of the war. The stories give no consistent explanation of this relatively widespread phenomenon, but some old pirate still thinks that the vanished crews might have been called by the Immortals of the sea to serve them in a sort of “pirate paradise”.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> For additional information about this character, see *Ierendian Government and Aristocracy* by G. Agosta, in “Threshold” issue no. 3, pages 44 and 54.

<sup>13</sup> These disappearances were actually caused by Immortal Korotiku, which transplanted a number of pirates crews in the

## Ierendi between Conservatorism and Transformation

King Donatello “the Black” took the Ierendian throne after his father Michelozzo’s death in AC 718; the new king earned great fame at the beginning of his rule by bringing to a successful conclusion the Corsair Wars, thus raising the kingdom to a rank never reached by his predecessors. His reign (AC 718-735) also coincided with a time of social and economic transformation in Ierendi. While the crown’s main activities continued to be piracy and mercenary services, agriculture and trade were quickly developing due to Ierendi’s raise as the local power.

Families descended from the followers of Mad Creeg, who had seized local plantations, had gradually become quite rich and plantations’ products represented a big slice of the country’s economy. Most of the families sitting in the Council of Lords - who at that time were called the “First Families” - owned plantations, besides some investments they might have in other areas. More and more during the last quarter of the 7<sup>th</sup> century AC and the first of the 8<sup>th</sup>, the First Families managed to place their members in positions of power, and to control the policy of the kingdom as a whole in their favor.

It may be also worth noting that during the reign of the last Matrongle king, a Minrothaddan immigrant by the name of Tomia began preaching a new cult called the

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Merry Pirate Seas in the Hollow World; I took the name indicating this event - “The Vanishing” - from [“Alternate Ierendi Gazetteer: The Pirate Kingdom of Ierendi \(AM 2\)”](#) (by J.W. Biles)].



The Ierendi and Colony Islands during the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Centuries  
FROM THE IERENDIAN INDEPENDENCE (AC 602) TO AC 790



**COLONY ISLANDS**

- Territories of the Republic of Minrothad
- Water and wood elven holdings in Aifeisle
- Halfling holdings in Open Isle
- Borders of the Minrothad Guilds (AC 691)
- Islands ceded by Thyatis to the Minrothad Guilds with the Treaty of Bayville (AC 720)

**IERENDI ISLANDS**

- Islands claimed by the Kingdom of Ierendi in AC 602
- Honor Island (ceded by Ierendi to the Alaphatian mages in AC 629)
- Islands ceded to the Five Shires with the Peace of Vlaad (AC 775)

**KINGDOM OF DAROKIN**

- Borders of the Kingdom of Darokin in AC 650
- Duchy of Malpeggi (independent before AC 685)
- North Shire (independent before AC 685)
- Duchy of Darokin (after AC 723)
- Barony of Nethlinn (independent AC 693)

**OTHER**

- Elven holdings on the mainland (Callarii and Vyalia clans)
- Territories of the Thyatian Empire
- Territories of the Atruaghin Clans
- Territories of the Five Shires
- Territories controlled by the Traladaran domains after the end of the Vampire War (AC 728)
- Main towns and cities
- X
 Main battles

People's Temple, which soon numbered many followers among both the settler-descended population and the native Makai. This sect would raise in the next centuries to become the main cult worshipped in the Kingdom of Ierendi.<sup>14</sup>



*Tomia preaching*

### **The Crown during the struggle between the First Families and the Merchants**

On the other hand, the gradual transformation of the kingdom from a pirate haven to a civilized nation with international relations which had to be cultivated, moved an increasing number of investments from piracy to regular trade. The number of those "New Money" families belonging to the merchant class - whose members were indeed in many cases former pirates and smugglers - was still quite small and not near as powerful as the landowners of the First Families. Kings Michelozzo and Donatello still favored the former because the increase of trade would bring more money in the kingdom's treasury through dues and tariffs. Due to their growing economic influence,

<sup>14</sup> The establishment of the People's Temple in the 8<sup>th</sup> century AC has been guessed by the author on the basis of GAZ4's text.

some New Money families began to ask for admission to the Council of Lords.

It was not long before the struggle between the First Families power block and the rising influence of the merchant class manifested itself in the political arena. Faithful to his vision of Ierendi as a trade power in the fashion the Minrothad Guilds were trying to become again, King Donatello was ruthless against attempt by the First Families to hamper the rise of the merchants - during his reign more than a few opposing family heads and leaders belonging to the First Families faction were exiled or put to death under charges of treason. This brutal reaction against the opposition of a part of the Ierendian "aristocracy" earned the king the nickname of "the Black". The king also admitted to the Council of Lords some individuals belonging to the New Money families, trying to break the back of the First Families' power. Nevertheless the latter, being some of the oldest families of the country, controlled many other areas, such as the bureaucracy and local garrisons, so the king had to avoid taking too radical measures against them for fear of a coup.

Also, the crown needed money after the decades of the Corsair Wars, and the merchant class was still too small to be the only source of financing for the king. Donatello did not want to depend on the First Families anymore, so he drastically cut the moneylending activity those families traditionally did toward the crown. The king also hated having to depend on foreign credit, but he had to because the kingdom needed infrastructures to improve trade, as the merchants were asking, and because Donatello wanted to pursue further project to expand Ierendian power.



### King Donatello's Davanian Armada

The most ambitious project during this time was the conquest of the Thyatian colonies on the Davanian coast. The empire, due to the Corsair Wars and mostly to the war against the merrow Kingdom of Twaelar, had effectively lost nearly all contact with its trade posts and colonies scattered on the coast of northern Davania, from the Green Coast to the Thratian lands. Donatello decided to fill the power vacuum left by the Thyatians and to begin a colonial enterprise which, starting from the conquest of the former Thyatian holdings, would have led to impose Ierendian control over the whole northern coast of Davania. The expedition, to be led by the king himself, was planned with great expenses, boarding supplies and marines, and sailed southward in the spring of AC 735.

Some weeks later, tragic news reached the capital: the Ierendian armada had encountered a horrible hurricane near the Yavdlom coast, which had dispersed much of the fleet and had sunk many vessels. The king's flagship, the *Indomitable*, had lost contact with the coast during the hurricane, and was nowhere to be seen. What was left of the armada limped back to Ierendi.

King Donatello at the moment of his disappearance at sea had no legitimate heir. Nevertheless, Donatello's bastard sons - on the ground that Black Toes himself was an illegitimate son of Mad Creeg - claimed the throne, but were challenged by the two other branches of the Matringle family which descended from Halia, the former queen and younger daughter of Black Toes. A bloody feud between the various branches of the Matringle, called the "Matringle Succession War" by other

families, ensued and lasted several years (AC 735-744), effectively bringing the family to economic decline and political marginalization.<sup>15</sup>

### The Start of the Forty Years' Terror

The Council of Lords, however, mostly made up by representatives of the First Families, took the opportunity of the death of Donatello to enact a quick coup and seize the government into its own hands. The aim of the Lords was to deprive the rising merchant class of the power it had acquired under Donatello, and to establish firm control over the realm. In late AC 735 the Council proclaimed the settlement of a regency council until a new king was chosen. Then the Lords began a quick and harsh repression aimed at ousting all the personalities who had been chosen by Donatello from the Council of Lords, the government, navy and bureaucracy and substituted them with men faithful to the landowners' cause. They then imposed a set of strict laws regulating trade - including the formations of special state-financed companies which unfairly challenged Ierendi's native merchants - trying to damage as much as possible the merchant class. The Council also established martial law in Ierendi and other towns to quell dissension and unrest by merchants - resulting in a vast sequence of arrests, exiles, executions, and confiscations.

In Ierendian history, this time is known as the Forty Years' Terror (AC 735-775).<sup>16</sup> In

<sup>15</sup> The "Matringle Succession War" was taken from *Ierendian Government and Aristocracy* by G. Agosta, in "Threshold" issue no. 3, pages 52-53.

<sup>16</sup> The death at sea of Donatello Matringle,

the first years after the Council of Lords' takeover, many merchants and commoners were forced to flee the country to avoid persecution. Many of them settled in the Five Shires and in Darokin's coastal cities of Tenobar and Athenos, which thanks to the immigration of these seafaring experts could begin their rise as minor trading powers. In AC 736, after having consolidated their hold over the kingdom, the Council of Lords finally chose Artalus Rackham, the privateer hero of the Battle of Jaibul back in AC 726, as king. King Artalus, or 'Art' as he was called by the common people, did not belong to one of the First Families, but was a very popular figure and embodied the ideal of the Ierendian hero. Indeed, the choice of the Council of Lords had not fallen on him without a reason, for - even if this was not publicly known - he had also close ties with some of the most important landowning families, and before receiving the crown accepted to align his decisions to the wishes of the Council.

### The Reign of King 'Art'

With the defeat of the opposers from the merchant class, the Council allowed King 'Art' to moderate the repressive climate established in the first years after Donatello's disappearance. This increased his popularity and made him appear merciful and just, as did the decrease of taxes levied on the settlers' lower classes (but not on the Makai). All this contributed

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and the Forty Years' Terror were borrowed from "[Thoughts on Darokin](#)" and "[The Thanegioth Archipelago](#)" (both by J. Mishler)]. I have reworked a little the circumstances of Donatello's expedition, though.

to build the image of a time of internal prosperity during the reign of Artalus, despite the fact that Ierendian trade - due to the destruction of Donatello's armada and the anti-merchant policies of the Council of Lords - began to be successfully challenged by the rise of the dynamic Minrothaddan economy.

Artalus also continued to approve piratical activity on foreign navies - in particular the Minrothaddan navy - and organized the land forces of the kingdom into the Royal Brigade, regulating the way in which both it and the Royal Navy sold their mercenary services to foreign nations. During his reign the king financed explorers to precisely chart many minor islands of the Sea of Dread - some of which were settled with small forts and resupply stations - and also started a program of undersea exploration to discover underwater resources which might be interesting for the kingdom's crafts or trades.

This type of intrusion in the Sunlit Sea worried the merrows and the tritons who lived under the waves. The nomadic merrows, in particular, were angered by the indiscriminate penetration of Ierendian explorers in some of their sacred underwater shrines, and started a series of raids against the Ierendian ships. Some families within the Council of Lords, led by the Teach family, voiced against the king's policy which threatened to disrupt Ierendi's cordial relations with the merrows and to endanger the kingdom's trade.

King 'Art' did not listen to these warnings, but his policy came to a sudden end in AC 748 when, during one of the explorations he was overseeing himself, a violent storm caught his ship, sinking him and all his





*Merrows of the Sunlit Sea*

crew - indeed it was rumored that the death of the king had been arranged by the merrows themselves. The death of the king overturned the balance within the Council of Lords in favor of the Teach faction; moreover, the family was known to have deals with the merrows of the Sunlit Sea. To avoid stirring up the merrows' anger, the Council of Lords decided to bypass the legitimate successors of Artalus to the throne - his daughter Yolanda, and his nephews - choosing instead as the new king the head of the Teach family, Thaddeus, nicknamed "Fish-Eye".

### **The Teach Kings**

The first act of the new king was to sign the famous "Treaty of Eternal Friendship" between the Kingdom of Ierendi and the representatives of the most influential nomad merrow tribes of the Sunlit Sea (AC 748). The treaty banned any exploitation of underwater resources by the kingdom, and forbid underwater exploration and plunder

in the areas the merrow held as sacred; in exchange, the merrows agreed to help the Royal Navy in the defense of the archipelago, serving as scouts for the navy and agreeing to supplement it with their sea cavalry in times of need. The treaty is still one of the pillars of the kingdom's defense system today. After the treaty, trade with the merrows flourished, as Ierendian traders brought to the surface the riches of the merrows and - through them - of the tritons of the Sunlit Sea.

King Thaddeus was able to establish a short dynasty when in AC 762 he was succeeded - after the Council of Lords gave its assent - by his son Varaldo. During the latter half of the reign of Artalus and during the reign of the two Teach kings, the merchant class started to recover from the harsher earlier times of the Terror. This was due to the gradual loosening of the repressive policies of the Council, and to a revival of trade that was brought about not only by the Teach monarchs' trade with the underwater dwellers of the Sunlit Sea, but also by the First Families' own interest in trading surplus resources they produced in plantations, mines, and so on. The social and political climate was still quite calm until the end of the reign of King Varaldo, when the first signs of discontent from the merchant class took the form of public complaints against the Council of Lords' absolute power. The merchants also voiced themselves against the fact the the Council actually had chosen and controlled the last three kings - they wanted that the king might rule without being a puppet of the Council. But the Council of Lords now was divided about what reaction to take; some of its members, like the Van Hoorn, Alexander, and Teach families, opposed a renewal of the oppressive policies

which had characterized the first years of the Terror.

Besides the growing social unrest and the declining trade power of Ierendi in favor of that of the Minrothad Guilds, another internal problem should have worried the landowning families and the Teach kings - that is the decisive worsening of the treatment of the Makai laborers in the plantations and mines. The native people of the archipelago had always been considered second-class subjects in the Kingdom of Ierendi - there were no influential people, landowners, merchants or government officials (not to speak of Council of Lords members) of Makai ethnicity. Many Makai continued to live in rural villages or in their traditional tribes, but over the course of years even more of them moved to plantations and towns to search for a work and were forced to submit to very poor working conditions. The situation got worse during the Forty Years' Terror, when the landowning First Families went on to exploit even more harshly the Makai labor, keeping them in conditions which were not very much different from those of the less numerous foreign slaves. In fact, many landowners began to rely more and more on Makai labor because it was cheaper than slave labor. Slaves had to be bought, while Makai could be

forced to work in mines or plantations and they could still be paid with the same food, drink, and lodge that a landowner gave to a slave. Following the reign of the second Teach king, isolated episodes of Makai resistance and agitation multiplied, but the Council of Lords gave free hand to the landowners in putting them down in the way they saw more fitting - whipping, brutal punishments, and even executions that would serve as a warning to would-be rebels.

### Unrest Growing under King Willem's Rule

King Varaldo and his two sons died in an accidental fire which destroyed the royal castle in the capital in AC 769. There were rumors that the most conservative Council members were responsible for the planning and enacting of the king's death, making it look like an accident - all because the king had shown intentions of opening the Council seats to some of the "New Money" families.



*The Council of Lords elects King Willem Van Hoorn*



The Council tried to calm the growing unrest through the choice of Willem Van Hoorn as the new king. The Van Hoorn were one of the most trade-oriented of the First Families, had a reputation of piracy which made them quite popular figures in Ierendi, and Willem was also very young (just 33 years old when raised to the throne). The people were not foiled, however, and pointed to the fact that the new king had still been chosen by the Council of Lords, who - this was the circulating rumor - had arranged the death of Valardo and his sons in order to make Willem king for some obscure purpose.

