

THRESHOLD

The Mystara Magazine

The Shadowdeep



The fourteenth issue of the Mystara magazine, featuring the mysteries and secrets of the Shadowdeep

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THRESHOLD

Issue # 14

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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

Down to the . . .



The most famous underground setting of D&D is certainly the Underdark of the Forgotten Realms, detailed in several products and novels featuring the famous character Drizzt, but Mystara has its own underground setting too. Gazetteers 10 and 13, dedicated to the Orcs of Thar and the Shadowelves, featured vast underground locations, with typical animals and monsters, fungi forests and much more. From this, the Mystara fan community created the name "Shadowdeep" to indicate Mystara's Underdark and began to develop it more and more, with a series of discussions on the Wizards board first, then The Piazza, and some articles stored in the Vaults of Pandius.

This issue of Threshold magazine would like to summarize all of what has been done so far to develop the Shadowdeep, and add something more.

We begin with the second part of my UnKnown World Trail Map, this time almost fully dedicated to the Shadowdeep, including the wilderlands of the Broken Lands and the Shadowlands, then Giampaolo Agosta will lead us in the exploration of Deep Hollow, a Shadowdeep multiracial city deep under western Ylaruam.

We will continue our dangerous voyage going all the way from the surface of Karameikos to the Hollow World, passing through 1,200 miles of solid rock by dark tunnels, underground rivers and mysterious caverns.

Then Robin D, who has created a wonderful 1 mile per hex map of the Upper Broken Lands on The Piazza and her blog, will describe to us a possible future of the humanoids' homeland.

Giulio Caroletti will detail for us the long and complex history of the Dwarves and Gnomes of eastern Brun, important inhabitants of the nearby Shadowdeep.

The rest of the issue will touch other topics, from an interesting article by Sean Meaney on how information and adventure hooks may travel in Karameikos to the third part of the Gazetteer of Limn, which began in issue 11 of Threshold, by Hausman Santos and Alexandre de Luna. To complete this issue, is another level of the Koskatep megadungeon, now just one level from completion, featuring Koskatepetl, The Wasted City, where Radiance poisoning is the invisible enemy of unaware explorers.

Descend into the Shadowdeep, and discover its dark and wonderful dreams.

Francesco Defferrari (Sturm)
Issue #14 Editor-in-Chief

This Issue's Contributors

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

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 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.

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

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

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

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

Prior to writing fiction, **Geoff Gander** was involved in the roleplaying community and wrote many game products. His first short novel, *The Tunnelers*, was published in 2011

by Solstice Publishing. He has since been published by Metahuman Press, AE SciFi, Exile Editions, McGraw-Hill, and Expeditious Retreat Press. He primarily writes horror, but will try any genre for kicks. When he isn't writing or working a day job, Geoff reads, watches British comedies, and plays roleplaying games. Geoff divides his time between Ottawa and South Mountain, where a lovely stone-carving, bagpipe-playing witch resides with her many cats.

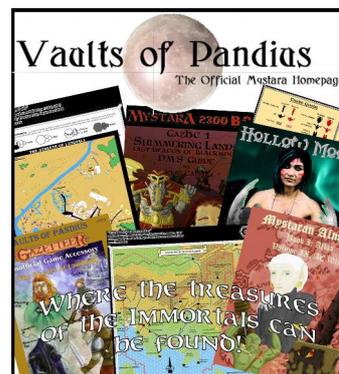
“What was that? Did you see that?” Gregor stopped and stared at his companion. The frantic Hin was obviously hallucinating. “You drank from the fountain didn't you.”

-Sean Robert Meaney



*FROM
THE VAULTS
OF PANDIUS*

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



FROM the
Mystara
FORUM at



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



Previous Issues

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

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

[#1 - "Karamaikos"](#)

[#2 - "Vaults of Pandius"](#)

[#3 - "The Sea of Dread"](#)

[#4 - "Return to Dread"](#)

[#5 - "Exploring Davania"](#)

[#6 - "The Northlands"](#)

[#7 - "Exploring Norwold"](#)

[#8 - "Warlords of Norwold"](#)

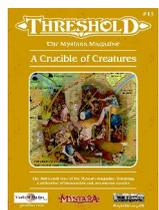
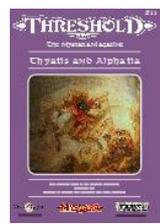
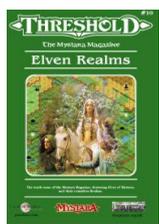
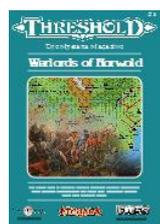
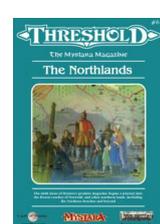
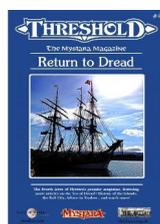
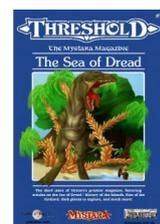
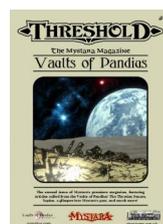
[#9 - "Hollow World"](#)

[#10 - "Elven Realms"](#)

[#11 - "Thyatis & Alphatia"](#)

[#12 - "Ages Past"](#)

[#13 - "A Crucible of Creatures"](#)



CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

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

Issue 15 - Mystaraspaces

More than darkness lies beyond the Skyshield. Across the Void of space further mysteries abound; including the Hollow Moon, Sarimaar the Wanderer, and the desolation of Damocles. The editorial team is accepting proposals on worlds, individuals, and civilizations far from the Mystara's firmament.

Proposal Deadline: Expired on January 15th, but proposal could still be submitted if the author is confident that the article will be completed by the below deadline

Manuscript Deadline: February 10th, 2017

Issue Published: By April 15th, 2017

Call for proposals for main themes of forthcoming issues (2017):

Issue 16 - The Great Waste and beyond

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

Proposal Deadline: April 15th 2017

Manuscript Deadline: May 10th, 2017

Issue Published: By July 15th, 2017

Issue 17 - Dwarves and Gnomes

Anything of the short, bearded folks, their society, weapons, items, cities, customs and anything else you wish to imagine for them!

Proposal Deadline: July 15th 2017

Manuscript Deadline: August 10th 2017

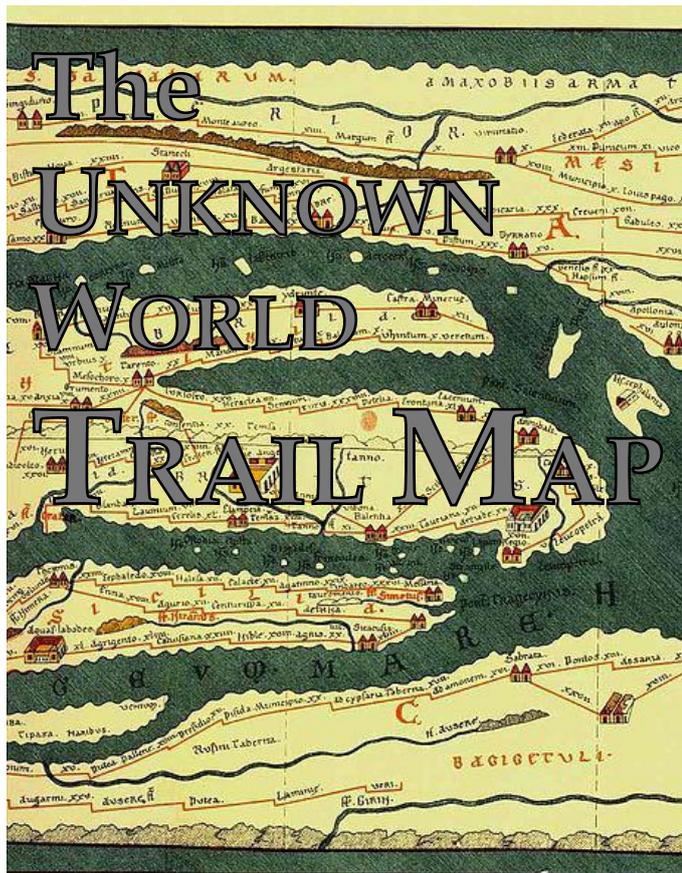
Issue Published: By October 15th 2017

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

Threshold accepts and invites submissions of extended or revised versions of works having appeared on The Piazza or Vaults of Pandius.

Contributions may include, but are not limited to: Articles-- short stories, short adventure modules, NPCs, historical treatises and timelines, geographical entries, new monsters and monster ecologies, etc.; and Illustrations-- portraits, maps, heraldry, illustrations, etc.

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



Part II - Broken Lands, Shadowlands and



by Francesco Defferrari
(Sturm)

A guide to the wilderlands of the Shadowdeep

This article follows a first instalment (which appeared in [Threshold issue #13](#)) that detailed the south east of the Known World (Karameikos, Five Shires, Ierendi, Minrothad and Thyatis). See the introduction of that first article of this series for a full explanation of the purpose of these articles, which will eventually cover the whole Known World.

Before moving to the other surface nations, we will look at the Broken Lands, the Shadowlands and the Shadowdeep of the Known World, in line with the theme of this issue.

In another article written by me in this same issue, *“Through the Shadowdeep, From Karameikos to the Hollow World”*, I have imagined up to 50 different underground levels or layers (but regions would be a better term) from the surface world to the Hollow World. Here however I will examine only the four levels nearest to the Known World surface. All four should be considered part of an Upperdeep macro-region comprising the levels which maintain, in a way or another, close relations with the surface of the Known World.



Cavern interior

The First layer (The DUNGEON level)

Populations and density

The first level of the Shadowdeep is composed of dungeons, tombs, mines and natural caves, at a depth usually no more than 100 feet (30 meters) below ground. It is composed of a myriad of tunnels and caves all around the Known World, often forming small complexes. A map is not provided because most of these dungeons are relatively small in extension and generally not continuous, so it's not possible to travel

this level without returning to the surface. There are many different kind of inhabitants on this level, from normal animals to monster to intelligent beings, such as humanoids, brutemen, lizardmen and many others. Some may be also haunted by undead, or occupied by bandits or wercreatures. Many will simply be empty and abandoned.

For a quick reference, the DM could decide randomly what kind of underground locations each 8 mile hex contains:

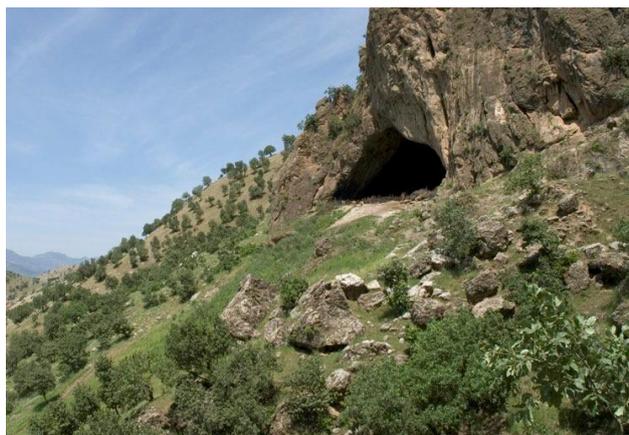
Random dungeon generator

- Roll 1d10 for the number of underground locations in the hex.
- Roll 1d4 to decide the type: 1 Tomb 2 Mine 3 Natural Cave 4 Building with dungeon
- Roll 1d6 to determine the extension: 1 level only, up to ten rooms (1-2), 2 levels, and/or up to 20 rooms (3), 3-5 levels, and/or up to 50 rooms (4), megadungeon with 10 levels and 100 rooms (6).
- Roll 1d4 to determine if occupied by living beings (1-2) or empty (3-4, could still contain treasures, information, objects, documents, traps, constructs or undead). If more than one level, this roll could be repeated for each level.
- If previous result was 1-2, roll 1d4 to determine if occupied by humans (1 - bandits, rebels or werereatures), humanoids (2), unintelligent monsters (3) or normal/giant animals (4). If bigger than a few rooms, this roll may be repeated as many times as the DM desires.
- Roll also 1d100: there is a 20% chance (or more if the DM wants) that the dungeon has a passage leading down to the second layer of the Shadowdeep.

The average population of dungeon inhabitants should be quite low, around

100 creatures in a 8 mile hex, but obviously a hex containing extensive underground locations could have up to 1,000 dungeon inhabitants or more.

On a national level, the population of intelligent “dungeon dwellers” is however quite relevant: for example in Karameikos, considering 100 creatures for each 8 mile hex, there could be up to 50,000 of them, a figure that could be added to the total population number already detailed in the previous issue of Threshold, or included in it.



Entrance of a cavern

UPPER BROKEN LANDS



Geysir in the Broken lands

POPULATIONS AND DENSITY

I will discuss the Upper Broken Lands here because due to its nature, the region should have extensive dungeons, mostly dug by the humanoids over the centuries by enlarging natural caves or reusing old structures. For a detailed view of the Upper Broken Lands, see the wonderful 1 mile per hex map of the region made by Robin D¹, who also delves

¹ Discussion and work in progress of Robin's map can be found in [this topic](#) on The Piazza Forums

into the topic with an article in this very issue.

Here I will just suppose which regions of the Upper Broken Lands could be considered heavily settled by humanoids and which regions should be considered wilderlands, similar to what I did in the last issue (#13) about the south eastern nations of the Known World.

In the last issue, the Broken lands were depicted as wilderlands as they are inhabited only by humanoids and other creatures, but in this issue, using Robin's wonderful maps and her research as the main resource, we will look a bit closer.

In GAZ10: The Orcs of Thar, populations are quite low, given at about 3,000 bugbears, 3,000 goblins, 2,500 hobgoblins, 3,700 kobolds, 2,200 ogres, 7,500 orcs, 1,500 gnolls and 1,000 trolls, so less than 25,000 in the Upper and Lower Broken Lands. Oenkmarr is said to have 18,000 inhabitants, including 9,000 orcs, 4,500 goblins and the rest other humanoids and giants. The Poor Wizard's Almanacs give the same figure for Oenkmarr and 39,000 inhabitants in the Broken Lands, including the new Great Crater. The Demografia Mystariana² by Simone Neri gives a population of over 60,000 inhabitants, including 1,500 faenare, 1,000 lizardmen, 790 humans (of which about 690 slaves and 100 brigands and spies), 300 troglodytes, 200 giants, 150 manscorpions and 100 elven slaves, mostly from Glantri.

² Available as a [PDF document](#) on the "Knights of Norwold" website in Italian only, but part of it was updated and translated in English in issues [#1](#) and [#3](#) of Threshold Magazine.

All these estimations calculate a very low population density in the Broken Lands, much less than 1 intelligent inhabitant per square mile. As explained in the previous issue, I prefer a much higher density, which I would estimate at about 18 intelligent creatures per square mile.

The Broken Lands would then have a population of more than **600,000 intelligent inhabitants**, with huge variations between the Upper and the Lower, and the different regions.

In canon sources, GAZ10: *The Orcs of Thar* does not have a list of monsters, but the *Poor Wizard's Almanacs* mention as unintelligent monsters goat, sheep, giant ants, rock baboons, giant lizards, giant rats, giant scorpions and giant spiders. The monsters listed in the GAZ6: *The Dwarves of Rockhome* and GAZ8: *The Five Shires*, should be appropriate also for the Upper Broken Lands: beholders, vampires, oozes, giant bats, white apes, doppelganger and mujina, devil swine, feywings, gargoyles, ghouls, black hags, haunts, lich, wererats, manscorpions, nightgleet, owl bears, rockfangs, seergars, skeletons, snakes, stirges, visions, wights. Sheldon Morris' *Monstrous Atlas for the Broken Lands*³ has also a more extensive list of the creatures of the Broken Lands including among the intelligent beings also thouls, leprechauns, metamorphs and werewolves.

Humanoids should be the most common intelligent inhabitants of the Broken lands, followed by **faenare, drakes, giants, lizardmen, troglodytes, manscorpions,**

³ See "[Monstrous Atlas: The Broken Lands](#)" in the Vault of Pandius.

humans, wercreatures, shapeshifters and dark fairies. This choice of inhabitants comes also from the history of the region which was developed mostly by fans and summarized by me in Threshold issue #12⁴. Before the humanoids, the area should have been inhabited by lizardmen, troglodytes, giants and fairies, elves. It makes sense that some of them, particularly giants, fairies and reptilians, are still present in the region. The Upper Broken Lands should also be able to support about **300 dragons**⁵.

In the description below I consider normally only the main humanoid race of the territory but, as described in Gazetteer 10, normally each land is inhabited also by some members of all the other humanoid races, in different proportions. For example in Bugburbia goblins and hobgoblins are quite common, and in Kol there are also gnolls and orcs. Races which hate each other (orcs hate hobgoblins, goblins hate kobolds, bugbears hate gnolls, ogres hate trolls) are normally very uncommon in the territory of their main enemy.

Upper Ogremoor is a region of cliffs, mountains, glacier and yaks. The region supports about 40,000 inhabitants, roughly 30,000 ogres and the rest is divided between faenare, giants and others⁶.

Upper Orcus Rex is a region of cliffs, canyons, crags and mountain goats with a population of 30,000 orcs and 5,000 others, mostly troglodytes and giants⁷.

⁴ See the article "[Past Ages of the Known World](#)" in issue #12 of Threshold Magazine.

⁵ See [this post in the "1 Mile Hex Mapping" topic](#) on The Piazza by Robin on dragons in the Broken Lands.

⁶ See some more details in [this post in the "1 Mile Hex Mapping" topic](#) by Robin.

Upper Bugburbia is the region bordering Glantri, mostly a region of rocky hills and mountains with a height between 4,200 and 6,000 feet. The Vesubia here flows into a deep canyon filled with giant rhododendrons and thick mosses. Most of the bugbear population lives in the hills nearest to the border with Glantri. The region should be able to support 25,000 intelligent inhabitants, including 20,000 bugbears and 5,000 other creatures, probably giants, faenare, frostdrakes and other fairies, maybe some troglodytes. The biggest wilderland should be the area of Mount Barbia, inhabited by frost drakes. The old elven ruin of Trammelant is inhabited by undead⁸.

Upper Goblity is another region of hills and mountains which also contains the wilderlands of Zyrd and Kalazyrd. The great fortress of Akross⁹ is the capital of the region, which is the home of 40,000 intelligent inhabitants, including 35,000 goblins and 5,000 others, mostly giants, faenare, dark fairies and troglodytes.

Upper Hobgobland is dominated by the grassy plateau of Akkila's Throne and has about 22,000 intelligent inhabitants, mostly hobgoblins with some troglodytes, caymen¹⁰,

⁷ More details in [this post and the subsequent one in the "1 Mile Hex Mapping" topic](#) by Robin.

⁸ See [this post in the "1 Mile Hex Mapping" topic](#) by Robin and the ["Bugburbia" topic](#) by Gecko and her for more about Upper Bugburbia

⁹ See [this post in the "1 Mile Hex Mapping" topic](#) by Robin for Akross and the nearby Steel Bridge. See [Threshold issue #11](#) about the Troll Queen and [this post in the "1 Mile Hex Mapping" topic](#) about the Skull of the Dragon King.

¹⁰ See [this post in the "1 Mile Hex Mapping" topic](#) by Robin and the following ones for her

manscorpions and dark fairies. The left part of the Muck is also considered part of it, and said to be inhabited by the weakest hordes in Gazetteer 10.

Upper Yellow Orkia is mostly a salt desert which becomes a marsh toward the river, inhabited by 20,000 orcs with some giants, troglodytes and others. The Muck is a true wilderland which the yellow orcs claim in name only, inhabited by up to 10,000 trolls, lizardmen, troglodytes and caymen.

Upper Gnollistan is a dry region dominated by the rocky desert of the Sun's Anvil plateau. It has a population of 35,000, including 30,000 gnoll and 5,000 manscorpions, giants, rockmen, geonids, galeb duhr and others¹¹.

Upper Kol is a region of forested hills, with many geysers and tar pits, able to support about 30,000 inhabitants, mostly kobolds with some hill giants, manscorpions, troglodytes and dark fairies¹².

Upper Red Orcland is a region of broken terrain and bushes dominated by the deserted plateau of Natoka's grave. It has about 30,000 inhabitants, 25,000 orcs and 5,000 manscorpions, giants, troglodytes and mudmen¹³.

Upper Trollhattan is a swampy depression concealed by mountains and a permanent

and Gecko's ideas about this region.

¹¹ See also [this post in the "1 Mile Hex Mapping" topic](#) by Robin and previous ones for more about Gnollistan.

¹² See [this post in the "1 Mile Hex Mapping" topic](#) by Robin about the Crooked hills of Kol.

¹³ Described by Robin in [this post in the "1 Mile Hex Mapping" topic](#).

fog. The swamp is inhabited by trolls and swamp horrors and can support a population of 10,000 inhabitants, even if canon indicated only 200 trolls. The DM should decide the true numbers and if the swamp could also be inhabited by lizardmen, troglodytes and caymen¹⁴. The rest of Trollhattan, the mountains surrounding the depression, can support 10,000 other inhabitants, mostly faenare, drakes and giants.

The final count of the population of the Upper Broken Lands should be 245,000 humanoids (30,000 ogres, 35,000 goblins, 30,000 grey orcs, 20,000 bugbears, 20,000 hobgoblins, 15,000 yellow orcs, 30,000 gnolls, 25,000 kobolds, 25,000 red orcs, 15,000 trolls), and approximately 15,000 giants, 10,000 faenare, 10,000 troglodytes, 2,500 lizardmen, 2,500 caymen, 4,000 manscorpions, 5,000 drakes, 4,000 dark fairies (redcaps, gremlins, hags and others) and shapeshifters (metamorph, mujina, doppelganger and others), 2,000 humans and werecreatures, 5,000 rockmen, mudmen, geonids and galeb duhr, for a total of more than 300,000 intelligent inhabitants.

The Wilderlands of the Upper Broken Lands

I - The Yak's Spur AND the Valley of Khyr

“Mountains do belong to ogres but do not belong to ogres. Them birdmen and them giants live here. They barter us weapons and things, we barter them yaks and things. Stubborn ogre chiefs sometimes makes war with giants, but them strong. Wiser chiefs pay them, as good they are at throwing rocks”

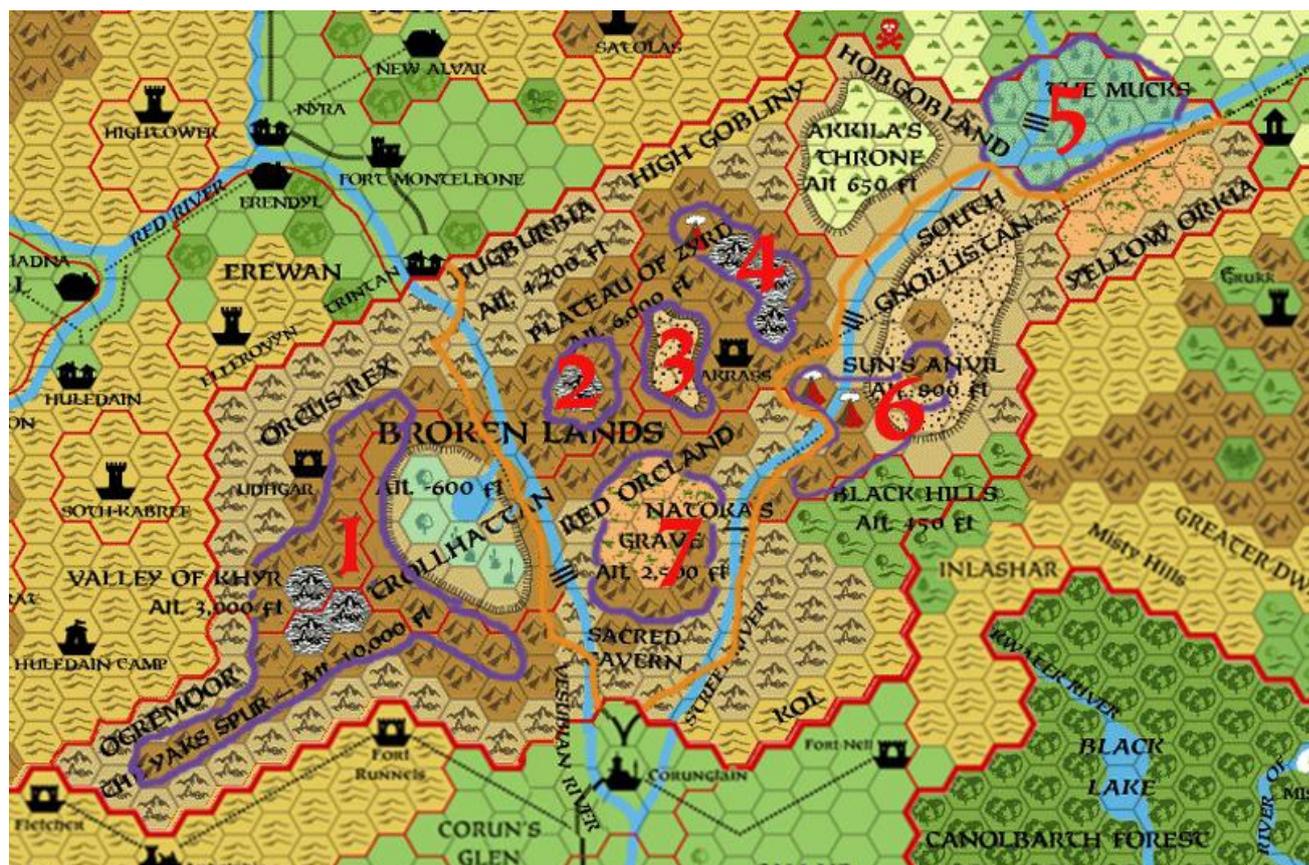
- *Gungim, ogre warrior*

Area: 64 x 32 miles, or 1,600 square miles.
Days to cross¹⁵: 20 days east-west or 15 days north-south, normally it is possible to cover only 3 miles per day due to the treacherous terrain.

Intelligent inhabitants: probably up to 30,000 (humanoids, giants, faenare, troglodytes, trolls, drakes and at least 25 dragons, including Pasvrost, Kal-Tejung-fer,

¹⁵ By foot with light encumbrance. However as this refers to difficult wilderlands, often without trails, the movement rate on horses should not be much different. As the area has great variation in altitude and terrain, traversing it with horse is near to impossible (you have to hoist the horse up on several occasions), and with a wheeled carriage totally impossible. the only trail going through the region over the western part of the glacier, is used with sleds. Note also that the chance of getting lost in these areas, unless the PCs have a good map or a good guide, should be very high, so the actual travel time could easily be double.

¹⁴ More about trolls also in Robin's posts [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#) that can be found in the "1 Mile Hex Mapping" topic on the Piazza Forums.



Broken lands wilderlands

and Ijsh-ergg-koud¹⁶, with extensive underground areas.

In Canon products and Fan productions:

- GAZ10 gives only a brief description of the mountains on page 8 of the Player's guide. PC2 *Top Ballista* mentions faenare on page 6 of the DM Booklet.

- Robin's [1 mile per hex map of the Broken Lands](#) details the Valley of Khyr and the Yak's Spur. See also the topic "[\[Races of the Wild\] Are Raptorans 3E's Faenare?](#)" on the Piazza Forums about the faenare. Robin places the location of the Tower of Doom from the

namesake videogame after 1014 AC, as suggested in that game, north of the Yak's Spur.

2 - The Barbia MOUNTAIN

"Little cold dragons, big cold dragons, nasty giants and magical creatures. Not a place a bugbear wishes to be, unless he is rot in the head like those humans who go around causing troubles"

- Kurum, bugbear warrior

¹⁶ See note 5.



3 - The Plateau of Zyrd

“A petrified forest, haunted they say. And an old monastery abandoned long ago by crazy humans. Top only for the shamans. Still we bring the goats on the slopes often, because there is always good grass. Not staying in the night in any case.”

- *Asbela, goblin goat herder and gatherer*

Area: 15 x 7 miles, or 100 square miles.
Days to cross: 2 days east-west or 5 days north-south, normally it is possible to cover only 3 miles per day due to the treacherous terrain.

Intelligent inhabitants: probably up to 2,000 (goblins, faenare, troglodytes, drakes, undead and at least 3 dragons (under the control of Gurmarmirmiar), with extensive underground areas.

In Canon products and Fan productions:

- The Plateau appears in the adventure HWA1 *Nightwail* as the seat of the abandoned Barleycorn monastery, founded by monks who tried to teach agriculture to goblins.
- Robin's 1 mile per hex map of the Broken Lands details the Plateau, which is also described in [this post in the "1 Mile Hex Mapping" topic](#).

Area: 16 x 16 miles, or 250 square miles.
Days to cross: 5 days east-west or north-south, normally it is possible to cover only 3 miles per day due to the treacherous terrain.
Intelligent inhabitants: probably up to 5,000 (drakes, fairies, faenare, giants and at least 4 dragons), with extensive underground areas.

In Canon products and Fan productions:

- Robin's 1 mile per hex map of the Broken Lands details the mountain: which is also described in [this post in the "1 Mile Hex Mapping" topic](#) in the Piazza Forums.

4 - MOUNT Kalazyrd AND the Ashen plains

“The great rumbling mountain is sacred to Kala, mistress of the earth and the underworld, she who created the goblins to punish the impious races.”

- Jabila, goblin shaman

Area: 40 x 10 miles, or 400 square miles.

Days to cross: 3 days east-west or 13 days north-south¹⁷, normally it is possible to cover only 3 miles per day due to the very treacherous terrain.

Intelligent inhabitants: probably up to 7,000 (goblins, giants, troglodytes, undead and at least 5 dragons), with extensive underground areas.

In Canon products and Fan productions:

- Robin's 1 mile per hex map of the Broken Lands details the volcano, which is also described in [this post in the "1 Mile Hex Mapping" topic](#) on the Piazza Forums.

5 - The Muck

“It's a damn swamp that even orcs and hobgoblins avoid. That should tell you everything you need to know about it.”

- Joris, Darokian caravan guard

¹⁷ Going without horse or wagon is faster than with. There are some trails known to the humanoids if PCs can find a guide.

Area: 32 x 24 miles, or 700 square miles.

Days to cross: 10 days east-west or 7 days north-south, normally it is possible to cover only 3 miles per day due to the treacherous terrain.

Intelligent inhabitants: probably up to 12,000 (orcs, hobgoblins, trolls, caymen, lizardmen, troglodytes, undead and at least 11 dragons (including Asthimahl and Gjullgaraah), with extensive underground areas.

In Canon products and Fan productions:

- Robin's 1 mile per hex map of the Broken Lands details the Muck, with some locations described in [this post in the "1 Mile Hex Mapping" topic](#) on the Piazza Forums.

6 - The SUN'S ANVIL AND the VOLCANOES

“It is our home, but the south west is forbidden land, inhabited by ancient dead, giants and creatures of fire. Gnoll warriors go there if they hope to gain great treasures and great fame. Some succeed, but many do not return”

- Abuas, gnoll shaman, teaching whelps

Area: 40 x 24 miles, or 500 square miles.

Days to cross: 13 days east-west or 7 days north-south, normally it is possible to cover only 3 miles per day due to the treacherous terrain.

Intelligent inhabitants: probably up to 9,000 (giants, elementals, manscorpions, gnolls, undead and at least 7 dragons), with extensive underground areas.

In Canon products and Fan productions:

- Robin's 1 mile per hex map of the Broken Lands details the area, with the Mountain That Died described in [this post](#) and the twin volcanoes [here](#) (both in the "1 Mile Hex Mapping" topic).

7 - Natoka's grave Plateau

"An important place for our people, where young warriors can earn feathers, or die trying."

- Tall Horse, red orc warrior

Area: 32 x 24 miles, or 650 square miles.

Days to cross: 7 days east-west or 10 days north-south, normally it is possible to cover only 3 miles per day due to the treacherous terrain.

Intelligent inhabitants: probably up to 12,000 (orcs, giants, mudmen, troglodytes, manscorpions and at least 10 dragons), with extensive underground areas.

In Canon products and Fan productions:

- Robin's 1 mile per hex map of the Broken Lands details the area, with mudmen described in [this post in the "1 Mile Hex Mapping" topic](#) on the Piazza.

The SECOND layer (The Dwarven level)

Populations and density

I will call this second layer the Dwarven level because dwarves and gnomes are its most famous inhabitants, but the true population of this layer is quite diverse.

This layer should include all the Shadowdeep locations at a depth between 100 and 800 feet below ground, so from 30 to 245 meters. Typically these regions could be reached from the surface in no more than an hour of walking.

The map below indicates the populations which are known to inhabit different regions of this layer under the Known World, from the Sind desert to the Sea of Dawn.

As this level is not very deep, the waters indicated in dark blue are the regions in which the surface seas reach down to this level. The pressure of the deep sea could flood the layer if not blocked by solid rocks or maybe some sort of strange magical effect, so normally should be impossible for the inhabitants of this layer to reach the surface by swimming up. The waters in light blue are instead Shadowdeep seas, with the surface of the water enclosed under the rocks of this level.

The region really controlled by dwarves and gnomes is just below Rockhome and northern Karameikos, and not even the whole extension of these areas. In fact, even if this is not common knowledge among



Shadowdeep second layer

Mystara's surface people and not even among the inhabitants of this very layer, the true master of this level are dragons. The dragon realms of the surface¹⁸ extend well beyond it, down to the dungeons in their domains (the first layer) and down to this second layer of the Shadowdeep and beyond. Beside the dragons many other intelligent creatures inhabit this layer of the Shadowdeep.

The letters in red indicate the approximate location of Lower Dengar (D) under Rockhome, Highforge/Eveskyr (E) under

¹⁸ See "Who is Who in the Wyrmssteeth part II" in [Threshold issue #9](#) for a description of these dragons or Bruce Heard original article, "[Who's Who Among Dragons](#)" is available in The Vaults of Pandius.

Karameikos, Makrast (M) under Thyatis, all cities inhabited by dwarves and gnomes that should probably be all connected. Also in red Cynidicea¹⁹ (C) and Barimoor's citadel²⁰ (B) in Ylaruam, which also should have a connection between them.

The region under Rockhome and the Altan Tepes mountains in Karameikos and Thyatis should be inhabited mostly by dwarves and gnomes, but humanoids, giants and other races could also be present in this area. This layer of Karameikos' underdeep is detailed in my other article in this same issue of *Threshold*, *Through the Shadowdeep*.

¹⁹ See the [Dungeon Master's Guide to Cynidicea](#) in The Vaults of Pandius.

²⁰ See GAZ2 *The Emirates of Ylaruam*.

For example, a nation like Karameikos could have up to 12,500 square miles of underground regions in this layer of the Shadowdeep, inhabited by up to 100.000 intelligent creatures.

Such underground regions will not always be composed by huge caverns miles long and miles wide, but more often by series of interconnected caves divided by huge walls and columns²¹.

As a general rule for the DM, it could be assumed that each surface nation has underground locations in this layer of the Shadowdeep up to one-fifth to one-quarter of its territory under the sun, and the density of intelligent inhabitants is less than 10 people per square miles.

Rockhome could then have 10.000 square miles of underground territories in this layer, able to support at least 100.000 inhabitants (or more, as dwarves should be particularly well organized to life under the earth).

This layer should be inhabited by more or less the same monster and intelligent creatures mentioned for the previous level, but in particular it contains the following populations:

In the west **Middle Graakhalia**²² dominates the Sind desert (Upper Graakhalia is instead located in the first layer of the Shadowdeep), while the mysterious **Black Mountains** have

extensive underground locations inhabited by humanoids, manscorpions, brutemen and other creatures.

Humanoids dominated by dragons populate this level of the Shadowdeep in most of the north, particularly in the **Adri Varma plateau, Glantri and Denagoth**. The inhabitants of **Wendar's** Shadowdeep at this level, if any exist, are unknown.

Troglodytes contaminated by the Radiance²³ are rumoured to live under Southern **Glantri**. Mysterious spirits dwell in the caves under **Ethengar** and trolls range from the Northern Reaches to the Broken Lands, which are dominated at this layer by **Upper Gnollistan**.

Grey orcs and goblins populate the underground area of **Darokin**, shapeshifters of various kinds hide deep under **Sind** and red orcs under the **Atruaghin** plateau, which also hides the mysterious ancient ruins of Intua²⁴.

Annwyn²⁵, the realm of dark fairies, lies under **Alfheim**, while **Rockhome** and the Altan Tepes mountains are mostly inhabited by dwarves and gnomes. The reclusive Modrigswerg inhabit the caverns of

²¹ See also the comments by Thorfinn Tait about underground locations in his ["Shadow Elf Territories, 8 miles per hex"](#) replica map of the Shadowlands at The Vaults.

²² See *Champions of Mystara* Boxed set for more information.

²³ This and other ideas for this layer were discussed in the Mystara community over the years, see the first page and notes 1 and 2 in my article Through the Shadowdeep in this same issue.

²⁴ About Intua, see the work done by John Calvin: ["2300 B Campaign and maps"](#), ["Intua"](#), [this post in the "2300 BC" topic](#) at The Piazza, and in [issue #12](#) of Threshold Magazine.

²⁵ See PC1 *Tall Tales of the Wee Folk*.

Svartwerg²⁶ in the **Northern Reaches**, bordering gnoll territories.

Ylaruam's Shadowdeep, beside Cynidicea and Barimoor's citadel, already mentioned above, hides also in this layer the ancient and cursed ruins of Nithia.

Giants, particularly hill, stone, frost and fire giants, have underground adobes in several regions of the Known World, such as Norwold, Denagoth, Heldann Territories, the Imperial territories of Thyatis and many regions of the Black Mountains, Northern Sind and the Sind desert.

This layer of the Shadowdeep under **Thyatis** should be dominated by wererats²⁷, while the Cruth Mountains between **Karameikos** and **the Five Shires** is inhabited by brutemen, troglodytes, manscorpions and humanoids. A large area of this layer between the Malpoggi swamp and the Blight swamp, so including all the southern coast of **Darokin**, **the Five Shires** and **Western Karameikos** is inhabited by a relevant number of lizardmen, troglodytes and caymen.

This layer of the Shadowdeep under **Ierendi** and **Minrothad** mostly contains ancient ruins inhabited by undead²⁸ and some

²⁶ About them see GAZ7 *The Northern Reaches* and these information compiled by Giulio Caroletti in "[Modrigswerg: Clans, Houses and Families](#)". Also the [Shimmering Lands Gazetteer](#) by John Calvin: is relevant for them. The name Svartwerg for the underground territory they currently inhabit was invented by me here.

²⁷ Mentioned in PC4 *Night Howlers*.

²⁸ See also the articles "[Undead of Elegy Island](#)" (Threshold issue #13) and "[The Darkness Beneath](#)" (Threshold issue #3)

lizardmen. The many volcanic regions of the islands often reach down here, and are inhabited by fire giants and fire creatures. Lastly, the underground seas of this layer are often the domain of the deep knas²⁹ in the southernmost regions of the Known World.



Underground lake

The Wilderlands of the Lower GNOllistan

Lower Gnollistan³⁰ is included here as it the region of the lower Broken Lands nearest to the surface, thus belonging to this second layer of the Shadowdeep. Lower Gnollistan is about 1,700 square miles and can support up to 30,000 intelligent inhabitants.

²⁹ The idea of these creatures, inspired by the normal kna of PC3 *The Sea People* and by sahuagins, was mentioned by Havard in the topic "[What would have been the next SC supplement?](#)" on the Piazza.

³⁰ See [the replica map](#) by Thorfinn Tait in the Vaults of Pandius.

The northern part of the cavern is a 32 x 20 mile region of quartz pillars and stalactites mostly inhabited by manscorpions, geonids and other earth creatures.

The south is 50 x 20 miles of desert infested by black puddings and quicksands, with a huge sinkhole, the main area inhabited by gnolls, with some manscorpions.

The west is a 24 x 24 mile mudbank and fungal forest near the Oued Ashuma river, inhabited by trolls, troglodytes, gnolls and some water and earth creatures.

The Third layer (The Humanoid level)

Populations and density

I will call this third layer the Humanoid level because the Lower Broken Lands are its most important region, but in this layer too the whole population is quite diverse.

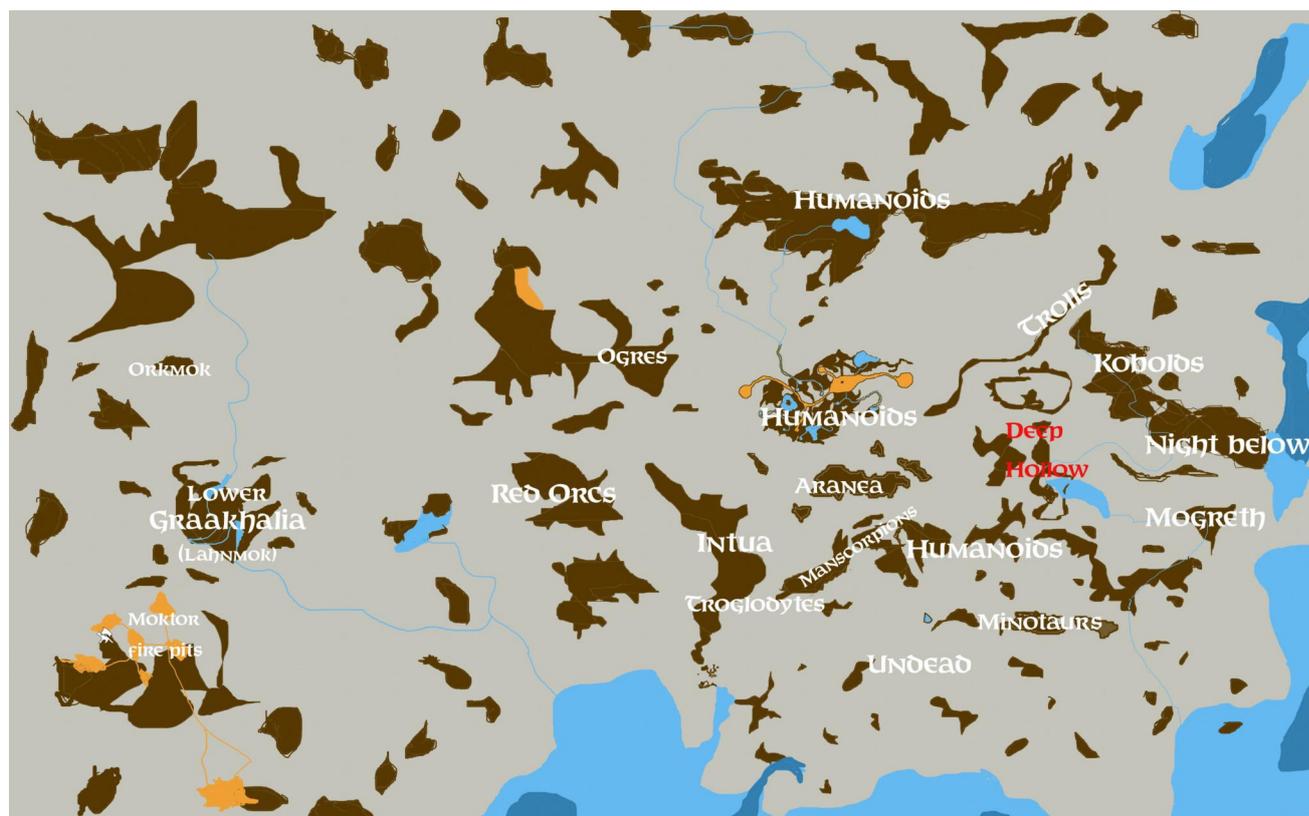
This layer should include all the Shadowdeep locations at a depth between 800 and 2,000 feet below ground, so from 250 to 600 meters. Typically these regions could be reached from the surface in about one to three hours of walking.

The map below indicates the populations which are known to inhabit different regions of this layer under the Known World, from the Sind desert to the Sea of Dawn.

The dark blue seas are those which are connected to the surface, as the sea in these region is so deep to reach this layer of the Shadowdeep. As explained above, the deep sea cannot be directly connected to the layer unless the DM wishes to have some magical effect preventing the sea from flooding it.

The dragon realms mentioned in the layer above have also some degree of control on these regions, depending on the area and the individual dragon.

Humanoids dominate indeed many regions of this level of the Shadowdeep, not only under the Broken Lands, Glantri, the Northern Reaches, Sind and Atruaghin lands



Shadowdeep third layer

but also in the northern Sind desert, the Adri Varma plateau, Karameikos and Thyatis.

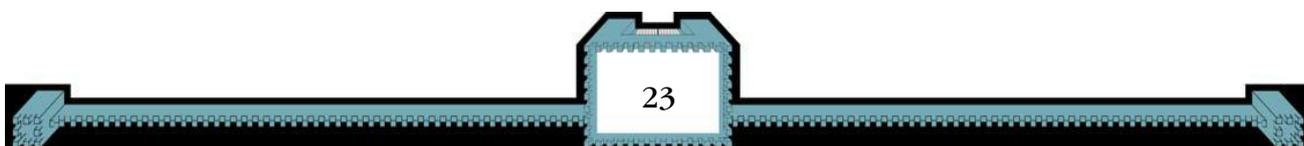
The region of **Deep Hollow** is described in the article by Agathokles in this same issue of *Threshold*, with all its common inhabitants. Other intelligent races which have a relevant presence in this level of the Shadowdeep are **minotaurs** in some regions of Karameikos and Thyatis, **manscorpions** under the Cruth mountains, **aranea** under Alheim. Ancient ruins belonging to **long dead civilizations**, like Mogreth, Intua and Taymora³¹ can be found on this layer under Ierendi, Minrothad, Ylaruam and Atruaghin lands. **Troglodytes** inhabit the region corresponding to the surface area between the Malpoggi and the

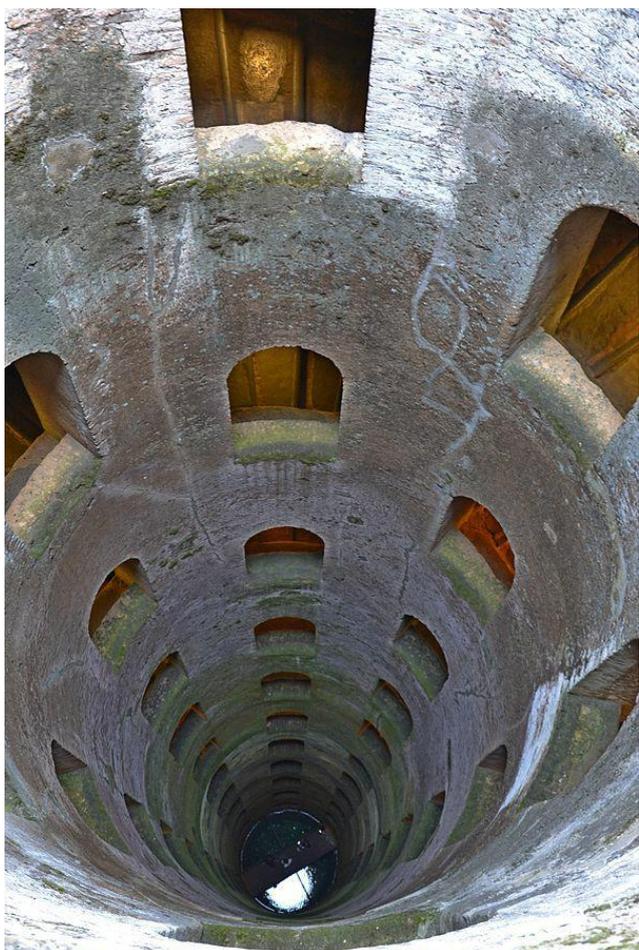
³¹ See [Threshold issue #12](#) and the [2300 BC Campaign Setting](#) on the Vault of Pandius and the [2300 BC sub-forum](#) on the Piazza .

Bligh Swamp, including the southern Shires. **Lower Graakhalia** dominates the Sind desert, surrounded by more humanoid domains.

As in the above layer, the DM could assume that each surface nation has underground locations up to one-fifth to one-quarter of its territory under the sun, and a density of intelligent inhabitants less than 10 people per square miles.

Therefore for example Sind could have as many as 50,000 square miles of Shadowdeep in this level and a population of 500,000 intelligent creatures, probably red orcs, ogres, giants, brutemen, caymen, gatormen, troglodytes, aranea, shapeshifters and others.





The Wilderlands of the Lower Broken Lands

The **Lower Broken lands**³² are included here as the most relevant region of this level of the Shadowdeep, at least in the Known World, except for Lower Gnollistan which has been described in the level above as it is less deep than the others.

Each ones of the territories described below can normally support from 15 to 20 **dragons** of different varieties³³. Some of these dragons

³² See [the replica map](#) by Thorfinn Tait here in the Vaults of Pandius.

³³ See my article [“Who’s Who in the Wyrksteeth part II”](#) in Threshold issue #9

avoid the humanoids, while others try to control or influence them. Almost all of them have servants and minions. If not humanoids, then members of the other races which inhabit this layer of the Shadowdeep.

The fact that the Broken Lands were created in 1700 BC by a cataclysm related to the Radiance still present in Glantri (see Gazetteer 3 and 10, and Threshold issue #12), leaves to the DM ample room to include in these underground territories a variety of mutated and strange **monsters**, like the intelligent insects I have included below.

I have also included several **werecreatures**, as I think both humans and humanoids infected by the affliction could be likely to seek refuge and alliances in such a land. Some of these werecreatures could have formed their own secluded communities, while other are probably employed as shock troops by humanoid hordes.

The **lava flow** in which Oenkmar floats and which runs through this region of the Shadowdeep has its own unique inhabitants, such as lava fish, lava lizards, lava oozes, fire beetles, fire giants, flame salamanders and other fire elementals.

The many underground **rivers and lakes** of this region have their own special inhabitants too, such as lizardmen, caymen, frogfolks, trolls, nixies and sprites on the shores and many kinds of giant fish, leeches, toads, crabs and termites in the waters, with intelligent creatures such as deep knas and hresha-rhak³⁴.

for more possible types of dragons which can live under the earth.

Lower Ogremoor is the largest cavern complex of the lower Broken lands, 100 x 30 miles crossed by two rivers and occupied by a vast fungal forest and some more arid lands. The area of about 3,000 square miles can sustain up to 50,000 intelligent inhabitants. The arid lands are mostly inhabited by ogres, hill giants and manscorpions, while the fungal forest has ogres, troglodytes, frogfolks, myconids and werebats.

Lower Trollhattan is a cave of about 45 x 45 miles with continuous rain, a shallow lake and arid sand near the lava flow, inhabited by trolls, troglodytes, frogfolks, myconids and other intelligent fungus, with some fire creatures near the lava flow. The region supports up to 25,000 intelligent inhabitants, including some aquatic creatures.

Lower Orcus Rex is a rocky cave with some fungal jungles and a beach on the lava flow, inhabited by orcs with some troglodytes, manscorpions, wereboars, werewolves and myconids. It's a 42 x 42 mile cave which can sustain up to 35,000 inhabitants.

Lower Bugburbia is mostly a thick and humid fungus forest with some more rocky regions, roughly 40 x 40 miles, able to support up to 25,000 inhabitants, mostly bugbears with some myconids, troglodytes, werebears and giant locusts (including an intelligent breed of them).

³⁴ See note 27 about the deep knas and Agathokles' article in this same issue about the Hresha-rhak, created by Geoff Gander (see "[Servitor of Ubbeth \(Hresha-rhak\)](#)"). Deep Knas and Hresha-rhak could also be considered the Mystaran versions of the more famous Sahuagins and Kuo-Toa.

