

Enclosure

Issue 2

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Roleplaying in the Fantasy World of Glorantha



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Welcome to the second edition of *Enclosure*! The members of the SFC believe that Glorantha is a world best explored through gaming. Accordingly, this issue includes background for running campaigns in several parts of Glorantha.

Glorantha is known for being a world of myth, and we've included several. Most of these are directly relevant to gaming, as there are famous heroquests based on them.

We hope you enjoy this issue, and will join us for the next.

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Editor: David Dunham

Publisher: Neil Robinson

Gaming SFC Style

Neil Robinson

Despite all the work of Gloranthan scholars from the Seattle Farmers Collective (SFC), the one thing we really get together to do is game, and usually in Glorantha. In response to a number of requests about how to run a game in Glorantha, or how to act as a player, I thought I would try to give an overview of

how we do it here in Seattle.

One of the most important questions to ask is "Why Glorantha?" To me, its greatest asset is an incredible depth of cultural, historical, and mythological context that the world provides. Unfortunately, this is also one of its greatest problems. There is just too much information for new players to deal with, and too many areas for a GM to remember during game play. There is nothing worse than a role-playing session being repeatedly halted while the players and GM hurriedly look some trivial piece of minutia.

Stick with a single cultural viewpoint

To simplify Glorantha, we normally run games based on a single cultural viewpoint. In Jeff Richards' *Taming of Dragon Pass*, we are all pre-Sartarite Orlanathi. In Pam Carlson's Alkoath Campaign, we are all playing natives of Alkoath, or Shargashi. This limits the required knowledge to a single set of myths, a single history and a single viewpoint. Who cares what the Ralian Orlanathi think about Arkat, when none of the character have been to Ralios, let alone met anyone who has. If they meet a Dara Happan, they'll only relate to them as a northern Sun-worshipping savage. Similarly, it is much easier to delve deeply into a single background than try to coordinate several. When starting new players, tell them the most important things in their culture. This will give them the cultural fodder for the first couple of sessions. More refined views can be learned from non-player characters (NPCs) and experiences during play. It sure beats reading 37 pages of background exposition.



Illustration by Jeffrey Noh.

My favorite part of *Gods of Glorantha* was the religious handouts. If the players read "Staves from the Storm Voice," they know how to act in basic religious matters. Along with the "What My Father Told Me" sections out of the *Genertela: Crucible of the Hero Wars* players book, they make us a nice overview of the Orlanthe people and how to think like an Orlanthe.

Players will initially complain that they want to play something unique, but honestly, there is a lot of room for diversity within the Orlanthe culture. Even if everyone were playing carls, each could have a lot of diversity based on the stead they come from, their family, and their goals. One character could push to be a hero, another the clan earth priestess, and yet another makes the claim to be clan chief or even a tribal king! Another could be a steadfast farmer, a surly hunter, or even one who gravitates to Eumal.

Many games involve a small multi-cultural adventuring group that roams across Glorantha righting wrongs and getting rich, maybe even becoming heroes. The problem I had with them was that they never seemed to have a good link to a community. I would have a hard time rationalizing characters going things for the greater good or other arbitrary moral code.

Another problem of mixed group is maintaining group cohesion. When players begin to deeply investigate their characters background, they may conflict with other player characters doing the same. Solutions to this problem involve putting dissimilar characters into a unifying and insulated circumstance. Some sample groups are:

- Adventurers in Pavis;
- Wolf Pirates;
- The only known survivors of the Dragonkill; or
- Traders in the Redlands.

Saying that, I'm still a strong proponent of the single-culture game. I'll guarantee you'll have a better-focused and more realistic group.

Provide all the players with a link to their community

The sign of a true hero is not just that they accomplish great deeds, but that they do it for a reason to accomplish something for their community not personal gain. Harmast did the Lightbringers Quest to save his people from the evils of Lokamayadon and Nysalor; Theseus battled the Minotaur to save his people from the evil Minoans. You need to keep this in mind when planning the background for your game.

The best thing to do is to give them families, complete with siblings, parents, and other kin. Better yet, make a few of the players directly related. Brothers will definitely bicker, but

stick together in the end. There are a large number of plots related to the family, from taking cattle to market, to ensuring a good marriage for your sister. When characters become more experienced and more important, they can begin to experience adventures that affect the entire clan.

Some of our games are multi-generation, where players play the father, then the daughter, and maybe even the grandchild. This continuity gives players the strongest sense of community possible.

The other side effect of linking the characters to a clan is responsibility. Sure you can cattle raid the Orlevings all you want, but what happens when Orlev Orleving raises the entire Malani tribe against your clan in reprisal? Players will think twice about having their characters be killing machines when they have to worry about the consequences.

Don't write a plot, let the plot develop like a character

I've been in games where the plot is so rigid that your character is nothing more than a cardboard cutout actor. It is very important to make players feel that their decisions matter.

Sketch out a general set of events, and allow the characters to react to them. Don't worry if their reactions don't produce exactly the same historical result as the source material.

Use the Gloranthan history as a backdrop to your story

Glorantha offers a wonderful backdrop of events and locations to game in. We tend to use such large-scale plots as our campaign backdrops. The Taming of Dragon Pass campaign got to see several major events take place as the game progressed. These events include:

- The breakup of the Malani tribe. King Malan sees kinstrife between his children destroy the tribe he built;
- Colymar Tribal politics and civil wars. Storm Voices, Orendanae Earth Priestesses and clan chiefs vie for the control of the largest clan in Quivinieland;
- High King Arim of Tarsh's battles with the aggressive northern neighbor: upstarts known as the Lunars.

All three of these major events share common threads. On a general level, we know what happened. Malan died. Barngradus defeated Borngold Ring-giver, but later stepped down in favor of Korlmar. We have a pretty good idea of the major players and their factions. However, we don't have an exact definition of how everything played out, and are free to modify the events to fit the campaign. This is perfect for a campaign backdrop.

Sample Cultural Viewpoints Orlanthe

- Our God, Orlanthe, is the Greatest God in the World
- No one can make you do anything
- Your kin comes first, and then your clan everyone else is a stranger
- Kinslaying is Chaos, and the worst thing in the world

Akothi

- Shargash kills everything
- We hate Darjiin usurpers
- You need to destroy to create again

Grazers

- We are the descendents of Yu-kargzant, God of the Sun, and are destined to rule
- Horses are our kin
- Only we can ride the sacred horse; everyone else is just vendref (or worse)
- We don't eat herd animals lesser than the horse

Trolls

- Obey your mother
- Everything else is just food

As the game progresses, the players need to see the foreshadowing of the event to come. A Malani clan chief visits the Varmandi player characters asking for support if he goes for the tribal kingship. The decisions of the characters help determine which side they are on. Once their choice is made they are suddenly going to suffer certain repercussions or gain benefits. Choosing to actively oppose the Lunars brings down their ire, but may be rewards once Argrath returns to Sartar.

The players don't need to be involved in all of these events either. If travelling merchants continue to bring small snippets of news from Esrolia about the disappearance of the Pharaoh, they will have a good feeling of a world with depth.

Myths and Heroquesting

Glorantha is filled with wonderful myths and stories Orlanth's wooing of Ernalda, the Summons of Evil, and Orlanth and Aroka. But to an Orlanthi these aren't just pieces of history, they tell people what to do and how to do with difficult situations.

The interaction between myth and culture is a core part of the SFC games. In addition to the physical and social aspects of the society, we also investigate the mythic aspects. In fact, it is the mythic aspects that provide the solutions for the problems that the characters have in the physical and social world.

The SFC gaming style is heroic (1). That is, our gaming occupies the intersection between the mythic, physical, and social worlds. Sometimes we play primarily in the social world, like clan politics; sometimes primarily in the physical world, like leading a trading mission to Rune Gate; and sometimes we operate primarily in the mythic world, like performing the Summons of Evil to deal with an infestation of broo. But no matter what we focus on, all three are present. There is never a clear division a division between the three worlds.

Most people are very comfortable with gaming in the physical world, especially combat. The social world is well known too, as we all have real world experiences to apply. But what do you do with the mythic world?

Gloranthan society is permeated with mythic solutions. When our clan Lawspeaker had a difficult law case, he went back to the stories of Heort and how he brought justice to the people to find his solution. When we discovered a Black Wyrms inhabiting Rainbow Mounds, we performed the Orlanth and Aroka heroquest to defeat it. And like the myth, we gained the benefit of a new friend—in our case a Malani King who didn't raid or demand tribute for five years.

Other social questions provoke a mythic response as well. In our most recent campaign, we play members of the Varmandi clan during Lunar occupation. The Colymar King, Black-

mor the Rabid, has extended his protection to foreigners, including Lunar missionaries, in return for reducing our tribute to them. Now it may have been a wise social and political move, but not a mythic one. In fact, the during the next Sacred Time we experienced Black Rain, just like Orlanth's people saw before he did the Lightbringers Quest. The interaction with the Lunars is Chaos running rampant into the world. When the Varmandi chief failed to drive off the Black Rain during the Sacred Time rites, we had to act. The failure of Orlanth's magic meant poor crops and poorer clan magic.

It is impossible to solve the problem physically, as the Lunars and their Tarsh Allies are just too strong. A mythic solution is needed. So the players have decided to perform a version of the Orlanth goes to the Empty Mountain to get a weapon to defeat the Black Rain. If successful, they will have a mythically powerful that should help them drive off the Black Rain, and in return, reduce the impact of the Lunar. However, if they fail, the entire clan will suffer, especially the heroquesters and direct supporters.

Players can also invent and apply their own myths. If they seem to be culturally appropriate, they can be easily applied in other situations. We invented a version of Orlanth rescues Ernalda, where Orlanth travels underground to defeat an evil god and return with his bride. The players used it to inflict damage on a rival chief and steal a hostage.

We can even take player actions and bind them into a clan myth. In an early game, a player had Chief Varmand defeat the Orlevings by flying over their battle lines and stealing their battle banner. A later chief could reenact this story to gain power against the Orlevings.

Conclusion

Our gaming style is not for everyone, although we feel it encompasses the full range of role-playing from cattle loans to heroquesting. Really, the main key in gaming is to have fun. After four years the group is still going strong, and that's what it is all about.

(1) Many gamers consider a heroic game to be played with characters of superhuman ability and power. I consider the heroic aspects to be based on what a character has accomplished, and why. Think of David defeating Goliath.

To see a descriptive version of the SFC Gaming Style in action, just check out "Korol's Saga," "Kerad's Saga," and "Tales of Ralios" on David Dunham's web site <<http://www.pensee.com/dunham/glorantha.html>>. Korol's Saga details the Varmandi clan during the 1300s, as they deal with the Malani, the Colymar, and the founding of a new clan. Kerad's Saga sees the Varmandi 250 years later, a broken clan after the failure of Starbrow's Rebellion. Tales of Ralios details the rise and fall of the Belovaking clan.

The similarity to Icelandic sagas is sometimes stunning. The feud between the Varmandi and Orleving clans develops into a generations-long struggle that drove the Varmandi out of their homes in Ormsthane Vale.

It Takes a Thief

(or, "How to Steal from Glorantha for Your Own Campaign")

Dr. Rich Staats

King Phineas the Black surveyed the carnage. "If only these Hemenisch halflings would stop their futile onslaught, the killing could stop," Phineas thought.

"Tremire!" Phineas bellowed across the din.

Within the span of a dozen heartbeats, Tremire of Gebnick Glade, long time associate of Phineas and a gray elf, appeared at the monarch's side.

"Tremire, take your Aldryan archers and the half-orcs cavalry to the hillock to the east. Grab the healers while you're at it. Move quickly Tremir! Ready the Yelmalian for a charge. We'll prevail over this hobbit rabble before the rising of the Isban moon!"

In creative circles there is an old adage that "talent imitates while genius steals." Glorantha began as the vision of a bright Beloit College freshman in the late 1960s. Sartar, Prax, and Magasta's Pool have grown from their inception to encompass books of tales, board games and role-playing games the world over. Glorantha is an incredibly rich and deep world, but many gamemasters are fearful of incorporating Gloranthan elements into their own worlds and campaigns.

This article will describe some guidelines for integrating the best of Glorantha into your own campaign in a non-Gloranthan setting. There are eight key factors to consider: Sample, Try, Aspect, Filter, Fearless, Own, Revise and Develop (STAFFORD). We will explore each of these factors below.

Glorantha is huge and full of unique races, mythologies, and geographies. Many gamemasters are daunted by the sheer magnitude of that which is Glorantha. The first step in creative Gloranthan purloining is to **Sample**. Try a small bit before you attempt to assimilate the whole world. Do you like Dragonewts? Well, go ahead and add them to your current campaign setting. Build on success, and it generally is easier to add a little than to add a lot. Before you know it, Prax will appear as a terrain feature on your campaign map.

One of the biggest difficulties in integrating in Gloranthan elements are the game mechanics, or the flow and feel of the game. It is absolutely essential to be willing to **Try** various modifications or combinations of modifications to your current rule set to capture that special Gloranthan look and feel. Be willing to modify background information to make the Gloranthan portions seem more at home in your campaign.

One warning is critical at this point. As you begin to add Gloranthan elements, make sure that you retain the key **Aspects** of Glorantha that made you select the elements to begin

with. *RuneQuest* was designed with Glorantha in mind while other gaming systems were not. You might find that what originally attracted you loses its luster when it is applied to your existing mechanics or campaign background. (See <http://www.geocities.com/TimesSquare/9329/staats2.htm> for more information—the link on designing a campaign world for a methodology for "top down" or "bottom up" world creation is the most appropriate.) If you introduced the Maidstone Archers into a level based system, some of their terror disappears. "Yeah, it took quite a few hacks to slay those funny three armed archers. Hey, they shot me five times, but I still had 50 hit points in reserve. They weren't so bad." In the case of the Maidstone Archers, you might want to add a "quick kill" mechanic, or not, **Try** a variety of options out.

There is an old adage "what is the best way to eat an elephant?" The answer is one piece at a time. In the same way, be willing to **Filter** out those other aspects of the creature or mythology you do not like. I really liked the multi-staged life cycles and rebirth of the Dragonewts, but there were elements of the Dragonewt culture that didn't work for me. So, I **Filtered** those "difficult" aspects out.

There is likely at least one Glorantha "purist" who has swooned from my heresy by now. (You know who you are.) "By the crimson Goddess! He means to **change Glorantha!**" To this I reply be **Fearless!** E. Gary Gygas claimed in the hallowed pages of *Dragon* that those who modified *D&D*TM weren't playing *D&D* at all. Pshaw! The keepers of Gloranthan lore will not burn down your house and cry "purity above all!" Greg Stafford, the creator of Glorantha, has publicly stated on more than one occasion that he

actually favors modification of Glorantha in the gaming context if it increases the group's enjoyment of the setting. (Ask Greg about Redwing sometime.) Don't be afraid to change key facts. In my own long running campaign, Time



Eurmali tricksters are universally distrusted for their thieving ways. Illustration by Stefano Gaudio and Justin Norman. ©1998 A Sharp.

is a deity born of Chaos' interaction with the other elements. Times key feature is entropy. Be a heretic; you're in good company!

Whatever you decide to purloin from Glorantha, make sure you *Own* it once you bring it into your own world. Take pride in the way that aspect fits into your own campaign. Make that aspect a unique, highlighted part of your world. It might have been Glorantha inspired, but, once, you've taken a piece into your own world, make sure you are willing to run with your own creative energies.

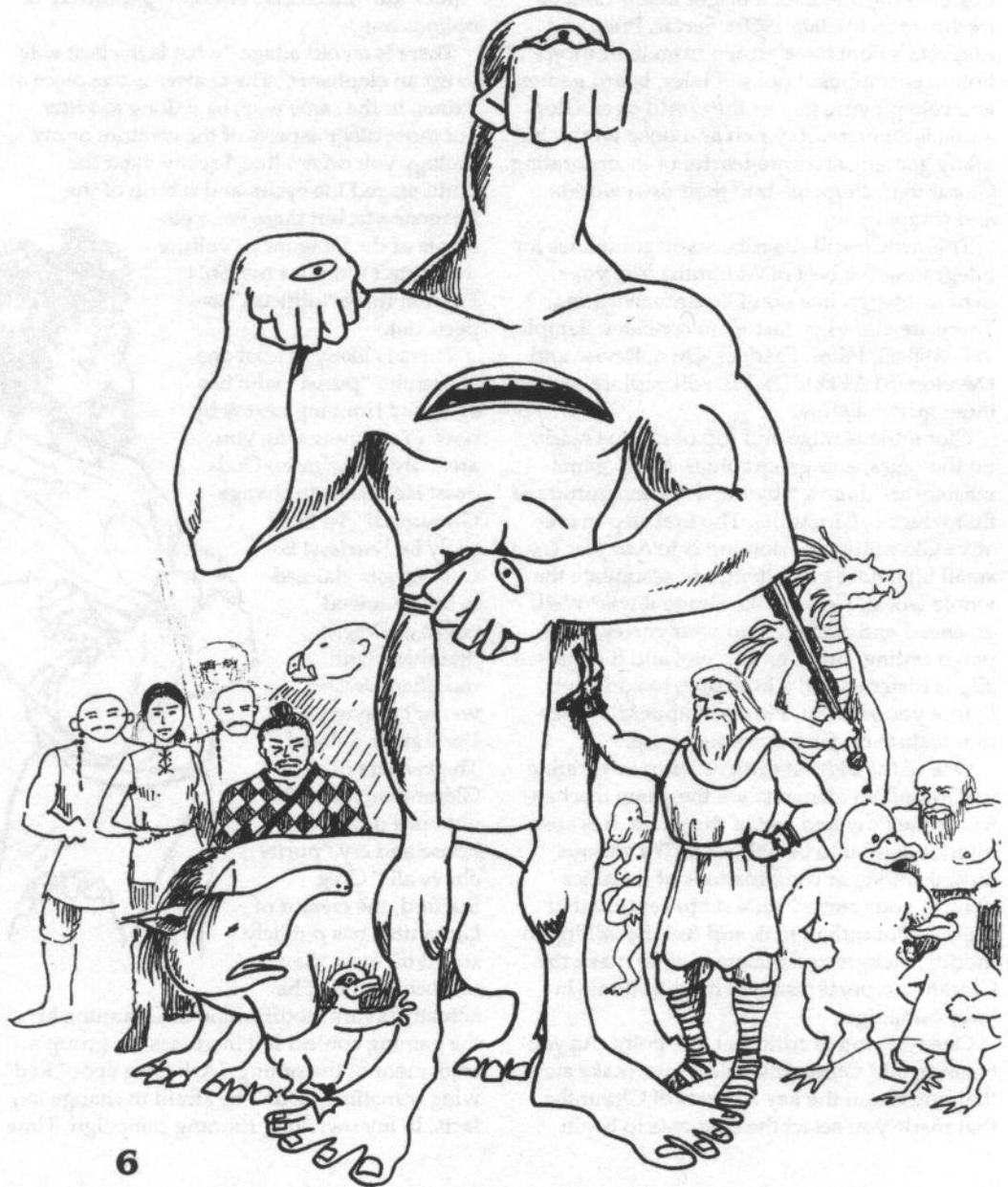
Along these lines, be willing to *Revise* the aspects of your world based on reflection and gaming experience. You might be able to figure out all the ways that your players will abuse the new aspects, but the players will surely figure them out in quick order. Giving the Humakti reusable Sever Spirit seemed like a good idea on paper, but in a world without resurrection, the idea didn't work so well. Change things to suit your needs, do play testing. It will work out better all the way around.

Conventions are a great place to try out modifications. You get a new set of eyes on your campaign, and you don't have any idea how the new players will react to it. Also, there is no laundry list of past decisions to haunt you. You are free to modify your world at will.

Last, integrating Glorantha into your world will likely mean you'll have to *Develop* other aspects to your own campaign. Hear, hear! Even if you ultimately reject the Gloranthan spark that motivated you, if the spark promoted you to further develop your own world, then the effort was not in vain.

Using STAFFORD, you can bring the mystery, depth and excitement of Glorantha into your own campaign.

Best wishes, and visit my web site at <http://www.geocities.com/TimesSquare/9329/inline.htm> for more examples of a Gloranthan based world and "how to" articles for the aspiring GM and player. You can also contact me via e-mail at staats@alum.mit.edu



The Maidstone Archers are one of the features of Glorantha people are least likely to steal. But perhaps the morokanths, the ducks, or the dragonewts are more to your liking. Illustration by Jeffrey Noh.

The Grazers

David Dunham

Mythology

The Remakers of the Empire of the Wyrms Friends made centaurs by using evil sorcery to combine men and horses. When the Dragonkill War wiped out all humans in Dragon Pass, born centaurs lived carefree lives. But the created centaurs were called Pain Centaurs, for they were discontent with their unnatural existence.

Harfrautos the Founder, a pain centaur, struggled spiritually with the Sun God and the Horse Goddess and discovered the secrets needed for the cure. He returned with the magical ceremony which Ironhoof, King of the Centaurs, used. In this rite each centaur had to agree to be either human or horse, and to dedicate himself or herself to the cause of each other. In this way they created a race of strong people and stronger horses which are kin to each other.

Harfrautos established the customs of the tribe when he travelled to heaven and communed with the Sun God. Yu-kargzant was glad to recover his ancient children in their original forms, and gave them the true secrets to lead a pure solar life.

Ironhoof granted his changed-forever kin grazing rights in the lands north of the Dragonspine.

History

Grazer history began in 1250, when Ironhoof created the tribe.

A one-armed swordsman from the Holy Country named Hiia was already in their lands. He helped the new tribe deal with the elves and trolls who still lived in Dragon Pass.

For years, no other humans entered the region. Then something disrupted the energies which had prevented them from entering. The Grazers enslaved or drove away all the foreigners who came into Dragon Pass. At first their numbers were small, and they were integrated as slaves within the clans. But after a while so many were captured that the Grazers allowed them to settle. They could lead their own lifestyle as long as they obeyed the rules of the Grazers. These people were called *vendref*, which means "standing ones."

In 1330 Arim the Pauper entered Dragon Pass from the north, and founded the Kingdom of Tarsh. The Grazers allied with Tarsh against the Lunars, while continuing to raid the Quivini peoples in the south. The ferocity of these raids earned them the name

"Horse-Spawn" from the Quivini.

The Tarsh kings eventually turned on their allies, and there was a major *vendref* revolt. Factional and religious struggles broke out, which would normally have been resolved by migration. But the Grazers were now hemmed in by settled people. There was no place to go.

During the turmoil from 1450-1470, a leader rose from the cult of La-ungarant, First Wife of Yu-kargzant. She was called the Feathered Horse Queen after her costume, and she discovered secret powers of the earth. First the *vendref*, then the priestesses of Arandayla followed her. Finally, she crushed the Grazer chief in a doom-ridden duel of thaumaturgy.

The new chief, Endars Stand-up, brought peace. The Queen was granted the right to speak in matters of magical interest, and the rebels recognized the overlords' right to rule.

When Endars died, many kings contested for the Feathered Horse Queen's hand in marriage. Sartar of Boldhome was the only one who qualified. Sartar lived in the Grazelands for a year, and founded two trading posts as a gift to his wife, who had a daughter. The Queen lived in Boldhome the next year and bore Sartar a son. The High Lord Dragonewt named Sartar the King of Dragon Pass.

When the Lunar Empire activated the Temple of the Reaching Moon, the Grazer lands of Sikithi were within the Glowline, and seized by settlers. Jendetarin the Strong purged Sikithi Vale of its newcomers, but the valley was eventually lost again.

The Grazers supplied troops to aid the Lunar conquests of Boldhome and Prax.

The Grazers in History

The history of the Grazers extends back far earlier than their arrival in Dragon Pass. One of their most famous kings is known in the historical record as emperor Vuranostum, who ruled Dara Happa. His descendants know him as Vuranoste, and follow his funeral customs.

The Pure Horse Folk made their way to Pent. The Empire of the Wyrms Friends brought them to Prax. The Praxian nomads tried to drive them out, but were utterly defeated at the Battle of Necklace Horse in 620.

In 800, the Pure Horse Folk fled the giant Paragua, taking refuge with their allies in the EWF. In 830, led by Jhoraz Khyree, and aided by Pavis and his animated statue, they returned to Prax, defeating the nomads in the Too Tall Battle.

The Pure Horse People suffered grievous losses in 1237 when the troll hero Gerak Kag marched south to Pavis.

In 1250, Goran Tar of the bison folk led clans from three different tribes against the Pure Horse Folk. Others say it was Bimabwe Bigger-than-Life, an impala rider who led four tribes against them. The horse riders were outnumbered and surrounded. The Praxians say none survived the Battle of

Alavan Argay.

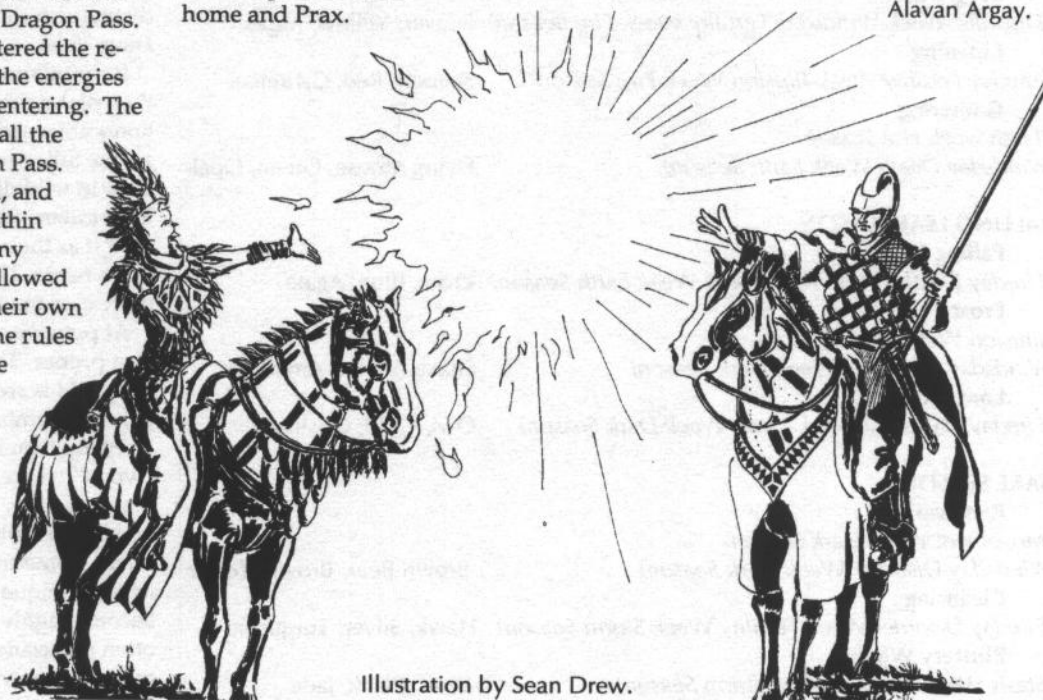


Illustration by Sean Drew.

More Information

Enclosure 1
King of Sartar
<<http://www.pensee.com/dunham/glorantha/grazelands.html>>
<http://homepages.enterprise.net/jneilson/RQ_content.htm>

The Silkmane Clan

Martin Hawley

A report by Aricus Massileuis, 1624

The Silkmane Grazer clan inhabits the north of the Seven Foals Vale. Like many neighboring clans, the Silkmane have few permanent settlements in their clan lands. Gatherings of families occur in the winter and at major festival times, when clan families return from their summertime wanderings in the pastures of the Dragonspine Hills. At these times camps resemble permanent dwellings. Some camps remain for weeks and the clan trades with merchants, both vendref and outsiders.

The Silkmane have a fine herd of some 1600 horses, mostly Seredae and Galana with traded Sun Flower clan mounts and stolen Sky Leap horses. They also have a number of the famous Hyal breed. The clan, which numbers some 750 individuals, holds to traditional roles within clan activities. Men are hunters and warriors, women are gatherers and caregivers. They adhere to the age group progression common to all the Grazers. They have "Chiefs"

for war, hunting, camp minding and several other roles.

Boundaries between family grazing areas are nigh on indistinguishable to outsiders, as such the lands of the Silkmane appear to be one. The lands of the Silkmane are also home to the Toci vendref clan, often known by their totem as the Blue Gecko, who eke out their meagre existence by farming cereal crops and keeping pigs.

Infanticide isn't widely practised. However, children of unions of identical birth totems are ritually killed. The name of the child is given at birth, and retained through out the child's life. It can be supplemented by an acquired name for some great deed or attribute. Women are separated during birth and for a week afterwards, residing in a yurt known as La-ungarant's Shelter, where only women may enter. Here they are tended by clan elders.

Women's Birth Song

(The Awakening of new life)

"Our voices call for all to awaken and for the child's sleeping spirit to enter the circle of new life"

Totems of the Silkmane

Times of the Year: Totem, Color, Mineral

(The never ending Hoop)

GROWING LEAF SEASON

Awakening

(Truth Week -Disorder Week Storm Season)

Deer, Orange, Agate

Growing

(Harmony Week-Windsday Stasis Week Sea Season)

Porcupine, White, Peridot

Flowering

(Fireday Stasis Week-Truth Week Sea Season)

Woodpecker, Pink, Quartz

DRY SEASON

Long Days

(Disorder Week-Windsday Fertility Week Fire Season)

Beaver, Yellow, Jasper

Ripening

(Fireday Fertility Week-Illusion Week Fire Season)

Salmon, Red, Carnelian

Gathering

(Truth week Fire Season-

Windsday Death Week Earth Season)

Flying Mouse, Green, Opal

FALLING LEAF SEASON

Falling Leaves

(Fireday Death Week- Movement Week Earth Season)

Crow, Blue, Agate

Frost

(Illusion Week Earth Season-

Windsday Harmony Week Dark Season)

Snake, Violet, Amethyst.

Long Nights

(Fireday Harmony Week-Stasis Week Dark Season)

Owl, Gold, Obsidian

BARE SEASON

Renewal

(Movement Week Dark Season-

Windsday Disorder Week Dark Season)

Brown Bear, Brown, Topaz

Cleansing

(Fireday Disorder Week-Fertility Week Storm Season)

Hawk, Silver, Turquoise

Blustery Winds

(Stasis Week-Illusion Week Storm Season)

Wolf, Black, Jade

Children are given a birth totem depending on what time of year they are born. Up to the age of puberty this is relatively unimportant, only after is it paramount. These totems are associated with a color, mineral and an animal. Colored ribbons are flown from the yurt of the chief to show the changes in the year. Men of the Silkmane are painted with the characteristic two horizontal red bands across their foreheads upon reaching fatherhood. These bands distinguish them from other clans in Seven Foals Vale.

If the Silkmane kill their own birth totem, they placate the spirit by giving the skull an honorable burial. During the Sacred Time rituals the Silkmane dress as their totems and engage in wild dances. Individuals rescued by their totems from danger, real or imagined, treat it as their guardian, taking on the animal's name. They become highly revered by other clan members.

At puberty children are admitted into the clan proper. This involves several ceremonies. The child is stripped and daubed in white paint (to symbolize the death of childhood). They are then led by the clan shaman into the "wilds" where they spend four days and nights fasting. During the fast the child is visited by their birth totem, which awakens their totem. Sometimes the child will be visited by a new or unique totem animal. These children become highly revered by the Silkmane, and often persecuted by Silkmane enemies. In the case of being visited by a horse, the child is

seen as being destined for greatness. If it is the winged horse then this greatness will be enduring.

The child returns and eats bitter herbs, reporting the sighting to the shaman. His interpretation instructs the child in the new conduct and morality of adulthood. Several of these are listed nearby. The child is then washed with fasting spittle before progressing to the tattooing and Ponymask rituals with their new yellow face paint; few outsiders know any thing about this rite. Girls don't adopt the skirt of the Silkmane women until after the totem quest. Before this they wear leather pants. Both sexes plait their hair at this time. It's never cut except on marriage, when the woman's is used for a skirt belt and the man's for reins.

Scarification and body painting are common, normally on the upper body or back. Both sexes receive these as a mark of the changes in them after the austerity of the totem quest. Both types of body adornment are repeated at significant times during their adult life, at religious ceremonies or festivals.

During the Earth Circle Dance, men and women are stripped and painted before dancing and drumming. Warriors have black and yellow horizontal stripes, Leaders have vertical blue and black stripes with a yellow band across their mouths, while Elders paint their faces entirely blue.

Polygamy is practised by those who can afford it. The wives live together and the husband lies with whom he chooses. Widows retain any social status gained from their deceased husband. They may remarry in a new ceremony, yet they lose their status. Marriage is forbidden between those of the same totem even if they are outsiders, unless they are Sunflower or Dawn Racer clan. Silkmane men take wives from both these neighboring clans as well as from the clans of Evergraze, Yellow Orb or Burning Hoof Print. Silkmane women are often brides to these clans and more infrequently to Saddle-Which-Flies and Laughing Dog men. Marriage of a bride to a Jewel Filly or Green Crown man is not unheard of, unlike marriage with the Sky Leap or Spirit Luminous Clans of the Dragonspine Hills which is taboo.

Before the marriage the men gather in the yurt of Yu-kargzant, and the women gather in the yurt of La-Ungariant. The men visit the women and summon the wife to the clan Solar shaman. Both have yellow painted discs about their mouths and red discs about their eyes, before progressing to the ceremony, which is forbidden to outsiders.

ers.

Men will not lie with their wives during the Blood time, during which the woman is separated into a special shelter. At this time some men will consort with their other wives or even a clan berdache.

Marriage song

(The serenade of the Life Journey)

(Woman) *"The silence of the night gives way to the songs of the spirits that sing to our lord, his heat brings our people to the cool shade of overhanging trees."*

(Man) *"As a child I have dived into the light and warmth of your earthy beauty. You have softened my flesh and hardened my bone. You make my spirit fly, give life to my sacred seed. With you I am whole I am your protector."*

(Woman) *"Ourselves are joined, as God and his wife, our bodies will worship each other, ourselves will linger at each others hearts."*

On death, significant warriors or clan chiefs are slit along the belly and filled with aromatic herbs. They are then placed together with clothing and trinkets onto a funeral stand. The body is covered by unguents or even rocks to prevent desecration by buzzards. Afterwards the skeleton and belongings are stored in rock crevices. There is little sadness, although all wear white face paint. On the festival of the dead chanting speeches are made to recount past deeds of great individuals.

Funeral Song

(The prelude to the dawn light of Yu-kargzant)

"We give thanks for life and ask you for a new life to be allowed to begin. Ours is a song of hope for tomorrow. Spirits of life come, come together warm us, help us create a vision."

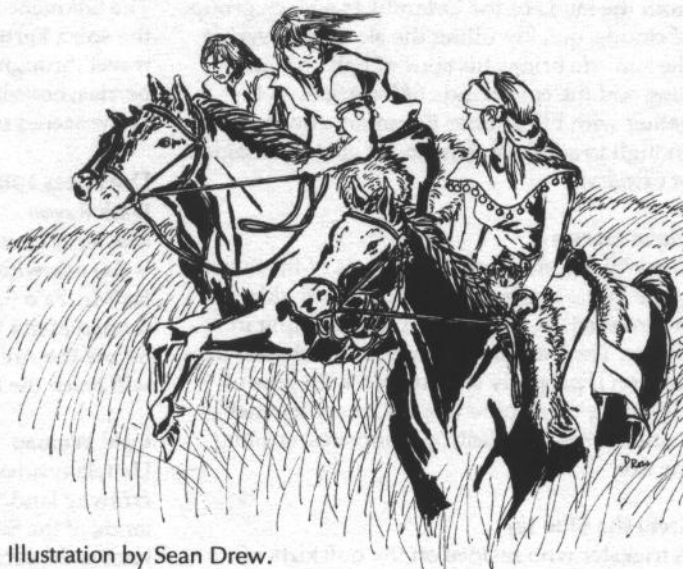


Illustration by Sean Drew.

Example Adulthood Taboos

Deer: Men: Never eat meat, Never use a bow. Women: Distrust men, Never eat meat.

Porcupine: Men: Total celibacy, Don't talk to women. Women: Distrust everyone, Never talk to vendref.

Woodpecker: Men: Never learn to swim, walk one day a week. Women: Remain silent in the company of men, never immerse in water.

Beaver: Men: Celibacy during Bare Season, Never eat turtle meat or talk to Water Strider clan. Women: Never drink koumiss, Never sleep on a blanket.

Salmon: Men: Never wear feathers, Don't eat fish, Never use fire as a weapon. Women: Never kill a bird of prey, Remain silent one day a week.

Flying Mouse: Men: Never speak to "Wolves" or "Snakes," Remain silent around outsiders. Women: Never own horses, Don't eat any grain.

Crow: Distrust women, Never eat bird meat, Never talk to vendref. Women: Eat no cooked meat, Marry only "Deer" or "Porcupines."

Snake: Men: Never own a stallion, Dismount in the presence of Elders. Women: Never marry, Never eat reptiles, Don't ride two days a week.

Owl: Men: Never fight at night, Never light a fire. Women: Total celibacy, Sleep outside the yurt in Dry Season.

Brown Bear: Men: Never drink alcohol, Always have a bare chest. Women: Never wear furs, Use no weapons.

Hawk: Men: Never use a shield, Don't eat bird's eggs. Women: Eat no vegetables, Never talk to "Woodpeckers."

Wolf: Men: Never eat vegetables, Distrust everyone, Never marry. Women: Never wear gee-gaws, never eat frogs.



Hyalor's Whistle

Duncan Rowlands and Martin Hawley
Illustration by Sean Drew

Description: A whistle 6-12 inches long made of a horse's leg bone, usually with between one and six blood-stained braids of horse hair tied to it.

Associated Cults: Hyalor Horsebreaker, Yu-kargzant and pantheon.

Knowledge: Cult Secret.

Procedure: A leg bone is taken from a horse killed with the Peaceful Cut and is fashioned into a whistle. The whistle is then enchanted, requiring the sacrifice of a point of POW for each horse the whistle is to be able to summon. The enchantment may be increased at a later ritual.

To enable a specific horse to be summoned, the user must braid a band of mane hair taken from that horse, soak it in blood draining from the horse's ear, and tie it to the whistle.

A whistle may only summon one horse for each point of POW expended in its enchantment, but the specific horses may be changed at will.

Powers: Once enchanted any user may summon a specified horse from anywhere within 10km by blowing the whistle and expending a magic point. How long the horse takes to arrive will depend upon exactly where it was and the terrain to be traversed to reach the summoner.

Value: A whistle is of little value to anyone not from a Yu-kargzant worshipping nomadic horse tribe, as they will not know what the whistle actually is. A member of such a tribe would be willing to pay up to the equivalent of 1000L for each horse the whistle could summon.

Spirits Of The Silkmane

Danny Bourne, Richard Faragher, Martin Hawley and Duncan Rowlands

These are elemental forces who have dwelt in the land before the birth of the Grazers. Some are amicable, others foul tempered. It is these spirits that the Solar Shamans of the Silkmane call to gain magic, or propitiate to avoid dangers.

Fire/Sky Tribe Feather Woman

The spirit eagle champion of the sun, she resides in the high hills of the Dragonspine. Her glowing feathers are highly prized, for they provide the magic of *Eagle Sight* (Farsee and Detect Life). Before she departs Feather Woman demands a sacrifice of meat to feed her young.

Erunor

The flickering light of the night fire, or sunshine dappling through the woodland copse. She can be summoned only during Fire Season and must be propitiated with a piece of yellow quartz. Erunor can dazzle enemies and help to hide friends with her magic of *Strobing Light* (Shimmer).

White Butterfly Maiden

She inhabits the echo chamber of Lone Star Hill where she holds the secrets of flight into the spirit world. Solars contact her as part of any Journeying ritual and those on their own Medicine Shield quest. White Butterfly Maiden also teaches the magic of *Butterfly Sight* (Vision).

Spirits of the Storm Black Thunderbird

The cloud carrier, wrath of Wingkoalad. The ritual to summon him is very dangerous and very rarely carried out. He always appears from the lands of the Orlanthi as a black group of clouds, quickly filling the sky and covering the sun. He brings his sons of hail and lightning and the cold winds of Bare Season together with his brother Rainman. Any foolish enough to summon him could gain the magic of *Cloudcall*.

Cloud Horses

The Wakinyan flyers, airy steeds of those that graze in the lands of the storm. Their skin is tatterdemelion and is constantly shifting in colour. They will take a rider to his chosen destination if properly summoned with gifts of Lightning-riven pine wood. Otherwise they scatter herds and destroy campsites, stealing the fire.

Krelli the Blue Jay

A trickster who resides on the outskirts of

campsites or the edges of woodland. He is a mischievous little sod who delights in causing Dastali to go astray with his illusion powers. Blue Jay is a braggart and schemer, a mischief maker. He often causes those he meets to deliberately disobey even simple instructions. The Silkmane have many stories of him which they tell about their campfires.

Water spirits

Jargum the Mistmaker

Jargum hides behind the crashing waterfalls of Laughing Dog lands. When Silkmane warriors raid these lands they must beware, as he will seize and drown them, dragging them into his plunge pools. If they cross fords he can call upon the powers of his evil brother Fikos'Cef (Terrifying Badness Water) to summon the White River Horses that eat people.

Blue Back the Kingfisher Man

Blue Back lives in the streams of the Seven Foals Vale. He is son of Cefela the River queen, and kindly brother to the Cef'Ka Girls of springs and water holes. All his family can be summoned at water sources. If gifted with shiny gee-gaws they make sure the water never goes bad. The Burning Hoofprint clan claim Blue Back to be the friend of Prill the Salmon, who they say lives in the big river of their land.

Earth Tribe

Tesri Little Deer

A timid little spirit of glades, she can only be contacted by female shamans. To them she teaches the special women's magic of *Running Silently*.

Tara Lady of the Wilds

The Silkmane know her as Fela'ka'me (Lady of the spirit Earth). All Dastali and those who travel through her lands should gift her with berries, horseblood, lifeseed, or womanblood at the sacred rocks alongside her pathways.

Darkness spirits

Dark Raven

Master of illusion and stealer of trinkets, Raven is the one who hides in the fire during Ka'Mri'Fa'o (Good spirit Dreaming). If summoned at the Va'An (Cold sun) festival and before the An'la (Sun Birth) rites then Raven will teach the magic of *Hide Fire*.

Cold Woman

Ue'fela resides only on the high peaks of the faraway land. She only rarely comes to the lands of the Silkmane. Only a shaman who knows the secrets of the yellow painted Snow

Yurt can call upon her. If they gift her with Black eagle feathers, burning juniper resin, lizard claws or silver trinkets she will protect them from cold and Enkreva.

Great Animals

Throughout the Silkmane lands and those of the Grazers many great animal avatars can be encountered. It is these that are seen during the initiation rites, or during the Medicine Shield quest. **Yaran the Beaver** grants *River Eye*; **Prill**

the Salmon teaches the magic of *Breathe Water*; **Garrin the Bear** grants *Strength*; **Ruhud the Owl** teaches *Night Sight*; **Praere the Porcupine** shares the secrets of *Protection*; **Hlizza the snake** knows the magic of the *Hazel Bracelet* to ward off viper bites; **Renred the Wolf** will grant *Hunter's Boon*; **Meskra the Hawk** grants *Ignite*; **Krauka the Woodpecker** knows *Iron-hand*; **Rikchick the Flying Mouse** grants *Jumping*; and **Kaka the Crow** grants *Create Shadows*.

A Note on Pronunciation

The apostrophe indicates a glottal stop.

Yanastan River-Laughter's Guide to Esrolia

David Dunham

Since the Building Wall was constructed to halt the Lunar advance in 1605, it's been a lot harder to raid Esrolia, damn the Pharaoh! The Wall has some holes you could dismount and lead a horse through, but they're not suitable for returning to the Grazelands, partly because they're hard to find. Arkat's Hold commands the gap between the Wall and the Skyreach Mountains, but that gap is nearly 7 km. It's possible to evade their patrols, especially if they don't know you're coming. Be warned they use digijelm guards at night. Another option is to use Azmikor's Pass, but it sometimes snows, and the mountains are uninhabited and still home to many spirits.

Small towns along the Lysos River offer the easiest pickings, although of course there's less to loot. Running downriver as far as I've gone, they're named Chorn, Blinth, Oblen, and Altosh. I've heard that the Pharaoh, damn him, will sometimes billet troops in one of these towns, so you could be in for a nasty surprise.

The typical town is square in shape and surrounded by earthwork berms about two metres high. There's a single opening which is barred at night, but any horse except those from the Silkmane clan's herds can easily jump it. You could just as easily ride over the berm. When you enter the town uninvited, be prepared to be attacked by ghosts, which Dinalish Mighty Leap suspects are those of people buried in the earthworks.

Military defenses can vary. Every town has a militia, some of whom are on watch at any time. Their slingers use Oralant's Thunder, which can stun a man and leave him helpless. A Spellguard will sometimes prevent this. Most of the militia fights with spears, although they occasionally use swords. They tend to have little grasp of tactics, but can sometimes overwhelm a raiding party with numbers.

The town itself is laid out in the haphazard style preferred by the vendref, with maybe a hundred buildings. If possible, learn the streets

ahead of time or you'll get lost in the heat of the raid. The towns I've named all have open squares which are filled with stalls on market day. The largest building is where the head-woman lives, and will probably have the best plunder. There is always a temple to the vendref goddess Ernalda, which can also have good plunder, but the Feathered Horse Queen has asked that we not desecrate earth temples. There are often shrines to Ernalda's husbands, either Oralant or Yelmadio.

Unfortunately, you can't expect to return with many horses, since these people don't have many, and don't know how to take care of them. You can find plenty of cows or sheep to slaughter. The people wear gold, silver, or seashell jewelry, and you can find coins. If you're lucky, you can find wine in portable containers, or else you'll have to drink it out of the barrel. They have much fine dyed cloth and embroidery, and down-stuffed bedding. Many of the kitchens contain large quantities of spice. There are bottles and sculptures made of glass, and furs, and ivory carvings. Some of their weapons and armor is of fine craftsmanship. And of course you can take the people themselves, though this can be more trouble than it's worth.

You can raid most of the farmsteads outside the towns without breaking a sweat, but this will often alert their neighbors, and there's seldom enough to bother with.

I don't know a whole lot about New Crystal City, but Taradarin Ten Day Run led a raid there, and came back with a poppywood runestaff he ransomed back for fifty red horses with golden bridles.

Since they're only vendref, you don't need to worry about pursuit, but they do use signal fires to warn the garrison at Arkat's Hold. Try to avoid them, since they've been known to capture fully laden pack horses with Hobble spells.

Scenario Ideas

- Young warriors are sent to Dunstop to trade ponies. Here they experience the highs and lows of civilization.
- Warriors are asked to travel to the Smoking Ruins to recover an ancient treasure of the clan. They encounter a crazed vulture priest, fight a troll war party, and discover the secrets of the ruins.
- A band of enemy warriors has been raiding villages and lands. Warriors are sent to apprehend them, only to be thrown into the middle of a conflict between the denizens of chaos and some unsuspecting immigrants.
- Young Grazer Dastali are summoned to take a clan tribute to the centaurs. En route they encounter traditional friends and enemies.
- A beautiful Grazer woman is kidnapped by renegade Gagarthi vendref. Warriors are sent to recover her and punish the wrong doers.
- Local vendref uprising. There are rumors of spirit world forces from beyond the grave. Warriors must quell the vendref and discover the sinister truth behind the rumors.
- Another clan has been grazing their herds in your lands. Perhaps they can be bought off with gifts, persuaded not to with threats, or driven off by force.

Vanch Geography

Harald Smith

Vanch is the land that lies east of the Oslir and north of the Black Eel and Red Wyrn rivers. It forms the uplands of that region and generally including the Imther Mountains. In ancient times it made up the northeast quadrant of Reladivela, the Golden Age land of southern Peloria.

Reladivela: in the Golden Age, a beautiful land stretched across southern Peloria, variously called Reladivela or the Bowl of Reladiva, for the goddess who grew there. At the center was Reladiva's Well of Birth. Her spouse was Heliakal who was pure and perfect and was the source of justice. He travelled the land upon the Seat of Judgment. Vanch, Saird and Sylila were all part of Reladivela. The peoples of this land were all initially of the same culture, for that culture was pure and perfect. But they had minor differences. Some rode horses and these were the Hyalorings (and these folk were most often in Sylila since that was the horse-center as Jillaro proves). Some were the brothers of dogs and these were the Jajalarings. Some rode the great Loon boat and these were the Nogtendos. Some made green pottery. Some had bees. Some followed others around and picked up things which were dropped and these were the Tunoralings. When Heliakal vanished and Reladiva went to sleep, the land was changed. The bowl was flooded. Then the bowl was chipped and broken. At last ice crushed the north edge of the bowl and ground it to dust. The land was never the same.