King Willem tried to distract the people's attention by opening a renewed season of piratical raids mostly directed against the Minrothad Guilds, whose competition in sea trade had increased during the Terror and had by now overcome the kingdom's trading influence. This revealed to be an hazardous choice, because the Minrothad fleet had improved its size and quality in the past decades, and responded to the Ierendian privateering raids with an ultimatum and then with war in AC 772. Minrothaddan diplomacy was also able to bring into the fray the Darokinian Duchy of Malpheggi, whose coastal towns of Athenos and Tenobar hosted a sizeable minority of Ierendian exiles who had fled the kingdom during the Forty Years' Terror. The war saw some initial success of Ierendi on the sea, but in AC 774 some of the coastal Traladaran states and the Five Shires entered the war on Minrothaddan side in order to inflict a decisive blow to the Ierendian pirates. Despite losses and some defeats, this blow did not come - but neither could the kingdom continue such a war against all its neighboring nations. King Willem had to come to terms in the Peace of Vlaad (AC 775): Ierendi had to stop

sponsoring piracy against the other nations, to cede a few minor northern islets to the Five Shires, and had to pay reparations for the damage done to their shipping in the first half of the war. Ierendi had suffered its first, effective defeat, which would prove fatal to the king's and the Council's political position at home.

### **The Merchant Uprising and the End of the Terror**

The lost war against Minrothad and its allies put the kingdom's treasury under pressure because the treaty signed at Vlaad required the Ierendian crown to pay reparations to the victorious countries. King Willem asked the Council of Lords for a contribution from the richest land owning families of Ierendi to replenish the kingdom's coffers, but the majority of the Council was made up of First Families which owned plantations and saw this as an attempt by the trade-oriented First Families - like the Van Hoorn - to damage them within the Council. So no contribution was approved and the king resorted to levy additional taxes on the merchant middle class and on the lower class.

In the last years the merchants had voiced against the Council of Lords' excessive power, against its control over the kings' election and policy, against its closure to "New Money" families<sup>17</sup> and against trade

<sup>17</sup> This was not totally true, because in the last few years the Council of Lords had co-opted a very few "New Money" families into the assembly in an attempt to quell the merchant discontent; an example of such families were the Eddingtons, who were admitted to the Council in AC 765 (see *Ierendian Government and Aristocracy*, by G. Agosta, in "Threshold" issue no. 3, page 47).



*Street Rioters during the Merchant Uprising*

policies which depressed native merchants which only made Minrothaddan competitors stronger. King Willem's decision to renew piracy and go to war against Minrothad further damaged trade in this region of the Sea of Dread, adding to the merchants' discontent. Also, King Willem had started an expensive building project to raise a new royal palace after the previous one had been destroyed in the fire which had killed his predecessor. Now, the Council and the king were again imposing taxes on the merchant and lower classes instead of contributing at least in part themselves to the sum, and

without even thinking to stop the expensive building project. A growing discontent was also circulating among soldiers and seamen, many of which came from middle or lower class families, and who had seen their wages irregularly paid or reduced in the last months due to the war and to the financial difficulties of the crown.

All put together, it was enough for an outright uprising of the merchant class, and indeed the crown's decision about taxation was the spark which started the fire. When heralds cried the taxation decree in the streets of the capital, agitation among the



common people spread in the city, while only some units of Ierendi's garrisons - despite orders to quell the uprising - actually intervened; a couple of them even sympathized with the common people. The most daring of the "New Money" families took the lead of the movement and were able enough to direct it against the Council's and King Willem's government. A true city conflict ensued, with some city blocks controlled by the rebels and some others in the hands of the Council's forces. The Council attempted to bide its time, proclaiming intentions to open the government to new families, all the while trying to recall troops from other towns and islands. The tide was broken when some commoners broke into King Willem's residence and assassinated him. Then the Council, under pressure by the moderate "New Money" families and fearing the degeneration of the uprising into a lower class riot, agreed to come to terms and impose limits on its own power.

The agreement granted a number of "New Money" families a seat in the Council of Lords, a fair and equitable taxation, the transformation of the monarchy into a diarchy with one king and one queen (not necessarily married) who watched one over another,<sup>18</sup> and the change of both crowns from hereditary (even if actually the Council had chosen all the kings who ruled during the Terror) to elective. It also established that the election of the king and queen, who still

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<sup>18</sup> I decided to change this detail from G. Agosta's *Ierendian Government and Aristocracy*, in "Threshold" issue no. 3, because GAZ4, page 5, states: "775 AC After a major uprising of merchants, the Council of Lords agrees to limitations on its power, and to the popular democratic election of the king and queen".

ruled for life, should be done by the Assembly of the People, a gathering of family heads belonging to the merchant and lesser landowning classes and chosen by popular acclamation.

The Merchant Uprising of AC 775 marks an important moment in Ierendian history. Not only did it mark the end of the Forty Years' Terror and of the First Families' unchecked rule, but also the beginning of the alliance - though still uneasy - between the old First Families and the "New Money" ones, an event which gave birth to the oligarchic power block - formed by rich landowning and merchant families - which still rules Ierendi today.

#### **The Elective Monarchs up to the Reform of AC 790**

Despite the Council of Lords' resistance, the "New Money" families managed to obtain the candidature of Rena Longkeel as of one the two monarchs; she was the scion of one of the oldest Ierendian halfling clans and was widely popular with the lower classes, having served for many years as quartermaster on several ships of the country. Rena's election as queen was engineered to quell the lower classes' continued agitation, out of fear that the merchant class' uprising may pave the way to further social revolution - which the merchants themselves did not want. The agreement between the First and the "New Money" families indeed granted each faction the election of one of the two monarchs, in order to keep balance between the two power blocks.

Rena reigned from AC 775 to AC 787, together with two different kings - Saviero

Samnios<sup>19</sup> (AC 775-784), member of one of the First Families with mining interests, and Jerome Alvine (AC 784-786), belonging to an old family who owned extensive plantations around Port Siers - but the queen's popularity made her stand out above her colleagues. Rena's reign was successful in calming down the agitation of the lower classes, and also brought an end to the open hostilities between the First Families and the "New Money" ones. Underground intrigue continued to oppose her faction to the old aristocracy, however, and she feared that the most conservative faction among the First Families might try to have her removed (or killed) at her first show of weakness. This is why the queen tried to preserve her popularity during her whole reign, making sure that the "New Money" faction of the Council of Lords enacted a series of laws and measures to improve the living conditions of the lower classes in the capital. During the course of her reign, the enmity she harbored toward the First Families grew, even pushing her to imagine the very overthrow of the Council of Lords and its substitution with a popular assembly - something, however, she realized was unachievable given the present situation.

Under Rena, work on the new royal palace started by late King Willem was put in motion again, but - in order to save money and avoid upsetting the lower classes with unnecessary expenses - the initial project was reduced and the size of the original building reconsidered. The palace was nevertheless completed in AC 785.

<sup>19</sup> The surnames Samnios and Mykelios (below) were taken from "[Alternate Ierendi Gazetteer: The Pirate Kingdom of Ierendi \(AM2\)](#)" (by J.W. Biles)], albeit placed in a different historical context.

Sadly, Rena's reign is mostly remembered for the tragedy which struck Port Siers in AC 786, when the Mount Haumea volcano erupted; besides being hit by the expulsion of cinders and lava and smoke, the town of Port Siers was overwhelmed by a black cloud of burning ash which descended down the slopes of the volcano - the whole population was killed in less than an hour, among them was King Jerome whose family possessions were located near the town.

Recovery from the disaster delayed elections for the next king to AC 787, but as intrigues were being weaved to choose King Jerome's successor, Queen Rena decided to abdicate after having negotiated with the Council the awarding to her family, the Longkeels, of a seat in the Council of Lords. Elections for the two monarchs were thus both held in AC 787, bringing to the throne Derwin Eddington - the head of a "New Money", trade-oriented family with Darokinian heritage, which had only entered the Council a couple of decades ago - and Craina Mykelios, belonging to one of the First Families which managed the capital's shipyards.

The oligarchy which ruled Ierendi seemed fated to suffer another jolt in AC 790, when it was discovered that Queen Craina had diverted funds from the treasury in order to pay the huge debts she had contracted with foreign moneylenders due to her lavish expenses in feasts, luxuries, and pleasures she held in her villa in the capital's countryside. Discontent was again running high among the lower classes, and some radical groups already were talking about the necessity of another uprising. The queen found herself in a difficult position, since she had also to face the anger of most of the



Council of Lords' members (even among the First Families). When the mob attacked one of the Mykelios' shipyards, the oligarchy realized it had to act quickly.

United by the common goal to preserve power, and by the common fear of the lower classes' uprising, the members of the Council of Lords decreed the removal of the queen from the throne, and the expulsion of her family, the Mykelios, from the Council itself. The queen and some of her closest advisors fled to Athenos before being caught by the mob. King Derwin, who had taken part in a couple of the feasts held at the queen's mansion, was forced to abdicate as well. Then the Council of Lords publicly declared that a reform bill was being prepared, with an intention to abolish lifelong monarchy and transform the Assembly of the People into a permanent institution in order to grant the people a place where to make their voice heard. The lower classes were content of this announcement and cherished.

The reform was approved during the autumn of that same year. The diarchy - one king and one queen - was declared to be elective on yearly basis, and nearly emptied of any real power besides the representative one. The reform also established the Council of Citizens to replace the Assembly of the People: the new body was formed by the heads of the most influential families in Ierendi, and new members were admitted only under request (if they fulfilled census requirements) or through cooptation; the Council of Citizens was summoned one time per year to elect the two monarchs, and also had the power to elect new members to the Council of Lords whenever the need arose (i.e. when a Council family

died out or for some reason left its seat at the Council vacant).

The oligarchy had foiled the chance of a popular revolution, which would have definitely been removed by the growth of Ierendian internal prosperity during the 9<sup>th</sup> century AC. The alliance between the First Families representing the old aristocracy, and the "New Money" families representing the last century newcomers, had won and was in full control of the institutional machine. The Council of Lords had preserved almost all the power it had held since the beginning of the Terror - albeit shared between a wider range of families - and the other body which should have balanced it, the Council of Citizens, actually was made up by the representatives of minor landowning and trading families with more or less the same interests as the more powerful Council of Lords families. The social and economic block made up by the high and high-middle classes would thus take the reins of the kingdom and lead it through a gradual economic rise during the next two centuries.



# *Ranesh, a city of four people*

by Francesco Defferrari (Sturm)

The Mountain of Bones is a city of ogres in the dark Cruth hills now, and has been for many centuries, but in the past it was one of the unholy keeps from whence the Beastmen came upon the land of Traladara, to kill and destroy. The many treasures they pillaged from the ancient, rich and powerful Traladaran cities were stored there, the stories say, but no greedy adventurer has ever returned alive from Koskatep.

*From "Compiled Traladaran Folk Tales",  
by Master Teldon, Specularum, 995 AC.*

## **SECRETS OF KOSKATEP, LEVEL 3**

This level can be reached only by going down from room 19 of Level 2 A (the lower ruins of the Ogre city of Kotesch, published in Issue 4 of Threshold magazine). PC's will find themselves in **Level 3, Ranesh**, a gnoll city that also was the dwarven city of **Karrast**, the red orcs city of **Rak** and the hutaakan city of **Ranekek**.



The text below was 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!

### Level THREE, GNOLLS WERE HERE

This level was a powerful gnoll city during the time of their invasion of Traladara and the following centuries (900 - 600 BC). The many treasures gnolls amassed in centuries of war and pillaging have been taken long ago by ogres and giants and now only some stone statues resembling gnolls remain.

This level is inhabited by several dangerous ghosts.



*Statuette of a human worshipping Pflarr*

*The secret:* This level was really a hutaakan city before the gnolls arrived, hence the statues. The ghosts are hutaakan priests and gnoll shamans that The Last One below awakened as guardians. There is still a sub-level with the ghost of a powerful hutaakan priest guarding his still-intact tomb and willing to help any group aligned with Ixion, the Traldar immortals, or Pflarr.

After the Darkers take control, groups of 3-5 wizards and priests of the Sons of Night can occasionally be found here, checking on the ogres and giants above.

**Random Critters** table and **Wandering Parties** table of level 2B (in issue 3 of Threshold magazine) still apply here. On a roll of 1 on 1d6, roll 1d20 on the Random Critters Table. There is also a 1% chance on 1d100 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 wishes so.

The initial layout of this city was created by the towers of the Temple of Pflarr (now Level 4, below) that the hutaakans built after the destruction and burial of Ieronyx (Level 5). Over the four centuries of hutaakan occupation the temple became a subterranean level of a larger city, that later was occupied and modified by orcs, dwarves and gnolls. Ranekek-Rak-Karrast-Ranesh, i.e. this fourth level of Koskatep, is therefore composed of four very different cities overlapping each other.

**Relevant history**  
**(expanded from issue 1 of Threshold)<sup>1</sup>**

**1412 BC:** After the time of the Nosferatu Kings has ended with the traldar crusades against the undead, Hutaakans took the site (then called Ieronyx) from the powerful nosferatu Lord Keiros, exterminating his followers, and renaming the city Ranekek (Light over the Darkness). Hutaakans and Traldar settle the city, which over four centuries establishes peaceful relations with nearby giants and fairies. Trade relations are established with the newly-arrived Hin of the modern Shires, as well as the Nithian empire.

**1257 BC:** Wogar's Tribe of the Red Orcs conquer and enslave the people of the Atruaghin Clans, as well as several cities in the area of modern Darokin. Their raids also endanger Hin and Hutaakan lands, and some Orcs occupy the Western Cruth mountains and hills.

**1147 BC** Alik Rokov of Corescon, a nosferatu follower of Nyx, leads a rebellion against the hutaakans and lay siege to Pflarkhepet (Achelos) and Ranenek, but is eventually defeated.

**1095 BC** Hutaakans and Traldars establish peaceful relations with the men of Minroth who have colonised the southern islands.

**1021 BC:** The Red Orcs sack and conquer Ranekek, renaming it Rak. Several Hutaakan priests survive by hiding in the lower levels. They eventually become additional guardians of the hidden temple of Ixion (Level 13).

**1018 BC:** An attempt by the hutaakans to reconquer Ranekek from the orcs fails.

**1000 BC:** Gnolls' invasion, Pflarkhepet is sacked and hutaakans and humans enslaved. The Red Orcs of Rak ally with the gnolls and maintain rulership of the city.