Lower Goblincy has a fungus forest along the Bugbur river and more rocky areas far from it. It has also an arid land toward the lava lake which contains Oenkmar. It's about 40 x 40 miles and can support up to 25,000 inhabitants, mostly goblins with myconids, manscorpions, troglodytes, wereboars, devil swine and intelligent giant slugs.

Lower Hobgobland is a relatively arid land of 50 x 40 miles, able to support about 35,000 intelligent creatures, mostly hobgoblins with some other humanoids, manscorpions, myconids, wererats and werebears.

Lower Yellow Orkia is a humid land dominated by a big lake and a fungus forest of about 60 x 15 miles able to support around 25,000 intelligent inhabitants, mostly orcs with some trolls, myconids, lizardmen, gatomen and caymen. The lake is also inhabited by aquatic creatures, including deep knas, nixies and water elementals.

Lower Kol is a region of 50 x 40 miles which includes an arid land near the lava flow, thick with purple worms, a fungus forest along the Kol-Dahk river and a more rocky area to the south. The territory can support 40,000 inhabitants, mostly kobolds with myconids, troglodytes, manscorpions and some elementals.

Lower Red Orcland is a region of 60 x 30 miles with about 35,000 inhabitants, mostly red orcs with mudmen, troglodytes, myconids and a particular breed of faenare similar to the local cave birds.

The **total population** of the Lower Broken Lands should be of 230,000 humanoids

(35,000 ogres, 15,000 trolls, 30,000 grey orcs, 20,000 bugbears, 20,000 goblins, 30,000 hobgoblins, 15,000 yellow orcs, 35,000 kobolds, 30,000 red orcs) and 85,000 other intelligent creatures (3,000 giants, 7,000 manscorpions, 11,000 troglodytes, 5,000 frogfolks, 12,000 myconids and 2,000 werebats, 2,000 wereboars and devil swine, 1,000 werewolves, 2,000 werebears, 5,000 elementals, 5,000 deep knas, 3,000 lizardmen, 1,000 gatormen, 1,000 caymen, 5,000 hresha-rhak, 5,000 intelligent locusts, 5,000 intelligent slugs, 5,000 nixies and other fairies, 1,000 mudmen, 4,000 faenare).

The final count of the population of the whole Broken Lands, Upper and Lower, should be 485,000 humanoids (65,000 ogres, 55,000 goblins, 60,000 grey orcs, 40,000 bugbears, 50,000 hobgoblins, 40,000 yellow orcs, 55,000 gnolls, 60,000 kobolds, 55,000 red orcs, 30,000 trolls), and approximately 18,000 giants, 14,000 faenare, 21,000 troglodytes, 5,500 lizardmen, 5,000 frogfolks, 3,500 caymen, 1,000 gatormen, 11,000 manscorpions, 5,000 drakes, 4,000 dark fairies (redcaps, gremlins, hags and others) and shapeshifters (metamorph, mujina, doppelganger and others) 2,000 humans, 8,000 werecreatures, 6,000 rockmen, mudmen, geonids and galeb duhr, 5,000 elementals, 12,000 myconids, 10,000 intelligent insects, 10,000 deep knas and hresha-rhak, 5,000 nixie and other aquatic creatures, for a total of more than 630,000 intelligent inhabitants.

The Fourth layer (The Shadowelves level)

Populations and density

The fourth level of the Shadowdeep is also the last level of the Upperdeep, the region which still maintains a kind of relationship with the surface. The level below this one, as we will see in the other article by me, Through the Shadowdeep, are much more detached from the lands under the sun.

This layer should include all the Shadowdeep locations at a depth between 2,000 and 6,000 feet below ground, so from 600 to 1,800 meters, more than one mile. Typically these regions could be reached from the surface in about a day of walking or more.

The map below indicates the populations which are known to inhabit different regions of this layer under the Known World, from the Sind desert to the Sea of Dawn.

The dark blue seas are those which are connected to the surface, as the surface sea in these region is so deep to reach these regions of the shadowdeep. These regions of deep sea are however isolated from the layer as explained above.

The Shadowelves are the most famous inhabitants of this level, but they are not the only one. Dragon realms of the surface normally do not exercise their power so deep, unless the DM wishes so or wants to use some dragon breeds which lives in the Shadowdeep. Geonids and rockmen are



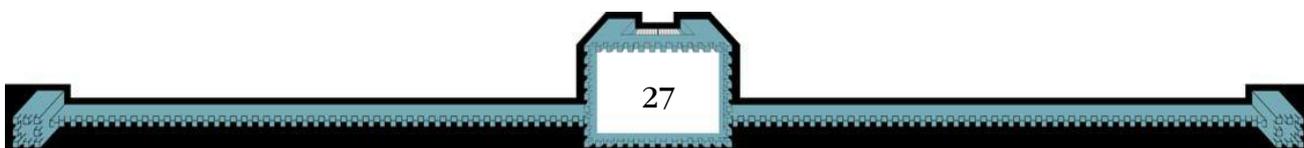
Shadowdeep fourth layer

common inhabitants all around the Shadowelven lands. Beholders also live in this layer and the one above, particularly in the region under Rockhome and nearby lands.

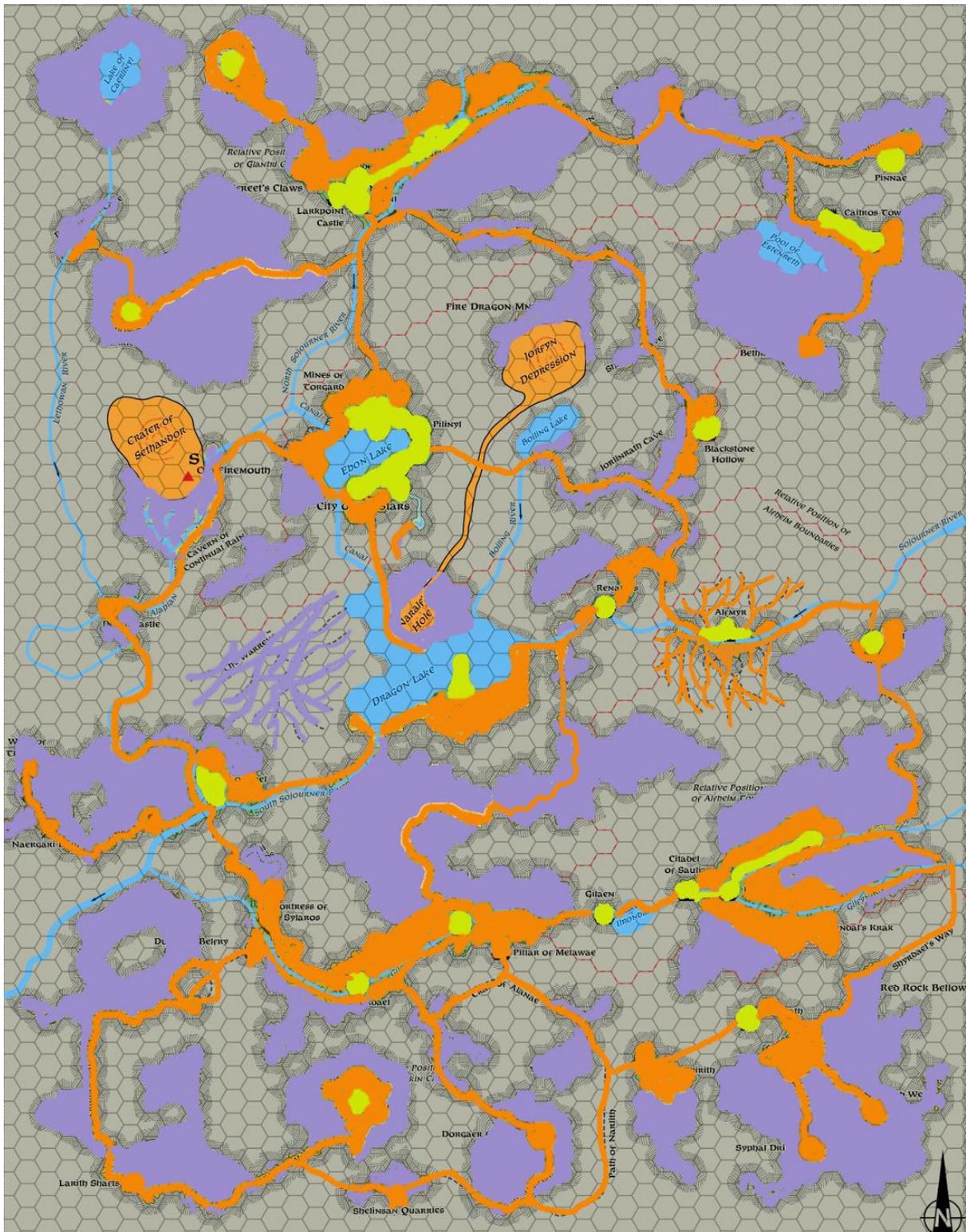
Medusas and Thouls are common in this layer of the Shadowdeep under Denagoth, while the mysterious dark elves³⁵ of the Northern Reaches have their realm of Svartalfheim in this area. The true nature of these dark elves is unknown, as they seem unrelated to Shadowelves and unknown to them, but they could be related to dark fairies.

Deep hutaakans live under Ylaruam, Hivebroods under Thyatis and Karameikos and Deep Glaurants under the Five Shires. Aranea live below the Atruaghin lands, while under the Black Mountains and the Sind desert there are populations of bargda, nagpa, myconids and fire giants. All these populations are quite reclusive and normally have few relations with the surface, if any. The same has been true for many centuries also for the shadowelves, if not for their desire to return to the surface from whence they came.

³⁵ Mentioned in GAZ7 *The Northern Reaches*, and see [“Svartalven”](#) by Andrew Theisen in the Vault of Pandius.



Populations and density of the Shadowlands



The Shadowlands, home of the shadowelves, cover a vast area of this layer of the Shadowdeep. According to Gazetteer 13 “the shadow elves, spread out over their underground expanse, number about 550,000, with more than half of these concentrated in the clans’ four major cities”. This contradicts the reasoning I made in the previous issue (and that Simone Neri did in Threshold issue #1 in his [“Demography of Karameikos”](#) article) about the fact that city population in a Renaissance level nation should be a way lower than the rural population. However I am willing to consider the Shadowlands an exception due to their particular nature. We can image the environment of the shadowdeep as particularly unforgiving and so it makes some sense that intelligent creatures will gather in big population centres and venture outside only for some hours of the day. Still, as the population of the City of the Stars cavern is given at 250,000 people, the total shadowelves population could easily be higher than the figure given in the Gazetteer, and reach one million people.

In the map above I have highlighted in **yellow** the civilized areas, as in the Known World map in the previous issue of Threshold. Such areas are less than 50 hexes, so cover some 3,200 square miles. If more than half of the total shadowelven population lives there, this means such hexes have a density of about 95 people per square miles, not so crowded considering than many real world nations have a much higher density. The total shadowelven population of such civilized areas should be over 350,000 people. Besides the shadowelven farm animals, such as giant slugs and skinwings, only some small wild animals should live in

these regions, and probably no monster nor other intelligent races. Every one of these hexes should have a major shadowelven city or town and several villages, with roads and some forts.

The hexes highlighted in **orange** are borderlands, where typically there is a shadowelven road or path, mines, small villages or forts. Such areas are inhabited but the density is much lower and many wild animals and monsters may be present. The borderlands are more than 210 hexes, an area of more than 13,000 square miles, with a density of about 15 people per square mile and around 200.000 shadowelven inhabitants.

The hexes in **purple** are wilderlands, inhabited by wild animals, monsters and some intelligent creatures. Among these, geonids and humanoids are mentioned in the Gazetteer, but many others could live in the Shadowlands, such as troglodytes, frogfolks, deep knas, dark fairies, undead, werbats and wererats, brutemen, myconids, intelligent giant insects, beholders and any other creature mentioned for the layers above. The wilderlands area cover more than 500 hexes and should be about 35,000³⁶ square miles, and therefore able to support a population of about 500,000 more intelligent creatures even with a very low density of less than 15 people per square miles.

³⁶ Note that the figure of 500,000 square miles given in the *Poor Wizard’s Almanac* must have an excessive 0 as the whole Shadowlands map, even not taking into account the areas of solid rock, is no more than 150,000 square miles.

The **normal monsters**³⁷ mentioned in the Gazetteer are albino lizards, skitterlings, steam bats, cave snakes, cold-water piranha, giant frogs, giant catfish, giant amoebas, giant eels, freshwater termites, fyrsnaca, water weirds, black puddings, carrion crawlers, gelatinous cubes, (wild) giant slugs, giant leeches, grey oozes, ochre jellies, basilisks, caeciliae, geonids, giant scorpions, hypnosnakes, purple and red worms, rock pythons, ropers, slime worms, spiders and tuatara lizards. Giant slugs, skinwings, fungi and the boneless are also described as special creatures typical of the Shadowlands.

Depending on how much the DM likes the idea of **underground dragons**, the Shadowlands could easily support more than 500 of them.

Suggestions about the possible other intelligent creatures are given below, in the short descriptions of the wild regions of the Shadowlands.



Stream in the Shadowdeep

³⁷ See also the [“Monstrous Atlas of the Shadowlands”](#) compiled by Sheldon Morris and stored here in the Vault of Pandius.

The Wilderlands of the Shadowlands

I - CERLIAN, BETHLANDOR AND CAERLINYL CAVERNS

“Our bastion of Darkleaf in theory control these caverns, but except for the occasional miners and adventurers few shadowelves ever come here, or know they exist. But they are inhabited by a huge variety of slugs, oozes, giant insects, lizards, skinwings, fungus and other more dangerous creatures, like efreet, elementals, strange humanoids and constructs.”

- Ymabarel, shadow elf soldier posted in the bastion

Area: Approx. 64, 32 and 48 mile wide caverns, or 4,500 square miles.

Days to cross³⁸: 15, 7 and 12 days, normally it is possible to cover only 4 miles per day due to the treacherous terrain.

Intelligent inhabitants: probably up to 65,000 (shadowelves, humanoids, geonids, rockmen, myconids, fire giants, efreet, elementals, troglodytes, drakes and others).

³⁸ By foot with light encumbrance. However as this refers to difficult underground terrain, the movement rate on any kind of creature should not be much different. Note also that the chance of getting lost in these areas, unless the PCs have a good map or a good guide, should be very high, so the actual travel time could easily double.

In Canon products and Fan productions:

- GAZ13³⁹ does not describe these caverns at all. Nor any fan sources⁴⁰ has ever mentioned them.

2 - New GRUNLAND AND FAIRBROW CAVERNS

“A great fungus forest which has plenty of food to be gathered. It also has plenty of native inhabitants, such as myconids, drakes, gremlins and lots of animals and monsters. It’s best to negotiate with the intelligent inhabitants to obtain aid and information about the unintelligent and dangerous ones”

- Lybinyriel, Porador shaman

Area: Approx. 40 and 112 miles wide caverns, or 5,000 square miles.

Days to cross: 10 and 28 days, normally it is possible to cover only 4 miles per day due to the treacherous terrain.

Intelligent inhabitants: 50,000 shadowelves and up to 40,000 others (humanoids, geonids, rockmen, myconids, fire giants, efreet, elementals, troglodytes, drakes and others).

In Canon products and Fan productions:

- GAZ13 does not describe these caverns beyond the main city.

³⁹ A [html and pdf copy of the Gazetteer](#), which was released by TSR, can be found here on the Vault of Pandius.

⁴⁰ The link in note 39 above also contains most of the fan work done on the Shadowlands.

- The adventure “*Contraband*” in the Gazetteer mentions that the North Sojourner river is plagued by water elementals, there are minor monsters and humanoids on the road and mentions a fungal drug traffic between the capital and New Grunland.

- Thorfinn Tait made a [detailed 2 mph map of New Grunland](#) which is stored in the Vault of Pandius. See also his comments about the tags of Jelden and New Grunland in the [main map of the Shadowlands](#), also available in The Vaults.

3 - Caetel, Mistpoint AND Estereth CAVERNS

“The north eastern periphery of the Shadowlands has two towns, a tower and plenty of mines and food. It is also far from the centre, so a favourite hiding place for anyone who disagree with the government or the shamans. There are also some wizards around, as the rumour says the region has gates to other planes of existence. All things considered, an interesting place to visit, if you are brave enough”

- Kebisyriel, shadow elf merchant

Area: Approx. 64, 40 and 96 miles wide caverns, or 6,500 square miles.

Days to cross: 16, 10 and 24 days, normally it is possible to cover only 4 miles per day due to the treacherous terrain.

Intelligent inhabitants: Up to 100,000 intelligent creatures (humanoids, geonids, rockmen, myconids, fire giants, efreet, elementals, troglodytes, drakes and others).

In Canon products and Fan productions:

- GAZ13 does not describe these caverns, and no fan source has ever mentioned them.

4 - Ebon cavern and the Joran's Path
Area: Approx. 56 miles wide cavern, or 2,000 square miles and a 350 miles long path with at least 2,000 square miles of other caverns.

“The centre of the Shadowlands and the most inhabited area, but still with its wild lands on the west. Joran's cave, Sharaen cave, the Jorfynd depression, the Fire Dragon mountain, the Jorlinrath cave and the Boiling lake are all interesting places relatively near to the capital. Usually we have deals and trade with the various creatures which live in these places, and so they do not prey on caravans. Usually”

- *Faefiriel, Dendronel guard*

Days to cross: 7 days to cross Ebon cavern, from 30 to 45 days to walk all the path.

Intelligent inhabitants: 250,000 shadowelves and up to 50,000 others (geonids, rockmen, myconids, fire elementals, frogfolk, troglodytes, drakes and others).

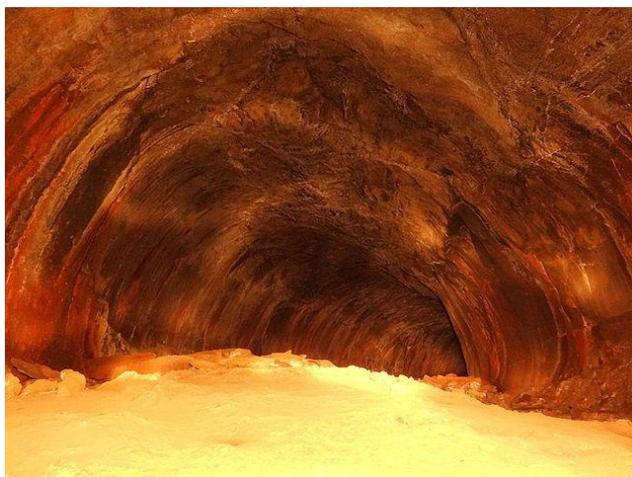
In Canon products and Fan productions:

- GAZ13 describes Ebon cavern and the capital city, which lies on the reversed gravity at the top of the cavern. Briefly described are also the acidic Ebon lake, the towns Dendronel and Pilinyl and other features of the cavern, including the dangerous south west where often fire elementals, flame

salamanders and many kind of giant worms can be encountered.

- The Boiling lake is also briefly described but the other minor caverns and Joran's Path are not detailed.

- See the [detailed 2 mph map of the Ebon cave](#) by Thorfinn Tait available at the Vault of Pandius.



Lava river

5 - Desrii, Shesunden AND CONTINUAL RAIN CAVERNS

“An important path goes through these lands, connecting the City of the Stars to Losetrel. The soldiers of Desrii Castle patrol the path as best as they can but the region is wild, so most prefer to go through the Dragon lake”

- *Sbesinaell, guide and adventurer*

Area: Approx. 16, 40 and 40 miles wide caverns, or 2,500 square miles.

Days to cross: From 20 to 30 days following the path.

Intelligent inhabitants: Up to 50,000 inhabitants (shadowelves, geonids, rockmen, myconids, fire giants, efreet, elementals, troglodytes, drakes and others).

In Canon products and Fan productions:

- The Cavern of Continual Rain is described in the Gazetteer as a peculiar place which radiates magic and is inhabited by big grey puddings.
- The adventure "Follow the Patsy" in the Gazetteer has the suggested location in this area. Rare fungus, giant slugs, undead and golems are given as possible encounters.
- See note by Thorfinn Tait in [the Shadowlands map](#) in the Vault of Pandius about Shesunden cave.

6 - DUNEDEA AND RENATHYS CAVERNS

"Two important cities which lay at the centre of the ideal triangle formed by the capital, Alfmyr and Losetrel, so they benefit from some trade. But you do not have to travel very far from them to find interesting wild regions of the Shadowlands, with their interesting inhabitants."

- Kafalen, adventurer

Area: Approx. 64 and 56 miles wide caverns, or 4,000 square miles.

Days to cross: 10 and 7 days approximately.

Intelligent inhabitants: Up to 65,000

inhabitants (shadowelves, geonids, rockmen, myconids, fire giants, efreet, fire and water elementals, deep knas, werebats, frogfolk, lizardmen, troglodytes, drakes and others).

In Canon products and Fan productions:

- The Dragon lake is described in the Gazetteer as inhabited by a Dragon turtle and steam bats.
- The adventure "Something Rotten in the Warrens" has the PCs reach Dragon Lake where they meet Water elemental drakes and the Dragon turtle is awakening.

7 - ALFMYR AND THE SHARDS

"Our land is blessed by Rafiel with an abundance of soul crystal that other regions of the Shadowlands cannot match. For this reason many of the Felestyr clan think we should be given much more respect by the other clans, the Celebryl in particular"

- Lawieylo, Felestyr shaman

Area: Approx. 48 and 48 miles wide caverns, or 1,500 square miles, plus countless tunnels. Days to cross: 6-7 days to cross one of the caverns east-west.

Intelligent inhabitants: 30,000 shadowelves and up to 20,000 others (geonids, rockmen, myconids, elementals, troglodytes, drakes and others).

In Canon products and Fan productions:

- The Soul Mines of Alfmyr are briefly

described in the Gazetteer.

- Alfmyr is briefly mentioned in the [fan Almanac of 1015 AC](#) available in the Vault of Pandius:

s - Losetrel cavern and the Warrens

“Losetrel is rich. We have the spider silk obviously but also several mines and connection to the surface world of the bright yellow light. Opportunely disguised, we have ways to trade with humans and obtain their interesting merchandise. Then there are also the many interesting things and treasures that can be found in the Warrens. But frankly I think the wildest mines, the forest of spiders and the surface, terrifying as they may be, are way less dangerous. Because such places have not the Boneless. You risk only your life, and not your soul”

- Keryliesti,
Gelbalf trader and adventurer

Area: Approx. a 96 miles wide cavern and hundreds of miles of Warrens, or 3,500 square miles.

Days to cross: At least 12 days on the known paths, or twice outside of them.

Intelligent inhabitants: 30,000 shadowelves and up to 35,000 others (aranaea, geonids, rockmen, myconids, elementals, undead, troglodytes, drakes and others).

In Canon products and Fan productions:

- Losetrel is briefly described in Gazetteer as the production centre of spider silk.

- The Warrens are described in the Gazetteer as a place infested by the terrible Boneless and many monsters. It is however rumoured to contain “the tomb of an ancient human warrior bedecked with fabulous magical weapons and wealth”, and “a hidden passage which leads down to the very centre of the world”.

- The adventure “*Something Rotten in the Warrens*” is set here, mentioning boneless worms and surface elves.

- Sean Meaney made [a detailed 2 mph map of the Warrens](#) which is stored in the Vault of Pandius.

- The Forest of Spiders is described in the Gazetteer as inhabited by giant fungus, spiders, rock rats, centipedes and lizards. Aranea are also present.

- The adventure “*Spider Hunt!*” in the Gazetteer takes place around Losetrel.

- Events involving Losetrel with an invasion of Shattenalfen and aranea were included in the [Fan Almanac of 1015 AC](#) and [here](#), stored in the Vault of Pandius.

- Andrew Theisen in “[Regions of the Shadowdeep](#)” at the Vault of Pandius pictured Annwn, the underground home of the fey races and the court of Gwynn-ap Nudd, king of the fey of Annwn, as located in the Forest of Spiders near Losetrel, but I prefer to place most of it in a larger location below Alfheim in the Dwarven level, see map of the second layer of the Shadowdeep above.

9 - Durdael AND the Desert of Lost Souls

“Durdael is well connected to Losetrel and Jeredor, but few dare to take the northern path, even if it is the shortest route to Dunedeia, Renathys and Alfmyr. The desert has some curse, or magical effect which drives travellers mad. It is also full of undead. Many adventurers have explored it, never to return”

- *Sheilyeilo, Durdael vendor*

Area: Approx. a 160 miles wide cavern, or 8,000 square miles.

Days to cross: At least 22 days to cross all the cavern from the north to Durdael, following the path. More if exploring the wilds outside it.

Intelligent inhabitants: Up to 120,000 inhabitants (shadowelves, undead, geonids, rockmen, myconids, elementals, troglodytes, drakes and others).

In Canon products and Fan productions:

- GAZ13 does not describe the city and its cavern.
- The adventure “*Crown of Corruption*” in the Gazetteer is set in the Desert of Lost Souls with undead and the evil artefact. The Desert is also described earlier in the Gazetteer.
- In the article “[Treasure chest of Mystara Ideas](#)” in the Vaults of Pandius, a young Shadow-Elf maiden G'wynaphaerr of Selinae is mentioned in adventure seed 103.

10 - Jeredor CAVERN

“The cavern is considered a periphery by many shadowelves, but due to its connection to the southern mines, Alfmyr and its route to the surface, it is considered very important by the army and mostly by us, because exactly over it lays Alfheim, the promised land our cousin stole from us, and then refused to share with us. The land that will be ours one day!”

- *Xilitectli,
Serpent's Eyes instructor, to recruits*

Area: Approx. 96 miles wide cavern, or 5,500 square miles.

Days to cross: 10-12 days following the beaten paths or more outside them.

Intelligent inhabitants: Up to 80,000 inhabitants (shadowelves, geonids, rockmen, myconids, elementals, troglodytes, aranea, drakes and others).

In Canon products and Fan productions:

- GAZ13 does not describe these regions.
- Rick Aucoin created a campaign which partially takes place in this region; see “[The Rod of Seven Parts](#)”, “[Part 2](#)” and “[Part 3](#)” in the Vaults of Pandius.

11 - DANNADARE AND Thirith caverns

“The extreme south east of the Shadowlands is a dangerous region which is sometimes attacked by humanoids from above, deep glaurants from below and several other hostile creatures and monsters. But daring miners do venture in it for the richness in metal and, sometimes, even crystals. Always alert at the minimal sound from the Belfry of Thirith, warning of a new invasion. I’ve done it for a few years. It was an exciting life, maybe a bit too exciting”

- Kaylimaren, Jeredor smith

Area: Approx. 25 and 80 miles wide caverns, or 5,000 square miles.

Days to cross: 10 and 28 days, normally it is possible to cover only 4 miles per day due to the treacherous terrain.

Intelligent inhabitants: Up to 75,000 inhabitants (shadowelves, humanoids, deep glaurants, geonids, rockmen, myconids, elementals, troglodytes, drakes and others).

In Canon products and Fan productions:

- GAZ13 does not describe these caverns.
- Roger Burns developed the [“Cavern of Thirith”](#), including also a race of intelligent amphibians, the Shli-Laska (available in the Vaults of Pandius).
- Jim Bobb detailed a shadowelf adventurer from Arlirath, [“Arminath Wynter, The ‘Old Man’ of the North”](#), (available in the Vaults of Pandius).

12 - Mylandiel, Illith, Balthys, Shelinsan, Dorgaer, Dalial and Elsunnath caves

“The caverns south of Durdael are rich in metals of many kind and have also some gems, so miners and traders are willing to travel the long way to reach this region. The village of Balthis is the most remote settlement of the whole Shadowlands. A place inhabited by brave shadowelves, who have to fight for survival every day”

-Cathiros,
officer in the Pillar of Melawae

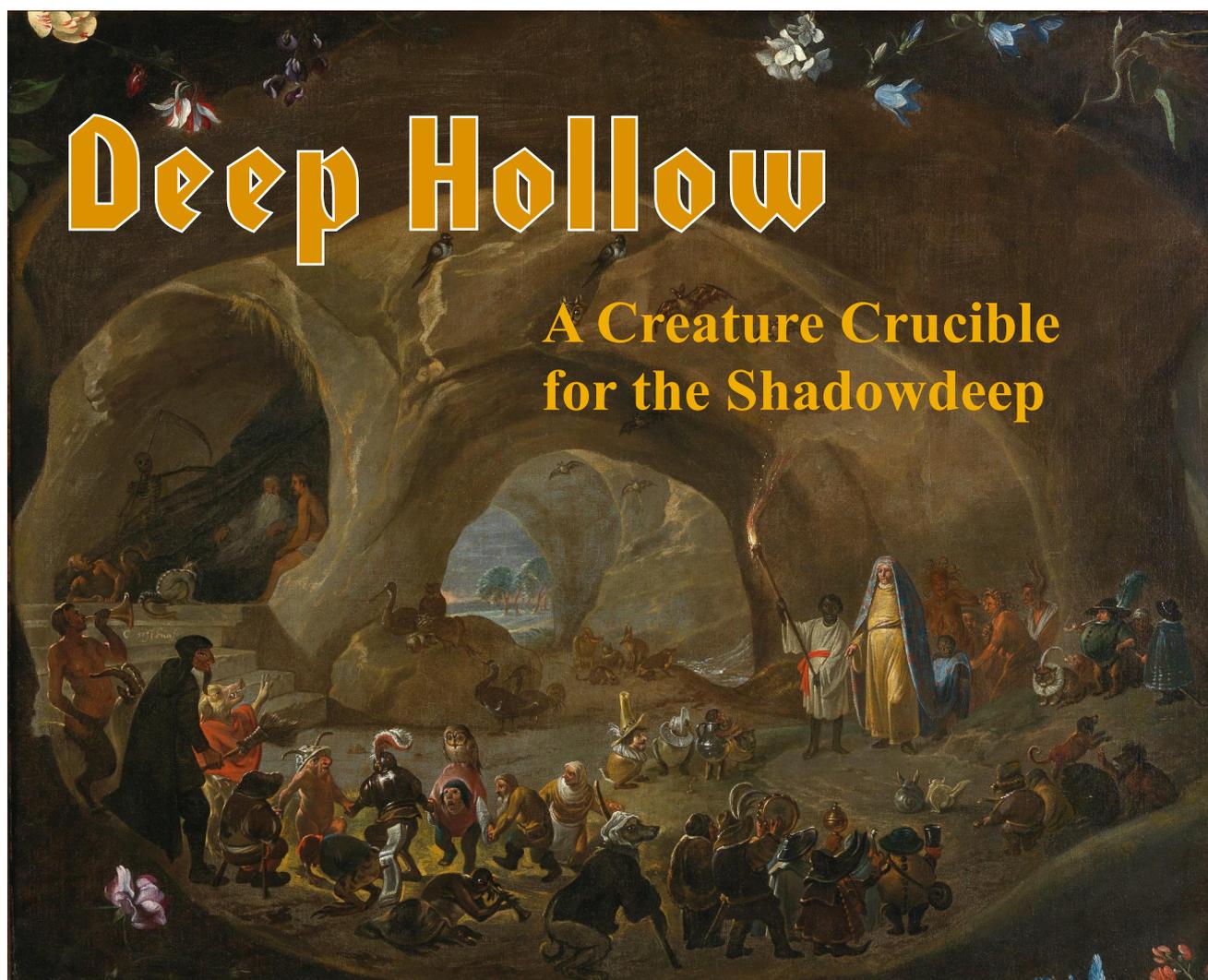
Area: From 16 to 48 miles wide caverns, or 7,000 square miles.

Days to cross: More than 50 days to walk the whole circle of trails.

Intelligent inhabitants: Up to 100,000 (shadowelves, humanoids, deep glaurants, geonids, rockmen, myconids, elementals, troglodytes, drakes and others).

In Canon products and Fan productions:

- GAZ13 does not describe these caverns, and no fan sources has ever mentioned them.



Deep Hollow

A Creature Crucible
for the Shadowdeep

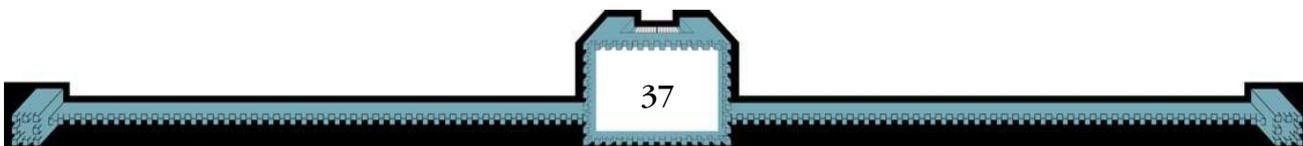
by Giampaolo Agosta and John Calvin



INTRODUCTION

The Shadowdeep is a vast region of caverns and tunnels under the Known World. Within it, there are many nations, such as the Shadow Elven Territories and the Empire of the Great Glaurants. Nesting beneath the Altan Tepes Mountain range, at the junction of the domains of Rockhome, Darokin and Ylaruam, is a smaller city-state. This city-state, known is Deep Hollow, is a keystone in the

trade of the Shadowdeep despite its small size. This place serves as a marketplace for goblinoids from the north-west, glaurants from the south-west, and dwarves from the east alike. The dwarves call this place 'Dulwyr' in their own tongue, and it is home to many races including rock-men, troglodytes, dwarves, gnomes, goblins, and aranea.



RACES OF THE SHADOWDEEP

Cold Drake and Shadow Drake

Drakes are faeries who are able to take the form of either a small dragon or a humanoid. They all remember the Great Rain of Fire and attempt to prevent a new catastrophe of the same type by limiting the technological progress of mortal races. They form a network, a kind of worldwide secret society of thieves and spies, to further their goals and protect themselves.

Shadowdrakes are almost identical to wooddrakes, but can only take the form of a shadow elf.

Colddrakes are also very similar to wooddrakes, and have the abilities of wooddrakes of the same level, except for HD and XP, as shown in Table 1. Colddrakes of less than NM level have the same attacks as wooddrakes of the same age category.

DWARVES AND GNOMES

Travellers

More than a race, Traveller are a culture of dwarves and gnomes. They are a gypsy-like travelling folk, wandering across the Shadowdeep, trading with all the races and offering small services. They have standard dwarf or gnome character class abilities (Travellers often have mixed dwarven and gnomish ancestry, and their abilities simply reflect the ancestor race they more closely resemble). Moreover, they have developed abilities similar to those of Darokin

Table 1: Cold Drake Character Class

Level	XP	HD
Whelp	-32,000	2d8
Youngster	-24,000	3d8
Teenager	-16,000	4d8
NM	0	5d8
1	32,000	6d8
2	96,000	7d8
3	224,000	-
4	480,000	8d8
5	780,000	9d8
6	1,080,000	10d8
7	1,380,000	-
8	1,680,000	11d8
9+	300,000	+1 hp

Merchants. These abilities only apply within the Shadowdeep. Table 2 lists the special abilities of the Travellers. Those that are not available to Darokin Merchants can be used once per day.

Moulder Dwarves

These odd dwarves live in caverns in the Northern Reaches. They were created alongside with the Rockborn, but are definitely different from several points of view. First, they have an affinity for weird magics, and are known as makers of wondrous items. Most of these items, though, turn out to be only rumours or fakes. Second, they are as much asocial and prone to mental instability as the Rockborn are social and sound-minded.

Moulder dwarves follow the same rules as rockborn dwarves, except that they have a -2 penalty to ST vs Magic and Poison, and do

not get the defence powers of rockborn dwarves against Magic as they do not benefit of the same protection that Kagyar bestowed to the Rockborn. However, in their dealings with dragons, moulder dwarves have developed techniques to defend against these treasure-hoarders, and high level moulder dwarves have the same protection against Dragon Breath as elves and halflings. All moulder dwarves are adept at mechanics, and can learn the Open Locks and Find and Remove Traps Thieving skills as a single General Skill. They progress as Thieves of the same level. Moreover, any attack rank achieved is considered as a new level for this purpose.

Finally, moulder dwarves do not have relics, and cannot benefit from them. They create magical items through the standard procedures for Clerics and Magic Users.

Moulder dwarves can become Dwarf Clerics, but they normally follow Thanatos, the Father of Demons. Moulder dwarf Clerics are Chaotic, and therefore cast reverse clerical magic. Like other dwarven Clerics, they have no weapon restrictions, but cannot turn or control the undead.

Table 2: Traveller Spell list

Level 1	Level 2
Calm Animal	Check Load
Clear Sight	Crowd Summoning
Count Coins	Detect Ambush
Detect Evil	Detect Magic
Evaluate	Hold Underground Animal
Ignore Road	Nightwatch
Orientation	Produce Fire
Precipitation	Quicken Pace
Trust	Savoir Faire
Watcher	Silver Tongue
Level 3	Level 4
Charm Animal	Accounting
Detect Lie	Charm Person
Find Traps	Check Caravan
Infravision	Embezzling
Inventory	Pass Rock
Smuggling	Resist Magic
Speak with Underground Animals	Summon Underground Animal

Moulder dwarves can also become Artificers. Artificers use d6 for their Hit Dice, but learn arcane magic as wizards of the same level. They are limited to level 12 in magic progression. Moulder dwarf Artificers learn a special ritual at attack rank H that allows them to cast the Permanence spell needed to create certain magical items. They can only do so in their own laboratories, with a casting time of 1 month. Otherwise, Artificers are able to follow all magic items creation procedures as standard Magic Users.

Table 3: Moulder Dwarf Artificer Spell list

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Analyze	Continual Darkness	Clairvoyance
Darkness	Detect Invisible	Dispel Magic
Detect Magic	ESP	Fireball
Hold Portal	Invisibility	Haste*
Magic Missile	Knock	Heat Metal
Read Languages	Locate Object	Hold Person*
Shield	Phantasmal Force	Lightning Bolt
Sleep	Wizard Lock	Protection from Normal Missiles
Level 4	Level 5	Level 6
Clothform	Animate Dead	Death Spell
Confusion	Conjure Elemental	Disguise
Dimension Door	Contact Outer Plane	Disintegrate
Enchanted Weapon	Harden	Geas
Fear	Fabricate	Move Earth
Ice Storm/Wall of Ice	Passwall	Stone to Flesh
Remove Curse	Wall of Stone	Stoneform
Wizard Eye	Woodform	Wall of Iron

Glaurant

Deep glaurants are found in the deeper reaches of the Shadowdeep. They are considered low-intelligence predators, but a related race of “great glaurants” is also rumoured of. Great glaurants actually exist, and have their own civilization less than one mile beneath the Five Shires. Great glaurants maintain an embassy and trade delegation in Deep Hollow, so glaurant characters can also be found in the Shadowdeep city. All glaurants originate from the Nightmare Dimension. Deep glaurants have suffered more from the shift to the Normal Dimension, whereas great glaurants have better adapted. Still, they perceive darkness as light, cold as warmth, and so on.

Glaurants are powerful creatures with multiple attacks and the power to create darkness¹ at will, every three combat rounds. High level glaurants often study magic, although the glaurant path is very different from that of most races, and resemble most the Secret Crafts of Glantri. Glaurant magic is organized in *paths*, and each path is composed of five *thresholds*. Access to the first threshold is available to 5th level glaurants, and costs 10,0000 XP. Further thresholds can be accessed after 5 more levels, and every new threshold costs twice as many XP as the previous one. Powers

¹ As the reverse of the Light spell, cast at the character’s level.

Table 4: Glaurant Character Class

Level	XP	AC	HD	Damage	Powers
Whelp	-64,000	7	4d8	2x/1d4	Darkness 1/week, Infravision
Youngster	-48,000	6	5d8	2x1d6/1d2	Darkness 1/day
Teenager	-32,000	5	6d8	4x1d6/1d3	Darkness 3/day
NM	0	4	7d8	4x2d4/1d4	Gliding, Darkness rounds
1	64,000	4	8d8	4x2d4/1d4	
2	192,000	4	9d8	4x2d4/1d4	
3	448,000	3	-	4x2d4/1d4	
4	748,000	3	10d8	4x2d4/1d4	
5	1,048,000	3	11d8	4x2d4/1d4	
6	1,348,000	3	12d8	4x2d4/1d4	
7	1,648,000	2	-	4x2d4/1d6	Flight
8	1,948,000	2	13d8	4x2d4/1d6	
9+	+300,000	-1 AC at level 12 and every 6 levels	+2 hp	4x2d4/1d6	

associated with the thresholds can be used once per day, plus once per day for each additional threshold achieved.

Path of Nightmares

The Path of Nightmares deals with the study of the Nightmare Dimension. Glaurants that study this path attempt to draw from their dimension of origin to affect the minds of Normal beings, and from the Normal dimension to affect the minds of Nightmare beings. Due to their stronger connection with the Nightmare Dimension, glaurants who follow this path have a 5% immunity to Normal magic.

- First threshold:** Phantasmal Force.
- Second threshold:** Hallucinatory Terrain
- Third threshold:** Feeblemind
- Fourth threshold:** Madness
- Fifth threshold:** Gate to Nightmare Dimension

Path of Terror

The Path of Terror studies a specific aspect of the Nightmare beings, their effect on the mind of normal beings. Due to their stronger connection with the Nightmare Dimension, Glaurants who follow this path have a 5% immunity to Normal magic.

- First threshold:** Cause Fear.
- Second threshold:** Fear
- Third threshold:** Death Spell
(this version of the spell causes such an intense terror that the victims die of fright)
- Fourth threshold:** Power Word Stun
(this version of the spell causes catatonia from fright)
- Fifth threshold:** Symbol of Fear

Path of the Shadowdeep

The Path of the Shadowdeep deals with the nature of the underground environment that houses the glaurant civilization. Glaurants who take this path are able to estimate correctly depth and direction when underground.

- First threshold:** Heat Metal.
- Second threshold:** Passwall
- Third threshold:** Wall of Stone
- Fourth threshold:** Rock
- Fifth threshold:** Steelform

Path of Shadows

The Path of Shadows studies magic related to shadows. Glaurants who take this path can Hide in Shadows like Thieves of 1/2 level.

- First threshold:** Obscure
- Second threshold:** Shadow Step
(Dimension Door, works by stepping from one shadow to another)
- Third threshold:** Conjure Shadow
(the summoned shadow has statistics identical to an air elemental)
- Fourth threshold:** Shadow Blade
(Sword, the blade appears to be held by the character's shadow and strikes from there)
- Fifth threshold:** Maze

Path of Blackflame

The Path of Blackflames studies the Nightmare equivalent of Fire magic. Glaurants who take this path resist fire (and blackflame) damage, reducing it by -1 per die.

- First threshold:** Faerie Fire
- Second threshold:** Blackflame Storm
(as Ice Storm)
- Third threshold:** Conjure Blackflame Elemental
(the summoned elemental has statistics identical to a fire elemental)
- Fourth threshold:** Delayed Blast Blackflame
(as Delayed Blast Fireball)
- Fifth threshold:** Blackflame Cloud
(as Explosive Cloud)

Hresha-rhak

Servitors of Ubbeth, or hresha-rhak as they call themselves, are fish-like humanoids that dwell in the waters of the Shadowdeep, as well as in the deeper reaches of the Seas of Dawn. It is believed that they entered the Shadowdeep via waterways connecting the Sunless Sea with underwater caves in the Western Sea of Dawn. Hresha-rhak are typically connected with the cult of the Outer Being Ubbeth, Spawn of the Deep, but they are not of Outer origin themselves. Therefore, heretic hresha-rhak may be available as player characters. However, these seaborne beings cannot survive easily outside water, which makes their interactions with landlocked races limited.

Rock Man

Rock Men are stony humanoids with vaguely cone-shaped bodies. They can easily surprise unaware people by standing still and looking like rock formations, but dwarves and other dwellers of the depths are not as easily fooled. Rock men are typically warriors, although they can take Shaman or Wicca levels. Most Rock man Shamans worship Earth Elemental spirits, and Wiccans typically focus on Earth Elemental spells.

Rock men typically live in small clans, led by elder councils.

Table 5: Hresha-rhak Character Class

Level	XP	AC	HD	Damage	Powers
Teenager	-1,200	7	1d8+1	2x1d4 or 2d4	Double damage from fire, cannot survive out of water, -1 penalty from moonlight
NM	0	6	2d8+1	2x1d4+1 or 2d6	Survive 1d4 turns out of water
1	1,200		3d8+2		
2	3,600		4d8+3		
3	8,400		-		Survive 2d4 turns out of water
4	18,000		5d8+4		
5	37,200		6d8+5		
6	75,600		7d8+5		
7	152,400		-		Survive 3d4 turns out of water
8	306,000		8d8+5		
9+	+300,000		+2 hp		+1d4 turns out of water at level 12 and every 6 levels

Table 6: Rock Man Character Class

Level	XP	AC	HD	Damage	Powers
Youngster	-2,000	4	1d8	1d6	Save as Dwarf, Infravision, Initiative penalty, Camouflage 1-2 on 1d6, ½ damage from fire
Teenager	-1,000	3	2d8	1d6	Camouflage 1-3 on 1d6, ¼ damage from fire
NM	0	2	3d8	1d8	Camouflage 1-4 on 1d6, Immune to fire
1	4,000	2	4d8	1d8	
2	12,000	2	5d8	1d8	
3	28,000	1	-	1d10	
4	60,000	1	6d8	1d10	
5	124,000	1	7d8	1d10	
6	252,000	1	8d8	1d10	
7	508,000	0	-	2d6	
8	808,000	0	9d8	2d6	
9+	+300,000	-1 AC at level 10, and every 5 levels	+2hp	+1d6 at level 12, and every 7 levels	

Table 7: Troglodyte Character Class

Level	XP	AC	HD	Damage	Powers
Teenager	-2,000	4	1d8	3x1d2	Camouflage 1-2 on 1d6
NM	0	5	2d8	3x1d4	Camouflage 1-4 on 1d6, Stench
1	2,000		3d8	3x1d4	
2	6,000		4d8	2x1d4/1d6	
3	14,000		-	2x1d4/1d6	-1 ST vs stench
4	30,000		5d8	2x1d4/1d6	
5	62,000		6d8	3x1d6	
6	126,000		7d8	3x1d6	
7	254,000		-	3x1d6	-2 ST vs stench
8	510,000		8d8	3x1d6	
9+	+300,000		+2 hp	2x1d6/1d8 (progresses to 3x1d8 at level 15, 3x1d10 at level 25, 3x1d12 at level 35)	-1 ST vs stench at level 12 and every 6 levels

Table: 8 Shadowdeep PC Races

Playable Race	Primary Locations	Source
Shadow Elf	Shadow Elf Territories	GAZ14 <i>The Shadow Elves</i>
Aranea	Forest of Spiders, Deep Hollow	<i>Web of the Wizard-King</i> in <i>Dragon Magazine</i> 183
Goblin	Lower Broken Lands, Deep Hollow, Oenkmar	GAZ10 <i>Orcs of Thar</i>
Hobgoblin	Hobgobland, Jhyrrad, Oenkmar	GAZ10 <i>Orcs of Thar</i>
Kobold	Kol, Falun Caves	GAZ10 <i>Orcs of Thar</i>
Bugbear	Bugburbia	GAZ10 <i>Orcs of Thar</i>
Orc	Western Orclands, Yellow Orkia, Red Orclands, Orcus Rex, Black Mountains, Oenkmar	GAZ10 <i>Orcs of Thar</i>
Ogre	Ogremoor, Black Mountains	GAZ10 <i>Orcs of Thar</i>
Troll	Trollhattan, Troll tunnels under Soderfjord	GAZ10 <i>Orcs of Thar</i>
Gnoll	Graakhalia, South Gnollistan, Gnollheim, Oenkmar	GAZ10 <i>Orcs of Thar</i>
Lupin, Cimarron Hairless	Oenkmar	<i>In the Eyes of the Cat</i> in <i>Dragon Magazine</i> 181 and <i>Lupins of Mystara</i> in <i>Dragon Magazine</i> 237
Gnome, Rock	Underyard, Highforge, Deep Hollow	PC2 <i>Top Ballista</i>
Nagpa	No communities, individually everywhere	PC2 <i>Top Ballista</i>
Werebat	Deep Hollow	PC4 <i>Night Howlers</i>
Kopru	Sunless Sea	PC3 <i>The Sea People</i>

Troglodyte

Troglodytes are reptilian humanoids found throughout the Shadowdeep. Deep Hollow, however, is the only location in (or, more properly, under) Brun where they have a larger scale society. Typical troglodytes are primitive, tribal hunters who rely on their camouflage abilities to surprise their prey. Deep Hollow troglodytes are somewhat more advanced, due to continual contact with other civilizations.

Troglodyte PCs often fill a role similar to that of Rangers or Thieves in human parties. Troglodytes can learn the Hide in Shadows and Move Silently abilities as a single General Skill. They progress in both as Thieves of the same level.

Races from other Sources

Several options for player characters for the Shadowdeep are available in existing sources. A list of the most relevant can be found in Table 8. The table also reports where each race can be found most commonly. These areas are well known as homelands of the race, and are suitable homelands for PCs as well.

Aranea Options

In BECMI, Aranea have only the option of being Magic Users. However, in AD&D Savage Coast, they can also be Fighters, Clerics, Druids and Thieves, with level limits and several multiclass options. Thus, it is reasonable to allow at least Aranea Clerics and Druids. The simplest option is to use the Aranea class as is, but allow the character to use Cleric or Druid spell lists instead of the Magic User spell list. An alternate option is to apply the rules for the Aranea (XP penalty and special powers) to classes other than the Magic User, although game balance could be affected since the HP and attack table would be beneficial in spider form as well.

HISTORY OF DEEP HOLLOW

FORMATION: The Old Carnifex

BC 9000: The old carnifex are exiled to the Pits of Banishment, a pocket dimension prison plane. One of the “seals” of this prison plane is hidden within the Shadowdeep, in a place that will one day become known as Deep Hollow. The carnifex of Y'hog escape the imprisonment, and form a powerful civilization that expands from Y'hog to cover a large portion of the world.

The Carnifex Era and the Lhomarrian Fortress

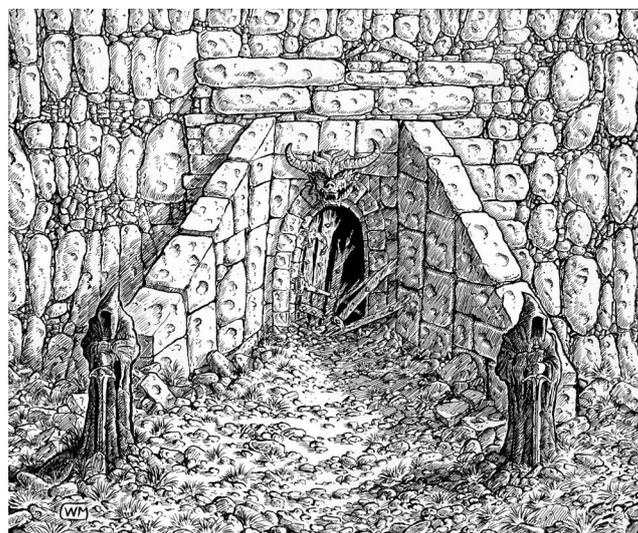
BC 7900 - 7024: The expansion of the carnifex of Y'hog brings them in contact with the human civilization of Lhomarr. Lhomarr and Y'hog war on each other for centuries.

BC 7200: Desperate to find a weapon that will destroy Lhomarr completely, the carnifex of Y'hog search for artefacts left by their now banished ancestors, the old carnifex. The Lhomarrians become aware of their plans and seek to thwart them.