The Rivers

Bikosin [V. "Green Vale"] River: this river, noted for the great

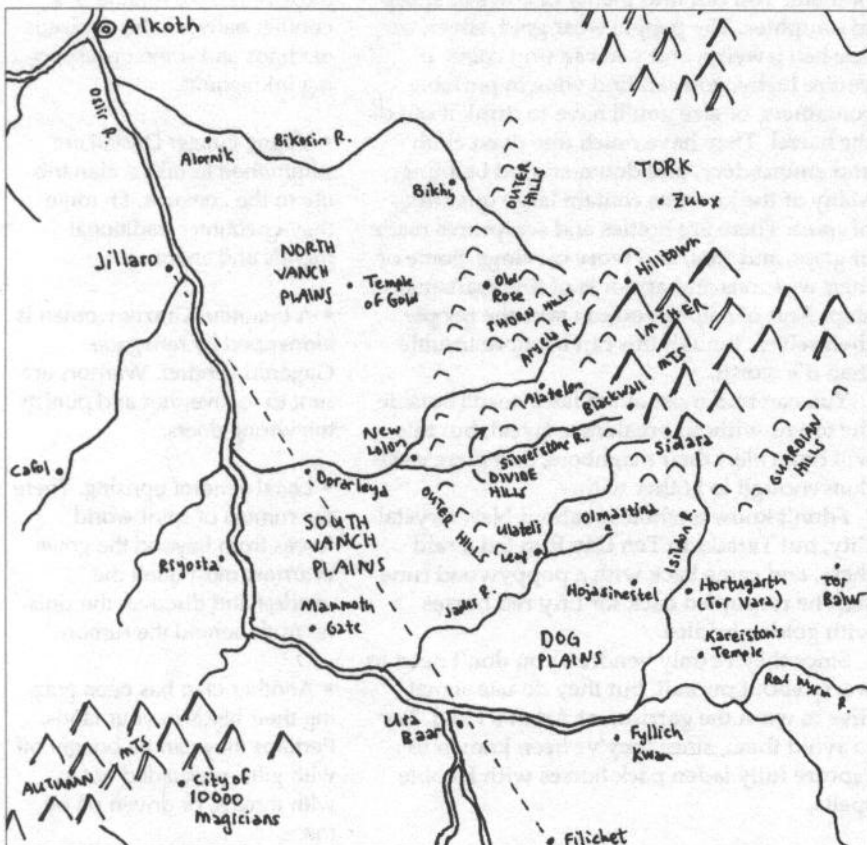
stands of elm trees which lined its banks, originates in the Grimorta Range of the Karathama [Imther] Mountains to the north and east of Hilltown. It comes down through the Guardian Hills, angles northwest and marks the northern edge of the Thorn Hills. It then flows through the Outer Hills at Green Crown Gap, and continues northwest until it reaches Bloodman's Turn. This marks the point where Shargash is said to have broken the leg of Bikosin when the wounded river god came back down from his defeat in the mountains. The Bikosin then marks the divide between the North Vanch Plains and the land of the Sankenites until it reaches the Oslir south of Alkoeth. The Bikosin is the longest and slowest moving of the Vanch Rivers. It is navigable to Bikhy by poled barges except at Bloodman's Turn where oxen are required on shore to help make the turn. Above Bikhy, the river is unnavigable and is used by fishermen.

Aryela [V. "Water Dog" or "Water Rat"] River: the Aryela, the most noted of Vanch rivers, is named for the water deity who commanded the other waters which climbed out of the Well of Birth and sought the sky. The Aryela originates at Hilltown where the Karathama and Grimorta ranges meet. It crosses the Guardian Hills, forms the vale between the Thorn Hills and the Divide Hills and leaps down the Outer Hills through the Cleft of Merbana. West of Lolon [1620 ST = New Lolon] it is met by the Silverstone River, but slows substantially at that point. The waters widen near Doraryela where the great dams were built. The river is only navigable from Doraryela to the Oslir, but the waters beside the Oslir are marshy and stagnant and great

banks of reeds must be traversed. The Aryela forms the divide between the North Vanch Plains and the South Vanch Plains.

Silverstone River: once called Karayela, this river originates in Karathama's Fold [1620 ST = Blackwall]. It was here that Karayela met Karathama and became the mountain goddess' lover, entering the fold and never climbing higher to the sky. When the other river gods fell from the sky, Karayela was lured out of the fold by a crafty deity called the Silver Vixen who promised a love greater than that of Karathama. Karayela was seduced and left the fold only to find that the Silver Vixen's promise was an illusion and that Karathama would never embrace him again. At the point where Karayela uncovered the illusion, the stones turned silver and Karayela took the name Silverstone in disgrace. He eventually fled back to the protection of his brother. The river travels largely westward from Karathama's Fold, south of the Divide Hills until it crosses the Outer Hills and joins the Aryela west of Lolon.

Jader River: from the Gap of Sidara [1620 ST = Sidherius], this river stretches southwest to the Oslir. The Jader is the River of Dogs, noted for the playful otters which inhabit its banks and for the Jajalaring dogs which often swam the waters. This is a fast river, generally unnavigable.



gable except near the Oslir. There are many rapids and a good falls beside Ulatel's Leap. This river marks the divide between the South Vanch Plains and the Dog Plains.

Isildon & Imaron Rivers: these two rivers come out of the Keltisa range in the south of the Karathama [Imther] Mountains. They tumble rapidly down through the Guardian Hills, but slow at the Hill of Verhil beside Tor Vara [1620 ST = Hortugarth] where the two rivers annually fight. From Tor Vara south, the river travels as one and is navigable. This river marks the divide between the Dog Plains and the lands of the Balurings.

The Lands

North Vanch Plains: a heavy soiled and fertile land (between the Bikosin River and the Aryela River) with some undulation and a gradual rise to the east. The Glacier pushed across this area in the Darkness and smoothed the area of most rough features. Streams, though no major rivers, descend gradually from the Outer Hills, forming small ponds and marshes in low-lying areas. At the Dawn it was a mix of grassy plains and small woods, particularly along the stream beds or around the ponds. Some myths say that this is where Heliakal fell while fighting the Ice Demons—that he released his fire powers to save the people, burning down woods and melting the ice, but that it was for naught for he died and disappeared. All that remained when the Glacier retreated were the ponds that would reflect the lost light. As this area became settled, it became good farmland and a raiding ground/battleground for Alkoithi. It is often called the Crow Plains for the crows which haunt both types of fields (farming and battle). It is also called the Pond Land.

South Vanch Plains: it was in these plains (between the Aryela River and the Jader River) that the Glacier was halted or stopped. After the Glacier retreated there was a line of rock and gravel that remained. The Tunoralings and Jajalarings called this variously the Unity Line, the Battle Line, or the Rock Line. The Tunoralings said that this is where the Earthwielder [a deity or heroic figure sometimes called Verhil] sacrificed himself to bring unity to the peoples and halt the ice. This plain is a medium soiled and fertile land, higher than the North Vanch Plains. It is a rolling land of streams with occasional small lakes and ponds. There are more trees here than to the north. This area has often been disputed. Tunoraling and Jajalar hunting hunters originally disputed good hunting areas here. Berenethelli and other Heortlings later arrived and began farming. The Tunoraling story of how Doriarius [V. "Binder of the Bull"] tamed the bull originates in this land.

Oslir Flood Plain: this land is the lowest portion of both the North and South Vanch Plains along the western edge of those plains. It marks the area that the Oslir periodically floods or where the great river shifts in its course. Through history this land has been commonly called Terarir. Where the Aryela River joins the Oslir is the great wetland called Riverjoin and later Marsh Bottom. Tunoraling hunters and fishers came here frequently at the Dawn.

Black Eel Flood Plain: this land is the lowest portion of both the South Vanch Plains and the Dog Plains along the southern edge of those geographic areas. It marks the area that the Black Eel periodically floods. This area has commonly been labeled as part of Saird. At the Dawning, the river here was travelled by the Nogtendos and the land by the Jajalarings.

Dog Plains: the area between the Jader River and the Isildon River is higher ground except along the river valleys. The Glacier did not reach here. This was the first area north of the Black Eel that Heortling Orlanthi penetrated. The soil is lighter and the Barntar-plow is used here. Dogs are common and are the prime animal of both hunters and herders. This is the land where Sairdite myths originated and includes their holy site of Hojasinestel.

Outer Hills: this long hilly ridgeline marks the divide between lowland Vanch and upland Vanch. It runs from east of Bikhy south to Lolon and then turns southeast toward the Jader River, though it doesn't reach that river. The land to the east is higher and the rivers wilder before they plunge through gaps to the plains below. Farming is harder, and herding and hunting are the common means of life. Near the north end of this ridge is the isolated Hill of Gold. Below Lolon the Aryela and Silverstone Rivers join together. The southernmost hill is known as Bull's Head [1620 ST = Orilstand]. Myth variously says that this marks the edge of Negalla's robe/cloak or that the Glacier pushed the hills up or that the spirits of the earth raised the land here to turn the Glacier aside.

Thorn Hills: east of the Outer Hills between the headwaters of the Bikosin and Aryela Rivers is a very hilly area noted for thorny grasses, shrubs, and brush. It is rough land, difficult to farm, but reasonable for herds of goats and sheep.

The Divide Hills: a small hilly area east of the Outer Hills which divides the Aryela and Silverstone rivers. Good hunting and herding ground. In the Darkness, there was a split amongst the Tunoralings about how to survive. One group favored waiting near the Throne of Judgment, the other thought they should forge new vows. It was here that the divide was made—one group went west to Lolon, the other east up the Aryela to form the settlement of Alatelon.

Guardian Hills: these are the foothills of the Karathama [Imther] Mountains. They were heavily wooded and good hunting ground. They mark the divide between Tunoraling/Jajalar hunting ground and the upland mountains where the Sidarsi herded goats. Most people of Vanch think those living in the Guardian Hills or beyond are very backwoods folks. In the Darkness, some Tunoralings found their way through the Guardian Hills to Karathama's Fold [1620 ST = Blackwall]. Their myths talk about how Tunoral went into the land of dreams to bring back sleeping Negalla. He raised a settlement to protect her and in turn her dreams began again to touch the world and restore its beauty.

Karathama Mountains: these are the mountains that eventually come to be known as the Imther Mountains. There are four primary ranges. The western range, noted for its wall-like appearance, is the Karathama range, named for the Tunoraling mountain goddess Karathama. The northern range, a stark and imposing range of jagged edges and peaks, is the Grimorta range. The southern range, a gentler line of mountains is the Keltisa range, and was home to the Sidarsi goat herders. The eastern range, which includes the Wedge (a dramatic opening in the earth said to contain ancient dwarf plans), is generally called the Miapora range or the Mountain Dancer's Abode.

Recordkeeping in Alkoth

Harald Smith

Alkothic Verses

The Alkothi, though ancient in traditions, are not keepers of chronicles per se. To them, time and place and foes do not matter—they participate in the same events over and over. However, there are pieces of information that hint at events in their past.

Within the great walls of the green city, endless bas-reliefs and mosaics line streets, alleyways, and deep corridors. These bas-reliefs and mosaics show the conquests and might of Shargash. Endless rows of armies marching against Shargash, but all defeated by the red god. The foes often look the same. Sometimes special foes can be recognized, such as Umatum or the River Serpent, but even these may represent multiple battles. Most foes are small figures with only minor distinctions in dress or weapons. Are the axe wielders Sylilans, Vanchites, or Heortlings? Are the slingers Zarkosites or Vanchites? Are the horseriders Hyalorings or Berenethtelli Riders? Visitors may make distinctions or ask these questions, but the Alkothi answers vary. One day an Alkothi may go to a particular picture and say "This is where we defeated the Vingkotlings." The next day an Alkothi will point to the same picture and say "This is where we defeated the Darjiini."

Different groups within Alkoth have different repertoires of dirges and verses used at their rituals. There is no historical context to these verses, but they are an important part of daily life in Alkoth. On almost any day, some group is performing rituals. These rituals often include marches to particular pictures. The Butchers of the Flayer's Gate and the Streetsweepers have different verses for the same picture depending on the day of the year.

A verse sung by the Butchers of the Gate of Flaying on the Day of Long Shadows. During this ritual, the Butchers go to a series of images carved in the Wall of First Rending and chant while their leader shows each scene in turn.

"In the Year of the Flaying when Gavashar held the Blood Crown [i.e. was the Red King], did more Backwinds [Vingkotlings] come to the gates of the Enclosure. The Backwinds pounded drums in imitation of Shargash. The Backwinds cast spears in imitation of Shargash. The Backwinds made curses in imitation of Shargash. But they did not know Shargash. Gavashar Red King was armed by the urvars [war servants] with the Drum of Nadek. Gavashar Red King was armed by the urvars with the Spears of Pelakastus. Gavashar Red King was armed by the urvars with the Blight of the Long Shadowed Demons. Gavashar Red King led the warriors out the Gate of Flaying. The

Drum of Nadek silenced the Backwind drums and knocked the foes to their knees. The Spears of Pelakastus shattered the Backwind spears and and knocked those weapons from the air. The Blight of the Long Shadowed Demons swallowed the Backwind curses. Then the arm of Gavashar Red King reached out and he rent each and every Backwind he touched with the power of Shargash. The Backwinds fled from the power of Shargash invoked by Gavashar Red King and only one torch escaped."

Translators of these verses are often nice and use names such as Vingkotlings, where the Alkothic citizens use Backwinds or Gasbags (typical description of weak Orlanthi) or the more generic Foods or Stupids.

Not all such verses are war-related. Some tell more common tales as the following which is a verse of the oil-pressers.

"The Green Oil Berry (1) was found by Oretanok, Green King, where the land rises toward the Rootless Mountains. In the days when the spouse (2) lay shallow and sluggish and the flaxseeds died, Oretanok left the Enclosure in search of a new oil. He brought his hand press and walked each direction, but only when he went east did he find a berry which made oil instead of juice when pressed. He gathered 10 seeds of the Green Oil Berry and brought them back to Alkoth. He planted 3 in the reed banks beside the spouse, but the reeds reached down with their roots to twist and strangle the seeds. He planted 4 along the causeways, away from the water's flow, but Yelm's eye found and burned them, for Yelm disliked their sourness. He planted 2 in the waters of the spouse herself, but spouse's children found and ate them. At last Oretanok planted the last seed upon the Green Hill itself in the shadow of his own palace. With great care and nurturing, this seed grew until it at last became a tree and produced more seed. But only upon the Green Hill and only in the shadow of the Green Palace would the Green Oil Berry grow then or now."

(1) a special berry used in Alkoth for oil.

(2) Oslira.

The Records of the Governors

Unlike the Alkothi, the Dara Happan Governors appointed by the Emperor traditionally had scribes to record events of their tenure. Sometimes these formed parts of reports to the Imperial court. Sometimes they were meant as personal histories to glorify the Governor.

One example is from the Governorship of Hemimam, Lord of the Seventh Hilltop:

The History of Alkoth

Dara Happan

Discrepancies Explained

Martin Laurie

Alkoth has a different history of the Dark than most Dara Happans. Even Plentionius failed to capture the uniqueness of Alkoth when compared to other Dara Happan folk. Alkoth stood during the Darkness, Alkoth survived it all. When other gods died or faded, Shargash lived on, warring against endless foes that remain unknown and unnamed to others. His people and armies lived with him, protected within the green walls.

Thus, the Plentonic history in the *Glorious ReAscent of Yelm* is incapable of imparting the feelings of isolation, of self-worth that all Alkothi feel when they repeat the myths of their God of All.

Even in histories after the Dawn, the Alkothi were often alone, ruling their ancient hegemony of Henjarl, often in defiance of some conqueror who had laid low the rest of the Empire. Alkoth is the outsider of the Tripolis. It is needed in war and for its mythic role but it is not a comfortable triplet to have around.

"In the year 111,284, Hemimam of the Seventh Hilltop named Governor of Henjarl. Upon his entry was their great protest against the 'Darjiin Usurper.' A rebel took hold of the Girdle of Strength, but Hemiman unveiled the Eye of the Night and regained the Girdle. The Ash Wind came and cleansed the city.

"In the year 111,285, Hemimam called for a scribe to record his rule. Ishantar, Red King, called for the Contest. When Valash Quillbearer cast down Baneltim of the Margins in the Square of Black Arms (1) with the Ultimate Stroke.

"In the year 111,286, Hemimam called for a new Enclosure. Ulbor Hampur (2) opened the Twenty-ninth Door and revealed the War Follower. The Standard Bearers took up the sign of the War Follower and raised it atop the Northern Gate. Then came the Gold-crest to the Northern Gate and he brought the Fourteen Weapons which were laid within the the New Enclosure (3). Zorvashin, Red King, laid the red sards around the New Enclosure and sacrificed the yuldam (4) so that Shargash would know the New Enclosure and enter into it. Ulbor Hampur took up the War Follower and brought it into the New Enclosure where it consumed the 244 eyes, including those of Ulbor Hampur. Blessed by Shargash and the War Follower, Ulbor Hampur came out of the New Enclosure and marked the Eyeless Trail to the House of the Ilbagits. Here Ulbor Hampur crushed the gargoki (5) and marked the signs of the Fourteen Weapons. By this means did Ulbor Hampur found the War Temple and the Ilbagits became the food of the warriors.

"In the year 111,287, Hemimam called for the Streets to be cleared of the horse dung. Bansahim and Jorkalim did battle in the Broom Court until Bansahim broke the six hundred bristles and tore the beard from Jorkalim. Bansahim led the street purge and cleared the Saddle of the Leaper (6). Then were the vuranis (7) forced beneath the broomhandlers. Burhagit Red King did mark this with the sacrifice of the first born of the vuranis and joy of first youth was shared amongst all.

"In the year 111,292, Hemimam called for Alkoth to overcome the Tarashic Crocodile (8). Rudarsham, Red King, invoked the ritual of Shargash over Varnaga, but the Tarashic Crocodile was immune to this magic and devoured the Red King. Yamastus, Green King, sat between the two hills as the Tarashic Crocodile crawled beneath and into Alkoth. The Tarashic Crocodile consumed 500 people before devouring the Green King. Then did all greenery in Alkoth vanish. The Tarashic Crocodile sat inside the Enclosure, digesting its food, until people discovered its skin was shedding, revealing green vines beneath. When the head sloughed off, the Green King was revealed again."



(1) a reference to the square in Alkoth where functionaries such as scribes come to battle usually with words, but occasionally weapons arm used. The contestants always coat their arms black using the ink from the black tentacles of the local river squids.

(2) this may be a title or an otherwise unknown individual.

(3) the New Enclosure is simply the latest enclosure to be built. They are not numbered, though some later receive special designation.

(4) captives from Saird.

(5) a special entry door into a house protected by certain demons.

(6) a statue of Vuranostum "The Handsome Equestrian," Dara Happan emperor of the Jenarong dynasty.

(7) horsehandlers.

(8) a monstrous river demon.

Shargash smiting his barbarian foes. Illustration by Mike O'Connor.



How to GM Heroes

Martin Laurie

A hero is a person. A person with power and purpose, but still understandable. Much of the problem with game-mastering heroes has arisen because game systems often fail to match the scale of their powers to the ability of the GM to cope with.

At the heroic level of play though the system should be minimal. The players should understand that at this level the story is more important and they are characters in a story and should live like heroes. Under no circumstances should the GM or the players let the heroic action slow down or become submerged in minutiae. Herodom is built on action, not accounting.

Example of good heroic action

Kogad the Storm Hero is trampled by a Teshnan war elephant. Roaring with berserkergang fury he yells, "I grab the elephant and hurl it into the air!" The GM knows that Kogad is berserk with the power of the Bull and has the Heart of the Bull hero spirit within him so his strength is immense. He asks for a roll on strength, Kogad rolls very well and the elephant goes flying, with one of the other player still standing atop it, straight into a Golden Guard Company. The whole process takes maybe thirty seconds and elicits whoops from the other heroic players.

Alkoth During the Hero Wars

Martin Laurie

At the time of the fall of Sartar there were several factions in the city of Alkoth and the Cult of Shargash who wanted change. Increasingly they found their previously divergent views to be solidifying into one homogeneous desire to break the chains that held Shargash and begin the great Cycle anew.

The factions were called the "Rules" and they were numerous. It was also possible to belong to many of the Rules at the same time, though not opposing Rules unless a Dark Path mystic.

The Alkoth Rules - Political - a group of extremists who believed that Alkoth should provide the Emperor and that it should either rule Henjarl once more or the Empire itself. They hark back to the days of Jannisor's rebellion or the successful autonomous rule of Henjarl that Alkoth maintained alone against the Carmanians and many other conquerors or disasters.

The Destroyer Rules - Religious - a Red Path faction who see the days of the Dominion of Shargash as the ultimate form of their worship. They seek a return to the total war and destruction his rule alone created. They see other deities and their cults as fair game, including Yelm because the cycle of life demands destruction.

The Red Emperor Rules - Political - Mostly Green Path, including much of the Alkor cult, though some Red—these owe their power and prestige to the Red Emperor or genuinely believe in the Lunar Empire and its ways. They are the most Lunarized of all the Alkothi and were a powerful Rule in terms of numbers and the most powerful politically while the Empire was strong. Many women in Alkoth lend their quiet support to this faction.

The White Moon Rules - Religious - this small but dedicated faction, including many of the Dark Path Aesthetics, sees the eternal cycle of Shargash protecting then destroying to remake the Goddess as intrinsic to her worship and the worship of Shargash—hence they see that the destruction of the Red Moon is a good thing as it brings a new era and a new metamorphosis to the White Moon Goddess. As Shargashi it is their duty to see this happen.

The Kazkurtum Rules - Religious - this small but utterly dangerous group believes that Kazkurtum already sits on the throne and that the Empire's use of Chaos is the proof of this. They hate the Red Emperor and all his works and supporters. They tend to be nihilistic and many are also in the Destroyer Rules and the Alkoth Rules too.

The Kargzant Rules - Political - a tiny group but enduring—these are descendants of the few surviving Dara Happan nobles that Sheng Seleris created. They maintain a secret shrine to his memory as many in Alkoth followed Sheng and many fought all over the world in his armies. Some of this faction see Sheng as an early avatar of Shargash, possible even a Demon of the Devourer. This group has grown due to a prophecy of Sheng's return, and have maintained contacts with Pent for centuries.

The Yelm Rules - Political and Religious - a big group who, with the Red Emperor Rules, make up the majority of the population. All those who aren't politically active or religiously divergent fit into this category by default. They acknowledge Yelm as Emperor and as long as the Ten Tests are taken and passed, they will support him and resist change.

Herocults of the Red Path

Martin Laurie

Vungharesh, Lord of Vengeance

This mighty Red King ruled at the beginning of the epic siege of Alkoth by the Carmanians. He did not live beyond the first battles for the wall but his struggle and desire for vengeance are hallmarks of good Red Path warrior behavior hundred of years later.

"...Kadash Bullsheart gained great fame that day among the hosts of Carmania. He stood against Vungharesh, Red King of Alkoth and matched spear to mace, shield to shield and

did not die under the Red King's utter fury. That Kadash survived with only four broken limbs was considered a great feat of fortitude. That he wounded his foe spoke highly of his skill. That he managed to move off the wall with no aid or succor showed the strength of his Carmanian heroism.

"Yet the cunning of his Spolite mother was in him too and fully revealed when he showed the gathered heroes of the army and his Shah, the remains of the Sunthi-toad poison smeared upon his spearhead. With a smile of sharp

whiteness he spoke of the thrust that would have ended the life of Vungharesh. Just a shallow wound that would be no more than a scratch to the mighty warrior but with the poison, it would be fatal even for one such as Vungharesh. For a time there was rejoicing in the Carmanian camp and much largesse and recognition went Kadash's way.

"The Alkothi response was typical and soon came to be feared. As night fell Vungharesh came forth leading a thousand warriors. Every one was a citizen of the city or a slave given the chance to live with Shargash in the underworld if they but shrugged off their fleshy form.

"Every one of them had seen the power of Senderesh and had joined the 'Kill You' Regiment. Each wore black with a mask like a red skull. They carried a mace in each hand thinking not of defence or the fear of death but only the rending of their enemies. Though their clothing was just sack and cloth, it repulsed weapons like the finest platemail. Vungharesh led them and his face was blue with death from the poisons in him yet he roared his battle cry with undiminished frenzy. 'Death is us!' he cried and his shout of ending was echoed by a thousand mouths.

"Out they came from the Flayer's gate. Out they came as a torrent. Though the peltasts and archers of the Korghuz nomad mercenaries showered them with missiles, the charge did not falter until the Kill You warriors smashed into the Darjiini contingent. They were camped on a low hill to lick their wounds from the slaughter on the wall that day. But they would get no rest that eve. One after another the Kill You sacrificial warriors died. But as each fell, so too did one of their foes, until more than a thousand had died for the thousand Alkothi.

"Only Vungharesh remained striding among the burning tents and siege lines of his foe. A hundred arrows stuck from his body and armor, a dozen wounds lay open but none bled, for Vungharesh had sent his soul on to Shargash when his body died of the poisons of Kadash. His body fought with the memory of his anger and the power of the Way of Ash guided by his Will from beyond the wall of Death.

"Vungharesh searched the camps of his foes like a crimson tear in existence looking for the coward who poisoned him. Kadash was brave but not foolish and stayed away from this funeral apparition. He sent the grim soldiers of the True Death Humakti warband from Saird to bring down his foe.

"The Humakti struck at the corpse-like Red King with sword and magic, calling on their god to end his undeath and bring his body to rest. Only after Vungharesh had slain half their number did Reynal Blackblade, a giant Tarshite warrior, decapitate the lich with his magical iron greatsword.

"Even then the headless body of Vungharesh swung its weapons wildly, striking down more of the Humakti. Finally they pounded it down and bound it with ropes and cords of leather. The body was then hacked to pieces. The pieces were hacked to pieces and the pieces of the pieces were fed to the dogs. When the dogs had eaten their fill and all of Vungharesh was gone then they too were hacked to pieces. Their pieces were burnt and the ashes were collected together and then pounded into a dust. The dust was scattered all over the land and the river and in the air so that Vungharesh who was dead would never rise to slay again. Such was the terror that he instilled in his foes and in the heart of Kadash who had poisoned him so foully. Yet Vungharesh would return with the spirit of vengeance burning bright in his people and the maces of his warriors.

—Excerpt from the Alkothiad, the Redendices Analysis, Book 3 - The Fall of a Red King

Herocult

The followers of Vungharesh are feared for their pitiless quest for vengeance against those who have wronged them in the manner of their death.

This vengeance carries on beyond the grave. Their devotion to their hero will literally animate their body till the corpse can go no further or their revenge is complete. All actions relating to their feud are the domain of this hero.

Barahum, Foe Feeder

"...Barahum sought a hardier foe and challenged a Knight to an eating contest in front of the whole Carmanian army. This Knight they sent forward was huge of girth, had sharp teeth, a strange manner and was full of great strength. Barahum thought it a worthy test.

"The Knight, called Sir Hrengolt of Spol, demanded the right of food choice for he was the one being challenged. Barahum laughed and agreed for the will of Shargash was in him and no test could be ignored. Sir Hrengolt called for the flesh of men as the meal of their contest much to the amazement of the Carmanian host. With a smile of shark-hunger he began eating with relish. His appetite was huge and he laughed as he shoveled the ribbons of meat into his mouth and ripped them with his serrated teeth.

"Barahum saw that he was not human but a thing of trickery and cunning yet laughed harder than his foe and was undismayed by the power of his gluttony.

"Sir Hrengolt ate and ate but Barahum ate with him without gag or pause. Perplexed at this strange perseverance, the Knight asked his foe between mouthfuls. 'Do you see now that I am no mere man of cattle mind or spirit like you Alkothi? I am hunger and want and the

Example of poor heroic action

Kogad the Storm Hero is trampled by a Teshnan war elephant. Roaring with berserker fury he yells, "I grab the elephant and hurl it into the air!" The GM frowns, thumbs through his rule book to check the Size to Weight table. He then asks for a detailed breakdown of the player's strength and spells boosting strength and finds the elephant's stats in the Creatures Book. He then consults the resistance table and assigns a low percentage. This takes five minutes with the rest of the group twiddling their thumbs in what should be a moment of high drama.

Naturally this does not mean that realism should be hurled out the window, but a good GM will give leeway to the heroic act to promote story and adventure. As long as the player can trust the GM's judgement to provide them with good flow while challenging them then this process should work well. It is a two-way street though, and players must understand their obligations to the heroic tale and the need to work with the GM for the sake of the story.

foe of all humans! I cherish the despair of your defeat for no mortal can out-eat the hunger of hate!"

"Barahum was undaunted and replied, 'I care not for your hate. Shargash is with me and I am man no more. I am the maw of my god and you are the slave to His will.' And with that he ate faster and faster. And for every mouthful he ate, his foe ate one too for he couldn't stop, propelled as he was by the will of Barahum and the endless hunger of the Devourer."

"Finally, when his body swelled and twisted like a squirming maggot Sir Hrengolt screamed. 'I can eat no more! Please!'"

"Barahum replied as he relished more mouthfuls. 'Life is to eat. If you don't eat, you DIE.'"

"With that Sir Hrengolt exploded like a bloated melon, spraying his flesh and that of his repast everywhere like a fountain of offal. Barahum laughed once more and turned to the

Carmanian host who still shuddered in dismay at their defeat. 'See your Champion! See his death caused by one tooth of the Devourer!' He waved towards the towering wall of Green Stone.

"I am a tooth, there is his mouth! Enter when you will for we have much eating to do!"

"Barahum returned to approbation and the blessing of Shargash."

—Excerpt from the Alkothiad, the Redendices Analysis, Book 5 - The Testing of Heroes

Herocult

When the power of the Devourer is lauded among the Red Path, then the name Barahum is used to describe it. His feat echoes like a resonant drumbeat in the hearts of all warriors. When any wish the courage to face the blackest of foes, then Barahum is invoked. When matching an enemy, the follower of Barahum can make their foe feel each blow, each morsel, each pang of pain that they feel. The cycle of the Devourer works on all who enter his mouth.

Jurgashelm the Breaker

When warriors wish to be filled with the power of Shargash they shout the name of Jurgashelm. Jurgashelm walked all paths, until he trod the Ash Road to enlightenment. For many years he wandered the streets of Alkoth muttering the sacred names of Shargash, his soul far away in the underworld when a revelation struck. His reaction was a mighty shout which destroyed the block of tenements he stood beside, much to the joy of the occupants.

Taking up his shout they screamed around the city bringing the power of the Destroyer to all who wished it. From then on Jurgashelm returned to the Red Path. His understanding of the depths of Shargash taught him to return to the basic creed of destruction for only with destruction comes renewal. Seeing that the chain of life had to begin with an act of Force, Jurgashelm set about bringing as much destruction into the world as he could. He led his followers and sometimes armies to battle. Wherever he went his foes fell before his fury. It is said that his apotheosis followed a fit of rage so great that after he slaughtered the entire Forked Tongue EWF regiment he literally exploded with anger creating a crater three men deep, blasting a flight of War Dragons from the sky.

Herocult

Followers of Jurgashelm extol force as solving all problems. They follow their hero's Black Path ways by wearing only ash into battle and spurning extraneous physical comforts.

Barahum Foe Feeder challenges Sir Hrengolt of Spol to an eating contest. Illustration by Mike O'Connor.



Dormastus

Once a Champion of the armies of the Evil One during the reign of Anirestyru, this mighty hero was taken by the Devourer during the third battle of Heronford. Seeing the power of the Lord of Ash, he quailed in his faith to the barbarian gods and forsook them. With iron vows he pledged himself to Shargash and service with the Elevens. Though none expected such a foreigner to survive the tests, he did and became an Eleven so perfect in his attention to duty that he was named the "Ten-Eleven" by his comrades. When his time with the Elevens

was over this hero joined the Red Path, again against all expectations, for a foreigner had never earned a rightful place among the Destroyers. For many years he fought against the barbarians in defense of Henjarl.

Herocult

Dormastus is considered the ultimate warrior of the Red Path who has also walked the Green. His followers are utterly correct in their behavior and dealings and frown upon any form of imperfection.

How Many Heroes?

Martin Laurie

A thesis on the nature of heroic manifestation among the cultures of Glorantha

by Irvandus of Jillaro, Learned High Scholar of Irrippi Ontor, 1631

The hero is the pinnacle of a society, the locus of legends, the doer of great deeds and the bane of foes. Heroes are few in number but always have impact for good or ill. By studying our own glorious past, our enemies and the lightless ways of those in foreign lands, we can gain insight into the nature of herodom and the social and (given the current climate) military implications of its manifestation.

Basic concepts

The causes of herodom

(1). Purpose

It is apparent that in all cases, heroes gain purpose. Purpose is the drive which defines the hero. Whether that purpose is as shallow as personal gain or as lofty in ideals as service to the glory of the Goddess, it is still purpose and therefore the catalyst to greater empowerment.

Recognized purposes:

(i). Enmity.

The hero seeks to defend themselves from or carry aggression to their foe.

(ii). Survival.

The hero attempts to survive a disaster for themselves or those they care about.

(iii). Curiosity.

To seek new frontiers, the hero quests for knowledge or insight and gains powers along the way.

(iv). Gratification.

To please themselves or others the hero performs the actions of herodom.

(v). Duty.

The hero performs actions in recognition of a duty. This might be a debt of honor, requirements of position or personal beliefs. The effect is the same.

Many purposes are interrelated and often shift and change during the life of a hero. It should not be forgotten that the hero is of mortal origins and many of the drives we live by in our daily lives still lurk beneath the power and presence of the mightiest of heroes.

(2). Power.

Let us make no mistake, a hero wields power. Wielding power in itself is not evil, even if more foolish members of the educated classes deny this obvious truth. The powers gained by a hero are not at fault. It is the reason for the acquisition of that power and the way it is used that determines its moral allegiance. For example: Hon-eel the Artess, blessings of light to her name, had powers of succor greater than any mere mortal healer or dancer yet plainly worked for the good of many poor folk and deluded barbarians. As a counterpoint, the dread slayer, Harrek the Berserk, shows us all that is inherently wrong with the selfish wielding of power.

Plainly the gaining of sufficient power is enough to make one a hero. This is in many ways a sad condition but it is true nonetheless. For example, the leader of the southern barbarian rebels, Argrath Bloodyhand, is clearly a hero of great power. Repeatedly he has shown his abilities and is venerated as hero and "Liberator" by his misguided barbarian hordes, yet his morality is without doubt that of the lowborn savage.

Under all the criteria which we of the Empire define the exalted status of hero, Argrath is one of preeminent strength. But he has destroyed bountiful lands, dispossessed rightful rulers and defeated the armies of the righteous



An uz hero. Illustration by Jeffrey Noh.

and just. Morality, reason and logic do not define the hero. The hero defines the world around them and this takes might.

Given then that power is the essential of the hero, it can be seen that the hero can become extant for a number of reasons:

- (i). By design. The hero deliberately quests for the power.
- (ii). By circumstance. The hero gains the power through the actions of others, their own mistakes or the vagaries of the universe itself that the hero survives to achieve transformation.
- (iii). At need. For the sake of others and with the support of the community, the hero is created by the ritual and spiritual support of their society.
- (iv). By role. The hero occupies social, religious or military position that brings with it the mantle of herodom.

(3). Potential

The hero is one or partially one with the plane of God. The mysteries of the Gods have been discovered, revealed, taken or understood by these individuals. These powers cannot be gained without the mark of divine favor and the potential to be a hero.

The hero is not the common man. He may live the life of a common man till his ascension to herodom, but within all heroes is the germ of greatness. Our

own Moonson was but one of many who vied for the Glory of Imperial Rule in the name of the Goddess. His star shone brightest through the potentials he awakened in the contests of Castle Blue.

Even Harrek the Berserk, crazed killer though he is, clearly showed his potentials in the arena of Glamour and the intrigues of the Dart Competitions. The blood of thousands of the uninspired stains the sand of the arena to give emphasis to my point.

One might argue, and I deem the point laudable enough to do so, that there are many who live their lives to their ending without ever having that catalyst to spark latent herodom. The man who sells dried fish in the market might very well become a

hero should the circumstances prove enervating. This thought then brings us to the impact our society has upon the frequency and appearance of the hero.

The Frequency of Heroic Manifestation in Diverse Societies

It is my contention that the numbers of heroes that arise in a society is determined by its structure. Let us look at examples of differing societies for the presence of the Hero and determine the nature of this pattern:

The Mostali

As a race, the Mostali are without doubt the most regimented of all except possibly the mythical folk known as the Brithini of whom the Carmanian chronicles speak. Their rigidity gives them immortality but at the price of total conformity to their place in society. The number of Dwarfen heroes can be counted on a hand with no fingers.

The Uz

A scattered, wild and unruly race with a warlike and hungry disposition. They fight everyone, each other and anything. They worship a pantheon of dark deities renowned for their violence and inhuman attitudes. Their heroes have been numerous. Their knowledge of their gods is strong and their exploration of the possible has made them the centre of many events.

The Rokari

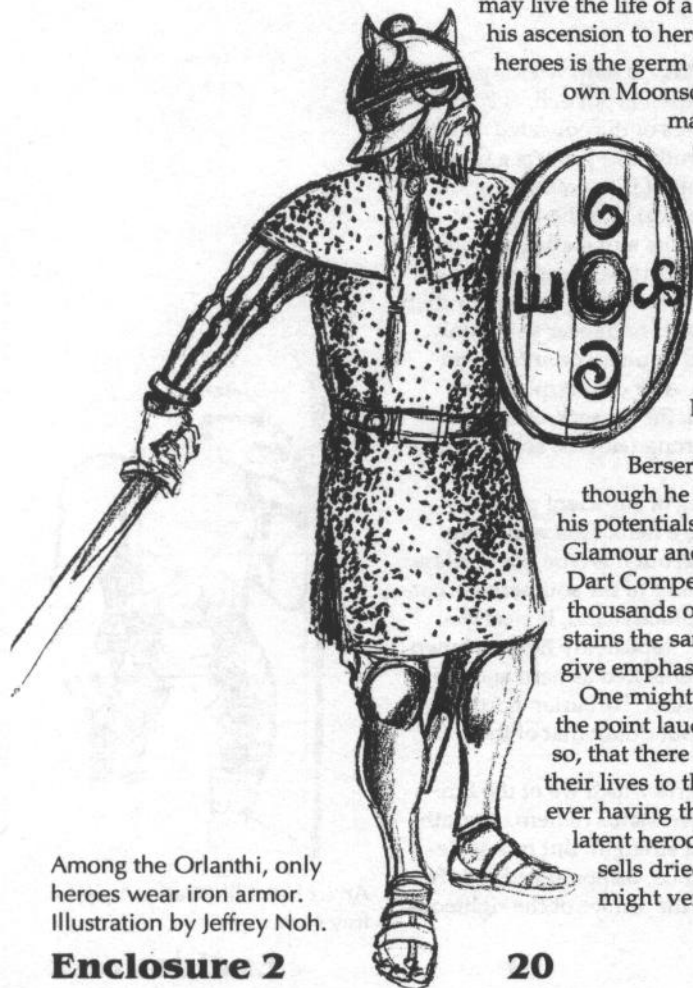
A Western folk with a rigid caste system. Their heroes are created by the purpose of Duty and the power of role. There are few if any peasant heroes. The opportunities to become a hero are determined by the place and rank of birth rather than the potential of the individual.

The Orlanthi

These barbarians live by the code of the hero. Their deities have all performed heroic feats (even the farming deities!!) and their culture is defined by the heroic ideal. As a society, they are predetermined to let the heroic virtues shine forth and all efforts are made to encourage such growth to emulate their deities. They have many, many heroes in proportion to population.

The Dara Happans

Bound by the laws of Yelm, Dara Happa is the epitome of a society governed by role and duty. Heroes in Dara Happa are those vested with the powers of office or obligation. There is very little chance of the common man becoming a hero for this would be a blight upon the perfection of Yelm! In this culture one emulates the gods of your birth and so a peasant venerates the deities of peasantry and not the virtues of the warrior.



Among the Orlanthi, only heroes wear iron armor.
Illustration by Jeffrey Noh.

The Carmanians

Once a vibrant people, these warriors followed the philosophies of the Magi and saw eternal struggle between light and dark as the centre of their faiths. As such they worshipped both peace and battle, cruelty and mercy. However their heroes were those empowered by the Magi who oversee the magical direction of all things in Carmania. Since their defeat by the Empire their warlike tendencies have been curtailed and the hero of Carmania is one of light not darkness. They have become more palatable to rule but perhaps less effective to lead into battle!

The Pentans

This savage folk live in conflict and hardship continually and such strife gives them cause to seek out great strengths to aid them in their battle to live against the odds. Such conflict has made many heroic leaders among them. Who can forget Sheng Seleris or the great warband of Pentan heroes who rode with him to plunder the Goddess in a terrible rape?

Analysis

It is clear from even a cursory delving into the many cultural examples that the rigidity of the social strata within a society and the forms of the deities worshipped have a direct relationship with the number of heroes extant in said society at any one time.

It can be argued that the more rigid societies provide a structure for more division of power, allowing more people to experience the powers of herodom. In some respects this is true. By maintaining a strong social order the rituals of the society are potent and easily repeated. Yet Dara Happa has maintained such a social order for millennia and time and again has fallen to vibrant heroquesting foes. Only the enduring culture of Dara Happa has allowed it any form of survival at all.

Thus, although many could say that the Sarterites have only as many heroes as we do in their armies I can safely pour scorn on such comments! Our Empire numbers eight thousand thousand folk whereas the barbarians can muster barely one twentieth of that number of people. Yet we do not have twenty times as many heroes as they!

Clearly the very fabric of our Empire is responsible for its weakness.

Currently the Empire faces a time of great testing. Hostile barbarians led by potent heroes plunder our Heartlands and defeat our armies. Time and again our large, well equipped and professionally led forces have been crushed by barbarians. Many behind the comparative safety of fortified city wall and Imperial Army passionately decry our military, our incompetent leaders and in more private moments, the very Emperor himself.

Such attitudes look at the symptoms rather

than the causes. One might as well decry the effects of Soul Waste instead of the agent of Malia who sent it! Our defeats can be laid at the feet of the society of our enemies which grows heroes like weeds among the rocks of their homelands!

This then is the crux of my thesis.

Our enemies worship gods of change, of conflict. They have these deities at every level of their religion whereas we have them as specialist deities alone. While every tribesman venerates the hero, the vast majority of our peasantry venerates the peaceful gods of fertility!

Among the social order of Yelm, there exists a stultifying strata system that denies the potential hero the required catalyst because it is not their place to be a hero! In the Empire today we have forgotten our warlike past. When the armies of the Goddess fought the battle of Four Arrows to be a Lunar mean you were part of a warrior people. Our heroes were numerous, our victories great. When Sheng Seleris stood astride the world like a Colossus, our Emperors battled to find his weaknesses. Our armies were led by heroes who never ceased their struggle. In the end they triumphed.

Wanes of peace have had their effect. The provinces were the place of war as the Empire retreated into the perfection of Yelmic splendor. The South lands became the place where all the troublesome military or warlike types were sent while the nobility amused themselves with infighting and hedonism of godlike proportions! So marginalized did our heroic folk become that the loss of many to the Brown Dragon left us disastrously weakened.

In Conclusion

I can only recommend a complete shift in Imperial policy. My learned colleagues would dispute such a bold statement but the time for talking is over! We must act! All efforts must be made to seek out the hero among us, to find the potentials available and to apply the powers at our disposal to them. Should we fail in this, I see only the bleakest future for our Empire. We will be beset, like an island of civilization amid a turbulent sea of barbarism. I fear that the waves will crash over us once too often and we shall not resurface from the torrent...

Irvandus

Notes: This document is restricted. Only persons of Imperial Rank Full may refer or use this treatise. Those interested in further speculations on this matter should refer to the Spoken Word interrogation transcript noted during the prolonged torture of Irvandus for crimes against the Empire. May Gerra look upon him.

The Bureau-Hero

Martin Laurie

Coffee house comments by Grey Sage Salker Staldersson of Nochet's Temple of Knowledge

Is it not odd that the most potent heroquesting Empire in the history of the cosmos had no heroes? The mighty God Learners are who I speak of! Yes they are reviled but who can doubt their puissance? Who can argue with such facts as the creation of gods, the defeat of ancient Empires, peoples and cults or the incredible acts affecting the Gods themselves. Yes they were great, and much is written about them but can you name a single one of them without looking through a dusty tome?

Yes, yes, yes, the secrets were lost and their powers forgotten but where were their heroes? Where are their names carved in stone and soul? Do we not remember Arkat, Talor, Harmast, Belintar, Lokamayadon, Palangio and many more who were likewise defeated and cast down in ages beyond the Jrusteli?

I tell you this, we remember no heroes for they had none! They were a bureaucracy of power, a triumph of intellect over heroism! When our gods faced the Jrusteli they faced a hundred hundred Bureau-Heroes all ruling by committee, all deciding as one and working together. There were no God Learner heroes because they were impersonal, like the collector of taxes or the clerk in the treasury. The God Learners were the epitome of the Bureau-Hero!

Ha! Spare me your pitying look. Just you wait till our populations rise once more. Mark me well, for the Bureau-Hero is not dead, they merely await the end of heroes and the collapse of herodom. When the worries of our taxes once more outweigh the value of our people's heroes, then shall the Bureau-Hero return!

Mitchuinn Moonhater, a History of a Hero

Martin Laurie

The Fall of Mirin's Cross

Dictated by Mitchuinn Moonhater, to Scaldur, Sage of the Mitchuinn Tribe of the Tarsh Lands, 1352 S.T..

I stood among the household of Gwythar Longwise that day. I remember Gwythar well. He was a great king and ring-giver, splendid in his iron and gold, lordly of feature, potent of voice, dauntless in battle, generous in victory, courageous in defeat.

Aye, all things a king should be were in Gwythar. Who else could have held the Alliance together for so long? Who else could have brought clansmen, warband and river folk together against Hwarin Dalthippa's accursed line of Shep-elkirt whores and bastards?

Who else could have brought war to Sylila for near twenty years? Who else could have seen to the death of Vingkot the Traitor and his son?

I stood on the bridge that day when Phiramax was slain by Bold Vareleus, leader of the last great Osliran fleet. Aye, and I took his finger and his ring of birthing.

I slew Noromorax the Impaler with his own spear as befits a hero of Vingkot.

I stood with Gwythar Longwise on the crystal bridge and opposed the household of its maker. Their blood was steaming hot and salty when it splashed on my lips.

I spat my curses as my warband dragged me clear of the rout and my lord of many years fell to their foul chaos magics. I yearn for revenge. My heart breaks with the pain of it. I will have it yet.

Born in 1301, Mitchuinn was a Vervoni clansman from the Huryandaring tribe in the Dara-Ni confederation. His father, Korlok Ironshield, was a weaponthane who in 1314 joined in the desperate down-river quest to raise the Dara Happan Tripolis against the Lunar Empire. The plan was to save themselves from encirclement by Hwarin Dalthippa. When faced by deadly moon magics the small group of Orlanthi and Dara Happans were handily defeated and driven off with great loss.

Korlok was killed in the raid, fighting Lunar demons to let his friends escape their clutches. Mitchuinn mourned his loss and swore vengeance on the Empire. When he was 14 Mitchuinn went to war and raided the Sylilans sorely. Even at that age his ferocity and relentlessness were noted.

In 1318 the Dara-Ni bowed before the threat of invasion from the Sylilan army, a fight they couldn't hope to win. Many brave clansmen were outlawed by their chiefs, with heavy heart, to save the rest. The Dara-Ni city dwellers escaped punishment for their reticence so the tribute fell heaviest on the traditional clans. The Vervoni were almost destroyed by other clans and Lunar carpetbaggers seizing their lands. The survivors fled south into Saird. Mitchuinn was among them.

Mitchuinn made a home in Saird and fought long against the Empire. He became a warrior of renown and was soon leading many raids and causing great destruction. By 1324 his standing and wealth had grown sufficient for him to create his own clan. In 1329 the Mitchuinn clan joined the warlike Kynneling Alliance which was formed and led by the hero Gwythar Longwise from his great fortress Kynneling (meaning Black Spur), on the juncture between the Oslir and the Black Eel rivers at Mirin's Cross, once an old Sairdite city.

Longwise was a canny campaigner and knew that the key to Lunar strength was Hwarin Dalthippa's grip on the Oslir. In 1330, backed by many displaced river folk and angry spirits, Gwythar led a powerful invasion of Sylila, crossing Aggar.

The Lunar army that was sent to meet them was smashed. Only the defending Lunar river spirits prevented a further rout taking the avenging army to the gates of Jillaro. Mitchuinn and his clan took much booty that day and were rewarded for their intervention against Opili nomad mercenaries as they tried desperately to ride down Gwythar and his household.

For the next three years the Kynneling Alliance warred upon Sylila, sometimes victorious, sometimes not. Wherever the fighting was at its fiercest, Mitchuinn was at the forefront. He earned the name Moonhater after killing Noromorax the Impaler, a renowned Warrior-Priest of the Red Moon in an epic battle of sword against sorcery.

In 1333 Phirmax, son of Hwarin and Ingkot was killed by a raiding party led by Bold Vareleus, the River Folk king. Many of the more warlike Kynneling went with him for plunder and vengeance. Mitchuinn was on that raid and slew many of Phirmax's glittering bodyguard as they tried to save their Prince and hold the bridge against the raiders. When Phirmax fell to Gwythar Longwise Mitchuinn cut the ring finger off the dead Prince and captured the young man's birth ring, a gift from his father for the summoning of war winds. Mitchuinn wore it as an insult to the Conquering Daughter.

Though the raid was a success in many ways, it brought the attentions of the Conquering Daughter fully upon the Kynneling Alliance. A great military buildup tempered the raids. Sylilan strength grew to great proportions thanks to the Conquering Daughter's thirst for vengeance. Aid from the Heartlands and the hiring of many mercenaries made her strength overwhelming.

In 1347 she set out, 14 years after her son's death. She proved unstoppable and Gwythar Longwise was unable to prevent her from creating a magical bridge of crystallized water right into his fortress. When he stood against her in person he was defeated and bound in place as an eternal guardian of the bridge, to forestall any raids into the Empire.

Mitchuinn was driven south in the fighting, giving up much but being joined by many other clans and refugee bloodlines. By the time they made the decision to cross the Deathline with pursuing Sylilans not far behind, they were a strong warband with many head of cattle.

Before he crossed the Deathline, Mitchuinn looked north and swore with a mighty oath, an oath followed by his children. He would "lead my kin to war and plunder though wounds lay me low, magics smite me down and death claim me. As long as a Mitchuinn lives, the Empire will know no respite!"