**954 BC:** Despite the successful campaign of the Traldars against the gnolls, the west is still in their hands and orcs still rule the city of Rak. In these years a large dwarven expedition reaches the Cruth Mountains. After several battles a dwarven army defeats the red orcs and conquers Koskatap-Rak, renaming it Karrast. The dwarves are soon in constant warfare with the gnolls that rule over the region.

**950 BC:** A tribe of Orcs escaped from the Shires, the GreySlayers, live in western Traladara, raiding settlements despite efforts to defeat them by humans and dwarves.

**933 BC:** Vandar humans come from the west, entering soon in conflict with gnolls and dwarves.

<sup>1</sup> Several details of this history come from my "[History of Traladara](#)". Other histories of the region may differ, as the one presented in issue 1 of Threshold magazine (History of Karameikos by Simone Neri, page 37), but this timeline could easily fit into them too.



**912 BC:** The dwarves are finally defeated by the gnolls, who build their own city of Ranesh over the ruins. Shamans of Ranivorus and Thanatos begin to study the Starlake<sup>2</sup>.

**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.

**820 BC:** An alliance of GreySlayers Orcs and Bloodhands Gnolls attack Dimi and Luln, the king of Traladara Sergej Halarov lead an expedition to defeat them, but is only partially successful.

**810 BC:** Traladaran adventures fight orcs in the Shires but are exterminated. Continual warfare in the west against orcs and in the north against gnolls.

**805 BC:** Irena Halarov, niece of Sergei, is queen of Traladara. She promotes war against orcs and gnolls, who still rule over many wilderness lands.

**801 BC:** Orcs conquer the Shires once more.

**800 BC:** Traladara establish relations with Alfheim elves and Nithian colonists in Darokin. Callarii elves arrive in Traladara and help against the gnolls.

**760 BC:** Battle of Vatresh, Ivan Ivanov defeats the gnolls, Bloodhands tribe is nearly destroyed.

**758 BC:** Ivan Ivanov is elected king of Traladara. He leads several campaigns against the orcs in the west to try to aid the halflings. The gnoll city of Vashak (Achelos) is burned to the ground. Despite Ivan's victories, Ranesh stays in the hand of gnolls.

**744 BC:** Hin rise up against their orcish overlords; the Time of Heroes begins.

**700 BC:** Thanatos, Immortal of the Sphere of Entropy, helped by the Immortal Ranivorus, corrupts the Pharaoh of the Nithians. The Pharaoh turns the Nithian empire toward worship of Entropy.

**695 BC:** With the secret intent of taking Ranesh, The Nithian pharaoh (now corrupted by Thanatos) sends an expedition to conquer Traladara. Traladarans unite and win.

**609 BC:** The Restoration of the hin nation; good relations with Traladara. Hin and Traladaran attacks against Cruth gnolls and orcs increase, undermining their control of the area.

**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.

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<sup>2</sup> As explained in issue 1 of Threshold magazine (Mirror of Eternal Night, page 144), Koskatep is the center of a millennia old struggle between Nyx, Ixion, Thanatos and Hel.



*Hutaakan bas relief*

The surviving parts of **Ranekek**, light over darkness in hutaakan, are depicted in yellow in the map. The huge temple area, dedicated to Ixion was in rooms 7, 8, 9 and 10 (the much larger Pflarr temple is below on level 4). Room 1 and 2 were the beautiful gates of the city and rooms 14-16 were a great compound used as military fort, priest and wizards academy, library and warehouse, but its internal divisions are long gone, replaced by gnolls. Room 18 was a temple of Kagyar,

area 20 was a public bath and room 25 a small shrine to Valerias. The other buildings of the city, often in wood, are long gone.

The parts added by orcs, i.e. the city of **Rak**, are depicted in brown. Of that only area 21 still survives, the former command center and quarters of the orc king, later re-used by gnolls as a burial ground.

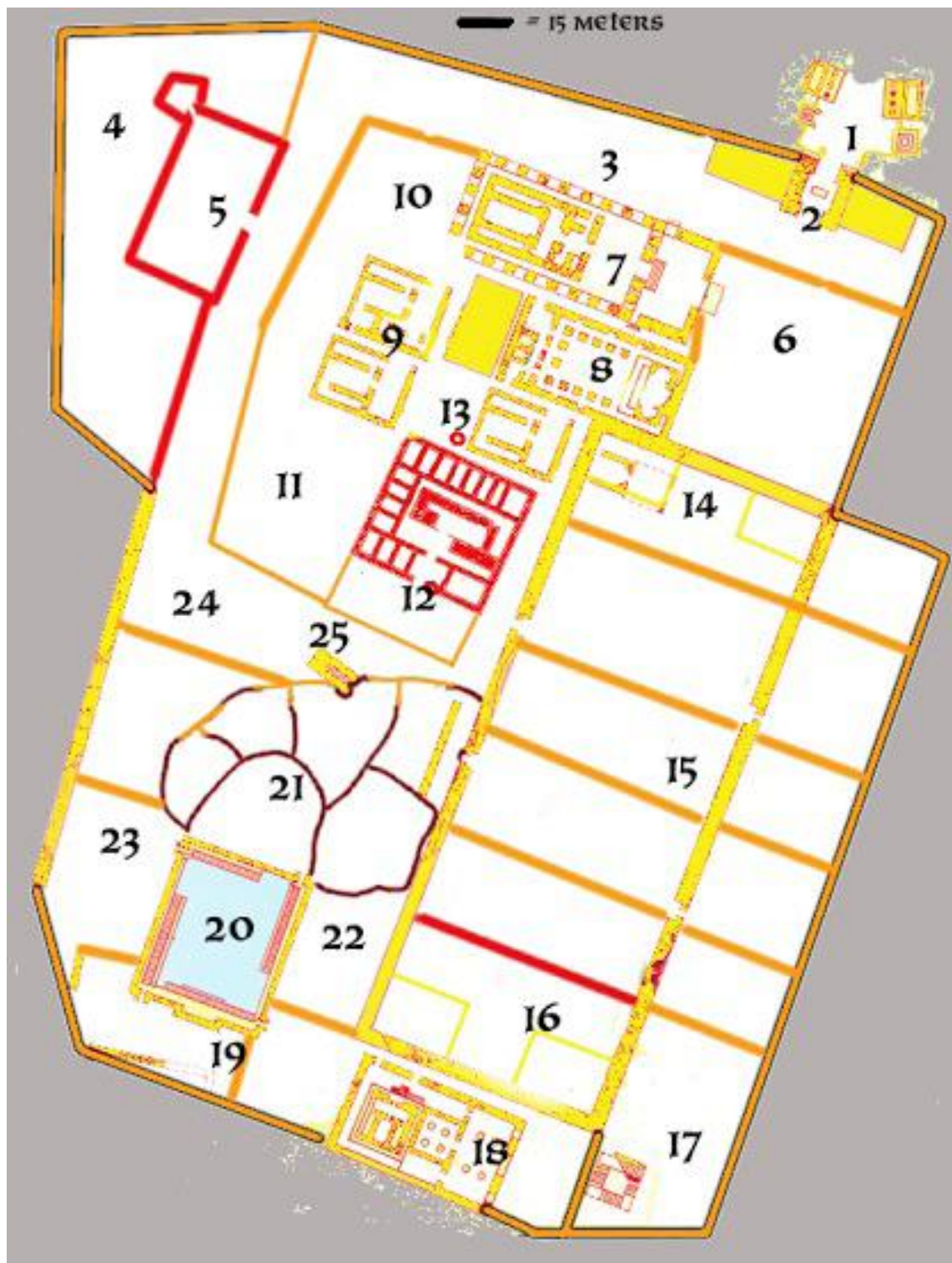
The parts added by the dwarves of the city of **Karrast** are in red. The dwarven city was mainly developed in the lower Level 4, the former hutaakan main temple (be sure to watch for further details in Threshold 6!). Room 12 was a crypt that the gnolls sacked and later used as larder. The intact tomb of the hutaakan priest is hidden under it. Room 5 was a fortress that gnolls re-used with the same purpose.

The parts added by the gnolls of the city of **Ranesh** are in orange. They added several external and internal walls, the latter used to delimit common rooms according to function and ranks (i.e. rooms for females, children, warriors, shamans and so on).

In grey is solid stone, very difficult to dig. In white are the “open” areas. Open should be considered a relative term as much of the terrain is rugged, full of debris. The ceiling, at the level of the former hutaakan city walls (3 meters), is frequently supported by crude columns (not depicted in the map) that ogres and giants raised when they decided to build over the gnoll city. The area is completely dark if PCs do not bring light. If they do bring light, of course, it makes the party quite visible.



# koskatep, level 3



### 1 - The Gates.

Former entrance of the city, once it was sculpted and decorated with hutaakan statues that orcs damaged and gnolls modified to look more like them. **Carrion crawlers and giant centipedes** have dug all around the gates. Several nests and 1d5+1 of either can be encountered here.



After the Darkers come, this area will be cleared of critters, but it will take some time before all the nests can be located and the cache in the north eastern tower will not be immediately found.

### 2 - The Internal Gates.

These gates were massive in hutaakan times but were taken by the orcs nevertheless, then by dwarves and by gnolls, finally by ogres and giants. Partially destroyed and crumbled now, it's possible to see parts of the gnolls' repairs, made from the bones of fallen dwarves.

After the Darkers arrive, the skeletons will be removed and it will not be possible to animate them anymore.

### 3 - The First Court.

In hutaakan times this area was a great street of clay with shops, but orcs removed them all when they took the city, leaving an open court (with wooden

(1) - There is a secret cache of precious hutaakan and dwarven statues hidden in the basement of the north eastern tower, buried here by gnolls before they were defeated by the ogres and giants in 603 BC, and never found since. One of the statues, a hutaakan silver figurine, is magical and can cast a detect evil spell once a day and a find the path spell once a month. Each power requires an activation word in hutaakan however.

(2) - The Last One will animate 1d20 **dwarven skeletons** here if necessary

(3) - Many non magical weapons and object of the gnolls of 603 BC, the last that were defeated and killed here, can still be found among the dust. The court is so big that two



palisades now long decayed) for better use of archers in case enemies could enter from the main gate. That however did not prevent dwarves from defeating the orcs, gnolls from defeating dwarves, and ogres from defeating gnolls. As at least four major battles were fought in this area, occasionally a massive **Vision** (HD12 or more) of all the armies that fought here appears.

After the Darkers take control not much changes at first, as critters will continue to wander here and it could take years before the area is inhabited again by someone.

#### 4 - The Soldiers Court.

This area, enclosed by still standing dwarven and gnollish walls, was a residential area in hutaakan times but the houses were razed partially by orcs and completely by dwarves and gnolls. It normally has at least two groups of **critters** like the previous area.

After the Darkers arrive the area will remain pretty much the same for quite some time, even if eventually they plan to train their soldiers here.

#### 5 - The Dwarven Tower.

This building was raised by dwarves, then the ogres and giants burned it with the gnoll defenders still inside. The interior is full of burned, brittle wood with some bits of melted weapons, armors and skeletons. The **Ghost** (HD14) of a gnoll shaman was reanimated here by The Last One to guard the area, and he'll throw him at the Darkers or at any previous intruder.

After the Darkers arrive they will succeed in talking to Feyogh, turning him into Nyx's service. Eventually they will give him a new body and some apprentices, and he'll set up his new home and workshop here in the former dwarven tower.

groups of **critters** (from the random table in issue 3 of Threshold magazine, page 208) can always be encountered here.

(4) - A great gnoll warrior named **V'ughrax** was slain here by giants, his magical armor and lance (of gnoll weight and size) are still half buried here, quite damaged. The Last One will raise him as a powerful undead when he'll decide to strike back at the Darkers (after their first conquest of the ruins).

(5) - The gnoll shaman name is Feyogh, and he is very tired of his condition. He's willing to defy The Last One and renounce his former faith to have a new life or at least oblivion.

## 6 - The Temple Court.

This area is full of rubble and has at least one group of critters. There is also the **Spectre** (HD7) of a gnoll warrior who has gladly joined the Last One's side to have the chance to kill again. His name is Mough, but he only says it so that his victims will know who killed them.

After the Darkers take the city the court will probably stay empty for quite some time. Eventually they will clean it to turn the former temple into a temple of Nyx.

## 7 - The former Temple of Ixion.



*An image of Ixion survived behind now decayed gnoll trophies.*

Here The Last One left the ghost of a reanimated **gnoll shaman** (HD14) named Jevuugh, once a priest of Ranivorus in this same temple. All the

(6) - In the southwest corner of the square some dwarf buried several 10d10 gold coins before the city fell to gnolls. The coins are very valuable but have a curse upon them: anyone trying to sell them to anyone who isn't a dwarf will have some misfortune, a small one if only few coins are sold, a major one if many coins are sold.

(7) - Jevuugh has still his well hidden treasure cache, even if most of the items are now useless to him, including potions of cure serious wounds, levitation, strength and clairaudience, a ring of seeing, three clerical scrolls and even a flying carpet.



decoration of the temple of Ixion were already destroyed by orcs when the gnolls arrived, dwarves used it as a temple of Kagyar. The ogres destroyed most of the trophies dedicated to Ranivorus that were hung to the walls, but Jevuugh redecorated with his trophies, mostly dead people, during the centuries. He has also recently animated as **zombie servants** a party of 5 orcs from upper Kotesh (level 1) that disturbed him.

After the Darkers take control they will destroy Jevuugh and his minions, but they will not find his treasure and will not immediately repair the temple.

### 8 - The former Hall of the Sun

Once an area attached to the temple of Ixion, this building was used as deposit or stronghold by orcs, dwarves and gnolls, and indeed several gnoll skeletons still lay where they were killed by ogres and giants. The Last One will animate **3d20+5 skeletons** here to fight the Darkers invasion, but will not do so for single intruders. Only walls and columns remain of the original building, most of its once beautiful carvings and decorations were scraped off long ago by orcs and gnolls.



*A survived wall painting of Pflarr receiving offers, in the former Hall of the Sun*

(8) - The gnoll skeletons still have their possessions, mostly pieces of armors, weapons, coins, little mirrors, copper figurines, pins, bracelets, bands and other small decorative objects that could be of great value for historians and sages.

After the Darkers take control they will clean the hall from skeletons and what other objects are here, and eventually they will repair the building to be the sacristy of the near temple as it once was, but it'll take years for this to happen.

### 9 - The late priests' residence

Once the residence of priests both in hutaakan and dwarven times, this building has been damaged in the last battle between gnolls and ogres in 603 BC. Now **three wraiths** dwell here, former low level gnoll shamans that the Last One animated just for fun. They will attack anyone entering the building.