BC 7190: Aware that the carnifex of Y'hog have a lead on powerful magic located in the Shadowdeep, the Lhomarrians quickly mount an expedition to claim the site. They arrive before the carnifex can secure the location, and establish a fortress, Fort Vigilance, to protect the underground site.

BC 7022: Lhomarr is destroyed through the machinations of the Outer Beings, and its

remnants removed to the Hollow World. Fort Vigilance survives, as its last guardians choose to become undead through the mummification procedure, standing forever guard against the carnifex.



BC 7020 - 6920: In retaliation for the destruction of Lhomarr, the Immortals bind the carnifex of Y'hog to their lands and slowly sink it beneath the sea. The Age of the Carnifex comes to an end.

With the destruction of both Lhomarr and Y'hog, Fort Vigilance and the seal it guards go dark a millennium. The entrances to the cavern -- at least the ones being used by the warring factions -- are closed off by the High Priest of Ixion. However the cavern and its secrets will not remain hidden forever.

BC 5500: The red dragon Yealaletherveri fights the final battle near the North Pole (at the time located near the Altan Tepes) against Iscranin, the greatest of the annelids, and kills it. Before crashing into Yealaletherveri's lair, Iscranin passes through the cavern that will become Deep Hollow,

creating a new entrance to it from the upper regions of the Shadowdeep.

First Migration: The Rock Men

BC 3000: Rock men fleeing the destruction of the Great Rain of Fire, delve down beneath the Dawn Territories in order to preserve their culture. Their brethren on the surface, though not destroyed outright, slowly begin to change both physically and socially forming several new cultures including that of the stone folk.

BC 2600: A group of Rock men travels deep underground through the Sunless Sea and all the way below Nithia, emerging in Deep Hollow. They settle on the slopes of the island in the middle of Lake Tzel, but leave Fort Vigilance undisturbed.

Second Migration: The Fall of Mogreth and Goblin Hordes

BC 2000: The Second Empire of Mogreth is destroyed. Troglodytes flee underground, and reach Deep Hollow, where the rock men employed them as servants.

BC 1700: A local cataclysm rakes the Broken Lands and buries the Great Horde. King Loark dies, and his horde breaks apart. Goblin clans flee underground and wander the depths until they find the Shadowdeep cavern of Deep Hollow, which they name *Kongdoy*.

BC 1500: Modrigswerg explorers and merchants discover Deep Hollow, and start buying gems from the rock men.

BC 1300: The M'kar (or Makers), a small but advanced civilization fleeing destruction at the hands of the kara kara, delves into the unknown depths below their island home of Teki Nuri Ria. They emerge into a large cavern and discover ancient ruins. Plumbing the magical secrets within, they are able to transform themselves into shadows.

Third Migration: Werebats and Aranea

BC 912: The Second Rising of the Hin. Loktal defeats orcs at Brokenfang Falls and rushes north to repel gnoll invaders, but is too weak to withstand a hin revolt. Halflings found the realm of Shaerdon, ruled by a Council of hin clan Lords. A clan of goblins is displaced by the fleeing orcs, and delves down under the Altan Tepes to Deep Hollow, bringing with it the curse of lycanthropy, which had been lingering among them since the times of Taymor.

BC 900: Aranea arrive on the island of Teki Nuri Ria, in search of magical artefacts, and are able to follow the trail of the M'kar deep into the earth. They do battle with the shadowy creatures that the M'kar have become, coveting the magical knowledge that the shadows possess.

BC 800: Aranean magic finally obliterates the shadows and the spider folk lay claim to the Lhomarrian ruins for themselves. The shadows, and their city of Maskelyne are moved to the Hollow World.

BC 799: Attempting to claim the ruins, the aranea instead wake the Lhomarrian dead that have been interred there. The undead

route the spiders, driving them from Fort Vigilance.

BC 750: The aranea cut off all ties with the surface world, magically closing the passageways to the Lhomarrrian ruins so that none from the surface can follow in their footsteps. They build the Silken City in stalactites above the ruins and begin plotting ways to overcome its undead defenders.

Fourth Migration: The Travellers

AC 490: Large kobold clans are driven into Soderfjord from the west, fleeing the armies of Rockhome. The gnomes of the Falun caverns are greatly outnumbered by the more prolific kobolds. The few gnome survivors flee south and west through the Shadowdeep with the help of dwarven exiles from Rockhome. Within the next two centuries, they form a new nomadic culture, the Travellers.

AC 700: The Travellers discover Deep Hollow, and establish the Caravansary.

Modern History

AC 800: Shadow elf explorers stumble on Deep Hollow. The encounter is initially hostile, and the elves retreat.

AC 900: The great glaurants establish a trade route to Deep Hollow, and send an ambassador there.

AC 950: The shadow elf government attempts a less aggressive approach after



Travelling to Deep Hollow

news of the glaurant embassy reach the ears of the King. A shadow elf embassy is established near the Caravansary.

AC 999: Nagpa archaeologists establish a working camp near Fort Vigilance. They claim their interest is merely in learning about the culture that created the ruins, although the truth is that they are researching carnifex magic as a way to escape their curse.

PEOPLE OF DEEP HOLLOW

Deep Hollow is a multiracial community, with a large goblin and troglodyte population supplemented by smaller groups of rock men, dwarves and gnomes, aranea, and other humanoids. The city has an overall population of circa 32,000 people.

The main languages spoken in Deep Hollow are Dwarvish (*Denwarf*), Goblin (*Gos-til*) and Aranea (*Akavishi*). *Denwarf* is only spoken by the Travellers among themselves, although it is not exactly secret, so several words have filtered into the other languages. *Gos-til* is the language of commoners, spoken by goblins, but also troglodytes and most rock men. Rock men also have their own language, but it is composed of low, rumbling sounds that are not easily reproduced by others. *Akavishi* is the language of bureaucracy and the upper

classes. Speaking *Akavishi* rather than *Gos-til* is an affectation adopted by many werebats, in particular.

ARANEA

The aranea, or *Akavish* in their own language, are the aristocracy of Deep Hollow. This particular group of aranea came to Deep Hollow following the M'Kar from Teki-Nura-Ria through the tunnels of Iscranin's Path. They defeated the shadows, and established themselves in Deep Hollow, where they waltz around the Lhomarrian undead in an attempt to gain even more magical power. The *Akavish*, like the Herathians, are shapechangers, but generally take the form of shadow elves, cimarron hairless lupins, goblins, or gnomes.

They are able to use wizardly magic, although most *Akavish* can only use first or second level spells. Those who reach level 4

Table 9: Population of Deep Hollow

Race	Population	Role	Quarters
Goblins	12,000	Miners, Laborers	Dripstone
Troglodytes	10,000	Laborers, Fishermen	Dripstone
Rock Men	6,000	Craftsmen, Miners	Dripstone
Aranea	2,000	Weavers, Hunters	Silk City
Traveller Dwarves and Gnomes	1,000	Merchants, Prospectors, Tinkers	Caravansary
Goblin Werebats	500	Couriers, Scouts	House of Tattered Silks
Lhomarrian Crusaders	500	(no social roles)	Ruins of Fort Vigilance
Glaurants	70	Diplomatic Envoys	Glaurant Embassy
Nagpa	5 + servants	Archaeologists	Encampment
Shadow Elves	25	Diplomatic Envoys	Shadow Elf Embassy

must enrol in the *Kesbepb Migdal*, the Tower of Magic, for further training. From a spiritual point of view, the Akavish follow the teachings of Yehm (Korotiku), Enebaan (Masauwu) and Negyavim (Iliric), as well as Aphrah (Terra).

Goblinoids

Goblins (*Gos* in their own language) comprise a large part of the commoner population of Deep Hollow. They have a long history in the city, as the first goblins arrived hereafter the defeat of King Loark. More goblins, originally part of Wogar's migration, reached Deep Hollow after Loktal Ironshield's dwarves defeated the orcs of the western Cruth mountains. They carried a strain of werebat lycanthropy from the Taymoran lands, which helped them navigate the tunnels of the Shadowdeep. Culturally, the goblins had a major impact, and *Gos-til*, their language, is the most commonly spoken tongue in Deep Hollow (which they originally called *Kongdoy*, although the dwarven name, *Dulwyr*, is actually more popular even with native *Gos-til* speakers).

Nowadays, goblins in the city are mostly employed as miners, as well as fungus farmers, servants, and other lower-class occupations. Most goblins, in particular farmers and miners, are followers of Yamag (Terra), although Wogar is also popular among warriors and hunters.

Goblin Werebats

Werebats are the elite of the goblins. Their main occupation is as hunters, couriers, and messengers in the service of the Deep

Hollow military. Also, they command the admiration and fealty of lesser goblin clans.

Other Goblinoids

Few other goblinoids are present in Deep Hollow, typically as mercenaries in the service of foreign merchants, visiting dignitaries, or paranoid local nobles.

Hresha-rhak

The Servitors of Ubbeth are a threat to all other inhabitants of Deep Hollow. From their lairs in the depths of Lake Tzel, they strike against fishermen and coastal travellers, and occasionally mount raids against the district of Dripstone or the Caravansary. For this reason, the ferry is heavily protected with magic and military forces, and a werebat strike force is always ready to respond rapidly to such attacks.

Hresha-rhak are usually cultists of Ubbeth, and are led by higher ranking cultists, called Xaresha-rhak. These leaders have the special powers of Servants of the Outer Beings². They speak a corrupted and simplified version of the Carnifex language. Due to their carnifex and Outer Being taint, they attract the enmity of the Lhomarr undead.

Rock Men

Rock men are a common sight in Deep Hollow, where they mostly work as miners or craftsmen. Called *Hruken* (granite people) in the dwarven language and *Aska-el* in *Gos-til*, the Rock men are a force for stability in the

² See G. Gander, "[Service to the Outer Beings](#)", at the Vaults of Pandius

city, forming a middle class of sorts between the aranea and werebat aristocracy and the goblin and troglodyte commoners.

Rock men follow the teachings of the shamans of Yamag, but honour also Kagyar and Garal Glitterlode.

Travellers

Travellers can be found almost everywhere in the Shadowdeep, trading and tinkering in underground cities and villages. However, in Deep Hollow they are more than an occasional presence: the Caravansary holds an entire community of these dwarves and gnomes, and serves as the main centre of their culture. All Travellers eventually return to the Caravansary, although they may stay away for years. In fact, the Caravansary appears to be the only place where Travellers sojourn for any significant time. Thus, the population of the Caravansary changes almost continuously, with few Travellers remaining there for more than a few consecutive years, leaving for their underground travels and being replaced in their work positions by others willing to stop from travelling for a few years.

The Travellers of Deep Hollow are organized in guilds, which manage the schedule of travelling troupes and caravans. The guilds are those of Tinkers, Teamsters, Mercers, Fighters, Ferroners³, and Masons. Every Traveller caravan is led by a Master, and composed of the Master's apprentice(s) and a group of journeymen, usually drawn from different guilds. Thus, a Master Mercer's or

³ This guild collects ironmongers and other metalworkers.

Teamster's caravan would focus on trade, but will also include journeyman Fighters for protection, and at least a Tinker or Mason for repairs. On the other hand, a Ferroner's or Fighter's caravan might look more like a prospector team, and a Tinker's caravan looks almost like a gypsy carnival.

Travellers are quite reserved, like most dwarves, in matters of religion. They do follow the teachings of Garal Glitterlode, Kagyar, and Gorden (Terra), but little more is known, and Traveller priests are indistinguishable from other members of their society. A few Travellers develop magic user abilities⁴, although few of them join the Kesheph Migdal.

Troglodytes

Troglodytes are the proletariat of Deep Hollow. They are more primitive than even the goblins, live in crowded warrens, and work mostly in the mines as hurriers (rather than the better paying, guild-protected pickman jobs, which are usually taken by goblins and rock men), or as fishermen and fungus farmers. Troglodytes are little organized, although fishing and farming communities recognize a *raish*, a chief or elder, among them.

Undead Lhomarrrians

The Lhomarrrian undead are an eerie presence in Deep Hollow. They never leave their fortress, and do not interact with the

⁴ These are Traveller who favour their Gnomish heritage. Just like Gnomes, they can become Wicca up to level 12.

other inhabitants except to repel any attack on the ruins. They appear to have a preternatural knowledge of such attacks, as they have never been surprised in the long recorded history of the city. The undead react with immediate violence to hresha-rhak attacks, but also to any troglodyte interloper. They generally warn any other intruder first, giving them time to leave before attacking. However, foreigners may not understand the language spoken by the Lhomarrians, leading to unfortunate casualties. The Kephesh Migdal has transcripts of the warnings most commonly issued by the undead, so local wizards and sages who research the ruins are able to understand them and leave before things turn ugly.

Embassies, visitors, AND guests

While Deep Hollow is fairly distant from other Shadowdeep, it does maintain trade relations with the main powers of the underground by means of the Travellers. Thus, both the shadow elves and the great glaurants have established permanent delegations in the city. Both are housed in fortified compounds near the Caravansary. Other visitors include the moulder dwarves and some nagpas.

Shadowelves

The shadow elf kingdom maintains a small presence in Deep Hollow. This embassy is manned by Shamans and Second Shadow agents who spend most of their time trying to pry into the secrets of the Kephesh Migdal rather than pursuing trade agreements. The Deep Hollow ruling council is aware of the interference, but avoids angering the militarily more powerful shadow elves, which

they plan to use to counterbalance the great glaurant expansionism.

Great Glaurants

The glaurant delegation is large and well organized. The glaurants appear to be heavily interested in trading outer world goods for their mineral products from deep under the Altan Tepes. However, they constantly attempt to get a greater foothold in Deep Hollow. For the moment, the council has managed to keep them out of the city proper, limiting their holdings to a compound on the shores of Lake Tzel.

Nagpas

A group of five nagpas, led by *Allu* (Nagpa 10, C), has set a temporary camp in the last month near the ruins of Fort Vigilance. The nagpas are, as usual, researching new magics that may release them from their cursed condition. Due to the Immortal-level magics involved in the curse, mortal magic is not sufficient to undo it, and the nagpas are trying to find stronger sources of power. Inevitably, this is going to bring them to the Outer Beings and carnifex lore, an event which would bring the wrath of the undead guardians of Fort Vigilance upon their heads.

Moulder Dwarves

There is a small but thriving community of moulder dwarves, mostly settled in the lower reaches of Dripstone, above the Masaph but lower than the Acropolis. Moulder dwarf craftsmen cater to the needs of the enchanters of the Kephesh Migdal, at a great profit to their own pockets. Deep Hollow moulder dwarves are every bit as eccentric as their Northern Reaches relatives, and only marginally more sociable.

ATLAS OF DEEP HOLLOW

Deep Hollow is built in and on a pair of gigantic stalactite and stalagmite forming an island in Lake Tzel, somewhat more than 1,000 ft under the surface. Deep Hollow stands below the western reaches of the Emirate of Makistan, near the Rockhome and Darokin borders. The Lake is fed by water filtered down from the underground banks

of River Nithia, and in turn its overflow waters flows through deep underground rivers towards the Sunless Sea under the Western Sea of Dawn. The Lake is also known as *Glomur* in Dwarven and as *Songkol* in Gos-til. Both names mean simply “big lake” or “sea” in the respective language, whereas the Akavishi name “Tzel” refers at the same time to “shadows” and “protection”.



House of Tattered Silks

The upper portion of the stalactite that hangs over Deep Hollow was abandoned by the aranea when trade with Dripstone made it impractical to use it, and later taken over by goblin werebats. The original tapestry of silks that covered many areas of the stalactite is reduced to tatters, giving the name to the quarter. The werebats live in caves dug into the stalactite, and adapted to flying inhabitants. In particular, the entrances are typically unreachable without flying, or at least taking a long and dangerous climb along the outer walls of the stalactite.



Werebat Messenger

Meshiir, the Silk City

The lower portion of the stalactite is a scintillating city of silk webs. Cocoons connected by silk ropes hang from the stalactite, providing lodgings to many aranea. The area and its buildings can be reached via cables and elevators which are lowered when necessary. Otherwise, flying is necessary to reach it from Dripstone.

Dripstone

The stalagmite portion of Deep Hollow is also the most densely populated area. Rock men, goblins, and troglodytes inhabit the quarter, both in stone buildings constructed on the slopes of the stalagmite, and in warrens dug into it.

The Acropolis

On the tip of Dripstone are located the government buildings, including the *Chtot Zhal* (City Hall) and the *Kesbeph Migdal* (Tower of Magic), carved in the very tip of the stalagmite. The *Beith Yehm* (House of Korotiku, the main Aranea temple) and the *Mezt Yamag* (Temple of Terra, mostly frequented by goblins and rock men) are the main temples, located immediately below the City Hall. The trade guilds and other administrative and religious buildings occupy the lower parts of this area.

The Masaph and Fort Vigilance

On the shore near the mainland is found the *Masaph*, the terminus of the ferry leading to the shores of Lake Tzel. On the opposite side of the island, the enigmatic ruins of a fortress guard passages locked by magical sigils. Undead humans from ancient Lhomarr

occupy the ruins, mostly avoiding the living as long as they are not disturbed. Near the ruins is a small encampment, currently occupied by a group of nagpa archaeologists and their retainers and assistants.

The Mines

Deep under Dripstone, the goblins and rock men have excavated great mines, searching for precious stones and metals. They steer clear of the ruins, as the Lhomarr fortress entirely surrounds it, even underground, and the undead are unceasingly vigilant.

The Shores of Lake Tzel

The nearest mainland area to Deep Hollow proper includes the Caravansary of the Travellers, the ferry house, a small village of troglodyte fishermen and goblin fungus farmers, and two walled compounds which house the glaurant and shadow elven embassies to Deep Hollow. Circa 1,400 people of assorted races (mostly dwarves and gnomes) live in the area. Large fungus farms surround the area.

Belfagar, the Caravansary

The Caravansary is the focal point of the Traveller culture. It is a walled court that protects a multitude of stables, taverns, inns, trading establishments, tinker shops, and warehouses, both dug into the rock and built within the court itself. It is located on the shores of Lake Tzel, near the ferry that leads to Dripstone and the road to Cynidicea.

The Caravansary is known as *Kerben* in Gostil and as *Robesh* in Akavishi, but Belfagar, the Denwarf name meaning “The Noisy House”, is mostly used. The majority of the

1,000 Traveller dwarves and gnomes reside within the Caravansary itself, in small tower-like houses built along the walls, or in complexes excavated below it.

The Depths of Lake Tzel

The depths of Lake Tzel are the domain of the hresha-rhak. The Servitors of Ubbeth have an unknown number of underwater villages and forts, from which they raid the surface. They have repeatedly attempted to invade Dripstone, but for mysterious reasons they always attack from the far side, and each time the Lhomarrian undead have swarmed forth and repelled the hresha-rhak with a combination of weapons and magic.

GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

The government of Deep Hollow is managed by a council composed of the Grand Magus, the High Priest of Yehm, the Chief Shaman of Terra, the Foreman of the Mines, the Master of the Caravansary, and the Herald of Arms. Due to ingrained customs, both racial and social, the Grand Magus and the High Priest of Yehm are always aranea, the Master of the Caravansary is a Traveller (and is generally called with the dwarven title, *Rakdar*), the Chief Shaman of Terra and the Foreman are rock men or goblins, and the Herald of Arms is a goblin werebat. This leaves the troglodytes without representation in the government, a fact that is recurrent source of social unrest in the city, as the troglodytes make up more than 30% of the population.

Of the main officers, the Grand Magus is selected by the Kesheph Migdal, which serves as the magicians' guild and school of magic. The priests are selected by their own clerical hierarchies, and the Master of the Caravansary is the clan head of the Larodar clan (usually but not necessarily the male clan head). The Foreman is elected by the members of the *Birik*, the miners' guild, among the senior members. The Herald of Arms is a hereditary charge, transmitted by the previous holder to one of his children, or to another werebat infected by him.

The council selects the lower officers, who are the ones actually in charge of the day-to-day running of Deep Hollow and its administration. The *Rosh*, or provost, is the head of the administration, and it is usually chosen among the foreigners, to avoid infighting among the city factions. Since neither glaurants nor shadow elves are much trusted, the Rosh is often a moulder dwarf, or a member of another, less common, race, such as the Cimarron Hairless lupins or the orcs. The current Rosh is *Aranrhod ferch Rhyfedd* (Rogue Sidhe 16, CN), a lady of the Sidhe court of Annwn. She's a rather erratic administrator, but is tolerated by all factions because she does not seem to favour too much the aranea. *Kelevyam* (Aranea Magic User 6, LN), the *Chotemsar* (keeper of the seals), is the next most important lower officer, and spends most of its time curbing the inefficiencies of Aranrhod's administration, as well as providing favours for the aranea. *Durrast* (Rock Man 8, LN) is the *Meltzar*, in charge of the maintenance of city buildings and mines. Finally, the *Matzbi* (marshal) *Talag* (Goblin 14, NE) leads the city watch.



Aranrhod ferch Rhyfedd

WHO'S WHO IN DEEP HOLLOW

Ma'atzamat, Grand Maga

Aranea 30, CN

Str 8, Int 18, Wis 15, Dex 12, Con 9, Cha 15
AC 1, HD 9d4+21, HP 45.

Attacks: 1 staff 1d8+5 or by spell

General skills: Languages (Akavishi, Dwarven 18, Gos-til 18, Shadow Elven 18), Law and Justice (Deep Hollow) 15, Detect Deception 15, Leadership 17, Planar Geography 18, History of Deep Hollow 18, Magical Engineering 18, Read/Write (Akavishi) 18, Acting 18.

Weapon Masteries: Staff (Master), Dagger (Skilled).

Special abilities: Magic User spells (as MU30), spider form. Permanent Shield spell.

Equipment: Staff of Wizardry, Dagger +2, Elven Cloak and Boots (of Shadow Elf making), Ring of Protection +4, Ring of Safety. The Grand Maga has access to a large selection of potions, scrolls, and other magic items.

elf ambassador, since the similarities end there -- psychologically, she appears completely alien to the shadow elf mind, which have been shaped by millennia of isolation in a strict, lawful society where the good of the collective is put over that of the individual, and the value of tradition is paramount. On the contrary, the Grand Maga is inquisitive, outgoing, and demonstrates an abrasive wit that is only partially offset by her physical beauty.

Regardless, she is a competent leader, able to bring together powerful mages to cooperate for the defence of Deep Hollow and the advancement of the Kesheph Migdal -- two goals that she must finely balance. As the *primus inter pares* of the city council, she is the nominal head-of-state of Deep Hollow, although she leaves entirely the administration to the Rosh and her functionaries. In the council, she is mostly a voice for progress, and is generally supported by the Rakdar, *Lhyred Farwalker of the Larodar* (male Dwarf 12/F, NG) and the Foreman of the Mines *Komur* (female Goblin 13, TN), both of whom favour trade with neighbouring nations and economic development over secrecy.

Ma'atzamat is definitely curious about what lies beyond the seals of Fort Vigilance, but is wise enough to understand the danger of messing with the powerful undead that guard it. However, she's not unlikely to let innocuous enough adventurers -- such as the nagpas -- try the defences of the Fort, in the hope of discovering something useful from their inevitable demise.

The Grand Maga, Ma'atzamat has the humanoid form of a beautiful shadow elf woman, which she highlights by wearing appropriate clothing, such as elven cloak and boots, and speaking a perfectly accented shadow elven language. This has been quite a shock for the shadow



Galach, High Priest of Yehm

Aranea Cleric of Korotiku 17, CN
 Str 9, Int 15, Wis 17, Dex 13, Con 10, Cha 16
 AC 2, HD 9d6+8, HP 27.

Attacks: 1 staff 1d8+4 or by spell

General skills: Languages (Akavishi, Dwarven 15, Gos-til 15), Religion (Yehm) 15, Detect Deception 17, Read/Write (Akavishi) 15, Acting 18.

Weapon Masteries: Staff (Expert), Sling (Basic).

Special abilities: Cleric spells (as C17), spider form, Hide in Shadows as T17.

Equipment: Leather armour +2, Staff of Watching +3, Ring of Protection +2, Ring of Holiness. The High Priest has access to a large selection of potions, scrolls, and other magic items.

Galach is the High Priest of the Temple of Yehm, the most prestigious religious institution in Deep Hollow. Galach looks like a Cimarron Hairless lupin while in humanoid form, but his true shape is that of a huge spider. He uses his true form only while in the Silk City of Meshiir, and switches to his humanoid form when in Dripstone. A powerful priest, Galach is also a personally charismatic individual, although not much of a leader, both due to personal inclinations and philosophical reasons. In politics, he generally favours the aranea, but not overly so, sometimes holding unorthodox positions or unexpectedly switching sides during the discussion of a bill or decree. He is also much younger than the other members of the council, with the exception of the Herald of Arms, *Tarizinde* (female Goblin 9/Werebat 9, CG), who is also his closest ally.

Hrumdor, Chief Shaman of Yamag

Rock Man 20/Shaman of Yamag 20, LN
 Str 16, Int 13, Wis 18, Dex 8, Con 15, Cha 17
 AC -3, HD 9d8+31, HP 70.

Attacks: 1 fist 4d6+2 or by spell

General skills: Languages (Rock Man, Dwarven 13, Akavishi 13, Gos-til 13), Religion (Terra) 18, Law and Justice (Deep Hollow) 18, Detect Deception 18, Leadership 17, Planar Geography 13, Profession (Jeweller) 13, Profession (Administrator) 13.

Weapon Masteries: none.

Special abilities: Camouflage, Immune to Fire, Shaman spells.

Equipment: Holy symbol of Yamag, Stone of Controlling Earth Elementals, Talisman of Earth Elemental Travel, Nail of Pointing.

Hrumdor is an ancient rock man, and a powerful priest of Yamag. As such, he acts as the main representative of his species in the government of Deep Hollow, since the current Foreman of the Mines is a goblin. He is also the head of the largest religious congregation of the city, as the followers of Yehm are found mostly among the werebats and aranea, whereas the cult of Yamag is popular among the lower classes.

Hrumdor is a wise, if conservative, leader, who insists on painstaking verification and assessment of intelligence before committing to any decision. As such, he is often seen as indecisive by his colleagues in the city council. He is difficult to distinguish from other rock men, unless he wears the paraments of the Chief Shaman of Yamag, a massive string of prayer beads made of a hundred different types of rocks and semiprecious stones.

Bal-kas, Troglodyte Raish

Troglodyte 7/Shaman of Yamag 2, TN
Str 11, Int 12, Wis 16, Dex 13, Con 16, Cha 14
AC 5, HD 7d8+14, HP 45.

Attacks: claw/claw/byte 1d6/1d6/1d6, trident 1d8+1, or by spell.

General skills: Languages (Gos-til, Akavishi 12), Profession (Fisherman) 12, Law and Justice (Deep Hollow) 16, Blind Fighting 13, Detect Deception 16.

Weapon Masteries: Trident (skilled), Net (Basic).

Special abilities: Camouflage, Stench -2 ST, Shaman spells.

Equipment: Trident, holy symbol of Yamag.

Bal-kas is an old troglodyte fishing crew leader, or “raish”. A canny hunter, he has survived many battles with the hresha-rhak, which he hates with a passion. The troglodyte fishermen look up to Bal-kas for guidance and leadership, and the old raish is the one who makes the prices and orders the nets cast and collected. He is therefore also the main negotiator between the troglodytes and the other races of Deep Hollow. He is a shrewd individual, and wise enough to understand the need to remain on good terms with the aranea, goblins, and Travellers.

Bal-kas looks like a spindly, bent troglodyte, dressed in a long, ragged kilt bound at the waist with a wide leather belt. A holy symbol of Yamag hangs from his neck, together with a string of weird fetishes (dried fish bones, bat skulls, shells, and even a couple of feathers from the world above. He wields a trident decorated with more fetishes, which also doubles as his *gri-gri*.

Thassantis, Undead Lhomarrian Crusader General

Ancient Dead 32/

Priest of Xeron (Ixion) 32, LN

Str 14, Int 13, Wis 18, Dex 10, Con -, Cha 16
AC -3 (requires magical weapons to hit), HD 11d8+50, HP 100.

Attacks: 1 touch 2d12 + disease or 1 warhammer 1d8+12 vs H, 1d6+12 vs M, or by spell.

General skills: Languages (Lhomarrian, Carnifex 13, Orimul 13), Religion (Lhomarr) 18, Outer Being Lore 1, Law and Justice(Lhomarr) 18, Leadership 16, Ancient History 13, Detect Deception 18, Danger Sense 18, Reading/Writing (Lhomarrian) 13.

Weapon Masteries: Warhammer (Grand Master), Staff (Expert).

Special abilities: Produce fire, half damage from fire, spells and magic weapons, immune to normal weapons, Fear at -8 ST, Disease, Salient Abilities (Retained Class Abilities, Magic Resistance 95%, Undead Liege, Elemental Command 5 levels). Spellcasting as a 32 level Cleric of Ixion.

Equipment: Intelligent Warhammer +4 + 6 vs Carnifex, Int 8, Ego 8, Lawful, Detect Evil, See Invisible; Bronze Shield +2.

A High Priest of Ixion as well as a veteran commander of the Carnifex wars, Thassantis was put in charge of defending Fort Vigilance, the last of a long line of such high officers. When all contacts with the Lhomarrian mainland failed, Thassantis was left with no hope for reinforcements or replacements. Bound to duty, he volunteered for being mummified, to remain as an undead guardian. His underlings chose to follow him to the last man.

Thassantis is obsessed by his duty. He spends most of his time renewing the magical defences of Fort Vigilance, repairing damaged members of his army, and plotting new defence strategies against what he believes is the inevitable showdown with the carnifex or their successors. The presence of the hresha-rhak and the Troglodytes bothers him, although he cannot truly place the source of his constant worry -- neither race is truly carnifex, but both bear some level of carnifex “mark” which the Lhomarrrian undead perceive at a subconscious level.

Thassantis appears as a desiccated corpse of average human height, dressed in bronze armour and ancient linens. His empty ocular orbs have been set with fire opals, which shine in the dark.

Zhol-dhokh, Xaresha-rhak

Male Hresha-rhak 12, CE
Str 14, Int 15, Wis 10, Dex 16, Con 14, Cha 16
AC 6, HD 8d8+13, HP 52.

Attacks: 1 marh-vol spear at +3, damage 2d4+5

General skills: Survival 10, Languages (Hresha-rhak native, Carnifex 15, Gos-til 15), Hunting 15, Outer Being Lore 4, Honour (Outer Being) 10, Leadership 16.

Weapon Masteries: Javelin (Expert), Spear (Expert).

Special abilities: Can survive 4d4 turns outside water. Cause Fear and Shield once/day.

Special vulnerabilities: affected by evilbane essence and holy water.

Equipment: marh-vhol spear (+2).

Zhol-dhokh is the leader of the hresha-rhak, evil fish-men who dwell in the depths of Lake Tzel. A servant of the Outer Beings, he constantly plots new attacks against Fort Vigilance. The hresha-rhak chief may offer to help parties attempting to breach the defences of the Lhomarrrians, although his “help” will hardly prove useful. He can, however, provide a very limited amount of marh-vhol, the magical metal of the Outer Beings.

MONSTERS AND BEASTS

FUNGI

Fungi and moulds are pretty common in the damp areas around Deep Hollow. Most of these are innocuous or even useful -- either edible or having some medicinal property. However, poisonous fungi are equally common, and the inexperienced adventurer needs to roll on half Wisdom to identify the correct fungi to eat. Natives roll on full Wisdom instead, and characters with the Survival (underground) skill can roll on it instead.

Besides, a few more dangerous species also exist, including Yellow Mould and Shriekers.

VERMIN

Giant beetles (fire and oil), carrion crawlers, gelatinous cubes, and giant centipedes are all common threats in the wildernesses of the Shadowdeep. Rare, but more dangerous, are the black pudding and ochre jelly.

Other threats include rhagodessae, cave toads and sporacles, all of which fish in Lake Tzel; rust monsters and basilisks, which are sometimes found in abandoned mines; and giant crab spiders, common in the fungus forests.

UNDEAD

Carnifex

Undead of carnifex origin in Deep Hollow are evil, undead spirits. They can be build using the Uncorporeal character class from Threshold Issue 13, but the typical specimen has powers similar to those of spectres, except that its appearance is even less humanoid and resembles instead a distorted lizardman or other reptilian being.

More powerful entities may have additional salient abilities, but not “Pristine appearance”, “Makai ancestor spirit form”, “Animate Plant” or “Poltergeist”.

Lizardkin

Lizardkin undead are either Ancient Dead, using the character class from Threshold Issue 13, or animated corpses (skeletons and zombies). The former often exhibit the “Undead Liege” and “Curse” salient abilities.

Lhomarrians

The undead of Fort Vigilance are, invariably, ancient dead. Mere soldiers have little powers, beyond their supernatural durability and vigilance, but officers are extremely powerful both in combat and magic.

Using the Ancient Dead character class from Threshold Issue 13, the typical soldier is Normal Monster mummy. Elite soldiers are

typically level 4 Ancient Dead, and have the abilities of Fighters or Clerics as per the “Retained Class Ability” salient power.

Officers are all at least level 9, and have other salient powers in addition to retaining their class abilities. Most are Patriarchs of Ixion.

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Through the



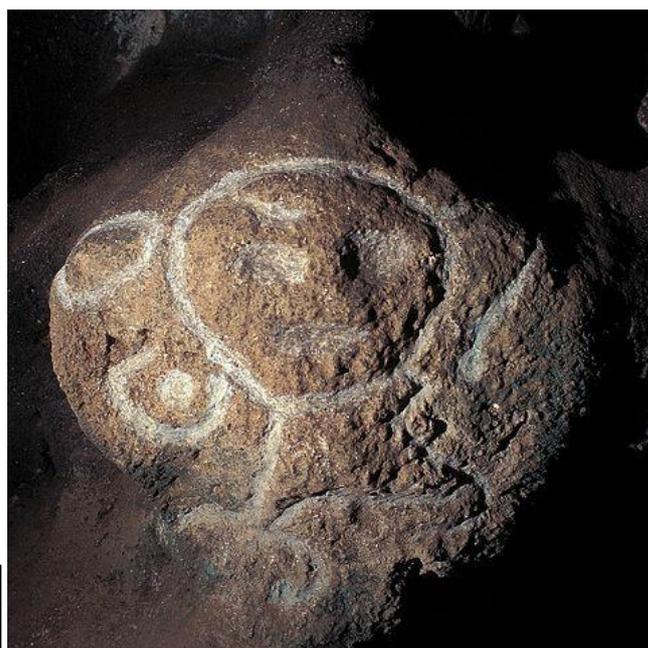
*FROM
THE VAULTS
OF PANDIUS*

FROM KARAMEIKOS to the Hollow World

by Francesco Defferrari

The ancient inhabitants of the depths

The land that is now Karameikos has existed for billions of years, long before the Traldars, long before Taymora. It has been higher, lower, under the sea, desert or wooded, inhabited by elementals, worms, oozes, insects, araneas, dinosaurs, fairies and giants for ages before men, and by other men before the ones that inhabit it now. Most of the ancient races have disappeared into history and not much is left of them, yet each race that inhabited this land has left at least some trace of itself behind, to be discovered in the present.



Sometimes they have left traces in ancient ruins below ground, sometimes they have left forgotten tombs just below the surface, and sometimes they have left secrets deep under the earth, down into the Shadowdeep¹.

¹ This name was chosen by the Mystara community in [a series of past discussions](#) (partially available in the Vaults of Pandius) due to the fact that the Shadowlands inhabited by the Shadow elves described in [GAZ13 The Shadow Elves](#), are the primary source on Mystara's underworld.

This article is an expansion of my previous work [“Outlining Karameikos' Underdeep”](#) published on the Vaults, and inspired my many other contributions including those listed in the category [“Shadowdeep”](#) in the Vaults (but see “Original Sources” sidebar for further information); and also several threads on The Piazza where more and alternative theories and idea can be found about Mystara’s Shadowdeep:

- » [“Mystara’s Underdark”](#)
- » [“Almanac of the Subterranean Known World?”](#)
- » [“Collaboration Proposal: Expanding the Shadowlands”](#)
- » [“Bree-YAAAARk! Piracy in the Depths of the Earth”](#)
- » [“Descent into the Depths of Mystara \(thought exercise\)”](#)
- » [“Outer World: Beneath the Atlan Tepe Mountains, 8 mi per hex”](#)
- » [“Outer World: Beneath the Adakkian Mounts, 8 miles per hex”](#).

Original Sources

Some of the links included in the Vaults’ category [“Shadowdeep”](#) refer to posts on the original Wizards Message Board which no longer exist. However, Havard has located corresponding links to where these original posts may be found on the web:

- [“Canonical name for Mystara’s Underdark”](#)
- [“NPCs of the Shadowdeep”](#)
- [“Races of the Shadowdeep”](#)
- [“Regions of the Shadowdeep”](#)
- [“Prestige Classes”](#)
- [“Magic of Anwn”](#)

AN INCREDIBLE VOYAGE

Imagine travelling from the Outer to the Hollow World the hard way. On foot, walking through mazes of pitch black tunnels and caves. But the greatest dangers of this travel will obviously be the inhabitants of these lands far from the sun. In canon Mystara some people now in the Hollow World had to face this incredible trip, for example the Shattenalfen and the Icevale elves. The distance from the Outer to the Hollow World is about 1,600 miles (see Author’s Note below) in a straight line. As there is nothing like a straight line, a trip should take into account at least 3600 miles of actual distance in irregular terrain and in the utter dark, and with many dead ends. Probably such a voyage should take 6 months minimum in an exceedingly optimistic prevision, but one year or two is much more realistic. Do you dare to descend into the Shadowdeep?

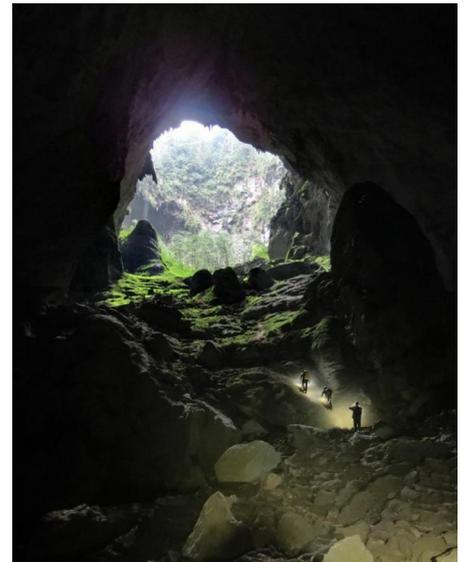
Author’s Note:

The 1,600 mile depth of Mystrara’s “crust” is my calculation assuming Mystara has dimensions similar to the Earth and the Hollow World dimensions as supposed by me in [Threshold issue #9](#), see also [“Mystara Outer World 1000 AC, 72 miles per hex”](#). The Hollow World boxed set assumed a smaller Mystara, and the distance was said to be “only” 1,200 miles. Thorfinn Tait on his calculations assumed instead a Mystara roughly as big as Earth, but the Hollow World more or less with the dimensions estimated in canon sources, so his distance (as detailed in [“Lining Up Mystra part XIX”](#)) is about 2,000 miles.

In canon Mystaran products, there are several mentions of routes connecting the Outer and the Hollow World:

- There is the Coliseum in Thyatis city, which sits atop a deep cavern entrance that reportedly leads all the way to the Hollow World. The Gladiators (at least one order of them) have long considered themselves protectors of the city from the Things That Lay Beneath².
- In GAZ13 *The Shadow Elves* there are mentions of Shattenalfens and Azcans from the Hollow World having reached the Shadowlands.
- There is the path which links Atruaghin's Palace in the Outer World to the ruins of Quahnahuac in northwestern Azca in the Hollow World.
- A lengthy tunnel system beneath the Barleycorn Monastery in the Broken Lands of the Outer World leads to the ruins of Atacalpa in the western mountains of Azca (near Colima), featured in the module HWA1 *Nightwail*.
- A man and magically made tunnel links the Outer World village of Pittston on the island of Aegos to the town of Haldemar in Alphatian Neatharum in the Neathar lands, see *Wrath of the Immortals* boxed set and *Poor Wizard's Almanac*.
- More possible connections could also be found in [Threshold issue #9](#) where that edition's theme was **The Hollow World**.

² As mentioned in the Piazza threads by Cthulhudrew, see also the module DDA1 *Arena of Thyatis*.



Exit to the light

This article imagines a similar route from Karameikos to the Hollow World, with all the possible levels along the way and the many different creatures and cultures which could inhabit them. Some example maps are included, showing the area under Karameikos at different depths.

Notes on borders and neighbours

What's interesting to note here is the main directions are not 4 (NWES) but 6 (above and below) so any underdeep culture could have at least six main neighbour nations around. Yet in the underdeep travel is not easy and therefore, differently from the outside world, it could be very difficult to know of other cultures beyond those in the immediate vicinity, unless there is an easy connection or the culture has a penchant for explorations...

As there isn't much in canon about Karameikos underdeep, I would leave many underground cultures quite separate from one another, unless PCs change that.

THE REGIONS OF THE SHADOWDEEP

Shadowdeep region	Level	Approx. depth range below Outer World ground level	Approx. depth range below Hollow World ground level
The Upperdeep	1st layer, Dungeons, tomb and mines	Ground level ↓ 100 feet	
	2nd level, Dwarves and gnomes	100 feet ↓ 800 feet	
	3rd level, Humanoids	800 feet ↓ 2,000 feet	
	4th level, Shadowelves and earth creatures	2,000 feet ↓ 5,000 feet	
The Middledeep	5th level, Deep Glaurants and Undeads	1 mile ↓ 2 miles	
	6th level, Caverns of the Pyramids	3 miles ↓ 5 miles	
	7th level, Mictlan	6 miles ↓ 7 miles	
	8th level, Deep Fomor	8 miles ↓ 12 miles	
The Lowerdeep	9th level, Crucotaurs	12 miles ↓ 15 miles	
	10th level, Saurials	15 miles ↓ 20 miles	

Through the Shadowdeep



	11th level, Amphibians	20 miles ↓		
		25 miles		
	12th level, Formians	25 miles ↓		
		40 miles		
The Underdeep	13th level, Spiders and Scorpions	50 miles ↓		
		60 miles		
	14th level, Worms, Oozes and Miriapods	60 miles ↓		
		70 miles		
	15th level, The Wiassian Empire	70 miles ↓		
		80 miles		
	16th level, Actoian	80 miles ↓		
	90 miles			
	17th level, Fyarash	90 miles ↓		
		100 miles		
	The Far Underdeep	18th level, The Deep Black	100 miles ↓	
			200 miles	
		19th level, The Moving Earth	200 miles ↓	
		250 miles		
	20th level, The Maze of Madness	300 miles ↓		
		500 miles		
	21st level, The Fire Pit	550 miles ↓		
		750 miles		
< ----- The World Shield ----- >				



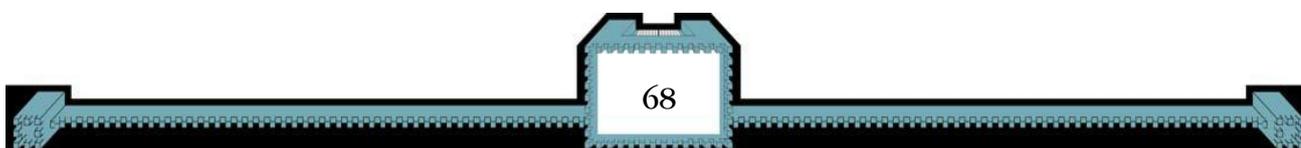
Through the Shadowdeep



The Hollowdeep	The Burrowdeep	850 miles ↓	750 miles ↑ 100 miles
	The Lower Hollowdeep	1,500 miles ↓ 1,550 miles.	100 miles ↑ 50 miles
	The Middle Hollowdeep	1,550 miles ↓ 1,585 miles	50 miles ↑ 15 miles
	The Upper Hollowdeep	1,585 miles ↓ 1,600 miles	15 miles ↑ 0 miles



The regions of the Shadowdeep - Not to scale



THE SHADOWDEEP

The Upperdeep

This region of the Shadowdeep is the one nearest to the surface and can be reached relatively easily from it, going down to a maximum depth of about 1 mile. Its inhabitants normally know of the existence of the surface and may be interested in exploring or even conquering it. This region was also described in details for all the Known World in my other article in this same issue, The Unknown World Trail Map part II.

1ST LAYER, DUNGEONS, TOMB AND MINE

Down to approximately 100 feet deep below the Outer World ground level. Normally less than 30 minute walk to reach the surface (without obstacles).

Tomb and mines in general are not very deep and not very extensive, as they are normally dug for a specific and limited purpose. A map of the many tombs and mines in Karameikos is not included here because even the bigger ones would appear too small in a country map. Subterranean locations are included in several canon sources, such as the B series of modules, some Dungeon adventures and later products, see also in the Vaults the ["Index of Mystara Products"](#) by David Keyser which includes suggested locations. A classic dungeon three levels deep will be generally no more than 50 feet below ground in its lowest point and even a megadungeon like

Koskatep (see article in this and previous issues) is mostly over sea level as it is built inside a hill. Deeper dungeons could be lower, but rarely more than 50 meters down (165 feet) from ground level.

The common underground creatures of the basic modules should be quite common at this level, such as bats, black puddings, blast spores, carrion crawlers, cave toads, centipedes, chokers, feywings, fungoids, gelatinous cubes, hypnosnakes, giant beetles and other insects, giant leeches, giant lizards, giant slugs, ochre jellies and other oozes, rats, rhagodessas, ropers, rust monsters, scorpions, spiders, sporacles, stirges, white apes, worms, yellow mould. Some intelligent creatures should be quite common in the underground areas of Karameikos, as they appear in the B modules, in particular brutemen, humanoids, lizardmen, troglodytes and maybe also minotaurs and gargoyles. Under the main cities, Specularum in particular, wererats, hivebroods and undead are all appropriate and obviously human criminals and cultists of dark gods too.



2ND LEVEL, DWARVES AND GNOMES

From about 100 feet to approximately 800 feet deep below ground level. Normally less than an hour walk to reach the surface.

The people inhabiting this level, the most famous being dwarves, gnomes and humanoids, typically maintain a tight relationship with the surface. Their communities under the earth and those over it are in constant trade and communication. Their caves are often inhabited by more or less the same creatures listed above that could be encountered in shallow caves near the surface. Other intelligent creatures who often inhabit this level of the Shadowdeep are lizardmen, troglodytes, brutemen, minotaurs, werecreatures and undead.

In this layer, the central area of Karameikos is dominated by the gnomes and dwarves of Highforge, *Eveskyr* in their language. They have also several mines under many of the mountains of the north, but most of them are included in the first layer rather than here in the second one. Other intelligent races, however, border the gnomish and dwarvish subterranean lands. Toward Thyatis, there are the Halls of the Giants, the great underground cave dominated by the giants of Altenia. Minotaurs are common in the east of Karameikos, according to the gnomes dominated by the powerful dragon Argos, who is also the master of the subterranean regions of the Dymrak woods, inhabited by lizardmen and humanoids. Many brutemen, the Ancient Ones as the gnomes call them, live under the area of the Moor in central

Karameikos, and some also north of the gnomish lands. Brutemen, however, are particularly numerous in the west, where they serve the powerful gold dragon Azem. The same is rumoured to be true for the lizardmen which live numerous under the Blight Swamp. Some underground lairs of the ogres and orcs of the west also reach as deep as this layer.

Under Mount Pavel, near the gnomish land, there is also the land of the "Stone People", how the gnomes call geonids, rockmen and stone giants.

Lastly in the south, just east of Specularum, there is the Dark Domain, an underground territory dominated by the Church of Nyx, with numerous Uncorporeal and Undecayed³. In some minor caverns from Specularum to Thyatis werebats and wererats are also present in this layer. To the north the gnomish lands have a direct connection to Rockhome, sometimes menaced by goblins who live underground in the eastern Orclands.

The gnomish territories in this layer are also often menaced by humanoids incursions coming both from above and from the layer below.

³ See the article "[Undead of Elegy Island](#)" by Giampaolo Agosta in issue #13 of Threshold magazine or the articles on Koskatap for more information about these special undead and the church.



Map of Karamaikos second layer

3RD LEVEL, HUMANOIDS

Between about 800 and 2,000 feet beneath ground level. Normally about two hours walk to reach the surface.

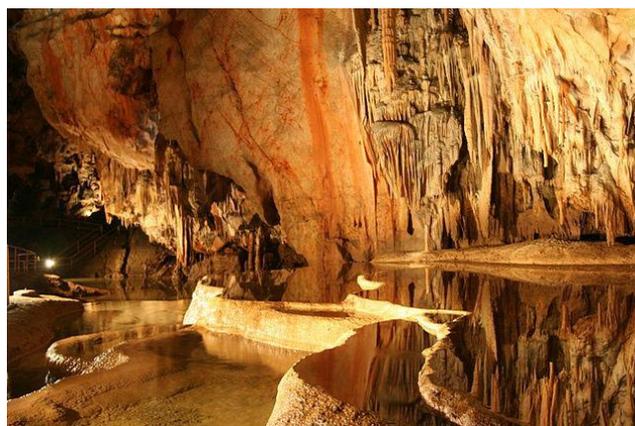
The people inhabiting this third layer of the Shadowdeep under Karameikos are mostly humanoids, with some minotaurs in the west. Normally these are the same clans which inhabit the surface of the nation⁴, but some unique clans exist which live almost exclusively underground, forced to leave in the darkness by defeats in war or excessive competition.

To the north there is the region of Deep Hollow, described by Giampaolo Agosta in his article of this same issue. To the south there is the Shadowdeep which lies under Ierendi and Minrothad, a region feared by the humanoids because reputed the domain of undeads⁵.

The west is mostly inhabited by troglodytes and manscorpions, with some pockets of humanoid territories. The east, toward and under Thyatis, is inhabited mostly by minotaurs, humanoids and wererats. Dwarves and gnomes sometimes dwell in this layer, if willing to face the risk of some humanoid encounters to search for particularly promising veins of metal or deposits of gems.

⁴ See [“Goblinoid Tribes of Karameikos”](#) by Giampaolo Agosta on this, (available in the Vaults of Pandius).

⁵ See my article [“The Darkness Beneath. \(Ancient buried secrets in the Sea of Dread\)”](#), in Threshold issue #3, and the extended material on [Taymora](#) in Threshold issue #12.



Water in a Upperdeep cave

4TH LEVEL, SHADOWELVES AND EARTH CREATURES

Approx from 2,000 to 5,000 feet deep from ground level. Normally about 1 day walk to reach the surface.

The people inhabiting this fourth layer of the Shadowdeep, last of the Upperdeep, under Karameikos are mostly geonids and rockmen, and other creatures with a deep relation with earth, including some earth elementals. Beholders and medusas are also relatively common on this layer. From under Specularum and toward Thyatis there are also several hivebrood nests⁶. Deep glaurants sometimes come up from the region under the Five Shires.

Lastly, the south eastern periphery of the Shadowelves lands reaches the north western corner of Karameikos.

The gnomes of Highforge have an informal secret alliance with the earth-connected

⁶ A hivebrood nest under Specularum appears in the adventure “Of Nests and Nations” published in Dungeon Magazine #13.

creatures which live in this level, cooperating with them to keep humanoids, beholders, hivebroods and deep glaurants at bay. Shadowelves have not many direct connections to this region, so they have only rarely explored it. Some minor trade has occurred and occasionally occurs among the shadowelves, the gnomes and the geonids.