In 1348 the Mitchuinn crossed the Deathline. They first encountered the powerful Breagalos clan which had grown rich and fat exacting

tribute from the refugees flooding south from the Daughter's War. Their chief, Breagal, attempted to do likewise with the Mitchuinn but Bork Mitchuinnsson, a brash Humakti, laughed in Breagal the Greedy's face and swords were drawn.

The Mitchuinn were a War Clan of hard men led by a mighty warrior and his kin, all of whom were great weaponhanes. Though outnumbered two to one by the Breagalos they proved triumphant. Mitchuinn cut his way through the defending housecarls and slew Breagal, fine armor and all. The Mitchuinnssons proved their blood by their terrifying battle zeal that left a score dead at their hands.

The Breagalos were defeated and their lands taken. Though many Breagalos joined the new Mitchuinn tribe and kept their possessions, their chief was appointed by Mitchuinn and a tribute was laid upon them.

Though Mitchuinn was warlike he was no fool and knew that to wage his war on the Empire he would need great strength. Determined to be a King and to expand his resources he gave his followers the right to form new clans. Four of them took up his offer and set off to achieve their Chief Tests.

His sons and one daughter became members of the new Tribal Council though many tribesmen grumbled that the Mitchuinnssons were too reckless, irresponsible, and young for such high position.

However, Mitchuinn ignored their surly words and sent his three oldest and most unruly sons Bork, Gunnar, and Branik to scout the new lands, make friends, defeat foes and define Mitchuinn borders.

On their journeys Bork, who took the role of leader, being eldest and most loudmouthed, brought many free farmers into the tribe. But his ambition was balked by first contact with the Mellmuri.

The Mellmuri, a refugee tribe too, had pushed on, deep into Tarsh to escape clan and Lunar troubles after moving in stages all the way from Dara-Ni. They were led by a brutal, callous man known as Mellmur Thrallsbane, who rejoiced in fine food and beers but cared little for human suffering.

The Death of Mitchuinn

Seeing that the Empire was always strong in spirit and hence in war, Mitchuinn resolved to follow the path of his God and Hero. He prepared himself with the rites of Vingkot. He heard his hero's words of wisdom and summoned great magics to him, bending them to his purpose. Vingkot was ever a hero to those who battled oppression and the rule of evil and his character fitted Mitchuinn well.

He told no one among his folk for the rites of Vingkot forbade it. When ready he set off into the Empire. He used his clan contacts to pose as a guard moving from Filichet to Mirin's

Cross where he confronted the Conquering Daughter as she came to enforce her will on the local clans. With the aid of his magics and the ring of Phirmax, Mitchuinn flew to the heroquest path of the Daughters road. There he summoned a mighty thunderbolt from the clouds which cracked the road and opened its magics to allow more warriors to fly onto the upper level where Hwarin marched with her household, priests, guests and allies.

Mitchuinn, painted in woad and shielded by great magics, struck through the bodyguard, taking down warriors left and right. Defending his grandmother, Farimax Phirmaxsson leapt to her defence but Mitchuinn cut him in half, powered as he was by the strength of Orlanth. Hwarin, grief-stricken, attacked him then in her rage but he met her with his own, greater wrath and struck back, bearing her to the ground with the power of his blows. Such was his heroism that day, such was the strength of Vingkot within him, that the lunar heroine's shield was riven and her helm cracked within moments. Fearing for her life she summoned the gift of her father, the Red Emperor. A horrible chaos demon came to her aid, lashing Mitchuinn with its tentacle of bile. Mitchuinn was mortally hurt by that blow though he struck down the demon as he fell. Thus he followed the path of Vingkot, who was wounded by the Monster as he battled alone during the darkness. That part of his heropath was complete.

With the death of the demon, Mitchuinn shouted so loudly that all in the city below heard his words: "Behold the true face of Shepelkirt, beneath the beauty, chaos squirms and writhes for they are the kin of Wakboth!"

The warriors who'd come with him had held back while he completed his quest. Now they fought Hwarin's bodyguard as they came up to save their Queen. A fight developed over Mitchuinn's body and the followers of Orlanth proved victorious. Many fought against chaos that day. Among their number were Heringvat Jaldarnsbane of Sylila, Massakar Wifeslayer of Jillaro, Argankar Darkwalker of Yolp, Vars-thela of Brolia, and Gnocci Broobiter of the Bilini. Using mighty Mastakos magics these brave warriors managed to carry Mitchuinn back, still semi-living, to his own tribe and kin. There he died the death of Vingkot after receiving his chaos wound. He was burnt with the rites of Vingkot to become a hero to his tribe and a war spirit to lead them against the Empire.

Events After the Death of Mitchuinn Moonhater

The Mitchuinn were ever forward in war against the Empire. As more and more refugees from the Kynneling and other tribes and clans who could not endure the rule of the Empire came south, their support increased. King

The Mitchuinn Cult in 1620

From Report 19 by Trius Red-hue, Lunar Provincial Magical Survey of Enemy cults

Mitchuinn is an old enemy of the Empire. Few cults that oppose us have their foundations in war against our Glorious Goddess. Though their main strength was broken during the civil wars in Tarsh and the triumphant rule of the Loyal Kings, the Mitchuinn still remain a threat.

Among the Tarsh exiles the priests and heroes of Mitchuinn found a home. After the defeat of 1582 many settled in Sartar around Alone. Other Mitchuinn refugees have made their way into Sartarite, Volsaxi and even Hendriki lands to settle and spread their ways. Because the focus of their hero-cult is the defeat of Rufelza herself, they find ready acceptance and no few converts among the warlike and barbarous folk of those lands. It is sad to note that even with the beneficence of Her divine rule plain for all to see, such loutish folk oppose Her with undiminished fervor.

Their magic is unusual in that it is geared only to fight our Enlightened Empire. Were it not for our efforts to incorporate the regions in question into our Divine Imperium then the insane cult would have died out decades ago!

I conclude that there is little to be done about this cult other than to eradicate it wherever possible within the territories we control and to ensure few of their priests escape our pogrom to begin trouble elsewhere.

Arim of Tarsh attempted to stay their hand from war but the Mitchuinnssons lusted for vengeance for their father and were driven by their oath to his memory and spirit. Always his spirit advised them and aided them against the Empire.

Eventually, the Mitchuinn became a powerful confederation. After completing great rituals, they incarnated the spirit of Mitchuinn among them and marched on the Empire in great strength. They broke onto the Daughter's Road and marched all the way to Mirin's Cross before they were stopped. They plundered and killed till the fury of the entire Empire was roused against them.

The Empire decided to strike back at the heart of the problem. They sent a powerful army and many magicians to assail then desecrate the resting place of Mitchuinn. This was among a grove of magics near the Deathline where many heroic Lunar fighting spirits and warriors lived. Fearing that the defeat of the Mitchuinn would lead to their own defeat at a later date, Arim sided with the Mitchuinn and destroyed the Lunar army at the battle of the Falling Hills in 1362. After this victory, the

Mitchuinn pledged allegiance to Tarsh and Arim.

During the height of the Tarsh Kingdom, the Mitchuinn were powerful. They always formed a major part of any fyrd the King should call. They raided deep into the Empire during the rule of Sheng Seleris and grew rich on the tribute of a dozen clans.

When the civil wars began, the Mitchuinn sided with whatever side wished to pursue war against the Empire. When the Lunar rule began, the Mitchuinn were decisively crushed by many enemies wishing to repay old debts. Their remnants made up little more than a clan and fled to join the Tarsh Exiles.

To this day they follow their hero-founder and do battle with the moon at any opportunity.

The Herocult of Mitchuinn

Mitchuinn gives his followers great magics against Shepelkirt but they must never deal with the Empire except to destroy or damage them in some way. In all matters they support whichever ruler will bring them to war with the Empire.

How Theya Two-Mothers Avenged Leikashearth

Pam Carlson

Theya Two Mothers was the daughter of Inanna Ernaldness-dotir, Leika Spirit-Talker, and Jarang Orlgandison, a hard-working and prosperous carl of the Jungardi. Her father had sworn his line to bloodfeud with a warrior from Hendrikiland. This warrior, whom we will not honor by remembering his name, wanted to be chief of the Jungardi. He wanted to have lands and folk forced to carry his name, as the Southerners do. This warrior covered himself in fine metal. He rode a giant horse and led many warriors, but he had no hall or lands of his own. This metal-clad Stranger talked the Laws of Orlanth, but he scoffed at old magics. He preferred the foreign Invisible Magic of Arkat.

This Stranger made war on the Jungardi because they would not be his bondi. He killed most of the thanes. He killed Theya's uncle, Kjarten-Stone. He even killed the old chief. But worst of all, he killed Theya's mother, Leika Spirit-Talker, when he raided her hearth. The clan called to the Hendriki king for justice, but the king merely sent another stranger to be chief instead. Jarang refused to live without Orlanth's justice, so he announced he would take his family into the wilds of the north.

After the family had packed what they could fit of Leikashearth into their wagon, Jarang and his children invited all the folk of Backford to Jarangstead to give away all the gear they could not carry with them. Jarang made a great show of inviting the metal-clad Stranger. He said: "I cannot afford to carry a bloodfeud into the wilds—I would end it now. Let the Stranger come or be known as a coward."

But at the Giveaway, Jarang wasn't there. The metal-clad Stranger was. Folk stood about uncomfortably, quietly wonder-

ing if there were to be a feast, as no food was evident. Even children know Giveaways are always followed by feasts! Then Utag jumped up on the wagon and began to announce his father's gifts. As he gave away each thing, he named a kindness the recipient had done for his family.

"Piers Akreson—you helped my parents clear the land for our fields. For this we give you our smallplow.

"Ronna Ilfresdotir—you gave us six hens the year when ours all died. For this we give you twelve in return.

"Mathi Safarasdotir—you fed my brother Illig after our mother Inanna died. For this we give you two fine heifers." And so on, until the stead was empty except for one large, grey bull.

Finally the Stranger, from high atop his great horse, bellowed: "Where is Jarang? Is he afraid to face me? I suppose he has great plans to plow me to death!" The folk laughed nervously.

It was Theya who answered him. "My father lies where I left him, drunk and sleeping in the forest. The children of Jarang only want the killing to stop. I, as the firstborn of Jarang's bloodline, will end the feud by giving the lands and buildings of Jarangstead to you. With this act we would end the feud."

The Stranger considered the offer. As much as he wanted the land, he thought the offer was a bit suspicious. Jarang was a proud man, and the warrior had expected violence. He roared, "I thought Jarang wanted to fight! Perhaps I should just slaughter all the Jarangsons? That would surely end this feud!" People began to back away from the warrior and his horse.

Illig leapt up on the wagon beside Utag. "We are but honest carls," he said, "not mighty thanes like you. The children of

Jarang wish only to start anew and live in peace. We would offer you the land of our mothers in return for the lives of their children." Now, Illig was known far and wide as a clever speaker. Folk said he could convince an apple tree to grow pears. Greed finally overcame cruelty in the metal-clad Stranger, and he agreed to accept the stead and end the feud.

"Now this bloodfeud will be peacefully settled, and witnessed by all here," announced Heorl, the Lawspeaker who planned to follow Jarang to the new lands.

Theya looked at the Stranger. "You cannot see the land sitting on a horse," she pointed out. He climbed down. "Now I will show you the stead," she said.

"This is the well. The CleanWater spirit lives here. As long as you keep a brightly polished copper coin on the ledge, the water will always remain pure.

"This is the root cellar. The CoolEarth spirit lives here. As long as you keep it very dark and make an offering of onions every season, it will drive off the rot spirits.

"This is the barley field. The GoldenHead spirit lives here. As long as you plant in early Sea Season and pour a mug of beer in each corner, the harvests will be heavy."

And so on. Theya continued to call forth the spirits that Inanna and Leika had befriended. She told them that the Stranger was their new guardian. "These spirits are the play-things of women, and unimportant to a warrior!" sneered the Stranger. But Theya saw he was secretly pleased at the thought of more things obeying him.

Then Theya brought forth her father's finest bull. The animal's soft, dappled hide rippled over a healthy layer of fat. "A new steadmaster needs his own bloodline. With this bull I will help you found your own."

"But I don't have a wife!" wailed the Stranger.

"I can't imagine why no woman would want you", said Theya. "What, with all that metal, you look so... grey. No matter—I will arrange the ritual so that the next woman you lie with shall be your wife. Then you can found your bloodline." She smiled coyly at the Stranger, and swung her hips a bit. Now Theya Two-Mothers was a lovely woman, and the Stranger Who Knew Only War did not fancy having to run a stead all by himself. He grinned eagerly and quickly consented.

Theya beautifully intoned the bloodline ritual of Orlanth and Ernalda, while Illig helpfully told the Stranger what lines he must say. The whole of Backford watched as the ritual was chanted. Now, this metal-clad warrior had devoted so much of his life to war that he had little idea of how a proper foundation ritual should work. Theya gave the Stranger a knife. "For extra fertility, you must first geld the bull and bury his fruits in the Earth under yonder yew tree. That way the fertility will spread throughout the entire stead."

The Stranger cut the bull. (Theya had drugged the animal with tarma-root so he felt little pain.) Then he buried the parts under the yew tree. As the Stranger filled the hole, he disturbed a small bone already in the Earth. "Never mind that", said Theya "It's just left from an earlier sacrifice." (1)

After Theya sang a while longer, she instructed the Stranger to open the bull's throat, to pour his blood upon the ground. The warrior did so easily, for he was quite skilled at killing. As the blood spurted from the bull, that fine animal slowly fell to his knees, never to rise again. Illig told the Stranger to chant one last line in Earthtongue. It was one of the few phrases in Earthtongue men may chant, but the Stranger was so ignorant of Earth he didn't even know the words to "As with this bull, so with me."

The folk of Backford cheered. The Stranger beamed, for he

had finally had forced folk to accept him as a thane, with land and bloodline. Theya told him that to provide a community for his bloodline, he must now share the meat of the bull with the village. But as the folk approached, young Svarr stepped forward to remind each one of some favor his mother had done for them:

"Bardast—don't you remember when my mother, slain by that Stranger, cured your daughter from the Spotted Sickness?

"Umala—don't you remember when my mother, slain by that Stranger, brought forth your son?

"Hroddar—don't you remember when my mother, slain by that Stranger, helped the brook by your stead run clear again?"

And so on. One by one, the folk of Backford turned their backs on the metal-clad Stranger. The warrior's feast-meat was left to rot in the sun. The Stranger was furious, but even the southerners cannot force hospitality on anyone. The warrior had no choice but to accept the insult. He sneered at Theya, "At least now I have your father's fine farm. He has nothing but a few pitiful possessions in a wagon."

"True," said Theya, sweetly, "and the next woman you lie with shall found your bloodline!"

The earthly folk of Backford made their farewells to Theya and her brothers, giving them small gifts of food and things they would need on their journey. Then they left the Stranger's hospitality, still hungry (2). After that day, the little stead beyond Backford, blessed by the bones mothers and the blood of bulls, produced rich harvests every year. But the metal-clad Stranger never produced a thing.

NOTES:

(1) It was the custom of the Jungardi to bury their mothers under yew trees. Yew bark is an ingredient in many healing remedies, and the bark from grave-trees is especially potent.

(2) Leaving a Heortland social event without having eaten traditionally confers terrible luck on the host.



Jarang's grey bull. Illustration by Stefano Gaudiano, Gary Amaro, and Mike Christian. ©1998 A Sharp.

The Injustice of Tyranny

Teachings of the Ethical Symposium of Raibanth

Martin Laurie

Let the lesson of Mahzanelm the Usurper be a example to all those who seek and support the rule of Injustice. When Erraibdavu died at the hands of Mahzanelm, a great evil was brought to the Footstool of Yelm. No rule created by force, treachery and armed might can stand for long. Its foundations are rotten, and so

The Conquest of Mahzanelm

Harald Smith

Beventos, Marek [V. 'tribal leader'] of the Rebanni [a tribe centered in the Thorn Hills], tried to fashion a new unity in the Vanch lands. The Rebanni rose quickly, conquering the neighboring settlement of Alatelon and then defeating the Dazorda tribe of Lolon and the Tusori tribe of Bikhy and forcing both to pay tribute. Beventos continued his efforts and by 330-335, they dammed the Aryela River to force tribute from the Hesperu [a tribe located in the lower Aryela valley between the North and South Vanch Plains], allied the Vitegi of Karathama's Fold, and obtained the trade

rights with the dwarfs of the Karathama [Imther] Mountains. Beventos, called himself Kharek [V. 'King'] of Rebannon [an area between the Bikosin and Aryela Rivers from the Mountains to the Outer Hills]. But when the Tusori invited an embassy from Dara Happa to aid them against Beventos' oppression, Beventos ambushed and slew the embassy of the Empire.

Beventos did not count on the reaction of Emperor Mahzanelm. Beventos expected a retaliatory raid from Alkoth as had always been and prepared his folk accordingly. But Mahzanelm wished to prevent the unification of Vanch [since it was part of the Unity Council] by Beventos. So Mahzanelm himself came south with his army.

Mahzanelm sent the Alkothi to Bikhy as a feint. He himself proceeded down the Oslir and turned across the North Vanch Plains. Potaran, Marek of the Hesperu, sent troops from Doraryela to aid Mahzanelm and this saved his settlement from sacking. Mahzanelm continued to Lolon, crushed the Dazorda and leveled the settlement. The remnants of the Seat of Judgment [a Golden Age artifact said to be the Throne of Heliakal] were carted off by the Dara Happans.

From Lolon, Mahzanelm turned up the Aryela. His soldiers found the well at Thornhedge [Alatelon] and drank it dry. At Old Rose, Mahzan-

elm's army and the army of Alkoth (fresh from victory at Bikhy) joined together, catching the Rebanni between them. Old Rose was sacked and destroyed. The Rebanni were taken to the Enclosure of Alkoth. The head of Beventos was crowned with dead roses and placed upon a pike. Mahzanelm declared that facial masks were anathema to the Sun and that such marking would be a sign of defiance of the Emperor. He skinned the faces of the fallen of Old Rose and had the faces carried about to display his intent. This was the Unmasking of the Rebanni.

Mahzanelm carried his trophies south. The Vitegi of Karathama's Fold had aided Beventos of Old Rose. Now the Vitegi retreated into Karathama's Fold, but Mahzanelm unleashed a Sunspear to destroy this site. Where the spear burned the mountain face there was only a great wall which was ever after called Black-wall. Only a handful of the Vitegi survived and they were given as gifts to Mahzanelm's favorite servants.

Mahzanelm's army continued their conquest. Ulatel's Leap was sacked and destroyed. Waladus, grandson of Olamastus Shoechanger, stood before the army of Mahzanelm as champion of his tribe. Waladus fought Lanitelus the Huge to a draw in a vale with all men watching. When he was brought before Mahzanelm, the Emperor declared that no true subject would fight the champion of the Emperor. Mahzanelm ordered the execution of Waladus even though Waladus renounced his heritage. Mahzanelm gave the tribe to a general, Vorurjerum, to serve as the general's slaves. Zana-delor, the Marek of Malusia, opened his city to the army of Mahzanelm but was taken as an outlaw for his Tusori heritage and was sent to the Enclosure. The city was looted, though it was not razed.

Finally, at the Temple of Kareiston, Karmast-on the Pure received the army of Mahzanelm and presented the tale of Kareiston. He proved his own worth before the light of Yelm by standing within a fire in the heart of Kareiston's temple without being touched by flame. Mahzanelm accepted the offering of Karmast-on and made his own offerings to all the gods of victory and justice. He returned north bearing the loot of his campaign and the trophies of war. At Bikhy, Mahzanelm appointed his general, Pergethus, as Pilek [V. 'Governor'] of Vanch.

Mahzanelm has ever after been cursed by the folk of Vanch or invoked as a curse ("May Mahzanelm Tear Off Your Mask!"). Village women often warn their children "Don't go there or Mahzanelm will get you!"



Illustration by
Mike O'Connor.

The Daughters of Vingkot

by Stephen Martin, with thanks to Jeff Richard

"Vingkot was bearer of Divine Blood, and his descendants were blessed with his capacity to rule. The bloodline of Vingkot the Founder was unique, and necessary to be king in his nation. But some of the men were more famous than their wives, and so their tribes were called after them."

The Saga of the Vingkotlings [Enclosure 1]

Listen well, these are the Daughters of Vingkot, who was the son of mighty Orlanth.

The first daughter of Vingkot was Vestene, and she was the last to marry, for she stayed in the Camp of Vingkot to care for her aging mother. She married Goralf Brown, who came leading his kinfolk when the land was dry, the air was cold, and the sky was dim. Though of strange appearance and speech he proved his good will by his actions and his kinship with Orlanth's wife, and was welcomed into the land for the gifts he brought. Though poor even by the standards of the Darkness, owning only the long axe he bore as a weapon, he offered the bodies of his enemies, the aldryami, as food. His people joined the tribe, and he married Vestene, who was closest to the earth of all the children of Vingkot's Summer Wife.

The second daughter of Vingkot was Orgorvale, and she married Ulanin the Rider. Ulanin was a nomad from the east. He had left his land in search of his splendid god, who had been slain by the coming of the Predark. He rode an animal whose ancestors had been noble, but who now relied upon Ulanin and his followers for its survival. Ulanin and his steed had proved their might by fighting the trolls who came to rob the stead, though both were maimed in the battle. Vingkot rewarded Ulanin by giving him the right to marry, and he chose Orgorvale as his wife, for she was the most upward-looking of all of the children of Vingkot's Summer Wife. Ages later, when Ulanin's people fled their native land (exiled for daring to worship their god, who had returned to bring light back to the world), they became Vingkotlings as well.

The third daughter of Vingkot was Penene, and she married Kastwall Five, who was so-called because he was as large and strong as five men. Though his exact origins are unknown, he did not bring any relatives to join the Vingkotlings. Indeed, he was worth more than any single man, and did not need a family to aid him. Kastwall won the right to marry Penene (the most emotional of the children of Vingkot's Winter Wife) when alone he defeated five foes in battle, Dara Happan kings all. Kastwall and Penene had five sons, who founded the Penentelli Tribe when they divided the clan into five clans upon their

father's death.

The fourth daughter of Vingkot was Infithe, twin of Jorganos Archer, who married Porscriptor the Cannibal. Porscriptor was a terrifying man, whose savagery was so great that he was known to eat his opponents after battle. Although he had no known kin, he was so fierce that even the Alkoithi demons feared him. Though falsely accused of being an ogre, he proved to be such a loyal follower of Vingkot that he earned the right to marry Infithe, who was the wildest of the children of Vingkot's Winter Wife. He and Infithe had many sons, the first of whom was Deksar, who tamed the natural fury of his nature and became the greatest Lawspeaker of the Storm Age.

The fifth daughter of Vingkot was Redaylde, and though the youngest she was the first married, for she alone of Vingkot's children knew her mind and her heart fully. She married Berenth the Rider, the greatest horseman in the world. Berenth was a nomad from the north who had fought the Dara Happs, enemies of the Vingkotlings, in the time after the death of the Emperor. His people rode horses, and claimed descent from legendary Hyalor, who first had tamed that noble beast after her crippling. Berenth the Rider was also called Berenth Kuschile, for he was the greatest archer in all the world, excepting only Jorganos Archer, son of Vingkot. Once, while riding his great stallion Gryphus, he shot an arrow into the Sky World and brought down a shining bird; the golden feathers of the Sky Eagle decorated his helm ever afterwards.

Vingkot's daughter, truest of all the children of his Winter Wife, fell in love with Berenth's beautiful horses, and could not help but love the man who counted such noble animals as his friends and allies. So great was her love for Berenth that Vingkot created the way for him to join the tribe of the Vingkotlings by marriage, which had been forbidden to foreigners before then. Redaylde and her daughters ever after tended the mares of her husband and his sons, and they and their followers spread across the land. So great was her love, and so populous their descendants, that when Redaylde joined Ernalda in the House of Women she was named to be the goddess of horses. Thus her blessings stayed with the Vingkotlings after her death.

Mahzanelm discovered to his cost as he died in the same manner as his former Lord.

He, as with other false rulers of his ilk, created the cause of his own demise. By substituting force for Justice he succumbed to the Dominion of Shargash. When force provides the means for your support then it to shall prove the means for your downfall. Without the Justice of a true Emperor, Mahzanelm was incapable of resisting the incarnation of Shargash in the very armies that swept him to power.

Here then is the secret of Rule. Justice. Justice alone can control Shargash, defeat the rule of the Empty Emperor and bring lasting happiness and peace to the lands of Dara Happa. Remember this well should a persuasive general approach you for aid in attempting the Ten Tests!

Porscriptor the Cannibal married Vingkot's daughter Infithe. Illustration by Mike O'Connor.



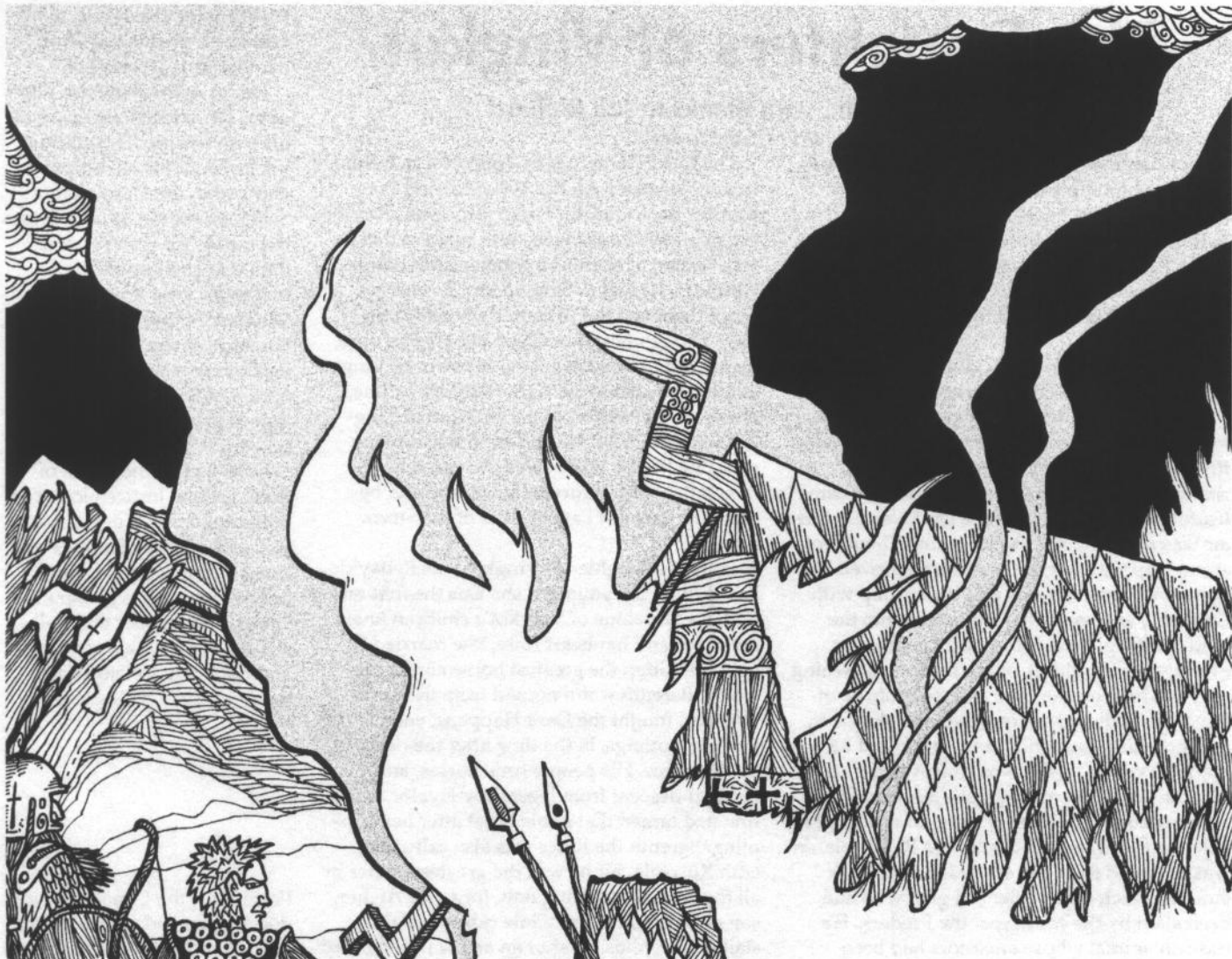


Illustration by Mike O'Connor.

Rastalulf's Saga

Jeff Richard and Greg Stafford

I.

There once was amongst the Berenethtelli a man named Rastalulf Vanak Spear. He was the son of Harang Great Father, the son of Vesten the Bull Wrestler, the son of King Venef the Stallion who embraced Heort as High King.

Rastalulf lived at Yinkstead, an ancient and well placed town on the Naller River. He was a tall, powerful man and outstandingly skilled at arms. He could strike or throw with either hand, and his sword-strokes were so fast that he seemed to be brandishing three swords at once. He was so strong that he could kill a man with his fists.

Rastalulf was not a handsome man. He had dark hair and brooding brown eyes, but he was a great speaker and never at a loss for words. His loyalty to his friends and his generosity to his supporters were legendary. He was quick in mind and quicker in action—he once said that it never took him more than to fill his

lungs with breath to make the right decision.

No man was ever better gifted by the gods than Rastalulf, for he was truly a favorite of Orlanth. He could speak words of power as easily as other men talked with each other. While a mere boy, he was confronted by jealous priests who were angered that such a stripling knew secrets that they did not. As said Burnt-Brolarulf in the Immolation Song:

*Defying vain elders, thundering youth
Showed them his gifts; Great Storm
Tore Land and Sky asunder!*

As Rastalulf began his initiation into manhood, he proved that he embodied the powers of Orlanth. When the enemy was summoned at the beginning of the ritual, Rastalulf smashed the foe with a thunderbolt though no priest taught him how! Two years later, upon completion of the initiation, Rastalulf sum-

moned a wind that carried the entire group, priest and new men alike, to the snow capped Empty Mountain high above the Storm Age Forest.

The Empty Mountain is a crescent shaped caldera and its huge circular valley floor has the heroic holdings of wrathful Alaramsor, the guardian of Asrelia's rich trove. Rastalulf and his companions surveyed the environs of Alaramsor's Hall, and later their tattoos depicted the magical terrain of that place. (1)

While scouting the floor of the Empty Mountain, Rastalulf and his companions were ambushed by dread Alaramsor and his many followers. His companions knew fear, for Alaramsor was a foe of Great Orlanth himself and had broken gods and heroes who sought to take what he guarded. (2)

But young Rastalulf was armed with Orlanth's divine Thunderbolt. With a brave shout, he leapt into the winds and hurled that divine weapon at Alaramsor. He called forth again the Great Storm to scour Alaramsor's followers and filled their hearts with terror. Finally, Rastalulf commanded the winds to carry him and his companions away from the Empty Mountain.

Rastalulf gained his first victory against his spiritual enemy, Alaramsor. His clan held a feast for him, since no man had ever been a match for the mighty guardian of the Empty Mountain. At the feast, the clan god-talker sang words of power of Orlanth's quest into Hell to wrench a fabled weapon from Alaramsor. (3) Rastalulf remembered the words and committed them to memory.

Many great men gave Rastalulf gifts and exchanged pledges (4) with the young god-talker. Among these was a proud young Berenethelli chieftain named Haradangan, who swore friendship and observed that Rastalulf was worthy to sit at his table as a hall-thane, despite his youth. Harang Great Father told Rastalulf that this was a great honor and predicted that Haradangan would someday be King of the Heortlings. But Rastalulf rejected Haradangan's offer, saying that he acknowledged no man to be his better except the holder of the Ring of Orlanth and that he would swear service only to the King of the Heortlings. Several of the chieftain's followers grew dark with rage, but the proud chief only laughed and told Rastalulf that he accepted his offer to serve him when he became High King.

Soon after, Rastalulf married Karendra of the Penentelli tribe. She was a wise and generous woman. Only Erilindia of Durlael ever said anything ill of Karendra and that was when she said such a mousy woman was unworthy of a man whose storms could shake kingdoms. Rastalulf and Karendra had four sons and two daughters, but the most famous was their first son, Brolarulf, who amazed all by speaking his first words in verse.

II.

Harang Great Father's prediction came true and at the Great Assembly of the Heortling tribes, King Haradangan of the Berenethelli became King of the Heortlings. (5) He sent a companion to Yinkstead and demanded that he honor the promise that he had made at the feast. Rastalulf presented himself to King Haradangan and offered him "his sharp sword, his right arm, and his breath" in return for the King's "friendship and support" (6) as the ancient oath goes.

Rastalulf won great honor as a hall-thane, and was acknowledged as the greatest warrior of the Heortlings. He was the High King's most important counselor. Whatever he spoke always came to pass. At Haradangan's side, he fought against the Queen of the Oslira, (7) whose warriors had killed King Orlmast. Against his foes he would call down thunder and terrible winds. None could stand against Rastalulf and his war-companions, and his praise was sung in the halls of kings and chiefs. As was said in the Fandara Saga:

*Waged the wide-famed thunderer
war-play, slaughtering many.
Again then Rastalulf gathered
storms, his sword to redden.*

When Rastalulf heard that his father had left for Orlanth's Hall, he told Haradangan that he wished to leave his service and return to Yinkstead to be the chieftain of his people. Haradangan asked if he would have greater honor at Yinkstead than at his side as a hall-thane. Rastalulf answered that the gold and rings given by a king is no substitute for following one's destiny. Haradangan was angered by this response, for without Rastalulf he would lose his mightiest weapon against his foes, and declared, "I have many warriors and much gold. I could make you remain at my side." To this Rastalulf said, "No one can make me do anything. What good is gold and men without honor?" None of the warriors in Haradangan's hall rushed to the King's side and it was clear that their sympathies were with Rastalulf. The High King paused for a long while and then agreed to dismiss Rastalulf from his service.

The king gave Rastalulf much gold and a fine stallion. They exchanged oaths of friendship and embraced as brothers, but some later observed that Haradangan never forgave Rastalulf for the insult. Rastalulf himself told Kastand, his trusty spear-thane that he would never again acknowledge any man as his better. He returned to Yinkstead and was elected chieftain of the Harangi without opposition.

III.

Among the Berenethelli, the chieftain Rastalulf was recognized as a man of action, and

This story is based on a draft of Greg Stafford's novel. The published novel may have a different version than you see here.

people who wanted vigorous and threatening support would seek his help at the justice meetings. But he refused to simply take silver for his help, and wisely listened to Orlanth and his Knower before he acted. Many people came to sacrifice at his altar, because it was so clearly a place of great power. Further, no one dared to raid Rastalulf's sheep and cattle, and even thieves were afraid to take a chicken from his clan. Thus the clan benefited greatly, and it was said that even the cottars hung tapestries in their houses. (8)

One summer day, Rastalulf saw a storm brewing on the northwestern horizon. Terrible dark clouds hung low in the far-off sky. They dropped black rain and brought ill omens. He warned his companions that the Darkness was coming. They asked what could be done. Rastalulf told them that a Great Storm must be brought that would change the world.

For three years Rastalulf and his companions sang words of power and offered sacrifices to the gods. On Orlanth's High Holy Day, he gathered his companions and summoned the wind that carried them the Empty Mountain. As before, Rastalulf and his companions were ambushed by Alaramsor and his many terrible followers. As before, Rastalulf leapt into the wind and hurled challenges and blows against his foe.

But Alaramsor was too powerful to be forced into submission by any man. Rastalulf and his men were defeated in their aerial fight. Calling upon the winds, he managed to escape with only his trusty spear-thane Kostand. Alaramsor and his followers pursued Rastalulf back to Yinkstead where they razed the entire fields of barley for the year.

To keep his carls well-fed, Rastalulf gave out much of his gold and his cows. He asked Orlanth and his Knower for advice on how to defeat Alaramsor. He remembered the words of the song the clan god-talker sang at the victory feast so many years before—the tale of Orlanth's quest into Hell to wrest a fabled weapon from Alaramsor. Rastalulf summoned the Berenethtelli god-talkers and listened intently to each version of the story. He sacrificed much wealth to the gods and gave Orlanth the stallion that the High King had given him. At the altar of the gods, Rastalulf pledged himself to Orlanth and accepted his destiny.

Rastalulf gathered his companions at the holy ground of his clan. As Orlanth did in the sacred tale he appointed officers and gave each their role. He appointed his old companion Kostand as his watchman. From among his new companions he appointed Venestra the Red Woman as his scout, Leikan of Deksars-hall as his speaker, White Della as his healer, Hill-Skolli the Hantrafali as his knowing companion, and Quick-Ashart as his riddler. Rastalulf appointed himself chieftain. He instructed his six officers of the tests that they

would each face and taught them the words that they would need to know. A great throng of supporters surrounded the holy ground. Rastalulf taught them the prayers that they would have to make if they were to defeat Alaramsor. Forming a ring with his six companions around the sacred fire, Rastalulf summoned a wind that carried the seven off to the Empty Mountain.

Within the caldera, Venestra spotted the host of Alaramsor without himself being seen. Rastalulf knew not to be ambushed and brought his companions to the gate of Alaramsor's Hall. Alaramsor's guardians refused Rastalulf entry, but they could not stand against his storm and he passed into the hall. As Burnt-Brolarulf sang:

*Fierce Thunder-wielder, strong ring-shielded
Passed by Alaramsor's Hall-Thanes and strode
down
The Path of Silence.*

Each of the companions remembered what Rastalulf had taught them. Because of that, they were not lost forever in the Otherworld.

The Knower knew where to leave the Path of Silence before they were judged in the Courts of Silence

The Scout knew how to follow the Unseen Trail and guided them through the Darkness.

The Speaker persuaded the Ferryman to carry them across the River of Swords.

The Watchman insured that they were not attacked by the Hounds of Alaramsor and protected them when they rested.

The Healer healed those who had been broken and would have destroyed them but for her compassion.

And the Riddler posed the Learned Devourer with a question it couldn't answer and learned the location of the Testing Grounds.

At the Testing Grounds, Rastalulf faced Alaramsor at the place where he was most powerful. Alaramsor would have destroyed them all, but Rastalulf was not afraid and spoke the Challenge Words exactly as Orlanth did. Alaramsor had to honor the Challenge Words for they were part of his power. Alaramsor challenged Rastalulf's ancestors, his luck, his breath, and his honor.

For his ancestors, Rastalulf pledged his ability to use words of power. He won when he recited the Origins of Umath in the sacred language of his people and forced Alaramsor to acknowledge his power.

For his luck, Rastalulf pledged his ability to sacrifice himself for his people. He won when he showed Alaramsor the destiny he had chosen and Alaramsor's role in that destiny.

For his breath, Rastalulf pledged his ability to wield the storm. He won when he overcame Alaramsor with the Great Storm.

For his honor, Rastalulf pledged his life. He

The Quest to Empty Mountain

Like most heroquests, this can be performed for different goals. Most notably, the object of the quest doesn't have to be the Vanak Spear itself. Many questers prefer to obtain a lesser weapon rather than accept the doom that accompanies owning the Vanak Spear.



won when he learned of the doom that would be his if he took the Vanak Spear and still accepted it rather than live with dishonor.

Defeated, Alaramsor showed Rastalulf where he had hidden the Vanak Spear. Reaching into Alaramsor's heart space, Rastalulf wrenched out the fabled weapon and greeted it as his Grandfather. As Burnt-Brolarulf sang:

The tongue of Vanak, my father's dread Grandfather, speaks words of power. They voiced Bagustan's bane, the burning of water-Jeseeri and of making Kadkardan half-a-man. Listen with care! Grandfather whispers of your end and promises thunder's angry vengeance!

Tribes in the First Age. Map by Mike O'Connor and Jeff Richard.

Triads of Terarir

Greg Stafford

Erilindia is mentioned in three triads of the Terarir period. (Like most of the triads of this period, they are attributed to Harshen Three-line [born c. 338, famous c. 362])

The Three Great Women of Terarir

Ore, the most modest. (It was a vice for her. Ferenus loved her, and courted diligently for twelve years. He even rescued her twice, but got her to glance at him only after he tricked her into revealing her real feelings.)

Kerenth, the most murderous. (She provoked the death of four husbands, poisoned three more, paid for two to be assassinated, and stabbed one while making love.)

Erilindia, the most ambitious. (Born a carl, she took the scale and became a trade chief, amassed great wealth and bought Durleel, became Director of Terarir and Queen of Oslira, and married the greatest priest in the world.)

The Three Great Treacheries of Durleel

Korstak, for lust. (He was a spoiler and debaucher, but led the troops to victory, so he was liked. Then he raped Fencha, and everyone turned against him.)

Marandos, for greed. (He was a conquerer and a commander, and received awards no man before him had ever received. Yet, for wealth, he blew it away. So, too, went he, as does all gold, away.)

Barderus, the Defiler. (He was a loyal man to his lord, but when he saw the murderer of his clan he killed her. Her kin didn't even seek wergild, preferring to disavow the heinous crimes of Erilindia. But for defiling a temple, Barderus was captured and tortured to death by avengers.)

Calling forth long-vanquished winds, Rastalulf carried his companions and the Vanak Spear out of Alaramsor's Hall and back to the holy grounds of his peoples. From this point on he was called Rastalulf Vanak Spear.

IV.

Rastalulf's loyal spear-thane was Kastand, who had stood beside him since their first victory against Alaramsor. Kastand's daughter Hindala was his only child. When she became old enough to marry, Kastand asked Rastalulf to help him find a worthy husband for her. Rastalulf arranged a marriage with Harnkaval of Holdfast, a cousin of High King Haradangian and a wealthy chieftain of the Berenethelli. To prove that she was Harnkaval's equal, Hindala brought a very large dowry—so large that some mocked Harnkaval as Hindala's underhusband. To honor his loyal companion Rastalulf contributed a generous part of Hindala's dowry himself.

The marriage between Hindala and Harnkaval was not happy, and Hindala told Kastand that she wanted to divorce Harnkaval. Kastand told her the precise legal formula to divorce him so that it could not be challenged by judges or jurors. Hindala did as Kastand instructed, and returned to her father at Yinkstead.

Kastand traveled to Holdfast with four men and asked Harnkaval for Hindala's dowry. He refused, and told Kastand that if he ever entered Harnkaval's clan lands again he would kill him. Kastand traveled to Yinkstead and asked Rastalulf for his aid. Rastalulf said that Harnkaval was most unjust not to return the dowry, and called for jurors to witness his claim to the dowry.

Harnkaval asked his cousin Haradangian for advice. The High King said that Rastalulf was a great man and there would be no dishonor for a chieftain like Harnkaval to settle the claim. Harnkaval said, "That might be so. But I think it would be a grave dishonor for a King like Haradangian to force his kin to settle with a man who has as little respect as Rastalulf." Jealous of Rastalulf's fame and remembering his haughty insults, Haradangian agreed to support Harnkaval.

At the next formal Court of the Berenethelli, Rastalulf arrived with his jurors, his companions and his supporters. His juror stated the claim against Harnkaval, and Rastalulf plead his case. King Haradangian refused to judge the case and said that he could not impartially judge a claim against his kin. Rastalulf retorted that Orlanth routinely judged against his own kin. "A true King," said Rastalulf, "places to the justice of his people above the advantage of his kin." Furious, King Haradangian announced that he would not hear the claim and that Enderos, chieftain of the Keradafi, would hear the claim. Rastalulf refused to allow

Enderos to be seated as judge and, brandishing the Vanak Spear, reminded the assembly of his boast of twenty years before—he acknowledged no man to be his better except the holder of the Ring of Orlanth.

The assembly left without the dispute between Enderos and Rastalulf being resolved. The next summer, Rastalulf and his supporters rode to Holdfast and announced that they were there to take Hindala's dowry by force. None of Harnkaval's men dared raise a weapon against Rastalulf.

When King Haradangian heard the news, he shook with fury. He tried to institute proceedings against Rastalulf, but Rastalulf was so popular that even Haradangian could not get sufficient jurors to swear the Law Oath against him. He sought to outlaw Rastalulf, but the chieftain had too many supporters. He told his hall-thanes to kill Rastalulf, but none would raise a weapon against him.

As a result of the feud between King Haradangian and Rastalulf, a dangerous black cloud loomed above every Court, and little business could be conducted at the Court because of the armed bands of men. After a few years, the quarrel between two great men grew so bad that the other tribal kings took sides, some siding with King Haradangian, others with Rastalulf.

V.

In far-off Talastar, lived a great man named Lokamayadon. He was the oldest son of Ingkarthor the Wealthy, the son of Jothitorang Gnawbone, the son of Swenith, the son of Great King Valarastans. Even now with his greatest fame lying in the future, he was the most famous man in the world. Just the briefest list of his deeds follows. He had defeated Emperor Mahzanelm in battle and liberated Lakrene from the Dara Happan Empire. He had earlier quarreled with King Haradangian but put that aside to perform the Feat of Thunder Mountain. The High Council of the Lands of Genertela gave him the title High Speaker and his word carried as much weight as the High King's. He married Erilindia of Fandara and negotiated the Champion's Peace between the High King and the Queen of Oslira. Many loved him, others feared him, but all respected him as the greatest of all the Orlanthi.

After, having brought peace between the Heortlings and the Queen of the Oslira, it was Lokamayadon's ambition to bring peace to all the races of Genertela. At the Council of the Oak, envoys of the Dara Happan Emperor presented themselves to the High Council of Genertela with gifts and offers of peace. Lokamayadon's silver words helped negotiate a peace treaty between the Empire and Dorastor. Places and issues were sacrificed by each party, but for Lokamayadon, peace was worth great sacrifices. He sought to bring harmony to

the Orlanthi peoples under his leadership.

It was with great disappointment that Lokamayadon learned of the feud between King Haradangian and Rastalulf. On the eve of peace between the High Council and the Dara Happan Empire, it was intolerable to Lokamayadon that the storms of war were brewing among the tribes of the Heortlings. (9) Calling together his followers, Lokamayadon resolved to bring peace to the Heortlings.

Lokamayadon arrived at the formal Court of the Heortlings with gifts and supporters. The onlookers became excited. The priests said that his presence at the Court portended great change. Many were angry with Lokamayadon for the shameful acts he had committed to win Erilindia of Fandara as his wife. (10) Others were angry with Lokamayadon for supporting peace with the Dara Happan Empire despite having won great glory by defeating the Dara Happan emperor in battle and seizing their territories. Still others hated Lokamayadon for having fought against King Haradangian, even though it ended with the Peace of Champions. But mostly the onlookers were nervous, because Lokamayadon was a great and ambitious man who swept away his opponents with the great winds he brought.

Lokamayadon announced that he came to reconcile the Heortlings and bring harmony to the Orlanthi and offered great gifts to Rastalulf and King Haradangian if they would let him mediate their differences. But Rastalulf Vanak Spear would not take his gifts. Instead he asked Lokamayadon what right he had to mediate this dispute between Heortlings. Lokamayadon replied that he was the High Speaker by proclamation of the High Council of the Lands of Genertela and that he spoke for the peoples of the High Council.

Rastalulf Vanak Spear asked Lokamayadon if Orlanth ever allowed a foreigner to mediate a dispute between him and his brothers. Lokamayadon admitted that no such thing had ever been done. Rastalulf Vanak Spear asked Lokamayadon if Heort ever allowed a foreigner to mediate a dispute between him and another Heortling. Lokamayadon replied that no such thing had ever been done. Rastalulf Vanak Spear asked Lokamayadon if the old laws sanctioned a foreigner to mediate a dispute between the High King and a free Heortling man. Lokamayadon said that following the Old Ways had led to war and dissension and thus New Ways were needed.

To this Rastalulf Vanak Spear said, "Lofty sheep-rider, much has been sold to buy your empty greatness." He told Lokamayadon that the Old Ways serve the gods and preserve the world, while Lokamayadon's New Ways serve his ambitions and preserve nothing. He accused Lokamayadon of wearing robes in his homelands and of being ashamed to show off his tattoos before the slaves of the Emperor. Finally, using the Vanak Spear, he destroyed the gifts Lokamayadon had offered. (11)

Lokamayadon was furious, for Rastalulf had insulted him before the assembled Heortlings. A dark cloud brewed above Lokamayadon's head, lightning flashed from his eyes and a strong wind lashed the onlookers. "You will respect my authority or I will sweep you away with my winds!"