After the Darkers arrive, they will destroy the wraiths and discover Adrian. They'll realize what he is and they'll help and comfort him, to the point that he'll join them and will begin to live between this level (with the guards in area 13) and level 5 (with Lord Keiros).

(9) - **Adrian**, a young Traladaran thief (T4), is hidden in one of the rooms, terrified by the wraiths and the place in general. He'll be happy to join any living being walking around. He'll say he comes from Rugalov and he entered this dungeon with his friends, now all dead. If the PCs talk to him a bit, they might notice that there is something strange in Adrian. In fact he was part of the group whose skeletons are now in area 19. The Last One captured him and then left him here for 400 years<sup>1</sup>. Adrian isn't aware of the passing of time, but if he sees the skeletons of his former companion his eyes will go blank and he'll attack the PCs. If they do not kill him, Adrian could realize what happened to him and will be able to give a rough description of The Last One's appearance and powers (see Level 7).

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<sup>1</sup> Adrian is technically undead, similar to an Undecayed (a zombie that retains memory, intelligence and almost a normal aspect, see *Mirror of Eternal Night* in *Threshold* issue 1, page 146), that The Last One killed, animated and mind controlled.



### 10 - The North Court

Several **Shrieker mushrooms** grow here and their noise could alert Jevuugh in area 7 and draw the wraiths of area 9, in addition to any other wandering monster. The court is full of litter and debris among which some ancient objects could be found.

After the Darkers arrive they will eliminate the Shriekers and the court will be empty.

### 11 - The South Court.

As another big battle was fought here, several **gnoll skeletons** lie around and The Last One can animate 1d100+10 of them when the Darkers arrive. A strange eerie mist also hangs in this area, and a soft sob can be heard sometime.

After the Darkers takeover, the gnoll remains will be removed. The Darkers will speak to Enialee and will persuade her to join them. She'll be sent to the Dark Fairies level again, but her loyalty will remain with the Darkers, and she'll spy on her former friends for them.

### 12 - The dwarven crypt.

This crypt was rebuilt by dwarves over a previous hutaakan tomb complex. It contained 16 sealed tombs of dwarven warriors, that were partially opened and pillaged by the gnolls in 912 BC. After 603 BC, ogres and giants built their city (levels 2A and 2B) over Ranesh and didn't disturb the tombs. The Last One has animated **1d10 gnolls as zombies** (or mummies, depending on the PC's level) here. Periodically Hasiq (see the box) destroys them and The Last One bring them back. Now 11 tombs are opened but they still contain the

(10) - Among the rubble of this court there is also a precious ring of life protection, once belonging of a dwarven priest.

(11) - **Enialee**, a banshee, also dwells in this area. A powerful sidhe sorceress in life, she was cursed with undeath for a great crime, and was even cast off by the Dark Fairies of Level 6 and given to The Last One, that in the meantime has placed her in this area. Enialee doesn't really want to fight for him and can be persuaded to join a party that will give her some hope. She's still afraid of true death but also sick of her present "life".

(12) - From the southwest tomb of the complex there is a forgotten and hidden hatch that leads to a small sublevel, made of a spiral corridor that lead to the intact tomb of **Hasiq** (Ghost, HD14). He was a powerful hutaakan priest of Pflarr and former leader of the city, killed by an assassin in 1.022 BC just a year before the city fell to red orcs. Unable to rest, Hasiq returned from death to continue his duty: he tried

gnolls' grave goods, mostly rusty weapons, decayed cloth and leather and some ornaments made of copper or semiprecious stones. There is also a gnoll dagger +1 hidden among the rubbish. Four dwarven tombs miraculously survived gnoll pillaging, being walled up and well hidden. They still contain fine dwarven weapons and armors, and even an axe +1 and boots of speed (dwarven, and they need a lost dwarven word for activation). If the dwarven tombs are discovered, it's possible that **one of the dwarves** will rise from the dead to defend his goods (he could be anything from a simple zombie to a spectre or more, depending on PC's levels and the DM). The remaining tomb, small and well hidden, is a hutaakan one that the dwarves strangely didn't open. It contains mostly decayed clothing, a few ancient coins and a diary, written in hutaakan. It seems that the priest that compiled it aided the dwarves in capturing the city from the orcs, and that's the reason why he was buried here and left undisturbed. As that happened after the gnoll invasion, the diary could contain clues leading to the Lost Valley of the Hutaaka.

to fight orcs, gnolls and ogres whenever he could, and he aided Ixion's priests when they recaptured the city. Several times he was almost destroyed, the last two times by the Last One, but somehow he always managed to avoid final destruction. Hasiq's grave goods include several magical objects like an amulet of protection from evil, one of remove fear, a potion of cure serious wounds, a rod with continual light and speak with dead. Items that Hasiq would give only to PC's aligned to Ixion, Pflarr or other immortals willing to fight against Hel, Nyx and Thanatos. The spiral corridor to Hasiq's tomb is filled with traps, but he can deactivate them.



*Walls inside Hasiq's tomb*



After the Darkers take control, they will eliminate the undead gnolls and discover the dwarven tombs. It could take some time however before they discover the hutaakan priest tomb above the sub-level with Hasiq's tomb. In the meantime Hasiq will begin to plot against them and search for any possible ally to hinder their plans.

### 13 - The statue.

This is a statue of Ranivorus of surprisingly good craftsmanship, that the gnolls made at the time when they ruled the city. It seems that the statue was partially destroyed, probably by ogres, but someone repaired it. The Last One indeed has animated the **statue** as a stone golem to attack intruders.

After the Darkers take control they will remove the debris, destroy the statue, the wraiths and post **an ogre, a priest of Nyx and two warriors** on guard duty here, slowly rebuilding the former hutaakan vestibule.

### 14 - Gnoll Room.

The Last One has created a **troll ghoul** (HD7) here. It has the abilities of a troll and a ghoul. It was once an ally of the gnolls when the city was in their hands, but is not an intelligent undead now. It will attack anyone entering this area, once an hutaakan palace long ago destroyed and reused by orcs, dwarves and gnolls.

After the Darkers arrive they will destroy the troll ghoul but will not proceed to renovate and re-occupy this area for a long time.

(13) - The partially ruined hutaakan palace beyond the statue was once the vestibule of the Pflarr temple below (Level 4), later became an orc city and then a dwarven city. A monumental staircase once reached the temple, but the gnolls buried it when they conquered the city, fearing the dwarven dead below. The Last One closed the passage again recently, but it's possible to get down if some debris is moved out of the way (a 2-hour job, at least). Anyone doing this, however, will be attacked by **1d6 wraiths**, former gnoll warriors that The Last One hid here.

(14) - Buried in a corner of the room there are some gems and jewelry, among them also a ring of protection +1 and a ring of truthfulness.

## 15 - Gnoll rooms.

These were the main rooms where the gnolls lived at the time when the city was in their hands. Objects and decorations from those times still litter the gigantic rooms, some more than 30 meters by 75 meters. In hutaakan times this area had streets and houses but only traces of the foundations remain now. There are old blood stains and bones in several places, residues of ancient battles. Just for fun, The Last One gave superior intelligence to some **Rockfangs and Ropers**, and now they are organizing themselves and have one of their nests in this area, with a whole series of tunnels leading to other levels that could prove quite dangerous to invade.

The Last One also placed an **Undead Chimera** in this area. The monster does not attack the rockfangs and ropers but will attack any other person roaming the area.



*Common objects from hutaakan times*

After the Darkers arrival, the Chimera will be destroyed, while they'll try to find a sort of arrangement with the rockfangs and the ropers, which they consider interesting creatures.

(15) - The walls and grounds of this area are pocketed with many hidden caches, left by the inhabitants over the centuries' reconstructions. Among the coins, heirlooms, and precious (though nonmagical) weapons, here PC's could also find a bag of holding, muzzle of training, and a lamp of long burning.



## 16 - Hall of the gnoll king.

This room was used by the gnolls as the main hall of their king. The gnoll leader and his guards were indeed slain here by the invading ogres and giants in 603 AC, and the Last One obviously reanimated them when he took the ruins in 227 AC. Even if only dust and bones remained of them, he not only brought them back from death but turned them into vampires. So now the **gnoll king Vudish** (HD 10) and his **4 guards** (HD8) dwell patiently here and in the next room, happy for the moment to kill the occasional adventurers that come in this area. The guards sleep in coffins here by day, heavy stone slabs protecting them from light and **two bronze golems** (former hutaakan statues, treat them as obsidian golems with HD6) created by The Last One to protect them and the king when they sleep. Even by night the king is often alone in area 17. The gnolls occasionally cooperate with rockfangs and ropers of area 15 to slay adventurers, but they do not like Haishin't (area 20) and avoid him entirely, unless forced to fight along him by The Last One's will. They are loyal to the Last One and believe he'll lead them to more glory and revenge against the enemies that killed them.

After the Darkers take control, the gnoll guards will be destroyed, while Vudish could manage to escape, see area 17. The bronze golems will be reused by them with the same purpose, to attack intruders that enter the room and do not know an appropriate passing word.

(16) - The 4 gnoll guards have magical weapons and armors (+1) and several more trinkets, coins and jewels they stole mostly from around the city or from unfortunate adventurers in the last centuries. The DM could decide randomly what other treasures they might have.

17 - Gnoll king room.

This was the throne room of the gnoll king. The elaborate seat and palanquin, decorated with skins and bones of enemies, humans and not, is still in the south west corner. **Vudish, the gnoll king**, often dwells here by night, while by day he's usually inside his coffin, once the sarcophagus of an hutaakan priest that he has redecorated his own way, and that sits on the southeast corner of the great room. Vudish keeps pets, **giant rats and bats** that he'll throw against opponents to have time to fight or, if cornered, to flee. It will be only a



*Statue of Vudish  
in Thyatian style*

momentary retreat however, as Vudish will pursue and try to slay anyone who dared to violate his private room.

After the Darkers arrive they will try to destroy Vudish but, at the DM's discretion, he could be able to escape in level 10 to join the Last One.

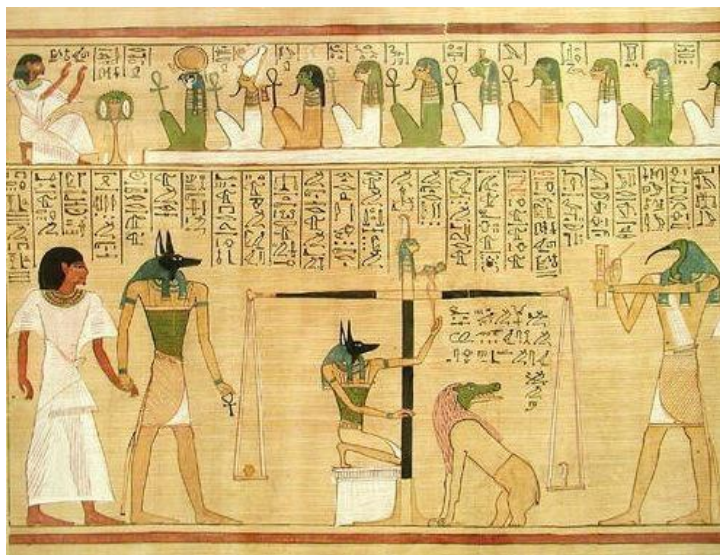
(17) - Under Vudish's coffin there is a secret cache with money, jewelry and magical objects, at least a wand of illusion, a potion of invulnerability and any other object the DM deems appropriate.



## 18 - Former temple of Kagyar

Though the gnolls conquered the city from dwarves in 912 AC and almost destroyed this temple, they were never able to reuse it for their purposes, as the temple was infested. Indeed, a powerful **Ghost** (HD14) dwells here, unable to leave. It's Daim, the dwarf cleric that fell trying to protect the temple from the gnolls. Vudish (area 17) and Hashin't (area 20) would never admit it, but they are in fact quite scared of Daim, as the Last One commanded them to destroy him but they failed. The Last One thought he would have to do the job himself, but then he found a better way. He's tormenting Daim from afar with vision of his failure, and is convincing him that the Starlake has been used already by Thanatos' followers, and now the domain of the Lord of Death is spreading from Karameikos to Rockhome, and all the dwarves will be exterminated. Daim tries to fight back, but he is still bound to his temple and cannot fight The Last One effectively, unless someone helps him.

(18) - Daim has a secret cache of potions, scrolls and magical objects once belongings of the temple, that he managed to hide from his enemies. He would give them to allies who are willing to assist him against The Last One.



*Ancient hutaakan scroll*

After the Darkers take control they will be able to bring Daim to their side. His faith in Kagyar has in fact been shaken too much by centuries of undeath, and he will embrace Nyx, unless the PC's can find him before the Darkers and bring him to their side

### 19 - Former baths.

The ruined stair from room 19 in level 2A (in Threshold magazine issue 4) descend to the northeast corner of this room, a former hutaakan bath area of which almost nothing is left.

The corpses of five adventurers lie in the southeastern corner, slain by The Last One personally almost 4 centuries ago. Not much is left of them but as they came from the once Kingdom of Achelos, their possessions, weapons and coins have great historical value. The Last One will animate them as **skeletons** (but with HD3) when the Darkers attack.

After the Darkers arrival the five skeletons will be destroyed and removed, the area cleared a bit to prepare it for future uses ,

### 20 - The Pool.

Here lives **Haishin't**, a Nuckalavee, with his hideous court of 2d10 **ghouls** and a colony of giant **water termites**. No one knows for certain the history of nuckalavees, but the most common story says they're a tribe of undead centaurs, cursed for having committed some terrible crime. Haishin't isn't really willing to talk about his past, but could be forced to. He'll send the ghouls and the termites to fight, and if the fight goes badly he will sink into the muddy pool and through the nixies ways he will go to level 6 and then report to The Last One.

After the Darkers arrival, Haishin't will be destroyed or will escape to level 10 to join the Last One's troops, as the DM prefers. His ghouls will be

(19) - Haishin't (of room 20, below) is often in this area too but he'll retreat toward the pool as soon as he spots someone, to better use the aid of his water termites, sending the ghouls to attack first.

(20) - At the bottom of the pool there is a submerged passage eventually leading to the nixies ways and therefore up to the well in upper Kotesh (Level 1, area 7, in issue 2 of Threshold magazine) and down to level 6, the Dark Fairies level. Obviously it is very dangerous to try to use these passages.

destroyed, while the termites will probably find refuge in the nixies ways. Eventually the Darkers will purify the waters, but it will take years before the pool will be used again as a bath.