The Middledeep

This region of the Shadowdeep goes down 12 miles from the surface. If it takes just about one day of travel to cross the whole Upperdeep above, it may take up to 15 days to go down to the bottom of the Middledeep, or coming up from its bottom. Generally the inhabitants of this region know of the existence of the surface world, but have escaped or forsaken it and remember it only in their legends, as a cursed and fearful place. They likely will see all travellers as possible invaders, and will try to capture and question them to learn if their lands are in danger.

5TH LEVEL, DEEP GLAURANTS AND UNDEADS

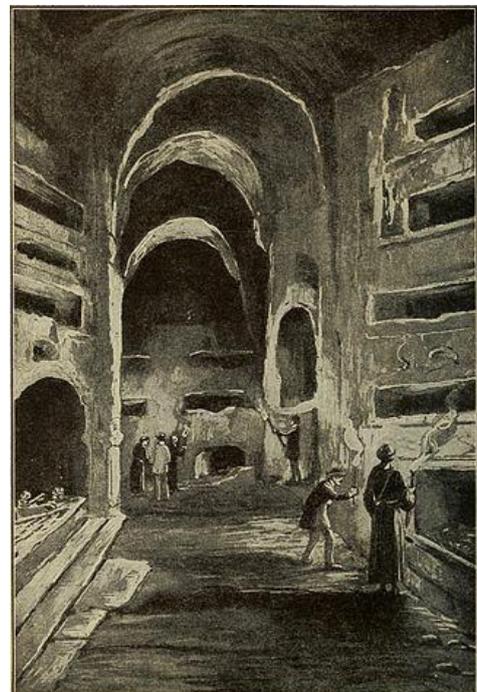
Between about 5,000 and 10,000 feet beneath ground level, approx. 1 to 2 miles). Normally about 2 days walk to reach the surface.

The people inhabiting this layer under Karameikos are mostly deep glaurants, in the west and under the Five Shires, and undead in every other direction. The full extent of the territory inhabited by the deep glaurants is unknown, as is their nature and motivations. They are however one of the few creatures of

the Middledeep which are known to surface dwellers and occasionally encountered in the Upperdeep of the Five Shires.

This layer of the Middledeep is indeed the one nearest to the surface, and therefore its inhabitants maintain a strained relationship with the surface. If no one knows why deep glaurants sometimes approach it, the undead which inhabit most of this layer under Karameikos were in most case surface dweller during their mortal lives.

Some geonids sages of the level above say the Karameikan region of this layer has some connection to Limbo, and therefore draw undead to it. Other rumours say followers of Nyx, Hel and Thanatos are constantly in battle for the dominance of this region. Few, if any, has ever explored this level and no one so far has been able to map it, but the layer is reputed to be quite cold and dry.



Explorers find graves in the Shadowdeep

6TH LEVEL, CAVERNS OF THE PYRAMIDS

Between about 3 and 5 miles beneath ground level. Normally about 3 to 5 days walk to reach the surface.

This layer is almost unknown and unexplored by those living above in the Upperdeep. It is called the “Caverns of the Pyramids” because it has vast caves where such structures have been built. The truth is that this region has several city states founded by descendants of Nithia and Taymora who have adapted to life in the dark. The history of this region has been very unstable, with short living nations unifying vast regions and then crumbling, cities dominated by undead for centuries and crusades against them. Only a few explorers from the level above or below may know the current state of this region and its neighbouring lands. This layer has some water and is less cold than the one above, allowing the growth of some fungi forests.

7TH LEVEL, MICTLAN

Between 6 and 7 miles below ground level. Normally about 7 days walk to reach the surface.

The people inhabiting this layer are descendants of Azcans, brutemen and humanoids. The place indeed took its name from the Azcan underworld. These people could have been the original founders of the ancient city of Oenkmarr and related to the ancient Azcan of the outer world and their descendants, the Intua⁷. Now they have a dark

⁷ See [Threshold issue #12](#) and the [2300 BC setting articles](#) by John Calvin about the past of the Known World.

culture worshipping entropic immortals and undead are common, but the territory is hardly unified under a common rule. Clans of brutemen and humanoids also live here, sometimes cooperating with the Azcan and sometimes fighting them. This layer is cold and dry but has some lakes and fungi forests where spiders and centipedes are quite common.



Azcan statue representing an undead

8TH LEVEL, DEEP FOMOR

Between about 8 to 12 miles beneath ground level. Normally about 10 days walk to reach the surface.

This layer is inhabited by fomorian giants⁸ and beastmen, partially descended from

⁸ Inspired by the article [“Land of the Fomorians”](#) by Giampaolo Agosta in the Vaults of Pandius, and by later development by me and John Calvin in the 2300 BC setting and Threshold issue #12.

populations which hid under the earth during the Great Rain of Fire or the Glantrian cataclysm of 1700 BC. The fomorians tried to conquer the whole layer and dominate the beastmen several times, with mixed success. They also have been occasionally attacked by the undead and Azcan above and some other populations of the Lowerdeep below, including deep glaurants. This layer is very hot and humid, with many lava rivers and water lakes, and overgrown fungi forest are commonplace, with many big worms and other great monsters.

The Lowerdeep

This region of the Shadowdeep goes down to almost 50 miles below the surface, which is therefore more a myth than a reality for the inhabitants of this level. They sometimes explore the Middledeep above and the Underdeep below, but rarely reach up to the Upperdeep and above, and they may be completely unaware of the surface.

9TH LEVEL, CRUCOTAURS

Approx up to 15 miles down from ground level. Normally about 15 days walk to reach the surface.

The inhabitants of this layer are crucotaurs, an ancient breed of gatormen which conquered this layer in ancient times from the original myconid inhabitants. Myconids however are still numerous in the layer and are often allied with lizardmen, troglodytes and caymen, came from above in more recent

times, against the dominant crucotaurs. Even if divided in familiar clans, the crucotaurs are quite united against external enemies, and have occasionally attacked both the level above and below. This layer is even more humid than the one above, with less lava and more waterways and lakes, and a lot of fungi forests.

10TH LEVEL, SAURIALS

Approx up to 20 miles down from ground level. Normally about 20 days walk to reach the surface.

This layer is huge, covering a depth of several miles, and so is really comprised of several different levels inhabited mostly by many different breeds of saurials. Intelligent creatures distantly related to the dinosaurs of the ancient past of Mystara⁹, saurials are not overly aggressive and have been often menaced by the more warlike crucotaurs above and the cunning amphibians below. Recently, some formian incursions have raided them too. They are trying to create a more unified defensive system to fight back all these enemies. This layer is vast and diverse, but generally less humid than the one above, even if it still has plenty of waterways.

⁹ [Saurials](#) are just the Mystaran version of the same creatures which appeared in the Forgotten Realms setting . I imagined some populations of them still living on the surface in Davania and the Hollow World, see also Threshold issue [#5](#) and [#9](#).



Proteus salamander

11TH LEVEL, AMPHIBIANS

Approx up to 25 miles down from ground level. Normally about 25 days walk to reach the surface.

This layer is again huge and very humid, almost a continuous fungal swamp in all six directions. Frogfolks, intelligent salamanders, newts and other amphibian creatures dwell here, in many different breeds and cultures. Often divided, they have still been quite capable of defending their territories and menacing the layers above and below, until recently. The formian invasion from below is in fact conquering vast lands of their territories, and their resistance is getting more and more desperate, often using artificial floods against the invaders. Such floods have often disastrous consequences both for the invaders and the native populations.

11TH LEVEL, THERAPSID

Approx 30 miles down from ground level. Normally about 30 days walk to reach the surface.

This layer is inhabited by intelligent therapsids¹⁰, ancient creatures which lived in the remote past of Mystara and are now almost completely extinct, if not for some remnant populations in the Hollow World. The group inhabiting this region, adapted to life underground since immemorable times, is now on the verge of extinction too as the formians from the level below have invaded the region and enslaved most of them. Other native intelligent creatures, mostly myconids, have been enslaved by the formians too. This layer is hot but relatively dry, even if there are some waterways and lakes, and several fungi forests.

12TH LEVEL, FORMIANS

Approx up to 40 miles down from ground level. Normally about 40 days walk to reach the surface.

This layer is even bigger than the ones above, covering an extension of ten miles of depth and all the surface of Karameikos above. It is a gigantic ant hill inhabited by formians, who have transformed all the region to suit their needs and are now in the process of invading nearby regions and layers above and below. Once an isolationist and closed society, they have recently become expansionists, enslaving all the creatures they meet. They are not harsh masters but they cannot really understand concepts such as freedom or time off, so living under their yolk is quite difficult. The formians will probably not stop

¹⁰ [Therapsids](#) are the ancestors of mammals. In [Threshold issue #9](#) I imagined some of them in the Hollow World.

their conquest until they meet an opposition so strong to contain them. Their layer is mostly dry and has some lava river, but their efficiency is so high they can manage perfectly the scarce waters and food of this layer. Still, being the region so huge, there are many wilderlands inhabited by animals, monsters, fire and earth elementals, geonids and myconids.

The Underdeep

Also called The Worlds Below this region of the Shadowdeep is the deepest one, going from 50 to 750 miles down from the surface, thus reaching the World Shield that separates the Outer from the Hollow World. The people inhabiting these regions often do not believe the surface exist, and would laugh at the notion of things such as sky, sun, moon or stars, even if they have a mouth and they can laugh. Indeed most of the inhabitants of the Underdeep would appear quite alien to the people living on the surface.

13TH LEVEL, SPIDERS AND SCORPIONS

Approx 60 miles down from ground level. Normally about 50 days walk to reach the surface.

Unique underground civilization of aranea and manscorpions inhabit this layer, which has arid and humid regions. Enemies for centuries, if not for thousands of years, they have recently found an unlikely unity when

the formians from level above invaded their homes in force. Now they are fighting to survive, or at least to remain free, against overwhelming odds.



Spider of the Shadowdeep

14TH LEVEL, WORMS, OOZES AND MIRIAPODS

Approx up to 70 miles down from ground level. Normally about 60 days walk to reach the surface.

The inhabitants of this layer are intelligent worms, slugs, oozes and centipedes¹¹ which have their own culture and strange architectures. Their layer is quite arid, dry and sandy, but they are still very worried by the possible expansion of the Wiassian Empire from the level below and from the formians above. Currently they are aiding the resistance of the araneas and manscorpions above, while also making plans to resist an invasion from below. The native creatures

¹¹ Creatures such as the canon [Scamille](#) and [Wurmlings](#) (both detailed in The Vaults of Pandius).

here, despite their alien appearance, are relatively friendly and could become guides and allies for visiting PCs.

15TH LEVEL, THE WIASSIAN EMPIRE

Approx 75 miles down from ground level. Normally about 75 days walk to reach the surface.

The Wiassian Empire¹² is inhabited mainly by three very different water descended races, one resembling crabs, one manatees and the third knas, but they have not a real relation to these outer world creatures as their ancestors came from the plane of water aeons ago. The Empire now spans a huge underdeep area from below the serpent peninsula to the Alatian islands, from southern Darokin to northern Davania, and has conquered several areas in lower and upper levels too. All this area is partially filled with water, and if the wiassians find an area which isn't, they fill it. Actoians do not know yet that will be their future, but they'll discover it soon enough. For now the Wiassian occupying force has magical devices to breath air in Actoian. The wiassians however do not drown all the air-breathing races, they just modify them to make them able to breath water. Obviously that works best with the second and third generation of the modified specimen, while the first one normally has more difficulties and often die out quickly. That's also for the best as second and third generation subjected people do

not remember anymore their original culture and nation. The main result of their great expansion is that the Empire is now the home of a dozen more races that were originally air-breathing creatures, but aren't anymore. The Empire has good relations with other powerful nations of the elemental plane of water but it still has some opposition on its main level as in the Underdeep of Davania there is a powerful nation of lizard-like water beings, to the north and the east there is a strange race of underground amphibious giants and to the west and south west there are Deep Glaurants. Wiassan is an orderly, authoritarian society where the state religion is dominated by Protius and Vanya. There is also an outlawed peace movement lead by the clandestine churches of Koryis, Calitha, Petra and Chardastes.



Submerged cave in Wiassian

¹² This level and the ones below are detailed in [“Outlining Karameikos' Underdeep”](#) in the Vaults of Pandius, as I had described them some time ago.

16TH LEVEL, ACTOIAN

Approx 80 to 90 miles down from ground level. Normally about 80 days walk to reach the surface.

Actoians are descended from earth creatures of ages past. They resemble dwarves in physical proportions but are tall as humans. An ancient, peaceful nation, they have recently been conquered by the Wiassian water empire from the level above. Many Actoians have come to accept the conquest, but a resistance movement is still active among the younger generations and followers of Maat, despite the small chances of success. The known neighbours are several communities of geonids and rockmen to the north and the east, that the Wiassian are trying to conquer too, and deep glaurant to the west. The Actoians sealed all the passages to the west centuries ago to keep the Glaurant away, but the Wiassians do not fear them and are ready to re-open the tunnels to invade these lands too. As explained above, they also plan to open gates to the Plane of Water to make Actoian an underdeep sea as soon as possible.

17TH LEVEL, FYARASH¹³

Approx 90 to 100 miles down from ground level. Normally about 90 days walk to reach the surface.

¹³ Fyarash was detailed much more of the other layers, as you can see in the original link of note 11. I have replicated the longer description here as an example of a partial development of such a Shadowdeep layer.

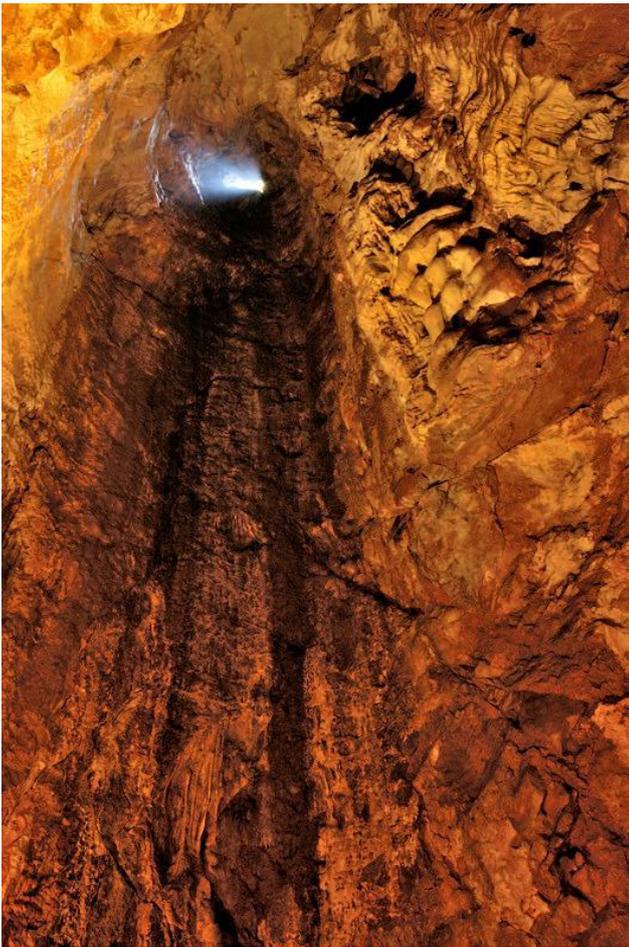
The Melting Tower

When the planet of Mystara was young, it was covered with lava and inhabited by fire creatures. They forged nations and empires that lasted thousands of years, until they were replaced by new races. Many of the fire creatures died, others escaped in their elemental plane. But some stayed. Besieged by their enemies they seek refuge in the only place where only them could live, in the fiery deeps below.

Now entire nations of fire creatures live in the depths, hundreds of miles below the surface, and only rarely they come in contact with the other creatures living above them... But in some places, where hot lava comes to the surface or near it, they could be encountered...

The Melting Tower is a huge lava shaft near Karameikos' surface, in an underground area 8 miles northeast of Highforge, that goes down for miles all the way to the World Shield. The shaft is surrounded by intricate passages and tunnels that are the home on the higher levels to lava lizards, fire beetles, lava Oozes and fire fundamentals, but that, going deeper, are inhabited by flame salamanders, elementals, fire drakes and efreet.

The people of the Fire nations however are inside Mystara since so much time that their culture is peculiar and quite different from their brothers in the elemental plane. But to expand on this, I'll go with an In-game POV.



The top of the Melting Tower

Report to the king of Highforge, prospect squad 12G

“**W**e went into the tunnels of the north east as we were commanded. As your majesty knows, the area is full of ancient ruins and dungeons, some dating back to lost giants kingdoms, others to more ancient creatures, others to humans. Yet what we found there is something completely different. We were into a tunnel going deeper and deeper, that we

found had more and more metal ores as we descended. At the beginning the tunnels were dark and cold as expected, and we encountered only harmless small animals and insects, until we began to see a dim red light ahead of us.

“Wary and prepared we went forward until we found a cave lit by small pools of melted lava. This was revealed as a rather large area, also rich in minerals and gems, that continued for several caves and tunnels. Many were inhabited by lava lizards, fire beetles and little elemental creatures that posed no threat to us as they just fled our approach. Onwards we went until we saw something bigger coming toward us. We were ready for the worst when we realized that the approaching creature was clearly a flame salamander. And we were astonished when she, as we later learned, made peaceful gestures and tried to speak to us. We managed to communicate only with magical means, as her language is unintelligible and sounds like crackling fire. The salamander told us that we were near to the entrance of the Fire nations, inhabited by thousands of fire creature that live below the earth, right below us. She said that many of them would be happy, like she was, to communicate and trade with people from the Air kingdoms, as she called our lands. But the most wonderful view was yet to come, because as we spoke with her we went forward and suddenly we came out of the lava tunnels into a great rock ledge that overlooked what I could only describe as a huge lava shaft, lit by fire, that went below into the depths of the earth as far as the eye can see.

“And in the middle of the great shaft, that I think was at least 600 feet across or more, there was a flying vessel kept aloft probably by hot air, not unlike our balloons. In the vessel there were other creatures. Some were flame salamanders, as the one that was speaking with us, others were more similar to us, they looked like slightly taller gnomes, shorter than humans, with braided beards and hairs that seemed on fire. Others yet looked like giants, taller than humans, and had no beards nor hair. We were indeed very intrigued by these people, but we thought it was best to return to Highforge and report this amazing encounter, even if the Flame salamander, she gave her name as Shalliass or something similar, invited us to enter the vessel and come down to visit their realms. We just said her we would return, and she let us go without hostility. I believe it is now up to your majesty and the elders to decide if and when to contact these creatures again...”

Fyarash is the land of the Fire Nations encountered by the gnomish prospect squad above. The intelligent races that live in this area are a sort of flame salamanders, fire drakes and two species of elementals that look a bit like tall gnomes and short hill giants. The latter two are visually similar to humanoids but are not, indeed they are ovoviviparous just like the salamanders and their newborns must stay several days in very hot pools of sulfuric waters. Normal water and cold are instead harmful to them. Fyarash is a great area of tunnels, huge caves, lava rivers and lakes with towns and cities and

around 90.000 inhabitants. The origin of the fire people date back to very ancient times, when fire elemental creatures inhabited the surface of Mystara. Defeated by air and cold creatures, they sought refuge below the earth and have lived there ever since. In so many years they have lost any connection with the elemental plane of fire. Indeed invaders from the plane were defeated by the fire people several times in their history. They do not know the truth about the Deep Black level below them, nor they know of the Fire Pit (that would bother them much) but thanks to the Melting Tower, they do know of several levels above them and of the surface, that they call the air kingdom, thinking it is still under the rule of the dangerous and hated air creatures.

They had some sporadic clash with the earth people directly above them but they do not know of the main menace to their land, the powerful Water empire that's spreading just two levels above.

They have other neighbours on their same level: to their south there is the Great Lava Sea dotted by the islands of the Fire drakes, peaceful nations with whom they trade. To the east there is the realm of the Fire Giants, kin to the same people who inhabit Fyarash and usually peaceful. To the north there is the so called Efrete Dominancy, a nation of renegades who left the plane of fire centuries ago and who the Fyarashians mistrust. To the east there is the hated dominion of the Deep Glaurants, with whom the Fyarashians fought innumerable wars...

Fyarash politics and society

Fyarashian are, predictably, fiery people, divided on many issue in religious and political factions. The factions are always engaged in heated debates that usually do not escalate in open battles, but often results in bloody duels. There is an atheist faction, one that serves an ancient fire dragon and factions of Ixion, Zugzul, Rathanos, Pflarr, Tarastia, Fire Elemaster and others...

Another major cause of duels in Fyarashian society is romance, a fundamental part of life for the many hot blooded youngsters. Factions sometimes cooperate, but more often divide families, marriages and cities. Against outside aggression however Fyarashian have always been able to unite, yet a very powerful enemy could exploit their division to its gain.

The Far Underdeep

The deepest regions of the Underdeep are so remote and dangerous that even the inhabitants of the layers above speak of them as legendary dangerous locations. The inhabitants of these deep layers are often strange and terrible.

18TH LEVEL, THE DEEP BLACK

Between about 100 to 200 miles below the surface. Normally about a 100-200 days walk to reach the surface.

This pitch dark area is inhabited by the ancient dragon Mahandrahyax, who in ages past fought against the Immortals and was blinded. Mahandrahyax is an earth dragon, an extinct breed, much larger than modern dragons, wingless and grey, with incredible elemental powers. He sleeps most of the time, but rarely he wakes up and scream his pain and rage, an appalling sound that travels for many miles in the tunnels. The area is also strangely devoid of lava and seismic activity but every two days, for unknown reasons, a strong wind blows, creating other strange, eerie sounds. The Deep Black can be crossed in 20 disquieting days. This enormous region probably contains many other inhabitants, normal animals and monsters, but apparently not intelligent beings. The inhabitants of Fyarash above fear this region and avoid it, and have sealed most of the tunnels leading down.

19TH LEVEL, THE MOVING EARTH

Between about 200 to 250 miles below the surface. Normally about a 200-250 days walk to reach the surface.

The main inhabitants of this huge level are Earthquake Beetles and other giant insects and worms. This area of the underdeep is literally moving and has constant landslide

and lava explosions. It's also inhabited by several lava creatures. It could be crossed in 10-20 days but managing to escape it alive it's not an easy feat.

20TH LEVEL, THE MAZE OF MADNESS

Between about 300 to 500 miles below the surface. Normally about a 300-500 days walk to reach the surface.

That's a huge multi-level than include dormant burrowers and several other aberrations, like beholders, illithids, chokers, chuuls, demons, otyughs, lesser outer beings, giant worms, athachs, nekrozons, dusanus, brain collectors, hook horrors, ropers, undeads of forgotten ages and other nasty things. This pitch dark and terrifying area has several planar gates but is not easily connected with levels above and below, yet it could be eventually crossed through difficult passages in 40-80 days going down, double time going up. And those would be quite interesting months for a group of PCs.



Molten lava in the Fire Pit

21ST LEVEL, THE FIRE PIT

From about 550 to 750 miles below the surface. Normally about a 550-750 days walk to reach the surface.

This level is a permanent gate to the elemental plane of Fire, and it's connected to other huge lava lakes/environments that leads to the same plane deep below Ylauruam, the Northern Reaches and Norwold. It's not connected however in any way with the surface, nor with the levels above. This place has existed for billions of years and it has been occupied and inhabited by several fire creatures, from elementals to elions. Now the Efreeti Empire rules here, has recently discovered the World Shield and it's slowly digging its way around, up and down, searching for inhabited areas and treasures. They could be quite far from the surface, but they have a sort of connection with it since the Karameikos school of Magecraft¹⁴ opened in Krakatos the so-called "Elemental tavern" a room within the school where teacher and students can peacefully meet outsider creatures, like elementals. Recently an efreeti agent of the Empire visited the place in disguise, and his masters could decide the idea could be useful to visit the surface areas in force...

¹⁴ Founded in 1010 AC in the Poor Wizard Almanac.

The World Shield

This region of reversing gravity divides the Outer World from the Hollow World. As we do know from the Hollow World Boxed Set that several group of elves travelled all the way to the Hollow World, they must have found a mean to go beyond it.

The effect could be similar to the gravity flutes described in Gazetteer 13 The Shadow Elves, only much bigger, and so particular expedients may be needed in the regions where the “wall” becomes the “floor”.

The Hollowdeep

The Shadowdeep going from the World Shield to the Hollow World will be described here in less details than the layers above. The Hollowdeep however should also contain more than 20 different layers, or more, as the Shadowdeep regions described above.

The Hollowdeep normally contains “experiments”, i.e. races that were placed in the Hollow World by the Immortals, but were later removed from the surface, usually because they were corrupted by Burrowers, or by entropic immortals, or because something is very wrong with them. Therefore the intelligent creatures that inhabit the Hollowdeep are normally scary, mad, cursed or all these things together. The Hollowdeep could be indeed considered the entropic idea of the Hollow World.

THE BURROWDEEP

Between about 100 to 750 miles below the Hollow World surface, or 850-1,500 miles from the Outer World surface. Normally about from 100 to 750 days walk to reach the Hollow World surface and 850 to 1,500 days to reach the Outer World surface

This level is inhabited by what’s left of the Burrowers¹⁵, the great worms and monsters that almost destroyed the Hollow World in ages past. Most of them are in deep slumber now, but from time to time one awakes, provoking earthquakes under the earth, or two may awake and begin fighting each other directly or through proxies. Many aberrations and other monsters also inhabit this layers, together with some intelligent servants of the Burrowers, such as corrupted beastmen and deep glaurants. From time to time they may be able to attack nearby layers, or even layers and levels quite far away from them. Outer Beings servitors¹⁶ and followers of Thanatos and other entropic immortals can also be found in this region.

¹⁵ Ideas proposed mostly by Andrew Theisen and others here in the [“Mystara's Underdark?”](#) thread at The Piazza:

¹⁶ See [“Insanity, Horror, and the Outer Beings in Mystara”](#) by Geoff Gander in the Vaults of Pandius, and also [“Service to the Outer Beings”](#) which includes more work done by him on the subject



Milenian plate depicting an underworld monster

THE LOWER HOLLOWDEEP

Between about 50 to 100 miles below the Hollow World surface, or 1,500-1,550 miles from the Outer World surface. Normally about from 50 to 100 days walk to reach the Hollow World surface and more than 1,500 days to reach the Outer World surface.

This big region of the Hollowdeep is inhabited by very ancient races, some of them present also in the surface of the Hollow World or in the Shadowdeep of the Outer World, such as aranea, manscorpions, hivebroods, formians, other intelligent insects, myconid and other intelligent fungi, intelligent oozes and worms such as scamilles and wurmlings, decapus, geonids and rockmen. The main difference between

those living in this region of the Hollowdeep and those living on the Hollow World surface or the Outer World is that usually the populations in the Hollowdeep have something “wrong” which prevented them from living under the red sun below, or the yellow sun above.

They may be infected with some sort of undeath or lycanthropy, cursed or corrupted by the Burrowers, followers of entropic immortals or something else entirely. Needless to say, most of these populations are not the friendliest around in Mystara, and PCs travelling through their territories should take extra care, or avoid them.

THE MIDDLE HOLLOWDEEP

Between about 15 to 50 miles below the Hollow World surface, or 1,550-1,585 miles from the Outer World surface. Normally about 15 to 50 days walk to reach the Hollow World surface and more than 1,550 days to reach the Outer World surface.

This region of the Hollowdeep is mostly inhabited by intelligent saurials, amphibians, therapsids, lizardmen, troglodytes, gatormen and other reptilian creatures. As said for the previous region, all these people have something “wrong”, or are tainted by Outer Beings, burrowers, entropic immortals or all of them. Some high carnifex and Y'hog carnifex¹⁷ escaped from immortal purges are

¹⁷ See the work done by Geoff Gander in [“Y'hog Carnifex”](#) on the Vaults of Pandius and in several more articles.

hidden in this region too, and should they be able to conquer vast territory or reach one of the surface the danger they pose could well put all Mystara on the verge of destruction.

THE UPPER HOLLOWDEEP

Up to about 15 miles beneath the Hollow World surface, or 1,585-1,600 miles from the Outer World surface. Normally about from 15 days to an hour walk to reach the Hollow World surface and 1,600 days to reach the Outer World surface.

The Upper Hollowdeep is a very diverse region with many different inhabitants. The lower levels (those farthest from the Hollow World surface) are normally inhabited by demianimals¹⁸, but the populations living far from the red sun, differently from their cousins on the surface, are generally in some way corrupted by Entropy. The upper levels, nearest to the surface, are inhabited by the

¹⁸ The races of anthropomorphic animals, a neologism created by me in assonance with demihumans in [Threshold issue #9](#).

Shattenalfen, Intuans¹⁹, Bahlorian undead²⁰, followers of Nyx²¹, mummies²² and many other, often human-like, creatures who prefer darkness to light. All these people are more often hostile to traveller than not, and PCs passing through their domains will risk becoming food or sacrifices if captured alive.

¹⁹ See the [2300 BC setting](#) by John Calvin stored in the Vaults of Pandius, and [Threshold issue #9](#) about Intua and its presence near Oltec lands in the Hollow World.

²⁰ The Empire of Bahlor would be a version of Taymora preserved in the Hollow World east of Milenia, as imagined by Havard in ["The Empire of Bahlor"](#) and James Mishler in ["Taymor and the Hollow World"](#) - both in the Vaults of Pandius

²¹ Under the Milenian Empire, where Nyx is called Zargos, see also HWR3 *The Milenian Empire*.

²² Under Nithia, see also HWR2 *Kingdom of Nithia*



From the 1 mile per hex map to the future of the land by Robin

The Broken Lands

Author's Introduction:

With my intense research in the Broken Lands for the creation of the 1 mile hex map, I had a lot of input from those of you willing and able to add information. Slowly the work became as alive as it happened for the Canolbarth map. Yet here, it encompassed another dimension: time. Unlike the Canolbarth where I started from a finished map, and only brought detail (greatly needed), the Broken Lands had a history. Canonical and by fans - *The Orcs of Thar Gazetteer* brought great detail, the *Poor Wizard's Almanacs* (Canon and Fanmade) and the *Wrath of the Immortals Set* brought great change. Together with the Geomorphological History of the Broken

Lands¹, geology, ecology, cultural sociology and politics I brought these together, for the Broken Lands were too variant to simply enlarge the scale and put in more details. Many flaws in the maps and the region, which had crept into canon, had to be resolved, explained or restored. Slowly this year I succeeded in this, as can be followed in my ["1 Mile Hex Mapping"](#) topic on the Piazza forums.

Now as the final details are placed, I can enter the map in my mind and wander about, being amazed at the wonders and actual beauty of the region, and weave the threads

¹ See the posts ["Geomorfological History of the Broken Lands"](#) and ["Geomorfological History of the Broken Lands 2"](#) at my *Beath of Mystara* blog.



of the past into the future of the Broken Lands. As I followed these themes, it is this saga I reveal to you here. Two maps (readjusted Lower Broken Lands 1012-1020 AC and a surface map 1100 AC of the Broken Lands both in 8 mile hexes) will make some changes in the future clear at first sight, but even here history explains much more. The Broken Lands are almost alive; developing from a simple mountain chain, radically altered and growing in the 1700 BC disaster, brutally wounded by the impact of a meteor, and infested with all kinds of sentient (and non-sentient) creatures all with a desire to keep these lands as their own, and attempting to alter it. Some of these alterations succeeded, greatly changing the appearance and use of the land. All these chaotic acts and happenings make the Broken Lands what we know it to be; a place to adventure and discover.

The [Eastern Half of the 1 mile Hex map of the Broken Lands](#) is available at the Vaults of Pandius.

*Have Fun,
Robin*

Future changes

As the Gazetteers are written for 1000 AC, and *Wrath of the Immortals* depicts the next 10 years, there are some major changes in this region that happen in its future.

Before the Great War the Broken Lands, probably the most desolate and inhospitable land in all of Brun, was home to thousands of goblinoid, orcs and other humanoids. Forgotten by Immortals, as well as by humans and dwarves (not to mention elves), these rugged lands were probably the most dangerous area in all of the Old World. But things changed dramatically in AC 1006. A meteor crashed in the Kurrish Massif creating the Great Crater. Life was never the same in the Broken Lands. The feared orcish leader Thar and King Kol IV of the kobolds moved their hordes to the Great Crater (Western Broken Lands) to better raid on Glantri as well as Darokin. Only a few tribes remained in the Eastern Broken Lands.

After the fall of Thar and the creation of the Great Crater in the *Wrath of the Immortals* (1004-1009 AC) King Kol took over the crater with his kobolds, and abandoned the republic of Kol (now overrun by other humanoids). He proved his magical might to the Glantrian mage-princes and with the help of Princess Dolores Hillsbury the crater became a new province of Glantri called Kolland, with King Kol himself as its mage-prince. Throughout 1010 AC and 1011 AC, tribes and clans of humanoids from surrounding areas poured into the Eastern Broken Lands, taking advantage of the departure of Thar's Legions, and even re-inhabited the now mostly empty caves. As expected High Goblincy stayed High Goblincy,

Red Orcland stayed Red Orcland and so on, with mostly new inhabitants of the same races that originally lived there, together with the much smaller numbers that did not leave for the Great Crater.

In AC 1010 brave dwarf scouts found the lost City of Aengmor floating on a lava lake in the caves beneath the Eastern Broken Lands. The mighty dwarvish army left Rockhome to defeat the hated orcs and conquer the fabled city. In Flaurmont AC 1012, after many bloody skirmishes, the humanoids surrendered to the dwarves, but their joy lasted for a very short time, because shadow elves attacked the city. In the following months Aengmor was conquered and lost many times by dwarves, shadow elves and humanoids with heavy losses on all fronts. The dwarves abandoned the city in Felmont, Alebane's ogres then ransacked the city in Ambyrmont just a few days before the shadow elves' final attack.



The arid hills of the Broken Lands

The Water Comes

After the fall of King Thar, some Red Orclanders moved towards the Great Crater, or were chased away (to the Great Crater) by the shadow elf invasion of 1014 AC, settling west and south along the border to the mountains. However, most remained within Upper Red Orcland and controlled the region. The shadow (dark) elves of Atzanteotl's Aengmor could not adapt to the blinding heat and sunlight in this region and their losses were too great. They soon refrained from any attempts at controlling the surface. Lower sections of Red Orcland are now empty of humanoids. But the area is so vast and diverse, and these dark elves are so few in comparison to before the division of the shadow elves, as it will not be long before humanoids return (prolific and opportunistic as they are). And the individualistic dark elves can only accept the situation. They will, however, take on a role as advisors, sometimes leaders, of separate humanoid clans.

Some Red Orc tribes desire to try to return to the Lands of Atruaghin, but are afraid of what they will find upon their arrival. What sort of welcome will they receive from local inhabitants? Does the place still exist as they have been told in centuries-old tales? They don't know that a gigantic plateau (the Plateau of Atruaghin) will make their return virtually impossible.

They also do not know that many human Children of Atruaghin are located here in several tribes. Yet if and when they follow Atruaghin again, maybe the Immortal will allow them a place to live in relative peace (perhaps as a buffer between the evil Tiger



The Steel River between Gnollistan & Hobgobland

Clan to the south, and the other remaining clans west and north).

1005 AC

Since the meteor fell, water of the Red River flows within the crater, and precipitation adds to this volume. The whole floor of the crater is a solid molten mass, with no tunnels, rips, or cracks. As the water accumulates, and slowly rises, a large morass of muck, and rapidly fungal forests will cover it all.

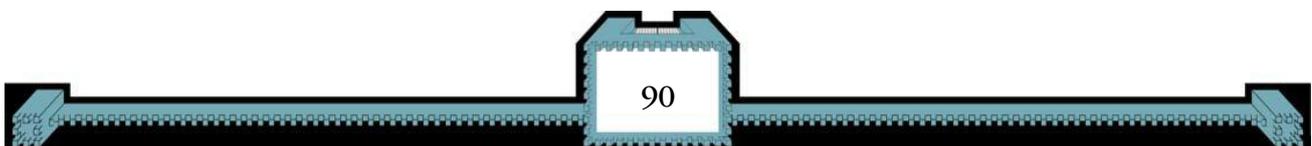
1010 AC

A small lake was formed by the Red River now flowing into the crater, the still warm ground evaporates much of this water, causing a moist "blanket" to cover the crater enabling fungi to grow rapidly. Unknown to almost anybody, the meteor has released thin amounts of powder dust, which remained

behind in the atmosphere. This will cause a significant increase in precipitation for the upcoming two centuries, for the whole of the Known World (including Wendar, Eastern Sind, Adri Varma, Heldann and Northern Wildlands).² Due to the meteor impact the magic gate to the Elemental Plane of Water, being the major feed of the Red River, tears open further and releases much more elemental water into the Prime Plane than before.

The humanoids are forced by shadow elves to leave the lower caves. Loses are great on both sides, too great for the shadow elves to do the same on all the surface lands, especially because of their weakness to the sun. Heldannic Knights and Vestlanders rode into the Eastern Broken Lands and attempted

² DM's using the TM1-TSR9403-D&D-The Western Countries-Trail Map weather system add 5% on the Precipitation chance and +1 on the intensity rolls to all affected regions for the 1006-1216 AC. For precise effects decrease Precipitation by 1% each decade from 1170 AC and lose intensity to normal in 1050 AC. From this moment on all values are normal...as per the Trail Map.



to clear the surface areas of humanoids in an attempt of increasing their popularity in the Known World. Many of the remaining humanoids retreat into the western region. Though successful in Yellow Orkia and Kol, resistance was too great for the Knights in Gnollistan, High Gobliny and Red Orc lands. The other humanoid nations they were not even able to visit. All in all the costs and losses were too high. They soon returned to Heldann.

Hobgobland: With the fall of Thar, and the move of Kol to the Crater about 25% of the Hobgoblanders moved to Kol. The rest stayed behind, remaining true to their heritage, ancestry and land. With the displacement of the Yellow Orkians by the shadow elves their enemies changed, and thus their offenses and defenses. These elven followers of Atzanteotl closed several tunnels

The luck the goblinoids have is that the rock which shapes their caves contains lead-ore, and this prevents all magic from working, including rock altering magic (a feature shadow elves know and hate.) The goblinoids quickly learned this feature in the many battles with the shadow elves trying to enter their caves. They could not hold them in the beginning when they closed of all open sections to the Great Magma chamber, and were not interested in why and how. At this time the shadow elves only made several skirmish attacks to defend their works. This defence was needed because the few stoneshapers decreased in number rapidly, as humanoids attacked them often.

Ogremoor is hardly affected by the invasion and thus only those ogres in Thar's former legion and Lower Ogremoor have settled in

the Great Crater. The others still live in Ogremoor. However, they lost full control of Lower Ogremoor, and they must rebuild forces to retake this region. The Aengmorian shadow elves have decided the region is too vast for their lower number to control, especially as they lost their shaman powers, and their Tunnel Shapers³, as most either stayed with the deep shadow elves, or perished in the wars. Only a few Tunnel Shapers survive (less than 12) and are needed badly near Aengmor city .

Upper Trollhattan is unchanged. The region was actually never discovered by others. Lower Trollhattan was cleared by the shadow (dark) elves, but recently trolls started to appear in the region again. They have not officially retaken the region, but many shadow elf patrols never returned.

Orcus Rex, upper and lower, is fully abandoned and this removes much tension in the region of Erewan, and the region east of the Great Crater, thus enabling the humans to install new settlements and restore older ones.

The demi-humanoids of the Valley of Khyr (Orcus Rex/Ogremoor) and Mount Barbia (Bugburbia) are unaffected by the invasions as they were not yet discovered. The faenare, giants and drakes notice what is happening

³ Tunnel Shapers are shadow elves specialized in these spells; 5th lvlr Dissolve/Harden, Passwall, Turn Rock to Mud, Wall of Stone, Rock Door; 6th level Rock to lava, Move Earth; 7th level Lower Lava, Turn Rock; 4th level Stone Door, and reverse versions these and other (Due to their specialization they have +50% range, duration, and size affected area)

below, but do not interfere and therefore appear not to be there.

1012 AC

At this stage, many Shadow Elves in former Alfheim return to their underground world. They are ashamed of failures on the surface, thwarted by their very own magic. Others travel to the legendary city of Aengmor, beneath the Broken Lands where plentiful water supplies exist, soon realizing they have more freedom to do as they wish. Worship of Rafiel is rapidly dwindling in this region, replaced by the idolization of Atzanteotl. Rafiel is aware of this development, but is unable to act directly against Atzanteotl, as for all his efforts nothing seems to change. Trying to subversively return his followers to the fold, many instead rejected Rafiel's teachings, holding him responsible, and continue to worship Atzanteotl. The familiar purple marks of the shadow elf shaman slowly fade on those turning away from Rafiel, as do their shaman abilities. From these shamans, new clerics of Atzanteotl arise, (starting from the first level) . The Aengmor elves start their plans to bring Aengmor closer to the surface. The elves close off West Lava Lake, North Orcus Rex, NE Trollhattan, Bugburbian passage to lava flow, Southern(mid) lava flow, Bugburbia Kundar passage to Lava Flow, Red Orcland North to Lava Flow, the whole North of Lower Kol, east of Akrass, South of Lake Morkia, and any minor passages in between leading to the lava, thus closing off the lava chamber, then temporarily closed off the main western flow partially, causing the

magma to rise (increasing the temperatures in the nearby caves).⁴

While closing off all access to the Great Magma Chamber and Channels, most Aengmor elven Tunnel Shapers were killed by the local humanoids, thus slowly losing most terrain altering skills and magic, the Aengmor elves live as humanoids once did in the area. They still harbour great animosity toward all surface dwellers, yet consciously begin to accept the companionship of evil races. Even monsters, such as Xrathpack the beholder, come to dwell in their midst - but under Aengmor elven rule.

Hobgoblin: Attacked so severely by Ethengar warriors and Heldannic knights the hobgoblins retreated underground and took what land was nearest and no longer ruled by others. Their numbers have grown and dwindled and remains at about 2400 humanoids.

Bugburbia and High Gobliny, those humanoids remaining behind when the brunt of the population moved to the crater earlier, feel the increase of temperature, moisture, and fear moving to the surface. Many tunnels are opened, creating a vented warm, moist cavern system below.

Many Red Orcs were killed or chased away (to the Great Crater) by the shadow elf invasion of 1010 AC. Some tribes want to try to return to Atruaghin lands, but are afraid of their arrival there, as explained above. Those that stay in Red Orcland become more proud and use the sun and heat against their

⁴ All pink marks on the Lower Broken Lands map. In my maps pink is the color of magic.

invaders. The surface is theirs and will remain thus.

The attacks of the humanoids did not stop the progress of the elves' work, and by late 1013 AC the caves were closed off. The humanoids were unaware of the Aengmor elves' plans to raise Aengmor.

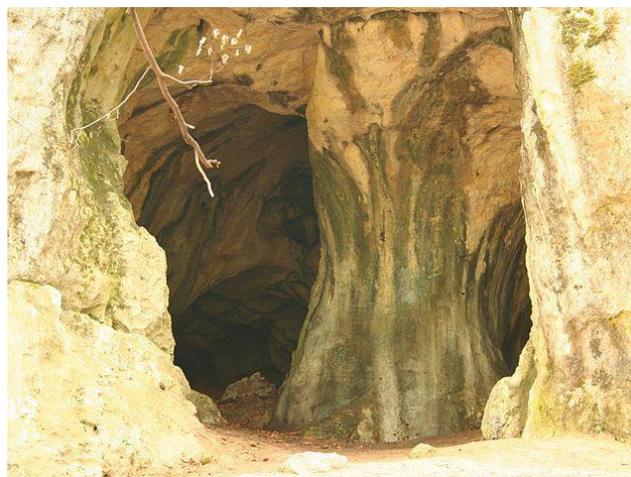
Lower Gnollistan: The elves first battled the gnolls underground. The current might of the elves was too much for the gnolls and 25% died in the conflict, another 35% fled to Kol, and the remaining 40% went to the surface.

Upper Gnollistan is still owned and controlled by the gnolls, but they lost the lower Gnollistan caves. The shadow elves closed off most entrances to the lower realm, but the gnolls soon established some mutual agreements through Aengmor, and this is the main conduit of contact. The gnolls also conquered the former Yellow Orkia. Some have reached Lake Morkia and act as a buffer between the goblinoids and the Aengmor elves. Here they often work together with these darker elves. The situation is tense with the hobgoblins on the other side of the lake, due to their old hatred for each other.

Throughout the recent years, tribes and clans of humanoids from surrounding areas poured into the Eastern Broken Lands, taking advantage of the departure of Thar's Legions, trying to re-inhabit the now mostly empty caves. The Aengmor elves of Atzanteotl must continue their battle for defending their hard won grounds and stop their conquest for new grounds. The number of their soldiers is simply too low.

Kolland is retaken by a variety of humanoids, some yellow orcs, but also foreign orcs from the Dwarfgate Mountains, Glantri, Darokin, Ethengar, Alfheim where there is an excess of orcs, and troll problems. But local hill giants and foreign kobolds also found this an excellent place to settle. They have not retaken the lower caves, where they are repelled by the Aengmor elves, and these are slowly taken over by giant spiders.

The Mucks are of no interest to shadow elves, humans and most humanoids, and several Trollhattan refugee trolls decided to settle there.



An entry to the Lower Broken Lands

1014-1015 AC

Broken Lands; Hool receives visions from Wogar to hunt Xilochtli, the orcish shaman of Oenkmar, as he stole the sacred blue knife. He starts a new Great Migration. Only Nizam Pasha (after a vision from Ranivorus) and the gnolls join him. The combined army is 3000 strong, and has to traverse the border between Sindhi and Darokin. The shadow elven military immediately gets to work at purging them from the area. Many flee to the Great Crater and join Kol's forces, while others head to the Makkres Mountains where Thar is rumoured to be forming a new kingdom (or so say his messengers). Some stay behind. Despite their best efforts, the shadow elves cannot possibly hope to clear the entire Broken Lands. They settle for keeping a good 50 mile radius around their city as clear as possible. The new Great Migration moves with 3000 humanoids around Darokin to attack the Tiger Clan (Atzanteotl followers) in Atruaghin. Many red orcs and gnolls remain behind.

The Hill Giants of the Careanna region moved north and took over the Southern section of Yellow Orkia, renaming it Yorkia (one of their Shaman named York suggested this as a pun to the Yellow Orcs). The Orkian settlements near the Mucks were abandoned, or were used by the sparse humanoids staying behind combining into a single meagre horde of old, sick, female or weaklings; they renamed this clan; Ol'd'ax. (encompassing the villages Khampaa, Norbor, Kai Kailaar). This new horde no longer preys upon the passing caravans but instead trades with the caravans as they pass by, slowly becoming more powerful as their young become adolescent. The waste lands

between the Mucks and Yorkia became abandoned, although not safe. As the giant insects, formerly hunted by the Yellow Orkians, now had no predators, they almost exploded in number and activity. Several giant ant, and Giant wasp lairs are found on the Ethengar border, and giant sand lions, originally a nuisance, have now become a real threat⁵. Other giant insects have their egg and larval form in the Mucks, but in adult form prey in Yorkia. It is rumoured that the village of Ohrimm is taken over by sentient insects called hivebrood - using any race they capture; dark elves, Ethengerians, remaining Orkians, merchants, and adventurers as hosts. The hivebrood recently discovered entrances leading down, to the fungal bounties there. The Atzanteotl Shadow (dark) elves of Aengmor do not like this, but can't do much against it⁶.

Key to colours used in Table 1 overleaf:

	Shadow Elven Rule Aengmor
	Humanoids rule over Oenkmar/Aengmor
Where both colors are in a row there will be many disputes	
Red Text/data = major disputes	

⁵ Game statistics of these insects can be found in "[Low Life](#)", chapter 3 of my Mystara Monster Manual Compilation book.

⁶ All these area details can be found on my [1 mile hex map](#) available at the Vaults of Pannidius.

The Broken Lands - detailed

Table 1: Aengmor and Broken lands populations

Year	Estimated Population New Aengmor (Including City Aengmor)							Important Happening	Aengmor Control Broken Lands	Total Number		
	Total	Shadow (Dark) Elves	Humanoids		Schattenalfen	Broken Lands Humanoids				Shadowlands Shadow Elves		
			East	West (Crater)								
Before 1000 AC	18,000	0.40%	80 (wanderers)	99.60%	17928	0.00%	0	Meteor Impact, Wotl	0%	39,941	5,000	500,000
1000- 1010 AC	18,000	0.40%		99.60%	17928	0.00%	0	SE War with Alfheim	0%	36,391	0	500,000
1010 AC	18,000	0.40%		99.60%	17928	0.00%	0	SE War with Alfheim, Plague runs rampant	0%	8,000	28,000	425,000
1011 AC	18,000	0.40%		99.60%	17928	0.00%	0	Canolbarth Dying	0%	14,000	35,000	425,000
1012 AC	28,000	20.00%	5600	99.70%	27916	0.00%	0	SE Conquering Aengmor	5%	15,000	38,000	425,000
1013 AC	25,000	85.00%	21250	15.00%	3750	0.00%	0	SE Conquering Lower Broken Lands	25%	14,000	42,000	425,000
1014 AC	20,000	80.00%	16000	20.00%	4000	0.00%	0	Rising Aengmor City, Tower of Doom	45%	14,000	45,000	424,000
1015 AC	15,000	75.00%	11250	15.00%	2250	0.00%	0	Shadowwars, Gobbleton born, Foreign Humanoids take Kol & Yellow Orkia (Yorkia born)	35%	21,000	52,000	405,000
1016 AC	17,000	76.00%	12920	20.00%	3400	4.00%	680	Defectors of Nation Aengmor, Schattenalfheim, and Shadowlands join City Aengmor	30%	24,000	55,000	350,000
1017 AC	17,000	76.00%	12920	20.00%	3400	4.00%	680	Shadow over Mystara	28%	35,000	58,000	340,000
1018 AC	17,000	75.00%	12750	20.00%	3400	5.00%	850		25%	30,000	62,000	330,000
1019 AC	17,300	75.00%	12975	20.00%	3460	5.00%	865		22%	32,000	65,000	330,000
1020 AC	17,800	70.00%	12460	25.00%	4450	5.00%	890	Red Orcland, Ogremoor, retaken by humanoids	19%	44,000	67,500	328,000
1030 AC	19,200	59.00%	11328	38.00%	7296	3.00%	576		19%	46,000	71,000	328,000
1040 AC	22,500	52.00%	11700	56.00%	12600	2.00%	450	Crater lake grows	18%	51,000	73,500	327,500
1050 AC	32,500	31.00%	10075	68.00%	22100	1.00%	325		18%	54,000	75,000	327,000
1060 AC	52,500	19.10%	10028	80.40%	42210	0.50%	263	Streel River Stops	18%	53,000	77,000	327,200
1070 AC	68,000	14.74%	10023	84.00%	57120	0.36%	245	Mucks increase	18%	58,000	80,000	327,400
1080 AC	75,000	13.35%	10013	86.36%	64770	0.29%	218	Yorkia flooded, Crater flooded	18%	87,000	47,000	328,050
1090 AC	84,000	11.90%	9996	87.85%	73794	0.25%	210	Anur Lake reborn	18%	111,200	36,000	328,330
1100 AC	96,000	10.40%	9984	96.00%	92160	0.21%	202	Lower Caves Crater Flooded	18%	203,400	23,000	328,345
1200 AC	104,000	9.00%	9360	90.81%	94442	0.19%	198	Canolbarth officially reborn	18%	311,600	25,000	328,405

Thus table may be found at:

http://pandius.com/Threshold_14_TheBrokenLandsdetailed_html_56b4c12c.gif

Aengmor: Atzanteotl's power grows as do tensions between other shadow elves, Alfheim elves and Aengmor citizens. The cult of Atzanteotl was introduced by the various artefacts/religious icons left behind by the humanoids. Also, the old items seem to indicate that the shadow elves once worshipped Atzanteotl, and the members of the cult spread propaganda claiming that Atzanteotl was the golden age of the shadow elves, at the time of ancient Aengmor. Many of the shadow elves believe the story since they are losing faith in Rafiel, and are slowly converting to the new way of life. Half the wanderers do so too, the other half is bound by Rafiel's Law. Kanafasti and the Wanderers believe they have found a way to stay in Aengmor while maintaining the Way of Rafiel; they intend to raise the city of Aengmor to the surface world, where they will claim a New Way of Rafiel shall be born. The idea was secretly brought to them by the cult of Atzanteotl. The cult of Atzanteotl has grown as powerful as it dares with the shamans of Rafiel in Aengmor. They intend to destroy the shamans' power by raising the city to the surface, where their soul crystals will be destroyed by the sunlight, and hence they will lose all spellcasting abilities. If that were to happen, the cult of Atzanteotl is sure they can take over Aengmor. Soon the tension spreads to the Shadowlands and the Nation of Aengmor.