But Rastalulf Vanak Spear was not afraid. "No one can make me do anything!" he roared. "I will not be swept away and you will live to regret your rash words." Summoning a great storm that raged on for three days, Rastalulf scattered the assembled Heortlings. It was said that in their haste to leave the assembly grounds, several members of the Ring

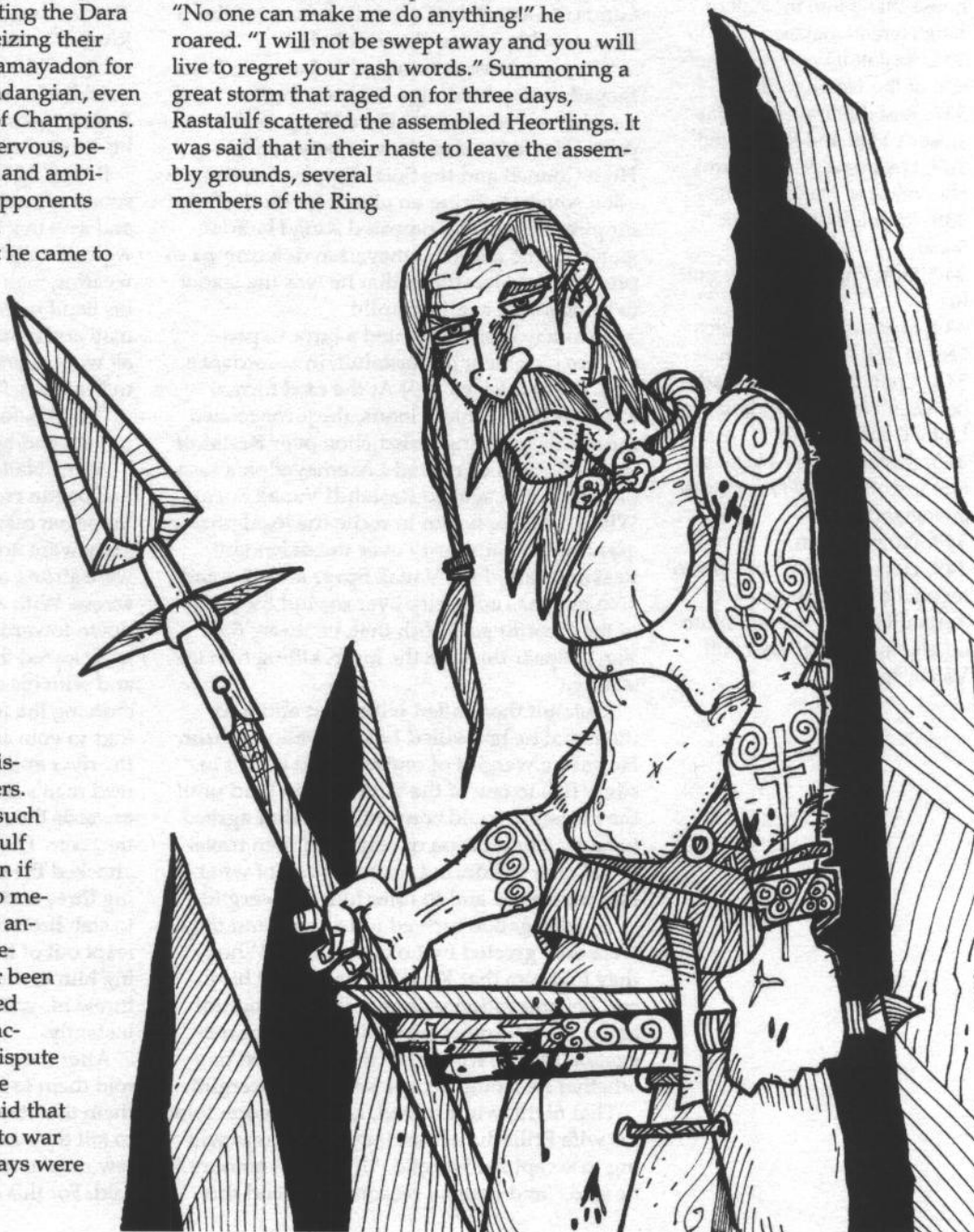
The Three Womens' Slaughters of Terarir

Koladan, by Erilindia, for the good of the earth. (Ganagran Oria makes ancient demands). Alornik, by Oppashargash, for a red river. (Shargash defied, sends death.)

Thernen, by Erlindia, for no reason, just rage. (Vadrus devours those who feed him.)

Rastalulf Vanak Spear was the most formidable warrior of his day. Illustration by Mike

O'Connor.



Timeline of Rastalulf's Saga

- 309. Rastalulf born.
- 311. Lokamayadon born in Talastar.
- 322. Rastalulf summons the Great Storm.
- 324. Rastalulf becomes an adult.
- 326. Rastalulf first travels to Alaramsor's Hall.
- 327. Rastalulf meets young Haradangian and marries Karendra.
- 329. Brolarulf born.
- 332. Haradangian becomes High King.
- 332. Rastalulf welcomed as a house thane into the hall of King Haradangian.
- 335. Rastalulf becomes Chief-tain of the Harangi Clan.
- 337. Rastalulf travels to Alaramsor's Hall and is defeated.
- 339. Lokamayadon performs Heroquest of Hagodereth.
- 339. Rastalulf wins Vanak Spear.
- 340. God Project is made public.
- 343. Lokamayadon performs Feat of Thunder Mountain.
- 345. Champions Peace made, between Dorastorings and Unity Council.
- 346. Rastalulf begins legal action to collect dowry from Haradangian.
- 349. Eringulf Born.
- 349. Lokamayadon attempts to reconcile Haradangian and Rastalulf but is violently spurned and insulted by Rastalulf Vanak Spear.

of the Heortlings dropped their sacred regalia. (12) Lokamayadon returned to Lakrene with his supporters.

The next year, Lokamayadon sent envoys to King Haradangian, asking him to hold Rastalulf Vanak Spear accountable for his insults. When the envoys presented gifts from Lokamayadon, King Haradangian received each gift graciously but presented them with counter-gifts of identical value. When the envoys presented their case against Rastalulf Vanak Spear, King Haradangian had his lawspeakers give ancient reasons why the King could not hear the case. After this had gone on for many weeks, King Haradangian dismissed the envoys, letting them know that he would not resolve the dispute between Lokamayadon and Rastalulf Vanak Spear. He said, "Lokamayadon is High Speaker of the Lands of Genertela. Certainly he can resolve a dispute with a mere clan chieftain."

When his envoys returned to Lakrene, Lokamayadon was holding a banquet for the haughty servants of the Dara Happan Emperor. Having ended the war between the High Council and the Solar Empire, Lokamayadon sought to bring an alliance with the Solar Empire. His envoys repeated King Haradangian's words and Lokamayadon determined to prove to the Heortlings that he was the leader to bring peace to all Orlanthi.

Lokamayadon appointed a juror to pronounce judgment on Rastalulf, in accordance with the Old Ways. (13) At the next formal Court in Berenethelli lands, the juror recited the words invoking jurisdiction over Rastalulf Vanak Spear and recited Lokamayadon's case of defamation against Rastalulf Vanak Spear. When the juror began to recite the legal phrase granting him authority over the defendant, Rastalulf raised the Vanak Spear and shouted, "No man has authority over me but the King of the Heortlings." With that, he threw the Vanak Spear through the juror, killing him instantly.

Rastalulf then called witnessed and told them that he had killed Lokamayadon's juror. He gave a wergild of one hundred marks in silver (14) to one of the witnesses to hold until the assembly could convene. Rastalulf agreed to allow a delegation of respected men travel to Lakrene to inform Lokamayadon of what had transpired and to offer him the wergild.

The delegation arrived in Lakrene and they were well greeted by Lokamayadon. When they told him that Rastalulf had killed his juror, Lokamayadon was angered, but did not abuse the delegates. Instead, he told the delegation that he would tell them the next day whether he would accept Rastalulf's wergild.

That night, while in bed, Lokamayadon told his wife Erilindia of Fandara that he was willing to accept the wergild. "It is a just amount," he said, "and I see no reason not to end this

feud with Rastalulf Vanak Spear." Erilindia scoffed at Lokamayadon and said, "Men will think you a coward if you cannot protect your own followers from men like Rastalulf, let alone from those greater than he."

Lokamayadon recognized Erilindia's threat and decided not to accept the wergild.

When Rastalulf learned that Lokamayadon had refused the wergild, he told his sons that Lokamayadon would send men to kill them. His eldest son Brolarulf smiled and said he would arrange a suitable greeting for them.

The next spring, Lokamayadon called his twelve best warriors and told them to ride to Yinkstead and kill Rastalulf. They rode fast and furiously across south Peloria. They wore fine mail and their helmets were inlaid with silver. In Berenethelli lands they met some carls and asked for directions to Yinkstead. The carls said that it was across the Naller River. The riders thanked the carls and set up camp for the night. One of the carls ran as quickly as a man can to Yinkstead and told Brolarulf about the riders. Brolarulf gathered his brothers and companions.

Before the dawn, Rastalulf woke up to the sound of rustling mail. He rose and went out, and saw that his sons and several supporters were all fully armed. Brolarulf was in the lead, wearing mail and wearing a blue cloak, with his hand on his sword hilt. His other sons wore mail and helmet and carried their spears. They all wore colored clothing. Rastalulf called out to Brolarulf, "Where are you going?"

"To look for Lokamayadon's lost sheep," he replied and headed for the river.

At the Naller River, Lokamayadon's men had begun crossing the ford, when they saw the seven men at the other side of the ford. They were unfamiliar with the ford so they were strung out in a line as they felt their way across. With a yell, Brolarulf raced straight down towards the river and made a great leap and cleared the river. He then turned around and with his sword cut down the last man crossing the ford. "My father sends his greetings to your lord," he said. He then ran into the river and his sword crashed down into the next man's head. The other brothers ran down towards the river and slew the first man across the river. Then they charged into the river and attacked the men trying to cross the ford, killing three and wounding three. One man tried to stab Brolarulf with his spear, but Brolarulf leapt out of the river and cut off his arm, leaving him to die in the river waters. He then threw his spear at another man, killing him instantly.

After the survivors surrendered, Brolarulf told them to flee back to their lord and tell them that it will take more than twelve sheep to kill their father. "It is an insult to send so few men to try and kill such a great man," he said. For this deed he was often called Brolar-

VI.

Lokamayadon was enraged when he heard about Brolarulf's Great Leap. He wanted to challenge Rastalulf to single combat to finish the feud once and for all, but the High Council forbade it. The High Council was culminating its negotiations with the Emperor to bring the Solar Empire into the Council and without Lokamayadon, the negotiations could not be concluded. Although he accepted the High Council's decision with public grace, privately Lokamayadon raged and the Emperor's priests were frightened by the ensuing storm until Eirilindia calmed him down.

Rastalulf Vanak Spear traveled to the hall of King Haradangian and presented him with many gifts. He asked King Haradangian for his support against Lokamayadon, warning that Lokamayadon would soon have the support of the Dara Happan Emperor. Haradangian replied that the dispute was between Rastalulf Vanak Spear and Lokamayadon, and did not concern him. He said that he could not choose between Rastalulf's arrogant pride and Lokamayadon's overwhelming ambition. Oddly, Rastalulf only sadly replied he knew that would be King Haradangian's reply and saluted the King of the Heortlings.

That winter, Rastalulf gathered his friends and companions. In all, forty-eight brave men and woman from all the Heortling tribes met at Yinkstead, and swore to fight alongside Rastalulf Vanak Spear. He sent away his grandchildren to be fostered in other lands. (15) On Orlanth's High Holy Day, Rastalulf and his chosen companions sacrificed the best of his herd to the gods and fed themselves solely upon that meat until Sacred Time.

In Lakrene, Lokamayadon called for his warriors and handpicked one hundred fifty of his very best men, chosen for their bravery, their devotion and their prowess. He gave each one a fine colored cloak and a golden armband. Each wore a coat of mail and a helmet with red feathers, and carried a sword and two spears. He exhorted them to strike quickly and make it evident that none can stand against the new winds of change. Accompanied by a wind summoned by Lokamayadon, his host sped towards Yinkstead, covering the distance in less than seven days.

Yinkstead was a strongly fortified stead with stout, thick walls and surrounded by a stone corral. Frighteningly carved wooden totems protected the stead from unfriendly spirits and the stone lintels were lined with runic carvings. Its high peaked roof had shingles of bronze and fierce spirits of wind raged in the sky above. Outside the hall, Rastalulf was ceremonially armed one last time by his trusty spear-thane, Kastand.

Lokamayadon's host gathered outside the

stone corral. A storm brewed above, and hail-stones the size of a man's fist fell from the sky. Above the din, Brolarulf laughingly greeted the assembled host and offered to quench their thirst with his father's ale, telling them:

*Honor is brewed here, handed out.
You thieves found it bitter drink.
My lips blister, honor quenches them.
Your thirst will be Dergandaran.*

After saying this, Brolarulf shot one of Lokamayadon's men in the eye with one quick draw of his bowstring. Shouting the war cry of Lokamayadon, the besieging host charged the corral walls. A brief battle ensued, but the foreigners failed to break Rastalulf's shield line and they pulled back. Brolarulf shouted across the field:

*No one can call us niggardly.
We are poor men, but we thrive returned
Your host gift of spears and sword edge.*

This was true, for Rastalulf lost only six of his men, but eighteen foreigners lay dead. Rastalulf told his men that it would be poor hospitality if Lokamayadon's envoys had nothing to boast of. He then reminded the foreigners of their oath to Lokamayadon and told them that their women would mock them if they returned without killing him. This inflamed the foreigners' anger and again they charged the corral walls.

Brandishing the Vanak Spear, Rastalulf leaped over the corral wall into the thick foreigners' line. Their weapons could not bite him and with each thrust of the Vanak Spear, one of Lokamayadon's warriors fell. Rastalulf's companions fought with great bravery as well, but the foreigners' swords could bite through their armor. Venestra the Red Woman fell first, her arm severed by a lucky blow. Hill-Skolli was killed when a well-placed spear cracked his skull and Leikan of Deskarshall died with an arrow through his neck. Kostand Spear-Thane died last, cut down at Rastalulf's side. The loss of his trusted companion struck Rastalulf hardest and he called up a fierce wind that blinded his foes and retreated back into the hall with his surviving sons. Brolarulf taunted the foreigners again:

*No man goes unsated from our hall.
Narosden and Fenlanth and their twelve good
thanes
are not thirsty. Minlister toasts them.
And those treacherous foreigners,
Forty eight or so, counting only heads,
Are not hungry anymore.*

Lokamayadon's men were afraid to follow Rastalulf into his hall, for they knew that behind those great, bolted oak doors lay Rastalulf

350. Haradangian refuses to resolve dispute between Lokamayadon and Rastalulf. Rastalulf Vanak Spear kills Lokamayadon's juror.

351. Brolarulf's Great Leap.

352. Lakrene Treaty. Dara Happa joins with the High Council of the Lands of Genertela.

352. Immolation. Rastalulf Vanak Spear and Brolarulf Great Leap killed along with their companions by supporters of Lokamayadon.

355. Significant Dara Happa forces settle in Dorastor.

365. High Council of the Lands of Genertela broken when King Haradangian leaves council, along with uz and dragonewts.

368. First Theyalan War. Haradangian killed. Berenethings enslaved.

371. Hardrinor Born.

375. Nysalor Born.

376. Victory of Second Theyalan War.

377. Directorate of Saird Established

379. Battle of Night and Day. Eringulf killed.

396. Harmast born

397. Battle of Vaantar. Hardrinor killed.

397. Ultimatum issued to Orlanthi.

398. Orlanth's Evil Year.

and his sons. They could not stand against the Vanak Spear. More than half the foreign warriors were dead and many more were wounded. From within they could hear Brolarulf's mocking poems and their impotence to avenge the insults enraged them further.

It was a Vanchite named Tuluki, cursed forever as the Burner, who found the bales of hay drying in the corral and suggested that they burn Rastalulf in his hall. They blocked the doors to the hall with a wagon and covered it with stones from the corral wall. They stacked up the bales around the hall and piled wood atop it high onto the roof. They lit the bales and a thick black smoke rose into the sky. But the fire did not eat the hall itself and from within, Brolarulf still mocked them:

*You paltry Burners! Make a pyre
Worthy of Vingkot, our grandfather hero.
You are burning heroes in here, too.
You can not stack death here, so place trees instead.
Make a hero's fire, with smoke to bear our breath
To Orlanth's mead hall. Burn us well,
Or we will mock you as fireless, as well as cowards.*

The Burners redoubled their efforts and threw more wood and bales onto the pyre. They prayed to their gods and they called upon Lokamayadon to burn Rastalulf. With that, the flames erupted and licked high into the sky. The heat was so ferocious that the mail

links of their armor weakened and their swords were forever discolored. But from within, louder than thunder, began Burnt-Brolarulf's Immolation Song:

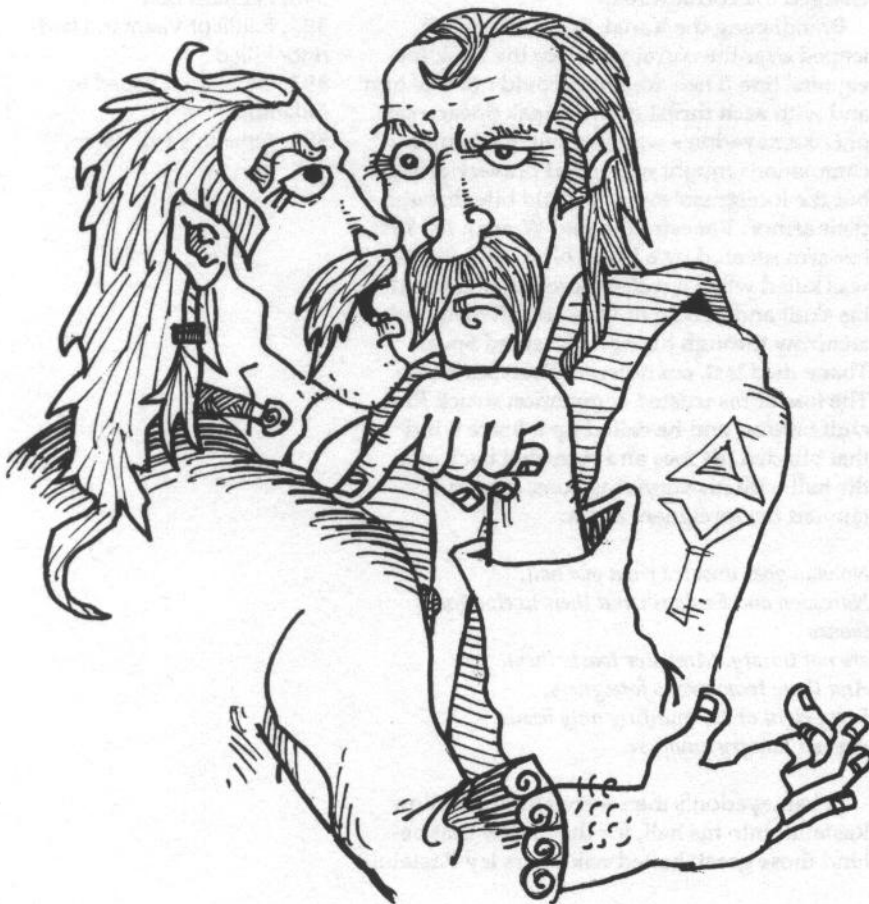
*This fire unfetters my soul, a debt I owe you.
My powers will repay you—hear my song and
breathe free. (16)*

He sang the entire Immolation Song from within the burning hall as the flames licked ever higher. His voice never weakened even when the embers of the roof collapsed into the ruins of the hall. When the song ended, the dread figure of Alaramsor was seen flying into the stead. Only the crackling of the dying flames could be heard as Alaramsor rode his steed back into the sky carrying the Vanak Spear.

When the flames finally died, every Burner was on his knees praying to his gods. None ever forgot the terrible power of the Song and each had been forever changed. King Haradangan heard the Immolation Song from a surviving Burner and he openly wept with tears streaming down his cheek. Realizing his wrong, he cried out for Rastalulf's forgiveness. No one ever sang the Immolation Song in Lokamayadon's presence and he was always puzzled by the reaction others had to it.

Thirteen years later, when King Haradangan broke with the High Council, he led the Heortlings from the Council singing the Immolation Song. Thus began the Gbaji Wars and the great storm that changed the world.

The disputes over points of law sometimes got rather heated.
Illustration by Mike O'Connor.



- (1) A crescent for the lip of the caldera, a square in the center, a pair of lines showing the slope, a sign over the square which is Alaramsor's sign.
- (2) No Godtalker of the Orlanthi knows Alaramsor's divine lineage, although Burnt-Brolarulf later said that Alaramsor lost his genealogy when Orlanth wrested the Vanak Spear from him.
- (3) Gavranal Split-tooth, a Berenethtelli chieftain who knew Harmast Barefoot late in his life, claimed that this was the Berenethtelli secret of Orlanth's Lightbringers Quest.
- (4) Heortling political alliances were cemented by the exchange of gifts symbolizing the oaths of friendship.
- (5) The chronology of the saga is a bit confusing, since several years have obviously passed. Haradangan had become King of the Berenethtelli. It should be observed that Haradangan remained King of the Berenethtelli while he was King of the Heortlings.
- (6) The term "friendship and support" for the Heortlings entailed a broad array of obligations and responsibilities. A king was expected to promote the interests of his companions just as they were expected to fight and die for him.
- (7) Erilindia of Durleel, called the "most ambi-

tious woman of Terarir," had proclaimed herself the Queen of the Oslira and fought several wars against the Heortlings.

(8) In some versions of the saga, this section occurs after the Vanak Spear has been won.

(9) Friction between the Heortlings and the Talastari had been on the rise for generations. Former little and rare problems had become larger and more frequent. Disputes over prime land had turned bloody and no institutions existed to resolve the disputes since the Heortling king did not have authority over the Talastari and the Heortlings did not recognize anyone with authority over them.

(10) Lokamayadon used the Three Lightnings and the Hidden Wind shamefully to win Eri-lindia of Fandara, the Queen of the Oslira and the most ambitious (and most beautiful) woman in the world.

(11) This is an extremely insulting gesture. Not accepting a gift is considered an insult amongst the Orlanthi. Destroying a gift denotes the greatest contempt for the gift-giver.

(12) However it should be remembered that in

Herangvot's poem describing the Ring of the Heortlings in 365, each item of the sacred regalia was listed and its bearer's merit detailed.

(13) The juror was Penorri Lawman, son of Axe-Kolli, son of King Angangarl of the Liornvuli.

(14) This is a truly remarkable amount and probably twice the true wergild of the juror. Many commentators have concluded that having satisfied his honor, Rastalulf was now willing to resolve the entire dispute with one great payment.

(15) One of these grandchildren, Eringulf, is the hero of his own saga. Portions have been published in *Tales of the Reaching Moon* #7, in the piece entitled "Fragment 1645." Eringulf was Harmast Barefoot's grandfather.

(16) These are the only two lines of the Immolation Song that have ever been written down, but every Orlanthi god-talker and poet has committed the song to memory. The song is considered to be sacred words of power, and even Lhankhor Mhy sages have the prudence not to profane it.

The Origin of the Sun Dome Temples

Jeff Richard

Based on a discussion between Steve Martin,
Jeff Richard, Harald Smith, and Greg Stafford

"Kestingatha sponsored a great new temple to Antirius, built in the new style with a great golden dome arching overhead. It also had a great square base, and an equally impressive statue of Lodril. As a result of this Kestingatha was blessed, and he grew strong and wealthy, and was noted far and wide for his justice. Furthermore, his army was fierce and they defeated the nomads in twelve battles." *Glorious ReAscent of Yelm*

After Emperor Mahzanelm conquered Vanch (345-350), the Dara Happans sought to ensure that oft-treacherous Vanch would never be a thorn in the side of the Empire. The Emperor commissioned the construction of a grand structure that would be both temple and a military enclave for the Dara Happans. The temple was in the form of a dome, but not set upon a square, and its compound was walled without gates. To enter the compound it was necessary to ascend a stepped walkway.

After the First Theyalan War (368), more of these Sun Dome Temples (as they were called by the Orlanthi) were built—one was even built atop the ruins of Urar Baar. In all, five Sun Dome Temples served as Dara Happan military anchors to keep the rebellious Theyalans under the control of the High Council.

Unlike the temples built in Vanch, these new Sun Dome Temples were set upon a square consecrated to Hastatus.

At the Battle of Night and Day (379), Nysalor revealed Daysenerus to be the patron of the Sun Dome Temples. In ancient times Antirius sent forth Daysenerus to bring Antirius' message to the barbarians. Although this noble mission failed in prehistoric times, Nysalor provided a new opportunity to bring Antirius' Light to the world. Daysenerus' first deed was to crush the army of Kyger Litor and his first temple was built upon the site of that victory.

During the years that followed, new Sun Dome Temples dedicated to Daysenerus were built throughout the lands occupied by the Bright Empire. The military might of the enclaves of Daysenerus suppressed the rebellious Heortlings and supported the rule of the Bright Empire. However, their association with Nysalor proved to be their downfall. When Arkat raised the Heortlings into their final successful rebellion, vengeful Heortlings and their troll allies destroyed every Sun Dome Temple they encountered and eradicated the name Daysenerus from Peloria.

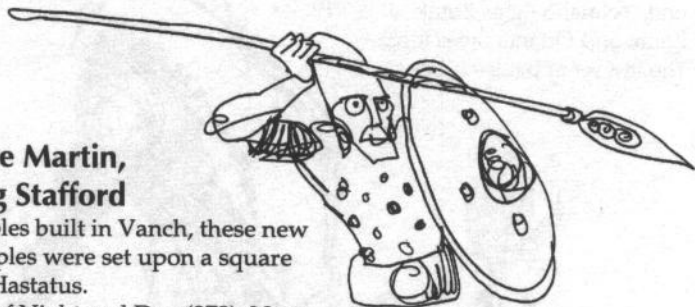


Illustration by Mike O'Connor.

An Introduction to the Hill of Gold

Stephen Martin

The Hill of Gold is one of the most prominent myths of central Genertela, or so we must presume from the wide array of deities who claim to have fought there. Yet little has been published about it, and few details are known. *Sun County* mentions that Yelmlio fought there, and was defeated by Orlanth and Zorak Zoran. In *Glorious ReAscent of Yelm*, Antirius faced the Selfish God and the Cruel God, and also died. Ancient sources indicate that Inora was present as well, and also defeated Yelmlio.

The basic form of the myth is relatively simple. Four gods go to the Hill of Gold (believed by most people to be in Vanch), and fought a series of battles. The first "day," Yelmlio fights Orlanth and Inora faces Zorak Zoran. The second, Yelmlio fights Zorak Zoran and Orlanth faces Inora. The last set of battles is be-

How Zorak Zoran Became the Lord of Death

A story told by the Ergnabs Clan of Dagori Inkarth

Stephen Martin

Back when the Enemy still ruled the Surface World, before Darkness was forced to flee to the Hurtplace by the Burning Death, Zorak Zoran was nought but a shadow. Though he was powerful, he was discontent in Wonderhome, and with his sister Xiola Umbar travelled to the surface world. The Hurtplace was perilous, and to survive the twins had to seek to be more than they were, especially when chaos started to intrude upon the world. Xiola Umbar sought to coexist with those around her, and so she met many gods in friendship. From them she learned to

heal her friends, and to defend against her enemies, and she grew ever stronger in the ways of Shadow. But Zorak Zoran sought other powers, for he thought that Shadow was weak, and saw the need to conquer all of his foes forever.

Thus, Zorak Zoran sought to learn the secrets he needed from the masters of war. He parted company from his sister, and travelled to Challenge Peak to learn from the gathered warriors of the gods. When he crossed the

Bridge of Passage and entered the Court of Conflict with his boastful challenge, he was

beaten and humiliated by many of them, for he was not yet a worthy opponent for any there.

Zorak Zoran determined that he would



Illustration by
Sean Drew.

Enclosure 2

take from them what they would not share, and began seeking his revenge.

Zorak Zoran is clever, and knew that he must be cautious. He hid in the shadows until one of the lesser combatants, Norag the Ice Hag, left the Court of Conflict alone, and then he attacked before she could prepare herself. She carried the freezing Shadow of Death, but she was kin to Zorak Zoran, and he was not harmed by her dark talons. He tore her freezing shadow from her, and fashioned it into a great dark Net to trap his enemies. Norag fled back to the north, and gave up all mastery of Death by her cowardice. Her shadow flowed from Zorak Zoran across the land, chilling all it touched and empowering all shadows, including the Dark God himself.

Strengthened, Zorak Zoran then sought out one who had cut him in the Battle Pit, for his victory had given him a taste for blood. Again he waited in the shadows, and when Amanstan the Yelmalio came by (as he did every day) he ambushed him. Amanstan carried the burning Fire of Death, and their battle scarred Zorak Zoran forever after. But Amanstan had already traded his spear in another battle, and Zorak Zoran was too close for him to bring his far-reaching arrows to bear. When he closed with Zorak Zoran he was frozen by the shadow of Norag, and his fires were easily taken from him. He limped across the sky in fear, only a glimmer of what he had once been, and the dimming of the Sun strengthened the Taking God even further.

The next combatant to come by was Orlanth, who came to see what had happened to his old enemy the Sun. Orlanth wielded the deadly Weapon of Death, and he was the next victim of Zorak Zoran. Before he could fly away in fear Zorak Zoran roared his challenge, and Orlanth threw the Firewind at him, which he had gained from Amanstan the Yelmalio. But

Zorak Zoran had already touched that power, and he simply swallowed the spear. Then Orlanth sent the Hellwind against Zorak Zoran, but its cold could no longer freeze him, and he captured it in his sling and swung it around his head until it wailed its submission to him. Finally, Orlanth came at Zorak Zoran with his Sword, and Zorak Zoran took a great wound there, so that his blood spilled across the Peak. But he brought the Shadow to blind him, and the Fires to burn around him. Orlanth fled in a cloud of smoke, which hid the last of the light from the world, and gave Zorak Zoran even greater power. The Death God reached down to pick up Orlanth's great weapon, abandoned in his flight, but when he picked it up by the long handle it cut his hand. Enraged, Zorak Zoran grabbed the head of the weapon and beat the long handle against the rocks until it was dulled, and so made the first long-handled mace, which became his greatest weapon.

Armed with Death and strengthened by Darkness, Zorak Zoran returned to the Court of Conflict, and defeated the remaining war gods there. All of the war gods fell before him—his new weapon blocked the blades of Humakt, his fires shielded him from the burning savagery of Shargash, and the freezing shadow of Norag withered Vronkal's bow before he could fire his arrows. Even Karrgan, the First, was defeated, who had been the greatest warrior at Challenge Peak, and the first to defeat and humiliate Zorak Zoran. Zorak Zoran defeated them all, and ate those who did not flee.

Then Zorak Zoran stood upon Challenge Peak and roared his challenge to the world, and all who heard it despaired. From that time on, Zorak Zoran lived there in his Lead Fortress, and sent his warriors out into the world to kill and eat as they pleased, so that the trolls ruled the world.

tween Yelmalio and Inora, and Orlanth and Zorak Zoran. But who really fought at the Hill of Gold—was it Yelmalio, Antirius, or some other primeval Sun God? Was it Zorak Zoran, or Kazkurtum, the Other of Yelm?

There is also doubt about the true location of the Hill of Gold, and indeed I find it doubtful that all of the myths name it such. The Hill of Gold is a real place, but it can also be seen as a metaphor for the Center of the World, which is known variously as the Spike, the Cosmic Mountain, the Primal Tree, and the Throne of Yelm, among others. I believe that tellers of the myth will often substitute a local, prominent feature for the historically-known Hill of Gold: Mount Kero Fin, Top of the World Mountain (in Ralios), Yelm's Tower in Raibanth, etc. As with all myth, the truth is in the eyes and minds of the believers.

In this issue are a number of variations on the myth of the Hill of Gold, each told from a different viewpoint. Each deals with the myth in a different way: in one the Hill of Gold is the source of Sovereignty, in another it is a silly story about the trickster. Some may seem more valid to you than others, and I encourage you to change the others to fit your own needs.

How the Taker Took the Elves

A Green Elf Myth Shannon Appel

In the Green Age there was an Island in the middle of The World, at the center of The Sea, and on that Island there was a Tree, and that Tree formed the roots of The Sun. The Sun was the mind of the universe, and its name was Yelmalio. The Island was the heart of the universe, and its name was Gata. The Sea was the blood of the universe, and its name was Arroin. The Tree was the soul of the universe, and its name was Flamal. From The Tree came The Seeds, and when they settled on Arroin they became the blue elves, and when they settled on Gata they became the green elves, and when they settled on Yelmalio they became the white elves. They were all the children of The

Grower, and all was well in The World.

But, the turn of the seasons is inevitable, and so one day a new thing sprouted in The World, the Taker, and its name was Zorak Zoran. The Taker looked in envy at the beautiful Island at the middle of The World, and he knew that if he controlled the center of The World he would rule everything. So, he decided to make The Island his own. He called together all his cohorts, the bad winds, the sickly pestilences, the burning flames, the sterile rocks, the freezing colds, and the sneaky leaf-rots, and he hatched with them a plan, a plan to weaken Yelmalio, the protector of The Island, and eventually destroy him.

Aldryami Names

The Aldryami use slightly different forms of some of the names in this myth. Eron is the nurturing water. The Great Tree is called Falamal. Halamalao is the warming sun. The Taker is Zazakzor.

The swiftest of all the winds was the first to approach the island, and its name was Orlanth. It brought a great throne with it, planning to place it on the island and rule by right of *sovereignty*, but Arroin saw it swiftly skimming over the waters. He let out a shout of warning, and Yelmalo leaped down from The Sky to protect his roots. He fought the swift wind long and hard, but Orlanth was a very good warrior, and Yelmalo couldn't defeat him. As he fought, Yelmalo noticed how Orlanth looked lustfully at his weapon, so finally Yelmalo gave up his spear, and only then was he able to strike a telling blow. The swift wind was very pleased with the spear, for it had never had such a fine weapon, and it decided to betray The Taker, just like Yelmalo knew it would, for the name Orlanth meant "Traitor to Kin." So Orlanth flew off and started its own kingdom at the edge of the world, and when the Taker tried to call Orlanth back, Orlanth poked him with Yelmalo's spear. But, it was a poor victory, for Orlanth and his boisterous brothers unsettled the waves, and the blue elves and Arroin couldn't come to the surface any more and had to hide at the very bottom of The Sea, and The World was growing stormy.

The hottest of all the flames was the second to approach the Island, and its name was Kitapah. It planned to burn away everything on The Island and rule by right of *existence*. Arroin wasn't there to offer warning any more, and so

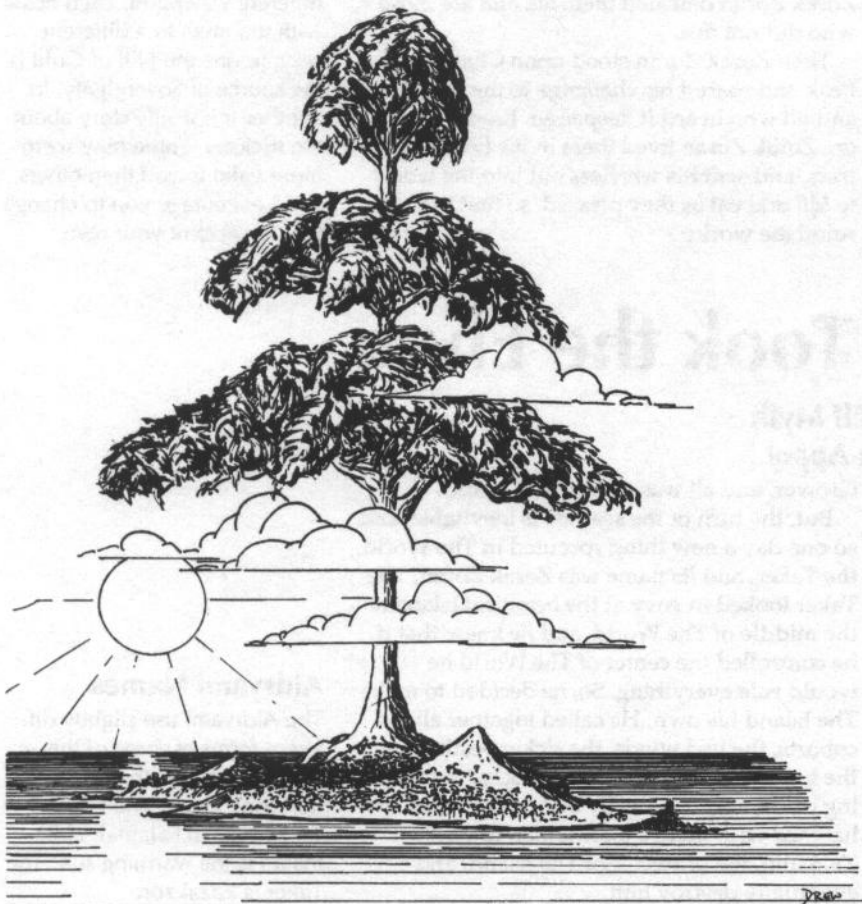
Kitapah got all the way to The Island. When that happened Gata began to scream for help and all the green elves leaped to her defense. Yelmalo heard too, and he leaped down from The Sky to protect his roots. By the time he reached the ground, the hot flame had burned all but a few of the green elves, making them brown and dry, but he was still in time to save Gata. He fought the hot flame long and hard, but without his spear he could not defeat it, because it was too like him. Finally Yelmalo gave up his own heat, and only then was he able to strike a telling blow. He stunned the hot flame, then lifted it up and dumped it into the stormy Sea, where it fizzled out. But, it was a poor victory, for most all the green elves were burnt, and Gata had cried herself to sleep, and The World was growing cold.

The coldest of all the frosts was the third to approach the Island, and its name was Inora. It planned to climb to the top of The Tree and rule by right of *supremacy*. Arroin wasn't there to offer warning any more, and Gata was asleep, so Inora got all the way to the base of The Tree and began to climb up. It took Flamal a long time to notice that Inora was climbing him, for he moves at a different speed than The World, as all elves once did, so it wasn't until the cold frost got to the top of The Tree that Flamal yelled a warning, and Yelmalo leaped up to protect his roots. He fought the cold frost long and hard, but without his spear and without his heat he could not defeat it. The white elves tried to help, but the cold frost just froze them solid. Finally Yelmalo gave up the last thing he had left, his life, and only then was he able to strike a telling blow. With Yelmalo dead Inora learned that cold only existed where there was light and heat, and so it blinked out of existence. But, it was a poor victory, for all the white elves were frozen, and Yelmalo was dead at the bottom of The Tree, and The World was growing dark.

After that Zorak Zoran came to The Island. He liked what he saw, but he decided The Tree was in the way, so he cut it down. No longer rooted to the ground, Yelmalo's palace slowly drifted away.

Now the blue elves, they were still alive, but they had decided to go to sleep, because The Sea was too stormy to swim in. And the green elves, they were burnt, but they were still alive too, and eventually they would wake up. And the white elves, they were frozen, but they might have been alive too, but no one will ever know, for when Yelmalo's rootless palace drifted away, they were lost forever in The Sky. And that's how The Taker took all the elves in The World.

Falamal grew on Gata, the island in the center of the world, surrounded by Eron and warmed by Halamalao. Illustration by Sean Drew.



The Fall of Heliakal

Harald Smith

This Hill of Gold tale comes from the Tusori tribe of northern Vanch (the settlers of Bikhy).

Though all know that Heliakal, the Seat of Judgment, left and did not return, only the Tusori know the fate of Heliakal.

Heliakal was the son of Pallanak, the Fire Orb and Lord of the Sun [one of the titles that the people of Vanch gave to the sun god]. His father gave him rule over Reladivela, as he gave other sons rule over other parts of the world. Reladiva, daughter of the earth, was the consort of Heliakal and they together ruled the Bowl of Reladiva. There came a day when Pallanak was cast down from the sky. There came a day when wicked gods chipped and broke the Bowl of Reladiva and Reladiva hid in shame. There came a day when the Seat of Judgment no longer moved. Heliakal knew then that justice was gone from the world. Heliakal called upon his kin for aid and they answered. Tunoral the Dutiful, Bearer of Masks, came at the rear for he always was a follower in those days. Heliakal marched north to fight Valkharal who is called Winter King and who had locked justice in a frozen tomb.

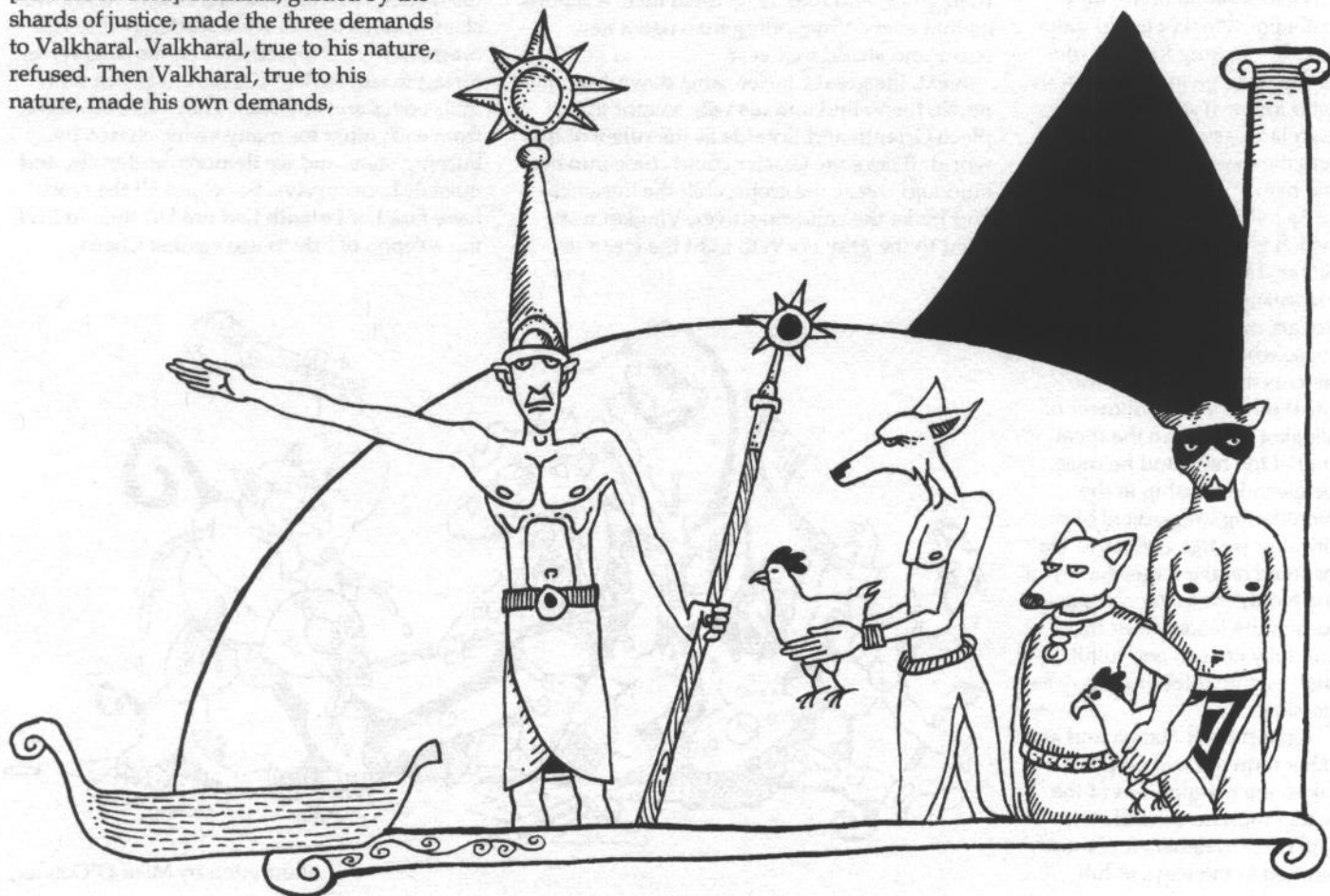
The forces converged at the Lip of Reladiva [i.e. Hill of Gold]. Heliakal, guided by the shards of justice, made the three demands to Valkharal. Valkharal, true to his nature, refused. Then Valkharal, true to his nature, made his own demands,

though they were unjust. Heliakal, guided by the shards of justice, refused. Then Valkharal, true to his nature, revealed his first weapon, Ralantak the Winds of Change. These tore at the allies of Heliakal and on that day, Yotelap the Fox betrayed his lord. Then Valkharal, true to his nature, revealed the second weapon, Orak the Nightmare, Mask of Darkness. He frightened the allies of Heliakal and on that day, Sarval the Possum played dead. Then Valkharal, true to his nature, revealed the third weapon, Vinak the Bonecrushing Grip, Fist of Valkharal. This broke the allies of Heliakal and on that day, Heliakal sacrificed his own fire powers so that his allies could flee.

Though the fires of Heliakal were enlarged by the Winds of Change, and though the fires of Heliakal drove the Nightmares away, they were useless against the Bonecrushing Grip. Heliakal was seized and crushed, his bones broken and his blood sealed in Ice. Valkharal named that place Ice Crown Peak and made the Winter King's Palace there.

Tunoral the Dutiful was amongst those who fled, but not before he found the Shield of Heliakal and carried it into hiding.

Heliakal leads Yotelap, Sarval, and Tunoral on their epic journey to the Lip of Reladiva. Illustration by Mike O'Connor.



How Vingkot Defended Kerofinela

A tale of the Colymar tribe, by Stephen Martin

Evil always comes from the north, for that's the realm which Orlanth never walked upon, and never set his will upon. That's the place where Orlanth's father Umath was knocked from the sky by the Son of the Tyrant. That's the place where Orlanth's brother Vadrus was tricked by the Emperor's Daughter, and was driven mad by her demons. That's where Orlanth's wife Ernalda was taken to be a slave in the Celestial Palace by the Servants of the Sun, and forced to tend the fires of his hearth.

In the Storm Age, after Orlanth freed the world, evil began to come from the north, for it was freed as well.

First, the Dara Happans came to avenge their dead Emperor. Vingkot had to fight them to defend his people. Rather than fight them in his own land, where the crops would be trampled, the livestock scattered, and the children stolen, Vingkot travelled to the bright north to meet the Dara Happans in their own land. With Vingkot came his sons by his Winter Wife and his friend Voriof, and together they killed the Dara Happans, and plundered their cities, and took from them their weapons, so that every Vingkotling man had a new spear and shield that year.

Next, the great Glacier came down from the north, for Valind and his wife sought to replace Orlanth and Ernalda as the rulers of the world. Before the Glacier could come into his land and freeze the crops, chill the livestock, and make the children shiver, Vingkot travelled to the gray north to fight the Ice in its

own land. With him came his daughters and his friend Elmal, and together they sang songs which melted the ice, and killed the ice demons, and moved the heart of the White Queen to pity, so that she relented and returned home to her Palace in the north, forcing her husband to return with her.

Later, the hungry trolls came down from the north, seeking to eat everything in their path. Before they could come into his land and consume the crops, devour the livestock, and eat even the children, Vingkot travelled into the dark north to meet the trolls in their own land. With him came the sons of his Summer Wife and his friend Humakt, and together they broke Gore's legs so that he couldn't run, and they tore out Gash's teeth so that he couldn't eat, and they took the weapons of Karrg and broke them, so that without their best leaders the trolls were forced to hide in the shadows for fear of Vingkot.

Alas for Vingkot, for evil always comes from the north. Chaos came then from the north, and Vingkot went to meet it with his sons, and his thanes, and his brothers. And Vingkot was slain, and his thanes were scattered, and his brothers were crippled, so that his sons were forced to run back to Kerofinela to flee with their wives and children. They were scattered from each other for many years, chased by burning stars, and ice demons, and trolls, and most did not survive. So would all the world have fared, if Orlanth had not left then to find the weapon of Life to use against Chaos.

The Northfaring Ritual

Martin Laurie

When the warriors of Kerofinela march against the ancient foes of the north, they call upon Vingkot to aid them. The Northfaring Ritual is old and potent, giving the warriors who follow it strength in foreign lands, surety of terrain and the magical weapons of the hero.

By following the ritual, which is widely known in Sartar, Tarsh and traditional Heortland, the powers of Vingkot are opened to all, even those who do not follow the hero as the Victorious. The ritual does need a follower of Vingkot to perform the focal role of the hero and he must be given leadership in the Northfaring irregardless of political or prestige concerns. Depending on the target enemy of the Northfaring, the companions of the leader must be carefully chosen and fulfill their mythic roles as closely as possible.

Against Dara Happa and any other form the Evil Empire takes, the companions of the leader must be sons of storm and harsh weathers and those learned in the ways of hill,



Illustration by Mike O'Connor.

How Inora Preserved Ice Mountain

David Dunham with Stephen Martin

Told by Valsadora the Tall, a Tarshite Mountain-Talker

Inora, the lovely queen of the snowy mountain peaks, made her home in a fabulous palace of ice, Ice Mountain. She was tended by shy snowmaids, hulking hollri, giggling rime pixies, glacial shivergusts, bitterly cold chorsneks, and silent blalings.

One day, she left her palace to enshroud the wildlands with swirling gusts of snow, hiding them from the sun. When she returned, a large, loud, dark god was smashing the furnishings in her palace. He had broken the hollri, then eaten all the blalings, and was now trying to break through the walls to get at her other followers. At the loss of her blalings, Inora cried great tears which froze into icicles, but she stepped forward to confront the raider, for her heart had frozen from fear. "Who are you," she whispered, "and why are you here?"

"I am mighty Zorak Zoran, and I must kill and eat!" he roared.

"Please, stop that and leave," she said. The only response was a bellow from the dark god, and the sound of ice curtains shattering. So Inora made it cold. She made it so cold that all the warmth was sucked out of the dark god, and then she made it colder, so even his cold left him, and he was left as no more than a shadow. It was so cold that the hollri were able to rise again. Zorak Zoran froze solid, and she had her hollri carry him off the mountain. Her heart thawed again, but the walls of her fine palace still had cracks.

Another time, she had to leave Ice Mountain, to spread a blanket of snow over the fields so the plants wouldn't die of cold. When she got home, a blustery, talkative, inquisitive god was whipping his winds into all the secret nooks and crannies of her palace. His winds had blown so strongly that the mountaintop was bare of snow, and the snowmaids had all fled. At the loss of her snowmaids, Inora cried great tears which froze into icicles, but she stepped forward to confront the raider, for her heart had frozen from grief. "Who are you, and why are you here?"

"I am Orlanth, called Adventurous, and I am seeking fine treasures," he shouted.

"Please leave, for I have no treasures you

could use," she said. The blustery god laughed and said that she was treasure enough for him. As he advanced towards her, Inora said, "I will give you my Crystal Crown if you will be satisfied to just kiss and hug me."