### 21 - The former orc king rooms

The orc vampire **Tumog** and his five human **vampire thralls** (former Darkers) lurk here, as happy to slay passing adventurers as Hashin't and Vudish. The orc and gnoll vampires and the nucklavee cannot suffer one another, as everyone of them thinks he should be the only master of this level, so clever PC's could even succeed in turning one against the others.

This area was once the center of the orc king's power, but later the dwarves used it as storage and the gnolls as burial ground, so not much is left of orc times, the orcish objects were later brought much later by Tumog, who also found several gnoll tombs and pillaged them for coins, weapons and armors.

(21) - Digging the area would result in several more findings of ancient orc and gnoll tombs, but it would take several days to do this.



*Gold pectoral now among Tumog's possessions*



After the Darkers take control they will kill Tumog (or at least they will try to) and eventually they'll also dig the area searching for any useful or historical objects, but it could take months or even years before they have the time to do it. The Darkers will obviously try to turn their former comrades (Tumog's thralls) against him, and will probably succeed.

### 22 - Gnoll room, former bath area

Once part of the hutaakan bath, this area was used as living quarters by orcs and gnolls. Now Haishin't, his ghouls and his termites often wander here (from areas 19 and 20), therefore critters are rarely found here (half the chance) and the whole room is clearer than many others.

After the Darkers take control they will clean the area but it will take time before they will be able to rebuild and use again the whole former bath area.

### 23 - Gnoll room, former bath area

The same as area 22 above.

After the Darkers take control the remains will be removed. If the adventurers were Darkers however they will be reanimated as **Uncorporeals** (see *Mirror of Eternal Night* in *Threshold* issue 1, page 146) and will dwell here unless given a mission or new bodies.

(22) - The south east corner has a pile of weapons and objects amassed here by Haishin't for future uses, mostly old gnoll weapons and armors, some coins and other objects.

(23) - Beside a pile of weapons and object in the north west corner, as room 22, the remains of five adventurers are also piled here. The DM could decide that they have interesting objects or maybe clues about their mission, as they could be Darkers, followers of Ixion, Hel or any other immortal who discovered Koskatop and send someone to investigate it.

## 24 - Former market place

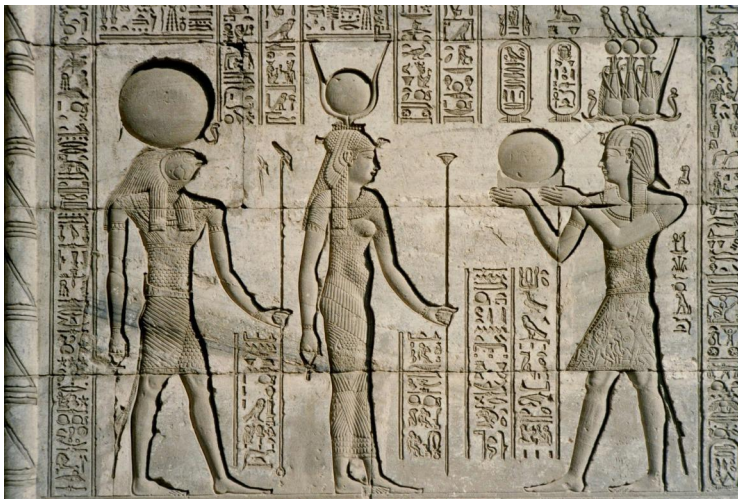
This was a huge square in hutaakan, orcish, dwarven and gnollish times, always used as marketplace. Remains of stalls and merchandises centuries old still litter the floor, and the area has a double chance to attract critters.

After the Darkers arrive they will eliminate the Black Pudding and slowly clear the litter, in the hope of being able to use the marketplace again somewhere in the future.

## 25 - Former shrine of Valerias

Once a shrine to Valerias, this place was smeared and damaged by orcs, ignored by dwarves and avoided by gnolls, as they found it disquieting. Therefore the original statues and frescoes dedicated to the goddess of love are still partly visible here, even if damaged.

Under the former altar there is a tombstone, once dedicated to a priest of Valerias. It can be opened with some efforts, to reveal a tall, apparently **human-like female**, with greenish skin and strange clothes.



Altar bas relief depicting Valerias and other figures

(24) - A big **black pudding** is thriving among the debris, engulfing anything and anyone who wanders by. Inside it several interesting objects could be found. The Last One can also animate **2d20 skeletons** here and will do so when the Darkers attack.

(25) - The occupant of the tomb isn't the original priest of Valerias, as The Last One destroyed her long ago. It's **Biree-67F**, a cyborg<sup>2</sup> that the Last One somehow found and decided to use for its purposes. The Last One indeed succeeded in changing the cyborg program, but made an error in leaving it in this shrine, where Valerias' power hasn't been broken. The immortal was able to slowly influence the cyborg through the centuries and now, should the Last One awaken or someone discover her, Biree could effectively decide not to obey him, even if she could need some guidance and persuasion from the PC's.

<sup>2</sup> See [Cyborg; Class III Terminator](#)

After the Darkers arrive, they will find Biree's tomb and will speak to her. She will be able to resist The Last One's commands, but she'll not immediately join the Darkers either. Depending on who will be able to influence here, Biree could become a powerful ally of the party she'll choose, a priest of Benekander<sup>1</sup> or anything else the DM will decide.

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<sup>1</sup> See ["Benekander"](#) (by Aleksei Andrievski) or ["Benekander"](#) (by Marco Dalmonte):

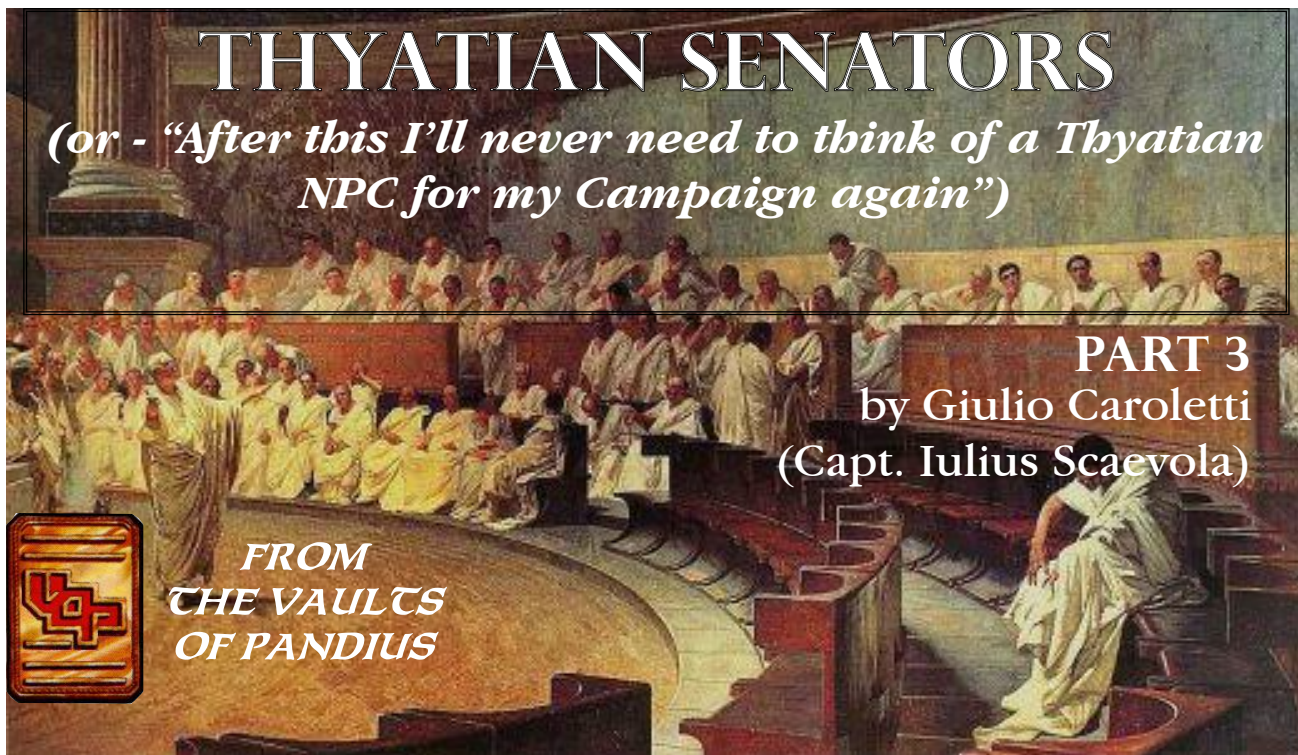
## THE BATTLE IN THIS LEVEL

When the Darkers will first attack, the Last One will send against them skeletons from areas 2, 8, 11, 19 and 24, the wraiths in area 9, the zombies in area 12, the golem and the wraiths in area 13, the troll ghoul of area 14, the undead chimera of area 15, and eventually also Mough (area 6), Jevugh and his zombies (area 7), the gnoll king and his minions (area 16 and 17), Haishin't and his minions (area 20), Tumog and his vampires (area 21). The latter three in particular will be very unwilling to risk their lives and will survive the battle, as will V'ugrax (area 4), because The Last One will not employ him the first battle, but will put him in command of the others, much to their displeasure, when he'll decide to strike back at the Darkers.

In the first battle The Last One will also try to employ Feyogh (area 5), Adrian (area 9), Enialee (area 11), the rockfangs and ropers (area 15), but they all will resist and defy him and will join the Darkers almost immediately. The same goes for Tumog's human vampire thralls (area 21).

Daim (area 18) and Biree-67F (area 25) could instead be persuaded later by the Darkers, but they could also join another party or the PC's. Hasiq (area 12) will never join The Last One or the Darkers, nor other parties unless aligned with Pflarr, Ixion or another immortal determined to fight entropy.





*From the author:*

Dear readers, it is time again to delve into the depths of Thyatian politics. This is the third part in our gallery of Thyatian Senators and their families, acquaintances, relatives and enemies. The first two parts of this article can be found in Issues #3 (Thyatian Senators pg 209) and #4 (Thyatian Senators pg 188). The first two installments detailed the Constituency Senators, i.e. those tied to a specific dominion of the Empire, either because they are dominion rulers or their senatorial representatives, or because they are elected by the citizens of that dominion.

This third instalment, instead, will focus on the forty aristocratic families who hold a Senatorial seat reserved for the head-of-the-family (who styles himself or herself with the *pater* or *mater familias* monicker in ancient Thyatian fashion).

In the next and final part of this article, we will end up describing the Conscripti, Senators that have been permanently raised to the seat through their merits - among whom is the Emperor - and the ecclesiastical senators, priests, diviners, sages and prophets from all over the Empire.

## 2. PATRES (40)

The hereditary representatives of the 40 senatorial aristocratic families.

### 1) **Actavius, Rutiliano.** Gens Sergia.

Rutiliano Actavius (born 937, F7, N) is the uncle of Geraldan Actavius, Count of Actius. An old fighter who served in the infantry legions of Thyatis, Rutiliano never married, although he has two illegitimate daughters and four grandchildren. After his retirement the seat will pass to Heraclius Actavius, oldest son of Count Geraldan.

Rutiliano has a medium-sized villa in the outskirts of Thyatis City, close to the sea. He is attended by a young woman secretary, **Alicia Termoli** (born 975, Bard 4, NG), who leads a small but efficient staff of servants and a half-elf lawyer from Terentias, **Cletian Swargas** (born 966, T (Rake) 6, LG), his legal advisor for all matters concerning lawmaking and politics - both Alicia and Cletian live at Rutiliano's villa most of the time.

Rutiliano is an intelligent, efficient and respected member of Gens Sergia, and his past as a military man makes him the ideal person to discuss and seek compromises between the Sergii and the Zendrolian faction. See also entry for *Actius*<sup>1</sup> for more information on the Actavius family.

<sup>1</sup> In issue #3 of Threshold magazine, page 217.

### 2) **Aenobarbus, Rufus.** Gens Zendrolian.

**Rufus Aenobarbus** (born 940, F4, TN) has always been a strong supporter of Emperor Thincol. He was only a young military official during the Alphatian Spike Assault and fell in awe of the northman gladiator. Rufus is a towering man with a red beard and red hair (in classical Thyatian his name and surname literally translate to "Red Copperbeard"). He keeps his appearance 20 years younger thanks to *potions of longevity*.

Rufus has two sons, the elder, **Domitius** (born AC 972, F4, NE) is his attendant in the Senate and is going to be the next senator of the family. Rufus's youngest son, **Publius** (born AC 976, F3, N), is a naval officer.

### 3) **Aurelian, Tracin.** Gens Aurelia.

**Tracin Aurelian** (born 946, C2 (of Vanya), TN) is a bleak and cold man who thinks that everyone should bow to the Church of Thyatis. Moreover, he applies to the letter the Immortals' word. Aurelius is a tall, gaunt man with a salt-and-pepper beard and a few grey locks on his head.

He and his wife **Laurentia** (born 951, C2, of Tarastia, LN), an unsmiling woman obsessed with duty, have two sons, **Adrian** (born 972, C7, of Vanya, TN), who is very much like his father, and **Tracin** (born 981, C1, of Tarastia, LG), a young apprentice priest and religion scholar with a much less grim view on life than that of his parents and older brother. The Aureliani are long-time clericalists, and many family members are priests or involved with religious matters.

4) **Colonna, Alessandro.** Populares.

**Alessandro Colonna** (born 942, F10, NG) is a tired, middle-aged man who seldom attends the Senate. Once he was an important military officer and senator, but he has turned inwards and is now mostly concerned with his own family and little else. His wife Alexia (950 - 986) died giving birth to his younger daughter **Paola** (born AC 986, NW, NG), whom Alessandro considers the solace of his old years.

Alessandro's older son **Andreas** (971-998) died falling from a horse during military service in the Hinterlands. Alessandro's heir is now **Gabriele** (born 975, W2, LG), his second son, a sickly young man and apprentice wizard, though his studies are slowed by his health issues. The third son **Bartolomeo** (born 977, F6, TN) is an adventurer and mercenary.

5) **Cubitius, Kymon.** Gens Zendrolian. Praetor Urbanus.

**Kymon Cubitius** (born 951, NM, TN) is a skilled politician, an old and staunch supporter of Thincol. He is the Praetor Urbanus, and has held this position continuously since 991. As Praetor, Kymon is not the most efficient of men: in typical Thyatian fashion, he weighs almost all important cases according to their political outcome. Moreover, he is mostly disinterested, as an aristocrat and a political "big player", to the plight of common citizens. Kymon is a tall, slightly overweight middle-aged man with sparse grey hair, intelligent, dark eyes, a short-trimmed beard and a beautiful, warm, baritone voice. He married very early to **Elena Porpora**, distantly related to Senator Silenus, and they have four adult children.