Fyrmont 2: Aengmor - Earthquakes shake northern Darokin and southern Glantri, as well as western Ethengar and the city sees (through the volcanic shaft) sunlight. Princess Tanadaleyo of Rafielton announces that the ruler of the city will be General Garafaele Galeifel, ruling in the name of King Telemon of the City of Stars. No longer will

wanderers and deformed elves be abandoned. The whole idea itself sprang up from none other than Xatapechtli. Using his friendship with Kanafasti, he managed to convince the mage that it would be a good thing to do for the shadow elves and especially the Wanderers. Kanafasti has no idea that he is also helping spread the plans of Atzanteotl. Soon the Shadow Wars start; shadow elves against each other. The Hollow World Schattentalfen hear of the lost city of Aengmor and enter the fray.

The few humanoid shamans of Atzanteotl still alive in the Eastern Broken Lands rally the scattered humanoids in the area encouraging them to wilfully join the shadow elves of Aengmor with the promise of a higher ranking within the new humanoid hierarchy under shadow elf control.

Old Hutai Khan and his horde are among the recruited ones. The elves of Aengmor, led by Xatapechtli, welcome the humanoids and use them as cheap slave work or fodder for the army. The Shadow War is finally won by the deep shadow elves, causing a break with the Aengmorian (dark) elves and defeat of the Schattentalfen. Many elves on either sides lost their lives, and this loss will have great impact upon the domain they control. Others relocate, and Aengmor thus loses most if not all its Rafiel followers.

Synn: Having started to feel the loss of power she once had in Glantri, Synn decides to try and cause trouble elsewhere in the Known World, while diverting all attention away from her and her dragon alias. She sends a powerful lich called Deimos⁷ under her control to harass Darokin to the south.

⁷ Source: *Tower of Doom* game 1014 AC

Using her connections, Synn sends several humanoid forces with Deimos to the Broken Lands. She also sends one of her shadow elf agents to act as Deimos' general of the goblinoids.

Once in the Broken Lands, the lich Deimos uses his magic to create a tower to act as his headquarters while his humanoids roam the area, gathering all the humanoids still alive and hiding from the shadow elves. These goblinoids, still afraid of the shadow elves, are eager to join what appears to be a powerful horde in the making. Deimos calls his base Sable Tower.

Synn uses one of her powerful magical items and "charms" another powerful red dragon from beyond the Adri Varma⁸ (who also happens to have a blond human female alter ego by the name of Synn⁹.) Behind the scenes Dolores (aka the real Synn, Night Dragon) keeps pulling the strings by using the charm spell. With the loss of Jaggar, Synn is losing her political pull as Dolores Hillsbury in Glantri. Since she just has to cause chaos, she has decided to send some of her forces elsewhere to inflict chaos in other lands. Darokin has now become one of her targets. The shadow elves sent with Deimos will help keep the shadow elves of the city of Aengmor away from the tower, hiding the humanoid forces there from the elves. The civil war brewing in Aengmor also helps. These shadow elf agents were originally

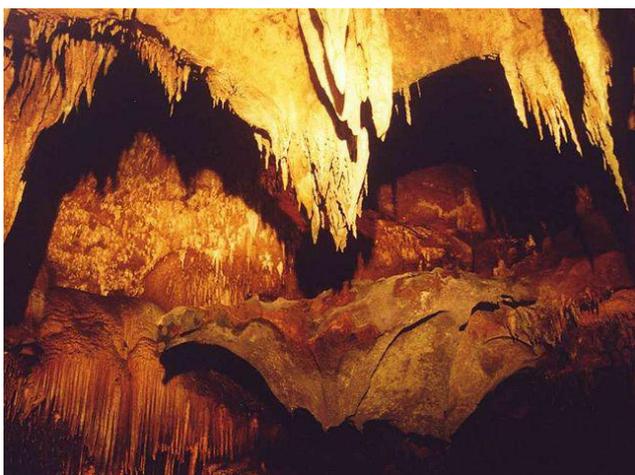
spying on Glantri, but came to love the power, magic, and cutthroat politics of the human nation and decided to stay in Glantri rather than return to the City of Stars. Dolores Hillsbury learned of them and hired most of them to work for her. The spies, having been trained by Xatapechtli, were already evil since they are assassins without any compassion for their enemies. They got along rather well with Synn the Red Dragon. Dolores controls everything from behind the scenes.

Having now amassed a large enough horde of humanoids under his command, Deimos has given the order for them to invade Darokin. With Darokin's forces occupied both in Atruaghin and in Selenica (both because of the raids at Fort Hobart and the fear of invasion from the now hostile Ylaruam), the timing could not be better. Several bands of a dozen humanoids pop up throughout the city of Corunglain, raiding and pillaging everything they can get their hands on. By the time the city defenders get organized and begin closing in on the intruders, the humanoids quickly duck back into the sewer system from which they came. When forced back from an attack on Darokin City adventurers manage to destroy important targets and successfully defeat Deimos within the Sable Tower.

The Aengmor Elves meddled in these affairs, and it is now that some of them have gained a darker appearance than before, with lighter hair. These are the first indications that the Aengmor elves are really physically changing. Dolores Hillsbury, secretly a Night Dragon, musters all she can to survive this political ordeal, and her secret is almost uncovered, but in the end she succeeds in

⁸ Source: *Storm over Mystara 1017 AC*

⁹ This slightly different backstory was chosen by the author as the dragon which appears in the video game is red, and her human identity is blonde, quite different from the dark appearance of Synn and her human identity Dolores in Mystara's paper canon products.



Cave in the Lower Broken Lands

being her “charming” self. However, she lost her control over the Great Crater and the neighbouring Glantrian regions. Blackhill, Erewan, Soth-Kabree, Caurenze are retaken by the former owners of the region. Dolores also lost control over Jaggar von Drachenfels.

Several Darokin locations, amongst them Corunglain, and a few years later Trintan and even Glantri were under attack by several groups of humanoids (in fact stirred up by Synn the red dragon). Both humanoid groups were defeated by adventurers.

Darokin: After many setbacks (including weather, shortage of supplies) plus an increase in Goblinoid raids to prevent the wall from being built, the 20 foot high, 125 miles long Great Wall of Darokin (from Fort Fletcher to Corunglain City, following the southern edge of the Broken Lands) is finally completed.

In AC 1014 wicked, renegade shadow elves, who live side by side with orcs, serving the evil cult of Atzanteotl, try to spread chaos in the western Old World and beyond. After the

recent Shadow War about a thousand Schattenalfen found shelter in the City of Aengmor. Rumours say that even some human brigands moved to the evil city. After the shadow elves’ civil war two years previously, rebel followers of Atzanteotl chose Aengmor as their stronghold, rallying the few scattered humanoids in the area and using them as slaves. The survivors from the disastrous Schattenalfen assault on the City of the Stars took refuge in the city of Aengmor in AC 1015.

1016 AC

Goblins in the **Great Crater** are severely irritated by the Kobolds’ behaviour and feel as though they are ranked second. When they discover that many goblins remained successfully in East Broken Lands, they leave the crater within a single week. The Hobgoblanders happily accept the new influx of humanoids to stave off the Aengmor elves. The closing of any access to the magma chambers and channels now starts to become a benefit to the humanoids, not only causing this to increase the fog and water in the caves, but also causing fungi to rapidly take root anywhere. The Aengmor elves can only attack from Lake Morkia, and they have no water skills. Battle after battle ensues; losses on both sides are great, but with the influx of new humanoids, the Aengmor elves decided to count their wounds and accept their loss of conquest. The goblinoids have retaken the Lower Caves of these regions. Tensions will remain in this area though. The whole lake area becomes a buffer zone between both races, as the shadow (dark) elf territory now borders the east coast of Lake Morkia. All of

Lower Broken Lands caves have become more alive (fertile for vegetation/insects) as the surrounding rock has become warmer. The average temperature originally 4-10 degrees Celsius is now a staggering 20 to 25. Water mist is prevalent, and enables the growth of fungi.

Red Orcland is re-established as Red Orcland and now again populated by red orcs staying behind, or returning, and some other orcs from Yellow Orkia and Orcus Rex.

Shadowlands: the completion of the Chamber of Spheres enables deep shadow elves to cast a variant source of magic on the Day of Dread and use crystals in the sun. It is proposed that the Schattenalfen who have been captured should be integrated into the shadow elf society; most of them refuse and are executed. The others, including those who helped against the Schattenalfen, are viewed with suspicion but allowed to settle in the Enclave according to the Verse of the Other People. Others escape to the city of Aengmor.¹⁰

¹⁰ This is a return of the Deep Shadow Elves to a natural source of magic, instead directly or indirectly using Radiance, like it is done globally. This is one of the new (actually original and very old; predating Blackmoor) sources of magic as discussed in [this posting](#) on the Piazza forums.

1018 AC

The bugbears of Bugburbia, the local goblins and hobgoblins convene and become a new humanoid nation, a nation which existed in earlier times, a nation of goblinoids: **Gobbleton** is reborn. Nobody can do anything against it, not even the disabled Aengmorian elves. Soon the goblinoids discover an old forgotten narrow tunnel south of Fort Kundar underneath the Magma channel leading to the other side, where the Former Red Orclands and Ogremoor lands are empty.

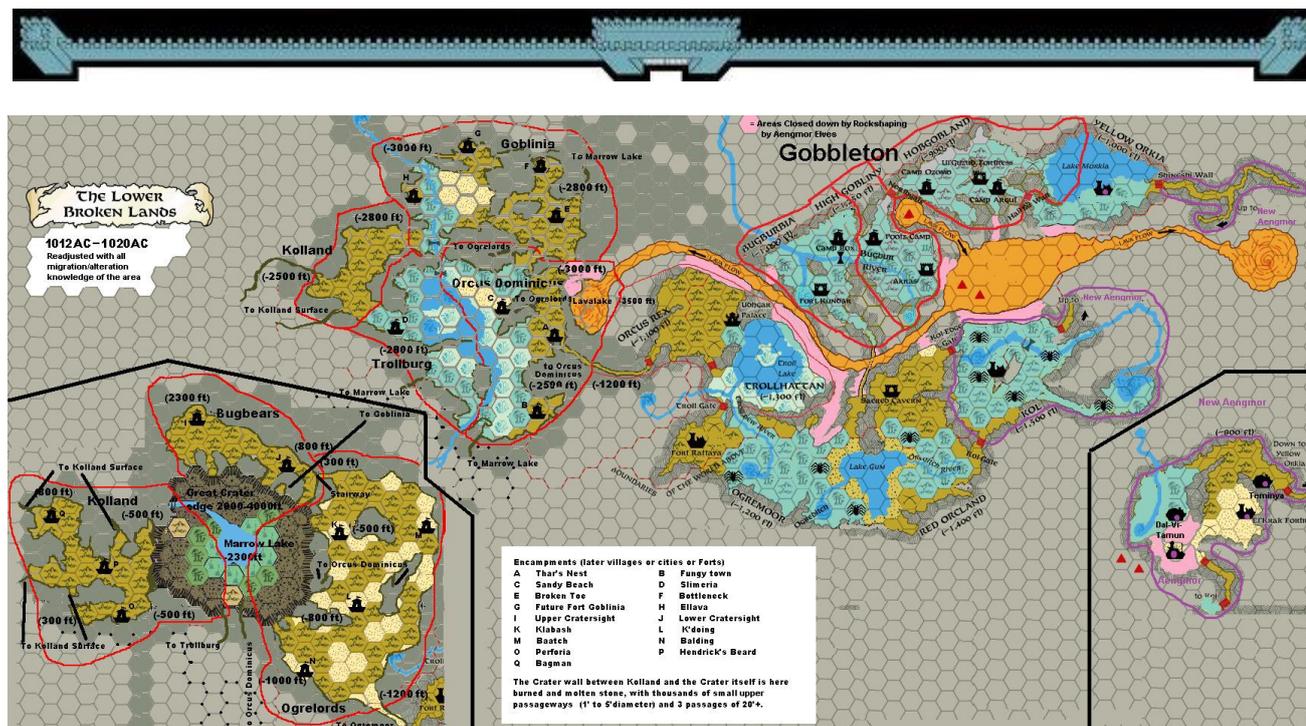
Gobbleton is occupied by goblins, hobgoblins and bugbears, that each form nations like High Goblincy, Hobgobland and Bugburbia, that become separate provinces of this new nation.

1021 AC

Lower Ogremoor is slowly retaken by the ogres of Upper Ogremoor. Lower Kol has turned into a vast fungal spider jungle.

The Aengmor elves take advantage of Kol's fungal jungle and take full control of the kobolds' former underground lands. Former Orcus Rex is now a loose bundle of renegade humanoids from anywhere. Astimahl a (black looking, but blue) dragon of Hobgobland succeeds in becoming a large dragon, and with that, magic is released affecting the region. As he is Neutral-Good in alignment, this affects the effects of the transformation magic (see sidebar "A Note on Dragons"). This increases the radical changes the whole region undergoes, which will become clearly visible in the upcoming decades.

The Broken Lands - detailed



Lower Broken Lands future map

A NOTE ON DRAGONS

As per Bruce Heard's article on Known World Dragons: "From Hatchling to Immortal Guardian" (Dragon Magazine #170): **Neutral Dragons:** Phenomena caused by the transformation of neutral Dragons are totally unlike that of lawful or chaotic nature. These occurrences, although limited to the domain of alterations, may be more subtle yet more drastic than with other Dragons. Druidical gatherings in the affected area (if appropriate) will be much more common than usual prior to an occurrence, where druids might share their concern about upcoming changes and their mystical meanings. A **small neutral Dragon** becoming large effects minor natural changes. For example, some wildlife or vegetation may become progressively extinct in the region, while other new life becomes more predominant. A water spring might dry up while another starts elsewhere. A small forest might progressively die out while a poorer region becomes more fertile. A strange lack of wildlife and winds might affect one region, while another becomes a new cauldron of activity (some minor wealth is discovered there). A change might affect the local climate, and so on.

1022 AC

From this year on the week of no magic has returned, centred again on the original Day of Dread, as in 1010 AC. Glantri increases in population, and magic users willing to learn the awesome magic are able to learn here. It became more and more difficult to keep the Radiance secret, with no Immortal controlling it, and more students using it, causing a rapid increase in the Brethren of Rad.

The increased yield of fungal and insect food in the Lower Broken Lands decreases the need for attacks on Glantri and Ethengar by **Gobbleton** residents, and **dark Aengmor elves**. It also causes the **red orc tribes** to slowly retake their

lower caves, but not in such a way to settle there ...yet.

1024 AC

The **Great Crater lake's** surface has quadrupled in size and now covers almost the whole of the crater bottom . There is no life within the expanded lake other than insect larva. Its depth is roughly 150 feet.

1026 AC

Ethengar adventurers discover the secret of the Streel River and remove it, much to the discontent of the Darokinians¹¹. With this simple act, the whole region succumbs to a dramatic ecological change. Water no longer flows up between the Twin Volcanoes, but starts to accumulate again in the basin of the **Mucks and former Yellow Orkia**. The volume of water in the Streel River towards Darokin decreases by 80%, now only fed by local streams in the Broken Lands. Darokin is bereft of much of its waters, but the Darokinians are unable to restore the situation to its earlier state, as they are totally unaware of the cause. Though careful and bitter, they decide not to war against the Ethengars, and see what the future will bring in this changing social climate.

The humanoids of the Northwestern Dwarfgate Mountains combine and form an independent humanoid nation called **Org-grukk**. The different racial sentiments make the region fragmented, but still passable for caravans (though plunder is running rampant.) Due to the volcanic changes caused by the Aengmorian elves earlier, more

¹¹ This secret will soon be explained in "[Breath of Mystara](#)", the author's blog

volcanic activity becomes part of the norm in this area. Increased temperature, geysers, hot springs, and more tremors (not quakes) become a normal part of life within this region. The reason for these conditions is the large Eastern Lava lake pouring down into the deep, which but due to pressure increases the minor tremors, heats up water in the region coming from the surface, and increases local ambient temperature¹².

1038 AC

The trolls normally being oblivious of any changes, suddenly notice that the island in their **Trollhattan** Lake is always flooded, trees die, while rooted below the water. To their faint memories, this was not the case; why it happens, they do not know. Glantrian geomages traversing the Trintan-Corunglain Trail later suggest that the centuries long coagulation of biological debris, sediments from the Vesubian, and other minor rivers entering the Trollhattan region, have finally clogged the small channels leading downwards in such a way that water levels rise, thus increasing pressure which further hardens the thick layers of clay-like material. This is the beginning of the end for Trollhattan. The dragon Astimahl partners up with his half-sister Belladraag and at the end of the year three eggs are laid, of which only two hatch; Kurkumon (Male) and Bardishar (Female).

¹² +1d3x5 degrees as per Trail Map weather chart for all seasons in this region only, lasting until magma in the great chamber is lowered ever again.

1050 AC

The water levels in the **Mucks** have risen sufficiently to begin increasing the Mucks surface area, and the fertility of the former Yellow Orkia wastelands. The region of Clan Ol'd'Ax becomes wet and muddy; plants and fungi start to grow rapidly and abundantly. The humanoids of Clan Ol'd'Ax relocate to the hills between Ethengar and the wet wastelands. Fairies start pouring into the region north of the Mucks, bringing with them millions of seeds of trees and other plants. Ethengar fully agrees to this as water is growth and growth is might. Several Erewan elves under duress of the Belcadiz elves in Glantri decide to leave Erewan and settle here. This is the beginning of a new region of prosperity, prophesied by the soothsayers of the Khan. The dragon Belladraag is killed by Aengmorian shadow (dark) elves, and this infuriates her mate, Astimahl. Shadow (dark) elves are no longer safe on the surface. Kurkumon and Bardishar, their children, leave the nest and settle elsewhere (probably in Ethengar). They have formed alternate identities; Kurkumon as an Ethengar warrior (though horses do not like his smell), and Bardishar as a human merchant. Both seem to keep in touch with each other, but are abandoned by their father.

1068 AC

Water starts to accumulate on the **salty plain of Yorkia**. Plants from the Mucks spread out and infest the region altering it permanently. The Hill giants keep the southern hills, but lose any interest in the wet wastelands. Humanoids thrive in the hills, fed by the many insects. They have no need for combat,

as food is abundant. Many insects perish; others prosper but many have to relocate. The hivebrood resettle against the Sun's Anvil Plateau. Water also starts to increase on the Ethengar borders, and the Hakomon of the nearby sites notice changes in their magic.

Org-grukk becomes more stable as rumours tell that Thar has returned (this might also be a son of Thar). Caravans now have to circumvent the whole Broken Lands, using the Old Trail to Lake Unur and then north through the Fairy woods.

In the **Great Crater Lake** large creatures are found. The remnants of magical meteorite ore and its chemicals caused the insects to evolve, and greatly increase in size. A new ecosystem is born, where they start to feed on the mushrooms and other vegetation, and each other.¹³

1075 AC

The **hills of Trollhattan** slowly become wet due to the continuously rising water, which is in itself no problem for the trolls, but they need ground to live. Due to some unforeseen cause¹⁴, some trolls seem to succumb to a rapid evolution, and are suddenly able to breathe underwater. It is unknown if this is due to the trolls natural unstable, but very adaptable genetic

¹³ This increases the amounts of large to huge insects and insect hunters within the region. See "[Low Life](#)" (chapter 3 of my Monster Manual at The Vaults) for examples.

¹⁴ This may be Immortal Influence of Bagni Gullymaw, in an attempt to save her race. In effect Scraggs, AD&D aquatic trolls, are created.

structure or to that very structure being affected by continuous radiation from below and a changing environment. Life for the other trolls becomes harsh; their caves dug in clay or sandstone either fill completely, or collapse, and many trolls leave the region and either travel north to Glantri or south to Darokin. Both nations try to prevent this, but they can not really stop this move, as the Trolls are doing this individually and not as organised groups. The Scrag's main underwater settlement is the almost intact ruins of Orken Keep,¹⁵ but many live either in shore caves or the surviving underwater caves.

1080 AC

The water of **Crater Lake** starts to enter the side caves to Trollburg. The lake is now 1300 feet deep and Kolland has a great view over the lake. The humanoids have learned (from the Glantrians) to make and use simple straw or wood vessels. The Old Jaggar von Drachenfels starts creature investigations and sends adventurers under water using a magical submersible. The dragon Astimahl is increasing his pyramid of power and subdues the dragons Erronya (Green), Gurmarmirmiar (Red) and Gjullgaraah (Black).

1090 AC

The continuous drain of the Radiance now begins showing its effects. Twice a year there is a week of non-magic. A 16+ Intelligence roll will be needed to study radiance based magic, or to advance further in levels. The number of Wizards decreases drastically in the world.

¹⁵ see ["Orken Keep"](#) detailed in the "1 Mile Hex Mapping" topic on the Piazza Forums.



Great Crater Lake from above

More and more Witches, Elementalists, Necromancers, and Druids would start to study the few sources of magic NOT affected by the Radiance, and thus whole new and very variable streams of magic very slowly become known.

Magical beings also decrease in number (this includes dragons, elves, fairy, etc.) affected by decreased levels of the Radiance, which their bodies were unknowingly used to. Many recover and adapt rapidly to the natural source of magic, but indeed many others perish or move away. The number of Brethren of Rad would rise to about 220 and then slowly but steadily sink as the number of Radiance using wizards goes down too.

As the water in the **Crater Lake** starts pouring in, more and more humanoids leave the area, as less and less living space is available. Abandoned Goblinia and Orcus Dominicus rapidly fill with water from the lowest levels. The water gullet in the north can not take the rapid increase of water (which also flows further down to the Shadowlands, increasing the water there).

Soon humanoid inhabitants of Lower Kolland and Trollburg have to move. The trolls and orcs move up into Ogremoor, but many become very discontent with the crowded space, and leave. The Orcs resettle in former Orcus Rex. Ogres turn to Ogremoor, where more of their kind still live. The final battle between the returning ogres and the orcs in the tunnel between Orcus Rex and Orcus Dominicus causes the tunnel to collapse. Hundreds of orcs die when the ceiling of the tunnel caves in upon them. The connection between the East and West Lower Broken Lands is now truly severed. This force of ogres go up against the inflow of water, out to the surface and the Great Crater and over the devastated lands to finally reach Ogremoor. Many ogres perish or become wounded in this ordeal. Relations between ogres and orcs will be strained from this moment on, each blaming the other for the cause and losses. The new insect ecosystem starts to feed on all the humanoids left behind (including the many drowned humanoids). Many insect species perish, others relocate to the lake's border region, and a few just adapt to the water, but the true water insects now prosper. Mostly they are beetles, but there are also sightings of giant (real giant!!) centipede-like creatures hunting bugs, birds and humanoids. Algae forests take over the bottom rapidly, and some new water plants are introduced due to seeds/specimens dropped by birds from nearby Lake Amsorak. Most fungi perish, but some are able to survive below water; these are a few molds (Brown and Yellow)¹⁶.

¹⁶ To find examples and statistics refer to ["Low Life"](#) chapter 3 of my Mystara Monster Manual Compilation.

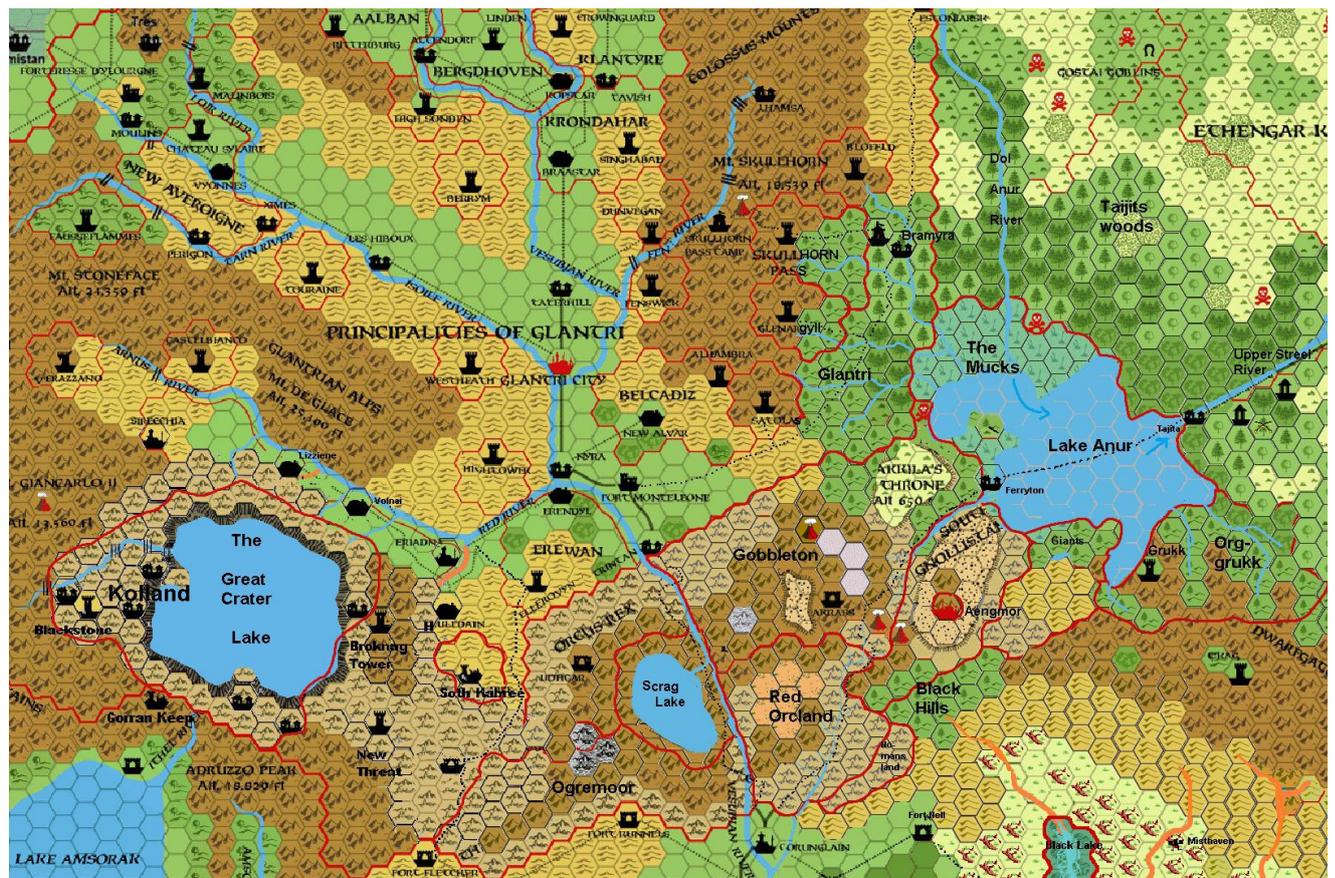
Glantri's Red River increases its yield as many creeks and brooks fed by underground channels of the Great Crater, add to their amount of flowing water, into the Vesubian River. Darokin is pleased as this water will eventually flow into the Darokinian Streel River. The Darokin water amounts normalize as before, but the sources are changed.

1100 AC

Crater Lake: The lower caves under the crater are now fully filled with water, the increased pressure caused some cave-ins, but all areas below become forever inundated. The upper Cave of the Ogrelords also starts to fill, causing them to relocate further into the Silver Sierra Mountains or regroup within Ogremoor. The same happens with the lower sections of Upper Kolland, forcing the kobolds to take the surface and live more like the humans.

The Upper caves are still in use, remaining above the level of the water, but are a crowded lot. Hundreds of humanoids start to settle on the surface around the lake, living off of the many large insects found here.

The lands of former **Yellow Orkia** are no more. Together with the Mucks they became the new Anur Lake. What remains of the Mucks moved up north and now lies on the western coast against Gobbleton's province Hobgobland and the Northern Coast. Only the coast against Ethengar (Taijits Woods) is used for fishing, but only simple reed vessels are used by the Ethengarians. The influx of fish in the Ethengar diet increases their physical health and social standing; but this



Upper Broken Lands and surrounding region future map

also brought some obesity to the lazy rulers. The fairies have control over the new forests of the region, where many Erewan elves also live. Two magic locations become inaccessible to the Hakomon, and are now used by the fairies, elves or humanoids. The Southern Hills along the Coast (Yorkia) and the Hills of Careanna are populated by several humanoids, while the Collapsed Mountains are under firm control of stone giants and other silicon based life forms. The Lake finally has returned to its original size. The Ethengar section of the Strel River is renamed Anur River when it became level with the Anur Lake and changed its direction of flow towards Bargdha, enabling simple

reed vessels to traverse along the slow flowing river. The water will finally enter the depression of the Sea of Flowers, making it into another lake. Water continues to flow down through tunnels and cave systems below the Sea of Flowers towards the Shadowlands, increasing the yield of water there. The small river from the Twin volcanoes is named "the Strel", abandoning the "River" adjective. The Strel River now comes forth in the Red Orclands by a combination of local creeks and streams there, and from the Crooked Hills of Kol following its original (but greatly reduced) tract into Darokin. The Hivebrood of Ohrimm have relocated to the north and

settled in the Lawensa Depression of the Wendarian Ranges. Their voyage took many lives, but also added some new Glantrian/Ethengarian broodlings.¹⁷

The Darokin/Ethengar Trail had to be changed. Up to Lake Anur, the trail is similar as before, though with a much decreased Streel River, but then the trail goes through Hobgobland, along Anur Lake, until it converges with the Alexander Glantri Trail going up to Bramyra. This village becomes a melting-pot settlement, with greater merchant capabilities like warehouses, and a market, and is visited by the new Erewan elves, Ethengarians and sometimes even a “friendly” goblinoid from Gobbleton. New town laws prevent conflict (or try to). Some smaller settlements increase and the Erewan elves have created a few villages within the new woods. The elves are allowed by the current Ethengar Kahn to settle in the Tajits woods, but when contacting Ethengarians, Ethengar Law prevails; further they may follow their own law. Even Ethengar is changed, now having access to more wood, more permanent structures in settlements are created, especially Barha which becomes a mix of a camp and a town. Though the locals fear the large black dragon (the blue dragon Astimahl), they are never attacked unless provoked. It is regularly seen flying above Anur Lake before disappearing from sight. Its lair is suspected in the new Mucks or within Anur Lake itself.

Many shadow elves have earlier travelled beneath the Broken Lands where plentiful water supplies exist. Here they have

¹⁷ To find detailed statistics on Hivebrood refer to [“Low Life”](#) (chapter 3 of my Mystara Monster Manual Compilation

converted to a more chaotic lifestyle under the doctrines of their new Immortal. Formerly followers of Rafiel, they became greatly disillusioned with the failures of the Canolbarth, and Rafiel’s seemingly strict doctrines. Interaction between shadow elf factions is emerging along three paths. Some bonds are broken; others strained or altered, while others remain firmly in place. Whether by divisions of clan, family or holding; shadow elves revering Rafiel come to associate with one another, while those worshipping Atzanteotl drift farther away and become more individualistic. Ties between Darokinians and returning Alfheim elves is stronger than anticipated with shadow elf followers of Rafiel. Despite Immortal affiliation three groups of Shadow Elves arise.

The first group consists of the few **shadow elves** who remain on the surface. Living in the darker regions of the Old Canolbarth; they continue having problems adapting. They are 110,000 in number, this is about 20% of the total shadow elf population. They call themselves fair elves.

The **larger second group** is comprised of the majority of shadow elves returning to the subterranean realms. Calling themselves; **deep elves** to further distinguish them from the dark shadow elves and fair elves. This faction preserves the traditions practiced over the last centuries. Their numbers, however, are greatly diminished. About 10% (55,000) having died in the wars and its aftermath, while nearly twenty percent (110,000) relocated to the surface; and finally, roughly 35% (192,500) travelled to the Aengmor region, taking up the beliefs of the temple of Atzanteotl. The original shadow elf clans remain in the Shadow

Lands' locations, although lower in number (220,000 : about 40%). This group holds most tunnel shapers, and keeps their ground altering magic.

With the return of humanoids in the surface lands of the Broken Lands, and even in some of the underground Realms, the dark elves suffered some more losses. The individualistic egotistical trait that these dark elves taught themselves becomes more and more a trait of their culture.

Atzanteotl, came to regret his choice of letting these elves within his power again, and withdrew while letting a local elf finding immortality under his rule take over¹⁸. The reason Atzanteotl abandoned the shadow elves in the past - their lack of rapid procreation - is their handicap still (1 or 2 children per generation per family). As most of these elves (65%) are male, fewer relations can be made. Their birth-rate is too low to replenish their lost numbers from war, age and disease, and while the humanoids have become a balanced nation due to their high reproduction, the dark elves decreased greatly in number. Their genetic structure is also affected by magic (not only their appearance), and these elves can only procreate with their own kind, and no longer with other elves. This was an attempt by Atzanteotl to create a higher rate of offspring, but he forgot the elves' nature of having only one or two relations generating offspring in a lifetime. Being originally 192,500 (35%) of the original shadow elf population, they lost more than half their number (126,250) in the many battles with the shadow elves,

¹⁸ Lolth, see ["The Fall and Rise of the Canolbarth"](#) in Threshold magazine issue #10

humanoids, dwarves and other intruders. A total of 64,000 survivors have settled in New Aengmor, and the lower Gnollistan Caves. Their military power greatly diminished, as their number of soldiers decreased to about 5,000. About 2,250 survivors have settled elsewhere individually, some even returned into the fold of the deep elves, regrettably. About 80% of Lower Broken Lands is now retaken by humanoids, but these are now fully separate nations and no longer under the rule of one king (like King Thar). Gobbleton, Ogremoor, Red Orcland, Orcus Rex (including lower Trollhattan) are now the ruling nations in the underworld. On the surface you find the same but also Gnollistan, and Careanna (the hills between Dwarfgate Mountains and the Broken Lands). The hills of Kol have no ruling power, the hill giants, kobolds, gnolls, and orcs living there are all independent family tribes, battling each other, and looting Darokin and Alfheim. They are often in conflict with Red Orcland, which now controls the whole region along the Streel River up to the Tar Pits. They regularly enter Lower Kol (now New Aengmor) and are mostly repelled by the dark elves.

1200-1250 AC

The dark elves hate the deep elves more than they hate Alfheim elves, but their culture of hate and distrust has caused them to become a loosely tied clutch of small groups within the caves of the Old Broken Lands. They seem to cooperate with spiders and monsters like beholders, and many humanoids which returned to the Eastern Broken Lands, although often still ruled by



Badlands of the southern Broken Lands

the dark elves. The number of dark elves decreased another 15% of the original number, due to battles, disease, desertion (mostly wanderers) and some of old age, stabilizing at 34,125 dark elves with a 3,400 military.

Gobbleton is strong and although not really dependant on raids, still does so now and then. The Bugbur river flows from north-west to southern Akrass, sinks down into tunnels underneath the magma tunnels, reappearing east of Kol-Edgegate, flowing east underneath Gnollistan/Aengmor to the Great Water Whirl, where it flows down to Shadowdeep.

Some water of the Streel and Anur Lake flows down into lower Gnollistan/Aengmor, diving down ancient lava tunnels to the magma chamber of the Twin Volcanoes, set under pressure and released through micro vents into geysers along the Streel, and in the Lower Broken Lands.

All this water together with the heat makes Lower Gobbleton a perfect environment for

fungi, insects and other underground vermin. The whole Lower Broken Lands, now mostly lacking long foraging by humanoids for decades, becomes a fungal insect haven. Many spiders find new niches, and even spill out onto the surface of former Kol. The dark elves see these creatures as holy.

Red Orcland was conquered by Gobbleton a few times, but since more Red Orcs openly started to honour Atruaghin, their shamans received different powers and thus allowed the Red Orcs to take more and more of their former lands back. They recently even succeeded in taking control of some of the former lands of Kol on the other side of the Streel River.

Yorkia in the hills of Careanna, ruled by the hill giants, is stable. Though they do not use the nearby Anur Lake, they are more prosperous, as the vegetation increased, bringing more animals to feed upon it. Though they still lack any real society, their family structure keeps them together.

Org-grukk is now a balanced state and a pain in the neck to Ethengar. The nearby silicon humanoids (stone giants, rockmen, geonids and other) however seem to balance everything out in that region, but have no desires to rule.

The **deep elves** finally begin to recover from all the ordeals they went through in the last 200 years. With new magic, new water, and a new more free social structure, they begin a new era of their own. And then in 1251 AC Astimahl succeeds in becoming a huge dragon and the North eastern side of Akkila's Throne increases the yield of magic available to the goblinoids. The nearby magic location

becomes stronger, and even the area of the Comeback Inn is affected. Astimahl visited Barga and Bramyra, clearly revealing that its intent is to leave these settlers alone, ...unless provoked of course. It enforced a tax of 1 gp a wheel and foot passing along the New Darokin-Ethengar Trail, taken in by some humanoids. The settlers accept, as this seems a fair price and agreement.

What will these uncertainties, effects, and changes bring... or take...??

A FURTHER NOTE ON DRAGONS

A large neutral dragon becoming huge causes more radical changes, affecting especially the realms of magic and time. This includes the creation of an anti-magic area of variable intensity, an aura that slows or accelerates the passage of time, or a region in which spell-casting is altered (certain spells are blocked, enhanced, or totally changed), or a place where the laws of physics and magic are constantly shifting. These places are a heaven for wizards and creatures that are magical in nature, and such regions often include magical gates, ores with strange properties, and unexplainable phenomena. This region is likely to be guarded by the new, huge dragon.

MAIN SOURCE LIST

Primarily:

GAZ10: *The Orcs of Thar* [TSR 9241]

But also:

GAZ5: *The Elves of Alfheim* [TSR 9223]

GAZ6: *The Dwarves of Rockhome*
[TSR 9227]

GAZ12: *The Golden Khan of Ethengar*
[TSR 9246]

GAZ13: *The Shadow Elves* [TSR 9287]

HWA1: *Nightwail*

Thorfinn Tait Broken Lands Replica Maps:

[The Upper Broken Lands, 1006 AC](#)

["The World Above - Upper Brojken Lands", 1000 AC](#)

GAZ3: *The Principalities of Glantri*
[TSR 9208]

AD&D2e Mystara:

Glantri Kingdom of Magic

Agathokles' ["Glantri Interactive Map"](#)

AC10: *Bestiary of Dragons and Giants (Trouble in Tall Stone Pass)* [TSR 9211]

GAZ11: *The Republic Of Darokin* [TSR 9211]

["Geography of the Great Crater"](#)

(cthulhudrew)

The D&D Rules Cyclopedia [TSR 1071]

D&D-Wrath of the Immortals boxed set
[TSR 1082; 1901+1902]

TM1: *The Western Countries-Trail Map*
[TSR 9403]

PWA1: *1010AC - Poor Wizard's Almanac I*
[TSR 9372]

PWA2: 1011AC - Poor Wizard's Almanac II
[TSR 9441]
PWA3: 1012AC - Poor Wizards Almanac III
[TSR 2506]
Mystara - 1013AC - Joshuan's Almanac
[TSR 2517]

Mystara Fan Almanacs:

- [1014 AC](#)
- [1015 AC](#)
- [1016 AC](#)
- [1017 AC](#)
- [1018 AC](#)

AD&D1e - Wilderness Survival Guide
[TSR 2020]
AD&D1e - Dungeoneers Survival Guide
[TSR 2019]

[The Tower of Doom](#) PC game
[The Storm over Mystara](#) PC game

["The Unofficial Timeline of Mystara"](#)
by Daniel Boese at the Vaults of Pandius

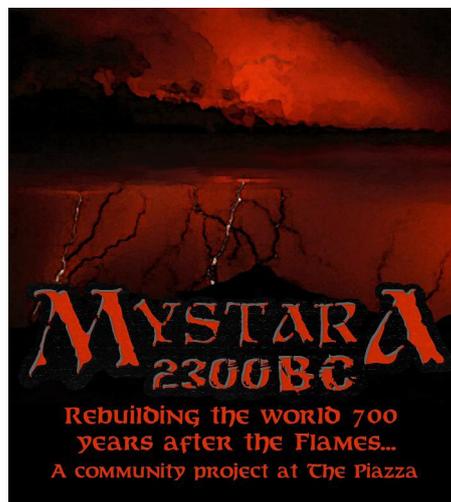
OldDawg Presents: GazF



CONTINUING the
Gazetteer Tradition BEYOND
the KNOWN WORLD



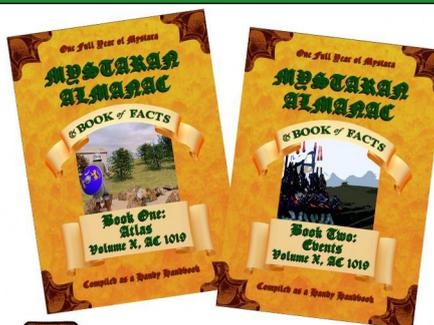
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Mystaran Almanac AC 1019

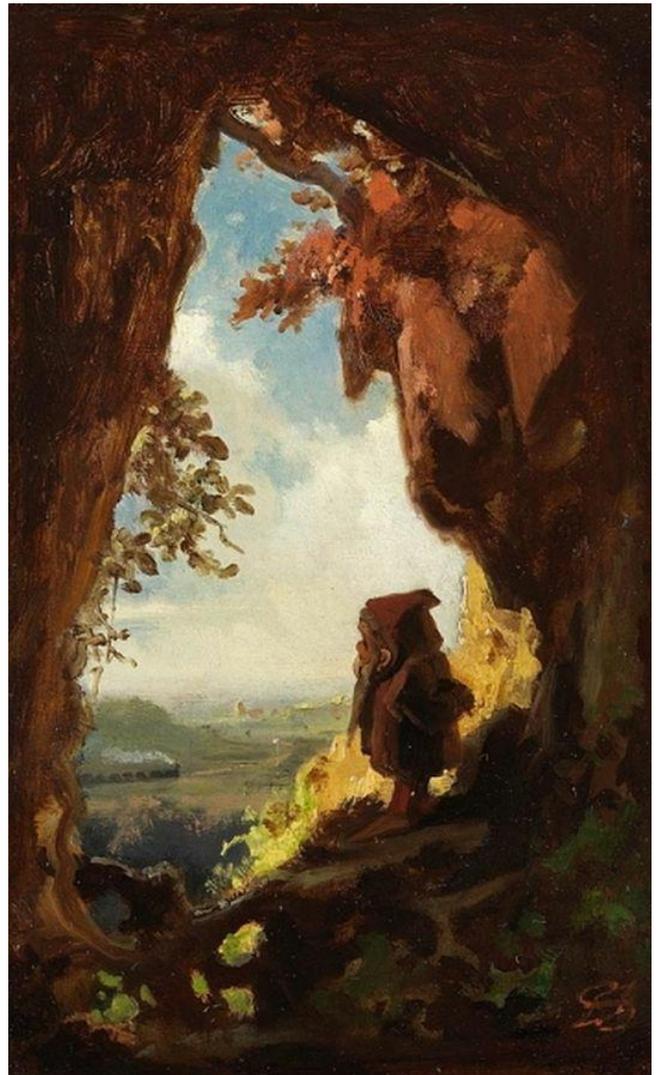


...at the Vaults of Pandius
<http://www.pandius.com>

The (NOT SO) YOUNG RACES

A Guide to Dwarves and Gnomes of Eastern Brun

by Giulio Caroletti



FOREWORD

Another Threshold issue, another article limited in scope and objective, following the rules on the use of space and time in RPG campaign writing that I have slowly built up in my previous articles on Thyatis up to now.

For those blissfully unaware of my vision for fantasy writing, suffice to say that I object to undying cultures soaring unscathed through millennia, set in the unchanging stone of one-page descriptions of cities that never change names and lands that never change in

ethnic composition and language. I object to huge empires occupying whole regions or even continents, with little diversity and less adventure possibilities.

Luckily enough, this is quite rare in Mystara. However, both in my writing and in that of friends and fans of this setting, it is easy, sometimes, to slip, eager as we are to fill in the minimal details of the setting. The Known World is an excellent example of good spatial writing: many cultures with

different histories are crammed in a relatively small area. But this is just like it is in real world and real history. Take Great Britain, where even before the migrations from African and Asian countries, the Anglo-Saxon descended English lived on the island along Celtic Welsh, Cornish and Scottish, and four aboriginal languages are spoken over an area of 209,000 km² (or 80,000 sq mi), with a nobility of French-Norman and Anglo-Saxon origin and a German-born royal family. Take Levant, take the Balkans, take South Africa, take Indochina. Even the apparently most monolithic states like Russia and the US are in fact multi-ethnic empires with many cultures and internal differences.

One of the most loved products of the Mystara line - and well deservedly so, the fantastic Hollow World campaign setting, written by Aaron Allston, tried to give a comprehensive vision of the history of the world from prehistory to AC 1000 (the notorious Time of the Gazetteers). The results were not less astonishing than the gargantuan scope and width of the opus. The history of the surface and hollow worlds as presented in the Dungeon Master book, which tried to summarize, complete and develop the individual histories presented in the 14 original Gazetteers of the Known World, is the starting point for every fan writer who wants to expand on Mystara's civilizations and races, on their history and their past, and to develop new cultures and lands.

However, given the huge endeavour attempted by Allston, it was not possible to avoid some minor oversimplifications that have haunted the Mystaran community ever since. After all, like theologians trying to

establish absolute truths from prophets' writings; like philologists trying to reconstruct old, fragmented literary works; like historians trying to put together and validate archaeological findings and old parchments; the Mystaran fan tries to stay as close as possible to the so-called Canon, and to twist it to his own vision when contradictions and holes emerge from it. And the history of the dwarven race has problematic aspects that deserve to be addressed, in order to open space (and time) to writers who have never dared confront one of the basic tenements of demihuman history on Mystara: namely, the fact that all dwarves of the world descend from the same racial stock, the dwarves living in the Northern Reaches around 1800 BC.

In this article, I will try to present my vision of the Denwarf and their relative clans. The Denwarf are the Dwarves of Rockhome: reborn in 1800 BC out of the dying remnants of the original, pre-Blackmoorian dwarven race, which was living in the area now known as the Northern Reaches, battered and beaten by radioactive catastrophes, harsh environment, and constant struggle with enemy races.

As mentioned above, in the original Mystaran products, **all** dwarves of the world descend by one half of the few hundred survivors that Kagyar and Garl left on the surface world, reshaped to survive magic and radiations, and planted in Rockhome (the other half were transplanted to the Hollow World as the Kogolor dwarves). Over time, I started to feel that this was a bit limited for a world as big as Mystara, and that it would be a hindrance to creativity, as it would force every possible dwarven culture on the planet

to be reconnected to the dwarves of Rockhome, something that might be difficult to do and implausible. What chance is there that every dwarven civilization descends from a dwarven colonizing party that left Rockhome 50, 200 or 400 years ago, to end up in Zyxl, in south-western Davania, or Hyborea?

Not only dwarves: even gnomes have always been underdeveloped on Mystara; and their history is sketchy, full of contradictions, with gnomish races very different from each other and scattered across the world in a patchwork of apparently unrelated cultures. So even here, I tried to separate the history of the Known World's gnomes from that of the other, faraway cultures that don't seem to be closely related to the Eastern Brun gnomes.

In the end, I decided to collect and order the history of the Known World dwarves and gnomes as it has been written and developed over time, sometimes in self-contradicting fashion even in official TSR products. I have used as main sources the Hollow World boxed set and the Gazetteer line, especially *The Dwarves of Rockhome* by Aaron Allston and *The Northern Reaches* by Ken Rolston. For Serraine, the material has been mainly lifted out of the *Creature Crucible* product "Top Ballista". For the Blackmoor era, I have used material written by Dave Arneson, and fan material written by Håvard Faanes, Francesco Defferrari (New Blackmoor, BC 3050, and "Past Ages of Mystara") and Old Dawg ("Hail Thonia!"). For the struggles of dwarves after the Great Rain of Fire, I have used John Calvin's 2300 BC material, especially for the history and culture of the Shimmering Lands, and once again Francesco Defferrari's "Past Ages of Mystara".

For the civil war between Kagyar's followers and the ancestors of the Modrigsberg, and the history of dwarves from 1800 BC to about 500 BC, I have used my own material coming from the History of the Dwarven Race at the Vaults of Pandius web site. I have tried to note and discuss most references in text notes, but some authors that I have cited or that might have inspired me will surely have escaped me. I hope they will forgive me for this.



Dwarf warrior

It was only much later, some 2800 years ago, long after the Great Rain of Fire, that a new race appeared on Mystara: the dwarves. Created by Kagyar the Artisan, they were moulded by Him in His image: a sturdy, no-nonsense race, strong and resistant, able to walk long distances in the mountains, but also suited to work and thrive in the depths of the earth. More or less at the same time, Garal Glitterlode, Kagyar's best friend and companion among the Immortals, created the gnomes, lighter than the dwarves, in size and also in spirit. Dwarves and gnomes, last of the major races to appear on the Known World, have been also called the Young Races.

The Young Races entered the history of the Known World much later, though. Contacts with other races remained minimal, with the exception of a military occupation of Shaerdon, the Hin homeland in the Known World, which did not last long and left no major traces in the history of that country. At the same time, around **900 BC**, a rise in humanoid activity forced dwarves and gnomes into almost total isolation from the rest of the world for five centuries, surrounded by enemies and confined by hostile creatures in the kingdoms of Rockhome and Falun.

In **492 BC**, the dwarven and gnomish coalition won a decisive battle against the humanoids led by Queen Ubdala at Sardal Pass, but they were defeated at the Falun Caverns: Kobolds and other humanoids occupied the gnomish mainland in **490 BC**. This last victory of the humanoids settled the frontier between the Young Races' lands and the humanoids' for a long time. Gnomes have since created smaller city-states and strongholds which dot the continent of Brun;

but they have never ever had a major country for themselves.

Dwarves and gnomes are wary races, and have always planned cautiously and carefully their expansion – through colonization or emigration – into other areas of the world. With the exception of Dengar (which, in other languages of the Known World, is translated as – Rockhome, Steenheim, Domuspetrae, Lithopolis, Casa di Roccia), dwarves and gnomes do not exert political control over sizeable nation-states, contrarily to elves¹ and especially humans. This has led them at the same time to be highly acceptable and tolerant towards other cultures, and to keep very strong ties to their own cultures and places of origin.