"That is quite a bargain, for then I will still win another fine treasure," replied the boisterous god, drooling slightly. But when he kissed her, his beard froze to her face, and he had to pull himself free. He then hugged her, but he found her embrace chilling, and left without further satisfaction. But the tiniest of smiles played over Inora's face, and before long, she had given birth to more snowmaids. The ice around her heart loosened, but her crown was gone.

A third time Inora left Ice Mountain, to paint frost in the arid wastelands so that the dirix could grow. When she returned, an arrogant, bright, burning god had melted the rime pixies when they laughed at him, and stabbed the shivergusts with his fiery spear when they tried to protect their cousins. At the loss of her rime pixies, Inora cried great tears which froze into icicles, but she stepped forward to confront the raider, for her heart had frozen from anger. "Who are you?" she demanded. "And why are you here?"

But the bright god would not deign to reply. His radiance was melting the palace, and Inora knew that before long her remaining followers would have no place to live. So Inora made the Early Ice under the god's feet. He could not stand upon it, and he slipped. Enraged, he got up and advanced on her, but Inora moved higher in the palace; again she made the Early Ice, and again he slipped. But he was a single-minded god, and leaped up and rushed at her. A third time Inora made the Early Ice, this time very near the edge of the summit. The god could not stop in time, and when he slipped he skidded off the edge of the mountain, and went crashing into the rocks far below.

Inora was able to stay in her mountain home, but her palace was shattered and ruined, and she was less than she had been before. Her rime pixies never returned, so her heart remained frozen, and now she is not as friendly as she was before, though she can still be seen dancing on the mountaintops throughout the year.

shepherding and the raid. These will cloud the magics of the sun and confound the armies of lowland and order.

Against the Ice, the leader must be accompanied by the followers of Elmal and a White Woman of beauty and mercy to melt the hearts of the ancient foe. This form of the Northfaring has not been attempted nor needed since the Darkness and is barely known.

Against the Trolls, the leader must march with followers of daylight and summer, light and life as well as the grim Housecarls of Death to lay low the powers of the Trolls and to face fearlessly the evils of the underworld.

Finally, the Northfaring is certain death for the leader, if he fights chaos upon any stage of his journey. While this usually means disaster for the Northfaring, one hero used it to great success: Mitchuinn Moonhater, who died on his Northfaring but came back to haunt his foes.

The Allegory of the Hill of Gold

Stephen Martin

Source: Faltikus the Good, Storm Voice

What is the Hill of Gold? We all know the story, how Orlanth went to the Hill of Gold, and there fought against three gods for rulership of the world. First he battled bright Yelmalio, and took from him his spear. Then he fought against cold Inora, and sent her fleeing to the north. Last he faced dark Zorak Zoran, and defeated the hungry god. From there he left on the Lightbringers' Quest, and so returned the Sun and Life to the world.

Though other peoples tell different versions of this story, surely these events happened, but what do they mean? Why did Orlanth travel to the Hill of Gold in the first place? Was this a mere set of victories against rival gods? Were these battles merely ways for Orlanth to gain greater powers, a belief which seems to motivate many of the followers of Orlanth who travel to reenact this holy quest? Is the Hill of Gold itself a real place somewhere far to the north, or is it symbolic of something greater? Indeed, the quest itself can be seen as symbolic of something greater.

In the first stage of this myth, Orlanth fights the god Yelmalio and defeats him, and takes from him his Spear. This is representative of Orlanth slaying Yelm, the act which ended the Golden Age. The spear represents the Sovereignty of the Universe, and shows that Yelm's rule was based upon domination.

Orlanth's motives were good, for this time was a period of stagnation and oppression, and by slaying the Emperor Orlanth freed the world from tyranny. Yet even Orlanth must admit that the world was worse after Yelm's death, for then came the time of the Storm Age, also called the Lesser Darkness or the Great Winter. Though the Storm Age was a time of freedom, it was also a brutal era. Many gods fought, and the mortal races were killed or left homeless, often without the combatants being any the wiser for their plight. Even Orlanth's own kin did more harm than good in this era, and finally Orlanth took responsibility for his actions, and set things right.

In the next stage of the myth, Orlanth fights Inora and defeats her, sending her back to the north. This is representative of Orlanth's many battles against his kinsmen, who dominated so much of the world then. And these many battles ended the turmoil of the Storm Age, for most of the other foes had been defeated by the Storm Tribe. In particular, the defeat of Inora and her brothers marked the end of the Great Winter, the most devastating part of this age.

Again, Orlanth's motives were good, for with Winter defeated the people of the world would be able to eat and know peace again. Yet even Orlanth must admit that the world was worse after the Storm Age, for the gods of winter had been holding back the forces of darkness, who came from Hell to devour the world. The mortal races knew fear even greater than before, and hundreds of thousands died to feed the hunger of the trolls. Even the lesser races of immortals began to fall, and finally Orlanth took responsibility for his actions, and set things right.

In the third stage of the myth, Orlanth fights Zorak Zoran and defeats that hateful monster, wounding him so that he can no longer destroy the world. This is representative of Orlanth's battles against the trolls during this era, which were carried on after him by his greatest son, Vingkot. Orlanth is victorious, and the trolls are defeated, and forced back into the shadows. This ended the Long Night, surely the worst time which had

yet been known in the world.

As always, Orlanth's motives were good, for the defeat of the forces of Darkness should have made the world better. Yet everyone admits that the world was worse after the Darkness era, for the trolls had been fighting against the Predark, who came from outside of Glorantha to return everything to the Primordial Chaos. Even the greatest immortals knew fear at this time, for chaos was a foe which none of them could escape or defeat, and it could send even the greatest of them into Death, their souls, names, and memories lost to the world forever.

Orlanth fought against chaos for a time, but eventually he realized that even he could not win this battle. He took responsibility for his actions, and decided that to change the world for the better he would have to return it to the way it had been. Thus, Orlanth armed himself, and left on the Lightbringers' Quest. It is no coincidence that this is also called the Lifebringers' Quest, for indeed, Orlanth renounced the powers of Death when he left Elmal to defend the world at the Hill of Gold. Orlanth sought to return the Grand Order to the world.

What is the Grand Order? A common story tells us, "It is a mirror of fire," which Lhankor Knowing says was taken away by the darkness. The Grand Order is, in fact, the Sun, for only the true Sun could hold back the forces of chaos, as indeed he had done before Orlanth slew him. To defend the world, Orlanth sought to return the sky which he had cast from the sky. Yet the obstacles against Orlanth were greater than any he had faced before, and at times it seemed that he would not be able to survive. Yet it is always darkest before the Dawn, and Orlanth succeeded in his quest, for he knew that he was the last, the only hope of the world. And so Orlanth brought back the Sun, and he realized that there had been more to the Golden Age than he could have known.

Our world of today proves that this is true. Is there not a Sun up in the sky, and was it not set there by Orlanth? Does Elmal not still protect us during the Night, while Yelm rules the cosmos and defends us from chaos during the day? People say that the Golden Age was a different time, and say it was better or worse than today, depending on the stories they have been told. But I say that you must know that that era was no different than our time now; you must see that we live now in the Golden Age.

Orlanth recognized the error of his ways, and accepted his enemy again into the world. And so too must we accept the error of our ways, and recognize our Enemy's place and necessity in the world, for without it the world would be destroyed, as it almost was before.

May the Breath of Orlanth bless the hearing of these, his words.



Illustration by Mike O'Connor.

The Hill of Gold Heroquest

Stephen R. Marsh

Originally presented in *The Wild Hunt* 53 and 61.

The General Quest

The Hill of Gold Heroquest is a yearly re-enactment of events from the Godtime. In it, teams representing four deities (Yelmalio, Zorak Zoran, Inora, and Orlanth) recreate their interactions during the Lesser Darkness. It can be used as a threshold quest for other patterns (see below), as well as being a major quest in its own right. Sartar may have used this quest to bring the Yelmalio forces to the Sun Dome Temple he established.

An individual quester can take the part of any of the four deities. In Dragon Pass, each cult usually fields a team of seven individuals (not counting allied spirits, etc.) at an appropriate temple. The team must undergo purification and rebirth rituals, and may go on preparatory quests as well. The gamemaster may decide to enact the quest once every Long Year (seven years) rather than annually. Note that results are written for individuals, but team results are the same.

Members of a team need have only some cultic affiliation. Thus, although the Orlanthi party is normally led by a Wind Lord or Storm Voice, its members can include an Urox or Chalan Arroy worshiper (though the latter will be at a distinct disadvantage at certain stages); Zorak Zoran can have any troll or darkness creature; etc. Most teams are composed of rune levels, with the occasional acolyte or advanced initiate.

After the initial rituals, the seven questers (or the one quester, if on the second level of the quest) represent the gods: Orlanth, Zorak Zoran, Inora, and Yelmalio. Thus, the questers have entered into the Land of Myth. When teams interact, each of the seven finds themselves alone facing a single member of the opposite team. There is no possibility of mass battles, or questers ganging up on a lone foe.

At the end of the quest, the individuals or teams find themselves "near" their starting temples, and will have the option of leaving the Godtime. Most do so.

ORLANTH starts at the Wind Temple

ZORAK ZORAN starts at the Throne (in Shadows Dance)

YELMALIO starts at the Sun Dome Temple (in Prax)

INORA starts at Thane (foot of the Glacier)

Mechanics

Each day, the questers will meet an appropriate team from the forces of the other gods. They must then decide how to face them. A foe beaten in combat (but not slain) loses a skill or power to the winner. Generally, the loser can select which skill or Divine spell is lost.

A foe slain in combat results in the loss indicated below and the slayer taking their choice of one skill or divine spell. Think of all skills and spells as tangible objects, possessions of the owner. Thus, an Orlanthi who slew a Yelmalion on this quest could take the Sun worshiper's 120% Spear Attack and add it to his own 80%, resulting in a skill level of 200%, and the Yelmalion having a 0% Spear Attack (i.e., not even at basic chance).

A quester slain in combat returns the next day; this is a function of the quest and the Hero Plane, and does not require use of Resurrect or similar spells. However, the quester is treated as having been dead for a day, and so suffers normal losses (i.e., in RQ3 he loses 1d3 from each of his characteristics). Thus, death

is something to be avoided on this quest, even if it is not permanent.

Individuals may freely trade skills and appropriate Divine spells at certain stages of the quest. If they do so and the mythic action was also a trade, then the indicated benefits of that stage also occur.

Parties need not accept surrender. However, once a skill or Divine spell has been traded or taken, the parties cease to be in contact. This works on an individual basis; the team is only reunited after all of the individual combats have ended.

Stations of the Quest

The first day pits Yelmalio against Orlanth and Inora against Zorak Zoran. Yelmalio lost many spear powers here, for Orlanth wrested the Lightning Spear from him. Inora lost all of her Darkness ties, while Zorak Zoran lost all his Cold powers.

If the Yelmalion team or quester wins, he/they takes all of Orlanth's Attack skill with a single Spear (i.e., 1-Handed Long Spear, 2-Handed Long Spear, etc.). If the Orlanthi wins, he takes one of the Yelmalion's Attack and Parry skills for a single Spear.

If the Inora quester wins she may sacrifice for the spells of Summon and Command Shade. If the Zorak Zorani wins he may plunder a single Frost spell from the Inoran (no POW sacrifice required, may take 1 point per 4 POW he possesses).

The second day pits Yelmalio against Zorak Zoran and Inora against Orlanth. Yelmalio lost all of his Fire and Heat abilities, as is well-known. Inora traded with Orlanth, gaining the Mountain Winds as her cult avengers in return for giving up the right to prevent the winds from playing in her mountains.

If the Yelmalion wins he may wear Red and use the Heat aspects of Fire — he may sacrifice for Summon and Command Salamander, though the POW sacrifice required is doubled, as it is for Zorak Zoran. If the Zorak Zorani wins he may use Summon and Command Salamander at the normal costs, instead of doubled.

Inora and Orlanth normally trade the abilities listed here. Each may give the other one of their cult special spells, as if they were under the influence of the Issaries spell Spelltrading, though no Spellteaching need be cast, and there is no chance of a failed roll. If they do not trade, then if the Inoran wins she may sacrifice for the spell of Cloud Clear. If the Orlanthi wins, any Increase Wind or Wind Warp spell cast while within the mountains will have double effect.

The third day pits Zorak Zoran against Orlanth and Yelmalio against Inora. Neither Zorak Zoran nor Orlanth was victorious over the other, and so their questers can gain no benefit from this conflict except their life, or the death of their enemy. Yelmalio and Inora each defeated the other: Yelmalio gained the right to cast light upon the mountain peaks (and so they catch the light first and release it last), while Inora was able to resist the Sun (and so mountains remain covered with snow all year). Again, therefore, the only results of this stage are the results of the combat itself.

On the fourth day, the Zorak Zorani may return to the Throne, or he may go on a quest against chaos. The Orlanthi may return to the Wind Temple, or may begin any of a number of other quests, including the Lightbringers' Quest or the Magic Weapons heroquest. The Inoran may return to Thane, or she

may set out upon the DrepnirQuest (see <http://adrr.com/hero/>), having already received the required vision in her conflict with Yelmalio.

On the fourth day the Yelmalion must ascend the Hill of Gold in an attempt to regain some of the power lost by his god.

The Yelmalio Quest— Hill of Gold

The Hill of Gold is guarded by Darkness creatures, by Parasites, and by Chaos (in that order). Successfully climbing the hill allows the quester to search for a magic crystal which can be used to found a Sun Dome Temple, for Divine Intervention, or for a reusable Sunspear spell.

Preparation

The same stations as listed above. If this quest is attempted without going through the normal Hill of Gold quest, roll for encounters using 2d100, modified by preparation (thus the quest might actually be easier if undertaken after long purification and preparation, with proper quest provisions, or it might be very, very hard). If the gamemaster does not have enemy HQ Teams prepared, he can use other foes:

0 or less	Small Elemental (1d3 cubic meters per quester)
01-30	Large Elemental (2d4 cubic meters per quester)
31-60	Runic Animals (Fire: griffins, flame hawks; Storm: storm bulls, wind children; Dark: giant insects, morokanth; Cold: bears, white runners, Drepnir)
61-120	Other heroquest Team (7 individuals) 2d3 Rune Priests, 1d4 Rune Lords (acolytes if cult has no Rune Lords), remainder are advanced initiates.
121-150	Single Heroquester (may have companion)
151-180	Hero
181-210	Subservient Deity (varies by cult)
211-240	Deity's servant(s)
241-270	Deity

Climbing the Hill of Gold

After the three encounters (one for each of Orlanth, Zorak Zoran, and Inora), the Yelmalion reaches the Hill of Gold. In most versions of the myth, Yelmalio lost to Orlanth and Zorak Zoran, and made a mythic deal with Inora.

As he climbs the Hill of Gold, the quester will face the enemies of Death, Darkness, and Chaos.

The Parasites (Death)

Roll 1d8 once for each quester

1-2	1d4 Head Hangers
3-4	1d2 Tape Worms
5-6	1 Blood Fluke
7	1d2 Spirit Leeches
8	1d2 Marrow Wights

The Forces of Darkness

Roll 1d6 once for each quester. Multiple rolls of 1-2 increase the size of the elemental, not the number appearing.

1-2	1 Shade (1d6 cubic meters per roll)
3-4	1d2 Giant Insects
5-6	1d2 Bone Morocanth

The Forces of Chaos

Roll 1d6 once only

1-3	1d4 Scorpion Men per quester; all have chaotic features
4-5	1d3 Broos per quester; all have chaotic features
6	Dream Dragon Demon; 1d2 chaotic features per quester,

at least one per quester beneficial

The Summit

Any questers who survive to reach the summit of the Hill gain the chance to search for magic gold crystals. All questers gain one chance to search; those who succeed in a POW vs. POW roll against a POW of 25 gain an additional chance, once for each success; failure causes a loss of POW instead of magic points. For each search, roll 1d8 and consult the table below; only one crystal may be taken (and one must be taken), but the quester can choose from among all rolls (including rolling of the POW of the crystal).

Once a crystal has been found, the quester is returned abruptly to the Mundane World, at the real Hill of Gold (in Vanch), regardless of his starting point. He must return home by whatever means he has available; for most questers, that means a long walk.

- 1-4 **Black Crystal.** Chaos-tainted: roll on the table in *Elder Secrets*, doubling the POW roll, then roll for the crystal's chaotic feature (passed on to the owner). The finder will know all attributes, but must seek magical rituals to rid himself of the crystal. If he rids himself of the crystal by Yelmalio's next high holy day, he is not himself tainted with chaos.
- 5-7 **Clear Crystal (gold-tinted).** Good for 4 points of Divine Intervention: the next time Divine Intervention is attempted, the first 4 points of POW loss will come from the crystal. Once all points have been used up, the crystal is destroyed.
- 8 **Gold Crystal.** The quester can select one of the following abilities: worth 8 points of Divine Intervention (as above); keep the crystal for a reusable Sunspear spell (if the crystal is lost, so is the spell); can use the crystal to found a Sun Dome Temple. Regardless of the variety chosen, the crystal can store up to 3d6+6 magic points, as described in *Elder Secrets*.

Illustration by Mike O'Connor.



A Story about Elmal

David Hall

as told by Glowric Truthsayer of the Vantaros tribe

During the Godtime, Yelmalio was the favorite son of the Dara Happan Sun God, the Emperor Yelm. The ceaseless majesty of Godtime was ended when Yelm was treacherously struck down by the rebellious and bullying god, Orlanth. Not content with killing Yelm and ending his Divine and wondrous Empire, Orlanth also stole away with Yelmalio (who was only a small child). (1)

Bullying Orlanth, and his shrewish and unfaithful wife Ernalda, brought up Yelmalio in their lowly stead, renaming him Elmal the Cold Sun. While Orlanth's children were fed with white bread and mead, Elmal lived amongst the thralls and only on a good day was he fed black bread and barley beer. He soon forgot his true father, and though Orlanth treated him like a slave, he served Orlanth loyally. Orlanth gifted Elmal many times for his loyal service, though always with the things he had stolen from others. One time he gave Elmal Yelm's spear, claiming it as his own invention. Another time he gave Elmal *Vision at Night* which he had stolen from the Troll, Gore the Gasher.

One day Elmal said to Orlanth that he would like to be married, as was his right. But Orlanth contemptuously gave him Inora the Snow Princess as his bride. Inora was cold and disdainful of Elmal and would not allow him to lie with her. Theirs was an unhappy and childless marriage. Even so, Elmal did not hold this against Orlanth, such was his loyalty.

Then one day there came to Orlanth's pitiful stead a bright and fiery messenger from the clean and well-dressed people of the lowlands. Before he could speak Orlanth slew him—without honor.

Another bright messenger came soon afterwards, but as soon as he started speaking Orlanth slew him, even though he had made the right sign of peace.

However, one day Orlanth had to leave his stead since his sheep had caught foot-rot because of the unclean ways of his son the shepherd. When he was away another Bright Messenger came, and this time he was able to speak his words of peace and tell of the return of the Bright Emperor. These words had a great effect on Elmal. They were words he had heard before in his dreams. He knew then who his real father was.

Realising that he had been lied to by his master, Yelmalio was then free to act in right fashion. He cast out his cold and frigid wife, and entered the stead of Orlanth. Unfaithful Ernalda was there, lying with one of Orlanth's slaves while her husband was away (2). Yel-

malio took her then, and beat her, as every husband should beat an unfaithful wife. Then, as he had been stolen from his father, he stole Ernalda away from Orlanth and made her his dutiful wife.

When Orlanth returned he was very angry. He sought out Yelmalio and tried to attack and kill him, but he could not, such was the weight of his dishonor. Though he stole back Yelm's spear, he could not steal back his wife or Yelmalio's respect. Beaten, he returned to his pathetic farm and instead forced himself upon his wife's daughters—but that is the way of the Orlanthi. (3)

Footnotes (by Griflet Asread):

(1) Presumably Orlanth took Ernalda with him at the same time. Ernalda was a hostage of Yelm.

(2) In other stories the slave is named as Heler, the rain god.

(3) It is interesting to note that the Orlanthi Amad tribe accept the basic truth of this myth, but say that Yelmalio was the son of Yelm and Ernalda! This may be the source of their rather crude accusations that Vantaros and Tovtaros warriors sleep with their mothers.



Priests of Elmal and Orlanth often display a rivalry. Illustration by Stefano Gaudiano and Justin Norman. ©1998 A Sharp.

A slightly different version of this story appeared in the RuneQuest-Con I book and the Convulsion '94 Programme book.

These myths are excerpted from Greg Stafford's novel, which he is in the middle of finishing.

The Storm Age

aka War of the Gods

Greg Stafford

Greed caused the war. Wanting something beyond your nature is the worst greed, and wanting a useless thing even though you know it will hurt another is even worse. Worst, of course, is to cause hurt because it will cause useless hurt, but that action is the mark of evil.

Umath was born and, like any newborn, took his place to live in the world. The greed of Yelm, however, prevented even the tiny charity to let the baby live. So Umath too grew into being a great and greedy god, always wanting what he had been denied. Thus Greed destroyed both of these ancient gods.

When they died greed spilled across the world like pearls running out of a broken treasure box. All the lesser beings of the world scooped it up and began to go around, taking more and more. This made everything get really mixed up. The world had been stable before this. Everything had its place, though Umath's place moved around. Now everything began to move around.

The first part of the Gods War was a pretty terrible time to be alive. Most beings had never really done anything at all except be a dormant part of nature. Suddenly something would come and take a part of them away. Sometimes the things that were robbed woke up to be gods, some were people, and some were terrible demons.

The war advanced in stages.

First the water gods flowed all over the world and tried to take everything. They thought that they could extinguish the rest of the fires of the world the same way that Yelm was extinguished. But they forgot that earth could be flooded, but would rise again; and that storm could be pushed aside, but that it would always blast back.

Then came the Storm Age, because the many sons of Umath ruled everything. After some difficulties, Orlanth came to be the most powerful among them all, as he still is. And that's a good thing, because we work well with our lord Orlanth. He made the first ring, and he protects and teaches us in the world of war.

It started when all the Umathi came together at the Northern Pit, where Umath had fallen when he died. Everyone was there: Orlanth and Humakt and Vadrus and Urox, and all their sons and cousins and half brothers, and of course warrior women and beasts which emulated the violence of Umath too. They all came together to the great crater, which is way far north of here and now filled with miles of ice. But then it was clear and open, and still hot from the scorching fall of the great god Umath.

"I will lead this ceremony," said one.

"No, me" said another. "I am more honorable."

"But justice demands that I do it," said a third.

"Father gave me the right," said a fourth, "And Urox has sworn to help me."

"You can not make me do that, now that Umath is dead," said Urox.

"Oh yes I can!" cried the other, and they immediately began to fight among themselves.

"Is this a private fight?" asked Vadrus, "Or may anyone join in?" And then he drew his great pointed hammer and leapt into the fray. It didn't take long for everyone to be fighting, and they never did celebrate the death of their father, except by this great melee.

Foe Strife, Kin Accord Words of the Hantrafali God-Talker

Martin Laurie

What Orlanth did, before all his kind, was separate foe and kin. Before that, the Storm Tribe did not see any differences between those who were family and those who were not. By creating the Ring and inserting discussion between wrong-doer and the vengeful, Orlanth showed a wisdom unique to the Storm Gods. He created order in the manner of his people. Not the stagnation of the Evil Emperor but the justice of society, of community, of kin. Foreigners, Outlaws and Strangers are Foe and are subject to Umath's law of violence. Kin and Guests are subject to the rule of the Ring, the test of law, and thus are accorded safety as long as they abide by those laws. Those who become like Vadrus, even though Kin, make themselves Foe!

Orlanth's Ring

aka, the Bastard Gods

Greg Stafford

Everyone was fighting each other. The two rules of Umath were the only laws:

1. Violence is always an option
2. No one can make you do anything.

Orlanth was displeased with this. He found Justice to be in his own breast, and he brought it forth and placed it in a torc about his neck.

Then Orlanth raised his banner and sent word to all the corners of the world, inviting every god and goddess to join with him and to be honored as a member of his tribe. He asked

everyone, and promised them all their rightful place, as would be determined by their actions in the war.

He did not even know the names of some that came, but he welcomed them. They had all been together in the Prison of the Strange Gods. Some of them did not even know their own genealogy.

Orlanth welcomed them all. He said, "Solitude is for outlaws, holy women, and mad men. None of us can live alone. No one is more

important than those with whom you live. I invite you to live with me."

"No, I can't agree with this," said Vadrus, a great troublemaker. "I have to be the ruler."

"Stop and listen to Orlanth," said Humakt, "Or I'll cut your head off again."

"Try it!" snarled Vadrus, and drew his pointed hammer, named Rhino, and stepped forward to meet his foe.

"Stop," commanded Orlanth. "The first thing for us to do is to agree to speak before we fight."

"Up yours," said Vadrus, and leapt at Humakt, who parried and began to fight.

"This is the old way," said Orlanth. "Peace among friends comes with speaking first. We will go to the speaking place, and leave all who would fight here."

So they travelled then, and they went to the Speaking Rock, which was a sage old mineral where many people would meet at different times.

"We will sit in a circle," he said, "And all who sit in this circle agree to listen to each other before acting. That is the first rule to keep peace among us."

He also said, "I shall create a sacred Ring by selecting the most suitable from among you." He spoke with them, conferring to learn each of their strengths and fitness for various tasks. However, his feast was interrupted when his brothers came crashing.

"You can't do this," they all said. "We're your brothers, and we're the ones that you should give these magical gifts to. You already made a mistake with the Death Sword, and we won't let you do it again. We are your blood and your breath, and it would be unjust and against nature to not give them to us." Such an argument, of course, is the most powerful one which anyone can give to their kin.

"Well," said Orlanth, who was always hospitable, "first put your swords away and sit among us and drink some strong mead, brothers. This house is not a place for fighting, and certainly not for fighting among us kinsmen. Meat will be served, cooked or raw for you Wild One. Shall I send for cloaks to put upon your broad shoulders?"

All of the best men and gods were there in his hall. However, they all stepped down from the high table and sat among the commoners, the followers of Orlanth. The storm gods then all sat at the high table.

"Dishthane," he said, addressing the man in charge of his treasure, "bring forth the tools which we will distribute today." And so they were all brought forth:

Laid out before them were six wonderful items, each unique. First was a marking bone, which could mark signs of power upon anything. Second was the staff called Scorch, which left its burnt marks upon everything that it touched, and which could kill a foe.

Third was the great thunder stone named Great Weighty, which had laid waste to a race of giants which were now just a mountain range. It always returned to its caster's hand. Fourth was a green basket of plenty which always served enough at the feast, even when Orlanth's brothers came by unannounced. Fifth was the Baby Cauldron, which produced a healthy young child for whomever came to it and properly devoted herself to it. Finally, sixth was a loom, with weights of gold and shuttles of silver.

"Each of these," said Orlanth, "is a treasure beyond our understanding. They were all taken in a raids from great gods. I have determined by reading runes that they shall serve as gifts for my first ring.

"But just as the greater powers have provided these gifts to us, and just as the greater powers have cast the runes to read, then so shall the greater powers decide to whom they rightfully belong."

"That is sheep shit," said the worst brother, Vadrus. He leapt up and flew right to the green basket and laid his hands upon it. "I'll just take this and go." And with it he flew right out the window.

"I'll get him," said Vingkot.

"Sit back down. Come off that window sill. Look by the fire pit."

There was the green basket once again.

"These are true instruments, with power of their own, and a life like our own which is subject to the higher powers. They shall choose for themselves their owners, who will be endowed by their blessings."

And so it went, and their first Ring was formed thereby. And here were the recipients of the gifts:

Lhankor Mhy the Lawspeaker received the ivory marking bone. His parents were named Mostal and Orenoar, two of the old gods.

Issaries the Translator received the staff called Scorch. He used it to mark his followers with his magic, to keep them safe, and thereby began the tattooing of power.

Hedkoranth the Adventurer, the leader of the Thunder Brothers, received Great Weighty. This thunder stone rumbled whenever enemies approached, and it would leap into its owner's hand for combat.

Pela, the Food Keeper, received the green basket which she had woven. It is she who feeds us.

Kero Fin, mother of Orlanth, received the Baby Cauldron. She is who to pray for to bear children now, and ever since then.

Ernalda the Stead Mother, the wife of Orlanth, received the wonderful loom of silver and gold.

Since then this has been the membership of the Orlanth Ring.

Clan Rings

David Dunham

The term "ring" is often used to refer to a clan's Inner Ring, which consists of the clan chief and six advisors.

The chief is responsible for choosing his ring, and he has a great deal of flexibility in doing so. He can choose politically important leaders and assign them a mythically reasonable role. He may decide that the clan needs a certain orientation, and pick leaders who can fill the necessary roles, which are usually those of deities or sometimes clan heroes. Some clans have traditional roles that must be filled (for example, the Greydog clan ring is unusual in that there is almost always someone representing Minlinster the Brewer). Usually he takes all these factors into account.

The chief may in theory reappoint his ring at any time, but the rituals take a full week, so they're invariably performed as part of the Sacred Time ceremonies.

Ring members are in certain ways channels for the clan's magic. If someone represents Uralda, the rituals for the cattle are more effective. A peace clan would do well to have representatives for the fruitful goddesses, and often Chalana Arroy. A war clan almost always has someone in the role of Humakt (even if they're not an initiate).

While there are many possible roles, certain ring positions are incompatible with each other. Most clans won't have both a Humakt and Chalana Arroy representative, since their magic would cancel out.

Members of the inner ring are considered to be thanes while they hold their position (of course, most of them are thanes to begin with).

The Vingkotlings

Greg Stafford

After death came into the world, the men and gods were separated. The difference was clear: men were small and died, and the gods were great, though they too died.

Orlanth proved that he was a good god because he helped any people who agreed to obey him. He sent his winds in all directions, bearing an invitation to all people to come to him. They gave instructions for all interested people to assemble at the foot of Kero Fin.

Many clans came from all around to join Orlanth's tribe. They travelled by air, riding upon winds or astride the backs of birds or flapping their own sturdy feathered wings. They came by land as well, by chariot and upon horseback, by foot and often with their herds of sheep or cattle, with wagons groaning with children and goods.

Orlanth and his household knew nearly all of the leaders who assembled there. They kept peace among the warlike clans. And Orlanth related his plan, which organized the nation of the Orlanthi into a peaceful tribe. He made the laws that let men live together. He made the first wergilds, courts, and tribal ring. Everyone agreed to these rules, which are the laws of Orlanth.

First, Orlanth declared that peace would come among his followers with payment of wergild instead of simple revenge. He declared that he would set the values of wergild values to be paid by the murderers, if they were found guilty by their king's court of judgement.

Then Orlanth declared that there would be a noble man to lead everyone, and who would act among men as Orlanth acts among the gods.

Vingkot was the first king of men. Vingkot was one of Orlanth's many sons. He was a great warrior and leader, ranking as the fourth best sword fighter in Orlanth's house (Humakt, Orlanth, Vadrus, Vingkot). He was also just, trusted by all, and he could being angry men to peace with each other. Orlanth put the torc upon his neck, proving that Justice resided in that man. His wergild was set at 500 cattle

This was not met with universal agreement. At that time there lived in the sky a great monster which was called the Sky Bear. It thumped to the

ground right in the middle of the ceremonies, and it challenged Vingkot to the rights that Orlanth gave to it. Vingkot said, "This is a place of peace. We have agreed to speak here first." But the Sky Bear growled back.

"I am not one of you." And it attacked.

However, Vingkot was a doughty warrior, and he drew his sword and fell to with the bear. It was fierce, but Vingkot was more fearsome and slew it. Its body was so huge that it lay like a great hill upon the earth. Vingkot claimed that spot as his own sacred land. Orlanth was pleased with this resolution.

Orlanth declared that men, like the gods, deserved to have a Ring which would guide over them, and whose members would bring the counsel of the people to the king. He gave to Vingkot the power to choose the wise and powerful among all his followers to serve upon the tribal ring. Vingkot then and there chose his first ring.

Vingkot chose three men: Khalmon as Law-speaker, Hantrafal as Godi, and Dagordi as Warrior. He chose three women: Kerona as Food Keeper, Hohenla as Midwife, and Ebfurya as the Herd Mother. Since then this has been the membership of the Staple Ring.

Orlanth gave to these leaders their sacred tools of the council: notched stick, tattoo needle, spear, sickle, sack, and distaff. Orlanth declared that all these leaders would all have a wergild which was equal to 300 cattle. We call them thanes today, and I know you've heard of spear thanes and sword thanes and shield thanes. These are because fighting is so important to us now that Orlanth decreed to us, about one hundred years ago, that such warriors are worthy of athane's wergild.

But back in the beginning, Orlanth thirdly declared that all other worthy men and women in the tribe would be free and equal, one and all. We call ourselves carls, because which means Free. Barntar and his wife Mahome were the first carls, and they lent their wisdom to everyone who would want it. Their wergild was declared to be equal to 100 cattle.

All of the clans of Orlanth then were given herds and lands according to their preferences, and some of them went away to live in the valleys, some in the hills, some upon the sea shore, and some in the forests. A few even flew away into the mountains to live. No one lived underground, or in the water.

That is how the first tribe was organized, and we still are today.

Vingkot built his stead near the place where everyone had assembled. He called it Grizzly Hill, and his long house stood atop it, while his great herds grazed upon its slopes as a village pasture.

Orlanth appointed his son Vingkot as the first king. Illustration by Mike O'Connor.



Kinstrife

Greg Stafford

We know everything is always at conflict, always changing, so it can stay in balance. It shouldn't be perfectly still, but never stuck entirely moving either.

Before Umath came then everything was stuck. Umath set it free. Then the world was truly alive, and everything was good. Since we are the descendants of Umath, it's in our nature to make that balancing change.

Umath had great sons. They continued his work. They kept the world in motion. They were made for this give and take, push and shove of life. Even as children they were rivals, easy and like when they had races and pushing contests, or fought their animals against each other. Sometimes the ram won, sometimes the billy, sometimes the bull. They were testing their strengths against each other in those times. No harm was done.

Their rivalry increased to become serious battling. During the Storm Age the gods and their peoples were often at war against each other. This began when they found special items which could not be shared, such as Barn-tar's Plow, the iron bound, silver horn called Shouter, or the mighty brewing vat, called Karni. However, Orlanth fixed these matters. Though difficult, these struggles were not really kinstrife.

Then real shortages began again, and the struggle grew critical. Vadrus in this time grew so desperate that he invented slavery, and then sold his slaves to the ice demons in return for their help. That was when balance was lost, for after that our goddess Ernalda had no place to stand where she was not wary of her health. Her bed was frozen, her limbs were numb. Stability was gone entirely.

Orlanth fixed this when he and his house-carls went to Vadrus.

Vadrus was always the tough guy. He liked to brawl, and all his family were brawlers. As individuals, the Vadrudi were tough, and hard fighters, and difficult to beat. But Vadrus always encouraged them all to gang up together against their foes, not ever caring anything for the duel.

"Duels're nothing but a damned Orlanthi trick," they would say. "Do you think we're stupid? Orlanth has magical weapons!"

One time Vadrus and his household raided Ernalda. Orlanth was gone someplace, like he often was. Vinga wasn't around in those days, either. So when Vadrus and his brutes came by they really roughed up the women and children, and they broke many of the buildings, and took away herds of animals.

Great Barntar was living there at the time, and he was a brave son of Orlanth. Of course he tried to defend his family and stop the

thieves. Great Barntar seized his spear and shield and cast forth his challenge, but without any warning all of the Vadrudi ganged up on him. With hard weapons and cruel hearts, they sent the best of carls to land of the dead. Barntar was dead. Before this Barntar had been killed, but never so he could not return again to life. He grew cold and stiff.

When Orlanth and his men returned they found all the women in mourning for Barntar. They had cleaned the body, and they had prepared a great pyre. Their actions there made the first funeral ceremony.

Orlanth then spoke his Praise of Carl.

*Hard worker, loyal farmer, you are the tribe.
The father serves the sun, the air serves the earth.
Thethane serves the Carl, who serves his good
parents.
Feed your children first, carl, before the thanes.*

Orlanth lit the pyre on the first royal funeral rite.

Orlanth was determined to avenge this terrible slight. He got together his own household, and all the other heroes of the Vingkotlings, and they all set off across the great ice to Vadrus' filthy hall. Vadrus had erected a huge wall of ice around his stead, but the vengeance of Elmal the Burner was so great that the wall melted away before him. Orlanth and his men rushed through the watery gap.

Vadrus and his thanes were waiting there. Vadrus raised his hands in peace and halted everyone with a shout. "A duel!" He challenged Orlanth to a duel, one on one. Of course Orlanth agreed, because he had honor and the words had been spoken correctly. At this Vadrus smiled, because he was going to cheat again, of course. They'd done it before. All of his household warriors prepared to secretly join into the fight against Orlanth whenever they could. Orlanth, always honorable, prepared himself and his weapons.

After all the proper formalities, Orlanth and Vadrus each leapt at the other, howling and roaring with the voices of all their worshippers crying out in support of their storm.

And then suddenly, without any warning at all, all of Orlanth's household raised their weapons and attacked the household of Vadrus. Those brutes were all eyeing Orlanth, looking for a chance to strike, and they were all taken by surprise by Orlanth's virtuous followers. The Vadrudi were caught entirely off guard, and most of them were so badly wounded in the first attack that they just ran away, howling. The others took only a little more time to flee. One, named Valind, threw himself to the floor and surrendered. Vadrus

Vadrus Speaks

Martin Laurie

Kinstrife? Is that what my young peaceful brother is calling it these days? Well I call it a good fight and no mistake. Why, after all your enemies have been crushed and a few lands have been smashed, who better to fight than the kin you went to battle with in the first place? I mean, they are going to be good for a battle, take and give knocks and all that.

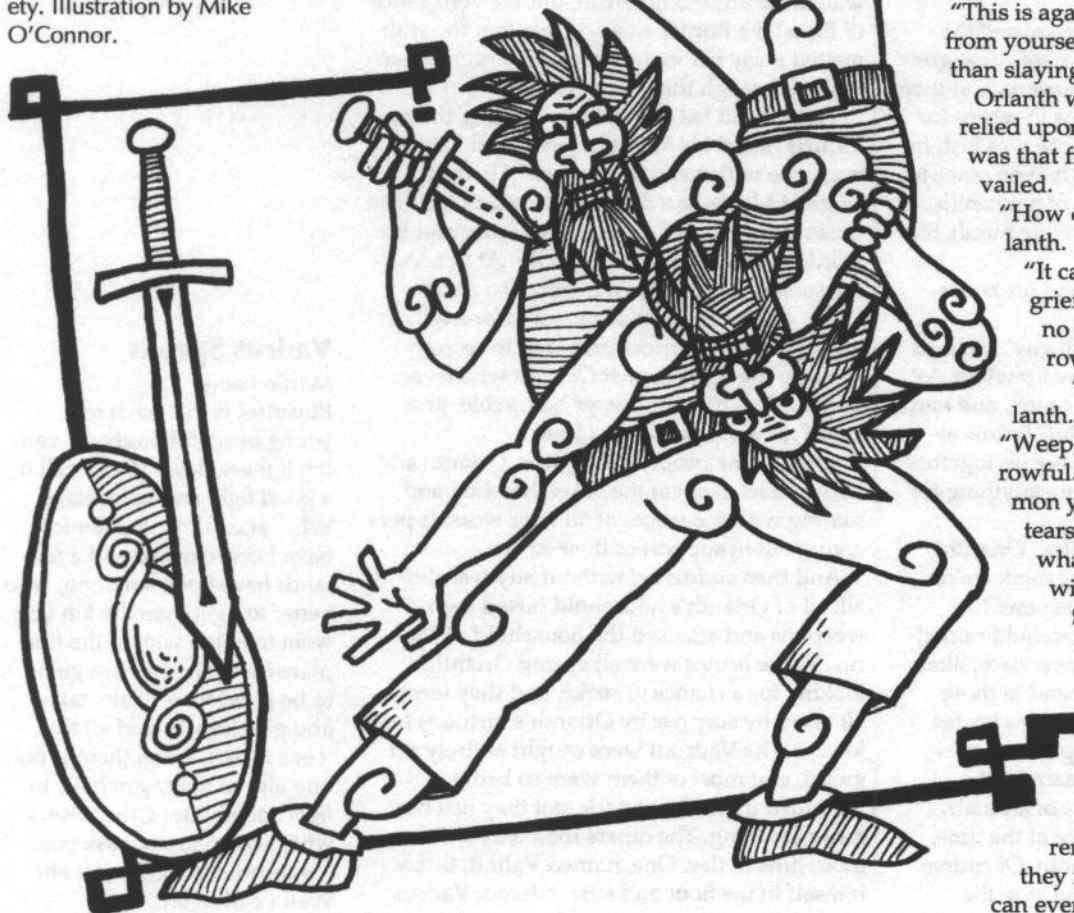
Let's face it, when there is no one else to fight, you have to fight somebody! Otherwise, what's there to do, I ask you?

Kinstrife he's calling it eh? Well I call it fun!

was abandoned by his nothing thanes.

In the fair fight that followed Orlanth thrashed Vadrus, of course, and with a backwards wrestling throw Orlanth twisted Vadrus so that he was never after able to stand up-right, or to fight properly. Orlanth threw him onto on the ground where he lay moaning. His hall was plundered, broken, and cast all about. Then, holding Vadrus underfoot and helpless, Orlanth declared that all of the holdings of Vadrus would hereafter belong to Valind, Vadrus' most cowardly son who had surrendered. Valind accepted this honor from Orlanth, and swore a promise. Of course it was a vadrudi promise, and he planned rebellion. But after Orlanth left the other Vadrudi all showed up to protest. They didn't agree that their fathers' possession should be Valind's. Of course, they then fought relentlessly among themselves. And though they are terrible and they still sometimes unite to fall upon us with their deadly winters, they

Kinstrife always shakes the foundations of Orlanthi society. Illustration by Mike O'Connor.



are, as we say, out of this story.

The deadly frozen winters ceased after that, and the world moved once again. Orlanth balanced the world, moving it with both dance and battle. Life was present, weaving between plenty and privation like a dog bounding from right to left and back and forth as she bolts down a trail. Orlanth kept the world with his wife, his brothers, the foreign tribes, and himself.

"How can this be fixed?" asked Orlanth to his household. "We have not been unjust." Indeed, Justice had been maintained, and that Orlanth had acted well within the boundaries of right, for he exacted a far smaller price for the terrible death of his son.

The Stone Law-speaker, whose views were not changeable, kept insisting that the cosmic balance would be reset with another death.

"Justice demands revenge for repayment," he reminded everyone.

"Wergilds can be paid to halt blood feud," reminded Orlanth, for he had made that law.

"This is against your own kin! Collect from yourself? That is no more solution than slaying another of your own kin!"

Orlanth was always the chieftain, and relied upon all his council for advice. It was that from Chalana Arroy which prevailed.

"How can this be healed?" asked Orlanth.

"It can not," she said. "This is a grief without limits. There can be no balancing in this, only sorrow."

"What can we do?" asked Orlanth.

"Weep," said the healer. "Cry, be sorrowful. Make a new effigy and summon your evil into it. Give it your tears. After a year you will know what to do. After three years, you will be as healed as you can be."

So they did that. Even many sons of Vadrus came and offered their tears and sorrow.

After a year they burned the effigy in a sacred fire. After two more years, most of them could no longer weep at all, though the empty place remained. And so in that way they remedied kinstrife, as well as it can ever be remedied.

Aggar

David Millians

The Land

Aggar is a rugged highland, lying primarily between the Autumn Mountains and the Rockwood Mountains in southern Peloria. Its hilltops and frontiers are occupied by Orlanthi-worshipping barbarians who regularly exert their surly independence. The valleys are ruled by the Lunar king whose loyal subjects include the lowland farmers, the small populations of the cities, and the merchant class. River folk and other lesser people are scattered over the landscape.

The Aggari Highlands are composed of steep ridges, rising toward the towering Rockwood Mountains to the south and the knobbed Autumn Mountains in the north. Deep, cool valleys lie between the ridges. Travel is difficult and centralized control almost impossible. The highlands are deeply forested in some places, while others are dominated by moors and fens. Streams spread into bogs, race over the rocky slopes of the ridges, and plunge into the gorges, where they mingle and flow over shattered boulders to the larger rivers of the eastern lowlands.

Copper and some bronze are found in the Copper Mountains of the south. The central highlands are scattered with salt mines, some dating back to ancient times. Many still provide salt, while others find use as shelters, corals, and even temples.

Benefiting from the plentiful rain and crisp winds, a lush, rich variety of plants grows across Aggar. Mighty grey pines, alders, rowans, and white oaks form extensive forests. Smaller plants are often valuable for their healing or spiritual qualities, though some can be deadly, and the Forest Folk know how to awaken trees of war. Bogs are filled with life and deadly quagmires, while the high moors seem to have endless heathers and grasses.

Beasts of all types roam the land. Simple hares and squirrels are hunted by the red fox, alynx, and wolf. Deer, aurochs, boar, sable, wild horses, and even mammoths provide food for the sabretoothed cat and hunting dinosaurs and, of course, humans. The streams are full of fish, and ponds fill with wading birds.

Powerful spirits, forgotten ghosts, and demons lurk between steads.

Neighbors

The lowlanders and even some of the Orlanthi living in the eastern valleys have different traditions. Some of these simply reflect the natural diversity and independence of Orlanth's folk, and some have been corrupted by foreign ideas and sorcerers. A tribe of were-

wolves lives somewhere in the highlands, and the evil, bloody tusk riders sometimes raid the unwary.

Forest Folk and Stone Men live in the deepest woods. While they can be a formidable menace, they mostly ignore the Orlanthi and are sometimes allies. The river folk were once a powerful people, but most of them now dwell in bogs or in caves along the rivers. They often provide delicious fish as additional food, but they are mysterious and wary. Dragon people and durulz sometimes travel in Aggar, and the Rockwood Mountains are known to harbor broo, trolls, ice demons, and hawk people. There are even rumors of long forgotten dwarf mines in the mountains.

The fierce Skanthi, neighboring Aggar to the west, are known as the Bandit Clans and are considered some of the most primitive of the Orlanthi. Their lands were ruined in ancient wars.

Holay and Vanch lie to the east, the former ruled by a queen in Filichet. Sylila is a Lunar Province north of the Autumn Mountains.

The People

The Orlanthi have dwelt in this land since at least the time of the hero Vingkot, who founded many tribes and gave them their first laws.

Physiology

The Orlanthi of Aggar are known for their generally hearty build and fair complexion. These Orlanthi tend to have high brows and smaller noses. Their hair can range in color from blonde to quite black, though most tend to have hair of a darker brown. Their eyes are usually darker blues, browns, and hazels.

Tattoos are a common element among the Aggari.

Men wear their hair, mustaches, and beard long. Young unmarried women wear their hair loose. Married persons wear their hair in braids, though some leave some of their hair loose. Widows wear their hair bound up or covered.

Psychology

The hill folk of Aggar share their culture with many of their Orlanthi neighbors, but the range within even Aggar can be great. They are known for being closed-mouthed. Their idea of wit is a short, snappy comeback, especially if it silences a long-winded person. They are masters of understatement. The men are more closed-mouthed than the women. Men are seen as more passionate and more easily driven to impetuous deeds than are women, who are known as the practical and more logi-

From Glorantha: the Encyclopedia

Greg Stafford

Aggar. A geographic area roughly defined as the drainage basin for the Forantin River. At the Dawn it was occupied by two Heortling tribes, the Pennentelli and Vestantes. The former tribe was exterminated by Arkat and the Vestantes took command of most of the clans. Nobles generally accepted the EWF, and after the subsequent slaughter the tribe was called the Tarkarlings, but more often the Kingdom of Aggar. It became a Lunar tributary around 1520 ST and is now one of the Lunar Provinces.

Bondor

Bondor can be simply defined as men and women who have given their word-bond to another man or woman. Essentially all Aggari are someone's bondor, and might have sworn bondor as well. Some bondor are little more than thralls, while others hold many acres from a wealthy carl. Most serve in a household or on a farm, and others maintain small independent plots or herds.

Their obligations are often informal and vague, but they expect some protection and guidance in return for their aid and support. It's an individual arrangement, and the details can provide years of legal wranglings. Some masters retain all rights to land and properties, while others allow almost complete independence. In the southwestern corner of Aggar, it's good simply to establish neighbors, so many wealthier carls are eager to help enterprising young families develop a new steadland.

cal members of society. There are, of course, many individual variations.

Aggari Orlanthi have a reputation for being hard workers and stoic. They must work hard to scratch a living from the poor soil or catch the lean and wary deer of the hills. They often face disaster, when a flash flood carries away their crops or herds or if no game can be found. This makes them value the ability to cope with a crisis without much fuss.

On the other hand, this bottled-up frustration and rage sometimes spills over in berserker fury. Before the Lunar conquest, many Orlanthi were devotees of Urox, the Storm Bull.

Language

Aggari Orlanthi speak Aggari, a language related to those in Holay, Sylila, and Talastar and descended along with them from the language of the gods.

There are a number of dialects of Aggari based around the primary divisions of the tribes, so there are forms common to the Autumn Mountain Tribes, High Tribes, Hill Tribes, Mountain Tribes, and Sun Tribes. Due to their isolation, clans living in the mountains can vary even more.

Epic poems celebrate the heritage of the Aggari. They are performed at moots and feasts. The longer ones are the exclusive creations and performances of bards. They tend to have several layers of rhyme, which shows the creator's skill and aids in memorization. There are several other formal features, the use of which demonstrates the crafter's mastery. Strong metaphorical language is common, resulting in many layers of meaning.