6) **Di Francesco, Gabronius.** Gens Aemilia.

The Di Francesco are the last family to enter the forty, and hail from Kerendas.

**Gabronius di Francesco** (born 968, F2, NG) is an expert lawyer. A calm and polite man with a slight stutter, he is not particularly vocal in the Senate, but is known as an intelligent and skilled jurist, committed to the ideals of the Aemilii.

Gabronius was only 16 years old when he married with **Alexandra Ditullio**, then 14, a marriage planned by their parents. **Andros Ditullio**, Alexandra's father and a member of the landed gentry of Kerendas, faked his own death before he was convicted for treason as he had embezzled money belonging to the Crown, with the help of Gabronius's father Esculapio (940 - 997). To increase the chances of the family fortunes being saved, Alexandra was married to Gabronius, and the Crown didn't strip the Ditullio family of all their possessions, as it would have been likely otherwise.

Gabronius and Alexandra are, luckily, very fond of each other, although the presence of the 'dead' Andros, who is living under an assumed name in Selenica, and comes once in a while to visit his daughter, wife and grandson, is considered by Gabronius a black spot on his otherwise immaculate life.

His heir is **Drosos** (born 984), a very shy boy of sixteen.



7) **Docerius, Lucius.** Gens Sergia.

The Docerii are a noble family that moved to the Isle of Dawn many centuries ago, having elected their residence in Redstone.

**Lucius Docerius** (born 932, F11, CG) is a retired adventurer who has married a former adventuring companion, **Althea Penhaligon** (born 939, T11, CG), a member of a lesser branch of the noble Penhaligon family. Lucius is utterly disinterested in politics, although he votes with the Sergii, mostly because of family tradition and out of personal dislike for most other families and parties, from the emperor's cronies to the republicans. Lucius tends to spend the winter in Thyatis and the summers hunting and fishing in Redstone, where he is a popular, respected figure.

His oldest son **Lupus** (born 974, F15, CG) is a mighty fighter and adventurer, well-renowned beyond the boundaries of the Thyatian Empire.

Lucius also has two daughters, **Lyanna**, an adventuress (born 976, W8, CN) and **Helena** (born 982, NW, NG).

Lucius's niece Periandra is the elected Senator for West Portage (see dominion entry for West Portage<sup>2</sup>).

8) **Dominikon, Varos.** Gens Aemilia.

**Varos Dominikon** is the First Aide to Jarandros Monikar<sup>3</sup>, the Empire's Ambassador to Alfheim. A corrupt Senator,

<sup>2</sup> In issue #4 of Threshold magazine, page 205.

<sup>3</sup> For more information on Jarandros Monikar and Varos Dominikon, see also "[Jarandros Monikar](#)" by Giampaolo Agosta.

Varos has forged a network of contacts in Alfheim with the goal of taking over the monopoly of commerce between Alfheim and the Empire. He is almost never seen in Thyatis.

His current heir is his cousin **Laurentius** (born 965, F3, TN).

9) **Evergetes, Maria.** Gens Zendrolian. Aedilis.

The Evergetes family is among the ruling families of the Shadow Hand, and **Maria** (born 949, T11, NE) is one of its most prominent figures, and at the same time a strong supporter of the Emperor. Maria is also an Imperial Aedilis, something that allows her a special chance of using her contacts and the Shadow Hand's companies for public work, making it especially easy for her to bribe on account of the Shadow Hand and to favour the Shadow Hand's illegal activities.

Maria's current heir is her oldest son **Nicander** (born 975, T3, NE).

10) **Fabius, Quintus.** Gens Aemilia. Praetor of the Southern Isle of Dawn.

The Fabius family is one of the most ancient and renowned families of the Empire - as well as one of the largest. They have several branches spread all over the Empire, from wealthy horse breeders in Kerendas to renowned jewellers in Biazzan, from landowners in Tel Akbir and Ochalea to shipping company owners on the Pearl Islands and in Westroure.

**Quintus Fabius** (born 968, F8, TN), the family's Senator, inherited his seat from his father Maximilian (940 - 990), who died

fighting the Alphatians in one of the many petty skirmishes on the Isle of Dawn. Born at Finnegar's Watch while Maximilian was commander there, Quintus grew up surrounded by soldiers and has followed his father's footsteps. He is almost never in the Senate, working as an army General and a Praetor on the Southern Isle of Dawn. Quintus has sound relationships with Count Furmenglaive, Uthgaard McRhomaag and Scott Minnear. He is yet unmarried, but has recognized one son, **Maximilian Jr** (born 998), that he had during a short relationship with **Feadyne Furmenglaive** (born 976, F3), a military engineer related to Count Furmenglaive.

11) **Furmenglaive, Phileus**. Gens Sergia.

See dominion entry for "Furmenglaive"<sup>4</sup>.

12) **Ordekis, Goron**. Gens Zendrolian.

**Goron Ordekis** (born 928, F3, TN) is the current Senator of the aristocratic Ordekis family. A supporter of the Emperor and former Ambassador, the old Goron and his wife **Clelia** (born 934, NW, TN) have two sons: **Tiberius**, (born 952, F14, LG), Goron's heir, currently a General, married with two boys; **Androclian** (born 954, NM, TN) who has spent most of his time working in the family possessions on the Thyatian Mainland, married with one daughter; Goron and Clelia also have one daughter: **Ekatherine** (born 958, T(Rake) 2, NG), who married a diplomat, **Calpurnius Pisces** (950 - 990), and then ran from home with her two daughters and her son, seeking refuge by Goron claiming

that the man beat her and their children. Goron Ordekis refused to bring the man over to authorities, but had him discreetly removed from office and then killed by adventurers.

Goron's brother **Gabronius Ordekis** died quite young in sickbed. Gabronius's son, Lord **Decimus Ordekis**<sup>5</sup> (born 953) is the Ambassador to the Minrothad Guilds and a former Captain of the Thyatian Legions and former aide to the Ambassador in Alfheim, Jarandros Monikar. Decimus has little time for his private life, and he is not married. However, during his time in Alfheim he had an affair with an elven lady, who gave him a daughter, **Livia** (born 987).

13) **Hyraksos, Valerius**. Gens Zendrolian.

**Valerius Hyraksos** (born 940, NM, NE) holds the seat of this wealthy family from Machetos. The Hyraksos were more or less the only ones in Machetos to profit from Stefan Karameikos's selling of his homeland to Emperor Thincol in change for Traladara. They are fierce supporters of Thincol, and at the same time are trying to keep the relations between Karameikos and Thyatis as smooth as possible. The Hyraksos family is despised in Machetos by most of the commoners, and the late Lucine Hyraksos, father of Valerius, was a personal enemy of Duke Callastian Jowdynites.

Valerius is a smooth-talking, smiling man who cares for nothing but his family's wealth. He is not politically ambitious, and sees his position in the Senate only as a way to further his family's interests. Valerius is married to Klara Kone, member of a rich

<sup>4</sup> In issue #3 of Threshold magazine, page 222.

<sup>5</sup> For more information, see "[Lord Decimus Ordekis](#)"

and influential Biazzan family. They have four daughters, all married to wealthy, powerful and noble husbands all over the Empire and Karameikos. However, Valerius doesn't think any of them is suited to rule over the family, so he is thinking to make his brother heir by asking the dutiful daughters to renounce their hereditary claims.

His brother **Constans** (born 944, T11, NE) has acted as his right hand all along, taking especially care to deal with all the more fishy aspects of power: from corruption to murders. When he was younger he was an adventurer and this toughened him enough to make him able to deal with some of the worst stuff himself - he is the most reliable killer in the service of his older brother. Constans is married to Evangelina Colonna (born 950, T1, TN), member of a lesser branch of the aristocratic family. They have two sons: **Thincol** Hyraksos (born 973, F3, LN), who is quite different from his father and is learning politics and fighting in Karameikos; and **Stefan** Hyraksos (born 976, T3, NE), who on the other hand is too similar to his father. Stefan's most burning desire is to build himself a dominion somewhere in Karameikos or on the outskirts of the Empire. If this fails, he has a plan B: wait for Valerius to bestow the senatorial seat to his father and then find a way to inherit it himself - after all, he thinks his brother Thincol will not be too interested in it and will make way for him.

Valerius's cousin **Lucius** (born 940, F11, LN) was Duke Stefan's preceptor and left Thyatis with him to become Minister of War, a position he has held for 25 years now. Lucius is married to **Katarina**, a

famous Traladaran singer and entertainer, now retired.

#### 14) **Kendasius, Stephanos**. Gens Aemilia.

The senatorial Kendasii are a branch of the Counts of Kendach family.

**Stephanos Kendasius** (born 966, F2, TN) is first cousin of Countess Julia of Kendach (see dominion entry for Kendach<sup>6</sup>). Their grandfather **Maximus** (900 - 976) separated the senatorial seat of the family from the dominion seat, abdicating the title of Count in favour of his older son **Alexius** (926 - 985) but relinquishing the senatorial seat in favour of his younger son **Paulus** (936, F3, TN), who passed the seat to Stephanos in 997.

Stephanos' younger sister, **Martina**, married **Ursus Allatrian**. Their daughter **Galatia** (born 979, M2, NG) is lady-in-waiting to Asteriela Torion, and currently lives with her in Sundsvall, the capital of the Alphatian Empire (see also dominion entry for the Duchy of Thyatis<sup>7</sup>).

#### 15) **Kerendas, Malderius**. Gens Aurelia.

Youngest brother to Maldinius Kerendas, **Malderius** (born 976, F9, TN) holds the family's senatorial seat. He is completely in awe of his oldest surviving brother, whose limits he greatly underestimates. Malderius is tall, blond, with blue eyes and a short, blonde-red beard, and is an extremely handsome man, although not a womanizer like his brother. In fact, Malderius has fallen

<sup>6</sup> In issue #3 of Threshold magazine, page 230.

<sup>7</sup> In issue #4 of Threshold magazine, page 202.



in love desperately with Iliana McRhoomag, the aristocratic representative of the McRhoomag family (see below). See also dominion entry for Kerendas<sup>8</sup> for more information on the family.

16) **Korrigan, Georgos**. Gens Zendrolian. Quaestor of the Duchy of Thyatis.

A supporter of Eusebius, **Georgos Korrigan** (born 945, T7, TN) is the corrupt Quaestor of the Duchy of Thyatis. Among the richest aristocrats in the Empire (the Korrigans are powerful landowners in the Duchy of Thyatis and Retebius), Georgos keeps a foot in every possible shoe, from the Shadow Hand to the Aurelii, providing lavishing funds to the Church of Thyatis to pass himself off as a pious man devoted to the Immortals, only to boost his image. However his best bet is on Eusebius: he thinks the Emperor's heir will sooner or later dispose of his father Thincol, and wants to be on the safe side when that happens.

17) **Lentulus, Darian Cornelius**. Republicans.

**Darian Cornelius Lentulus** (born 964, F12, LN) is the political heir of the ideals of the revolutionary republican Luscinia and the leader of the Republican Party, just like his father before him. They were not stripped of the senatorial title because they took no part in the *Conjuratio Lusciniae*, judging it immature and destined to doom, something that was proved right beyond doubt (nobody in the Republican Party doubts that - also because those few who

originally did were eliminated one after the other, although it is not commonly known, and Darian himself doesn't know about it).

Darian truly believes that a federal Republic would be the best way to rule the Thyatian Empire, but knows that the Emperor and the Senate are too strong, and have too much popular support, to be attacked. At the moment, the only way is day-to-day fight in the Senate, as a way to increase the Republicans' visibility (and popularity) among the people. Darian has adventured often, and sometimes still does, generally to raise funds or to gain popularity through grand, generous (and dangerous) quests.

18) **Lucinius, Julian**. Gens Sergia.

Many consider **Julian Lucinius** (born 969, T2, NE) the quintessence of Gens Sergia: he is renowned for his uncertainty in taking any position in the Senate, and is almost completely dependent on some of his more determined colleagues for his decisions in the Senate. His is one of the most ancient families in the Senate, but his family has slowly gone into decadence both from a moral and an economical standpoint.

Julian's father Euripides (938 - 984) died penniless of syphilis. By then, Euripides's long-estranged wife Tallia (948 - 989?), a member of the disgraced Lentulus family, had already left the household for Glantri, where she disappeared in 989, apparently during a deer hunt in Belcadiz. The Lucinius seat passed temporarily to Ascan Lucinius (958 - 996), who should have held it until Julian became 21. A distant relative, Ascan tried in every legal (and not, like corruption and bribes to functionaries) way to get permanently the seat for himself, but

<sup>8</sup> In issue #3 of Threshold magazine, page 231.

only got himself arrested and ended his days in the jails of the capital. Thus, Julian took the seat in 990, and has not distinguished much himself in the Senate since - moreover, Julian's personal history does not raise much pity from the cold-hearted politicians in there.

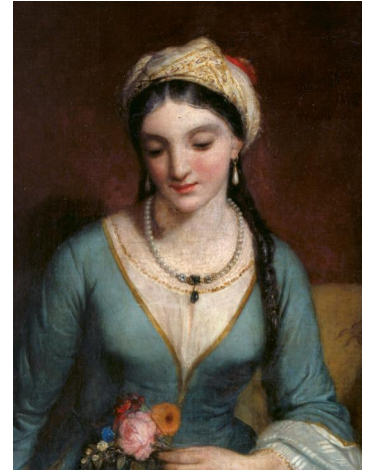
Julian hates most of the more aristocratic and snobbish Senators and is actually faking at least part of his ineptitude, in the meantime trying to build a personal web of informants in order to harm some of the people he dislikes the most, like Aemilia Scaurus, Archduke Derentarius, Duke Maldinius Kerendas, Duke Leonidas Ruggiero and Duke Callastian Retebius. In this respect, he has attracted the attention of the shrewd Angelarian Canolocarius, who is wondering how he can use the man to further his own goals.

19) **Lycandronion, Aemilius.** Gens Aurelia; Censor.

**Aemilius Lycandronion** (born 947, C3 (of Khoronus), LN) is a very formal person - honest and reliable, but a bit of a bore because of his very technical view of politics. Occasionally annoying even to his fellow Aurelii, he has proven useful to their cause because of his expertise and dedication. He is a more than irreprehensible Censor, a position he has already held successfully twice before.

His wife **Cecilia Patrizio** (born 960, NW, TN) is the younger sister of Senator Marco Patrizio (see below). Their oldest daughter **Aemiliana** (born 985, W1, TN) has started to study magic. Aemilius and Cecilia also have two boys, **Damian** (born 988) and **Gavin** (born 991).