Dwarves and gnomes are young, prolific races on the rise - they have been slowly growing and building communities around Brun, on the Isle of Dawn, and on Alphatia, for over one millennium now. For the most part, they are an added value to the regions where they have settled, because of their serious and law-abiding nature, and because of their technical and intellectual skills as artisans, craftsmen, technicians, engineers, and scientists. Few are the regions, from Brun to Alphatia, where dwarven and gnomish communities cannot be found in the main cities and market towns.

¹ In Canon material, and only considering the surface, elves rule over Alfheim, Shiye-Lawr, Wendar and the Sylvan Realm.

THE NOT SO YOUNG RACES

In fact, dwarves and gnomes are much older than most think. Descended from the same stock than humans and giants, dwarves started their quest toward civilization around **6000 BC**, when they were barbaric mountain and foothill dwellers, mostly goatherds, in the land bridges between Brun and Skothar.

Originally, Dwarves called themselves *dbwerg*; later, the name took different dialectal forms, like *dweg*, *duerg*, *twerg*, *dreg*, *dwerch*, *dvergr* and *dwargh*. *Dweg* is still the term used by Modrigswerg dwarves (a name which in turns comes from *modrig*+*dweg*), while Denwarf dwarves use the commonly known *dwarf* (from *dwargh*

→ *dwarf*, after a process of guttural shift common in Antalian languages). In most combined words, the weak *d* in front of *dweg* or *dwarf* is muted or cancelled outright (*denwarf*, *wyrwarf*).

DWARVES OF THE FIRST AGE

What the dwarves know: According to the most ancient dwarven chronicles, dwarves had developed a cultural identity at least as far back as **4000 BC**². At that time dwarves were not so shy and reserved, nor were they so obsessed with chronicling, age-reckoning and with their genealogies. This is a shame

² Håvard Faanes, "[Legends of the Dwarven Race](#)", says that the dwarves remember having existed before 1800 BC.

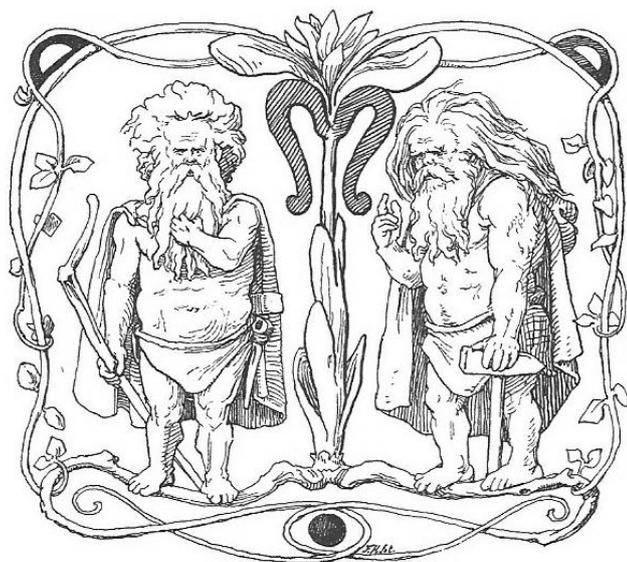
for dwarven historians, as they feel so much must have been lost; however, it is unlikely that much information would have survived anyway, after the Great Rain of Fire.

This era is called the **First Age** by dwarven historians. At the dawn of the First Age, Dwarves were mostly interested in agriculture and craftsmanship, and they hadn't developed their interest for mining and underground. It is believed that Dwarves were much more open-minded, friendly and open toward strangers than they are now.

With the slow rise of Thonia³ and Blackmoor, dwarves created their first civilization on western Skothar. There were dwarves in the Empire of Thonia, although it is not clear whether they were citizens, a subject race, or if they constituted a protectorate, were allies to the Empire, or were fully independent.

At some point, Blackmoor became a huge Empire, and begun a meteoritic rise thanks to its incredible magic. It overshadowed Thonia and managed to build colonies around the world. This growth, however, got quickly out of control, and in **3000 BC** the Blackmoorian magical arts resulted in a terrible catastrophe known as the Great Rain of Fire. When the Great Rain of Fire destroyed Blackmoor, some of the Skotharian dwarves living close to Blackmoor, and some of their colonies on Brun, were able to survive, even though they suffered horribly and their dark ages begun.

³ For more information and options for this time of Mystara's history, we suggest three excellent articles: Old Dawg's "[Hail Thonia!](#)", Francesco Defferrari's "[3050 BC](#)" and "[Past Ages of Mystara](#)". We have tried to keep as much as possible of their ideas compatible with our vision of Mystara.



Depiction of ancient dwarves

What the DM knows: It is believed that elves and hin originated in the southern continent of Davania, while the first humans developed in the savannas and plains of eastern Skothar, where the Tanagoro now roam.

The common ancestors of dwarves and giants, instead, rose in the land bridges between Brun and Skothar, many tens of thousands of years ago. These ancestors were closer to the current giants than to dwarves: like many other creatures living in the last ice age, like mammoths, smilodons, and others, they were giantish, furry creatures apt to these extremely cold environments.

The two kins drifted away as the gradual warming of the planet brought the ancestors of the giants further north to the colder climates, and up on the higher mountains; while the ancestors of the dwarves moved south to warmer areas and less impenetrable mountains and hills, and became shorter and

bulkier in the process. Through many millennia, and possibly Immortal intervention, this resulted in the birth of the modern dwarven specimens.

Fast forward to the Thonian and Blackmoorian eras⁴. Thonia is the first large human civilization on Mystara⁵. The First Republic of Thonia was founded in **5000 BC**. At the time, the Fey people lived in the woods of the Thonian Republic and went along well with humans⁶. In the following centuries, the Republic met some crisis and decline, and it was founded again two more times. After nearly a millennium, around **4000 BC**, the Third Republic of Thonia was more an empire-like nation, arbitrarily ruled by the Emperor of All.

It is not known how many dwarves there were during the first Thonian millennium, nor where they exactly dwelt at the time. Most sources agree that the main dwarven lands were located on the landbridge between Brun and Skothar. What we know for sure is that an independent dwarven colony was founded at the northern border of the Thonian Empire, close to Blackmoor, by Uberstar Khazakhum; and that at the same time some dwarves were part of the multicultural and multi-ethnic Thonian Empire. It is not established whether Uberstar and his followers were originally subjects of the Thonian Empire, either.

⁴ Lo Zompatore, [“An Extended Blackmoor Timeline”](#), at the Vaults of Pandius

⁵ Aaron Allston, *“Hollow World”*. More precisely, Thonia is the first Canonic one. Lhomarrians, enemies of the Carnifex, are the first ones, according to Geoff Gander and other authors.

⁶ PC1, *“Tall Tales of the Wee Folk”*

The year 4887 BC is the legendary birth date of the dwarven hero Uberstar Khazakhum. It was in 4487 BC that he established the Northern Delving mines (also known as the Great Mines), in the Crystal Peaks mountains, just north of the northern border of the Thonian Empire⁷. A few years later, a smaller colony, the Duchy of Evedhur⁸, was founded within the Empire of Thonia.

Dwarves had been good mountaineers, adapted to the mountain environments where iron, minerals and precious ore could be mined. So it was only natural that they were favoured in comparison to other races in specializing first as miners and then as engineers and underground architects. They even invented steam engines, a technology that would be lost after the Great Rain of Fire for millennia⁹.

The northern Khazakhum dwarves developed a culture that in interests, although not in attitude and morality, was more similar to the modern Denwarf. The Khazakhum were proud and boastful, much more than the humble and cautious Denwarf are today. They were easy-going especially towards humans, and happy to adopt their friends and their families in their own through the "Dwarf friend ritual".

It is interesting to note that dwarves at the time weren't suspicious of magic – and were even able to become wizards and sorcerers. As the Khazakhum controlled the major mines of the north, they also controlled the major locations of the raw gems wizards

needed to create spell foci; this made them natural allies for the spellcasters. Even at the time, however, the Khazakhum dwarves mistrusted and disliked elves, whom they found boorish and self-serving¹⁰. Last but not least, having settled the northernmost areas of Skothar and the land bridge, they were among the first creatures to be attacked by the savage beastmen coming from the north: creatures of Hel, born out of the reincarnated spirits of evil beings, the beastmen, unable to breed true, were the ancestors of most modern humanoids. By 4000 BC, the Khazakhum and the beastmen had already fought five major wars.

Khazakhum society at the time was male-dominated. However, dwarves were not a very prolific race, and since, from a certain point onward, female births were steadily on the decline, this caused a rising role for them.

The Khazakhum worshipped Immortals that are either lost or have long changed their names and interests over Mystaran races: Dhumnon, the lord of the Khazakhum pantheon; Hemgrid, older brother of Dhumnon and former lord of the pantheon¹¹; Koorzun, the good patron of

⁷ Lo Zompatore, cit.

⁸ Håvard Faanes, "[The Duchy of Evedhur](#)" at The Comeback Inn forum

⁹ Dave Arneson's *Blackmoor First Campaign*, pp.14-15.

¹⁰ In Dave Arneson's *Blackmoor*, there are also orcs, goblins and other humanoids. We know that modern humanoids breed true species on Mystara only after the Great Rain of Fire. This is one of many examples of incompatibility of the original Blackmoor campaign with the Mystara one. It is generally solved by establishing references to humanoids as in fact referring to beastmen.

¹¹ Dhumnon can be considered an older alias of Garl, and Hemgrid an older alias of Kagyar. Both were supposedly Immortals at the time of Blackmoor, although Marco Dalmonte in his *Codex Immortalis* dates Garl's ascension to Immortality at 3100 BC. According to Marco Dalmonte, the original

dwarven wizards; and the feared Gorrin, the evil god of destruction and of the underworld¹².

Many of the cultural traits established at this time by the Khazakhum would then pass on to their descendants, the Denwarf and Modrigswerg, the two dwarven races of the Known World.

Once again it is important to remind readers that the Khazakhum are just one of a multitude of possible dwarven cultures and races present during the Blackmoorian Era. It is entirely possible that other dwarven races of Mystara exist nowadays, unrelated to the modern Denwarf.

The city of Blackmoor, the first official settlement of the Thonian Empire beyond the North, was established around 4250 BC. At the time, the North already had several inhabitants: the Unwanted (exiles and criminals fleeing Thonia), the Khazakhum dwarves, the Cumasti and Westryn elves, the Docrae (possibly related to Hin), and several beastmen clans. Among the founders of Blackmoor was also the mortal form of the Immortal Khoronus¹³. The whole region was annexed to the Thonian Empire and called the Province of the North. It is possible that the Feys' migration to the Northlands happened in this period, as the Feys were

dwarves were created in 10500 BC by Kagyar, who lost interest in the race later on. Although we prefer a darwinist approach to dwarven history, the loss of interest and followers by Kagyar to other Immortals is reflected in the back story of Dhumnon and Hemgrid. If you prefer to have Garl ascending in 3100 BC, Dhumnon can be some other Immortal.

¹² Dave Arneson, cit.

¹³ *Wrath of the Immortals* box set.

disappointed by the increasingly authoritarian government of the Thonian Empire¹⁴.

In the following time, new states, like the Duchy of the Peaks and the Duchy of Ten, were established; the Cult of the Frog was born; Skandaharian reavers started harassing the coasts of the North; and the mysterious creature known as the Egg of Coot appeared. Afridhi raiders, followers of the firegod Zugzul, conquered the lands of neighbouring nations, like the Valemen and the Peshwah, and occupied the Duchy of Ten (4015 BC). As the Thonian emperors sought peace with the invaders and failed the northern marches, Uther Andahar, Baron of Blackmoor since 4025 BC, seceded from Thonia and became King (4010¹⁵ BC).

In 4006 BC, the alien spaceship Beagle crash-lands on Mystara, in the Valley of the Ancients, a desert lowland south of Blackmoor. The events of the DA1-DA4 adventures take place around year 4000 BC. Among the huge consequences of these events is the fact that both Blackmoorians and the Cult of the Frog get access to high technology extracted from the Beagle. At some point, the Beagle is annihilated by an explosion, creating in the process the Immortal Benekander out of one of the crew members¹⁶.

Thanks to the Beagle's technology, the Blackmoorians build a technological society that imposes itself on its neighbours. By

¹⁴ PC1: *Tall tales of the Wee Folk*.

¹⁵ Old Dawg, "[Hail Thonia!](#)", *Threshold* #11, p54-65, sets this date in 3987 BC, and all the events from 4015 BC to 4000 BC are moved consequently in time by 23 years.

¹⁶ *Wrath of the Immortals* box set.

3500 BC, the Empire of Thonia is conquered by the Kingdom of Blackmoor¹⁷; the Fey, disturbed by the alien technology of Blackmoor, seek shelter in the woods of the Azcans and Oltecs¹⁸. More or less at the same time, the Blackmoorians meet the elves of Evergrun, who swiftly embrace their technology. Four clans of Evergrun (Celebryl, Porador, Felistyr, Gelbalf) settle in the lands of Blackmoor¹⁹.

Priests of Blackmoor begin a crusade against the Beastmen, whose ancestral homelands are located in the Borean Valley²⁰. Elves join them. These are the ancestors of other Brunian post-cataclysmic elves²¹.

By **3200 BC**, Blackmoor crusaders have pushed the beastmen to the lands of Hyborea and closer to the old North Pole²².

The Great Rain of Fire takes place in **3000 BC**, during the sixth year of reign of Reger I, Emperor of Thonia and King of Blackmoor. Metropolitan Blackmoor and most of its colonies are destroyed.

Most of the dwarves of the First Age, having revelled in the Blackmoorian technology and having been a technological and technomantic force in the Empire, fall with Blackmoor. However, the ancestors of the current dwarves of eastern Brun, somehow survive²³.

¹⁷ *Wrath of the Immortals* box set; Lo Zompatore, cit.

¹⁸ *PC1 Tall tales of the Wee Folk*.

¹⁹ *GAZ13 The Shadow Elves*, page 4.

²⁰ *GAZ10 The Orcs of That; Hollow World* box set.

²¹ Lo Zompatore, cit.

²² *GAZ10 The Orcs of That; Hollow World* box set.

²³ According to [“New Blackmoor: 3050 BC”](#),

DWARVES OF THE SECOND AGE

What the dwarves know: At the time of the Rain of Fire (**3000 BC**), all dwarven colonies near Blackmoor were immediately destroyed. According to the few remaining literary fragments from those days, the dust clouds that were raised shaded the sun for years and made the temperature drop. The dust brought skin-affecting diseases and cancer, that fell upon the dwarves and their neighbours. In order to flee from sure death, dwarves built new homes underground. Having become soft with the comfort of Blackmoorian magic as a substitute for their mining and engineering activities, they had to re-learn their old techniques the hard way.

In those years, Rockhome's climate was beginning to change toward ice-age: the mountains were always covered with ice and the dwarven agricultural skills were failing. Dwarves lost gradually contact with their neighbours, human and humanoid races became extinct, disappeared or fled from the

by Francesco Defferrari, among these are the dwarves (and gnomes - but according to us, gnomes will be created only in 2900 BC) of nowadays Rockhome. You are free to follow his interpretation, but we prefer a slightly different take for various reasons, among whom are canon sources (HW, for instance, explicitly states that dwarves did not have their main ancestral lands in Rockhome before 1800 BC), fan sources (the work of John Calvin on the Shimmering Lands), and our own preference to not having the dwarves mostly confined to the Rockhome area from 5000 BC to 1000 AC.



Old bas-relief of dwarves at the forge

Known World. Little use to the dwarves were the friendship they matured with another race, the Gnomes, around 2900 BC. Gnomes are believed to be related to dwarves, and moreover both races revered the Immortals Kagyar (whom the gnomes also call Karl or Karal) and Garalin (whom Gnomes call Garl or Garal).

In the end, after wars for survival had wiped out all the last traces of culture, only dwarves remained, in the regions near Rockhome, apart from the gnomes, who were settled in the area now known as Northern Reaches.

The diseases continued to harass the dwarven race: even if the climate, around 2500 BC, had slowly begun to revert to normal, most children were stillborn, or bore deformities, and many dwarves were born sterile. Around 2000 BC, only some ten thousand dwarves were present, and the race

was facing the risk of total annihilation, of extinction. Most knowledge of their past had disappeared with their lost greatness; in a desperate move to avoid ultimate oblivion, clinching to their art and their existence as the testimony of a race condemned to death, the dwarves began to compile extremely precise and definite genealogies of their families and clans, descriptions of their activities and history, while living their desperate lives. However, one of the six surviving dwarven clans, the Hrukats, got in touch with the dark elves.

The dark elves had been enemies of the dwarves in the past. They were servitors of the Father of Demons, and lived north of Rockhome. The Hrukats Clan was in charge of the fortresses in the north that had been built to repel the dark elves in the past. The Hrukats were proud and noble, and had always defeated the enemies of the dwarven race, defending the other Clans from the threats in the north. After the defeat of the dark elves, the Hrukats had remained to guard the passes, waiting for an enemy that for a long time didn't show itself again.

Four centuries after the last battle, the dark elves returned. After long years of decadence and desolation, the Hrukats were ready to downplay the old enmity and their adoration of the Father of Demons when the dark elves pretended to offer a truce and an aid to the Hrukats. Although the Hrukats King expelled the dark elves, he secretly arranged to have some meetings to discuss the matter.

The Father of Demons was an obscure divinity. According to the ancient dwarven mythology, he had fathered some of the most foul of creatures: Garm, the Devourer of the

Sun; the Midgard serpent, a monstrous demonic snake enchained beneath the oceans by the Immortals, whose desperate movements to free itself could cause earthquakes and sink huge continents; and Fenris the wolf, who could kill an Immortal by swallowing him or her whole. Later on, the Vikings would identify the Father of Demons with Loki, although currently the dwarven clerics suggest that the Father of Demons was more probably Orcus or Demogorgon.

The dark elves told their necromantic arts to the Hrukats, promising the King that these arts would slow and prevent the decline of his people. The King, his counsellors and their closer relatives became thus, secretly, powerful necromancers. In the beginning, they used their spells to halt and then erase the diseases from the population: but Evil always corrupts whoever uses its powers, and in the end the Hrukats leaders became tainted by Evil, isolating the Clan from their brethren in the south.

The dark arts tainted the heart and soul of the dwarven necromancers, madness spread and the cult of the Father of Demons spread too, openly. Most of the population, having been denied any contact with the other dwarves, forced to live always in the depths of the earth, ruled by necromancers, became apathetic and indifferent, while instigators at the service of the dark elves spoke against Kagyar and Garalin, and told the Dwarves that their patrons were to be blamed for their condition, as they had forgotten their race and left them to suffer in the claws of Evil. Around 1900 BC, the southern dwarves began to see clearly what was happening,

and started to plan a way to expel all Hrukats from Rockhome. However, given the necromantic arts of their rulers, that had halted diseases and sterility, the Hrukats counted the same number as all the other clans together. Called Moadreg ("dark dwarves") by their own brethren, the most impious among the Hrukats rulers planned an attack against their own race, allied with the dark elves, with whom they forged five cursed weapons, each built appositely to be used against each remaining dwarven Clan.

A group of dissident Hrukats were able to discover the plot and managed to convince the other dwarves that something dangerous was happening and that they had to move before the Moadreg did. The dwarves held a Council (1812 BC). Here they decided to attack immediately, before the Hrukats were ready, hoping in a spontaneous revolt among the Hrukats population. However, the intransigent nature of the dwarven race, and the malice spread by the followers of the dark elves (whose purpose was to destroy the whole dwarven race, like the Father of Demons wanted), had caused most of the population to actually hate and despise their southern cousins because they believed that they had been indifferent to their fate before, and now only desired to conquer and destroy them, blaming the whole Hrukats Clan for what was just the responsibility of their rulers (and of their gods, moreover).

The dwarven attack was extremely hard. The five Clans strangled the Hrukats in a long siege, that went on for six years. The Hrukats were suddenly abandoned by their allies, the dark elves, and the Moadreg had to crush internal revolts in blood-baths. In the end,

the dark elves had nearly obtained their goal, as the dwarven population had nearly halved itself with the long and bloody, cruel war, and the race was near extinction. Desperate, the Necromancer-King of the Hrukats surrendered (1806 BC).

Hate between the two dwarven factions was at its peak. Both had suffered terrible hardships; the life of dwarves in the last thousand years had just been suffering and desperation. Almost bursting in tears, the Moadreg-King of the Hrukats, the son of the dwarf who had allied himself with the dark elves, shouted his wrath against the southern dwarves, saying they were just jealous of the achievements of his necromantic comrades: they had relieved the Hrukats from the curse and disease of Blackmoor, from sterility, and to do so they hadn't hesitated to use every means. Crippled, suffering and debilitated because of the dwarven race disease, the general of the dwarven army, Commander Tor, showed his plagues and his sore body to the bounded Moadreg and proclaimed: "In no way shall the dwarven race be consumed and tormented by the Disease of the Soul, even when this shall mean be consumed and tormented by the Disease of the Body! So, all dwarves who stipulated the insane alliance with the Forces of Evil and the dark elves and the Father of Demons will not be dwarves anymore! And their name will be removed from the Clans Chronicles. The Hrukats Clan is dead, it doesn't exist anymore. But you surrendered, so we will leave your people to leave our land. However, you and your batmen are sentenced to death, in the name of Kagyar and Garalin."



The evil Moadreg dwarves

So the survivors of the Hrukats Clan left Rockhome and moved, in shame, east to the mountains at the border between Rockhome and the lands of the gnomes.

The pride of the dwarves of the five Clans moved the heart of Kagyar the Artisan, the Immortal who had always loved the dwarves. Kagyar has never wanted to interfere with the lives of mortals: he is a respectful divinity, who wants to leave mortals free to choose and live their lives, according to their laws,

and not as pawns of the Immortals. But in that time, the only time in the history of Mystara, Kagyar stepped in and acted, saving the dwarves²⁴. In 1800 BC he sent them Denwarf, a dwarf with great powers, that would guide them and save them from death. Denwarf was the first cleric of the dwarves. He cured the dwarves of their diseases and brought to them many secrets that Kagyar and Garalin themselves had taught him.

What the DM knows: When Blackmoor came to an abrupt end in the Great Rain of Fire (3000 BC), part of the Known World was in an Ice Age²⁵. The Great Rain of Fire shifted the planet's axis: Blackmoor became the north pole and its civilization disappeared outright. One of the Blackmoor devices, however, remained untouched in the Broken Lands. The northern areas of the Known World, on the other hand, slowly became habitable as ice receded from the region.

Although the Great Rain of Fire's destruction was beyond compare, its aftereffects were just as violent. Those that survived were subjected to the wasting disease. Life became painfully short as the flesh literally wasted away from the bones. There were ways to

²⁴ At this point, there should be about 5000 dwarves. According to GAZ6 *The Dwarves of Rockhome*, the original dwarves were 500, but they are way too few to rise in 400 years to the meteoritic number of 125000 dwarves.
²⁵ Sources are variable; some say the Known World was the polar ice cap, others say the same further Norht, or Northwest. There has been extensive research made by fans in this ishshue placing the ice cap in the NW section of Brun stretching ice to somewhat in the Known World. In Francesco Defferrari's "[Past Ages of Mystara](#)", the Known World is mostly ice-free at the time.

fight the Wasting (as it was called) else nobody would have survived at all.

Giants and humanoids fared the best during these times. The giants seemed to be immune to the Wasting, while the humanoids actually seemed to thrive under it. Giant nations sprung up filling the void when human and elven nations crumbled. The humanoids increased in number (and in species) and spread destruction wherever they went.

The Thonian colonists, who had settled south-eastern Brun, started rebuilding their civilization, isolated from neighbouring forces. Around 2500 BC they will resurface as the Taymorans, a people with bronze age technology. Metalworking and social advancements were preserved during the Great Rain of Fire age by a cadre of Nosferatu followers of Nyx, so the Taymorans turned to necromantic magics and entropic Immortals in order to sustain themselves.

The elven colonists on Brun suffered different faiths. Some, the ancestors of the Genalleth elves, fled to Wendar²⁶. Others retreated into caves, farther and farther into the depths of Mystara. The first four clans to settle close to the Brunian colonies became the Shadow Elves. Some clans devolved into degenerate cave dwellers - barbarians little better than animals. Most died out. Some other clans, in order to preserve their society, turned to dark entities for sustenance. These clans eventually became the dark elves²⁷.

²⁶ "[Timeline for Wendar-Denagoth-Ghyr-Northern Wildlands](#)" by Marco Dalmonte
²⁷ The dark elves are mentioned in GAZ7 *The Northern Reaches*. John Calvin calls them 'deep elves' in his articles on the

The southern elves had a schism over a debate about whether to return to the old ways of the Immortals, or to continue seeking solace from Blackmoorian technologies. Those who shunned Blackmoor left their brethren and migrated northward. With the help of the Immortals it is said that they found ways to contain the Wasting, and even to remove it from the environment around them.

The dwarves of Brun who survived the cataclysm faced a similar situation. The polar shift changed the climate drastically for the dwarven colonies of Brun, thrusting their civilization into a wintry turmoil almost overnight. The Brunian dwarves struggled to find food and shelter in an increasingly hostile environment.

But the dwarves of Skothar had no such dilemma. To them Blackmoorian technology had become a way of life, and there was no question about shunning it. They continued to use Blackmoorian technology, and their numbers continued to dwindle. During their struggle for survival they discovered a new form of magic. Radiomancy they called it, and it was more powerful than any magic they had ever known before. The Radiomancers worked great miracles to save their people from the Wasting, and for a time they even succeeded. In the end they did more harm than good however, as their newfound powers tapped into the forces that were actually the cause of the wasting disease. It seems strange that they did not discover this fact (for nearly every other race that had dealings with them knew, or at least guessed at it), but perhaps their lust for power

[Shimmering Lands](#) and the [2300 BC](#) campaign setting.

blinded them to it. Wherever the dwarves went, they were shunned and persecuted by all around them and their numbers continued to dwindle.

At the same time, most of the dwarves of Brun simply abandoned the dangerous technology of Blackmoor, that they were not dependent upon anyway, and clung to their hilly pastures and low mountain terraces, eventually settling in the areas between the Wurmsteeth Range in Norwold and nowadays Heldann. These were the ancestors of the Kogolor dwarves. The difficult choice for the dwarves was to live in the Norwold and Heldannic mountains, colder but farther away from the evil winds blowing over the sea from the east, or to live in the warmer environments on the leese of the Rockhome mountains and in the Northern Reaches, more affected by the radioactive winds.

By 2900 BC, most of the Dwarves living in these latter areas were so severely affected, that the Immortal Garl Glitterlode, once a dwarf himself, and thus sympathetic to their fate, sends his Vision promising to deliver the dwarves from their sickness, if they accepted a radical re-shaping of their nature. The dwarves of the Northern Reaches clans took to Garl's way, and were changed into modern gnomes, slightly smaller than dwarves, more resistant to radiation and disease, and more adaptable to their surroundings. Gnomes in the Known World readily expanded west towards Rockhome, and were the original settlers of that land.

The northern clans, however, had to fight against the dangerous radiations on their own terms. And they would probably have

succeeded, if two major events hadn't shaken their history, bringing about the eventual demise of their civilization.

The first of these events happened to a major community who had moved along the coast from Norwold to the areas of current Wyrksteeth, under the guidance of a dwarf named Lugett Yadrak²⁸. Guided by a prophetic vision of an Immortal of light and radiance, he drove his people to the south and disappeared amidst caverns where his Immortal patron told him he would find salvation for his people. Studying his notes, his son Kardrof led a second expedition. This led the dwarves into the arms of the dark elves, who were happy to teach them foul, defiling spells that could cure them and sustain their bodies. Yadrak's clan became thus the most powerful in the region, and the Entropic magics spread among the dwarves of eastern Brun, gradually replacing the old ways among many clans. Others, especially in the fringe areas of dwarven territories, remained wary of the strange magic of Yadrak's clan, and stayed true to the old ways.

The second of these events took place on Skothar. Although the surviving Skotharian Khazakhum dwarves had made some progress in fighting the wasting disease, they realized that they were losing the battle. It was generally believed that they have remained too close to the site of the disaster. They resolved to leave their homeland in search of a less deadly abode, and crossed over the Bridge of Oost to reach Brun in **2602 BC**.

²⁸ John Calvin, [Mystara BC 2300](#) campaign setting.

They settled between the Bridge of Oost, Norwold and the Northern Reaches. Although their numbers continued to dwindle they were able to subjugate tribes of humanoids and giant-kin with their superior arcane power. Despite moving a great distance from their homeland, the wasting disease still plagued them and many of their sorcerers unknowingly exacerbated the situation by practicing the arts of Radiomancy. Radiomancy was becoming ingrained into their society, as the dwarves used its magic to power their spells as well as their creations. Many wizards still made an annual pilgrimage to their homeland, where their magic was strongest.

The arrival of the Skotharian dwarves came not unnoticed to the Brunian dwarves: they were in fact more numerous than gnomes, Yadrak and Fuldreg (western dwarves) combined. Some of the Kogolor joined their newly-arrived brethren, attracted by their advanced technology; others, terrified by their radiomantic magic and even more wasted appearance, hid deeper in the mountains or moved at the fringe of dwarven lands. Still others finally decided to flock to the banner of the Yadrak dwarves. In the course of the following century, the Sanndreg ("eastern dwarves", as the Skotharian dwarves were called), the Yadrak, the Fuldreg and the gnomes were put more and more under pressure from other races, so the loose clans and houses had to intensify their collaboration in order to survive.

Throughout most of the rest of the world, the effects of the wasting disease lessened. It could still be felt (especially in Brun), but

slowly populations were beginning to grow again.

Rafiel took an interest in the Sanndreg and prompted them to begin building a wondrous artifact on the Bridge of Oost called the Gate of Light (2576 BC). Dwarven radiomancers broke their traditional seclusion and formed a community around the artefact.

By 2550 BC, the Dwarven conflicts with their neighbours intensified. Giants, elves, even dragons in the area, took an immediate disliking to the plague bearing dwarves. Some of the giant tribes began to work together to repel the new invaders.

In an effort to prevail against their enemies, the Yadrak dwarves shared with the Sanndreg the dark pacts with beings of other worlds that they have practiced since their first meeting with the dark elves.

In BC 2473, Dranwyrf finally united most of the clans of the Northern Reaches, the Bridge of Oost and Rockhome in a major coalition, and made a final stand in the Makkres Mountains against the giant and elven hordes persecuting his people. The combined strength of the dwarves and gnomes crushed their enemies like copper on an anvil. Dranwyrf was named "First King of the Shimmering Lands" and the site of the battle became Drangyr, the first gatherhold of the Moadreg, the new name for the unified dwarves. Moadreg means "molten dwarves", with "moad" being the term used by dwarves to indicate the molten metals fused together in the forge to create new materials. Fringe clans of Kogolor dwarves and gnomes continued to live north and west of the

Shimmering Lands, carving out peaceful but harsh lives as farmers and herders, shunning their degenerated brethren.

While the situation was slowly stabilizing itself, in BC 2400 massive volcanic eruptions in Vulcania destroyed the elvish civilizations on that continent and sent gouts of black ash swirling into the atmosphere. The resulting clouds plunged the world again into decades of darkness and despair as the climate shifted and hunger and death plagued the lands once more. The influence of the demon worshipping Yadrak grew among the dwarves.

The beastmen of the frozen north began to breed true and started exploring the more desirable territories to the south. The tribes gathered at Urzud.

By BC 2350, most of the Taymoran nobility had joined the ranks of the undead under the tutelage of the original Nosferatu²⁹.

In BC 2319 the Moadreg completed the construction of the Gate of Light, allowing them a permanent gateway connecting to their ancestral lands. The power of the radiomancers grew and the wasting sickness began to reach out from Moadreg lands to other territories.

By year 2300 BC the southeastern tip of Brun (what would 3000 years later become known as the Known World) was the centre of many civilizations. The Taymoran city states were emerging as a major power: but their rule was often violent and bloody, and few foreign nations could stomach having the

²⁹ Giampaolo Agosta, "[Taymora, Land of the Dead](#)", Threshold magazine issue #12.

undead as neighbours. The giant nations of inner Brun fought with the Taymorans for territory. So too did the Azcan tribes (broken since the fall of Blackmoor) as well as scattered remnants of the reptilian kingdom of Mogreth. And southern elves appeared sailing white ships from the Sea of Dread, and begun to trade with Taymora.

During this time, most dwarves preferred to live quiet and isolated lives in secluded estates hidden in the wilderness. Those that couldn't be masters of their own domains swore fealty to those that could. Even so, the population that made up dwarven estates was only a fraction of the total. Dwarves who were underprivileged and unlucky enough not to have the money or means for solitude ended up living in the few scattered cities of the Shimmering Lands.

Dwarven culture at the time was not monolithic, but instead made up of several varied beliefs that had meshed together throughout the years as different dwarven clans merged throughout the long pilgrimage that brought them to the Shimmering Lands. One thing that they all had in common though was the dreaded Wasting disease. It was a plague brought with them from their ancestral lands and affected all dwarves in some shape or form. The most common manifestation of the Wasting was physical deformities, though mental deterioration often took hold in older generations as well.

Although by now most dwarves identified themselves with the Sanndreg clans and houses, there were many mixed families. The Yadrak-blooded clans were de facto demon worshippers. Kogolor dwarves which refused

the tainting of radiomancy and/or demonology lived at the fringe of dwarven society; some lived like gnomes, others still had formed small enclaves of hardy and independent workers and farmers in the Shimmering Lands or even beyond the northern and western borders of the country.

Gnomes that had settled in Moadreg lands were treated as near equals by the dwarves. The gnomes were hardy and could endure the harsh conditions of the world, and as such they took on all societal roles that the dwarves either shunned or were unable to perform.

Many swore fealty to one of the dwarven Houses and served them directly, though most gnomes were content to live on the surface of the land, beholden to the dwarves but for the most part left largely to their own devices. In fact gnomes hold many positions of prominence in the Shimmering Lands and were largely responsible for keeping the country cohesive. They were the merchants, tradesmen, and administrators of the country.

Like the dwarves, gnomish culture was a union created from several different tribes. Unlike the dwarvish culture however there were many commonalities between the tribes that brought the gnomes closer together. Gnomes tended to enjoy the company of their peers, and often worked together – even when a single gnome was enough to accomplish the task at hand. The gnomes of the Shimmering Lands also held a singular distinction, of all of the (flesh and blood) races in eastern Brun, the gnomes were the only one that had proven resistant to the Wasting.

Over the next hundred years, the Taymoran Empire reached the height of its power. The Sheyallia elves migrated to the area and were offered the lands in the east (2250 BC); Giant and Antalian clans were brought to submission; and the necromancer kings began to extend their power beyond the borders of the Known World. In addition the Taymorans began breeding programs that would eventually lead to the creation of several new races including lycanthropes and the Albarendi.

By 2000 BC, the lizard kingdom of Mogreth had collapsed, and Taymorans and Moadreg were the only two major powers of the Known World³⁰. Separated by Giant kingdoms, by the lands of Thantalian and Trantalian (Neathar tribes related to Antalian), and by hostile humanoid, the two powers rarely got in touch with each other. Nithians fled the Isle of Dawn for the lands of modern Ylaruam.

The number of dwarves decreased constantly because of the radiomantic powers. Many Moadreg increasingly turned to demon worshipping or, on the other side of the spectrum, to the clergy of Kagyar. Gnomes carved out independent kingdoms in the regions depopulated by the dwarven disappearance.

A number of Taymoran sorcerer-kings tried to increase their power by shifting their allegiance from Nyx to Thanatos. The effects were devastating, as the war between followers of the two entropic Immortals raged for years. Some geological instabilities

destroyed some peripheral areas of Taymora, sinking some areas and creating new islands and land masses. Most Taymoran cities survived, and the kings foolishly continued their wars³¹.

1900 BC: The dwarves had been completely decimated by a combination of internal plagues (spurred on by their use of the radiance), internal and external conflicts. The priesthood of Kagyar had risen to the control of many clans of Moadreg, most of whom were now reduced to only a few hundreds of members each, and challenged openly the rule of Radiomancers and the demon-worshippers that had led the Shimmering Lands to an escalation of isolation, dementia and decadence. The lands of the Bridge of Oost, by now a radioactive wasteland, were gradually collapsing under the upheavals that were hitting the Known World; many refugees fled to the western mountains.

1850 BC: The Bridge of Oost collapsed almost completely, bringing the Gate of Light to the bottom of the ocean. Radiomancers began losing their power, although faint magical powers could still be accessed from the coastal Northern Reaches.

1812 BC: An open civil war started between the followers of Kagyar, and the demon-worshippers and radiomancers, led by House Hrukats, that claimed both Khazakhum and Yardrek ascendance. The civil war and internal strife lasted for a full decade, and killed off almost all the remnants of the race.

1800 BC: Unfortunately, over time it became clear that, even without the last, terrible civil

³⁰ Francesco Defferrari, "[Past Ages of the Known World](#)", Threshold magazine issue #12.

³¹ Giampaolo Agosta, "[Taymora, Land of the Dead](#)", Threshold magazine issue #12.



Statue of the mythical Denwarf

war, the dwarven race on the Known World was slowly, inevitably dying out. Initially, Kagyar had not liked the idea of his friend and companion Garal to reshape the dwarven race. He didn't like the idea to meddle in that race's life and history, and didn't like the idea of being a creative power on living flesh. However, he grudgingly had to see the wisdom of Garl's vision, as the gnomes thrived in the same regions where the dwarves were struggling with their genetic disorders and radiation-imparted diseases.

Kagyar and Garl took half of the remaining dwarves, cured them and transplanted them to the Hollow World, where they became the Kogolor dwarves; and the other half were reshaped by Kagyar into a new dwarven race. The few survivors of the demon-worshipping Dwarves were left to themselves in the Northern Reaches, where the largest dwarf colonies had been, and eventually became the Modrigswerg clans. The new dwarves, known as the Denwarf clans, were planted in the Rockhome region. Both groups were given false memories and believed that the Modrigswerg dwarves also originally lived in the Rockhome lands but were expelled at the end of the civil war.

The dwarven and gnomish legends described in the previous section heavily distort the historical facts, also because of the false memories planted by Kagyar and Garl: they put demon worshipping and radiomancy in the same evil cauldron, and underestimated the length of the era in which dwarves were ruled by radiomancers and demonologists.

They have no memory of their arrival from Skothar, of the existence of the Bridge of Oost, and they believe that they always lived in Rockhome and that their culture has always been immovable. There they slowly declined from 3000 BC to about 2000 or even as late as 1900 BC before part of their race gave into demonologic practices.

Gnomes believe they were created in 2900 BC by Garl, and they share with the Denwarf the historical 'knowledges' of the subsequent history of Rockhome and the Northern Reaches until 1800 BC.

1750 BC: After many years of war between those who had remained loyal to Nyx and those who had turned to the ways of Thanatos (a battle between nosferatu and vampires), the core of the Taymoran Empire sank beneath the waves. Geological disasters -- volcanic eruptions and earthquakes, enhanced by the massive magical energies invoked by the warring sorcerers -- sank most of the remaining Taymoran lands into the sea, and splintered off much of the lands south of the modern day Five Shires and the Atruaghin Clans. This cataclysm marked the end of the Taymoran culture³².

The last remaining parts of the Bridge of Oost collapsed, leaving only islands of barren radioactive wastes behind.

DWARVES OF THE THIRD AGE:

What the dwarves know: It is said that Kagyar created Denwarf from a rock, and thence came his name, which means *rockborn*, and the name of the new people.

Dwarves never speak about things that happened before the advent of Denwarf, and will never reveal this part of their history to any non-dwarf (exceptions are extremely rare, and are only true and long-time friends of the dwarven race).

Denwarf was the first King of Rockhome, and ruled justly for a long time, bringing the

dwarven race to an age of peace and prosperity. An intransigent and harsh King, he was respected more than loved. He guided the dwarves in a careful project of planned growth of the population and careful exploration of the mountains around their homes, that hadn't been in their control for a long time; they slowly expanded their colonies and opened new mines in the region, regaining control of their land, that with their decline had been occupied by barbaric tribes of goblinoids.

The Dwarves soon learned to hate orcs, goblins and kobolds, creatures that lacked any artistic sense and form of civilisation and culture; soon new conflicts arose, and those conflicts saw the dwarves victorious over their enemies, that were forced to leave the mountains. Last of those who were repelled were the orcs: this marked the start of a hate that would never end.

When the dwarves occupied the mountains and started to build new communities and colonies, Denwarf assured himself that he only would confirm the community leaders and town majors in their position, and ordered all communities to send him a representative. In this way he created the basis for the current government system of Rockhome, and of the Senate.

But even dwarves grow old, and Denwarf felt that his body was weakening after long years of peace and prosperity under his rule. He went into the forge, and made himself a new body of rock and steel, so that he could guide his people for coming centuries as well. But Kagyar spoke to him then and said: "Are you not happy with the body that I have given you? Seek you to improve on the work

³² Giampaolo Agosta, cit.

of your Master?" And Denwarf answered: "Forgive me lord, for it is not arrogance that has led me to do this work. But is it not an apprentice's task to learn from his master?" Kagyar answered: "Very well. You will have this new-forged body, but for now you must leave, and allow younger dwarves to rule themselves." Then the legends of the dwarves say that Kagyar added: "I will let you return to the dwarves when they again need you ." The Hurwarf Clan especially believes this legend to be true, while others shrug it off, saying more or less convincingly that "it's just a legend"³³.

Denwarf had discovered a great system of dungeons under Mount Everast. He gave the name of Dengar (*rockhome*) to the caves and told his followers to build there their capital. Then he chose as heir a dwarf of the Everast family, prophesied his return and left his kingdom for the dark caverns under Dengar³⁴.

The communities had changed from small families to big families, from villages to cities. By 1400 BC, the number of dwarves had almost reached 125'000, and the race was healthy and safe from extinction. But their past history had changed their way of living dramatically: removed for centuries from all other sentient races (bar their gnomish allies and hostile humanoids), having suffered every sort of hardship and desperation, the Denwarf dwarves had developed a taciturn and stubborn attitude. Fear for the fate of their race, threatened by the folly of humans and elves, and by the contact with violent

and barbaric orcs and goblins, made them suspicious of all other races. It's also for this that the dwarves write long and accurate genealogies, with whom any Denwarf can trace her roots back to the few survivors that had been visited by Denwarf and saved by the love of Kagyar and Garalin.

The dwarven legends say that "Denwarf had seven retainers; these became the dwarven lords, founders of the greater Clans", but Denwarf dwarves know that this isn't true³⁵. When Denwarf founded the new dwarven nation, he forged, with the help of some apprentices, the first three Forges of Power. These three he gave to the most important and influential families: the Everast and Torkrest that followed Denwarf to Dengar; and the Skarrad of Smaggeft. Most of the smaller families allied themselves to these three, effectively giving birth to the structure of the dwarven Clans as they are known today. The legend of the seven retainers is very popular, and is considered mostly true among other races, like humans, elves and hin. However, Denwarf are not secretive about this, and they will be more than happy to explain the truth to any member of another race, if he or she is ready for a long treatise on dwarven genealogies and clans.

³³ Håvard, "[Legends of the Dwarves](#)" at the Vaults of Pandius

³⁴ Aaron Allston, GAZ6 *The Dwarves of Rockhome*. In fact, Denwarf returns in the *Poor Wizard's Almanac* series.

³⁵ The Buhrodar and Hurwarf Clans, at the very least, were created later in dwarven history. See Aaron Allston, GAZ6 *The Dwarves of Rockhome*.

RISE OF THE MODRIGSWERG:

What the dwarves know: While Denwarf rose to power in Dengar, the Moadreg had arrived to the dark mountains of the east³⁶, close to the regions where most gnomes lived. Here, three remaining faction of Moadreg confronted each other; although their leaders had been killed, some Hrukats, followers of the Father of Demons, were still present among them. Then there were two other factions, those that called themselves Fuldweg (a corruption of the old Fuldreg term, chosen to highlight both their diversity from Denwarf dwarves and from the old Moadreg ways), that wanted to repent for their sins and return to the worship of Kagyar and Garalin, and the majority, formed by the Moadreg who just wanted to isolate themselves from the rest of the world and especially from their brothers in Dengar, and forget everything about gods or Immortals or demons or whatever beings that had only caused them problems and suffering.

The Fuldweg were led by Arwarfin, a follower of Garalin. While the Moadreg fragmented themselves in many small family groups in the mountains, Arwarfin and his followers challenged the remaining Hrukats and were able to erase their presence from the surface.

This heroic and disinterested act was appreciated by Kagyar and Garalin, who chose Arwarfin as the first cleric among the Fuldweg. As an act of gratitude, Arwarfin,

³⁶ As mentioned before, this is a false memory planted by the Immortals.



Dwarven warrior, supposedly Arwarfin

the first Hrukats Cleric of Garalin, sought the weapons that the necromancers had forged with the aid of the dark elves to help in the destruction of the dwarven race, and he found two, the Footspear of Brissard and the Shield of Ryleegh, that he hid in the deep of a Black Basalt Tower that he found thanks to a dream omen sent by Garalin himself. Later in his life, Arwarfin met with King Denwarf, and the chronicles of this event are in possession of the Clans Hurwarf and Everast. It wasn't a successful meeting. Denwarf was a hard and uncompromising ruler, and he refused to forgive even one single dwarf who had fought along the Hrukats King in the civil war which had put an end to the Second Age of Dwarves. Saddened, Arwarfin returned to his companions.

Following the desires of Arwarfin, the Fuldweg separated in small groups to live among the other Hrukats. "It's no use to

close ourselves in the towers of granite of our purity. Our brothers in the west have made this mistake, refusing to see the good in our hearts and refuse to admit that we repented for our sins. Now we must not make the same mistake and look with scorn and arrogance at our brothers in the east that have decided to seclude themselves from the world. We must live among them and remember them with our example that our past is great and our present may also be of greatness. We must reconcile the Denwarf and the Moadreg, because only being one race and one blood we will be able to fight against our enemies. Everything went wrong the day the King of the Shimmering Lands left our brothers to follow the delusion of the Father of Demons." It is said that when Arwarfin died, he and his closest followers were blessed by Garalin: their bodies were put to guard the weapons hidden in the Basalt Tower, to avoid forever the use of these foul weapons against a dwarf.

Most of the Moadreg ignored Awarfin's followers' preaching, and their ambitions. The Moadreg's name became Modrigswerg (from *moadreg dwerg*). The Modrigswerg separated in many small groups hidden in the depths of the mountains (1800-1400 BC). Their life philosophy turned towards paranoia and pessimism: Kagyar and Garalin were aloof deities that had proven uninterested in their fate - first during the hard days after the Rain of Fire, and later on too; they had been cheated by the Father of Demons and the dark elves; and then they had been unjustly exiled by their own brethren that *they* alone had tried to save! What had happened had been just a mistake, and they couldn't be accused of it! They had been cheated, after all! So why respect and

worship the Immortals, if the Immortals didn't care in the first place? And why ask their brethren for forgiveness? And why have any contact with other races *at all*?

The consequences of the necromantic arts that had cured the rotting plague aggravated their paranoia and depression: the Modrigswerg, due to the taint of the necromantic magic, now an inherent part of them, developed an inclination for madness and manic depressions even culminating in suicides, psychoses that are especially evident and frequent among the oldest members of the race. Neutral to most conflicts between the surface races, the Modrigswerg became soon even more greedy than their relatives in the west, agreeing to sell magical weapons and artefacts to anyone, if only they were paid a good price for it, never caring to ask what use would be made of the items they built, nor against whom - even brothers and friends.

Given the taciturn nature of all dwarves, when the northmen met with the Modrigswerg, they didn't even suspect that the two people were separated kin; this, along with the Modrigswerg's isolationist and greedy attitude, has helped to spread the latent distrust the northmen have for the dwarven race in general.

What the DM knows: The remaining Moadreg remained untouched by Kagyar. However, they too were given false memories of having been exiled from Rockhome by the other dwarves, because of their leaders making an unholy alliance with the dark elves. They were left free to choose the path to pursue in their future. Kagyar's hope was that they would return to his worship

(without any active encouragement) and repent their sins, otherwise he is willing to let them fall into decay and eventual slumber.

THE YEARS OF GROWTH

What the dwarves know: While the Fuldweg tried to bring the Word of Kagyar and Garalin among the disillusioned Modrigswerg, the Denwarf began slowly to expand eastwards. Ignoring the areas settled by the Modrigswerg, the Denwarf allied themselves with the gnomes of the Northern Reaches, whose capital was Falun (in nowadays Soderfjord). The dwarves theorise that gnomes could be a subrace of dwarves, while gnomes claim that they evolved from a common ancestry. Whatever the truth, the two races had been allied since the first time they met, after the Great Rain of Fire, and whenever Denwarf and gnomes met again, the alliance was reassured.

Meanwhile, the dwarves met again with Humans after several centuries: beyond the mountains and hills lived the Antalians, ancestors of modern northmen. The contacts were rather sparse to begin with, as the dwarves had no interest in a race of barbaric pirates, busy only fighting among themselves. In the north, over the mountains, the Denwarf met the aggressive Ethengarians, something that discouraged the relationship of the Denwarf with their northern neighbours, given the superstitious and rather chaotic nature of this people.

The first Everast kings promoted a politic of slow population growth; intelligent and

cunning planners, they knew the risks of an uncontrolled growth. They continued the tradition of exploration, fortification and mineral exploitation of the land, and of craftsmanship, that King Denwarf had pursued during all of his reign. The Everast dynasty, moreover, made an important decision that gained it the support of the population: the tradition of Abdication. Everast I (1400-1378 BC) believed that Denwarf had begun to show his weaknesses and limits with age: personal limits, sure, but also the limits that were peculiar of the Denwarf race, first of all a conservative attitude that could lead to intellectual and creative stagnation. To avoid this risk among the leaders, it was wise and right for a King to step down when he recognised that his time to rule the dwarves was over.

In those years, the Syrklit of Dengar (a family belonging to the Skarrad Clan), stepped to the front of innovative mining techniques. The family had such a big following among its Clan, that it was able to form a new Clan. Clerics, artisans and smiths of the Skarrad Clan helped the Syrklit to create their own Forge of Power (1323 BC), a major event in dwarven history, as it was the first time a Forge of Power had been created after the departure of King Denwarf. The Skarrad Clan split, with the technocratic families of engineers, architects, smiths, and those interested in the developing of metallurgic and building techniques mostly remaining in the original Skarrad Clan, while the miner families entered the new Syrklit Clan. Since then, however, the two Clans had been close allies and shared a common political view.

The tradition of abdication went on even after the end of the First Everast Dynasty, when Everast VI (1206-1161 BC), surprisingly enough, not only didn't choose his older son as heir, but even chose a dwarf from another Clan, the Torkrest, that ascended to the throne maintaining his true name Thoric (1161-1119 BC). The unexpected decision created some tension between the Everast and Torkrest Clans, but no-one dared to oppose it. Thorin Son of Thoric chose a new name when he ascended to the throne, Blystar (1119-1062 BC), becoming the first of a long number of Torkrest kings to bear that name.

It was during the kingdom of Blystar I that a small number of ultra conservative traditionalist families, that opposed the political strategies of the Torkrest and the Everast, left these two Clans under the guide of the Lyrrast family of Dengar. They formed their own Clan, the Hurwarf, that was recognised by the other Clans when Kagyar showed his approval by allowing them to build completely on their own a new Forge of Power (1089 BC).

After these events, the heads of the Clans, the clerics and the historians codified the requisites needed to be recognised as a Denwarf Clan: a group of Denwarf families will be considered a clan when it is in legitimate possession of a Forge of Power. The Forge may be built by the artisans, sages, priests and smiths of the Clan, with or without external help.