Social Culture & Government

Aggari Orlanthi are divided into several somewhat distinct tribal groups: Autumn Mountain Tribes, High Tribes, Hill Tribes, Mountain Tribes, and Sun Tribes. The description below is generally true across Aggar, but some variations will be noted, and others exist. Those clans living in the mountains can be even more idiosyncratic in their social arrangements.

Aggari Orlanthi base their society on decreasingly intimate familial groupings. Their immediate family is those with whom they live, usually in an isolated stead. These families are related to one another along patrilineal lines of descent into clans, most named for a guardian or representative spirit, typically one contacted by the clan's founder. Members of a clan know their ancestry for at least seven generations. They respect all of those within and descended by blood from this line to be their clan kin. This lineage and group tend to be an Aggari's primary loyalty. The territory, both physical and spiritual, of a clan is known as its cenol, clan lands.

Clans are led by a chieftain, known as a

thegn. His supporters are known as carls. The thegn is selected by the carls, but the position is hereditary in most clans. Thegns are in the best position to prepare an heir, so most clans go with his designate. Crisis and ineptitude can quickly shift this role to another branch of the clan, almost always another carl.

The thegn is a leader in war and a mediator with the spirits of the clan and the gods of the Aggari. He receives formal visitors and makes agreements with other Aggari leaders. The chieftain usually can only exercise legal power within his own stead and among his bondor. Carls independently govern their own parts of the cenol.

Most clans contain representatives of each social level and position in Aggari society. Thus, each clan will have wealthy and poor members, and each clan will have several gothi.

While almost every freeman in Aggari society has personal, individual property, the clan often owns most land and stock in common. The clan is collectively liable for debts, legal fines, and blood vendettas incurred by a single member. When a man dies, his wealth is redistributed among his clan kin. Since they are all of similar distance from the deceased, his brothers, sons, and father all have equal claim to a share. Grandfathers, uncles, sons, and nephews are also considered equally related. Some clans allow women to make a claim, and some even accord the equal status to women in roles equivalent to those listed above.

Aggari families are patriarchal, patrilineal in descent, and patrilocal. Women marry outside of their clan and join their husband's clan. Dowries and brideprices exist, and their use varies depending on local conditions and needs. Women and their families work hard to assemble dowries or to increase the brideprice value. Marriages are usually large community festivals featuring gift giving, music, and dancing.

Clans are grouped into tribes. These are based somewhat on tradition, but they can be changed at any time, though this may bring down the wrath of other clans and the tribal king. Members of a single clan are sometimes members of different tribes, though this is uncommon.

For much of the Third Age, the Aggari have had a High King of all tribes, and his court has usually been at Eneal. Due to their remoteness, Aggari kings command little of their subjects' natural loyalty. A king's strength is based on his own real power within his tribe and clan.

The High King of Aggar is chosen by tribal contests, though those seeking the office are usually already tribal kings. The High King collects the tribute due to the Lunar Empire in the form of silver, bronze, barley, and regiments of native warriors serving under Lunar

Rilith Swanmaid

Rilith is a relatively slender, fairskinned woman of about five feet in height. Her hair is quite light blonde, falling straight to well below her shoulders, though she usually wears it in a single, fine braid at the back. Just above each of her wrists on the outer sides of her forearms is a tattoo of a flying swan, as if seen from below. She has the bearing of a mature woman but is probably in her late twenties.

Rilith usually wears a light gray robe with a dark blue or embroidered hem, sleeve ends, and neck. Over this she usually wears a white work apron. A braided, brown, tied belt, decorated with copper studs every few inches, runs around her waist. Her small work knife hangs from this, like all women's on her left side down the front of her left leg, on a two foot long thong. She wears fine, silver loops in her ears. When she wears a cloak, usually black or dark green, she also wears one of her family's fine silver or copper brooches just below each shoulder on her chest to hold the cloak in place.

Rilith is a quiet, observant woman. She speaks relatively softly and with a comfortable intimacy. She smiles often, but it is an almost melancholy smile, and she obviously suffers when she witnesses pain. She rarely gestures and often gazes into the distance or beyond those around her.

Note that the Aggari ideals of beauty seek women of a healthy, hearty build. Rilith would be somewhat slighter than the average, so she would be notably heavier than the underfed waifs so popular by Twentieth Century standards.

commanders. If a tribe or clan is slow or refuses to pay the designated tribute, the High King may ignore this or raid that group or some other to make up the difference. The individual tribes remain very independent.

The High King of Aggar is responsible to the Lunar Provincial Government based in Mirin's Cross in Holay. The Provincial Governor since 1586 has been Appius Luxius, known for his integrity. He is served by Quinscion the Patient, the General of Procurement, a post he has held since 1555. Quinscion is known to play chess with the Red Emperor. His field agent is Ivex Devouring Dog, the Imperial Tax Collector, and a number of clerks.

The only three significant cities in Aggar are Eneal, the seat of the High King, Masassakar, a hill fort and rebuilt ruin from ages past, and The City of 10,000 Magicians, a mysterious community in the southern foothills of the Autumn Mountains. The latter was once a center of study for the Empire of the Wyrms' Friends. It has been closed to foreign visitors for decades.

Gothi are another element in the hierarchy of Aggari society. They are acknowledged elders within the community, though not all wise, older members of the clan receive this title. A gothi is often a priest or talented magician, so this term is also used for the animists of the mountain clans. Gothi do not necessarily have political power, but their influence can be great, and it is unwise to ignore them.

Many gothi are storytellers, and bards also fulfill this role. Stories serve to remind and bind families, clans, and tribes together and to ground an individual more strongly in the values and traditions of his or her people.

Gift exchanges are common in Aggari society. This practice binds together many clans and allows Aggari to form new links with those outside their immediate family or clan. Carls and thegns use gifts of land, weapons, arm bands, neck bands, other jewelry, beasts, valuable cloth, other beautiful crafts, and food-stuffs to form obligations with their followers. These are usually not responded to in kind but instead in loyalty, duty, and service.

Those of comparable rank in society also give gifts, and these are usually mutual. It is to be expected that small tokens at least will be exchanged during a visit or even some encounters. To fail to do so would be an embarrassment and could result in the loss of honor, status, and onach. It is very rude to refuse a gift.

Law & Onach

The Aggari measure a person's value in onach, which is comparable to wergild. It is measured in cattle. Thralls and slaves do not have onach value, though they may be valued as property in some cases. All free adults have onach, even strangers and those from beyond Aggar.

Killing a man allows his family to sue for his

onach value in cattle. Lesser crimes against his person are worth some fraction of this total. Injuries of honor and dignity—attacking someone from hiding, for example—can increase the onach award.

Those of higher onach value and status are also able to press their case more strongly in court. Witness, oath giving, or other testimony or evidence have a higher value in court if done by someone of higher onach.

Fathers, Carls, thegns, and kings adjudicate legal disputes and award onach, acting as broth or judges. One part in ten of the award is kept by the broth. Collection of awards is entirely the burden of the winner. Brothi can also strip a person of some or all of his onach value.

Aggari often vouch for one another. This is a formal but simple oath in which one person swears to stand by another for some period of time. Failure to do so results in a loss of honor and onach. The one vouched for is considered to have the rights, privileges, and duties held by others under the oathmaker. Sometimes the receiver is required to make oaths in return or take on geases.

Religion

The Aggari follow the ways of Orlanth, King of the World, and his household. Orlanth values honor, bravery, and justice. His wife is Ernalda the Earth Mother, leader of women and a keeper of wisdom. Some of Orlanth's companions on the Lightbringers Quest—Kalana, Issaries, and Lankormin—provide role models and magic for healers, merchants, and lawspeakers, but Yurmal the Fool only causes trouble, and both Ginna Jar and Fleshman are mysterious. Elmal is the loyal thegn of Orlanth, and Vinga is his trusted daughter-warrior. Kinless Humakt carries Death, and Urox the Bull is ever ready to battle the evil manifestations of Chaos. Other, less powerful deities like Barntar the Plowman, Dakafal the Judge of the Dead, Donandar the Bard, Esra the Barley-mother, Gustbran of the Forge, Harst the Reeve, Heler the Rainbringer, Mahome the Hearthfire, Maran Gor the Earthshaker, Mastakos the Charioteer, Minlister Alefather, Odayla the Hunter, Voria Flowerdaughter, and Voriof the Shepherd all provide their magic and power to the world.

Some gods like the Heron Goddess and Yes-tendos of the Boat, both gods for the Heron People, or the Lady of the Forest are mysterious but are not hostile. Inora Snowmaid and Valind Winterking are Orlanth's kin, but they bring difficulties to his people. Trollmother, Daga Droughtbringer, and Shepelkirt the Red Moon are all workers of evil.

Many other spirits, some mighty and many just dangerous, manifest in Aggar. Their touch can be a blessing or a curse. Minor spirits inhabit every corner of the land and even dwell within the steeds. Hearth maids and weed

Odo Bigear

Odo is a comfortably healthy carl of middle age. He has rusty red hair falling in curly waves almost to his shoulders, and his beard is more richly red with a scattering of increasing gray. Curling, serpentine tattoos run from his wrists to his upper arms. A small spider tattoo is on the left side of his neck.

Odo usually wears the basic, little-decorated tunic and trousers of his work day or hunting, dark stripes for the former and the latter usually in a bland cheque of brown and tan. This coloration is good for moving through the forest. He wears a gold torc depicting coiling trees rising to their fruit at the opening at his throat, and he also usually wears a gold armband on the right in the shape of a coiling dragon attempting to consume Orlanth. He wears high laced boots. In cooler weather he adds his bear fur vest and, if travelling, also a long cloak clasped with relatively simple broaches just below the shoulders.

Odo is observant and listens carefully to others, hence his nickname. He laughs and plays easily, delighting in the children of his household. He likes a good game of tafl. He grows serious when a threat looms or if someone of his household shirks his responsibilities.

reapers help keep the household tidy and efficient. White Water Woman seeks to drown those who cross her ford, and Drunkards can appear at any festival.

Rites of Passage

Immediately after birth, Aggari babies are held aloft atop a local sacred hill or cliff, named, and blessed. Their parents and others, usually including a gothi, witness and bind themselves to the new, young life and call on the gods, clan spirits, and natural forces to watch over the growing child.

Aggari children begin to learn their duties and skills and to assist in the household soon after they can walk. Girls are presented to Vor-ia Springmaid, and boys are sworn to Voriof the Shepherd as they begin to follow their different paths.

Girls are initiated into the ways of Ernalda with menarche. This is a solemn, secret service and introduces the young woman to the first women's secrets. She must begin a more restrained lifestyle, developing her appeal for possible later marriage. Girls receive secret tattoos so that their guardian spirits will recognize them.

Boys are initiated into the ways of Orlanth with their first beard growth. During or after a riotous ceremony involving drums and dance, each boy must survive some ordeal, typically returning from the nearby wilds with the men sometimes tormenting the youth in various forms. Each boy is marked with several tattoos, the meaning of which is sometimes known only to the officiating gothi.

Many youths are fostered at or before their initiation. This is a way to bind families within and between clans, to strengthen old friendships, to create future bonds and prevent strife, and to satisfy the need for hostages. Fosterages usually last until maturity. A fosterling does not usually inherit from his foster parents or foster clan, though either group can choose to do so.

At legal maturity in their twenty first year, young men and women swear loyalty to one or more protective gods and spirits. They also declare their immediate loyalty and align themselves informally with a tribe, typically that of their clan, sometimes that of a foster clan.

Full initiation into a cult is a major event, though its details obviously vary. Initiates become privy to cult powers and secrets and are expected to maintain and further these and the cult's power.

Aggari marriages are made extra-clan and patrilocal. Older family members usually arrange marriages, though youths often make their interests clear and pursue their intent independently. Marriage oaths of fidelity, protection, fertility, and love are sworn before as many relatives as possible and representatives

of Orlanth and Ernalda. This is usually followed by a large feast provided by both families.

Divorce is legal and socially appropriate in many circumstances. The husband or wife declares the dissolution of the marriage before the ranking clan gothi. Only the gothi can block this action, a rare action on his or her part. Marriages can also be dissolved as a result of a lawsuit against a cruel, delinquent, or infertile spouse.

A death among the Aggari is a significant event. Aggari, especially men, grieve loudly. The body itself is laid out overnight to allow for visitation. Stories are told, and many families hold a feast as part of these wakes. Just before dawn the next morning, the body is removed from the house. Men's bodies are carried to a high rack or placed high within a tree to be exposed to the elements, the cleansing winds. The bones are removed after several weeks or a season and buried at the edge of the family's stead lands. Women's bodies are buried near the family's main garden. Children's bodies are buried like women's.

Great chiefs and kings are burned and often buried in great mounds with fabulous treasures and sometimes slaughtered beasts and slaves.

Aggari believe that the dead can rise to haunt the living in the form of draugr or other horrors, and several traditions exist to prevent this. The words and magic of a gothi are usually enough to send the dead one's spirit on to the awaiting gods. Grave goods are also important, for they provide for the soul's needs, lest it need to bother the living for necessities. Finally, bodies are buried at least a man's height below the surface in order to hold it tight within the earth's grasp. Should a body still rise, due to dramatic circumstances, more powerful magic or a physical struggle is necessary.

Physical Culture

Aggari work in a variety of materials and have a rich, heavily decorated culture. Almost any item will receive extra attention with colored threads, small gemstones, furs of many colors, precious metals, and so forth. A wedding blanket might have an embroidered border of vibrant color which relates the story of her clan's founding ancestor. A harp will almost always display the symbols of Donandar or Orlanth or Issaries. Animals and plants are common decorations, and clans vary in their preferences. It is often possible to tell an Aggari's origin and affiliation by the symbols, stories, and colors used in his clothing and possessions.

Clothing

Traditional Aggari clothing is a shirt or tunic and a long skirt or kilt. More and more Aggari men, especially members of the High Tribes

Redwalda of Redstone

Redwalda is a proud woman of middle age. She is of average (Aggari) build and wears her thick, wavy, ungathered auburn hair across and below her shoulders, though she sometimes pulls it back in a thick, loose braid. Her teeth are large and white. Her arms are marked with old scars and tattoos of Vinga, Lightning, and War.

Her gown is usually deep red or brown, edged with a darker brown or black at throat, wrists, and hem, sometimes embroidered with her own elaborate needlings. She often goes barefoot or only in simple sandals, even in snow. Redwalda's work apron is a vibrant blue, edged with embroidery depicting many stead crafts. Her belt is dark, made of woven mammoth hair, and from it on leather thongs hang her two small knives, the larger one of bronze for daily tasks, the other smaller, formed of sacred copper and used in holy rites. She wears a copper torc ending in the faces of maid and crone on right and left respectively. She uses either simple straightpins of silver or elaborate broaches of copper, silver, gold, and gemstones to bear her cloak in colder weather.

Redwalda is more intense than Odo, more often thrusting herself forward with a question or comment. Her brow clenched, she focuses sharply on a speaker, a task, or whatever has her attention. Her voice is loud and somewhat piercing, and she laughs and cries noisily. She doesn't tolerate foolishness or wasted time and energy and is herself always engaged in some activity.

wear trousers, and some even don the Lunar toga on occasion. Sandals in summer and high fur boots in the colder seasons are the norm, and hoods exist for rain and cold. Lighter articles are made from linen cloth, while wool and leather are common for winter and rougher environments. Buttons are rare in the uplands, where thongs, clasps, and pins are used.

Accessories for men and women include a belt, from which hang the wearer's many tools or weapons, pins and brooches to bind cloaks and hoods, decorated shoulder bags, hair and beard pins, rings, torcs, bracelets, and earrings. Metalwork is typically in copper or bronze, silver and gold for fancier objects.

Tools

Aggari need a variety of tools, most made from bronze, wood, bone, and stone.

Transportation

Aggar's rough terrain and poor trails leaves most of its inhabitants travelling by foot. Those with horses are better rested but little quicker. Winter makes some areas better accessible by sledges. Coracles are used in the marshes and on some of the quieter stretches of water, but these are more useful for fishing than for travel.

Shelter

Aggari live in steads, extended, rectangular halls with outlying barns, sheds, stables, storehouses, and other buildings. A large hall will sometimes have a second story opening in the center to the main floor. The main hall has one or two cooking pits and other work spaces down the center, and the sides are lined with raised floors for use as work areas and beds. Storage is below, and some items are hung overhead. Entrances are usually at either end.

Like their clothing, Aggari buildings tend to be richly decorated and with purpose as well, their intricately carved beams, doors, and other features serving to remind mortals and spirits of the family's strength and history.

Steads are usually built atop a small mound. These are assumed to have been raised for this purpose, but some have later been discovered to have been originally burial mounds. Larger and more powerful steads have evolved into village hill forts.

Food

Aggari have a diverse range of foods, but deep winter can be a time of real hunger. Their primary grains are barley, oats, and rye. They also have many vegetables from their gardens or gathered wild. Pork is the most common meat. Hunting provides meat as well. Cattle are kept primarily for milk and hair. Some lowland clans use a higher proportion for meat, but they are too valuable for this and the hunting is too good in the highlands to justify regular

cattle slaughter

Wine has replaced beer as the drink of choice in the lands under direct Lunar control.

Sports & Games

Aggari men and women play many forms of Feld Ball, essentially a form of soccer. Most steads have a playing area, and clan moots always have at least one large game. Some competitions can range widely between two steads, the goals miles apart.

Aggari also enjoy foot races, wrestling, and martial contests. Many Aggari view raids as a sport.

Popular games are mostly dice and board games. The former are played with polished bones and are mostly based on luck. The most popular board game, Tafl, is similar to Nine Men's Morris, though chess is making some inroads among the High Tribes.

Pets

Aggari traditionally keep cats for hunting, though in the lowlands they have been relegated to the role of mousers and replaced by dogs. Although some stead members, especially the children, can become attached to these animals, they are generally seen as working members of the community and receive little special treatment.

Music

Aggari musicians play bagpipe, drum, flute, harp, lute, recorder, and trumpet. The bagpipe is viewed as either boorish or as, along with the harp, the most sophisticated of instruments, depending largely on where it is played. Aggari music tends to be either energetic or melancholy.

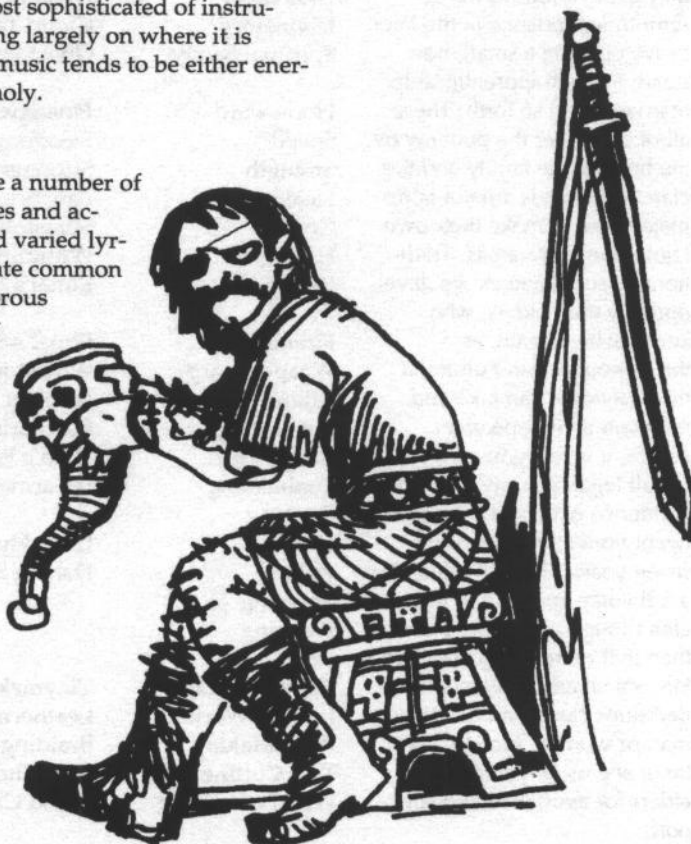
Song & Dance

The Aggari have a number of popular melodies and accompanying and varied lyrics. Most celebrate common themes of humorous characters, lusty love, and survival against the elements. More grandiose themes tend to become stories, sometimes sacred ones, and epic poems.

Thralls and Slaves

The Aggari distinguish between slaves and thralls. Their thralls are bound by law, a more limiting status than that of the lowliest bondor, but their offspring are free if poor. Aggari (except some clans near Eneal) don't keep real slaves. They believe that the lowlanders keep slaves whose descendants can never be free of the status. In fact, individual thralls and slaves would see no difference in their daily lives.

Although Rascius, High King of Aggar, wears a toga when he deals with the Lunars, he puts on simple Aggari garb when drinking with his subjects. Illustration by Mike O'Connor.



Lesser Magic

The Aggari say, "Men sing, and women chant," and their basic magics reflect this general difference in their manifestation. Many of these magics, especially boy and girl magics, are generally available, some through the familiar cults of Voria, Voriof, Orlanth the Father, Ernalda the Mother, and a few others like Elmal or Issaries. Others are clearly linked to a certain, more rare cult and are simply taught by those who know them to those who do not and who are worthy. Others are of unclear origin or provenance but are valued.

Learning one of these magics requires working with someone who does. There is usually a minor, symbolic challenge to overcome, and the two typically retreat to a sheltered grove, a cave, a sweat lodge, or some other private, potent place. The elder paints the other with tem-

porary symbols and images, and a spirit of the magic manifests. The student memorizes the song or chant and promises to honor the spirit that brings its magic. The elder sings or chants with the younger, and then they clean themselves and return to the family.

Most Aggari learn all of these magics.

All of these spells cost a single (1) Magic Point to cast. They have various minor effects or provide minimal protection, but they can spell the difference between safety and injury, health and madness. Several of these spells—Orlanth's Morning Breeze, Voria's Dawn Blessing, the sporrans magics—would be cast every day, while others would vary depending on the day's tasks and challenges, and others might only be cast rarely.

Legal Maturity

From the period of late childhood through the acquisition by most Aggari of full adulthood in their early twenties, men and women gradually accumulate various rights and expectations. Legal standing, onach, and the like shift accordingly.

An older child has increasing responsibilities for the herd (boys) and the household (girls). Initiation into the mainstream cults of Orlanth and Orinalda usually occurs at puberty, roughly at fourteen years of age. This allows the youth greater participation in adult activities, and he or she begins to learn many, mostly gender-specific traditions.

Depending on family wealth and circumstances, individuals may gain various forms of semi-independence in the later teens: clearing a small, new stead; a foster-apprenticeship; marriage; and so forth. These all occur under the purview of the head of the family and the clan. Individuals are not completely free to make their own choices in these areas. Traditionally such matters are developed by their elders, who know better. Again, as throughout Aggari culture, if the individual can take and maintain an independent stance, it is recognized.

Full legal maturity and independence occurs at the age of twenty-one: three spans of seven years. The individual has a full voice and vote in the clan though usually less heard than that of more experienced kin. Social and professional decisions can be made by the man or women, though again he or she usually turns to the elders for assistance and support.

Magic Realm

Blessing
Blessing
Grooming
Greeting
Farewell
Honor
Oathswearing
Sanctuary
Tafl Playing
Boasting
Storytelling
Divinatory
Divinatory
Divinatory
Spiritual Safety

Homeward
Speed
Strength
Healing
Combat
Hiding
Riding

Firemaking
Weaponsharp
Killing
Butchering
Gathering
Toolmaking
Cooking
Hunting
Fishing
Spinning
Weaving
Sewing
Pottery Work
Leather Work
Rope Making
Tree Cutting
Wood Chopping

Boy Magic

Orlanth's Morning Breeze
Sporranspakan
Beard Combing
Omath the Host / Door Song
Path Song
Honor Song
Stone Words
Mercy Cry
Grandfather's Tafl Board
Boasting Song
Grandfather's Story
Hear Rain's Whisper
Dreamsleep
Cloud Tales
Ghost Be Gone

Homepath
Fleetfoot
Strongarm Song
Pain Song
Surestone *
Withining
Elmal's First Saddle

Elmal's Spark
Whetstone Song *
Peace of Beast Brother
Butchering Song
Wild's Witness
Spearmaking

Little Hunt Song
Fishing Song *

Claymaking
Leathermaking *
Braiding Song
Tree Chopping Song
Wood Chopping Song *

Girl Magic

Voria's Dawn Blessing
Sporran Blessing
Hair Braiding
Ernalda's Table / Hearth Chant
Mother's Footsteps
Honor Chant
Heart Words
Mercy Cry

Grandmother's Story
Hear Mother's Voice
Dreamsleep
Woodland Words
Ghost Be Gone

Homepath
Run Along Song
Carrying Chant
Heal Chant

Gift of Mahome

Sister's Embrace
Tail Bones
Wild's Witness
Tool Body
Cooking Words *

Spinner's Chant
Weaver's Chant
Sewing Chant

Braiding Chant

Carving Painting	Carving Song Paint Magic	Carving Song
Bringing Bringing Bringing Finding Nature's Sweets Climbing	Sheep Call Cow Call Goat Call Lambseeking * Bee Woman Grandfather Climbed *	Little Lost One Needlerattle Berry Man

* These magics are often learned by the other gender.

Man Magic

Woman Magic

First Man's Music	Ernalda's Wounding Chant for Mother Tomorrow
Wooing Words Husband Song	The Barefoot Dance Wife Chant Birthing Chant
Fatherson Song Fatherdaughter Song Death Words	Motherdaughter Chant Motherson Chant Death Words
Seating A Ring Lankormin's Lore	Grandmother's Counsel Grandmother's Treasure
Bloodax, Bloodblade Great Hunt Song Cidersong	Grandmother's Vengeance Ciderchant Feldblossom Chant Steadstone Song
Stonecutting Song Rowing Song Orlanth Sails The Winds	

Tales of Creation

David Millians

Nok and the Nykri (half human, half fish)

The Nykri, sometimes also called the Noklings, are not, as some people say, simply another trick of Yurmal. Those who attribute every oddity encountered to the Trickster are simply revealing their own foolishness, for his tricks and creations are fleeting and break easily.

Nok was a strong and handsome warrior, and his valor was well known. He bravely cleared new land and built his stead on a protected rise high above a deep loch. As he cleared the land, as he erected his hall, as he plowed his fields, he heard singing from the loch far below. He stood atop the stony height and sent his sight far down to the waters. His gaze was returned, for therein dwelt a beautiful Water Maid. Their love was immediate and strong, and they sought to come together.

Nok and the Water Maid met at the loch's edge, but she could not live on land, and the waters would drown him. Nok's magic could

bring her gifts, settle the winds, or master any beast, but it could not bring him to his true love. Her magics, though, held an answer. Long he lay upon the gray shingle, as she conjured her magic, changing him with each rippling wave that came ashore.

Finally Nok slipped beneath the waters and beheld his love's beautiful kingdom, for she was the eldest daughter of the Loch King. She made him promise never to reveal the kingdom or the magic which brought him there, for if he did, it would shatter her magic and separate them forever. Nok agreed readily and swam into the watery depths with her.

Nok impressed the Loch King, and he and the Water Maid married. They had many children and lived well.

After many years, Nok began to want to look once again upon the land of his youth, to hear once again the voices of his own people. The Water Maid and the Loch King and all of adoptive clan protested, but Nok became determined to visit the surface once more.



Harmast was not the only hero without shoes. Illustration by Jeffrey Noh.

Nok found that his stead had fallen into ruin, and he set about renewing it. He heard calls of his people, however, and he fled from them back into the loch. Embarrassed by his action, though, he later returned and continued his work on his old stead. His people were as surprised as he had been when they found him there, for he had been away for generations, and they knew him as only a story.

Nok refused to tell them where he had been. He told them many wondrous stories of a faraway people, their wise king, his beautiful daughter. The people came to accept his magical return.

Nok worked to renew his stead. As he cleared the land, as he erected his hall, as he plowed his fields, he heard singing from the loch far below. The Water Maid sang to him, and he returned to her. Nok then divided his time between water and land, enjoying his family and bringing them delights from the surface world.

One night, Nok returned late to his land stead. He may have been at a wedding, and he may have been at a funeral. A one-eyed man was there and claimed kin and guest rights, which Nok, known for his generosity, granted.

The man told Nok that he had heard singing from the loch that night. Nok ran to the loch's edge, but the singing had ended. Nok wept for having been away and missed it. The stranger asked of the song's origin. Nok assumed the stranger had seen the Water Maid and told him of the beautiful kingdom beneath the loch and of his wife, the Water Maid.

A cry rose from he waters, and Nok realized what he had done. He leapt from the cliff and swam deep beneath the surface, seeking his true love's domain. But the magic was broken, and all was water and darkness. He could not return, and he drowned in the water's embrace. The Water Maid herself died from grief.

Their children, the Nykri, swift creatures with human form but a scaly tail instead of legs, still live in the deeper waters of Aggar. Some are curious about their landbound kinfolk, and many fear and despise us. They guard great treasures, and they are as mercurial as their watery home.

Grandfather and Grandmother

Grandfather and Grandmother were the first people. They are parents to us all, and their ways are our ways. Their discoveries, triumphs, and mistakes are ours too.

Grandmother carried a daughter within her womb. Grandfather engendered a son. Together they bore their children.

Grandmother chose the site of the first stead. Grandfather built it. Grandmother blessed it with her song. Grandfather filled it with his breath. Grandmother brought her daughter within the stead and into the hall. Grandfather brought his son within the stead and into its hall.

Grandmother marked the boundaries of the first field and blessed the plow with the sacred words and rites. She laid the plow in her bed during the night. Grandfather yoked Ox and plowed the field, keeping the rows straight and deep with the sacred words and rites. He labored with the plow during the day.

Grandmother knew the ways of Ernalda. In her hands, grain became bread and beer, flax and wool became cloth and clothing, produce and meat became food for our tables and bellies.

Grandfather knew the ways of the forest and the land. He could travel far, and he knew the ways of the young world. He could find meat, wood, berries, and later honey. He sometimes said he was part bear. Grandfather learned much in the world,

and sometimes he was in danger. Twice Grandmother beat him for his dalliances.

The Journey to the First Stead

Grandfather and Grandmother sought their home. The world was young, and they did not know its ways and walked paths of confusion. Then Spider came to them, for they were her children, and she led them out of the darkness. Grandfather wanted to squash Spider, but Grandmother listened to Her.

Spider said, "Look, look, my children, gaze far to the east, the sunrise path, and tell me what you see."

"We see dragons and desolation."

"Then you must not go that way, for it will destroy you.

Look, look, my children, gaze far to the west, the sunset path, and tell me what you see."

"We see dark forests of mysterious beasts and mad thoughts."

"Then you must not go that way, for it will drive you to madness. Look, look, my children, gaze far to the north, the frozen path, and tell me what you see."

"We see blinding ice and endless darkness."

"Then you must not go that way, for it will blind you. Look, look, my children, gaze far to the south, the fiery path, and tell me what you see."

"We see blackened hills and blazing flames."

"Then you must not go that way, for it will burn you."

"Where shall we go?" they cried in despair.

"You must build your home at the center of the world, a place of safety, a place you may someday lose, a place you will always remember."

And it was done as Spider said. The First Stead was built, and it was a place of safety. It was later lost, but we remember it now, for it is our way.

And those who followed the other paths were lost to us, some thankfully dying, others driven mad, and some bent by fire and cold into monstrous beings that return to torment the living.

Grandmother Meets Mahome

One day, while Grandfather was away hunting, or so he claimed, Grandmother gathered the many and rich fruits of the earth near their stead. The world had always provided for them in great abundance, and more often than not, however much Grandfather bragged of his hunting, it was Grandmother who provided their meals. She knew many of the secrets of the forest, moor, and mere. She gathered berries and sweet roots. She found nests and burrows. Along the way she also found clays for her pots, reeds for her baskets, and herbs for taste and health.

Mahome, a daughter of the Fire Tribe also wandered the woodland that day, and she too delighted in the new world. All was fresh and full of discovery, and her flames leapt and grew.

Grandmother came upon Mahome and was frightened, and then she was angry. She called for Mahome to calm her fiery temper, for she was endangering the entire forest, perhaps the whole world! Mahome thought Old Grandmother was a fool, and laughed at her fear. Mahome was not scared of fire.

Mahome's laughter too was flame, and Grandmother was burnt by her words. She reached into her bag, drew out a thick cutting of moist clay, and flung it at Mahome, hoping to stifle or quench her fire. Mahome was surprised by Grandmother's response and burned more brightly.

Soon, though, the clay around Mahome grew hard from her heat, and she was trapped within. She did not like this! She

called for Grandmother to release her, but Grandmother was as surprised as she at the change Mahome's fires had made to the clay. When she was done marveling at the clay hard as rock, she spoke to Mahome.

Grandmother asked Mahome to use her fire to help her people, and Mahome asked Grandmother to help her discover other ways of fire in the new world. Mahome and Grandmother became friends, and Mahome travelled back to the stead in a hard fired, clay bowl.

Mahome is our gentle friend, and she helps us in many ways, but sometimes her violent siblings, oily fire and blisters and raging forest fires, sneak into our hearthfires, and they can be dangerous. Remember that Mahome was once as wild as they and treat her with care and honor.

Grandfather Meets Bee Woman

Grandfather was a great hunter and wielder of magic, but he also enjoyed sleeping in the sunshine, swimming in cool rivers, and chasing young women. Grandmother knew that his hunting did not always involve finding wild game and twice she beat him for it. This was not one of those times.

Grandfather did care for Grandmother very much. He liked her foods and her body, and he knew that she was wiser than he, though he never said so aloud. He would come to miss her while he was hunting, and he would make his way home to their stead, eager for her hearth and blanket. As he neared their home, he would smell all of the good smells of his wife, and he would move thither more swiftly.

Returning from one hunt for which he had nothing to show, he smelt something strange, new, and somehow more enticing than the smells of Grandmother. Maybe it was just that it was a new smell. He hurried in this new direction and soon came to a shaded grove he had never before entered.

Within this shelter of trees moved a young and beautiful woman. She moved in a graceful and mysterious dance that drove thoughts of all else from Grandfather's mind. The fantastic smell came from her drifting body! Grandfather approached her, and he danced with her. She was formed of sweetness, and Grandfather tasted her many times to their mutual delight.

Grandfather could have stayed with her for ages, but Bee Woman knew this was not to be. She knew his ways and did not have the patience of Grandmother. She gave him a bowl of her honey and told him he could return for more when he wished. Grandfather protested and would have remained with her, but

Bee Woman stabbed him sharply with her harsh stinger, and he fled from her, spilling some of the honey but not all of it.

Grandmother knew Grandfather had experienced something strange when he returned to their stead. She tended his wound, and he shared the honey with her and told of his bravery in capturing it from its fearsome guardian. Grandfather sought comfort in Grandmother's arms, and she smelled the sweetness on more than his lips.

Grandmother knew there was more to the story than he had told, but she did like the new taste of honey, and she told him to get some more, for had he not conquered its guardian? Grandfather promised to fetch more soon, but he was reluctant to do so. He had to approach Bee Woman's nest with care, and sometimes he was stung badly. It is the same today.

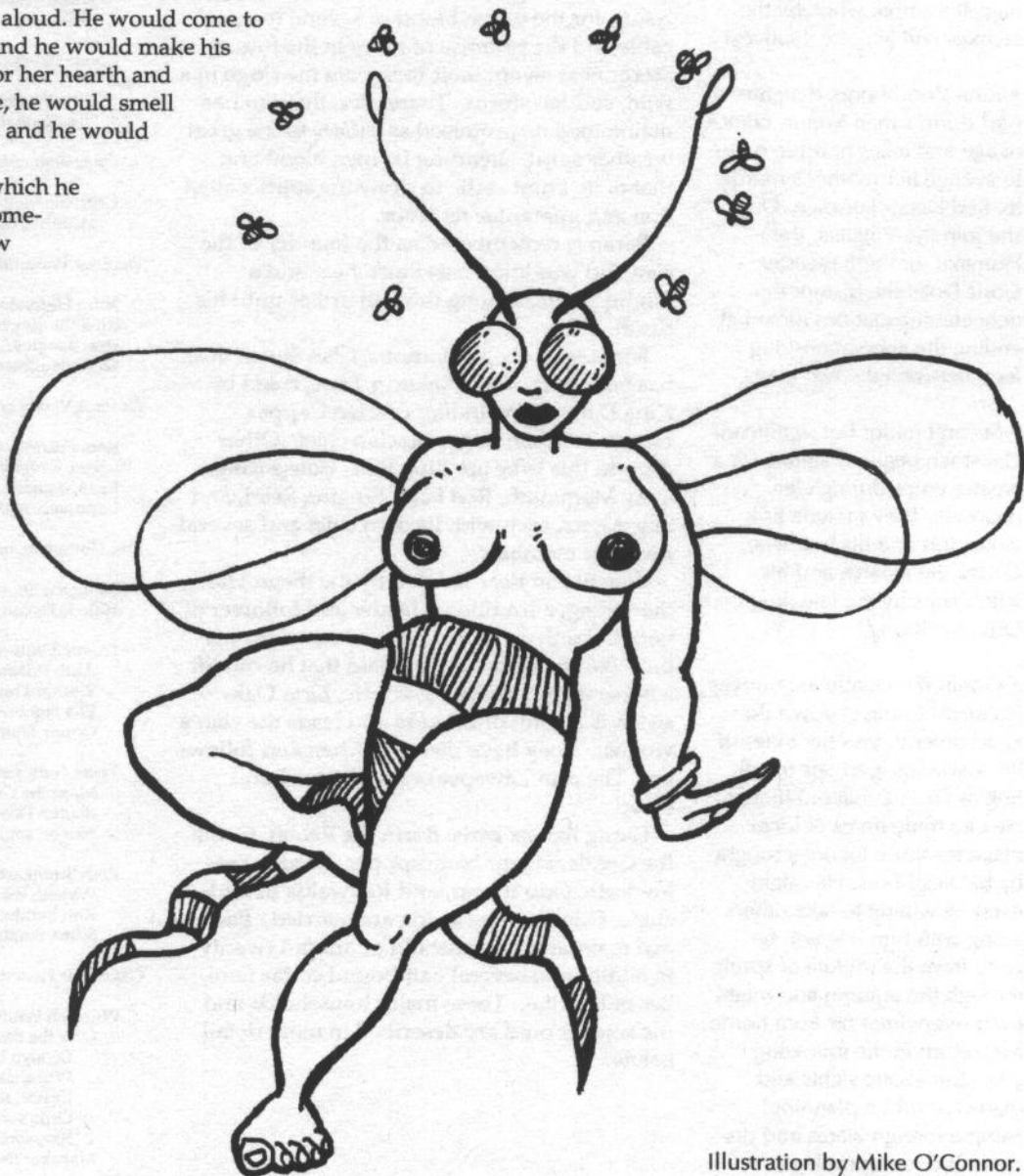


Illustration by Mike O'Connor.

Clan Storm Bear

Storm Bear is an ancient spirit of the Rockwood Mountain foothills and has had mortal followers since at least the beginning of time. The current tribe does not form a continuous link with this primordial time, but they have been the primary focus of the spirit cult for several centuries.

Baran Mountainleaper, a chief and gothi dedicated to Orlanth and known already for several magical quests and deeds, contacted Storm Bear following a disastrous spring raid in which he and his fellows had been ambushed and had fled. They were pursued to their village, which they abandoned. They tried to make for higher ground, but encumbered by their families and the material wealth they could carry, they were doomed to capture, followed by death or slavery.

Stopping on a promontory, Baran sought and found magical aid from Storm Bear. In return for the warm blood of several magic cattle and the promise of more in the future, Storm Bear swept their foes from the ridge in a wild, sudden storm. Thereafter, the clan has maintained its promised sacrifices to the great weather spirit, shedding its own blood and that of its finest cattle to draw the spirit's attention and guarantee its favor.

Baran is remembered as the founder of the clan and was known as Stormbear and a mighty leader among the Hill Tribes until his death.

For at least six generations, Clan Storm Bear has been part of the Nakorin Tribe, ruled by King Daranor Wolfkiller of Clan Copper Horse, of which he is also clan chief. Other clans in this tribe are Blue Pine, Goose King, Gray Mammoth, Red Fern, Singing Reed, and Star Alynx, each with its own chief and several hundred members.

Clan Storm Bear is ruled by the thegn Harag the Strong, a traditional leader and follower of both Orlanth and Urox. He is known for his bull-like strength, and it is said that he can lift a horse with one arm. His wife, Birta Oak-sister, is a gothi of Ernalda and leads the clan's women. They have many children and followers. The clan Lawspeaker is Maegin Barebeard.

Harag has six carls: Borin the Rabbit, Gobin the Gentle, Hagor Stonesplitter, Kaedin Yellowteeth, Odo Bigear, and Redwalda of Redstone. Odo and Redwalda are married. Each carl maintains a household of around twenty in addition to several oathbound cottar families of the clan. These major households and the smaller ones are described in more detail below.

Aadin Blacknose, bondor of Carl Odo, male, 54

Dunin the Ox, son, male, 31
Torfin Redbreeks, son, male, 26
Duna Goosewalk, wife, 22
Torfin, son, male, 3
Lada, daughter, female, 1

Adror Redcheeks, bondor of Carl Hagor, male, 22

Maralyna Blacklocks, wife, female, 22
Orik, son, male, 2

Ballun the Silent, bondor of Carl Gobin, male, 38

Borin the Rabbit, Carl, male, 38

Kara Alynxmother, wife, female, 38
Harag Swiftfoot, son, male, 17
Gurlyn Tightweft, daughter, female, 14
Dina Brightface, daughter, female, 11
Shirlyn, daughter, female, 7

Fonor the Tracker, bondor, male, 35
Durunda Wildbond, wife, female, 34
Borin Darkmane, son, male, 16
Lela Lefthand, daughter, female, 14
Shirith, daughter, female, 8
Orik, son, male, 3

Konor Calfraid, bondor, male, 28, Wife killed in Red Deer raid
Rina Wrathbond, daughter, female, 9
Yon Redhair, son, male, 5

Finor Boghunter, bondor, male, 24

Urith the Mother, bondor, male, 21
Hedelyn, daughter, female, 3

Duninor Waterman, bondor of Thegn Harag, male, 27

Nifra Herondaughter, wife, female, 26
Kina the Swimmer, daughter, female, 8
Ura, daughter, female, 5
Elith, daughter, female, 2

Dusinor Vainbeard, bondor of Carl Borin, male, 30

Kara Feareye, wife, female, 27
Iralyn, daughter, female, 7
Rana, daughter, female, 5
Ludo, son, male, 2

Erik Gottorson, bondor of Carl Odo, male, 40

Tarag the Short, son, male, 18
Hide Eriksdaughter, female, 13

Thunin Gottorson, brother, male, 36
Alith Prizewife, wife, female, 29
Thunin Thuninson, son, male, 10
Ella Sighbreath, daughter, female, 5
Gottor Thuninson, son, male, 1

Tarag Gottorson, brother, male, 33
Marn the Grim, daughter, female, 12
Bladun Deerwalk, son, male, 9
Nunor, son, male, 4

Roth Strongarm, bondor, male, 29
Wyneth the Slave, wife, female, 27
Kon Bondson, son, male, 5
Shina Bonddaughter, daughter, female, 2

Gadek the Hoarse, bondor of Carl Kaedin, male, 35

Wuralith Whiteye, wife, female, 51
Orik the Bastard, son by Orlik the Strong, male, 28
Diralyn Warmwomb, wife, female, 26
Wura, daughter, female, 8
Donor, son, male, 6
Orik, son, male, 3
Ban, son, male, 1
Marukor the Bastard, son by Orlik the Strong, male, 24

Scenarios for Clan Storm Bear

- Kara Alynxmother, wife of Carl Borin the Rabbit and a famed alynx breeder, leads a band into nearby Alynxwood to capture or secure new breeding kittens. Rumors say she's half-alynx on her mother's side. While some conclude this to be a straightforward expedition, others wonder if perhaps more sinister activities aren't afoot. Perhaps it's a trick whereby the alynxes will acquire captives?
- Rina Wrathbond, daughter of Carl Borin's man Konor, comes of age and takes horrible oaths to avenge her mother's murder by Red Deer clansmen. Does she join the Vingans, the Humakti, or the Babeester Gori? Does she disrupt the delicate negotiations aimed at ending the generation-long feud between the two clans.
- Several junior but significant clansmen begin to agitate for a greater voice during clan counsels. They include Erik Gottorson and his brothers, Gadek the Hoarse and his wife's sons by the late thegn, Orlik the Strong.
- Gobin the Gentle announces his intent to travel down the Hrad River to visit the cities of the lowlands, perhaps traveling as far as Eneal or Filichet. He can trade items of local make for those luxuries sought by his neighbors. He might even be willing to take others along with him. He will be gone from the middle of spring through the autumn and might even overwinter far from home and return in the following year. See exotic sights and marvel at urban planning! Sample foreign wares and discover indoor plumbing!

Gera Firemaker, wife, female, 24
 Dinwin, son, male, 5
 Mara, daughter, female, 1
 Hede Thegnsdotter, daughter by Orik the Strong, female, 19

Doran Raincaller, bondor, male, 27
 Ellalyn Cornkeeper, wife, female, 22

Gobin the Gentle, Carl, Issaries Gothi, male, 46

Torun Bloodspitter, son, male, 27
 Ana Goodwife, wife, female, 24
 Blantha, daughter, female, 4
 Karel, son, male, 1

Dilyn of the Hearth, daughter, female, 22
 Ablin Scarbrow, husband, male, 22
 Gobin, son, male, 2

Nith the Traveller, son, male, 18

Hurath the Hound, bondor, male, 40
 Uralyn Wanwoman, wife, female, 38
 Gedla Hounddaughter, daughter, female, 17
 Tora Lightstep, daughter, female, 15
 Dor Shakespear, son, male, 13
 Nina, daughter, female, 4

Ruwalf Grainmaster, bondor, male, 33
 Jira Springberry, wife, female, 26
 Winor Underbush, son, male, 7
 Dona Boggirl, daughter, female, 3

Gullin Bloodybreeks, bondor of Carl Hagor, 28

Hagor Stonesplitter, Carl, male, 37

Frina the Lioness, wife, female, 38
 Radlif Woodwright, son, male, 19
 Ina Calfcarry, daughter, female, 16
 Maror, son, male, 7

Nurak Blackaxe, bondor, male, 32
 Witalyn Hidecrafter, wife, female, 32
 Stenor, son, male, 7
 Hella, daughter, female, 4
 Tadin, son, male, 2

Renek Longeye, bondor, male, 26

Hunor Bearfoot, bondor, male, 23

Alwyn, bondor, female, 20

Harag the Strong, Clan Thegn, Orlanth Gothi, 51, male

Wife Birta Oaksister, Ernalda Gothi, female, 45

Odo Bluespear, son, male, 26
 Nara Krondaughter, wife, female, 26
 Nara, daughter, female, 5
 Harag, son, male, 2

Banor Haragson, son, male, 20
 Kaelith Songvoice, wife, female, 19
 Banor, son, male, 1

Lawspeaker Maegin Barebeard, Lankormin Gothi, female, 58

Hlaedor Notman, son, male, 35
 Dira Wizardkiller, daughter, female, 30, Vingan
 Toloth Lightspear, husband, male, 30, Elmali
 Dun Blackgaze, son, male, 6

Walor Woodmaster, bondor, male, 46
 Raelith Manytales, wife, female, 46
 Skunor Onehand, son, male, 24
 Erik Boarhunter, son, male, 21
 Kira Farhills, wife, female, 20
 Lonar, son, male, 2
 Dina of the Feast, daughter, female, 17

Gylath the Rock, bondor, male, 38
 Fin the Mountain, male, 20
 Gera Littlewife, wife, female, 19
 Adror, son, male, 1

Hunin Stickpicker, bondor, male, 35

Mara Manysticks, wife, female, 30
 Hunin the Lesser, son, male, 5
 Guna Mousehusband, daughter, 1

Delin Shieldbearer, bondor, male, 31
 Elda Longhair, wife, female, 30
 Kulyr, daughter, female, 8
 Wedwin, son, male, 4

Relfor Gorpburner, bondor, male, 27

Shin the Smith, bondor, male, 26

Kaedin Yellowteeth, Carl, male, 52

Udalyna Bentback, wife, female, 50
 Barath Coarsetongue, son, male, 27
 Rada Brokebone, wife, female, 25
 Jan, son, male, 5
 Wina, daughter, female, 2
 Kerith the Trapper, son, male, 20
 Orika Noteeth, daughter, female, 17

Wadwin the Fierce, bondor & berserk, male, 30

Inor Plowman, bondor, male, 26
 Erellyn Magicneedle, wife, female, 21
 Kaedin, son, male, 2

Amwin Alone, bondor, male, 22

Malath the Stonecarver, bondor of Carl Gobin, male, 37

Odina Beardaughter, wife, female, 38
 Hede Blackhair, daughter, female, 19
 Abwin Swiftstrider, son, male, 17
 Gylath the Fair, son, male, 15, injured in recent Red Deer raid

Hunin the Short, son, male, 13
 Barad Cursedtongue, son, male, 9
 Inid, daughter, female, 5

Kunan Lazytree, brother, male, 34
 Borga Quickfist, wife, female, 31
 Malath the Quiet, son, male, 12
 Elith Splitlip, daughter, female, 8
 Lora Laughingdaughter, female, 5

Dafin Bearkiller, uncle, male, 62
 Rudla Retemper, daughter in law, female, 30
 Shin Norinson, son, male, 10
 Neleth Norinsdaughter, daughter, female, 6

Finin Burntbeard, bondor, male, 32

Malath Voriofson, bondor of Thegn Harag, male, 31

Aada Longstride, wife, female, 29
 Malath Blacktop, son, male, 6
 Shina, daughter, female, 2

Narikor the Slow, bondor of Carl Borin, male, 25, Hagan & Anja's older brother

Nodin Whitebeard, bondor of Thegn Harag, male, 44

Ara Trufflehunter, wife, female, 40
 Tomin the Mad, son, male, 21, seizures
 Kunon Wrothdeed, son, male, 17
 Hana Vingaspear, daughter, female, 13
 Olith Leastdaughter, daughter, female, 10

Odo Bigear, Carl, male, 42 & Redwalda of Redstone, Carl, Vinga Gothi, female, 38

Birta the Quiet, Daughter, female, 21
 Mador Birdlaugh, Son-in-Law, male, 22
 Their other three surviving children — Tomas (17, Carl Gobin), Odo Redhair (14, Thegn Harag), and Edith (11, King Warador) — are all fostered with other families.