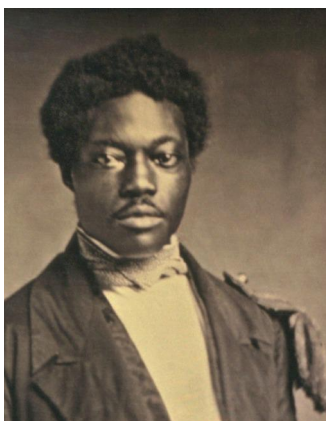
Aemilius's younger brother **Plinius** (born 950, F1) is married to **Devota Palikratidius** (born 960, NW), a skilled lutist and cousin of Commander Thyarius. Plinius has written several tragedies and comedies, with mixed-to-positive critical and public reactions. His comedic works show a humorous and humane, low-key approach to religion, while his tragedies



*Portrait of Devota Palikratidius*

attack the nihilist stances of Thyatian society, from corruption to party zealotness. Devota and Plinius have also written several songs together, some for Plinius' comedies, that have become firm staples of Thyatian folksingers all over the inns of the Empire - some, like "The dwarf who thought he was a cat" and "Hattian Soldier, Glantrian Spy" are among the most popular novelties of the last five years all over the Known World.

In 964, after the death of Aemilius's mother, Aemilius's father **Lepidus** (924 - 980) married a Nuari woman, **Tabitha Mensah** (939), who had already a young son by her previous husband. Lepidus gladly adopted the child as his own, and he grew up as **Harantius Lycandronion** (born 960, F23, LG). Harantius has held the position of General Governor of Redstone for the last ten years.



*Portrait of Harantius  
Lycandronion*

Lepidus and Tabitha had two other children, the mountaineer, skier and explorer **Mitasula** (born 966, T(Rake) 6, LG), and the accomplished singer and lutist **Polibius** (born 970, Bard 3, NG). Harantius and Aemilius are quite fond of each other, being very much Lepidus' sons, and they actually have more in common than Harantius and his true half-siblings.

#### 20) **McRhomaag, Iliana.** Populares.

The McRhomaags are barons of Caerdwicca (see dominion entry for Caerdwicca<sup>9</sup> for more information about the family). The senatorial title is traditionally given by appointment of the current baron to a member of the family, so changes in holding this seat are more frequent than what is usual among other families. **Iliana** (born 979, T1/F1, NG) has been recently appointed as the new senator of the family, and is enjoying



*Portrait of Iliana*

her new life in Thyatis, although she misses her half-witted, humorous family, uncle and the Isle of Dawn seas and marine landscapes.

#### 21) **Metellus, Severin Valerius.** Gens Sergia.

**Severin Valerius Metellus** (born 943, F9, LN) is a strong-willed man from an ancient family of the northern mountains of Kantrium. He is married to **Eliana Ghellariar** (born 955, T6, NG), a former adventuress and sister to the wizard **Marcus Publicola Ghellariar** (born 956, W9, LG). In the last years, Severin has turned inward and is less and less interested in the Senate's activities. He is one of the least seen of the aristocratic Senators, and everyone in Thyatis considers his political career dead. In fact, he's started showing symptoms of Alzheimer's disease, but refuses to admit it even to himself, something that might be of dire consequences to his physical and mental health.

Severin and Eliana have three sons: **Lucius** (born 976, F6, LN) and **Damian** (born 977, F5, NG), both adventurers in Karameikos with the assumed names of "Jacob Boar" and "Harold Boar"; and **Quintus** (born 978, NM, LN), who is the heir since the resignation of senatorial rights by his older brothers. All three sons are a disappointment to their parents (well, at least to their father): Lucius and Damian for choosing the adventurer's life, and Quintus because he left the family and went to live in the capital to become a scholar as soon as he turned eighteen.

<sup>9</sup> In issue #3 of Threshold magazine, page 220.



22) **Murco, Traianos.** Gens Aemilia.

The Murco family is very old, having been mentioned historically in the City of Thyatis well-before the establishment of the Empire. Mostly disinterested in politics, **Traianos** (born 934, W2, CN) is a scholar with many interests and only occasionally shows up at the Senate, generally when his relations in Gens Aemilia push for him to attend to especially close or important votings. Traianos became Senator after the childless death of his older brother **Quintus** (925 - 994), formerly a General on the Isle of Dawn.

Traianos's older son and heir **Postumio** (born 966, W4, CN) is a snobbish and effeminate aristocrat who shares his father's disinterest in politics. The younger **Alexandra** (born 970, F6, LG) and **Stephania** (born 973, T(Rake) 6, LN), both adventurers working together and living in Karameikos, have more in common with their energetic mother **Ignitia Saragat** (born 950), a red-headed woman from the petty nobility of Carytion, forcibly wed to the unloving Traianos when she was only 15 years old. One of the reasons might be that neither of the daughters are children of Traianos, but of Ignitia's long-time lover Quintus - yes, her husband's brother - although they don't know it - yet.

Moreover, Quintus had an illegitimate, unrecognized son, **Gabronius Gordon** (born 977, T3, NE), from a Dunael woman. Gabronius is a member of the Thieves' Guild of West Portage. He knows that his father is Quintus Murco, and is working with the Guild to forge some papers to show that Quintus and his recently deceased mother **Leona** were married, in order to claim the Senatorial seat (and the

rich inheritance) of Quintus Murco for the Guild - with a healthy profit for himself too. Now that Leona is dead and Gabronius has come of age, it is almost time to reap the harvest of their misdeeds.

23) **Oesterhaus, Horst.** Pure Ones.

See dominion entry for Hattias<sup>10</sup>.

24) **Orsini, Marco.** Populares.

**Marco Orsini** (born 968, F8, NG) is the son of **Sergio** Orsini, an aristocrat-turned-Populares as a means to try to restore a prominence of his ancient family in the Senate. Sergio resigned in favour of his son a few years ago after an apoplectic attack.

Marco is not too tall, thin, with amber eyes and sparse light brown hair striped with gray, and a beautiful, aristocratic-Thyatian face.

Marco is married to **Blanca Bernini** (born 974), the daughter of a former Populares senator, and has one son, **Paolo** (born 994), and two daughters, **Marcia** (born 995) and **Gabriella** (born 998).

25) **Octavian, Aper.** Gens Sergia.

**Aper** (born 936, F7, TN) is the head of the Octavian family, a Kerendan family who is traditionally aligned with Gens Sergia. Aper has completed the whole *cursus honorum*, having been twice Censor and Consul, and several times Quaestor, Praetor and Aedilis, leaving a positive and honorable mark on his life as a Senator, although his most fond memories are those of fighting with Thincol

<sup>10</sup> In issue #3 of Threshold magazine, page 225.

during the Spike Assault counterattack, something that improved his odds in the political career. He loves dearly his many sons and daughters, and misses sorely his dead wife **Nemea** (944 - 992), who died of cancer a few years ago.

His older son and heir, **Aiace** (born 968, F15, LN) is a General of the Thyatian legions.

Aiace's cousin **Hector** (born 974, C11 (of Tarastia), AL TN), recently became, at 25, the youngest ambassador of Thyatis, to the Kingdom of Ierendi (999).

#### 26) **Palykratidius, Silvia.** Gens Aurelia.

An aristocratic wizard, **Silvia** (born 971, W6, NG) is the eldest daughter of Commandant **Thyarius Palykratidius** (born 950, C23, of Vanya, LN), who resigned from his family seat early in his career.

Thyarius is the head of West Reach, the officers' training school in Kerendas. He is stern, short-spoken, intolerant of mistakes, enraged by backtalk. He is cold but loyal to Thyatis, well-beloved of his men, and the preserver of grand traditions in Kerendas.

Thyarius's younger brother **Mauritius** (born 954, W9, LN) held the position for many years, before taking Silvia as apprentice, then as her personal aide as soon as she came of age, and then passing her the seat two years ago. Mauritius has been elevated to the seat of meritory Senator himself. He is not as stern as his brother, probably because of his personal strife to reconcile his (secret) homosexuality with his public persona.

Mauritius married late to much younger **Diana Delectibus** (born 972, NW, NG),

whom he considers a friend and loves like a father. They have a little boy, **Thyarius** (born 993) and a little girl, **Mauritia** (born 996). Diana has become aware of her husband's sexuality, and is disconcerted and confused. She didn't marry Mauritius for love, but because of aristocratic family arrangements, and was relieved to find Mauritius a discreet, gentle and caring husband, who did not force himself on her. When she learned of Mauritius's homosexuality, she reacted with rage, feeling cheated, but now she has settled more in the situation, also understanding that Mauritius is a gentle man who really cares for her and for their children.

Silvia is a scholar and researcher who votes according to the desires of her father, of whom she is incredibly fond of, up to the point that she only sees his good sides and never the bad ones, and is only mildly interested in politics.

Silvia is married to a commoner adventurer, **Jurgen Neuenberg** (born 966, F9, LG), politically a very moderate Hattian nationalist sympathetic to Gentes Aurelia and Zendrolian, practically seldom at home as he wanders a lot on the Isle of Dawn and in the Sea of Dread.

Jurgen is the brother of the Hattian philosopher **Rudolf Neuenberg** (born 967, F8, CG). A fierce enemy of the Storm Soldiers, Heldannic Knights (he was one from 988 until 992) and Pure Ones, he is famous for having written a successful book, "How to become stupid," subtitled "About the stupidity of Hattians in general, and of Heldannic Knights in particular," for which he was prosecuted *in absentia* and sentenced to death in Heldann, and for which he earned the hate of most of

Hattias. Rudolf has left his homeland to live in the Five Shires since 995, but still has good relationships with his family. As a scholar, Rudolf is interested in multiverse theories and is an expert in dark cults of Thyatis.

27) **Patrizio, Marco.** Gens Aurelia.

**Marco Patrizio** (born 958, C3 (of Vanya), TN) is a member of the lesser branch of the counts of Lucinius family. In recent times, his grandfather Vhakas Patrizio, the younger son of the first Count of Lucinius and of Alexandra Glantri, replaced Alexandra's elder brother Canius Glantri among the 40 noble families, following the *Conjuratio Lusciniae*. He is thus a distant relative of Senator Appius Glantri.

Marco is married to **Demetria Palykratidius** (born 966, C2 (of Vanya), NG) the youngest cousin of Commandant Thyarius (and sister to Devota, the wife of Plinius Lycandronion, see above). Their son **Mauro** is ten years old.

28) **Paulus, Tiberius.** Gens Aemilia.

Pater familias of the Pauli, **Tiberius Paulus** (born 942, F1, TN) is an expert and clever politician, and one of the leaders of the Aemilia family (see also dominion entry for Kerendas<sup>11</sup> for more information on Tiberius Paulus).



*Portrait of Tiberius Paulus.*

His son **Kritias** (born 976, F1, TN) served shortly in the army before becoming his aide.

29) **Penhaligon, Alexius.** Gens Aurelia.

**Alexius Penhaligon** (born 926, C7 (of Odin), LN) is the Senator for the Penhaligon family, of mixed Dunael/Thyatian ancestry. Though they came originally from Westrouрке, they have now settled permanently in the Duchy of Machetos. Alexius was raised in Selenica, where his father was for several years the Thyatian Envoy in the city, and he continued to live there as a university student. He became then a priest of Odin and then a professor of religion at the University. He married Selene Vorbian and their first child was born in Selenica in 959, but she died in 969 and Alexius moved to Biazzan to take a professorship there, leaving his son in Selenica to be raised by private educators. Things went not well with him - **Colin Julius Penhaligon** broke all ties with his family and ended up an exile in Norwold (born 959, C11 (of Pearl), CE).

Alexius re-married another aristocrat, **Aurelia Mactator** (born 944, NW, NG), a cousin of the Archduke of Terentias, and they had two other children: **Alexander Aghlin Penhaligon**, a druid (born 972, D9, TN), and **Alorian "Lorn" Penhaligon**, his heir presumptive, an adventurer and scholar (born 979, W5, LG). Alexander and Lorn are experts in dark cults in Thyatis, and are friends of Rudolf Neuenberg (see above, entry for the Palykratidius aristocratic family).

<sup>11</sup> In issue #3 of Threshold magazine, page 231



30) **Porpora, Silenus.** Gens Aemilia.

An elderly man and a rich aristocrat directly descended from Thyatian Emperors, **Silenus Porpora** (born 937, NM, NG) is a small, wrinkled man, with a short-trimmed grey beard, and a clean-shaved head. The Porpora are powerful merchants and own many lands in the Imperial Territories, on Hattias and on the Isle of Dawn. They control a great chain of food industry, dealing from the production of grain and fruits and wine to shipping companies to bring raw wares and finished products to other parts of the Empire and neighbouring nations.

The Porpora are traditionally rivals of the Evergetes, and Silenus suspects that they must have some ties with the Shadow Hand, but he is careful around them since he is aware of the strong support (and the big financial backup) they provide to the Emperor's faction. The family riches and his personal prestige have made him one of the most important senators of the Aemilii.

His heir is **Caesar Porpora** (born 962, NM, NG), who spends most of his time doing business in the Sea of Dread, and lives in a family castle on Hattias. Caesar despises the Storm Soldiers and considers himself an enemy of Count Oesterhaus. However, he knows of the Count's power and relies mostly to indirect means to investigate and counteract the Count's activities.

One of his most trusted men is **Publius Cornelius Lentulus** (born 964, F7/Werewolf 7, LN) second cousin to aristocratic Senator Darian. Lentulus, a long-time adventurer who contracted lycanthropy while living in Nouvelle Averoine, is charged with the office of

finding adventurers and conducting missions for Caesar, and is allowed free reign and a solid financial backing for his activities.

Of the other sons and daughters of Silenus, worthy of mention is **Aurelia**, engaged to Senator Kallistos Vorbian (see below).

31) **Prothemian, Nizam.** Gens Aemilia.

The Prothemians are related to Empress Gabriela and the former Imperial family. Originally they were an aristocratic family from Tameronikas. An Alasiyan/Thyatian mixed family, they own pasture lands and farms in Biazzan and Tel Akbir.

Although the old father **Massentius** (born 915, T(Rake) 3, TN), still lives, he has resigned the seat in favour of his eldest son **Nizam Prothemian** (born 940, T6, TN). Nizam dislikes strongly his sister **Olivia**, the Archduchess of Karameikos, as she considers her in league with Archduke Stephan's 'independence' move. He blames Thincol and his foolishness and corruption for the loss of undeveloped but rich Traladara, and is one of the most vigorous opponents of the Firestorm Archdukes of Westrouke and their separatist ambitions.