The chroniclers and miniaturists of the various Clans wrote a marvellous book that, since those days, should complement all the family genealogies with the list of all the true

Denwarf Clans (1083 BC). The tome, known as "Book of Clans", reports the List of Clans and the names of all the Families belonging to all Clans, comprehending the dates of transition of a Family from one clan to another. More or less during the same years, the chroniclers and historians begun to catalogue and compile all the genealogies of all dwarven families. It took them more than a century, but it brought to the completion of a precise genealogy for each of the clans.

What the gnomes know: While dwarves of Rockhome and of the Northern Reaches started to rebuild their communities, gnomes fared much better in the Northern Reaches. While many continued to live by the dwarves and to thrive in their growing communities, the main gnomish clans were dotting the Soderfjord ranges. As dangerous humanoids occasionally scoured the surface, creating disruption to commerce and family contacts, the gnomes started building an impressive set of dungeons and caves. The project was led by the Falun clan, and took almost two centuries (1800-1600 BC), after which all the gnomish settlements of Soderfjord and eastern Rockhome were interconnected by hundreds of kilometres of galleries, allowing for travel and commerce underground.

As the surface world was still dangerous, and the consequences of the new explosions in what is nowadays Glantri (1700 BC) sent again huge clouds of radioactive smoke and cooled down the Known World, the gnomes were convinced that the safest route to colonization, traveling and exploration was to build a whole set of underground highways that connected together the whole Known World. The idea was clearly crazy, but it fitted well the gnomish' mindset.

The enterprise was once again led by the Falun clan, and gnomes asked for the help of the Rockhome dwarves for its development and implementation. The first set of underground caves was established to connect gnomish lands and dwarven lands, and the whole gnomish nation worked tightly towards these goals: geological and engineering studies bloomed as the two races worked closely together to map the underground, find the natural caves and the areas where it would be possible to safely expand and build new underground routes. By 1200 BC most of the dwarven settlements of Rockhome were connected together and to gnomish settlements in the Northern Reaches. The project had to halt at Ethengar, and also the Heldannic territories did not have mountains and geological features that could allow for the building of new underground roads. This was also a major factor in determining the first lines of expansion for the two young races.

A political result of this endeavour was also that the gnomes formed a loose confederation and elected the clanmaster of Falun Clan, Sigurd Falun, King of the Garalin Gnomes, in 1233 BC, in a solemn ceremony attended by the clanmasters and relic keepers of most dwarvish and gnomish clans.

What the DM knows:

Kagyar and Garlain in fact had need of Denwarf to help them in the Known World. A shadow elf invasion threatened the whole Kogolor population, so Kagyar sent Denwarf there to deal with the invasion. After five years of fight, the war was won and Denwarf was placed in a state of suspended animation below Dengar.



Dwarven statue in Dengar

And with the story of Denwarf and the establishment of the gnomish Kingdom in Falun, we end the first part of this series on the Young Races of Eastern Brun.

ADVENTURE HOOKS, RED HERRINGS & THE INFORMATION MESH

by Sean Meaney

RUMORS are employed in adventures pretty much all the time. Players asking around the village about the nearby Dungeons, Castle, or Temple is a regular aspect of the game as is the movement of rumors across the larger campaign setting.

TABLE 1:
RUMOURS IN THE VILLAGE OF VERGE

2d6 Rumour	
2	A Thief was found nailed to a Tree.
3	Breyark! is a goblin greeting.
4	There is a magic wand lost in the ruins.
5	There is a Statue with ruby eyes.
6	A wizard lives in the caves.
7	There have been murders in the Capital.
8	Farmer Tambo saw a Dragon.
9	There's a giant stone head in the woods.
10	The House across the market is haunted.
11	The village is built on a Dungeon.
12	The Lady of Verge is a witch.

The problem is that not every rumour is true. But why is a rumor true or false. It has to do with not only the intent of the rumor teller, it has to do with the movement of information.

Facts, rumours, and lies are all the same thing: information. It is the degree of accuracy that separates truth from lie. How does the village of Verge know anything of murders in far off Specularum (Mirros)? Tanis the paper merchant has driven his cart of blank (or bleached) scroll parchment in from Specularum. He also brings with him a tale of an apparent tidal wave of murders. Specularum is a big, crowded place filled with desperate people prepared to kill to survive. The likelihood that the rumor is true is going to be based on the generic nature of the information. Murders happen over a period of time in the big city therefore 'there have been murders in the capital'. Specific knowledge of a particular murder is going to require accuracy of information to which the merchant may or may not have access. How does he know that Davinos was murdered in the street? Is he keeping tabs on murders

that may have been committed by the Veiled Society? Is he a member? Is he associated with a rival faction? Has he lazily concluded that one particular murder must represent an occurrence of numerous such murders? The decay of information accuracy is often the result of laziness in the storyteller to impart all the facts or correct assumptions. Thomic the gnome overhears a conversation and imparts a variation on the rumor simply because he fills in the gaps with his own creativity - and 'murders in the capital' becomes a madman on a killing spree. Ultimately it is the charisma of the information source that varies the accuracy of the information.



Legendary Milenian hero dying after reporting the news of a won battle

Basically information accuracy is determined by the distance of the source and the population of the source so is determined by this formula¹:

$$\text{Accuracy}\% = 0.24 * ((\text{Population} \wedge 0.87) / (\text{Distance} \wedge 0.4))$$

¹ The symbol \wedge stands for Exponent; algebra calculators like [this one](#) can be found online.

TABLE 2:
POPULATIONS IN KARAMEIKOS

COMMUNITY	POPULATION
Specularuam	50,000
Kelvin	20,000
Fort Doom	10,000
Vorloi	7,500
Highforge	6,500 Gnomes/ 1,000 Dwarves
Threshold	5,000
Luln	5,000
Penhaligon	3,750
Rifflian	1,700 (2,000)
Sulescu	950
Marilenev	900
Rugalov	650
Verge	500
Dmitrov	6,500
Vandevicsny	100

VERGE as we know is a village fourteen 8-mile hexes from Specularum. As it sits on the road between Rifflian and Threshold and is Three road hexes from Threshold and four road hexes from Rifflian. There are certainly other places but these two Towns are of immediate interest.

According to Table 2 (Populations in Karameikos), we have the following relevant populations adjacent to Verge:

1. Threshold (5,000): 24 miles
2. Rifflian (1,700): 32 Miles

So sitting in the Tavern in Verge we can now look at Verge's relationship with various information sources to generate a consistent list of rumours.

Accuracy % =
 $0.24 * ((\text{Population} ^{0.87}) / (\text{Distance} ^{0.4}))$

We apply this to the various sources supplying the village of Verge:

Threshold% = $0.24 * ((5000 ^{0.87}) / (24 ^{0.4}))$

Rifflian% = $0.24 * ((1700 ^{0.87}) / (32 ^{0.4}))$

These provide us with the following information Accuracies:

Courier delivering a letter



TABLE 3: VERGE ON THE RIFFLIAN-THRESHOLD CORRIDOR

Community	Population	Distance	Accuracy%
Threshold	5,000	24 miles	111%
Rifflian	1,700 (2,000)	32 milse	38% (44%)
Subtotal rumor slots			3

So we get one rumour from Threshold that is one hundred percent accurate and one that is eleven percent accurate. we also get one rumour from Rifflian that is thirty eight percent accurate.

TABLE 4: RUMOURS IN THE VILLAGE OF VERGE

2d6 Rumours doing the rounds in Verge

- 2 A man was found nailed to a tree near Threshold.
- 3 A giant stone head was discovered in the woods near Threshold (it is a rounded boulder sticking out of the dirt).
- 4 The Lady of Rifflian is looking for adventurers to catch a dragon (she is interested in being a patron to adventurers).
- 5 A Farmer saw a Dragon near Threshold.
- 6 A magic wand was lost in ruins near Threshold.
- 7 Breyark! is a goblin greeting (Its goblin).
- 8 There is a statue with ruby eyes above the bar in a Tavern in Rifflian.
- 9 A wizard lives in the caves.
- 10 There have been murders in the Capital.
- 11 The abandoned house across the market is haunted.
- 12 The village of Verge is built on a Dungeon.

As you can see we have eight remaining slots that will likely fill with rumors from further afield. So let's look at:

- 3. Kelvin (20,000): 72 Miles
- 4. Highforge (7,500): 56 miles
via Threshold

Because Highforge is not connected by road it sends overland via Threshold

We apply this to these sources supplying the village of Verge:

$$\text{Kelvin}\% = 0.24 * ((20000 \wedge 0.87) / (72 \wedge 0.4))$$

$$\text{Highforge}\% = 0.24 * ((7500 \wedge 0.87) / 56 \wedge 0.4)$$

These provide us with the information Accuracies shown in Table 5.

So we see Kelvin provides Verge with three rumors (two of which are a hundred percent accurate and one which is thirty nine percent accurate). Highforge is a provider of two rumors (one at one hundred percent accuracy and one that is twelve percent accurate).

TABLE 5: VERGE - KELVIN & HIGHFORGE

Community	Population	Distance	Accuracy%
Kelvin	20,000	72 miles	239%
Highforge	7,500	56 miles (via Threshold)	112%
Subtotal rumour slots			5

TABLE 6: RUMORS AVAILABLE IN VERGE

2d6	Rumours doing the rounds in Verge
2	A man was found nailed to a Tree near Threshold.
3	A giant stone head was discovered in the woods near Threshold (it is a rounded boulder sticking out of the dirt).
4	The Lady of Rifflian is looking for Adventurers to catch a dragon (She is interested in being a patron to adventurers).
5	A magic wand was lost in ruins near Kelvin.
6	The City of Kelvin is built on an ancient Dungeon.
7	Drogo the Gnome saw a Red Dragon near Highforge.
8	There is a Statue with ruby eyes above the bar in a Tavern in Kelvin (Its eyes are red glass and it's under the bar).
9	Breyark! is a goblin greeting (not particularly).
10	A wizard lives in the caves.
11	There have been murders in the Capital.
12	The abandoned house across the market is haunted.

As you can see we have three remaining slots that will likely fill with rumors from further afield. So let's look at:

5. Penhaligon (3,750): 128 Miles
6. Specularum (50,000): 112 Miles
7. Rugalov (650): 224 miles
8. Luln (5,000): 200 miles
9. Fort Doom (10,000): 208 miles
10. Vorloi (7,500): 192 miles
11. Marilenev (900): 120 miles
12. Sulescu (950): 160 miles
13. Dmitrov (6,500): 184 miles
14. Vandevicsny (100): 184 miles

We apply this to these sources supplying the village of Verge:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Penhaligon}\% &= 0.24 * ((3,750 \wedge 0.87) / (128 \wedge 0.4)) \\ \text{Specularum}\% &= 0.24 * ((50,000 \wedge 0.87) / (112 \wedge 0.4)) \\ \text{Rugalov}\% &= 0.24 * ((650 \wedge 0.87) / (224 \wedge 0.4)) \\ \text{Luln}\% &= 0.24 * ((5,000 \wedge 0.87) / (200 \wedge 0.4)) \\ \text{Fort Doom}\% &= 0.24 * ((10,000 \wedge 0.87) / (208 \wedge 0.4)) \\ \text{Marilenev}\% &= 0.24 * ((900 \wedge 0.87) / (120 \wedge 0.4)) \\ \text{Sulescu}\% &= 0.24 * ((950 \wedge 0.87) / (160 \wedge 0.4)) \\ \text{Vorloi}\% &= 0.24 * ((7500 \wedge 0.87) / (192 \wedge 0.4)) \\ \text{Dmitrov}\% &= (0.24 * ((6500 \wedge 0.87) / (184 \wedge 0.4))) \\ \text{Vandevicsny}\% &= (0.24 * ((100 \wedge 0.87) / (184 \wedge 0.4))) \end{aligned}$$

These provide us with the information Accuracies in Table 7

TABLE 7: VERGE - SPECULARUM & OTHER COMMUNITIES

Community	Population	Distance	Accuracy%
Penhaligon	3,750	128 miles	44%
Specularum	50,000	112 miles	445%
Rugalov	650	224 miles	7%
Luln	5,000	200 miles	47%
Fort Doom	10,000	208 miles	85%
Vorloi	7,500	192 miles	68%
Sulescu	950	160 miles	12%
Marilenev	900	120 miles	5%
Dmitrov	6,500	184 miles	61%
Vandevicsny	100	184 miles	1%
Subtotal rumour slots			14

That means Specularum provides us with four good rumours and a low accuracy rumor. The remaining communities provide us with seven more rumours of poor accuracy.

TABLE 8: THE VERGE INFORMATION NETWORK

Community	Population	Distance	Accuracy%
Threshold	5,000	24 miles	111%
Rifflian	1,700	32 miles	38%
Kelvin	20,000	72 miles	239%
Highforge	7,500	56 miles (via Threshold)	112%
Penhaligon	3,750	128 miles	44%
Specularum	50,000	112 miles	445%
Rugalov	650	224 miles	7%
Luln	5,000	200 miles	47%
Fort Doom	10,000	208 miles	85%
Vorloi	7,500	192 miles	68%
Sulescu	950	160 miles	12%
Marilenev	900	120 miles	5%
Dmitrov	6,500	184 miles	61%
Vandevicsny	100	184 miles	1%

1



A tavern, where many rumours are heard

So now we have twenty-two rumor slots. This is good for a 20+ Slot Rumor chart.

TABLE 9: RUMOURS IN THE VILLAGE OF VERGE

3d8 Rumors doing the rounds in Verge	
3	A man was found nailed to a Tree near Threshold.
4	A giant stone head was discovered in the woods near Threshold (it's a rounded boulder sticking out of the dirt).
5	The Lady of Rifflian is looking for Adventurers to catch a dragon (She is interested in being a patron to adventurers).
6	A magic wand was lost in ruins near Kelvin.
7	The town of Kelvin is built on a Dungeon.
8	Drogo the gnome saw a Dragon near Highforge.
9	There is a Statue with ruby eyes above the bar in a Tavern in Kelvin (Its eyes are red glass and it is under the bar).
10	Breyark! is a goblin greeting (Highforge Dwarves made that rumor up for a laugh).
11	A Serial Killer has been stalking women at night in the streets of Specularum.
12	Duchess Olivia's Favourite colour is purple.
13	A Serial Arsonist has been setting fire to homes in the Nest.
14	A Ylari murdered a member of the King's Guard in Specularum.
15	The old boarded up house overlooking the Great Market in Specularum is haunted (Its an observation post used by the Secret Police and they arrest intruders).
16	A Wizard lives in the caves in the Wulfwold hills east of Penhaligon (Its a Kobold).
17	The Lord of Sulescu is afflicted with Vampirism (The Lord of Rugalov fell ill a month back and has been anemic).
18	The town of Luln is filled with Traladaran Rebels (there are a few who want to topple Baron Blackeagle)
19	Bargle the Wizard is hiding out in Fort Doom (He is Magist to Baron Blackeagle).
20	The kingdom is preparing for war. Baron Vorloi is building warships (new ones were needed).
21	Traladaran Rebels are growing wolfsbane to poison Specularum's water (Lady Marilenev's gardener was exposed to Wolfsbane while pulling weeds almost a month ago and died horribly).
22	Vampire Lord Sulescu is enslaving the peasants (This Nosferatu is happy to pay well for the labour of his farmers).
23	A ship has wrecked on the beach off Dmitrov (an old warship has been beached for salvage).
24	Bargle the Wizard was seen summoning flying demons to attack Luln (an old crypt was opened a few weeks back for repair in Vandevicsny releasing bats).

RUMOURS FLY

There is of course a real distance at which information accuracy drops below a hundred percent.

So let's build a different set of data based on a variation of our formula, this one looking for distance:

Distance =

$$0.4\sqrt[0.4]{\left(\frac{\text{Population}^{0.87}}{\text{Accuracy}\%/0.24}\right)}$$

So for each community we now look for distance at 100%, 50%, and 10%. This provides us with something we can then map.

Community

Distance =

$$(0.4\sqrt[0.4]{\left(\frac{\text{Population}^{0.87}}{(100/0.24)}\right)})$$

Distance =

$$(0.4\sqrt[0.4]{\left(\frac{\text{Population}^{0.87}}{(50/0.24)}\right)})$$

Distance =

$$(0.4\sqrt[0.4]{\left(\frac{\text{Population}^{0.87}}{(10/0.24)}\right)})$$

TABLE 10: GRAND DUCHY OF KARAMEIKOS INFORMATION DISTANCE

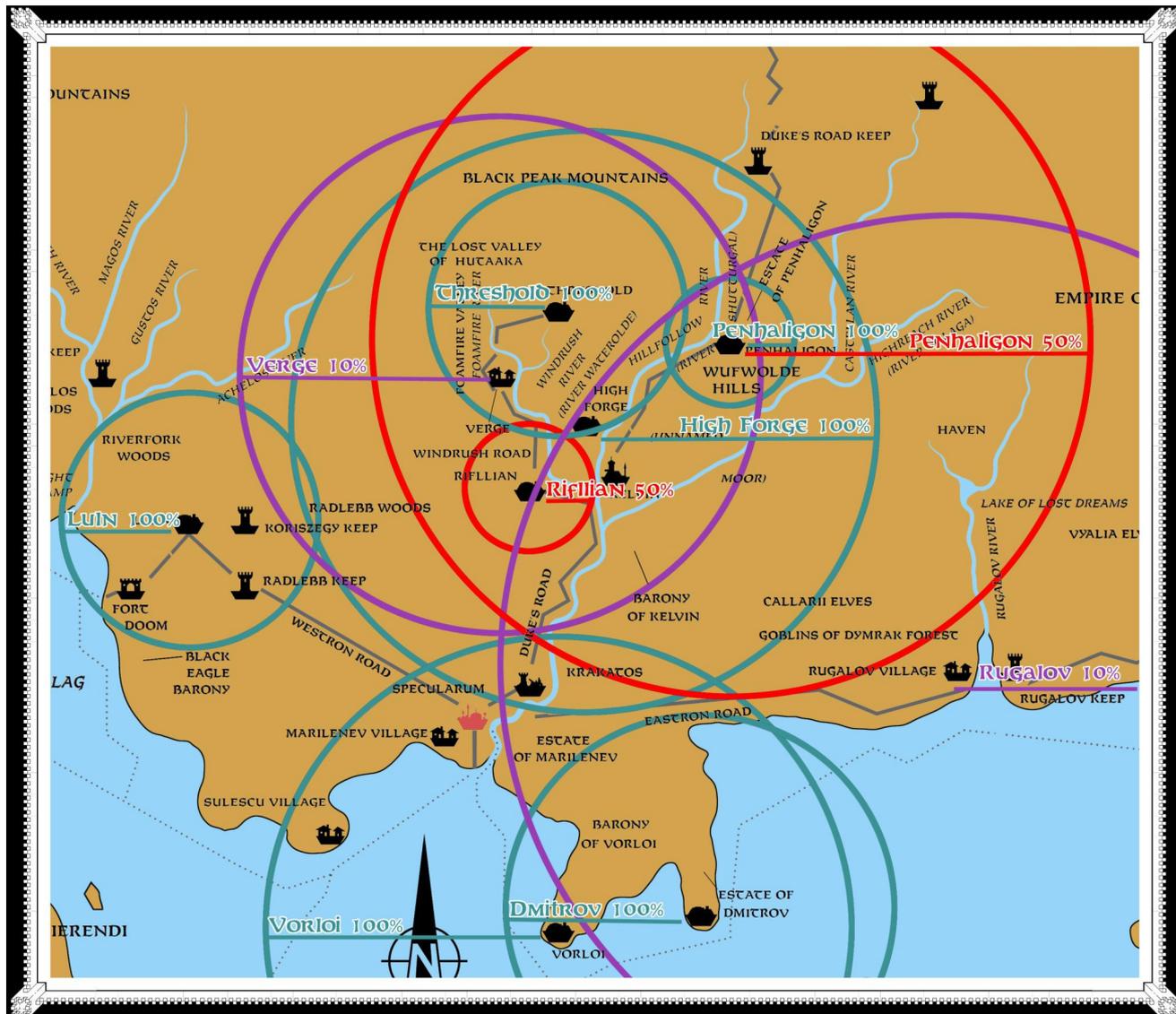
Community	Population	100% Accuracy	50% Accuracy	10% Accuracy
Threshold	5,000	31 miles	177 miles	9,903 miles
Rifflian	1,700	2 miles	16 miles	947 miles
Kelvin	20,000+	638 miles	3,612 miles	201,961 miles
Highforge	7,500	75 miles	427 miles	23,920 miles
Penhaligon	3,750	16 miles	94 miles	5,297 miles
Specularum	50,000	4,685 miles	26,507 miles	1,481,794 miles
Rugalov	650	<1 mile	2 miles	117 miles
Luln	5,000	31 miles	177 miles	9,903 miles
Fort Doom	10,000	141 miles	800 miles	44,722 miles
Vorloi	7,500	75 miles	427 miles	23,921 miles
Sulescu	950	<1 mile	4 miles	267 miles
Marilenev	900	<1 mile	4 miles	237 miles
Verge	500	<1 mile	<2 miles	66 miles
Dmitrov	6,500	55 miles	313 miles	17,523 miles
Vandevicsny	100	<1 mile	<1 mile	<2 miles

WHAT IS HAPPENING IN KARAMEIKOS?

Given a hex is basically four miles in radius, as calculated in Table 10, rumours struggle to exit communities like Sulescu, Marilenev, Rugalov, Verge, Rifflian without being greatly

reduced in accuracy. In Vandevicsny rumor accuracy is below ten percent before it even leaves the periphery of the village.

MAP 1: INFORMATION MESH DISTANCE/ACCURACY IN KARAMEIKOS



Circles on the map are centred on their city of origin, and represent the distance that a rumour may travel from that point.

In addition, each circle is colour coded to represent the accuracy of rumours that may be generated from the source point.

MAP LEGEND

Blue: within this range, rumours are 100% Accurate

Red: within this range, rumours are at least 50% Accurate

Purple: at this range, rumours originating from the source are now only 10% Accurate



Lining up the maps, Part 3 (South region)

by Hausman Santos and Geoff Gander

This article presents and compares the versions of Limn maps published in the *Mystaran Almanac* (AC 1018) with those developed by Bruce Heard on his blog circa AC 1000 / AY 2000 with a brief general description (with this part focusing on the south lands) and proposes an alternative to unite the unusual passages in each version of the maps in order to put them together.

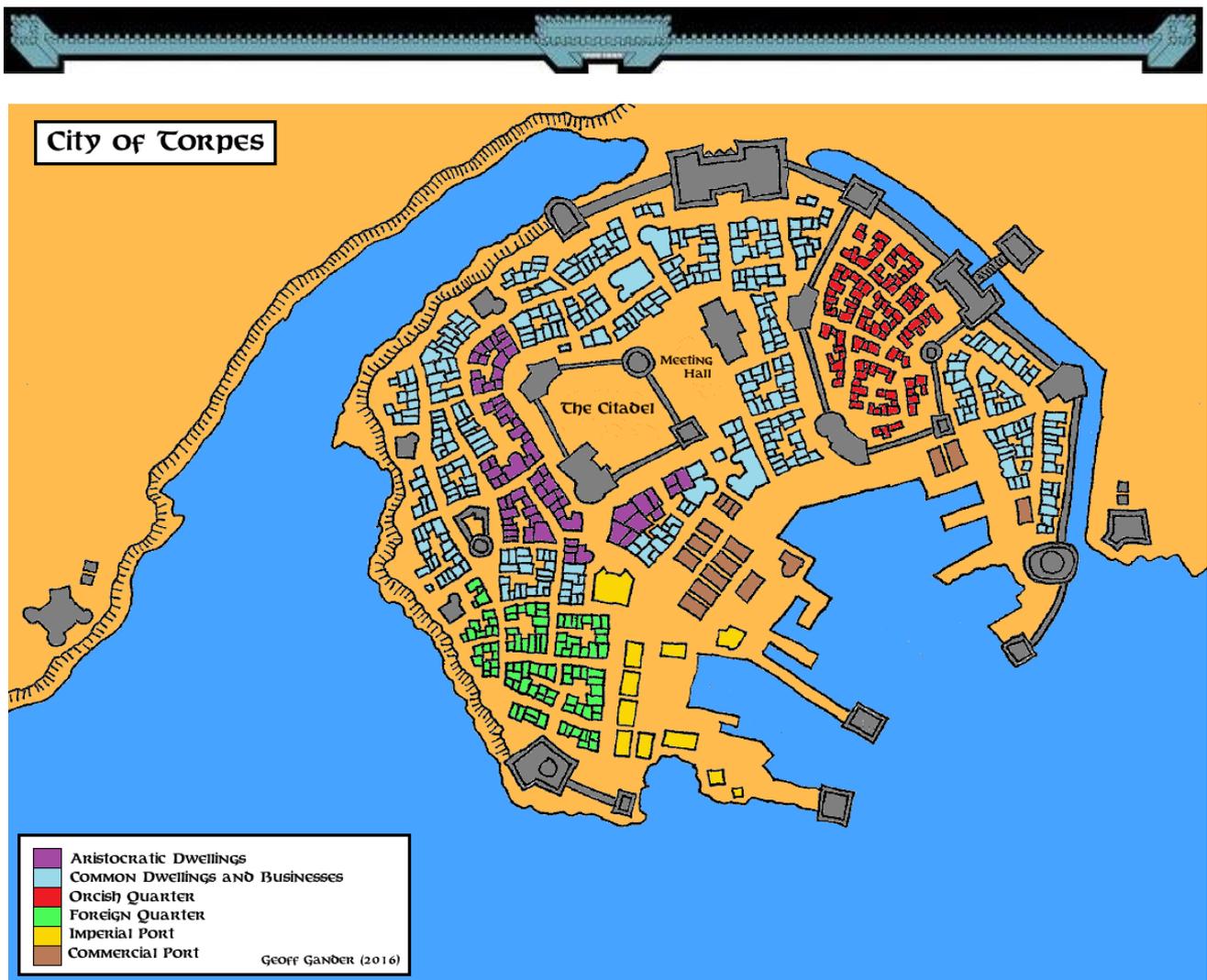
This article also makes extensive use of the material previously developed by Rodger Burns, Francesco Defferrari and Geoff Gander in their descriptions of the region.

The previous parts of the Gazetteer were published in *Threshold* issue [#11](#) and [#12](#).

INTRODUCTION

The southern region of Limn was the place where the greatest confrontation between Ymathra and Alphatia was concentrated, and was also the one who presented the biggest surprises in terms of alliances and twists.

Region of barbarian peoples, elves, giants and even djinni. Understanding its geography and structure is a very important criterion for understanding the whole kingdom.



TORPES MISSING NOTES

When this city was built, it was imagined an impressive defensive wall along the neck of the peninsula, some of which may still stand today, though modern Torpes is built upon the ruins of Grønborg the city¹.

Created with a fjord/inlet west of town, which offers some natural defences (cliffs - which explains partly why Grønborg was

hard to conquer). On the eastern side, the Alphasians dug out a partial moat to restrict access. A bridge connects the orcish quarter (which will be walled internally). What remains is a very defensible neck of land.

¹ For more description of Torpes, refer to [“A Gazetteer of Limn part 2”](#) in Threshold issue #12 and Geoff Gander, [“Torpes”](#), on the Vaults of Pandius.

TRACES AND HISTORY ON SOUTH LANDS

As a starting point for the open conflicts in the southern region of Limn, the goblinoid invasion of the plains and the coast against the Antalians generates a series of actions that will define the current formation of kingdom's lands.

Conflict after conflict, the Hundraal, a clan of Antalians of Ystmarhavn origin are forced to get closer to the hills and forests further south of Limn and limited to the margins of a few territories Sheb-Nigosh and now have a hard time living on land close to the goblinoids.

A point of support for the Hundraal in the lands to the south, are the barbarian peoples who lived in the hills of Sheb-Nigosh; These seemed to have a distant and almost forgotten origin coming from the more eastern lands in the current Alphatia².

This situation only improves when Ystmarhavner seafarers (current Sea Guard) secure the domain of Aroth-Dag Hills and when the Ymathrans establish a hold in the south (near Hundraal River) and mediate (through his powers of manipulation and charms) for a peaceful coexistence with the goblinoids on site.

The expansion of the Ymathra to Limn (after confrontation with Alphatia in the present Haven) brings a cohesion and union with the

² Information about Zaanidon further on this article and also on Rodger Burns at [“Alphatia: Kingdoms Before Landfall”](#) on the Vaults of Pandius .

goblinoids (subjugating with influence and magical abilities) in the plains and regions near Sheb-Nigosh.

The next target of the Ymathra are the local barbarian tribes (also eliminating their shamans, wokans, and sorcerer leaders) who are also brought into an imposed covenant; The Hundraal more intelligently also adhere to a policy of good coexistence with the Ymathra.

ELVES FROM THE SHIYE LANDS

Internal conflicts between the Shiye and the fall of Ilmaryl³ in the north, provoke the migration of several elves to Norwold. In AY 740 / 260 BC Several Shiye elves united as a minor clan (Celebryn) move out from Shiye-Lawr (after conflicts with the king). A few houses teamed up to create a domain between the forests of Tal- Burud and Maskin-Xul south of Limn.

Conflicts and clashes in the plains encouraged sylvan folk to ally themselves with the Shiye elves in exchange for mutual protection. A defensive wall among the trees at the forest frontier (consisting of archers, scouts, forester patrols) caused great goblinoid casualties before they could enter the forests, but elves and sylvan folk had their numbers reduced too. This model followed until the arrival of the Alphatians on Limn.

³ As related in [“The Fall of Ilmaryl”](#) by Geoff Gander on the Vaults of Pandius

Limn, 1000 AC

Based on Dawn of the Emperors and maps by Bruce Heard

Cartography by Thorfinn Tait, May 2012; last revised June 2012

www.thorf.co.uk



Map of Limn including locations from [Bruce Heard's map](#) (from his blog), with [Thorfinn Tait's version](#) (in the Vaults of Pandius) and [Geoff Gander's map](#) from the AC 1018 Fan Almanac, (also available on the Vaults).

THE ALPHATIAN INVASION

The arrival of Alphatian armies in AY 884 / 116 BC, the recognition and consolidation of allies and enemies finally began to define the territory of Limn. Alphatia tries to make a geographic political analysis of the region before starting a campaign.

Its previous experience with the elves makes them the first logical alliance option against goblinoids and lizardmen in Trollmark and Ymathra.

Around AY 100 / 900 BC Ymathra already was defeated and officially under Alphatian rule by AY 100. A few individual domains still remain in Limn mountains. Since then, Limn remained as one of his last refuges until Alphatia arrived at last. An imminent confrontation was necessary and Ymathra began to prepare his allies for battle. Its front line was the goblinoids (tribes of the plains) that are easily defeated by the Alphatian coalition. Yamathran Lords reinforce their territory awaiting the advance for the final confrontation. In AY 900 / 100 BC the few surviving Ymathran leaders launch their goblinoids, their peasant militia and several undead against the Alphatians.



Naval battle with the Alphatians

ALLEGIANCES

In a council, war agreements are closed by securing (by the Alphatians) the security of the elflands in exchange for alliance. The elves continue to mediate the agreement with the sylvan folk who also agree to an alliance (in exchange for Alphatia securing their lands and forests east of the Dar-Engal River).

In view of the alliance, the fairies from the old winter court abandon the sylvan folk, feeling outraged and betrayed by the agreement with the Alphatians.

Alphatia makes a prior (and secret) agreement in AY 65 / 935 BC with the Antalians from the south coast of Limn (Hundraal) and with the Antalians tribes of the coast (current Seahome Guard). The alliance remained secret until the definitive attack on Sheb-Nigosh against Ymathra.

With Alphatian alliances in place (elves, the Antalians south of Limn, and a few sylvan folk) the goblinoid tribes are defeated and ultimately surrender to the Alphatians, saving themselves from extinction. Finally, the strongholds and homes of the Lords of Ymathrans are located and destroyed in Alphatian attacks.

Alphatian armies in the area, supported by the Draconic Orders sent from Randel, come into conflict with undead troops just as often as they do with Ymathrans. The main position to fall is Sheb-Nigosh (now Castle Zychnier).

SOUTH LANDS AFTER ALPHATIAN INVASION

The Alphatian campaign in Limn officially ended with the defeat of Ymathran⁴, the taking of Trollhattan and the victory over Grønborg. After this, the Alphatians give benefits of lands and domains to their allies.

Hundraal established Alphatian cities in the south of Limn's coast and settled the Ystmarhavner seafarers on En-Hadoth building a naval port in conjunction with the Alphatians in Aroth-Dag (Seaguard Tower). Subsequently, it is ceded to the Dracor a domain of defence on the southern border of Limn on castle Zychnier.

Dul-Marag was another goblinoid community established by the Dar-Engal River as well as the sylvan folk village of Zerantha.

⁴ More info about Ymathra see Rodger Burns at [“Alphatia: Kingdoms Before Landfall”](#) on the Vaults of Pandius and Francesco Defferrari article [“Lost Civilizations of Thyatis and Alphatia”](#) in Threshold issue #11.

THE FAIRY - FOLK⁵

“The Winter Court was composed by members of all Fey races: sprites and pixies, dwellers of forests and glades; wooddrakes and pooka, masters of shapechanging; tiny leprechauns, craftsmen of the Wee Folk; brownies, kind and hard-working; and last but not least, the true princes of the Fey, the fair Sidhe, similar in physique to elves but vastly superior in power.

Thanks to their amazing magical powers, the Fey made Frisland, then called Fridland (or Land of Peace, in the Yanni language), a true paradise where humans could raise cattle in green pastures and hunt game in the sprawling forests of the Fairy Kingdom.

Everything changed with the Landfall of the Alphatians, who according to Yanni legends, had used force and trickery to steal the land from Fey and humans. [...]

Anyway, both accounts mention the bloody war between Alphatians and Fey in the V century which led to the exile of the Fey, mostly slain and finally mysteriously disappeared...”

Excerpt from the notebook of :
Abraxas Ayendir, student of the School of Thaumaturgy of Gowola (Frisland), regarding the Eye of Huldra and the Fey. Eimir 17th, Alphatian Year 1778

⁵ From Marco Dalmonte interview: [On the fey of Frisland and the Eye of Huldra](#) translated by Giampaolo Agosta in Threshold Magazine issue #6

Like the Known World, the Empire of Alphatia has its hidden kingdoms of the fae, existing alongside but apart from the mundane realms of human, elf and dwarf. Alphatian wizards don't much like to discuss the matter, though, because the fae of Alphatia are quite independent of the Empire and in fact arguably hostile to it - using ancient cunning, and alien and unpredictable magics to humiliate their would-be overlords and maintain the bounds of their realms. Though the fae of Alphatia have neither the numbers nor the desire to conquer or despoil Alphatian territory, their presence in the heart of the Empire is still an embarrassing threat that most loyal wizards would love to be rid of. Unfortunately, this is



HOUSE OF DLAGANA: SONS OF OLD GANDHAR

Long and lost is the story of the old Gandhar⁶. Among the giants of the region only a few heirs remain to represent their people. What can be supposed by the

⁶ See more about Gandhar on Francesco Defferrari article "[Lost Civilizations of Thyatis and Alphatia](#)" in Threshold issue #11.

scholars and sages is that it was a government of provinces united by the greater clans, however the migrations and diverse conflicts resulted in the isolation and seclusion of this nation.

In addition to the mountain giants that follow the Martoth⁷ in the north and some other clans isolated in the mountains, the best known in the south are those of the Dlagana house (since its origins point to the Ridge of Dlagana, besides the Glacier of Baradum), currently concentrated in the Kerothar Spur.

It is probable that there were other great halls of clans, as above Dag-Atur near the Glacier of Kazarn, since ancient times. They maintained their power in the northern Kerothar Mountains (from the Kerothar Spur near the Maskin-Xul Forest and to the north near the Glacier of Kazarn) and extending south on the Ridge probably until Mogban Ranges and Bolgrim Mounts.

It is believed that their numbers have been much greater and theories are of great confrontations when dragons began to migrate to the Kerothar as well as some possible exodus, but there is no trace of their passage to other regions.

As Alphatia brought relative peace to the region and proved to be a good ally of the more peaceful races, Dlagana's house agreed to maintain relations with the court of King Drushiye by sending representatives of his clan to Trollhattan. The giants are also allies of the djinni of Zaanadar Sanctuary.

⁷ This Character was explained on previous "[A Gazetteer of Limn part 1](#)" in Threshold issue #11.

NOTES ABOUT ZAAANIDON

In the hills south of Limn (near Sheb-Nigosh) there is a tribe of barbarian peoples dating to before the arrival of the Alphatians and the Ymathran. These had already established a prior contact with the Antalians of the Limn coast (as the Ystmarhavn). Unknown to local history and even by learned scholars, they came from ancient peoples called Zaanidon (from the eastern lands).

From the Central Alphatia, in the present-day Imperial Territories. The natives of Zaanidon (translating to 'Stormwatch' in the common tongue) were human in ancestry, but also had contact with djinni and other natives of Elemental Plane of Air and Elemental Plane of Water. Their spellcasters were few in number but generally quite capable and versatile, limited more by lack of vision and ambition than by lack of power. While the lives of the Zaanidoni were by no means ideal - they had comparatively crude skills in agriculture, metalworking and construction compared to the Alphatians, and they were threatened both by native prime plane monsters and infrequent incursions of wild elemental beasts unleashed from air and water vortexes - they were steadily improving their lot and likely could have grown to dominate their home continent, if left alone.

The magic leaders of the Zaanidon in the mountains were decimated by the action of the Ymathran and the rest of the tribe was brought to a truce. The sanctuary of the Zaanidon in the mountains was abandoned and the place was inhabited by the djinns from the Plane of Air who had previous

contact with the Zaanidon elementalists now decimated. The shrine was converted into a domain of the djinns (landhold), who came to ally with the local giants to remain neutral in the Alphatia war / invasion and free from the influence of the Ymathra.

PLACES OF THE SOUTH

AROTH-DAG

620 military inhabitants - Like a large black spur between the hills above the entrance to the bay, is the watchtower of the Seahome Guard, a home of Ystmarhavn seafarers, experts in navigation and dominion of the seas. Here is the largest military port of the Limn fleet. Guarding the entrance to the Trollhattan bay and confronting any threats from the sea of Alphatia and the dreaded deep and dark waters of Alphaks Island. A lighthouse serves to guide the boats over the area of shipwrecks and troubled waters along the coast.

It is said that a small community of Reef Giants live near Bay and are allies of the Seahome Guard.

EN-HADOȚH

590 inhabitants - Home of the Ystmarhavn seafarers and part of the Hundraal (the political and mercantile elite). This town is further south of the Bay of Trollhattan where the waters are quieter and the commercial port is more productive. The predominance

in the city is of Antalians besides some houses of Torpes that have representative for businesses here (Enemos, Cymia, Sigebyr⁸). The strength of local industry is fishing (octopus / squid / sepia) and paints (sepia ink).

DUL-MARAG

4500 inhabitants – The structure of this town is defined by a cohesion of goblinoid tribes governed by a council of shamans. Keepers of the old customs, Dul-Marag has a religious and political importance. Many goblinoids believe that the council of shamans and sages make this place protected and blessed by the goblinoid immortals. The town is also a training centre for hunting in the forest and gathering raw materials and some monsters to produce potions and magic components. The work of many hunters and scouts within the Alal-Xul forest and Tal-Burud lead to the occasional confrontation with sylvan folk, fairies and Zerantha people. It was necessary for King Drushiye to establish a military troop (around 200 troops) to supervise and patrol the trade and intervene in the conflicts of Dul-Marag with Zerantha to maintain peace. It is unnecessary to comment on Zerantha's disapproval that they can do little more than complain to the king, but part of the clashes in the forests are beyond the actual intervention of Limn, maintaining itself as a zone of confrontation.

⁸ These minor families was seen previous [“A Gazetteer of Limn part 2”](#) in Threshold issue #12.

NIN-BURUD⁹

4100 inhabitants – Even that established in the forest, an urban dwelling of the Celebryn-Shiye was necessary for trade and politics with Limn. From this point, Nin-Burud emerged, a portal to Maskin-Xul. The city gathers representatives of elven families to lead the city government. The idea came when the Celebryn, united by the few nobles of the Shiye house of Aradeyth¹⁰ (who accompanied Drushiye in exile) came to Limn.

Nin-Burud is also the trade centre for elf production (ceramics (production / export), bows / arrows (production / export) and hardwood (fine woods). There is also a large flint (mining) trade where some goblinoids and humans command the work of slaves and convicts for the extraction of flint. The predominance of the guard in the city is elven (200 troops) with units of air cavalry.

Admission to Maskin-Xul is not permitted without the permission of the elves, and the patrols are harsh and ruthless with transgressors (who are judged according to elven laws or, in rare cases, taken to Nin-Burud for judgment).

SHEB-NIGOSH

350 inhabitants - Plus the nearby tribes and 700 military personnel in Zychnier Castle¹¹,

⁹ Also known as Celebryn according to Limn version map from [Mystaran Almanac AC 1018](#) at the Vaults of Pandius.

¹⁰ See about Aradeyth on [Genealogy of the Shiye Court](#) by Geoff Gander on the Vaults of Pandius.

¹¹ This location was depicted on the

established by the Dracor to defend the Limn border. Its ruler is Lord Zain Zychnier, personally sent by the “Count” Mzilikazi¹². Their policy of conviviality is cordial and peaceful with the barbarians of the hills and a few Hundraal, including many who are hired for hunting services and border patrol.

DOMAINS OF DLAGANA

30 inhabitants – Located in the Spurs of Kerothar, this community of several families of frost giants and mountain giants form a clan of noble lineage. Their families are ruled by a Jarl known as Dralgard. The caves, castles and halls are protected by polar bears, wolves and, unusually, one or two white dragons.

ZAANADAR SANCTUARY

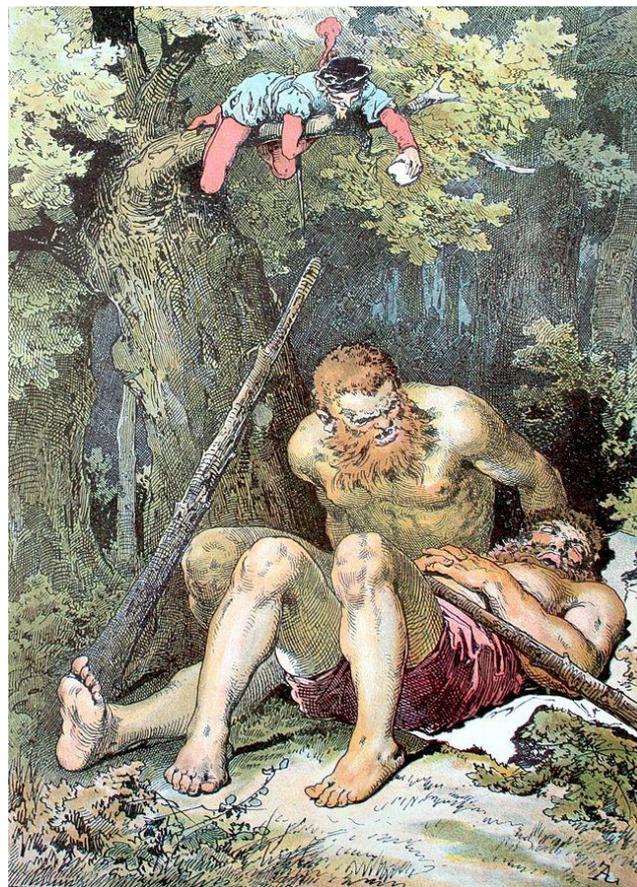
20 inhabitants – Over time, the abandoned mystical place was modified and improved by the djinns (after the end of the Zaanidon elementalists) to a typical Landhold state, as the standard model normally used in the Plane of Air¹³.

The djinns’ help also aided the Dlagana's House Giants against the dragons' attacks, using spells and charm monsters abilities.

[Mystaran Almanac AC 1018](#) version of the Limn map.

¹² This character was originally presented in “[Mystaran Almanac AC 1019](#)” available at the Vaults of Pandius.

¹³ Details on *AD&D Manual of the Planes* (TSR publishing) page 35.



Giants

The southern giants are going to have better luck with these allies on their side.

The domain is currently ruled by a Sheik or Pasha, who shows up in neutral terms with the court of King Drushiye of Trollhattan having appointed a vizier to discuss political affairs. Their origins and nation are unknown by Limn, but it is known that they know Al-Samaa - the djinni kingdom¹⁴.

¹⁴ As related on “[Ar: A Dream of Djinni](#)” Bruce Heard’s Blog.

ZERANTHA¹⁵

200 inhabitants – The largest exclusively Sylvan community in Limn. Governed by a council of forest beings who owe allegiance to King Drushiye and Queen Mellora (among its members are actaeon Grabulg and Tarmugh and the dryad Kamina).

The status of the fairies in Zerantha is curious: there are fairies close to the sylvan coalition, but some have remained more secluded in the forest (such as dryads, pixies, sprites and other treants). Other are even more separated and distant, including some renegades from the old Winter Court that did not leave for Shiye-Lawr or their hidden realms (sidhe, brownies and leprechauns). They appear taciturn, spiteful and distrustful, after they left the Winter Court and the elves of Celebryn for allying with the Alphatians. Some of them also went to live with a few fairies in Shiye-Lawr or other faerie realms like the faerie court in Redstone on the Isle of Dawn.

NPC GALLERY

Aroth-Dag

Blakor Gotison (LN male human F6) - Leader of the Seaguard Tower and warlord of the Limn fleet at the port at Aroth-Dag. Old wolf from the sea and experienced advisor to the royal military accessory. Despite his age, his physical bearing and height, he can still intimidate enemies. He wears a sea-scuttled

¹⁵ This town is not present on version of the map by Bruce Heard, however you can find it on the [Mystaran Almanac AC 1018](#) version of the map of Limn.

armour to make clear his influence and leadership among the Seafarers.

Horborgg Seaman (NG male human C6 of Protius) - Silent and mysterious, this priest is a friend of the sea and sea creatures. He can be seen on several occasions paying homage and ceremonies to his immortal and enjoys swimming at leisure in the reef's deep waters. He has a dependable friendship with Nergalu, a giant of the reefs. His omens are much sought before sea voyages.

Bersi Seaguard (N female human W4) - Blakor's niece, Lady of the Sea Breeze, Lady of the Seaguards at En-Hadoth. She runs the family business in Blakor's Hall and is on good terms with the Hundraal.

Nergalu (NG male Reef giant 18HD) - Giant of the reefs, ally of the Seaguard, his people have lived near the port for some time and have in the Seaguard Seafarers a lasting friendship. Nergalu and his people also have friendship with other nearby maritime peoples and join forces against any threat coming from the depths of Alphak's Island.

EN-HADOOTH

Hahkror Hundraal (N male human F5) - Descendant of Hadoth, leader of Hundraal, loves hunts and parties. An admirer of the ancient Ystmarhavn and Yannivey ways, he lives to recount the ancient conquests of his ancestors and the legacy that his family and clan left them (En-Hadoth). He does not hesitate to defend his honour at the tip of his sword or axe (whatever the moment or situation demands of him) but he is not very

aware of how much age or party life and little training has weakened his combat skills.



Koniholm Hundraal (N male human F3) - Hahkror's nephew, is one of the family's closest relatives, and Hundraal merchant (the son of Hahkror-Harom, left a few years ago for Norlan court in Qeodhar to render service and gain fame and glory). Koniholm takes care of the port (goods and transport) and conducts business with the barbarians of Sheb-Nigosh.

Balda / Ank'shatu (CN female human/Aranea 4HD) - Balda is a witch and wise woman widely sighted and sought after for omens, divinations, and sorceries in Eh-Hadoth. She has a particular interest in ancient stories and has searched for one or two times the League of Sages or the barbarians in Sheb-Nigosh. In truth, Balda is a disguise for Ank'shatu - an aranea of Thothia - and she came to Limn a few years ago following orders Of Aketheti, the Queen of Thothia and daughter of the Night Spider. Her goal is to find some relics and artefacts that have been stolen since the goblinoid

migration to Limn and she should return to her people. But until the moment without success. She follows without hesitation any information about magic mirrors (mirror to contact planes), mantle of spiders, book of rituals with spiders in its cover, etc (rituals used to contact Thiphatia or the Isle of Night Plane). For these mission, 3 araneas accompany her.

Sheb-Nigosh

Theore (NG female human F3) - Young leader of the barbarians of the south, Theore has maintained a peaceful existence in the region and has good relations with the Hundraal and also the Dracor. She also deals occasionally with the dwarves and men of Daevar to the south.

Baerwy (N male human F4) - Barbarian mercenary specialized in hunts and patrols, offering the services of his men (around 25 troops) for a good price and goods for his people.

Ozur (CG male human W3) - Young air elemental, woked barbarian. As a young man he possesses abilities for magic and pursues the lost magical legacies of his people. He has heard of ancient ruins and forgotten places in the mountains once belonging to his peoples, and plans someday to set up an expedition to investigate these places.

Dul-Marag

Kutulmag (LE male ogre 5/Shaman 4) - Great ogre shaman of Jamudaru who is part of the council that governs Dul-Marag.



Guardian and protector of the ancient tribal ways and customs of goblinoids, Kutulamag believes to be a protective force of the ancient ways and this attracted the support of strange spiritual forces that help him (secretly sent by the Immortal Kiranjo).

Rodog (CN male gnoll F4) - Backed by Dul-Marag, Rodog is a trainer for the hunting groups that search the Alal-Xul and Tal-Burud Forests to collect rare items and magic components and have already conducted two or three clashes with fairies and sylvan folk inside the woods.

Gashakk (N male beholder 11HD) - This beholder of Trollhattan was sent as a conciliatory representative, not too sensitive to the infractions of the laws in Dul-marag and Zerantha, to ameliorate conflicts that threaten the stability of the kingdom.

NIN-BURUD (Celebryn)

Aredyn Aradeyth (LN female elf W4) - Young council regent and clanholder - not yet named Clanmaster of the Celebryn Shiye, Aredyn rules her elven subjects and maintains the alliance and support to Drushiye in the southern lands in Limn.

Anduil “the old” Aradeyth (NG male elf W7) - An ancient and wise elf shiye, Anduil is a distant relative and friend of Lady Penaria and Arashiye II in Shiye-Lawr (and therefore a relative of Drushiye in exile). He has a vast knowledge as former nobleman of the ancient Shiye ways and customs. So he also assists young Aredyn when necessary and also King Drushiye when summoned to the palace of Trollhattan for audiences.

Arwel Aradeyth (LN female elf F4/W3) - Captain of Celebryn's air cavalry and protector of the Elven lands. Disciplined and dedicated to military life with devotion, she was decorated as a member of the royal guard of the king as a tribute to her efforts, even so remaining in the guard of Celebryn.

Galore (CN male human F4) - Barbarian of the southern lands and captain of the quarries, overseeing workers, convicts, and slaves in the work of the flint mines. Strong personality and dark humour, always answering questions with vague words. He is usually accompanied by men and goblinoids for his safety.

Millaene (N female swanmay 2HD) - Ally of Queen Mellora, she and her Swanmay sisters descended from one of the original daughters of Belotra the Beautiful - Guardian



of Green Realm¹⁶ and accompanied the Celebryn on their migration to Limn. Soon afterwards she was entrusted to Mellora's care to become a druid, but still remains in training. Among her assignments is to represent Mellora's interests in Celebryn and Maskin-Xul and to report those in court in Trollhattan.