Uwe Manywords, foster son, male, 27
 Anja Vingasister, foster daughter, female, 19

Fin the Bull, Steward, male, 46
 Marana Speartongue, wife, female, 44
 Fin the Younger, son, male, 24
 Herpa Trollclub, wife, female, 24
 Birta, daughter, female, 5



Illustration by Jeffrey Noh.

• Vingans from other clans and tribes arrive to challenge Carla Redwalda for mastery of the sacred site of Redstone. Redwalda is defeated and taken by her clan sisters to the unknown precincts within Redstone. What will be her fate? This jumble of massive, dark crimson boulders is off limits to men. Does Redwalda's husband, Carl Odo, pursue the Vingans? How does the clan respond?

• Those in need of a love potion, fertility charm, or magic for killing werewolves might travel to visit Todla the Raven, wife of Thrantor Loudvoice and well-known witch. What does she require for her skills? What is the true effect of her magic?

• Baran Mountainleaper, clan founder and also known as the Stormbear, returns during the ceremonies of the Sacred Time. He might issue a challenge, alter the clan's relationship with its totem spirit, or call for action against Red Deer clan or Lunar missionaries downriver.



Illustration by Jeffrey Noh.

Odo, son, male, 2

Rador the Tall, bondor, male, 38
Winna the Fair, wife, female, 34
Edith Goldenhair, daughter, female, 14

Kon the Shepherd, bondor, male, 33
Hede, wife, female, 30
Denor, son, male, 11
Irika, daughter, female, 7
Nona, daughter, female, 3
Kona, sister, female, 33

Gimlin Hunchback, bondor, male, 31

Arik Manybraid, bondor, male, 28
Ninith, wife, female, 27

Elda Cowtongue, bondor, female, 25

Ofor Loneman, bondor of Carl Kaedin, male, 34

Bala Farclan, wife, female, 19

Rador Halftought, bondor of Carl Hagor, male, 39

Jiralith Killbird, wife, female, 40
Win Browncomb, son, male, 20
Dina Wearycough, wife, female, 19
Rador, son, male, 1
Wunor Winrace, son, male, 16
Hede Lionscar, daughter, female, 12
Ula Everrun, daughter, female, 7

Huthor Blueface, bondor, male, 27

Gadin the Rooster, bondor, male, 24

Fonor Nohair, bondor, male, 20

Rulf Fivetoe, bondor of Thegn Harag, male, 39, lost left foot to Aldryami

Erika Goldenbraid, wife, female, 36
Erika the Tall, daughter, female, 17
Jan Dogboy, son, male, 14
Abora, daughter, female, 9

Marakor Arrowblind, brother, male, 34, blinded by Aldryami arrows

Banin Bearbeard, bondor, male, 35

Nath Bentteeth, bondor, male, 22

Hurin Shieldbiter, bondor, male, 20

Thadin Biglaugh, bondor of Carl Borin, male, 35

Anja Catclan, wife, female, 34
Shinlin the Climber, son, 14

Donin Winterholly, bondor, male, 24
Felwyn Clawhand, wife, female, 19

Runwun Runwunson, bondor, male, 23

Thranor Loudvoice, bondor of Carl Odo, male, 42

Todla the Raven, wife, female, 42
Nel Nightdancer, daughter, female, 20
Tonor Blackbraid, son, male, 15
Burna Ravensdaughter, daughter, female, 13

Gon Longrunner, brother, male, 36
Birta of the Horse, wife, female, 23
Gon Gonson, son, male, 3

Adward the Fool, brother, male, 29

Dolon Hobblesstep, bondor, male, 47

Girda the Rider, bondor, female, 25

Thudin Choptree, bondor of Carl Kaedin, male, 48

Terelyn the Cursed, wife, female, 47
Fin Farwalk, son, male, 24
Illa Barrenmother, wife, female, 23

Orika the Cursed, daughter, female, 20

Janor the Fair, bondor, male, 22

Ubo Icewalker, bondor of Thegn Harag, male, 28, Uwe's brother

Lela Steadbuilder, wife, female, 26
Dunir, son, male, 7
Jabik, son, male, 4
Rolf, son, male, 3
Kon, son, male, 1

Uro Boarbrave, brother, male, 24
Una the Mute, sister, female, 20
Other clan members include:

Aamik the Lowlander has a small stead near Eneal and leads the last fragment of the clan dwelling in the Osir valley. In the wake of recent trouble, most of his other kin have rejoined the clan in remote hills, but he has chosen to remain, for he feels his fortune is there. He will extend basic hospitality to his clan fellows, should they visit, but he knows they think little of him, and he feels similarly toward them.

Aamik the Lowlander, male, 47, Orlanth gothi
Hwera Grimface, wife, 44
Maraewyn Cidermaker, daughter, 22
Nonor Standfast, son, 19
Borondo Mightyvoice, son, 15
Klomo Houndfriend, son, 10

Kopus Stonebreaker, male, 35, thrall

Sodoria Noteeth, female, 28, thrall

Unius, male, 24, thrall, big, skilled horticulturalist

Secundus, male, 24, thrall, dour, resentful

Tertus, male, 22, thrall, lost tongue in court, hard worker

Quartio, male, 22, thrall, singer, plans to run away someday

Quintius, male, 21, thrall, poorly healed left arm, prisoner from Tarsh

Sextus, male, 21, thrall, scarred face and neck, missing left ear, prisoner from Tarsh

Septus, male, 21, thrall, alert, anxious, sold by family at age 5

Hudo the Fool is a simpleton, who wanders from stead to stead, seeking work and a bit to eat. After a fortuitous rescue of an alynx kitten during the sacred rites, Thegn Harag extended his protection to him, and all clansmen are to obey this ruling, so while Hudo's childish ineptitude and mischief can be annoying, he is usually allowed to stay for several weeks before being tricked or abused into leaving. Hudo is an older man, and it is not even clear if he was born a clan member. Certainly no one claims him as an immediate relative.

Midor the Bard is a middle aged man, who long ago discovered his and the god's gift of music and song. He now wanders throughout the Hill Tribes, where he is widely sought for his skill and repotoire. While he visits his own clan only once or twice each year, his presence is a welcome one.

Mina Nevermother lives at a small stead with a couple of farmhands. She was raped by a broo years ago, and the magic used to cleanse her body of evil and of the vile pregnancy killed all of her own children. Her home is sometimes referred to as the "Saddest Place."

Mina Nevermother, female, 54

Yana Bloodpot, sister, 50

Hwonon Treewatcher, male, 47, bondor, fears overwhelming Redwood attack

Edelgon the Outlaw, male, 27, bondor, hardworker, hiding from Hell Boar clan

"Bladin" Aemeon Koenormon of Alkothe, male, 25, bondor, Irrippi Ontor initiate, student of chaotic zoology, hopes to understand Mina's magical cure

Yinkin, God of Alynxes

Jeff Erwin

The following materials have been recopied from the hands of many scholars in the devotional book of Yinkin Ratcatcher at the Jons-town temple.

This manuscript is dedicated to and protected by the Lord of the Light of Knowledge and the Lord of Alynxes. May he who profanes or damages it walk in the darkness of Ignorance forever and may rats infest his dwelling.

The earliest document in readable form is a fragment of the Jrusteli monograph, "On Cats and their Gods." It is hesitantly dated to the 8th century by the sages, who identify the author as the scholar Tombron the Unkempt, who is known primarily for the edificatory nature of his demise whilst investigating the Tiger Sons of Teshnos, and the nature of Fralar. According to legend the sage's familiar Earrip Muddypaws founded the Manirian subcult of Yinkin Naps-on-Books.

Who was Yinkin?

He is the little brother of Orlanth, and the first of his thanes. All Orlanthi have one thane always, be they stickpicker or king, and that is the little brother. —A Storm Voice from Heortland.

He's the Night Wind. He is the Dark that the Clouds bring, when the cold wet comes. He's the Shadow of Orlanth. When the Wind was born, he took man-form. Yinkin is his dragon-spirit. He sees with secret bright sight, he listens to silence and feels with the wind. Once Yinkin was a fiery, flying creature, the left side of the Storm. But he lost these powers when he died.

When we sleep Yinkin takes the watch. He stands out in the fields and hunts the evil things that creep about, and that's what he listens for the spirit things we cannot see. —So said a Draconic Orlanthi from the Pass

Yinkin is our great grandfather before time. He gave us the secret ways we need to turn shapes and to find food in the winter. —Testimony of a Hsunchen from Kero Fin. (1)

Yinkin is what we call the eye-fire that Elmal's folk share with the alynxes. He's a part of the secret sun, that stays with us until the dawn. That is why the alynx loves to sleep in the warm sunlight. He carries the spark of the dying sun until the morning. —Elmali Priest.

[The document rapidly becomes unreadable, as many brown pawprints discolor several pages. Internal arguments regarding whether the pages should be cleaned magically are countered by the valid contention that they are the holy contributions of Earrip and consequently sacred.]

...The description of Yinkin as Orlanth's Secret Perception is something of a Riddle. It is difficult to answer properly without compromising the modern myth, and revealing a little too much of the lattice-work underneath. Functionally Yinkin is a complex god, despite his obvious attributes.

Orlanth and Yinkin, as brothers sharing the same mother in a primitive setting, are more related, as blood-siblings, than is commonly depicted amongst patriarchal cultures. The male descent is a function of Orlanth's wind-powers not a proven kinship and his maternal descent is clearly a reflection of his cult locus. The Youthful Orlanth is consistently a companion and brother primarily to the Alynx god.

Orlanth is the first of the Storm gods to be human in conscience and personality and the youngest of his generation. His brothers by Umath are said to include Kolat, Urox, Vadrus and Humakt. All are recognizable principally as archetypes or elementals. Orlanth's secret power (as revealed by the tale of his initiation) is the power of comprehension and wisdom. As brother to Orlanth, Yinkin is depicted similarly.

Orlanth and Yinkin are human-like in that they live in houses. They also must go outside the house in order to continue the peaceable life within, and the work they accomplish in the outside is often violent. Yet they have mastered both worlds, having the capacity to be fierce and dangerous outside and loving and social indoors.

The infancy myth of Orlanth is illustrative of the Yinkin as self-reflection and means to wisdom:

"Orlanth's first actions were typical of his life to come. While playing in the Whistling Caves of his mother, Orlanth raised the wind abruptly to see if he could knock down his brother, Yinkin. He did, and blew the shadow cat out of the cave, tumbling down towards the rocks below. Orlanth flew out of the cave

Yinkin's Kin: Small and Medium Cats of Genertela

Yinkin initiates are asked never to kill cats, even wild ones.

They are usually accepted by smaller cats, but must be careful not to antagonize feral or hungry animals. While Basmoli and Fralari tend to laugh at Yinkin initiates, they recognize kinship and female tribespeople can seem overprotective of the Kitten-god.

They say that Yinkin is the son of Fralar, who is the lord of carnivores. Like his father, he seems to have been a busy Tom, and sired many litters.

Alynx *Felis ombrosus*

The classic Shadow Cat, found in barbarian regions of Genertela west of the Wastelands. It is known in the wild and amongst Theyalan settlements, particularly in Dragon Pass. It is larger than the domestic cat, growing to an average of 3 feet long, with a short tail. Notable tufts of dark fur outline and tip the ears. In the Empire and the West, popular fear of the alynx has led to fur bounties.

A strange story from the West says that alynx piss turns into amber, and that's why they bury it, to keep it from greedy humans. Considering that anyone who owns a tom knows better, I suspect this is somebody's idea of a cruel joke on those god-hating sorcerers.

Orlanth and Yinkin play at the Whistling Caves on the slopes of Mount Kero Fin. Illustration by Aries / Armadillo Artworks.



Caracal *Felis caracal*
A variety of wild cat closely related to the Alynx, longer tailed and orange-brown in color. The Caracal is counted as one of the sons of Yinkin. It is not normally domesticated by Praxians and Pentians, where it roams, although a tamed variety exists in Tesh-nos. The Caracal has large, tufted ears.

Cat *Felis sylvestris/domesticus*

The most common wild variety of Cat throughout the whole of Genertela. It is sometimes confused with the Alynx. Theyalans consider Wild Cat and the Domestic Cat as runts of the god's litter. In reality most "alynxes" of the city and the outskirts of the Barbarian Belt are mixed breed descendants of the two. Outside of Dragon Pass the cat is popular with some city folk as more sanitary and manageable than dogs.

The Kralorelan Cat goddess is depicted in this form and is considered a dangerous Trickster.

mouth and leapt through space to the rescue. It was not the first time that Orlanth caused a disaster only to save the situation in the end as well."

Perhaps the strongest point one can raise is the relationship of the Odayla (Storm Hunter cult) to the alynx. Male Orlanthi are entrusted kittens at a young age. This is to educate them in the responsibilities of kinship and love; it serves a similar function as puppies in other cultures. Stress is placed on the dependence and loyalty of the animal in the indoctrination of the child.

A certain role reversal is found in some myths constructed around the maturing Youthful Orlanth, who is now walking the path towards peace and household. The emphasis is placed on Yinkin's desire for stability, for a roof, for a fire, for female companionship and for territory. As with the child/kitten relationship, the kitten matures first. The alien nature of Yinkin's desires disturbs and frightens Orlanth, who is forced to follow his friend to the stead of the Earth Queen. (2)

Conversely, Yinkin reflects the bestial side of Orlanth and his alien powers to his worshippers. The oldest representations of Orlanth from Kerofinela seem to posit a primitive equality between the two. Succeeding cave paintings represent the wildness of Yinkin and the warrior-nature of the Storm god until he becomes a mighty warlord and his friend a dark lion and a father.

The death of Yinkin in the Storm Age froze the alynx god and his children into less than full-grown form. Yinkin and his tribe are thus weakened, like more powerful deities of the Godswar and their children. The death of Yinkin at the hands of the Bad Dogs is in modern form a trope of the devastated stead and the subsequent decision of the Storm god to take the Quest. One Kolating put it to me this way:

"Yinkin is Orlanth's fetch. He must rescue him from the darkness he has created and confront the fact that he has become the Bad Man. The terror which he generates has become more important than the guardianship of his tribe, and therefore he has forgotten his good magic." (3)

The peculiar relationship of Yinkin to Elmal the Sun is part of this construct. The Catseye spell and its felid ancestry is the subject of much debate. Certainly it is used by both cultists of Sun-thane and Alynx-god. But it is the physical representation of the light of the night-sun in the hearts of cats. The paradox of Order as represented by a wild predator is solved by the Cat as night-god. Here the forbidden by day is accomplished. Yinkin re-

verses the rules so life may prosper. He sleeps by day. He is a seducer and an assassin who tortures his prey. He is proud, yet is born in rudeness, worse than the stickpicker.

Ironically the function of Yinkin is absorbed by Orlanth as he ascends to the Throne, along with that of his court. Orlanth is now master of all good skills. The resurrected Yinkin is again a child-god, and a friend to the young Storm, Odayla.

The relationship of Orlanth to his myth (and therefore the Cat as well) has changed as Orlanth and his people learn of new things and new ways of living. The adoption of foreign gods to explicate and detail the Godswar inevitably creates discontinuity as well. Everyone knows that the night-goddess is Xentha (not Yinkin Night-hunter); everyone knows that Fralar is the Great Cat (not Yinkin the Mountain Lion); everyone knows that Yinkin is not a Storm God (and therefore Yinkin Night Wind cannot be!) and finally that Elmal is really Yelmalo anyway (and Yinkin Fire-eyes is a fable?). (4)

(1) No one has seen any Alynx hsunchen since the Dragonkill War. One story is that they all became cats following the fall of the EWF, or that they lost their connection to the Beast rune and became ordinary humans because of a failed heroquest. [copyist's note]

(2) Ernalda was wooed in the "How Peace was Made" tale by Orlanth giving her kittens to guard her grain. This tradition has persisted amongst the farmers of Kerofinela and Esrola, where the suitor traditionally goes to the alynx dens for handsome animals as a wedding gift. [Written on facing page in same hand as original]

(3) The saying that someone is Alynx-eyed means that one can see through solid opaque things; Kolatings use it as a term for Second-sight. When one usually asks why Orlanth's Perception is Yinkin that is the reasoning given by the Wind Priests. Of course the capacity to do so is common to spirits in general. [Marginal note by copyist]

(4) Paragraph added in another hand.

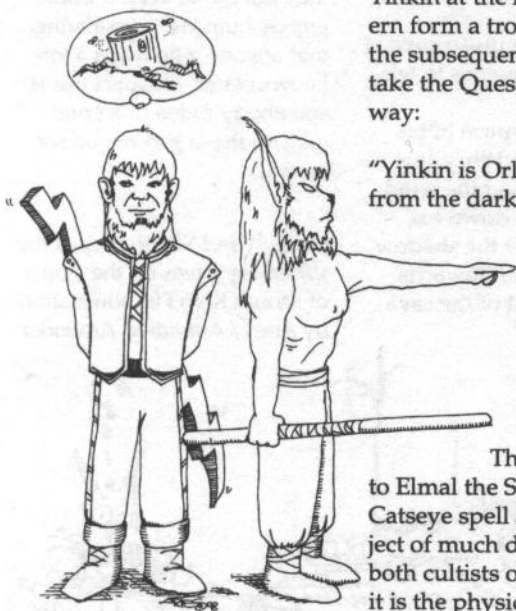
The Aspects of Yinkin

A commentary bound next to Tombron's essay, probably from the Nochet temple scribe Syandra Whiskers (c.1500).

Odayla and Yinkin (as one cult)

Most of the childhood myths concerning Orlanth are repeated with some variation within the frame of Odayla, his kinsman. The focus of the Yinkin subcult within Odayla is twofold: to teach the ways of hunting, and to teach the ways of brotherhood.

The Orlanthi hunting style is peculiar amongst humans in that hunting cats are used. The adult Odaylan often raises alynxes bred



Yinkin often acts as Orlanth's "secret perception." Illustration by Aries / Armadillo Artworks.

for size. As opposed to common domestic cats, the alynx is semi-wild, and is physically stronger and larger than its hybrid cousin. Larger alynxes approach the size of a hunting dog or fawn and are used similarly to hunting cheetahs in Pamaltela. Odaylans never hunt with more than one; alynx hunters are infamous for jealousy and territoriality. Professional hunters who use alynxes are initiates. They are rare in civilized Orlanthi regions, which tend to employ the Voriof cult as the youth-cult in any case. During times of war Odayla initiates and their familiars are used as scouts for raiding parties, or conduct ambushes.

The cult spells are identical to the standard Odayla cult, with the addition of Catseye. This cult is associated with the tribal council of the Orlanthi. Yinkin herein is given the Runes Beast and Death (and is associated with Air).

Yinkin Ratcatcher

The Ratcatcher cult is actually rather new, dating to the first cities of the Theyalan wilderness, although it seems to have a strong tie to the proto-Barntar cult and the Grain Goddesses as well.

Not as formalized as the Odayla-Yinkin relationship, the cult is centered around the cat as a vermin-killer, a solitary activity. The associated cults are Barntar, Ernald and her daughters, Uralda (for her milk), Harst, City founders and boat gods (Dormal, Diros). Argan Argar is a rival cult, because the troll god uses rats as familiars. The traditional gesture (a lay activity) is leaving milk outside Yinkin (with dead rat) statuettes, found in warehouses, barns and streets. Initiates are ratcatchers, a specialized occupation. Since this cult is not formally connected with Orlanth it is found even within Dara Happa, where it is associated with Yinkin's kittens, the Domestic Cat. [Marginal note: similar subcult: Yinkin Naps-on-Books]

Shrines (only found in medium or larger cities) teach Disruption (Kill Rat) and Draw Rodent. Runes are Beast and Death (and associated with Shadow).

The other aspects of Yinkin are much more esoteric. People who choose to follow Yinkin as their primary deity are considered odd at best, unless the society is particularly primitive. The Horned God/Kolating subcult worshipping Yinkin as a pseudo-Hsunchen spirit cult teaches the spell Become Shadow Cat. The existence of this cult is linked to the Orlanth Thunderous cult's ritual. It is associated with the elemental Darkness. Runes are Beast and Magic (and associated with Shadow). A popular myth regarding this form (and one of the common ancestry tales of Orlanthi tribes around Kero Fin) has the shaman-god marry a human woman.

Another cultic remnant is Ancestor Yinkin,

who is associated with Daka Fal, Ty Kora Tek and Orlanth Lightbringer. This is the dead God, ancestor of mortal Hsunchen (now vanished) and Orlanthi tribes. He is symbolized by a cat skull, often of unusually large size. Only descendants and participants in Lightbringer ceremonies worship this god. Runes are Beast and Spirit (and associated with Death). Cult spells are the same as Daka Fal, but summon Cat and Man spirits, who know Yinkin associated spirit magic.

An inserted slip of paper lists some subcults, unfortunately without much detail:

Lucky Yinkin from Hendrikiland

Yinkinsdottir

First Cat from Peloria

The following text is accompanied by many sketches of cats, and was added to the book by an apprentice copyist from the larger Bestiary also in the collection, after the fall of Tarsh (1582).

Appendix: the Cult of Yinkin

Yinkin

Father of Shadow Cats

Yinkin is the son of Kero Fin and Fralar the Predator; he is the half-brother of Orlanth (whose father was Umath), Basmol, father of lions and Telmor, father of wolves. His sister is the Lady of the Wild. He is the Secret Perception of Orlanth, his cunning; who is called the Perceiving Companion.

Yinkin's eccentricities include a distrust of Heler (who one played a joke on him) and an abiding resentment of Vrimak, who got away. He was killed and resurrected either once or several times during the Godswar.

His runes are Beast and Movement. He is associated with Shadow and Luck.

Initiate Membership

Requirements: the candidate must be acceptable to the local acolyte, and have an alynx which he has raised since kittenhood. He must sacrifice a point of POW, and swears an oath never to mistreat felines.

Initiates normally have access only to their subcult's rune spells on a one-use basis. They may be Shamans, but never Sorcerors. Initiates are taught Understand Cat Speech (Perception, 00%) to at least 5%+bonus. Ducks (for some reason) are almost never Yinkin initiates.

Subcults are detailed in the essays above.

Virtues: Lustful, Generous, Proud, Indulgent, Valorous.

Spirit Magic: Coordination, Detect Enemy, Glamour, Mobility, Second Sight, Shimmer, Silence.

Forbidden Spirit Magic: Control [any feline species].

Manul Cat *Felis manul*

A small, domestic sized wild cat, of a uniform, long-haired grey. It is found primarily in Kralorela and its vicinity.

Moon Cat *Felis lunica*

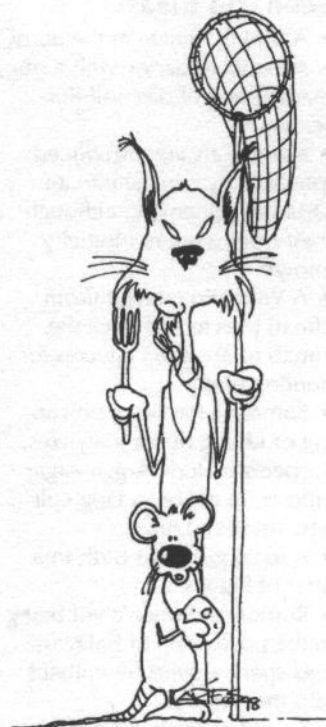
A red-orange breed of domestic cats. They are found in Tarsh now, possibly in an attempt to supplant the half-alynx as a Ratcatcher. They appeared first in Glamour, and are associated with Lunar cults and noblewomen. The association of this breed (and imported tigers) with the Moon is a source of some myth confusion.

Sand Cat *Felis margarita*

A tiny wild cat found primarily in the marginal regions to the Wastelands.

Snow Leopard *Panthera uncia*

A four-foot long wild cat, with a three foot tail, the snow leopard is perhaps one of the most attractive cousins of Yinkin. It is found in the mountains of Shan Shan. Rumors of a snow leopard Hsunchen group are unconfirmed.



Yinkin Ratcatcher is a popular subcult in the cities. Illustration by Aries / Armadillo Artworks.

Alynx Familiars

The Cult of Yinkin provides awakened shadow-cats to Orlanth Wind Lords and Wind Priests and sometimes also to favored associated cults. Awakened cats are considered initiates of Yinkin and Orlanth. They have a nonfixed INT of 3D6, and are acquired only by petitioning Yinkin and Orlanth, either after becoming a Wind Lord or Storm Voice or after completing a religious quest. Although the awakening is considered a form of Divine Intervention, no POW cost is associated, though the petitioner must roll POWx3 on d100 to impress the god sufficiently. Awakened cats are also available to Yinkin acolytes (this is an exception to the general rule printed in *Gods of Glorantha*, p. 20). Whilst the awakening of cats is a cult secret of Yinkin, and a reason it persists, it is not used often, since the alynx god is usually only powerful enough on High Holy Days and Sacred Time.

Scenario Ideas

- A Yinkin initiate in the party is selected to parley with a nomadic band of Basmoli Berserkers.
- Moon Cats are introduced (possibly by Lunars) into an Orlanthi settlement, although their origins are not initially known.
- A Yelmadio convert (from Elmal) tries to convince the Elmalis to abandon alynxes for hunting birds.
- Someone has been poisoning or killing hunting alynxes. Suspects include Argan Argar cultists (in a city); a Dog cultists; Telmori; Ducks.
- A local girl gives birth to a litter of kittens.
- Rumors of Yinkin's tail being in the possession of Balazarings spark a quest by initiates into that region.
- A wild alynx is slaying livestock in a border region. Cultists and foreigners clash over methods.

Acolyte Membership

Requirements: must have 50% in Animal Lore, Summon, Listen, Track and Sneak and 90% in Scan and Jump and may be shamans. Otherwise Standard.

Common Divine Magic: Divination, Mindlink, Soul Sight, Spirit Block, Summon Alynx, Warding, Worship Yinkin.

Special Divine Magic: Become Shadow Cat, Catseye, Identify Scent.

Associated Cults:

Elmal, the Sun

Provides Shield to acolytes.

Eurmal, the Trickster

Gave Catnip to Yinkin. Yinkin initiates are affected by the drug as if cats. This gives the user the effects of the spirit magic spell Second Sight, but also the effects of Befuddle.

Hykim & Mikyh, Beast Parents

Provide the recognition of the Hsunchen. Hsunchen react to initiates and acolytes as if they were Hsunchen. This does not entail friendship.

Kero Fin, the Mountain

Provides Absorption (one-use) to acolytes.

Lady of the Wild

Provides Fear (one-use) to acolytes.

Mahome, the Hearth-fire

Provides Ignite (the spirit-magic spell) free to acolytes.

Odayla, the Hunter

All Yinkin hunters are Odayla initiates (not vice versa). Non-Yinkin initiates amongst Odaylans are required to aid alynxes when possible.

Orlanth, the Elder Brother

Orlanth gives Darkwalk to his brother's acolytes. Nearly all Yinkin acolytes and initiates are initiates of Orlanth.

Uralda, the Cow

Provides Speak with Herd Beasts to acolytes.

Friendly Cults: Inora, Kolat, Maran Gor, Xentha

Neutral Cults: Annilla, Heler, Yelmadio

Hostile Cults: Argan Argar, Brother Dog, Golod, Telmor, Vrimak

Enemy Cults: Gagarth

[where varied from Orlanthi standard]

Yinkin Spells

Become Shadow Cat

3 points, touch, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

The caster retains all old characteristics and skills except SIZ, which is normally 6. Abilities and skills are adjusted accordingly: all Manipulation skills excluding natural weapons are reduced to DEXx5%; base skill percentages are Dodge 50%, Hide 75%, Sneak 90%, Claw 40%, Bite 30%, Rip 80%.

Catseye

1 point, touch, duration 12 hours, nonstackable, reusable

For 12 hours the spell affects the target's eyes

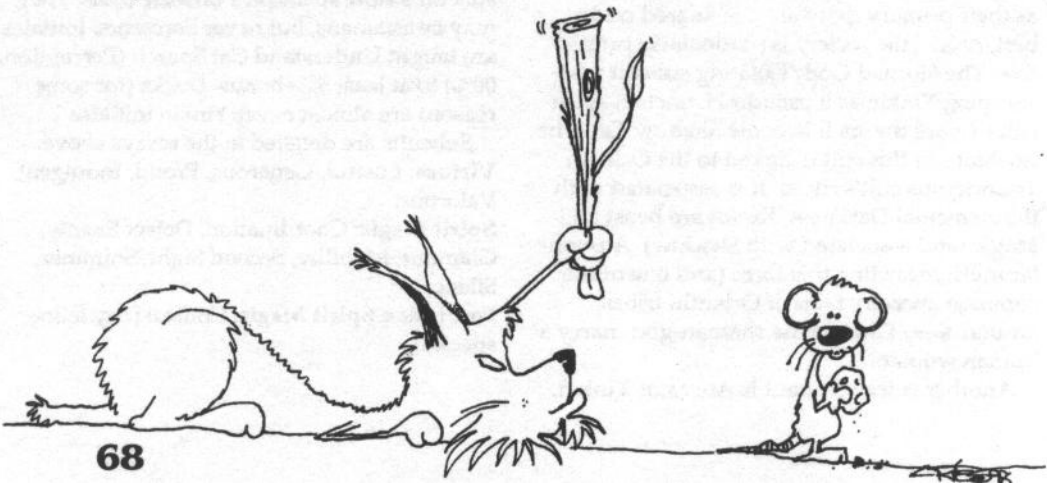
so he can see by any amount of available light. If there is a complete absence of light, he cannot see; if light from a dim spark exists, he can see normally. Eyes under this spell reflect light as do a cat's.

Identify Scent

1 point, ranged, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

This spell enables the target to perfectly identify the nature of any familiar scent he encounters while under the spell's influence. It does not give range or direction, just nature. If the scent is of a substance or entity that the target has never before encountered, he only knows that an unknown scent has been encountered.

Illustration by Aries / Armadillo Artworks.



Fonrit: A Player's Introduction

David Dunham

Mythology

Artmal, a son of Annilla the Blue Moon, once ruled the land, but he was maimed by invading storm gods. Wounded, Artmal could not stand against the later invasion of Chaos.

Huradaz, the God of Gods, sent a group of deities, the Council of Gods, on a quest to bring back order and truth. Their circumnavigation of the world is called the Circle of Light, and restored the world and made it the way it is today.

Garangordos was the mighty hero who brought new gods and a new way of life to Fonrit. Although he was murdered, he is still one of the most powerful deities in Fonrit.

History

At the Dawn, Fonrit was occupied by the Veldang remnants of the Artmali Empire.

In 500, Garangordos the Cruel and his followers arrived from Laskal, and enslaved the Veldang. Garangordos was killed by his brother Jokot. His seventeen brothers and sisters killed Jokot in turn, dividing the land between them.

During the Second Age, the Middle Sea Empire came to dominate Kareeshtu in the north, and influenced the entire land.

Afadjann was founded in 921.

Fonrit was hit hard by the Closing, suffering disasters as early as 942 and as late as 1112. During the Closing, an influx of people fleeing the Yranian Leapers came to Fonrit.

The Cult of Silence spread from Umathela, and engulfed Fonrit in 1240. It was renamed the Land of Silence. The Clamorers ended the Silence in 1313.

Afadjann conquered much of Umathela in the 1300s, but was gradually thrown out by a combined force of barbarians and Aldryami.

In 1587, the Vadeli fleet conquered Kareeshtu, but the Vadeli were defeated in 1594.

People

The people of Fonrit have blue, black, or white skin, as well as a mixture thereof. The black Agimori make up most of the ruling class, or *masarin*, while the blue Veldang are the most wretched of the slaves.

Slavery is the most important aspect of society. About 70% of the population are slaves, and everyone, free or not, is ranked by how many slaves they are allowed to own. It's possible, though difficult, to gain your freedom.

Most people live by intensive agriculture, frequently irrigated. Millet is the primary crop. They also raise goats, pigs, and cattle. Fishing and seaweed-harvesting are important on the coast.

Much of Fonrit is divided into city-states, though they are usually subordinate to a single city and form de facto, if frequently changing, kingdoms. Afadjann and Kareeshtu are among the most important political units. Banamba is subject to Kareeshtu. Mondoro is a wild land; its people have their own language and culture. In times of severe trouble, a Confederation of Fonrit unites the entire land, but this has never lasted long.

Many of the cities are quite large — Garguna has over 100,000 inhabitants. In the countryside, slaves live in small villages, and are owned by the village headman (himself owned by a city masarin).

Political and religious factions abound. Masarin are also divided into the "Oldster" or "Renewed" ancestries, who hold differing attitudes towards their slaves.

Masarin marriages are often polygamous. Most slave marriages are not legally recognized.

The masarin worship the 34 Hero-Tyrants, led by Garangordos the Cruel. Others include Darleester the Noose, Ikadaaz the Torturer, Calari the Jumping Leopard Man, Ompalam the Lord of Slavery, and Evukindu the Warrior.

The Council of Gods are still worshipped, as is their enemy Selarn the Thief.

A pantheon of earth deities is mostly worshipped in rural areas. They include Ernamorla the Millet Mother, Ennug the Digger, and Ankimdu the Farmer.

There's some practice of Malkionism, including the Siwalite Sisterhood who specialise in birth manipulation, and the hedonistic fanatics of St. Ebbesh.

The deities of the Artmali and other enemies of Garangordos still receive some worship by slaves; they are known as the Oppressed Ones.

Pamalt's pantheon was imported into Katele, and his worship has spread. Northern deities are also known in a few cities.

The legal system is very complex, and varies by city. In addition, there is an intricate system of customs, especially towards the top of society.

Cities are connected by roads, and there is much trade by land and water. Money is rare, but beads representing slaves and even family members are often used in place of currency.

There is a specialized class of soldiers, a few of whom are mounted on horses or elephants. Spears and swords are the most popular weapons. Well-equipped troops have chainmail armor.

The Land

Fonrit has a semitropical climate, which allows two harvests a year. There are frequently terrible typhoons at the end of the year.

To the west are the Aldryami forests of Umathela. Interspersed with the brown and green elves are their human allies the Umathelans, a barbaric people who worship storm gods and practice primitive agriculture. The Vadeli live far to the west.

The western coast is inhabited by the city-states of the Malki. They use sorcery, though many also worship pagan gods. They are often profitable trading partners.

Across the Marthino Sea is Kimos, a wasted land where humans fight the Gorgers.

To the east is Laskal, inhabited by yellow elves and primitive humans. It is covered with tropical forests.

Further east is the Errinoru Jungle, an impassible land inhabited by yellow elves.

To the south are endless plains inhabited by primitive Agimori tribesmen.



This short introduction is intended as a handout for players. A great deal of additional information follows, but this should be enough to create a character and start playing.

The Garangrapha

Martin Hawley

Food laws

Several passages cover food taboos, and characterize as ingratitude the refusal of good things provided by the sea, land and air. Garangordos forbade the eating of snails, worms and seafood by the Veldang, a stricture extended to include all non-masarin by Soman II. Additional prohibitions were developed by various holymen and leaders, often to hide shortages or poor trade dealings in certain goods. The millet prohibition of 1072 by the ruler of Kafeamoro, however, failed abysmally after enterprising Garguna merchants handed out free millet boza in the streets, causing riots and the downfall of the city Ras.

Drinking of alcohol

The drinking of alcohol was seen as required by nearly all the Seventeen Walis. Excess was recognized as evil by a handful of puritans. Non-masarin drink mostly unfermented millet boza. Masarin consume palm sap wine and foreign wines, often in great orgiastic parties. Abstinence from drinking of any alcohol is the paramount stricture of followers of Lalla Mimouna.

Afadjann

Simon Bray

History

After the Dawn Fonrit was home to the Veldang, slate-blue skinned survivors from the fallen Artmali Empire who owned ornate boats and worshipped crippled gods.

In 500 S.T. Garangordos the Cruel entered Fonrit from Laskal. His armies invoked ancient rites to enslave the Veldang. Those who resisted were slain. Garangordos then began his near-divine period of rule. The laws, religion and culture of Fonrit were defined in the *Garangrapha*. In 585 Garangordos was slain by his treacherous brother, who sought 'Freedom.' The brother was then murdered and dissected by Garangordos' seventeen siblings. Garangordos gained immortality and Fonrit was divided under seventeen rulers. The land remained divided throughout history, although the 'Confederation of Fonrit' does reappear against cultural foes, and when Garangordos is invoked.

In 600 the Jrusteli and God Learners arrived

in Pamaltela. The northerners settled mostly in Vralos, but their traders and missionaries were welcomed into the coastal regions of Fonrit. Foreign settlers were integrated into Fonritan culture and their deities were occasionally adopted as a relief from the oppressive native gods. In 654 the woods of Vralos were destroyed by God Learners, and their colony fully established.

In 921 Hombori Tondo was founded. Afadjann, the political state was born. Kanem Dar became the center of the state and wars of establishment were fought with its neighbors.

The Closing hit Fonrit in 957 when the Pillars of Water formed in the Kareeshtu straits. The Invasion of Water followed in 958. The Jrusteli were struck a terrible blow by the event, and their already quarrelsome city-states began to crumble. The God Learners were destroyed by the Invisible Fleet in Koraru Bay. Garangordos was summoned and the Confederation of Fonrit reappeared in an attempt to expand Fonrit's lands. The unity failed and Fonrit collapsed into civil war.

The Cult of Silence appeared in Umathela in 1137 and began to spread across Pamaltela. Silence engulfed Fonrit in 1240, and it was renamed the Land of Silence. The city of Sarro in Afadjann became dominant and seized the country in 1290, but was opposed and assaulted by the Clamorers, ending the Period of Silence in 1313.

The Tsanyano movement appeared in 1300, inspired by the reformations of the Katele Purists and Women's Revolts of 1202. Internal conflict arose between the Tsanyano and the Oldsters, or Bolgaddi.

The Yranian Leapers appeared and dominated Fonrit between 1319-1331. Little is remembered of the period, but the Yranians appeared to have unique lunar beliefs. Faladje became the capital of Fonrit for the duration of their rule.

In 1322 the Confederation of Fonrit reappeared to invade Umathela. This ignited the eight Season Wars between the Fonritans and the Elves of Umathela. The wars continued until 1458 with a decisive Elvish victory. The Vralos woods expanded, but the Afadjanni still dominated Tortrica until 1478 when they were finally expelled.

The title Jann first came into use in 1518. The first Jann, Istam I, explored the inner secrets of Ompalam and returned with Darleester the Noose. He used the Rite of Compulsion to expand his territory. The Janns continued to rule Afadjann with their unique form of government (for a Jannist perspective of later history see "The Fortunate Strangulations" in *Questlines 2*).



Astamanyx the Cruel, Jann of Afadjann. Illustration by Simon Bray.

The Vadeli arrived in Fonrit in 1587. They hailed the opening of the seas and brought with them the cult of Dormal. However they demanded expensive tributes and when the cities resisted they were sacked. In the resulting Vadeli Coast Wars the Fonritans and Umathelans were conquered. The 'Brown Years' lasted until 1594 when the Vadeli fleet was destroyed at Oenriko Rock.

In 1613 Astamanyx became Jann of Afadjann. He replaced his insane uncle, and became one of the most stable Janns for generations. To gain his position he made several alliances with Kareeshtu, which he has since broken. He usurped his nephew Ovgormangis and forced him into exile. He is now making many political reforms to strengthen his country, and Afadjann's neighbors are concerned about his plans. Astamanyx is taking a deep interest in religious matters and his followers have undergone several heroquests. Prophets are once again appearing in the streets of the cities and the terrifying words of Acac the Revivifier are again being extolled.

Description

A warm and pleasant semitropical climate pervades the whole of Afadjann. The area is noted to be blessed by the sun, the sea and the earth, for it is one of the few regions of Glorantha that can support two harvests a year. The terrible Keraun Winds lash Fonrit throughout the typhoon season. These typhoons can persist until Sacred Time. The storms are only driven away when the doldrums rapidly expand west of Fonrit in the meteorological event called the 'Clearburst.'

Fonrit is a varied land, which can be divided into four distinct regions. In the north, along the Dashomo coast is a strip of narrow and discontinuous coastal plain that extends inland and gradually rises into rolling hills. Where deforesting for farming has not occurred, there are lush woods of pine, cedar, cork oak and a rich undergrowth of perfumed shrubs. The islands of the Poysida Strait are the next region, they to are surrounded by coastal plains, but the hinterlands are mountainous and hilly, useful only for the farming of goats. The principal river of Afadjann is the Gargos. Its wide valley is verdant, and the Afadjanni have turned its most northerly stretch into the arable heart of the country. Its banks are thick with farmers growing millet, Afadjann's staple grain. The rough and wild hills of the south that border Mondoro are the final region. These wild hills are overgrown with vegetation, and act as a physical border between the Afadjanni and the Mondorans. They are hotly contested.

The cities of Afadjann are wonders to behold. Great temples and bejeweled palaces rise up from amongst the squalid fetid slums of the slaves. Massive walls surround each city, and

great bronze gates prevent enemies from entering and slaves from escaping. Every city has at least one great market, at which can be purchased exotic goods and slaves from all over Glorantha. The coastal cities have developed rapidly since the Opening, and possess ports unrivalled along the Pamaltelan coast. The air is perfumed with choking incense, rich spices and human sweat.

To the west of Afadjann are the woodlands of Umathela and the city of Tortrica, an ancient enemy. To the southwest is the Aldryami stronghold of Vralos, which has sought to invade Afadjann in times past, and still sends out hunting parties. To the south is rugged Mondoro, a theocracy of Fonrit, which is avoided and deemed evil. To the southeast lie the rough highlands of Marana, inhabited by barbarous shepherds who frequently raid the coast lands. To the east is the Empire of Golden Kareeshtu which controls the greatest navy in Fonrit, and is an enemy thanks due to the current Jann's trickery. Finally to the north is the sea, ruled by Terthinus the mer-king, a powerful malasp chieftain who extorts taxes of sea metal from those that cannot avoid his sea serpent guards.

Inhabitants and Culture

Fonrit is one of Glorantha's few multiracial cultures. Agimori, blue skinned Veldang and Warerans are all represented, as well as a substantial group of mixed race folk known as Torab. It is mostly the Agimori that make up the ruling classes and the Veldang who form the most wretched of Afadjann's slaves. Among non-slaves, society is divided into two kinds of people, dependent upon whether or not the family's eldest female is of Bolgaddi (Oldster) or Tsanyano (Renewed) ancestry. Bolgaddi are traditionalist in their attitudes, they are fierce and relentless. They judge their lives and those of their servants by harsh standards. The Tsanyano are liberated, allowing slaves to marry, buy their 'freedom' or have limited religious choice. In modern Afadjann the Tsanyano movement seems predominant. In truth the concept of 'Freedom' is an anathema to most Fonritans, including the Afadjanni. Fonritans believe that free will and freedom was the cause of the Gods War and the introduction of Chaos into the world. The Gods of Fonrit agreed to lose their freedom to save the world. Instead the people of Fonrit believe in 'position' within their society. The higher an individual's 'position,' the greater the flexibility of their actions within the constraints of society's laws. Thus the lowest slave may appear to be unable to act without the consent of his master, and the Jann is ruled only by the dictates of the gods.

The Afadjanni are highly civilized. They have developed an intricate system of laws, whose complexity is unrivalled in Glorantha.

Glossary

Agimori - The black skinned people of Glorantha. They bear many similarities to the Negroid races of Earth.

Bolgaddi - An 'Oldster' slave owner who adheres to the doctrine that "to live is to suffer" and judges himself by the same harsh standards that he applies to his slaves.

The Calari - Slang used to define the bodyguard and secret police of the Jann. Derived from the god Calari the Man-hunter.

Dorradi - Agimori nomads from the lands of Jolar and southern Pamaltela.

Del - The ruler or rulers of a city state.

Ebbeshite - A fanatical worshipper of the Holy Prophet Ebbesh. A radical sect of Malkionism with a hedonistic doctrine.

Exigers - A race of wild mountain men who specialise in magical combat.

Garangorodos the Cruel - The founder of Fonrit, and one of its most important religions.

The Garangrapha - The most holy book of Fonrit which contains all the knowledge, laws and wisdom of the great hero Garangordos.

horse - A very rare and highly prized mount.

imizighen - a "free" commoner.

Jann - ruler of Afadjann.

kadam - The lowest form of slaves. Literally a slave who is owned by a slave.

kora - A great sword. The traditional weapon of eunuch harem guards.

masarin - A member of the powerful plutocratic ruling class.

palam - The soul. Believed to be divided into seventeen pieces. The manipulation of the palam is the strongest form of Fonritan magic.

Afadjanni thinkers have engineered awe-inspiring buildings and practice arts and sciences virtually unknown to the rest of Glorantha. Afadjanni are also cruel. Society is based upon slavery and the tyrannical upper classes are supported by a huge class of miserable and wretched slaves. However their cruelty is mild compared to other countries and an Afadjanni slave is often better treated than a Kareeshtan drudge or Loskalmi peasant.

In Afadjann farms, fisheries, and all manner of businesses are all worked by slaves, who are owned by their overseers. In rural regions the slaves are organized into villages called sowuks. These are governed by the headman who owns the overseers, who in turn is the property of a masarin. Several slave families typically live together in cramped adobe barracks with only the headman and his overseers living in separate housing. A similar system exists within the cities, with slaves being housed away from the master when not working. A separate group of 'non slaves' are found in Afadjann. These are former slaves who have bought their 'freedom' or nobles that have fallen from power. They till the land and own small holdings, but pay heavy taxes for the privilege. There are also groups of 'non slaves' that although poor have hereditary rights to 'position.' These include the wild goat folk of Kanem Dar. However there still exists a hierarchy amongst these people based upon the number of slaves owned.

Two types of slaves exist. The 'yad' is a highly specialized slave, such as a eunuch or handmaid. They are typically trained from birth in their position and hold a fierce loyalty to their master, by whom they are directly owned. The second is the 'kadam,' lowly slaves who are themselves owned by slaves.

Afadjann is densely populated, with a population of about 3,500,000.

The Afadjanni are exotic. Their lives are ordered by complex traditions, rites and taboos. The rich dress in luscious silks, live in jewelled palaces and possess great harems. Powerful eunuchs protect their masters, while wretched Kadam slaves sing of Garni Muk the Free Place and plot to escape from their flea-gnawed hovels. In the rugged mountains of Kanem Dar live the wild goatherds who cannot be tamed. In Siwah El the Sisterhood sends forth its curses and magic against good men. City streets throng with jewelled hand-slaves going about their master's business, rich caravaneers with strange foreign slaves and the bellow of pack-laden titanotheres. In the clear crystal waters of the Poysida Straits the Jann's dashing corsairs use their guile to outwit the oppressive mer-king's taxes. In dark alleyways the whisper of treason is heard from the covered lips of the Jann's enemies, the holy thieves of Selarn or vile profiteering Vadeli. Afadjann is a land rich with adventure.

Politics

Afadjann is one of the most powerful states within the politically divided land of Fonrit. It has an ancient plutocratic heritage, derived from teachings of the Fonrit's founder Garangordos the Cruel. Like all Fonritan regions, Afadjann is little more than a confederacy of city-states brought under the rule of one individual, namely the Jann of Afadjann. As a country Fonrit is divided. Political power changes hands frequently and allegiances are easily broken. Thus, the borders of each state fluctuate constantly. This is certainly true of Afadjann. Even within the greater whole of Afadjann independent city states strive against the rule of the Jann.

The Jann is the highest authority within Afadjann. He rules from the sacred capital of Hombori Tondo, as have his ancestors for the last 700 years. The government of Afadjann is one of the most stable in all Fonrit, having survived seventeen dynasties. The Jann is attended to by a multitude of ministers, viziers and advisers from the masarin caste who carry out his every command. The word of the Jann is absolute, and is enforced by his powerful and organized military, his deadly secret police and through the rites of Darleester the Noose.

The Jann controls the rulers of Afadjann's city-states through his spell of compulsion. The nature of these rulers depends upon the city in question. Some have warlords or patriarchs, other have councils formed from the many internal city factions. The city rulers are always referred to as 'The Del,' no matter their nature. After the Jann, it is the Del that control the greatest wealth, but all must pay homage directly to him. Those Del that refuse the Jann's rule soon find themselves ascending the Tower of Compulsion in Hombori Tondo to face their deaths, while their officially sanctioned replacements seize their palaces.

The masarin or Masters are the wealthy upper class of Afadjann society. They are the servants of the Jann. They form the core of the priests, sorcerers, merchants, warlords and politicians. All are grotesquely wealthy, holding onto their amassed fortunes with ruthless pragmatism. The masarin have within their class an almost invisible hierarchy, based upon traditional positions and promises granted by the Jann himself. They to enhance their political position within the court of the Jann by whatever means they can, seeking ideally to replace the overlord with themselves. The Jann however keeps the masarin occupied by constantly using sacred tradition and divinely guided politics to keep them in conflict with each other. The result is bloody conflict, vicious assassination, and an incredibly security-conscious social class. Each city and town may hold as many as a dozen different powerful

Ras - A Kareeshtan noble.