Nizam is married to the Tel Akbiran **Zhora Karadja** (born 950, NW, NG), and they have three daughters and one son.

32) **Retebius, Alexandros.** Gens Aemilia.

**Alexandros Retebius** (born 973, F7, TN) is the younger brother of Callastian, and will keep the Senatorial seat as long as Callastian does not have a son or daughter that turns 21. Alexandros is jealous of Callastian's fame, and feels he was not liked

enough by his mother, who spent most of her time concentrating on his older brother. He pretends to be a loyal brother, but is just desperate to do something on a grand scale to prove the better of the two. He wouldn't actually really harm his brother, but if he can't do something big himself to show off, he would gladly put his brother through some mild public embarrassment to teach him some humility.

33) **Scaevola, Lucius Sergius.** Gens Sergia.

**Lucius Sergius Scaevola** (born 959, F11, NG) is an important senator of gens Sergia. A leading personality in the Senate, he was a well-respected naval officer and is a courageous fighter. He uses his personal reputation to refute the idea that the Sergii are cowards and cravens. He is more nationalistic than most of his fellow Sergii senators, and is very critical of the too-pacifist ones, as he doesn't want his faction to be considered just the ethnic-Thyatian branch of the Philosophers. However, he is a far cry from a militarist or expansionist, and has been a vocal opponent of the Hinterlander invasion ('strategically we have no need for the Hinterlands, and militarily we are already too thinly spread over the seas - we don't need to fight an invasion war just to keep the military trained, do we?').

Although his father **Mucius** (born 931, F9, NG) still lives, he has resigned in favour of Lucius a few years ago, to devote himself to his beloved olive trees in the family estates in the County of Lucinius.

Lucius is married to **Anna Aenobarbus** (born 971, T(Rake) 3, TN), a sculptress and second cousin to Rufus Aenobarbus, and

they have two sons, **Luscinius** (born 996) and **Valerius** (born 997).

Lucius's younger brother **Ceras** (born 964, F6, LG) is a military engineer and former army officer. He is married to the Helskiran of Alphatian/Ostlander mixed descent **Kyria Grand** (born 972, W3, NG) and they have one son, Iulius (born 998).

Lucius's youngest uncle **Publius** (born 948, F9, LG), a formerly twice elected Senator, has two sons, **Iulius** (born 980, F3, LN), who is a young army officer in the Hinterlands, and **Phileus** (born 983, F1, CG), who entered the Thyatian Navy at 16.

34) **Scaurus, Aemilia.** Gens Aemilia.

The Scauri are one of the two branches of the original Gens Aemilia, the other being the Pauli.

**Aemilia Scaurus**

(born 944, NW, TN) is one of the main taleswomen of her Gens, a skilled and expert woman with a **s t r o n g** personality, firmly rooted in **t r a d i t i o n a l** Thyatian values. Paradoxically, Aemilia shares



many of the *Portrait of Aemilia Scaurus* Thyatian prejudices against women - she thinks that the best women, and the only one suited to politics, must be very un-womanlike, and can only come from the aristocracy. She is contemptuous of most of the young upstart

women in the Senate, and sneers at Thincol's difficulties at raising properly his daughters Stephania and Asteriela. But, after all, he is just an upstart himself.

Aemilia was married to **Patrizio Retebius** (born 943 - 991?), uncle of the current duke, but they divorced several years ago, in 985, and Patrizio resumed adventuring ('the foolish old mutton') and ended his days as a prisoner of some minor khan in Ethengar. Unbeknown to her (and to anyone in the Retebius family), Patrizio had a daughter with a maidservant of the khan's wife.

Their oldest daughter **Leana Scaurus**, a youth of 21, is Aemilia's aide at the Senate, and the heir presumptive of the senatorial seat. Leana shares many of her mother's political ideas and personal beliefs - with a few exceptions. She is more modern, has grown to like some of the 'upstarts' in the Senate, and is a good-looking, humorous woman who doesn't think it is 'bad', after all, to 'feel like a woman'. After her mother's divorce, she gave up her father's surname.

### 35) **Sirenides, Janine.** Populares.

The Sirenides are a family of mixed human/sirine<sup>12</sup> blood from Actius. As a special mark of the fey blood running through the family, only about one child in ten in the family is a male. By a special decree of the Counts of Actius, ratified by the Senate a long time ago, the Sirenides family name is bestowed upon all offspring

<sup>12</sup> Sirines are aquatic feys described in AD&D 2E Monstrous Manual (p.314) and in D&D 3.5 Monster Manual II (p.185). Offspring of humans and sirines are always female. The Sirenides family has to be considered fully human in game terms.

of a Sirenides daughter, although the child is entitled to renounce to the name and take the father's if he/she so desires upon reaching adulthood.

**Janine Sirenides** (born 957, C10 (of Calitha), CG) is the current Senator. She has been in charge since her father **Corbus** (930 - 988?) disappeared on a trip to Ierendi.

Janine's mother **Paiza** (936, T4, CG) was completely broken by Corbus's disappearance and has mourned him ever since.



Janine is married to *Bust of Janine Sirenides.*

### **U l t i m u s**

**Actavius** (born 955, C10 (of Calitha), NG), a cousin of Count Geraldan. They met while studying the faith of Calitha Starbrow and adventured quite some time together. They have three daughters. The oldest, **Teodora** (born 980, T(Rake)1, NG) is heiress to the senatorial title.

### 36) **Teng, Lee-Dai.** Philosophers.

An Ochalean scholar, **Teng Lee-Dai** is a distant relative of the Archduke. See dominion entry for Ochalea<sup>13</sup>.

<sup>13</sup> In issue #4 of Threshold magazine, page 191.



37) **Urbania, Albert.** Gens Sergia.

The current Urbania family has much Darokinian blood, as they are a minor branch of the family who moved to Darokin several centuries ago.

**Albert Urbania** (born 942, NM, TN) is the current Senator. He lived in Selenica until



*Portrait of Albert Urbania.*

he was 21, when he was invited by the Thyatian Senate to take his rightful position as heir to the Urbania seat.

Most of his family still lives in Selenica, where they have strong ties to the H a l l o n i c a M e r c h a n t

House. Their allegiance to the interests of Thyatis and Gens Sergia is at best questionable, and Albert's son **Alanus** (born 967, T7, CG), a skilled adventurer and thief, is the first member of the family to have been born in Thyatis since the 6th century.

38) **Von Hendriks, Karl.** Pure Ones.

The Von Hendriks are one of the most important families of Hattias.

**Karl von Hendriks** (born 950, F9, LN) is a honest man and a loyal supporter of the Empire. He dislikes the racist excesses of the Storm Soldiers, and being only a

moderate nationalist, he has taken a liking to Hugin Kahlweiß (see entry for Hattias<sup>14</sup>).

Karl's heir presumptive is his second son **Frederik** (born 974, F4, LN), a good fighter and soldier. Karl's first son **Erich** (born 970) disappeared a few years ago while on a mission in Davania on a Heldannic Warbird.

Karl's cousin **Ludwig** (born 951, F11, CE) is the infamous Baron of the Black Eagle in Karameikos; **Donna** (born 953, NW, TN) sister of Ludwig, remained in Hattias with the rest of her family when he moved west. She married a distant cousin from a minor branch of the family, **Ocastar von Hendriks** (943 - 974). A wealthy landowner in Hattias, Ocastar, nicknamed "the Mighty", was a reckless man who spent most of his time adventuring and hunting, leaving the administration of the land to his late father's staff. Harald died only 28 years old during a monster hunt in Halathias. Their only child is **Anna** (born 972, C7, LN), who joined the Heldannic Knights when she was 18 years old.

Donna re-married to **Gustav von Moltke** (952+996?), another reckless Hattian nobleman and knight, who disappeared on the Isle of Dawn while searching for an ancient family treasure, the Opal Sword, lost several centuries ago by one of his ancestors. Gustav and Donna had two children: **Heinrich** (born 976, F7, LN), a moderate Storm Soldier, and **Ludwig** (born 977, F3, TN) who recently joined the *Speculatores* (military explorers)<sup>15</sup> on the Isle of Dawn. Ludwig has vowed to one day

<sup>14</sup> In issue #3 of Threshold magazine, page 225.

<sup>15</sup> More informations on the *Speculatores* can be found in Threshold Issue #3, page 214.

recover the Opal Sword and solve the mystery of his father's disappearance.

Ludwig and Donna's mother, Bretonia Korrigan, and Stefan Karameikos's mother, Amanda Korrigan, were sisters. Their brother Octavius Korrigan was the father of Alexius Korrigan<sup>16</sup>.

39) **Vorbian, Kallistos**. Gens Aurelia; Quaestor of the Mainland Islands.

**Kallistos Vorbian** (born 970, C7 (of Tarastia), TN) is a silent and pondering man, who inherited his seat a few years ago when his father **Cato** (born 943, F3, N) was crippled during a boar hunt and preferred to stay thereafter away from the city and in their family stronghold of Hillfork.

Kallistos has recently been appointed Quaestor of the Mainland Islands. A committed officer, he thinks that justice must be reached at any means, and law is something that has to provide a field game on which any dirty trick can be used - if the end is truth and the trickster is personally honest.

Kallistos is a personal friend of Caesar Porpora and has found it very easy to get along with Archduke Derentarius, the Praetor of the Mainland Islands. Kallistos spends most of his time between Actius and Hattias. Kallistos is engaged to Caesar's sister **Aurelia Porpora** (born 974, T(Rake) 3, CG), a beautiful red-headed woman of 26.

Aurelia loves very much her fiance, although she is a much more playful and



*Portrait of Aurelia Porpora*

life-loving person. She has a great love for the **N u a r i** culture and has learned the language **t h r o u g h** study and many trips to the islands. All in all they make for a **l o v a b l e** couple and

are favourites of the gossip hunters, something that she delights in because it gives her the chance to take great pleasure in confusing her stubborn and stern Kallistos in public. The simple mention of the "Puar bikini incident of a couple of years ago" is a sure way to embarrass Kallistos at a mundane occasion.

Kallistos loves too much Aurelia to be mad at her for her personality - he loves her so much because she is so naive, spontaneous and different from him. Moreover, Kallistos has, to his great surprise, noted that Aurelia's antics are actually making them (and him, as a consequence) more popular and respected in the public eye of all but the most traditionalist and narrow-minded conservatives. Kallistos's only problem is that many of them pack up the lines of his own Gens Aurelia, and he is afraid that some old bore of the Gens might ask him to break the engagement for politics' sake.


<sup>16</sup> See Gaz 1, "The Grand Duchy of Karameikos", for more informations on Alexius Korrigan.

40) **Zenobius, Ran-Wen.** Philosophers.

**Ran-Wen Zenobius** (born 964, F3, LN) descends from a Nicostenian family on his father's side. The Al-Zabbah clan favored the Thyatians over the Alasiyan desert tribes and had been instrumental in the occupation of Tameronikas. By the time of the campaigns of Suleiman Al Kalim, the now fully Thyatianized Zenobii were forced to relinquish their Nicostenian holdings, but they still own large tracts of land in Tel Abkir. They have held a senatorial seat for more than a century.

Ran-Wen's father, a military tribune posted to the Beitung military base, married a noblewoman of the Ochalean Chong family. Ran-Wen is not married, and his heir is his cousin **Aemilius** (born 973, F4, LN), who in turn has a son, **Pertinax**, who is 7 years old.


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Triumph of Neptune standing on a chariot pulled by two sea horses (Latin: hippocampes). Mosaïque d'Hadrumète (Sousse) the mid-third century AD. Musée archéologique de Sousse.

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Ancient egyptian bas-relief depicting the goddess Heqet

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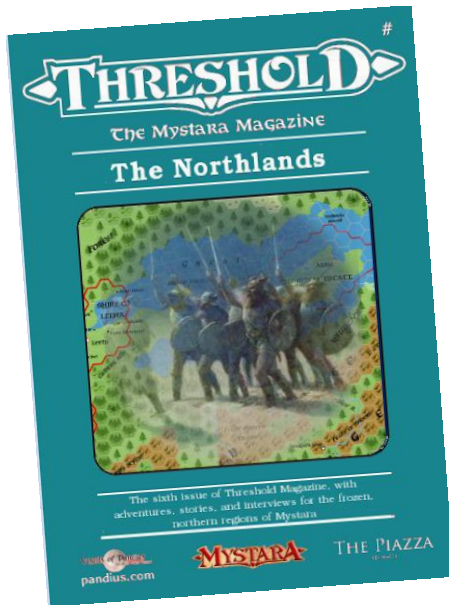
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*Not final cover*

Wide expanses of untamed wilderness -- ancient forests, towering mountain chains, freezing glaciers, and endless tundra -- are the mark of the Northlands. In these lands hardy pioneers and fearless explorers battle barbarian tribes, dragons and giants to establish new centres of civilization.

From the longship raids of the Northern Reaches to the battles of the Knights of Heldann and the colonization of Norwold, and even stranger challenges in more distant lands, the Northlands offer adventure, riches and glory to those willing to brave the harsh climate and its dangers.

### EXPLORE THE NORTHLANDS

Anticipated contents include:

- A Primer to Norwold and to adventuring in the region
- The Skaufskogr, a mini-campaign setting between the Heldannic Territories and Landfall
- An interview to Codex Immortalis author, Marco Dalmonte
- Running The Night Below in the Northern Reaches
- Test of the Warlords: an in depth view to the claimants
- Mystaranomicon: Alphetian books on the North
- In the name of the Dragon, an adventure in the Wyrksteeth

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[Threshold.Mystara@gmail.com](mailto:Threshold.Mystara@gmail.com)

Please begin the subject line with the tag "[LETTER]"



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All proposal submissions can be sent by mail to the editors at the following address [Threshold.Mystara@gmail.com](mailto:Threshold.Mystara@gmail.com), and must be received by the proposal deadline†. 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:

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The mail content should include the following:

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- 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.

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†Refer to "Call for Contributions" (page 5) for next issue deadline dates.

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# THRESHOLD

The Mystara Magazine

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## EXPLORING DAVANIA

It's a wonderful continent, but could be unforgiving, if you're lost in a remote land and you know nothing of its people and its creatures.

In this issue of Threshold Magazine you'll get to know the dangers and the opportunities of Davania much better, from lush landscapes to forgotten ruins, from civilized nations to untamed wilderness. Either could be certain death or neverending glory for the brave explorers willing to face the unknown.

Join the exploration of Mystara's great southern continent! Here you will find at least some directions. Will you ever be able to return home or will you stay in Davania to live or die?