Offiron (N male elf T2/W2) - Official imperial representative in Limn, Offiron was forced to leave Shyie-Lawr after the conflicts involving Xerdon on the southern borders of Blackheart. He has commanded a contingent of boltmen and responds to the imperial officers in Trollhattan.



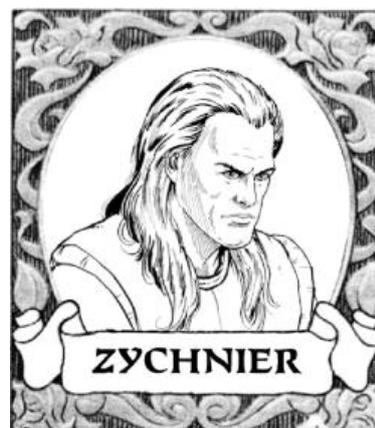
¹⁶ See more in *Twilight Calling*, (TSR publishing) page 7.

Jamiah & Stelliara (N female swanmay 2HD) – Both are swanmay in Alal-Xul and live in a cottage in the woods. Stelliara stays longer while Jamiah is part of the council meetings in Nin-Burud (Celebryn) when Millaene is absent. They live on good terms with elves in Maskin-Xul and occasionally help the elf forester patrols.



Zychnier Castle

Zain Zychnier (CN male human vampire 9HD) - Lord of the castle at Sheb-Nigosh and member of the House Dracor. He assumed the duties of leadership and border protection with hard working personnel and dedication against excesses from Stonewall.



Over time, however, he has lost some of his relationship with Count Mzilikazi. Perhaps because it gained more mystical strength and resistance to the sun (like the nosferatu) after making use of a strange medallion found among ancient coffins in the subterranean chambers of the ruins of the old castle. But he has suffered from strange dreams in which he feels a call from some being or force to the north in the Kerothar mountains around Dag-Atur and Mitrestu Castle (he has not talked of this with anyone). A small contingent of the knights of the order of Dracor is parked in the Castle.

DOMAINS OF DLAGANA

Dralgard (CE male frost giant 15HD) - Jarl of the Dlagana Giants. Descending from a lineage of clans of Gandhar, Dralgard feels tired in a struggle that can no longer be won against the various races that came with the migrations. He has good relations with the djinns in Zaanadar and for the well being of his people he has established an alliance with Drushiye, sending representatives to his palace in Trollhattan. In his subterranean vaults, he keeps old relics and treasures of his people with the help of Duorakh, his personal sorcerer.

Duorakh (CE male frost giant 14HD/Wokan 5) - Sorcerer of the Dlagana and Wokan. Duorakh is dedicated to the history of his people and ancient magics now forgotten, the Odin runes that were used by older giants and sages who now no longer exist to guide and teach him. Duorakh has some daring plans to strengthen his dispersed people: follow ancient expeditions to other ruins of the Gandhar peoples, gather

knowledge, magic and legends and try to contact the ancient world of origin of the giants - Jotunheim.

Duorakh believes he has collected the fragments of an ancient magical portal of his people that made use of the runes, but it does not work anymore. For this, he has established a secret alliance with a strange entity called Grothar (see below).

Zaanadar Sanctuary

Farid Mahad (CG male djinni 15HD) - This djinn Sheikh has established his hold in the ancient sanctuary of Zaanidon and wants to keep his secrets and study the magic of humans. His relationship with Al-Samaa is unknown and he does not comment on it. His greatest ally in the region are the giants of Dlagana.

Musha-al-Mahir (CG male djinni 7+1HD) - djinn Vizir of Zaanadar, observer, judicious and answers questions with new questions, always deceiving the most curious and inquisitive. At Trollhattan court it is usually reserved and quiet, but always observant. Rarely allows access to Zaanadar, stating that his Sheik does not allow visitors.



Depiction of djinns in manuscript

Zerantha

Kamina (N male dryad/wokan 4HD) - Wokan dryad, Zerantha council member and one of the main political articulators of the city and relative of Mellora. Kamina discusses with the council the day-to-day of the city about the nearby goblinoids (Nergath and Dul-Marag), visits Mellora in hearings and contacts other dryads and hamadryads in the forest about possible incursions and conflicts with



Tarmugh (N male actaeon/druid 11HD) - Druid and council member in Zerantha. Tarmugh belongs to a circle of druids that can be traced to Foresthorne and the sylvan folk. Mellora is linked to Tarmugh's circle and it looks out over the forests around Limn. Lately Tarmugh's mission is to contact Dreadwood's power in the forest (still not fully understanding what happens) and the actions of fairies, goblinoid incursions and occasional magical conflicts and disappearances in Akh-Kharu (which has previously sent Grabulg - another actaeon of the Council to investigate).

Sage Hs'wah (LN male hsiao 13HD) - Hs'wah is a council member in Zerantha and a member of the League of Sages in Trollhattan. Devotee of the Immortal Ssu-ma and dedicated to finding solutions to conflicts with scholarly and historical investigations, the learned Hs'wah is highly sought after and consulted in Zerantha, Trollhattan, Nin-Burud (Celebryn) and woodland creatures in general as the bearer of ancient knowledge among the Sylvan folk.

Forest of Alal-Xul

Dreadwood (N male gakarak 18HD) - Actually a Gakarak, a great treant in Alal-Xul and remnant of the oldest trees in the whole forest, Dreadwood has seen many springs and winters to continue tolerating so many migrations, invasions in their lands and has fomented some of the treants closest to him. Not to tolerate any more damage to their ancestral lands. After obtaining relative fame and extreme results against enemies, it managed to attract the attention of some fairies of the Winter Court and some Vengeful Fairies (see below), that united with him in the fight to keep the region impenetrable to invaders. Dreadwood sees itself as the punitive force of Ordana itself, the Purifier of the forest. Among his allies are treants, hamadryads, and a few sylvan folk and fairies.

Aglon (N male sidhe F5) - Lord Sidhe of the Vengeful Fairies of Aglon was sent to establish mystical holds in Limn through menhirs. The Vengeful Fairies use powerful magics to plant enchanted menhirs in the area they want to claim, then warp a pocket universe around the menhir to serve as a

stronghold and spread withering, disease and mayhem to crush any opposition. For the success of his mission (having even put one or two in Akh-Kharu) it becomes important that Dreadwood succeeds in isolating Alal-Xul so that he can strengthen his position in the place and in the future be able to confront Alphatia directly. Sidhe are uncommon but powerful among the ranks of the Vengeful, forming its officer corps and elite heavy infantry. They almost always have class levels, invariably as warriors, and carry weapons and armour made of 'coalsteel' - a hard, dullish-black alloy of iron that is not poisonous to fae. Physically, the Vengeful sidhe are almost perfect, but appear almost unnaturally gaunt, their skin stretched grotesquely over their bones.

Grothar -(NE male wraith 6HD)- This former Antalian sorcerer has enjoyed in the past the status of a minion of chaos¹⁷, But failed in its mission of collecting energy from the dead and declined as a mere major wraith - more precisely during Alphatia's confrontations with Grønborg. Demoted in the prime plane of Mystara as a mere undead, Grothar has restarted his climb to power by joining forces with others. He has visited Zain Zychnier in his castle and also joined forces with the frost giant Duorakh in Dlagana (without revealing his true plans). He has tried to remain hidden from Argaloth and from the Mitrestu.

¹⁷ See description about Lord of Chaos and Minions of Chaos (and Limbo) in the "Voyage of the Princess Ark" article on page 48 of Dragon Magazine #180, (TSR publishing).



DM PLOT INFORMATION

VENGEFUL FAIRIES¹⁸

This kingdom of fey is new to Alphatia, having arrived only within the past fifty years. The Vengeful have openly proclaimed themselves to be the military arm of an unidentified but powerful kingdom of the faerie-folk located somewhere in the depths of Nentsun. The Vengeful have great enmity for the Capricious (another Faerie kingdom far away), though they refuse to explain the cause of this; they also have equal spite and disdain for the Alphatians, who they view as either collaborators, dupes or pawns of their wayward kin. As a result, the Vengeful are just as willing to make war on any Alphatians that get in their way as they are on the Capricious - and since the Alphatians are far more numerous and visible, they usually bear the brunt of any conflict.

¹⁸ Originally detailed on "[The Fairie-Folk](#)" by Rodger Burns on Vaults of Pandius.

Currently, the Vengeful maintain their main strongholds in the sparse pine-forests of the southeastern Yannivey islands; they have also recently begun claiming a beachhead near the coastal lands of northern Foresthome. As an invasion force, the Vengeful work slowly and circuitously; they use powerful magics to plant enchanted menhirs in the area they want to claim, then warp a pocket universe around the menhir to serve as a stronghold and spread withering, disease and mayhem to crush any opposition. By striking only two or three times a decade and keeping their territorial claims away from major human settlements, they have advanced so far without raising large-scale human attention. Whether this will continue into the future, and whether Alphantian wizardry is able to deal with such a threat, remains to be seen.

WRATH OF THE FOREST

So many incursions and clashes with the goblinoids generated some resentment within the forest. From the goblinoid migrations and the Alphantian invasion, from the Dul-Marag foundation to its scout hunt groups, a response of terror echoed inland. It is said that an old magic was released giving life to the forest to take revenge against the invaders (now doubly more cautious). These legends have echoed even among Zerantha's circles.

This fact is correct, with a bit of exaggeration by those who are unaware of the real reason. One of the ancient beings among the treants (actually a gakarak) decided to gather a group of few isolated treants to take revenge on any invasion or desecration of the forest.

His influence has now extended beyond Alal-Xul across the Dar-Engal River thanks to his new allies: strange renegade fairies from some distant place (the Vengeful kingdom) were presented by the hamadryads to the gakarak Dreadwood. These fairies (under the leadership of Aglon) have powered his magical punitive ability against invaders, and so the rumours and legends of the living magical forest remain. Tarmugh of Zerantha, the actaeon druid, has tried a dialogue, but the tensions remain at a level that may have no limits.

THE PLAN OF GROTHAR

Grothar suspects of the whereabouts of a few menhirs and monoliths of Odin's runes around Torpes and already has begun to investigate the League of Sages to have some clue. If he could not only have access to these monoliths, but also to some of the ancient magical runes, he could make some worthy gifts for Hella, like having access to tombs of ancient heroes of the Grønborg era and bring them to revenge against Alphantia. This would also alter the runes of the ancient portal of the Gandhar giants to favour access to Niflheim¹⁹ (making the frost giant Duorakh think he would be contacting Jotunheim²⁰, see below) and thus obtain as reward a dignified status among the world of the dead of Hella.

¹⁹ Plane of immortal Hella, can be seen in *GAZ7 The Northern Reaches* (TSR publishing), page 63.

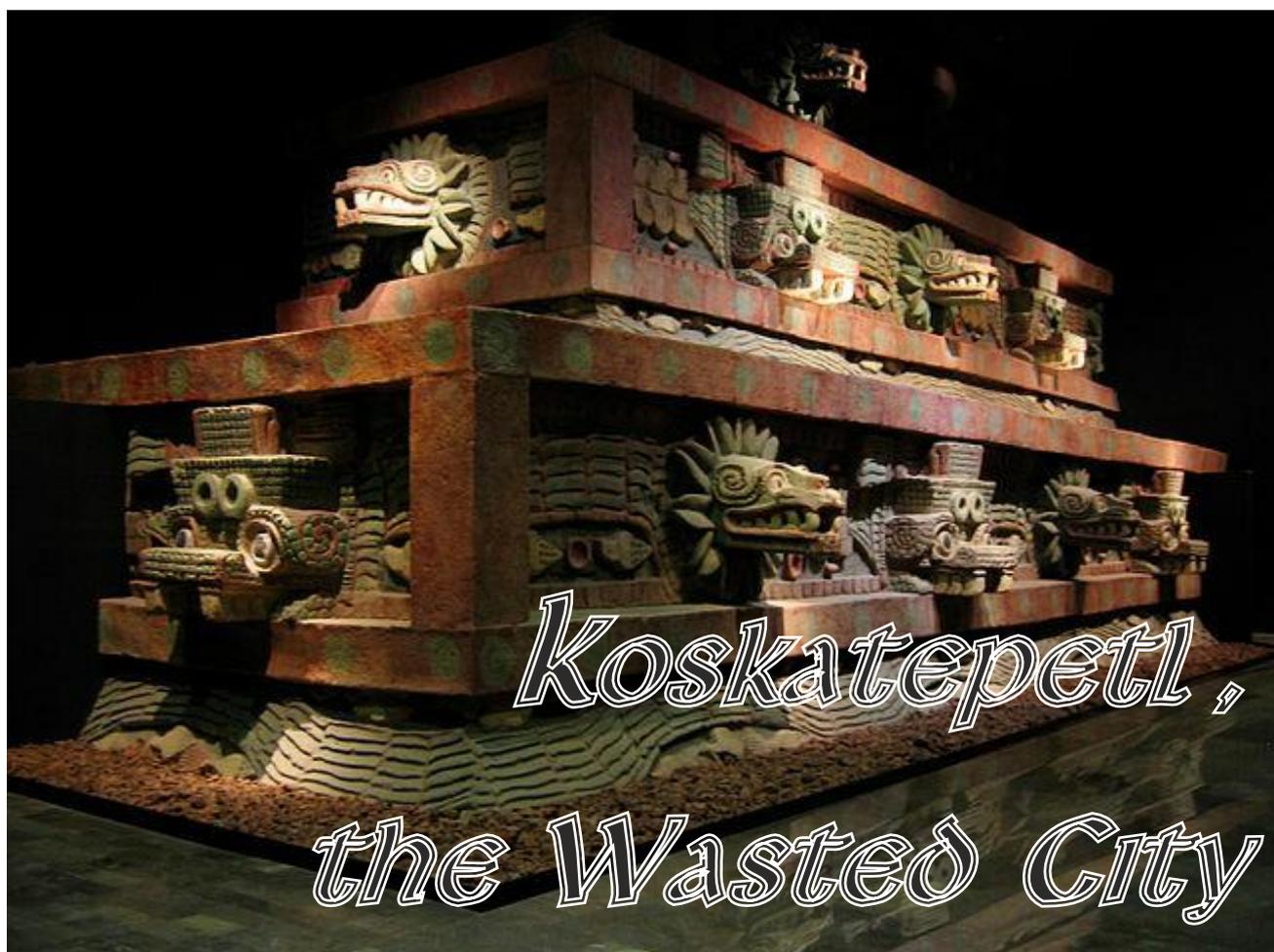
²⁰ Plane of Giants, can be seen on page 63 of *GAZ7 The Northern Reaches* (TSR publishing).

VAULTS OF DLAGANA

Below the jarl halls, Duorakh's research to restore the remains of an artefact known as the Giant Gate received the help of Grothar in order to reopen a magic passage to the giant's home world (Jotunheim). Unfortunately, Duorakh is having momentary problems with the use of the ancient runes of the giants (which were created from Odin's runes), but Grothar presented a reasonable solution: to complete the Giant Gate with some rune bearing monoliths, that he affirms will complete the scriptures of the Gate. Duorakh's idea is to convince his entire clan (with some reinforcement to be obtained at Jotunheim) to return Gandhar to his old time of strength and power in the Kerothar Mountains.

APPENDIX: REFERENCES

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- Geoff Gander, [“Genealogy of the Shiye Court”](#) from the Vaults of Pandius, current as of 7 August 1999.
- Rodger Burns, [“The Fairie-Folk”](#) from the Vaults of Pandius, originally from the Piazza posted 29 August 2009.
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- Francesco Defferrari [“Lost Civilizations of Thyatis and Alphatia”](#) in Threshold issue #11.
- Geoff Gander [“The Fall of Ilmaryl”](#) from the Vaults of Pandius, from the Mystara Mailing List posted 16 September 1998.
- Marco Dalmonte [“On the fey of Frisland and the Eye of Huldra”](#) translated by Giampaolo Agosta on Threshold Magazine issue #6.



by Francesco Defferrari (Sturm)

The wrath of the Sun God has hit the Gem of the Mountains, the great Azcan city of the land of the rising Sun. The city is now destroyed and abandoned; civil war plagues the Empire. The Sun God has forsaken the Emperor who wanted to defile the secret temple. It is a time of despair, and many fear the end of the Fourth Sun is upon us.

Azcan tablet,
approximately 3056 BC.

SECRETS OF KOSKATEP, LEVEL 12

This level can be reached only by going down from the chasm in area 1 on Level 11 (Kalasah, published in Issue 13 of Threshold magazine). The PCs will find themselves on **Level 12, Koskatepetl**, once the original Azcan city built over the location of the hidden temple of Ixion (Level 13, to be detailed in the next issue of Threshold), but abandoned before the Great Rain of Fire.

The text below repeats the original description of this level in issue 1 of Threshold Magazine (Mirror of Eternal Night article). Read on to discover more on this level of Koskatep!

Level TWELVE, GEM OF THE MOUNTAINS

Koskatepetl, the original Azcan city before the Great Rain of Fire, was once here. As it was purposely destroyed by the priests of Ixion from the level below, just a mass of debris and corpses - long ago turned to dust - is all of what's left of the once proud and great city. Yet, as the beastmen did not explore it much, and the Inti found it impractical to try to clear, almost all the contents of the city at the time are still here, buried in the ruins. Because of this, the site is one of the greatest treasure troves of the world, and one of the most intact archaeological sites of Blackmoorian times. At first look, the city is just a maze of fallen tunnels full of rubble, difficult to cross, with some partially crumbled skeleton or skull lying around, but one needs only the patience to dig a little to find metals, gems, gold, clothes, furniture, blades, treasures, ancient codes and spells - and very dangerous items such as radiance machinery and weapons.

The secrets: The DM should point out to over enthusiastic PC's that randomly pillaging the ruins is a major archaeological crime. While PCs probably will not care about this, all the items found in Koskatepetl are still infected

The levels of KOSKATEP in issues of THRESHOLD Magazine

- #1: [“Mirror of the Eternal Night”](#) (Overview)
- #2: [“The Debris”](#) (Level 1)
- #3: [“The Akropolis of Kotesch”](#) (Level 2B)
- #4: [“The Lower Ruins of Kotesch”](#) (Level 2A)
- #5: [“Ranesh, city of four people”](#) (Level 3)
- #6: [“Karrast, dwarven gold”](#) (Level 4)
- #7: [“Dark secrets of Ieronyx”](#) (Level 5)
- #8: [“Shadows of Kundrak”](#) (Level 6)
- #9: [“Signs of the Universe”](#) (Level 7)
- #10: [“Mokrath, serpent eye”](#) (Level 8)
- #11: [“Krystallac, Crystal Heart”](#) (Level 9)
- #12: [“Intitepetl, Gem of the Sun”](#) (Level 10)
- #13: [“Kalasah, The Black Hearth”](#) (Level 11)

with the Wasting, the terrible disease that killed millions after the Great Rain of Fire - so foolish PCs will soon learn the error of their ways.

No undead inhabit old Koskatepetl nor do any lifeforms - not even oozes or small insects. That should give PCs a clue about the dangers of the place.

Nothing changes here after the Darkers take control. During the centuries The Last One has explored the city extensively but, much to his frustration, found it impossible to animate the dead here (an effect of the Temple), found the radiance items quite useless, and he knows of no passage to the Inner temple lying below. Should he find himself in serious danger on Level Ten, he might try to escape here, where he will be quite hard to find in the huge maze of rubble.

TIMELINE

5100 BC: Precious and semi-precious gems are found in the area and the local people, ancestors of the Azcans, build mines nearby. Slowly the temple becomes a town, and later a city, that falls under the influence of the Oltec empire and is named Koskatepetl, the Gem of the Mountains.

3525 BC: The Azcan empire is formed, and Koskatepetl becomes not only a source of gems but also of metals, to build new lethal weapons for the war.

3057 BC: The Azcan emperor declares that the underground, secret temple of Ixion has to be opened to share its secrets with the people. The priests refuse, and destroy the city to seal the temple. A revolt of the Church of Ixion throws the empire into civil war and chaos; the site of Koskatepetl is abandoned and for several years infested by bandits and monsters that try in vain to occupy the place.

2998 BC: Human refugees hide from the Great Rain of Fire in the ruins of Koskatepetl, but are soon slaughtered by a group of beastmen that take residence among the ruins. The inner temple survives the cataclysm and the invasions unscathed. In time the beastmen cover the ruins and create a complex cave system

2504 BC: The Inti, led by the church of Ixion, occupy the ruins and rebuild the city of Koskatepetl. The beastmen who survive the conquest hide in a remote part of the cave and are not detected. The Inti explore briefly Level 12, but realize it is poisonous and abandon Level 11 and 12, building their

new city over them. Only a part of Level 11 is occasionally used as storerooms. Inspired by Hel, the beastmen seal a part of the caves (sublevels 1-4) to hide there.

2379 BC: The Troll Queen of Grondheim conquers the city, renaming it Krystallac. Just a few years later sidhe priests discover the existence of the inner temple of Level 13 and begin a century long negotiation with the sollux and the brutemen below to gain access to the artefact. They communicate through the temple of Ixion in Level 10 and do not settle Level 11. The beastmen thrive in their new hidden cave system.

2282 BC: As the Queen grows impatient about the unwillingness of Ixion to compromise, she sends her best troops to open the temple, digging a magical tunnel from Level 10 to 13. As this affects only the abandoned part of Level 11, the beastmen do not even notice. Inti troops soon attack the place, and Taymora intervenes shortly thereafter. This is the beginning of the War of the Empires, or the Twilight Wars, or the War of Southern Grondheim, that will last decades and will devastate the region. Mogreth intervenes as well a few years later.

2170 BC: Some fairies of Krystallac turn to the Unseelie, and decide to tell Elienor about Ashira's tomb. The Troll Queen discovers them and exiles them, and manages to scatter the essence of Elienor after a terrible magical battle near the Crystal Lake. But she is gravely wounded by Elienor's magic, and will never be able to recover. The Crystal Lake is also damaged and its capacity as a portal greatly reduced.

2080 BC: In a time of crisis in Grondheim, due to the Troll Queen's malady, Taymora and Intua, lizardmen and troglodytes, escaped from Mogreth, occupy Krystallac and keep it for a hundred years. As the lizardmen cannot locate all the portals left by the fairies in Level 9, they try to seal it completely, and likewise they ignore Level 10 and below.

1976 BC: After a long siege Taymora conquers Krystallac and renames it Kosmoteiros. Nyx knows about Ixion's artefact, but rather than try to steal or destroy it, she decides to exploit the magical aura of the place to build her own, stronger artefact that will bring about the fulfilment of her Dream. The followers of Nyx leave alone the levels below.

1777 BC: To prevent Kosmoteiros from falling into the hands of Thanatos, the priests of Nyx destroy the city with a terrible earthquake. Thousands die and the place is abandoned for many years as seismic activity increases in the area. The earthquake opens the Chasm down to Level 12.

1664 BC: After the destruction of Taymora, fairies of the Unseelie court, former exiles of Krystallac, take possession of the place and try to use the Starlake, but do not discover Ashira's burial and are not able to reach Elienor until much later. The dark fairies of Kundrak do not reach Level 10 and below.

1597 BC: Lord Keiros, a Tal¹ nosferatu and follower of Nyx, conquers Koskatep from the

¹ The name I gave to the Taymoran descended population that lived in Karameikos before the arrival of the Traldars, see my "[History of Traladara](#)" in the Vaults of Pandius

dark fairies. Vampiric followers of Thanatos attack several times but are defeated. Lord Keiros briefly explores Level 10, 11 and 12, but does not use them.

1412 BC: Hutaakans conquer the site for Ixion and Pflarr; a seriously wounded Lord Keiros is forced to hide, and his followers are exterminated. The Hutaakans slowly explore the levels below, reaching Intitepetl and its mummies, and succeed in communing with them. They explore Level 11 and 12 also but, finding them empty, leave them alone.

1021 BC: Orcs sack Koskatep. Some hutaakan priests survive hiding in the lower levels, and will become more guardians for the hidden temple of Ixion, teleported from the temple in Level 10 by the will of the Immortal.

954 BC: After several battles, a dwarven army defeats the orcs and conquers Koskatep, but they are soon in constant warfare with the gnolls that rule over the region. They do not fully explore the lower levels.

912 BC: The dwarves are finally defeated by the gnolls, who build their own city over the ruins. Shamans of Ranivorus and Thanatos begin to study the Starlake. The Gnolls do not reach Level 10 and below.

841 BC: Followers of Nyx, aided by ogres and giants, attack Koskatep but are unable to conquer it from the gnolls, though they succeed in killing the most powerful shamans of Thanatos in Level 7, and burning their notes.

603 BC: The ogre king Kulfan conquers Koskatep in the name of Nyx; ogres rule over

the area for centuries. Human priests of the Lady of the Night live in the city along with them. They have some contacts with Level 8 and 9, and reach Levels 10 and below, but do not use them.

95 AC: The Darkers almost complete the ritual to use the Starlake and bring forth the Eternal Night, but are stopped at the last moment by priests of Ixion, who drive out the ogres and occupy Koskatep for years. The priests of Ixion occupy all the levels down to the 10th, while they briefly explore Levels 11 and 12, soon abandoning them.

227 AC: The priests of Ixion have repelled several attempts by ogres, giants and followers of Nyx trying to reclaim the ruins, but are destroyed at last by a very powerful and ancient vampire sent by Thanatos, The Last One. Some priests of Ixion escape to the lowest level and become defenders of the inner temple, teleported from the temple in Level 10. In the following centuries ogres, giants, followers of Nyx, and even adventurers sent by Ixion try to reclaim Koskatep, but The Last One destroys them all. However, he fails to control completely Level 9 and 10, and so is unable to fully settle the empty Levels 11 and 12 with his minions.

912 AC: Traladaran freedom fighters hide in the ruins for some time, but are destroyed by the Thyatian army. The Thyatians soon leave the place.

998 AC (or later if the DM prefers): Lady Sonya, the Grand Daughter of the Night, a powerful priestess of Nyx, and her followers, are able to defeat The Last One and reclaim Koskatep. The Last One is not destroyed, but escapes to Level 10 with some faithful

followers, to plan his revenge. However, Quehuar has his own plan to stab The Last One in the back and destroy the Darkers, too, with the aid of the followers of Ixion in Level 13.

1031 AC: The next alignment. On this date, the Starlake could be used to bring forth The Eternal Night. Shortly before this date at the latest, the beastmen of the hidden level will attack Level 13. If The Last One is still alive and hidden in Level 12, he will stage his final attack at this time. See also “The Battle on this level” paragraph at the bottom of the previous levels of Koskatep in Threshold issue [#12](#) and [#13](#).

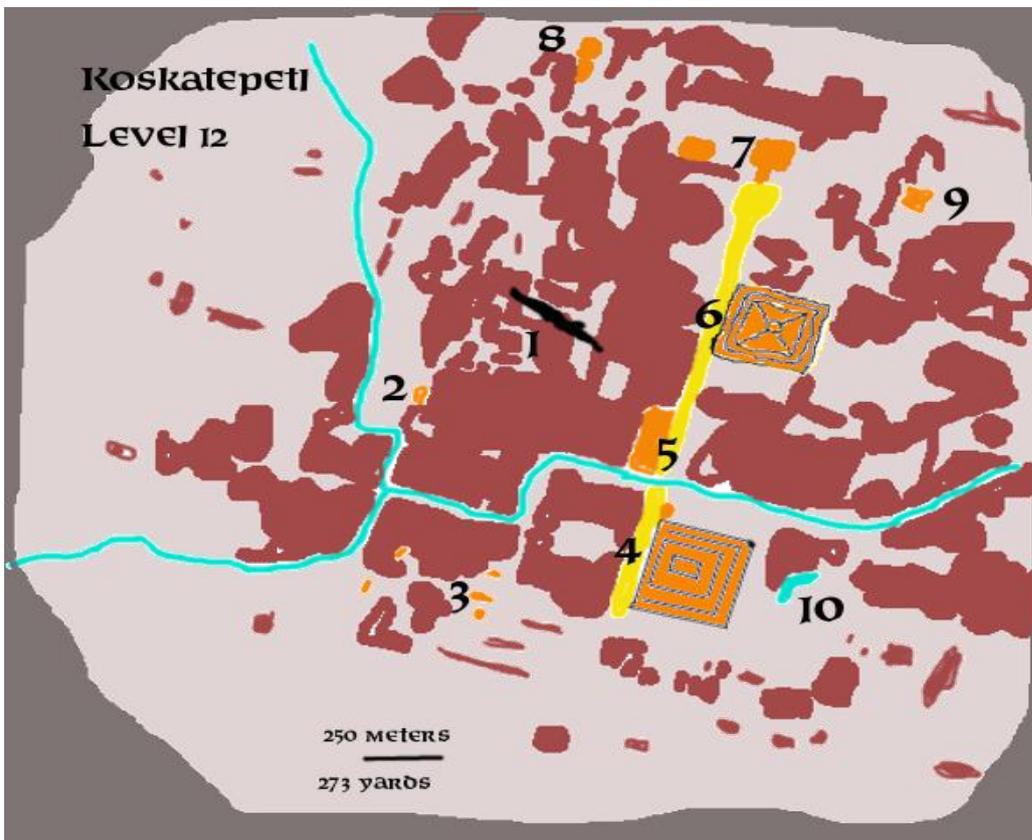
Notes on this Level

The **Random Critters** table and the **Wandering Parties** table of level 2B (in issue #3 of Threshold magazine, pages 207 and 208) may apply here if the DM so wishes, **ONLY** in the empty part of the level. In this case there is a 1% chance in each room that a Wandering Party will be encountered.

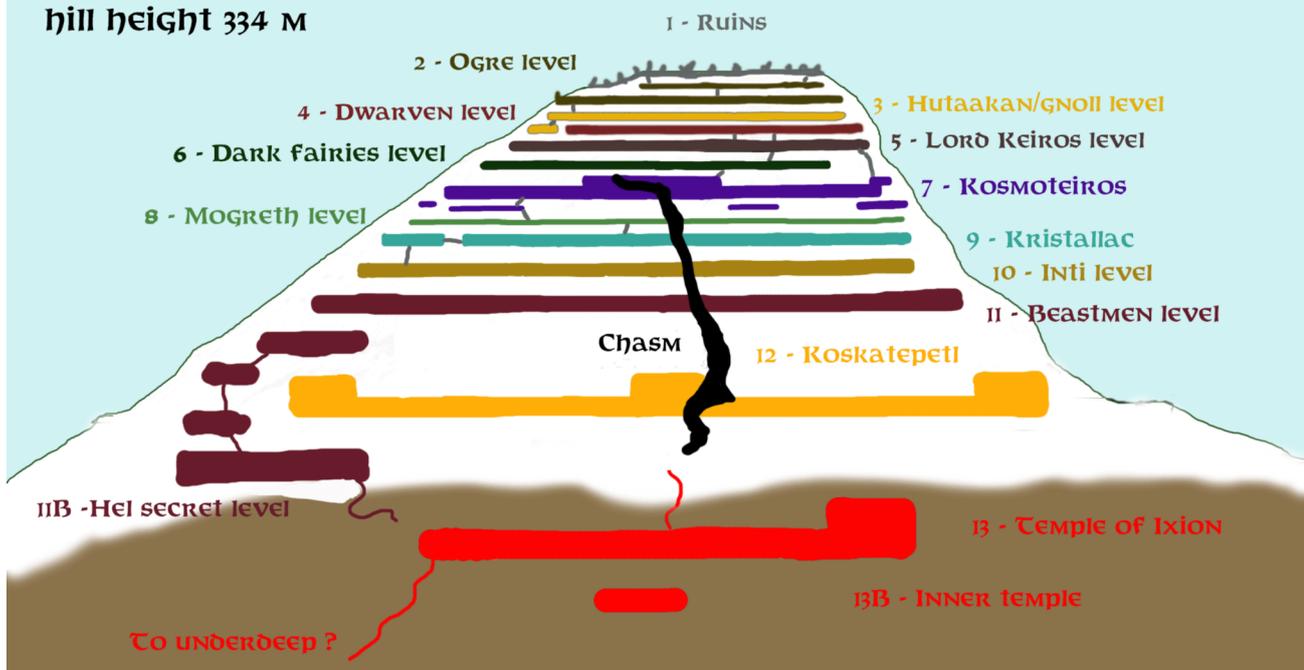
The **Followers of The Last One** encounter table of level 1 (in issue #2 of Threshold magazine, page 122) can also still be used here if the DM so wishes, but only in the empty part. One such follower could try to join the PCs to explore this level, with the final purpose of bringing them in the presence of The Last One himself (in Level 7). After the **Darkers** take control (see issue 1) a party of them could also be encountered in this level.

Except for the casual explorer listed above, and The Last One and some of his minions if he is defeated twice but not destroyed, this

koskatep, level 12



Koskatep sections hill height 334 M



level is completely **empty**. There are no living creatures, nor undead. There are only some constructs in specific locations, as described below, but they will not move around.

Spells that provide magical transportation, such as *teleport*, *passwall*, *dimension door*, *magic door*, *travel*, *gate* and spells such as *clairvoyance* and *find the path* do not work on this level as on Levels 5-9 due to powerful wards² placed by The Last One and others before him. The DM could decide to apply the same rule to the levels above the 5th, at least from Level 2 and below, particularly if the PCs are of a high level.

The map and the inhabitants of this Level

The area in **dark grey** on the map is solid stone, and thus very difficult to dig, even though it may contain small tunnels dug by critters and wandering monsters. The area in **lighter grey** of the main level is partially clear, but full of rubble, rocks and collapsed structures which cannot be recognized anymore. The **dark red** areas are collapsed buildings, sometimes with just a wall or half a wall standing. The **orange** buildings are still (mostly) standing and are the only ones which can be entered. Collapses may still occur inside them.

The former buildings of Koskatepetl are shown in red and orange because they were often painted and decorated with a prevalence of these colours.

The black “scar” in the middle of the map is

² For example a [Teleport Ward](#) as the spell created by Robin D. (See the Vaultsof Pandius)

the **Chasm** opened by the Kosmoteiros earthquake of 1777 BC, which goes all the way down to this level.

This level is **empty** of any inhabitants, unless The Last One is hidden here after a second defeat (see Levels 7 and 10 in Threshold issues #9 and #12). This could be the end of the dungeon for the PCs, because there is no way to reach Level 13 below by walking or mortal magic. The only way is by the will of Ixion, through the temple in Level 10, as described in Threshold issue #12, or if the beastmen of Level 11 are able to open a physical passage as described in Threshold issue #13. There is no light in this level unless the PCs bring it.

All Level 12 is contaminated by the **Wasting, or Radiance poisoning**, therefore anyone spending at least a day here or drinking the water of this level has a 70% chance (-constitution) to develop nausea and vomiting after 1d6 hours, which will last 1 full day, with minor headaches, and -3 to all rolls. The PC so affected will also feel weak for a full month thereafter, and suffer a -2 to all rolls and a 20% decrease of his/her hit points. After this month, she or he should recover fully, but there is a 15% chance the PC will develop a mysterious malady which will bring him or her to death in 1d6+2 weeks. The malady can be cured only with clerical healing of the fifth-seventh level.

This is the reason why nothing alive inhabits this level.

Something also happens here to **undead**, despite their status. After a full day spent here, the unintelligent undead such as zombies and ghouls begin to decay, losing pieces of their bodies and feeling weak, with a -1 cumulative to all rolls and characteristic for each day spent on this level. Once their constitution drop to 0, they fall to dust and

are destroyed. Incorporeal undead suffer a similar effect, and eventually dissolve. Superior and intelligent undead, such as mummies, vampires, nosferatu and lich, do not suffer the weakening effect, but are unable to raise any lesser undead in this level. This effect is due to a combination of the powerful aura of the secret temple of Ixion in Level 13 and the Radiance poisoning suffered by the ruins of Koskatepetl after the Great Rain of Fire.

1 - The Chasm

This is the only passage from Level 11. As described in previous levels, climbing up and down or tying a rope could be quite dangerous, as the water dripping from Level 7 has random teleportation effects (see sidebar). Even if the Chasm does not reach down to Level 13, it's still about 70 meters to the bottom, so a fall from here can easily kill anyone slipping down. Around the Chasm there are mostly collapsed buildings. Among the buildings, the skeletal remains of many inhabitants of the ancient city can still be seen, as is the case everywhere around the ruins of the city. Due to the effect of the temple of Ixion in Level 13 below, these skeletons cannot be animated.

(1) - There is the Dark Waterfall coming down from above. As the walls of the chasm are wet, it is extremely dangerous to try to reach Level 11 and above from here, but on this level it is also the only way. Touching the Dark Waterfall may also cause random teleportation effects to Annwyn, particularly the areas where it borders the Carnifex prison (see "*The Carnifex Connection*" at the end of this article).

This area of the city was the noble quarter in the heyday of Koskatepetl. Searching for many hours, it is still possible to find several ancient magical weapons, as well as precious and semi-precious stones (1 object decided by the DM for every hour of search by 5 people, or a 20% chance each hour for any individual PC). The magical objects



Skeletal remains

The Last One, Quehwar of Level 10, and the Darkers will keep on ignoring Level 12 as they have done so far. Only when the followers of Ixion open Level 13 to come up (if called by Quehwar as detailed in Area 4) will a permanent passage probably be built from Level 11 to 12. The actions of the beastmen in the hidden sublevels will obviously come into play, too (see previous issue of Threshold magazine). If the Last One is defeated in his hideout of Level 10 but not destroyed, he will come down here, but will not stop in this area.

found in Koskatepetl may be very strange and very powerful¹, but are also all contaminated by the Wasting. This means that anyone carrying them around, even outside this level, will have a 30% chance (-Constitution) to develop nausea and vomiting for each day he or she carries the item. The sickness will then last 1 full day, with minor headaches, and -3 to all rolls. The PC so affected will also feel weak for a full month hereafter, and suffer a -2 to all rolls and a 20% decrease of his/her hit points. If the PC continues to carry the item, he will never recover and the malady will bring him or her to death in 1d6+2 weeks. The malady can be cured only with clerical healing of the fifth-seventh level. A similar spell could also be able to remove the contamination from the item, if the cleric understands this is not a “common” curse.

¹ For ideas on the technomagic items from before the Great Rain of Fire see these Vaults of Pandius articles: [“Alien devices from DA3”](#) , [“Sample tech weapons”](#) by Rob , [“Additional tech weapons”](#) by Alex Benson and [“3.5E Technology”](#) by Jamie Baty.

2 - The Great Court

This was once a great plaza, used by the noble Azcan of the ancient city for sports and meetings. The only standing building was once a house of pleasures to consume drugs and engage in other activities. Not much is left now except for rubble, and some interesting mural paintings which seem to represent dog-headed people. PCs could find treasures and objects digging around, as described in the previous area.

The river runs slowly to the north. It is completely devoid of any life; its waters will cause nausea and vomiting, and affect a PC with the Wasting, should he or she drink them. There was also a bridge in this area, now collapsed. Beyond the river was the area of the city inhabited by servants and common people, now completely in rubble and containing in general only common objects.



Dog headed warriors depicted on a wall

The Last One will ignore this area even if he hides in this level. Should he stay here for a long time, he may try to modify Chetlan for his purposes. Any other party who will decide to rebuild this level, if they will be able to remove the contamination of the Wasting, will do the same (see Area 6).

(2) - The house once had a guardian, a **jade living statue**², which is still inside, appearing as a dog headed creature. PCs who have seen gnolls, Hutaakans or lupins may believe it to represent one of these races. The statue will animate if someone enters the house, presenting herself as Chetlan. She will speak in Azcan only. She will offer pleasures which are no longer available in the house. Her real usefulness may escape the PCs, as she can answer many questions on the ancient past and the layout of the city. She does not know about the Wasting and the danger of staying in Koskatepetl or picking up objects. She will refuse to leave the area unless a powerful wizard PC can somehow modify her incantation. She is still contaminated by the Wasting and can affect PCs staying near her, giving all a 15% chance each day to develop the malady as described above.

² Living statues appears in the Rules Cyclopedia, with more types as new monster in *B10 Night's Dark Terror* and in the 1993 *Creature Catalog*. See also the "[Living Statues](#)" at the Vaults of Pandius.

3 - The Forges

This area once held the forges and workshops of the city, mostly pottery, and some buildings are still standing. This area too could be excavated to find archaeological treasure, and among them there are several masks made of obsidian and other materials. Some of the masks are clearly magical. There is only a 5% chance of finding a magical mask for each person searching for an hour, but there are several mundane masks clearly visible.



Obsidian Mask

The Last One will probably find the masks and use them to his advantage. If he is defeated and another party manages to fully explore Level 12, they will find the masks and take them.

(3) - The masks have similar properties to the minor artefact Mask of Bachraeus, described in the Rules Cyclopedia, page 249, but each one has only one power between Charm Person (once a day), Resist Poison (permanent when wear), Turn to Stone (once a day), Detect Magic (once a day), Passwall (once a day), Immunity to Turn to Stone and Charm (permanent when worn), or others the DM thinks appropriate. The masks can be removed at will.

4 - The Palace and the Garrison

This was once the great palace of the city on the Golden Avenue (see below), and had in front of it the great garrison, now completely in rubble. The great palace has partially survived, and its four pyramidal levels can still be entered, but the interior could be subject to collapses. Murals depicting jaguars and fantastical creatures can still be seen on the walls. There are also several **iron and rock living statues** in the palace which will activate if someone enter the room in which they stand. There is also a 25% chance of finding magical treasures and object for each person searching for an hour.



Mural depicting jaguars

The Last One or any other party coming after him could well be capable of turning the statues to his side and discovering the secret treasures and weapons.

(4) - The statues will ask intruders to leave in Azcan, and will not accept delays. However, a powerful wizard could be able to modify their incantation. In this case, the statues could answer many questions about the city, their times, and also the secret caches of treasures and magical weapons which are still hidden in the basements of the palace and the garrison. As Koskatepetl was an important city on the eastern border of the Azcan Empire before the Great Rain of Fire, the amount and power of such weapons and magical object could be quite relevant.

5 - The Golden Avenue and the Market

This was once the main avenue of the city, surrounded by shops and the great covered market on the left side. The great bridge over the river is the only one now still standing, and can be crossed in relative safety. In this area there is a 20% chance for every hour of searching by each person to find valuables, including gold and gems. Just a few strange coins are present, however, as the classical Azcan did not use them.

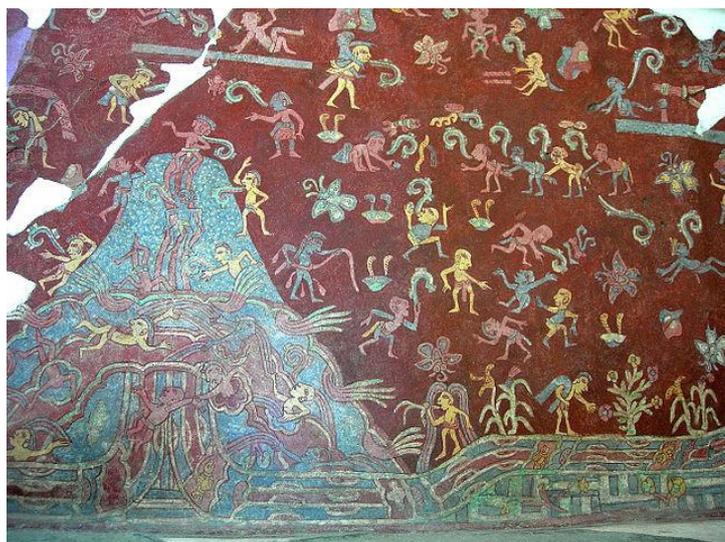
The Last One, or any other party coming after him, will find Ceotl and use him for information.

6 - The Great Temple

This was the pyramidal temple of Ixion (called by the Azcan Otzitiotl) at the height of Koskatepetl. The temple was not destroyed by the earthquakes of 3,057 and 1,777 BC but partially damaged and abandoned. The temple has several levels, but now all the internal areas are dangerous and can collapse on minimal vibrations (10% chance every turn, 15% if more than 5 people are walking near each other). Despite the danger, the temple still has all its treasures intact: gold, tapestries, magical objects, and gems. All of it is contaminated by the Wasting. The Vault of the temple has even more fantastic treasures. However, at least **12 living statues** will activate to defend the treasures of the temple, 5 of them defending the Vault. The statues will animate only with someone tries to take objects away or if someone tries to open the Vault's locked door. They will not speak to anyone, even if he or she speaks Azcan. A fight will increase the chance of a collapse by 5% for every 5 rounds of fighting.

(5) - An ancient **jade statue** is half buried among the rubble of the market. His name is Ceotl, and in Azcan time he served as a guide and source of information. As with the other statues, he speaks in Azcan only, but magic could be used to communicate with him. He will not attack but will defend himself if attacked.

(6) - Several skeletons lay around the temple, remnants of ancient adventurers who tried to take the treasures away and failed. Some of them have also magical objects. The statue will not intervene to defend such objects. Followers of Ixion entering this temple may experience visions warning them of the dangers of the collapses and the Wasting, and advising them to reach the temple in Level 10 (see issue #12 of Threshold magazine) for a safe access to Level 13. A group of at least 12 clerics of Ixion working together in this temple for a month will succeed in purifying this level from the Wasting. The clerics of Level 13 will eventually do that if they come out, and a visiting PC cleric could receive a vision showing this too.



Mural in the Great Temple

The Last One, or any other party coming after him, will explore the temple and take possession of the many treasures still buried here.

7 - The Minor Temples

This plaza was once home to the other main temples of the city, such as the one dedicated to Kalaktatla (Ka), and other immortals venerated by the ancient Azca, such as Tlaloc (Protius), Xochiquetzal (Valerias), Mictlancihuatl (Hel) and others. The temples of Ka and Valerias are the biggest ones, and are in the best condition. Both contain treasures, and at least **7 living statues** protecting them, as in the great temple described above.

The Last One, or any other party coming after him, will eventually explore these temples, too, and take possession of the many treasures still buried here.

(7) - As in the temple above, some skeletons are also abandoned here and their minor magical objects can be safely taken. Followers of Valerias and Ka could also experience visions when inside the temple of their immortals, with warning of the dangers. They will not, however, receive directions on how to access Level 13.

8 - The Workshops

This area of the city was once home to workshops of various kinds, as the technomagic development of Blackmoor had reached the Azcan Empire, too, back in 3,057 BC, when the city was destroyed and abandoned. Various types of technomagic toys and weapons can be found here³, but they are all contaminated by the Wasting and therefore highly dangerous. There is also the laboratory in which the living statues were created, with several of them in different stages of completion.



Image of one of the Azcan books on how to make living statues

The Last One or any other party coming after him will eventually discover the codex and develop his (or theirs) own living statues as soon as possible.

³ Roughly equivalent to a real world technological level of about the middle XIX century AC.

(8) - A good wizard or alchemist, or a gnome or dwarf with some relevant skills, could be able to learn here all what is necessary to build a living statue. The process is explained in several Azcan Codices, which could be taken away and studied. The codices suffer from a minor Radiance contamination, giving a 5% chance each day of developing the malady described in Area 1 to anyone handling them.

9 - The Palace of the Goddess

In Azcan times, this was a school for girls of various ages, normally daughters of nobles or rich merchants who were educated to become clerics, wizards, or refined courtesans. Several images of a female immortal, probably Valerias or Ordana, are painted around the palace. Not much is left now except for some half decayed dresses, toys and laboratories. A lone living statue, Xechal, stands in the main courtyard, appearing as a noble Azcan woman (with a long shirt, long skirt and hair braided on the front). She is a **crystal statue** but will not attack unless PCs destroy the properties of the Palace. It is possible to speak to her in Azcan.

(9) - The only treasures still lying around in this building are the jewels and the gems once worn by the young students. A small minority of them may be magical (only 1% chance of finding one if one person searches for one hour).



Painting in the Goddess Palace

The Last One, or any other party coming after him, will not explore this palace much, unless they want eventually to clear this level and settle it (once the level is purified from the Wasting).

10 - The Small Lake

This was once a beautiful garden with a lake in the centre, a popular place to walk for the ancient inhabitants of the city. Now rubble is all around, and the water is grey and dirty. In addition to that, it will cause the malady of the Wasting to anyone drinking it. Another major danger also lies in it.

The Last One or any other party coming after him will surely possess a lot of magic, and so will be attacked by the stone alligator immediately. The Last One will try to take control of the statue for his own purposes, and the same could be done by others who will come here.

(10) - The stone **living statue** of an alligator is hidden just below the waters. The statue was created just before the destruction of the city by an Azcan wizard who meant to use it to kill a hated rival, but this never happened. Deprived of its purpose for centuries, the statue will now attack any wizard coming near the waters. The statue is able to detect magic, and will attack any PC which possess a relevant quantity of it, including magical objects.

THE BATTLE ON THIS LEVEL

There will be no initial battle on this level, but the Last One will come down here to explore if he is defeated again in Level 10, or in any case in which he is repelled but not destroyed. The paragraphs about the battle in Level 10 and 11 in the previous issues of Threshold already explained and detailed several possible outcomes of the battle for the control of Koskatep.

The Carnifex Connection

This idea comes from [“Thorn’s Chronicle”](#) by RobJN. For more information about the Carnifex, see [“Of the Lore and Legends of Y’hog, City of the Unclean Ones, and of that Race”](#) and [“Carnifex”](#) at the Vaults. Annwyn is the home plane of the Dark Fairies, see also the earlier level of Koskatep in Threshold issue [#8](#) and issue [#9](#) about the Dark Waterfall. The chance of teleportation could be very low (only 5% of the times that someone touches the waters), or much higher, depending on the DM’s preference. This should be considered an Immortal level effect, thus not affected by any Teleport Ward, see footnote 1 in Room 1’s Secrets description

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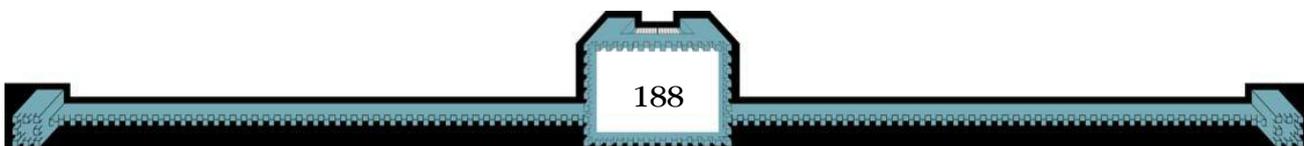
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NEXT ISSUE



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MYSTARASPACE

Anticipated contents include:

- A short guide to Mystarospace
- Myoshima (Matera)
- More Hollow Moon (Patera)
- The Exiles campaign
- The world of Ishtar
- A training day before embarking on the Thyphatia
- The last installment of Koskatep

...and much much more!

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Submission proposals should be sent inline in the mail, using the following subject format: [ISSUE#][Proposal] <title of your article>

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- The type of article being proposed (short story, adventure, geographical location, organization, etc...)
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- An estimated word count of the article (articles should range anywhere from 1000 to 7000 words, depending on the type of article submitted).

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†Refer to "Call for Contributions" (page 5) for next issue deadline dates.

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The Mystara Magazine



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A few brave people, even entire communities, have faced the Shadowdeep and triumphed, some even reaching down to the Hollow World, the land of the red sun, and some instead reaching up from the Hollow World to the strange Outer World of day and night.

Threshold magazine presents in this issue the secrets and the treasures of the Shadowdeep, for you to discover and take. But not all of them, because the Shadowdeep is so vast you could roam it for your entire life, and never return to the worlds of the light.

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