Shakh - A Kareeshtan tyrant.

Silence, The Cult of - A strange religious movement that dominated Fonrit. It was destroyed by the Clamorers, but some adherents still exist.

The Six-Legged Empire - An ancient culture of horse-riding invaders that once dominated Pamaltela.

sowuk - A farm which is worked by slaves.

titanotheres - A gigantic relative of the rhinoceros, one of the many strange beasts of burden found in Fonrit.

Torab - folk of mixed Veldang and Agimori origin.

Tsanyano - A 'Renewed' slave owner who has liberal attitudes, allowing slaves to marry, buy their freedom and practice limited religious choice.

Veldang - A race of blue skinned people, Their skin is not bright blue, but the colour of slate. They controlled the powerful Artmali empire, the last remnants of which disappeared before the Dawn.

Wareran - The white skinned people of Glorantha. The Fonritan Warerans have dark hair and eyes.

walis and wazirs - Saints and prophets.

Vadeli - Brown or red skinned immortals, renowned for their corrupt and evil ways.

yad - A hand slave. Owned directly by a masarin, often born into service and fiercely loyal.

yataghan - The traditional sword of the masarin. A scimitar-like weapon.

Yranian Leapers - A group of strange religious fanatics, dedicated to moon worship. They once controlled Fonrit, but may now be extinct.

factions contending for power.

Within Fonrit, power is slaves and land, and the more of these commodities that are owned, the greater the individual's power. One of the greatest differences between Afadjann and the rest of Fonrit is the number of slaves that a man can own. This is strictly regulated by the Jann, who in turn proclaims by the divine right of Garangordos and Darleester the Noose to own every man within his country. It is notable that the most common trade for yad slave is as an accountant or lawyer on behalf of their masters. Training in assassination is also very highly valued.

Religion

Afadjann has a vast multitude of deities that are traditionally divided into five groups: the Hero-Tyrants, the Council of Gods, the World Spirits, the Traditional, and the Oppressed Ones. There are also a number of imported foreign religions which have developed followings such as the unorthodox Malkionism of Ebbeshal and a primitive Orlanth pantheon in Sarro. These deities are all worshipped alongside each other, and an individual may make sacrifices to many different deities within a year. Only a limited minority of the populace will devote themselves to one deity, but when they do it is done with immense religious fanaticism.

Worship takes place within great vaulted temples, lead by complex hierarchies of priests or within the lavishly decorated shrines of the masarin. Slaves are led before the statues of their masters to sacrifice their power, or let their blood in the fields to the hungry goddesses of agriculture.

Hero-Tyrants

The Hero-Tyrants are worshipped only by the masarin. They are a large group of deities and heroes, thirty-four in all. It is the temples of the Hero-Tyrants that dominate the public squares of Afadjann. Garangordos the Cruel is the leader of this group. He was the founder of Fonrit and conqueror of the Veldang, he instigated the laws, traditions and rites of Fonritan life. He was then murdered by his siblings and ascended into immortality. When Fonrit faces a great foe, such as the elves, then a great magician may summon Garangordos to unify Fonrit against the threat.

By virtue of his political significance Darleester the Noose is the most powerful religion in Afadjann. His spell of Compulsion maintains order with the country. The Jann is the highest authority within the cult and only he can teach the life long duration spell, to those already under his compulsion. The spell of compulsion is renewed throughout Afadjann on the Darleester's High Holy Day, called Black Knot Cord Day.

Ikadaaz the Torturer is another popular

Hero-Tyrant. His skills and spells are admired by judges and truth seekers alike. Calari the Jumping Leopard Man is the hunter, his worshippers are the Jann's police force responsible for hunting down sedition, treachery or revolution. Ompalam is the great god of subjugation, the lord of slavery and bureaucracy. It is his magic that centralizes the Jann's power. Evukindu is the warrior god of Afadjann, a powerful deity of death, separation and loyalty, his worshippers are typically fanatical eunuchs. The corsair god is Um-Oradin, who stole the secrets of Artmali ships and taught them to his followers. The cult of Um-Oradin almost became extinct during the closing but is now finding new vitality.

The Council of Gods

The Council of Gods are the great gods who circumnavigated the universe to bring back order and truth. The quest called the Circle of Light ended the War of the Gods, and caused the creation of the world as it is today. Huradaz the God of Gods sent them upon their quest. He gave the gods Free Will and then took it from them when they abused it. His servants are associated with light, fire, justice, centralization and social order. The Sun is called Fida-Is, giver of light, the spiritual manifestation of Huradaz. Azlod is fire, the physical manifestation of Huradaz's vengeance. Votuman is Good Thought, Seer of Foresight. Savasha is Excellent Order, the Way of Rule. Dangva is Desirable Power, responsible for the manifestations of Huradaz. Vagomet is Divine Might who is the executioner of the gods. Amiti is Fanatical Devotion, the Teacher of Faith. Bitiat is the Preserver of Life. Etat is Immortality, the Life Keeper. Chronspa is Separation who divided the worlds. Many of these deities were mistaken by the God Learners to be Yelmic in origin, but they were unable to find any mythical links to confirm this. The Hero-Tyrants often replace the functions of the Council of Gods and are more accessible.

Selarn the thief is a particular enemy of the Council of Gods. Throughout their heroquest he robbed them, tricked them, and attacked them. This cult is popular with those who seek to overthrow the ruling government, or just want to be bandits, outlawed from society.

The World Spirits

This is a naturalistic pantheon of ancient earth goddesses, powerful land spirits, fishing spirits, environmental entities and community spirits. These are worshipped throughout Afadjann society, but more so in rural regions. The most developed religion within this pantheon is that of Ernamorla, Goddess of Millet. Her temples litter the countryside and her strange headless statues are found in every field and sowuk. Ennug the Digger and Ankimdu the Farmer are also highly respected.

Ernamorla

Statues of Ernamorla, the goddess of millet, are made with a concave depression instead of a head. The hole in the neck is filled with sacrifices: water in Sea season, millet in mid Fire season (first harvest), blood in late Fire season, millet in late earth season (second harvest), and blood the rest of the year.

Suggested Fonritan Adventurer Backgrounds

- Members of a masarin house that is about to collapse. The family needs to gain political power by any means. Assassination, the Quarry Games, piracy and blackmail are all legitimate plays.
- Powerful slaves of an unusual masarin. For example servants of a far-ranging trader or slaver, the body guards of a powerful political figure or the Headman and overseers of a titanother farm.
- Corsairs in the service of the Jann. Roam the seas looking for plunder, defend Hombori Tondo from the Kareeshtan war fleets, or seek to evade the watery minions of Terthinus to bring a precious cargo home.
- Slaves on the run. The members of a slave revolt seeking Garni Muk the Land of Freedom. Calari hunters are the constant enemies of such characters.
- Soldiers in the service of the Jann. Travel the length of the country to defend it from treason and foreign invasion.

It is also highly possible to play in Fonrit as a foreigner. The local religious/political constraints often mean that it is difficult for Fonritans to act as they wish, so they hire and empower foreign mercenaries to do the job for them

Afadjanni Names

Masarin Males

Astamanyx, Alyralhan, Alexahmed, Azmurad, Bencali, Ovgormangis, Nomas, Soman, Istam, Tafamus, Jamadar, Halahadim, Isamanyx, Jumkapan, Somadari, Alhancali, Jarrhadim, Rogaman, Ovgorcali.

Masarin Females

Ernergastor, Jalenga, Nefreti, Seki, Saluwi, Ernecala, Chaleteris, Bayjabel, Djelma, Masuk, Ropurmara, Deliyawa, Karen-tara, Baratrish, Myrafredi, Salelan, Nefleteris, Jalentara, Faheyma, Pulalenga.

Slave Males

Adunki, Gungar, Hallim, Laman, Fasir, Takem, Marluk, Shovu, Mapak, Dagan.

Slave Females

Djel, Horep, Jala, Linea, Tasi, Suwol, Ersi, Bini, Koli, Etap, Pana, Vumok, Birep, Selim.

Running Away

Kareeshtu is much worse than Afadjann—the Tsanyano liberationist movement is nearly nonexistent there. Slaves are regularly beaten to death, tortured, or fed to the titano-theres. In fact the only people worse than the Kareeshtans are the Mondorons, the Maranans, the Aldryami, the Tortricans and the Vadelis. So if you run away from your master, where are you going to go?

Their statues grovel and stand respectively at Enamorla's side.

The Traditional

These are the traditional gods of the Doradi, imported into Fonrit by the Katele Purists in 1202. They have gradually grown in popularity. The most common deities worshipped in this group are Pamalt the Earth King, Yammorla and Sikasso the Old Women, Vangono the Spear, Nyanka the Midwife, Aleshmara the Mother-in-law and Cronisper the Wise.

The Oppressed Ones

These are the gods of the slaves. Some are the former deities of the Veldang, bound into slavery. Others are ancient enemies of Garangordos, now bound to serve. Some are ancient spirits of the land, stripped of power. The Oppressed Ones deities are unpopular in Afadjann and are becoming rarer with the increasing strength of the Tsanyano Movement. Amongst this group are Artmal, Annilla and Tentacule.

People of Note

Jann Astamanyx - The present Jann of Afadjann. He previously ruled the small city of Teshvoros after being exiled from the capital by his murderous father Azmurad II. Astamanyx's brother, insane Istam, ruled in his place, and his nephew Ovgormangis was to follow. However, Astamanyx seized the throne by force. He was aided by Kareeshtan money and ships, a debt that he has not repaid and which is causing tension between the countries. Unlike many of his recent predecessors, Astamanyx seems to have great strength of mind, and has already begun to be known as 'The Cruel,' a great compliment.

Ovgormangis - The prince of Afadjann. The rebel son of Istam II was exiled to the Mondoro wilderness by his uncle. He now dwells within the wicked city of Barueli with the famed High Priest of the Hungry Goddess. Ovgormangis and his supporters plot, spy and stir rebellion against the Jann. Many recent slave revolts have been traced to Ovgormangis.

The Sorceress of Siwah El - A potent force. She leads a sisterhood of feminist magicians, who preach strict morality and forbid ownership of the opposite sex. The Sorceress rules Siwah El as an independent state, but the Jann seeks to absorb it into Afadjann.

Terthinus, Voice of the Deep - A violet skinned mer-king of the Malasp who extorts taxes from all who cross his waters. The Jann pays regular token tributes to the sea, but rewards highly any captain willing to try and outwit Terthinus.

The Jann of Thieves - The shadowy ruler of Sarro. He leads a massive gang of bandits and thieves that have led a reign of terror over western Kareeshtu. Astamanyx has told the

leader of the Kareeshtans that he is not responsible for the Jann of Thieves. Some say that the Jann of Thieves is the high priest of Selarn, and has sworn to cause the downfall of Kareeshtu.

Places of Interest

Dashomo Sea - The sea that surrounds Fonrit, Jrustela and Kumanku. These waters are dominated by an underwater tyrant called Terthinus, Voice of the Deep. The Malasp king and his followers have been demanding heavy taxes from all ports and ships in the region.

Ebbeshal (Large City) - An independent city-state which is home to the peculiar Malkioni sect known as the Transcendental Church of St. Ebbesh. The church is so minor that it has not as yet been labelled heresy by the mainstream Malkioni. The doctrine of the church teaches that mundane life is without worth and that Solace can be entered by anyone, therefore any action is excusable. Several splinter sects have developed within Fonrit such as the Holy Hedonists of Ebbesh and the Divine Flagellants of the Saints. The actual city is fortified and is defended by the fanatical brothers of the religion, who of course will fight to the death. The Jann appears to wish to absorb Ebbeshal into Afadjann, but so far the church resists.

Faladje (Large City) - Former the capital of the Yranians. The city is notable for having the greatest temple to Fida-Is in all Fonrit. The Sun god is worshipped here in all his many forms and Fonritan come here throughout the year to make pilgrimages. Due to the growth of the coastal cities Faladje is gradually crumbling and the golden towers are falling into disrepair. The Jann is making strong advances upon the city and the gluttonous Shakh of Faladje appears to be receptive to the proposals, although he fears assassination as did his murdered predecessor.

Garguna (Metropolis) - The largest city in Afadjann, with a population exceeding 100,000 inhabitants. The city controls vast tracts of land, including much of the Gargos River. It has been dominated in the past by the warlords of Vralos. Garguna is now allied to the Jann. The city is rapidly becoming a major trade centre and its large port has attracted many foreign ships. Many deities are worshipped in Garguna, but all their temples are housed in the cramped Prayer Ghetto owned by the High Priest of Darleester the Noose. In the ghetto can be found temples to all native Fonritan gods, as well as many shrines to Pamaltelan and Genertelan deities. The city is surrounded by great walls of blue stone, the remains of a Veldang hero slain by Garangordos. With the recent growth in population nearly half the city sits outside the wall's protection.

Gargos River - This large river cuts a wide valley through Mondoro and Afadjann. The river banks are thick with settlers, and agriculture is



intense. Many Afadjanni nobles have estates in the north river region, coming here to hunt titanotheres, crocodile and hippopotamus. Two great cities sit on the banks of the Gargos. Garguna in the north is ruled by Afadjann and Isten in the south is ruled by Mondoro. Each seeks to collect as much grain from the valley as possible. Border conflict is common.

Hombori Tondo (Large City) - The sacred capital of Afadjann. From this throne the Janns have ruled Afadjann for seven hundred years, through seventeen dynasties. This is the most stable government in all Fonrit. The city is renowned for its cyclopean buildings such as the

Palace of the Jann which houses three thousand people, the Tower of Compulsion where enemies of the state are executed in dozens and the brooding High Temple of Darleester. The city also has a notable port which houses Afadjann's small navy. The corsairs are legendary for their bravado and hatred of Kareshtu.

Kafeamoro (Large City) - Famed throughout Fonrit for a series of yearly games called the Quarry Pastimes. Masarin enter the contest and compete in the deadly challenges with the victor winning the losers as slaves. The con-

This map shows Afadjann, and several nearby cities the Jann is interested in conquering. The map maker has cleverly concealed Jokotu under the label; the City of Freedom is almost never depicted on Fonrit maps.

Other Resources

Elder Secrets mostly covers Fonrit's neighbors. The map in *Gods of Glorantha* is the best source for the topography of Fonrit. *Heroes* vol. 1 no. 6 has Chaosium's article on Fonrit (portions of this are online at <http://www.glorantha.com/>) and a scenario. *Questlines II* includes "The Fortunate Strangulations." *Tales of the Reaching Moon* 11 has several "Notes from Nochet" entries, and information about Fonrit's neighbors.

A corsair, with a mighty yataghan. Illustration by Simon Bray.



tests are supported by the Calari cult, although they are not allowed to enter. The games are used by some masarin houses as a last attempt to increase their power before inevitable financial collapse.

Kanem Dar - The largest island of Afadjann. Hombori Tondo dominates the island and the coastal regions are densely populated with many villages and farms. The rugged interior of the island has only a sparse population of wild goatherds called the Gaffan. These clans are hardy and fierce and have never been enslaved. The Gaffan worship a bestial goat god called Ganis Tann. His grisly altars deter would-be slavers who enter the mountain passes.

Poysida Strait - This strait separates Kanem Dar from the mainland. It is rich with fish and edible kelp which feed the teeming masses upon its shores. Fishing boats and merchant ships abound, carrying food to the populace.

Sarro (Large City) - Ruled by the pirate called the Jann of Thieves. Sarro was once a great city, but has begun to decay. The central city core upon the waterfront is surrounded by gloomy ruins, haunted by ghouls. The city was cursed by the Clamorers during the Wars of Silence, but has adapted by using the undead as a defense against greater external enemies.

An elaborate interpretation of a primitive Orlanth cult forms one of the strongest factions within the city. The cult, called Orl-Orlan has a similar mythology to the Genertelan god, but is associated with local deities. Ernamorla thus replaces Ernalda. The majority of Sarro's masarin are of the Wareran race, unlike most of Fonrit. It is also notable that slaves are called thralls here and have different rights. Sarro is now allied to Afadjann.

Siwah El (Medium City) - The Sorceress and her coven rule the city. A female ruler is unusual in the male dominated politics of Afadjann. She has strict morals and forbids the ownership of members of the opposite sex. The most common religion in the city is a sorcerous interpretation of the Dorraddi female cycle, with great importance placed upon Sikasso the Witch. It is widely believed that the women of Siwah El have powers over darkness, sex and childbirth. The Siwahrites remain independent of Afadjann, despite the Jann's pressure.

Tavu eb Teba (Large City) - The heart of Afadjann's sophisticated culture. The city boasts a unique organization, the Artists and Musicians Guild, which has no political power but attracts the support of many masarin houses. The city is beautiful throughout and many Afadjanni nobles hold properties here in which to relax.

Tolodofeamoro (Large City) - A glittering city with an important market center. This is the only place that Kanem Dar's mountain men will come to trade their greatly sought-after cheese and minerals. The city is well positioned in a natural harbor and the local Del support a vast fishing fleet. Tolodofeamoro is renowned for its sword smiths, and has been responsible for supplying the Jann's army for several centuries.

Yngortu (Large City) - Known as the 'Grim City', an independent state. The major religion here is that of Orjethulut and Hanjethulut, or the Two Brothers. These bloody gods slew all their enemies, but made peace rather than slay each other. The cults support many powerful warriors and a careful census must be taken each year to ensure that neither cult has more worshippers. If one has then the excess worshippers are sacrificed. The Yngortans form a buffer between the Umathelans and Afadjanni, neither country has dared to assault these brutal people. It has been known through history for Janns and masarin to send their sons to Yngortu to learn the arts of war.

Zalasfan (Large City) - An official Blank Land, develop or destroy as you see fit.

Life In Afadjann

Martin Hawley

"The skies cloud over and the stars are obscured. The vault of heaven shakes, the earth trembles, all is still. When they behold the One in all his divine power, the dwellers of heaven serve him, he roves across the skies, he roams through every land. He, the most powerful, who has might over the mighty, he, the great one, is like a falcon who soars above all falcons. He is a god greater than others. Thousands serve him, thousands make offerings to him. His lifespan is eternity. The borders of his power are infinite."

The Garangrapha

The Material World

Agriculture

Irrigation is a considerable advantage throughout Afadjann. It is seen as the most fundamental and exacting of all agricultural labor. Construction projects not only provide water but arteries for transport, strengthening social organization and the authority of the Jann. Several Janns have built canals around the cities of Afadjann. These canals are most beloved and boasted about. Ambitious projects include the botanical gardens of Soman I, Tafumus's Flowing Vase Canal and the vast Gargos irrigation of Astamanyx.

Along the larger river valleys water flows freely over the land in the winter. Some of the flood waters are stored in reservoirs for summer usage. The silt brought down the rivers is deposited. To prevent breaching, the banks and levees are strengthened and repaired by slave workgangs or corvee labour.

Millet is the staple crop, with barley a close second. Most villages produce at least two crops of either grain in the lush growing climate of the coast. The fields are set out in a regulated pattern, first established by the edict of Garangordos. At the intersection of every fourth field stands a shrine to Ernemola, the Millet Mother. In every village Millet Guards stand watch over the crop. The grain harvested is essentially for maintenance of the burgeoning cities of Afadjann and the payment of tithe. In recent years, villagers rarely have enough grain to consume themselves as the zakat tithe grows ever more exorbitant. Other common cereals include emmer and wheat, with some rice growing beginning along the Gargos.

Harvested grain is destined for eventual consumption by the gods, humans or animals. Crushed millet is mixed to dough for fattening geese and ducks. Much is baked into loaves or cakes, some is eaten as porridge, and the remainder is sent to brewers to ferment into *boza* beer. Grain is stored in brick granaries, which are often fortified, especially in border towns.

Other crops include lima beans, peas, cotton,

onions, garlic, cucumbers, cumin, coriander, mustard, and lettuce. Orchards of figs, apples, pears, almonds, olives, cherries, oranges, peaches and pomegranates are all grown. Oil pressed from rapeseed is used for cooking, lighting, and cosmetics.

Goats are common. Black, white and fat tailed breeds are kept. All are important for meat, milk and wool. Goat hair is used for cords, carpets (*Foutahs*), and other textiles, while their bladders are inflated to be used as buoyancy aids on river going vessels. The flocks of goats are owned by temples, masarin and the Jann. Some richer yad own small flocks. Few kaddam have more than one or two for domestic use, although the goat is the primary stock animal of the hill herders of the uplands of Kanem Dar.

Pigs are kept, as pork and pork fat are enjoyed. Specialist slaughterers and butchers are common in larger cities, where pigs scavenge amongst the rubbish piles. The kaddam of the sowuks supplement their meagre existence by keeping chickens and small half-starved pot-bellied pigs.

Cattle are an essential part of the economy. Not only as a source of food, but as draft animals, commonly used for plowing and pulling carts, as well as for threshing. The usual breed is a solid animal with up curving horns, sometimes with a hump. There is always good pasture along the coast, even in the summer months. Beef and veal are an accepted part of the diet of masarin. Cows are milked for butter, cheese, and ghee. The hides have many uses: clothes, footwear, and covering temple kettle drums. The cattle are run in herds in enclosures and housed in sheds, and treated better than kaddam.

Wild ducks and geese are netted by fowlers along watercourses. Some are reared for food. Goose fat is used for medicinal purposes. Pigeons are also bred and eaten. The rivers of Fonrit as well as the sea provide great quantities of fish. Many kinds are eaten fresh and salted. Honey is the best sweetener available to Afadjannis. Bees are kept for honey and wax throughout the countryside.

The horse, introduced from Seshnela in the Second Age, is a prestigious and rare animal, extremely important for military, ceremonial and religious activities. Two breeds are found in Afadjann, the Dariti and the Daron. The latter are used exclusively for cavalry, notably the black horses of the Crushing Hooves companies.

Crafts

Beer and wine are popular amongst masarin. Brewing has become a subtle and skilled op-

The Agricultural Year

Compulsion: New irrigation ditches dug, or repaired.

Tozeur dancing & folklore festival.

Humility: Jizya Polltax due. Inundation of fields along Gargos River.

Servility: Almond harvest—"Louze." Millet sown.

Humbleness: Hamman festival, cotton harvest.

Domination: Orange blossoms festival, Honey festival. Martyrs day. Goats moved to lower pastures on Kanem Dar.

Subjugation: Orange festival—"Burtukal." Zakat tithes due to Ompalam. First millet harvests.

Discipline: Festival of Malouf music. Falconry festival. Day Of Roses.

Servitude: Ziara pilgrimages. Celebration of traditional weddings. Cherry harvest.

Contrition: Womens day. Sea-food harvest—"Coral."

Submission: Wine festival—"Shirab", apple and pear harvest—"Tufah."

Coercion: Date festival & harvest—"Tmar". Second millet harvests. Ernemola high holy day.

Penitence: New era day. Olive harvest—"Zituona." Goats moved to higher pastures.

eration throughout Afadjann. Brewers also make malted beer-bread (*bappir*). Afadjannis recognize the virtues of intoxication, allowing even lowly kaddam to consume the soapy boza beer during festivals. Palm sap wine (*iaghmi*) from date palms is as popular with yad and masarin as the imported grape wines.

Production of textiles is highly specialized with guilds of weavers, spinners, dyers, and fullers. Both cotton and wool are used to make cloth. Dyes are usually natural, yet in recent times chemical dyes have been utilised to produce a multitude of bright colours.

Perfume making is one of the unique skills of Afadjann. Both frankincense and myrrh are used. When they wish to look their best, women of the pleasure loving classes wear rouge made from red ochre, or eye paint from antimony. Concubines often paint their nails and feet with henna. The arts of goldsmithing and of jewellery making is highly developed. The Jann and several rich households have wooden objects gilded with sheet gold. Fine jewels of precious stones are common place amongst masarin women.

Among the other important craftsmen (*maallem*) are leather workers, carpenters and potters. Leather is used for military equipment, and domestic uses like slippers (*babouches*), bags, water-skins and furniture seats. With the abundance of local woods, carpenters are prized for their fine works. Some wood is brought overland from Laskal, and some from the more dangerous forests of Vralos. Afadjann is renowned for the making of beautiful mosaic tiles (*zelliji*), fine earthenware bowls and jars.

Apart from these crafts Afadjannis have developed glass-making, the preparation of alkalis and soap, metallurgical processes and distillation. Afadjann is the only state in Pamaltela capable of using sulphur to produce fire: in the words of Garangordos, "You shall light a torch from fire of sulphur."

Architecture, towns, and cities

Successive Janns have seen their cities as containers of social organization and tools of control and centralization. There are many fine cities, where elaborate dwellings surround extensive temples and gardens. Large cities are divided into precincts (*Fariq*). Architects prefer long narrow rooms with high vaulted ceilings, often with elaborate brickwork (*Ajaracas*) and arches. Large temples are sited on ziggurats with fine painted façades, columns and embellishments.

The private houses of masarin are of assorted sizes. A few are flat roofed and single storied, but most have several floors and galleries. The majority of masarin homes (*mederas*) are brick built and have stone fronts with yad chambers, kitchens, and courtyards to the rear. Attached to the house is the family vault and shrine. Houses are as cool and airy as possible

to provide comfort during the hotter months.

Most cities have an unmistakable slum area occupied by kaddam slaves, known as the 'Blue Town.' Here poor quality, mud brick, single floored huts clog narrow streets. The whole of the typical city is enclosed by lofty and immensely thick walls set with imposing gates (*Babs*). The inner city of masarin houses and grand buildings are separated by a lower wall from the outer suburbs where families live among gardens, orchards and small farms. Living below the towering seats of divinity and power, at the same time surrounded by stout walls imbues the citizens with a deep sense of security and togetherness and the Jann with the ultimate method of centralization.

The gates of cities are large and elaborate, and serve as civic centers of their own quarters. There are many public squares (*Mechouar*) and informal marketplaces (*Kissaria*). The inner sanctum of ziggurat temples, courtyard houses of officials and barracks is set aside by a wall, forming an inner citadel.

Throughout the countryside (*Badw*) are groups of cantonments, (*Sowuks*), originally built to house Kaddam during the building of monuments, mines and the great undertakings of previous Janns. Life in these villages is based around the family houses of the local Ras. The traditional village, is oriented north to south, like a prostrate human. Elements of the village are laid out inside this shape according to their associations with body parts and thus Palam. Sowuks only truly look like a body on the plains of the Afadjann fertile coast. In the hills of Kanem Dar the terrain forces other visual arrangements, yet the sowuk still maintains the mythical portioning.

The shape of the mud plaster houses can also be symbolically explained. The floor is the Earth. If placed according to the rites of civilization then the door is open towards the city of Hombori Tondo, and at the opposite end is the hearth. Kaddam houses are built from a mixture of earth and lime (*Kabia*). The flat roof is like the granary of Amkimbu, in the realm of Karkisso. There are often four small roofs around the central roof, each with a symbol of the four Aouthad. The rooms of the house symbolise the union of man and woman in the service of their overlord and master. Kaddam houses are overcrowded and outsiders would consider them dirty.

Trade and transport

Money is rare. Only the masarin use it openly. Most people are paid in either slaves or more commonly millet seed. The products of the land are allocated to high officials and the Jann and his household. They can use these to secure merchant loans (*awilan*) based on the security of arable fields and plantations.

A complex system of barter has been established. Each market has an overseer from the

The Garangrapha And The Strictures Of Life

Martin Hawley

Garangordos returned from the Council Of Light heroquest, where he and the Seventeen Walis had liberated Ompalam and rid the land from Jraktal. Upon his return he set down the so-called strictures of life. This later formed part of the holy book known as the Garangrapha.

After the murder and subsequent dismemberment of Jokot the book was divided into seventeen separate parts, each taken by one of the Walis to his or her own city/region of Fonrit. Each Wali attempted to reconstruct the Garangrapha by rewriting the missing parts, thus each city produced its own version of the holy book. At least Seventeen versions of the Garangrapha are known to exist each with different sections, tarikhs stories of Garangordos and the council of seventeen and strictures of life, along with additional strictures of city deities, other Gods and Walis. These versions have seldom remained static texts as they are constantly revised by prophets and the 'occasions of revelation' of holymen and Wazirs. The fulfilment of the strictures is not an easy task for the peoples of Fonrit. Many contradict each other or conflict with strictures declared by the jurists of individual Gods.

The five main strictures of the Garangrapha have caused many conflicts in the past as holymen, prophets and leaders attempt to reconcile their own ends with the Garangrapha. These five are known throughout Afadjann as the Pillars of Light.

They are the Authority of Leadership, the Worship of Garangordos and Ompalam, the Zakat tithe, the institution of Slavery, and the Pilgrim-mage.

Jann's granaries who establishes the value of all items in terms of millet seed or other barterable commodities. Millet is weighed using a special weight known as a Jar. A copper Jar is the smallest weight and a lead is the greatest. There are seventeen Jars used in this system. The coinage used by the masarin is called a Jann Jar and, like the weights used by the overseer, is shaped like a small jar. They are produced from silver, aluminum, coral, electrum, gold and platinum. The size varies with the value. The smallest denomination is the silver Jann Jar which is worth the equivalent of a thousand silver pieces in Genertela.

Credit procedures exist to encourage trade, in the form of Akori beads, small carved beads worn on necklaces by masarin family heads as an indication of the number of slaves owned. The beads are of three colors and types: Black wood, representing kaddam, white clay, representing yad, and blue glass, representing family members. Akori beads are imported into Fonrit from Jolar and other Doraddi lands. The necklaces could be seen as twisted parodies of Pamalt's Necklace. These beads act as trading 'Currency' among families. Zakat tithe is often paid in beads, although a payment of a blue bead only occurs in dire situations. Once a bead has been exchanged between masarin, the individual it represents has a new owner. Wealthier families and households will have several necklaces, sometimes the weight of these is too great to be worn by any one masarin and the beads are kept in small golden or bejewelled jars. The Jann, of course, has several thousand of these beads in his royal store. Individuals allowed to buy their freedom by enlightened Renewed families proudly wear their own bead as a symbol of their status. Yet they must guard it well, as if it is lost or stolen then their freedom is lost.

Instead of horses or mules, Lucans and occasionally Balucitheres are used as pack animals. There are paved highways between cities, making it possible for wagons to carry loads over great distances. For marbles, ores, and bitumen river transport is used keeled boats with lateen sails, coracles or buoyed rafts (*Kelek*), depending upon the load.

There are three methods of obtaining goods and raw materials from outside Afadjann. The first involves Jannic expeditions to foreign lands, usually accompanied by officials and military. Communities of miners or loggers are installed and defended, and local leaders are placated. The second is acquiring goods from foreign vendors, mainly from the Pamaltelan hinterland or sea going merchants, such as those from the Umathelan city-states. The third is the most ambitious: the dispatch of Jannic or Trader Prince fleets to foreign ports to deal with the local rulers. These fleets may even sail as far as Genertela.

Imports: Timber, Slaves, Wine, Stone, Min-

eral ores.

Exports: Luxury goods, Goats, Perfumes, Spices, Palm oil, Ivory, Textiles, Pottery, Glass-ware.

The Social and Political World.

State and Government

"All possessions of civilization and culture, all things great and small made and taken from the Gods, all have a blessed simplicity. All your objects, buildings, farmlands, the plants and animals, sacred texts and works of art. All these were given to you by Garangordos."

The Garangrapha.

Society is made up from the rulers (*masarin*, or just *ras* outside Afadjann), commoners (*imazighen*), hand slaves (*yad*), and slaves (*kaddam*). The land owning nobility comprises the Jann and his family, palace officials, leading priests and several masarin households. Their large estates leave some land for imazighen and a few rich yad.

The Jann himself controls the government of Afadjann. In practice many Janns have been assisted by their inner council. Together they

An Evukindu-worshipping eunuch wields his short-bladed kora against a Vronkali. Illustration by Simon Bray.



The Strictures Of Life

Martin Hawley

Authority of leadership and the divine right of rulers

The original declaration was that there was no leader greater than Garangordos and that all deities were subject to the rule of Ompalam. Once Garangordos had been murdered, the stricture began to be interpreted as the divine right of each Wali to rule in the name of Ompalam. The first Jann declared this stricture as his right to rule all peoples of Fonrit and beyond. Subsequent Janns enforced this stricture to justify their actions, as did the scheming Jalenga Kosem and Seki Pumra. The stricture has been extended over time to include the rights of masarin over yad and yad over kaddam.

Worship of Garangordos and Ompalam

Formal public worship (*salat*) has been part of the practice of Afadjann citizens since the time of Garangordos. The details of this public worship vary depending upon which deity is being worshipped. Worship used to be settled by custom rather than religious prescription. Some have tried to regulate this worship, and failed, such as Jalenga Kosem. Others, notably Alexahmed I, standardized worship of Garangordos and Ompalam.

The current practice is for prayers at early morning, early evening gloaming and noon although of course there is the Grand worship every seventeen hours, throughout the year wherever one may be in Afadjann. Worship was traditionally towards Hombori Tondo, the cause of schism among the peoples of the Jann, as some holymen now declare Garguna to be the rightful direction of prayer. Moves to reestablish the capital to this new city are also afoot by Renewed faction members. Wherever worship of this kind takes place it must always be preceded by ablutions.

manage affairs of state, appointing city rulers (*Lugal*) and regional governors (*Ennis*).

The role of the Jann's Wazir has become increasingly important during the realm of Astamanyx. Recent responsibilities include direction of irrigation works and tree felling, the biennial cattle census, measurement and recording of weather and the collection of taxes.

Law

Before the coming of Garangordos, dealings between people were controlled by an undifferentiated blend of local, personal government with social and minor religious customs. With the bringing of civilization and urban life, Garangordos brought formalization of law. Indeed one of the outcomes of the Council of Light heroquest was to bring justice to the land through control and centralization.

In the early years after his return, the strictures of Garangordos were followed, and disagreements were conducted within his court. After the murder of Garangordos and under the regime of the Seventeen the administration of justice fell to individual city Walis and their interpretation of the Garangrapha. This resulted in the flourishing of a variety of rules on every conceivable subject.

With the coming of the Janns the law of Afadjann is dictated by central authority, through the Ennis and Lugal of each city or region. Each has a court (*Rabianum*) which hears cases and doles out punishments. Trial by ordeal is permitted for those masarin and a few yad found in breach of the laws of the land. Punishments include the beating of the soles of the feet by a stave (*bastiado*) for crimes such as assault or corruption. Crimes like rape, true incest, kidnapping or theft can result in hanging. Masarin and yad are well within the law to administer their own punishments to their kaddam, especially in cases of runaways.

The cult of Calari is a noted as being the 'police' of Afadjann. The cult's members come in two groupings. The first are the Jann's secret police, individuals who are integrated into all levels of society, so well that none apart from the Jann knows their true identity.

The other group are the Black Guard. These burly warriors can be found throughout the city domains. They are highly paid mercenaries, often gifted with horses at huge expense and equipped with the finest weaponry. It is common practice for this police force to use animals to hunt down criminals, especially fearsome black baboons and leopards, both animals are trained to follow criminals were ever they go, even over roof tops. Despite the small size of the apes they are fearsome and easily have the strength to rend a man's arm from his socket or tear through chainmail with their fangs. In fact, most thieves and criminals fear the baboons more than their masters or the leopards.

Men, Women and Children

The vast majority of marriages among the kaddam go unrecognised by their masters. Those that are must gain yad or masarin approval. Family life can prove difficult, as families hardly ever remain as single units due to the sale of progeny and the relocation of individuals. In some richer sowuks, extended families of kaddam do exist.

Masarin marriages are predominantly polygamous. Indeed the *Garangrapha* lays down that if a wife does not bear children, the husband is required to take another wife or impregnate a slave-girl, the children counting as the wife's. Masarin men can promote a concubine, or in some cases even slave-girl to the rank of wife. This imbues her with all the associated status. The normal form of marriage is for the girl to leave her birth family and enter the household of her husband. There are various gifts and payments linked to the marriage, jewellery, land, and with the growing numbers of enlightened families, limited forms of freedom.

Among the masarin, life is centered about the household. Each household is composed of several extended families. These are patriarchal, in both social and legal aspects. Children of families are considered to be children of all male household members. Children and the young of masarin and yad are wholly subject to their parents, at least in theory, especially to the father—who can sell them into slavery should he decide to do so. Parenthood of individual children is often difficult to establish due to the practice of polygamy and the maintenance of concubines and harems, where women can be impregnated by many different male family members. All members are considered to be interrelated and called 'Brothers' and 'Sisters.' Fornication between true siblings or with your true parent is now taboo, although sexual relations between 'Brothers' and 'Sisters' or 'Parents' and 'Children' are common.

The hierarchy of households is far from static. Whole households or individual families constantly vie for higher status. This can be achieved by removal of a higher household's family heads, or by intermarriage. In the latter case, all the members of the brides family ascend in status and become part of the husband's household. When individual families attempt to rise through the hierarchy without the assistance of, or knowledge of, their household it will cause considerable repercussions. Many holy men have declared this type of scheming to be against the stricture of theft.

Inevitably, there is a double standard between husbands and wives in sexual permissiveness. Women can be accused of using their charms to entrap men into sex. If found guilty they can be put to death. Men are expected to

be promiscuous, having children by concubines and slave girls. Separation through divorce is easy for masarin and both parties end up in a legally equitable state. All kaddam are considered the chattel of their master, and are treated as such.

In harmony with these views, wives, widows and daughters of yad or masarin are forbidden to go about without appropriate dress, while harlots, unwed temple prostitutes and kaddam women are prohibited from covering their faces, arms and legs. All forms of sexual practice are common place among masarin and yad alike. Afadjannis fully recognize the links between sex and religion. There are temple prostitutes—male, female and neuter, with sexual practices including homosexual and Sapphic unions. Afadjanni men are obsessed with impotence, leading to numerous medical preparations and magical rituals to counter it. Contraception is sometimes practised in the forms of charms and herbs, or the sophisticated magics of Naditu women and Siwah-El witches.

Eunuchs are common place throughout Fonrit, but a man who achieves the status by punishment is very rare; the usual practice is to castrate boys. A particular function of eunuchs is to serve at the courts of city Lugals, or if extremely fortunate, the palace of the Jann.

Masarin and yad women can own estates and other property, qualify as witnesses and engage in trade. There are even rare cases of female scribes and physicians. The only other important office open to these women is as priestesses, apart from in the city of Siwah-El, where women are permitted greater freedoms.

The Mental World

Intellectual Life

Education is restricted to masarin and selected yad. It centers about the learning of reading and writing, both pictographic and cuneiform. Mathematical and religious laws follow closely in popularity. The study of the natural world, flora and fauna and astronomical teaching are all highly developed. The measurement of time, both by sundials and water clocks, is unique on the continent of Pamaltela.

Medicine is one of the gifts of civilization encouraged by successive Janns. The oldest known pharmacopoeia rests on the shelves of Astamanyx's personal library. Both physical (*ashipu*) and magico-religious (*kalupu*) types flourish. The substances used by physicians are of varying origin. Herb and plant extracts, blood, creature parts and the use of minerals, like salt, sulphur and bitumen oil are all common. Surgery is among the unique developments in Afadjann, again both by the Doctors of the Jann and more mundane physicians.

Music, Literature and History

Music and dancing form a regular part of life

at all levels. Jannic patronage reflects in the lavishment of instrument types and music. Both singing, chanting and music are integral parts of religious ceremonies. This includes the professional sacred muscians (*Imdyazn*), whose tuneless renditions (*Nawba*) often last for several hours.

Literature of all kinds is found in Afadjann, notably the texts of the Garangrapha, in all its forms. Epics and poetry are also popular as are epithets and recounts of battles. Story telling has reached great heights in recent years, so much so that story tellers are in great demand and can fetch high prices as yad.

The recording of history revolves around the deeds of Garangordos and the seventeen generations of Janns. Chronological ordering is as important as revised truths or glorious reinterpretation.

Visual Arts

Afadjanni art is distinguished by its strength and controlled energy. Human figures are always depicted in arrested movement, while animals are always portrayed as ideals.

Bas reliefs, of stone or hammered bronze, adorn the walls of temples and palaces with ritual scenes, or those from mythology and history. Some are painted, typically blue, red, white and black. This glyptic art is considered to be the best in Gloran-

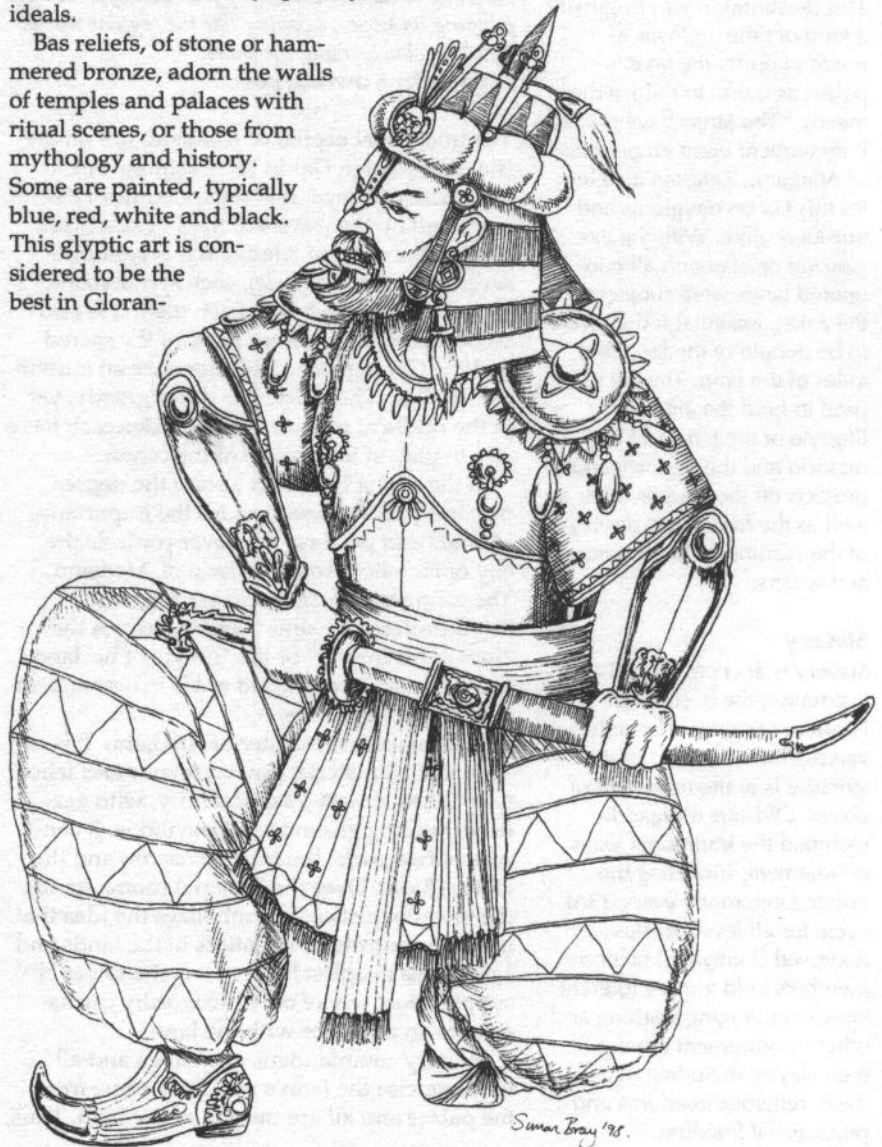
The unwritten stricture

Martin Hawley

Only Garangordos ever knew this stricture. Upon his murder it was interpreted by the Seventeen in many very different ways. Leaders used it to enforce their own laws and whims. The Janns have used it to establish their own law codes, often resulting in ridiculous or sadistic strictures.

A Wareran masarin warrior, wielding a foreign scimitar.

Illustration by Simon Bray.



tha. Sculpture in the round, of life- sized statues, bronze or stone stand in many public courtyards and town squares.

Carved ivories, mostly flat with incised relief are found in many masarin homes. Ivory is often combined with gold leaf, carnelians, and lapis lazuli to produce exquisite works of art.

Cylinder seals are common, ranging from stone to precious jewel in origin. Many of the cylinders display high levels of workmanship and adornment, motifs vary greatly. These have been used many for years to roll over clay producing a seal, which is fastened to legal documents, or attached to trade goods.

Hombori Tondo

Life In The City Of The Jann

Martin Hawley

"The smell of still burning sacrifices lingers with smoke about the metal domes. The heavy air hardly moved by the sea breeze, steam rises off the adobe sun heated walls of the buildings. The waves lap gently against the hill-circled gulf of the harbour. As the sun spreads his light upon the salt lagoon, where flamingos form long rose-colored lines amid the banks of golden sand. The blue vault of heaven sinks down to the sea and above the city lie the summits of Kanem Dar, the pyramidal cypress trees fringing its slopes, swaying like the regular waves that beat slowly along the shore."

Majeed Bana-owned, poet.

The traditional capital of Afadjann lies on the island of Kanem Dar in the Dashomo Sea to the North of Fonrit. It is separated from the mainland by the waters of the Poysida Strait. Like all the cities of Afadjann it is split into seventeen districts (*fariq*), each symbolizing part of the human body. Each district is also associated with different parts of the sacred body of Garangordos and therefore an individual's Palam. These districts differ greatly, yet in the mystical rules of Garangordos each has a role to play in the service of the center.

In the city of Hombori Tondo the degree proximity to the Jann decides the importance of lands and persons. Whoever controls the city of Hombori Tondo is Jann of Afadjann. The conquests of Afadjann are the Jann's "well-protected realms" and the city is the "foot of his throne" or the "abode of his land". Government is conducted at his behest and all peoples are his slaves.

The palace is the center of Afadjann. It is the source of all material power, favour and felicity. It forms almost a separate city, with gardens, hunting grounds and pavilions. It consists of two parts: the Inner (*Enderin*) and the Outer (*Birin*). Over the imperial rooms stands the tower of justice. It symbolizes the idea that the Jann controls all injustices in the lands and against his peoples. Next to it is the tower of supplication, where only the worthy can ascend to an audience with the Jann.

Military commanders, city rulers and all who exercise the Jann's authority come from the palace and all are the yad of the Jann. Thus,

the palace is more than an imperial residence. In it the Jann's yad slaves receive special education, after which that are appointed to the high offices of the land. The Jann spends most of his private life in the Inner palace, within its wide courtyards and harem. All the services and organizations regulating the Jann's relations occupy the second court. Joining the two courts is the Gate of Felicity where the Jann dispenses his injustices and observes ceremonies from the pearl throne.

A detailed system of protocol and promotion establishes everyone's rank within the Jann's household. Seniority is the general rule for promotion but it is possible for a person to rise to high standing by other means. The system requires all, including the Jann, to respect absolutely its rules and traditions, which receive the same esteem as the strictures of previous Jann.

"All the slaves of the Jann are subject to the codified procedures and ceremonials when within the walls of Hombori Tondo. The colors of their robes, the cut of their sleeves and style of turbans are all prescribed in the greatest detail. The Wazirs wear red, the hajib chamberlains green priests must wear purple, military light blue. Even the shoes (babouches) provide a set of symbolic distinctions; Oglan pages wear yellow, courtiers light red, Warerans must wear white, other Foritians green and Vadeli black; while girls of the harem have their feet hennaed or wear blue slippers."

There are four chambers in the service of the Jann—the privy (*Kisada*), Treasury (*Hozine*), Larder and kitchens (*Giler*) and the delights campaign (*Sifiloda*). The thirty-four pages of the privy chamber directly attend the Jann, his ablutions, clothes, and weapons, and are his night guard. Chief of this group is the closest person to the Jann, never leaving his side. Beneath him are the sword holder, the stirrup holder, the garment holder, the linen holder and the confidant, who arranges the Jann's lustful fulfillments.

The treasury holds the Jann's valuable jars full of riches while the larder prepares the sumptuous banquets renowned throughout Afadjann. The delights chamber brings together the laundry men, bath house atten-

The Strictures Of Life

Martin Hawley

The Zakat tithe

This prescription was originally a kind of tithe and was as much to purify the giver's palam as it was to relieve the 'needy.' The Janns have made it incumbent upon all peoples of Afadjann. Zalasfan also levies this tax on emigrants and outsiders alike. With the expansion of Afadjann all conquered lands were subject to the zakat, essential if they were to be people of the land and allies of the Jann. The tax was used to fund the affluent lifestyle of the Jann and his masarin and the vast irrigation projects off the Gargos River as well as the hedonistic desires of the Hombori Tondo priests and wazirs.

Slavery

Slavery is accepted by all as an institution, the basis of all Fonritan societies. The only varying interpretation of this stricture is in the treatment of slaves. Oldsters (Bolgaddi) maintain the traditional ways of treatment, including the proving ceremony every 33rd cycle for all levels of slave. Renewed (Tsanyano) faction members hold a more tolerant view encouraging learning and other development among their slaves, including marriage, religious freedoms and purchase of freedom.

dants, barbers, musicians, singers, whores and others.

"Before us were brought large earthenware flagons, orange glass amphoras of palm sap wine, tortoise shell spoons, pearl-boarded golden plates and blocks of ice melting on ebony tray with pyramids of lemons, pomegranates and water melons The kaddam carried anise-sprinkled loaves alternated with fine goats cheeses, crystal bowls of sweet water and gold filigree baskets of sugared flowers. Our eyes were filled with the joy of at last being allowed to gorge ourselves. First, we were served with song birds and sauce, then with every kind of shellfish, and snails dressed with cumin on dishes of yellow amber. Afterwards the tables groaned in meats; antelopes, peacocks and Gargos water buffaloes, hedgehogs covered in garum, fried grasshoppers, and preserved mice. Next we were treated to a most enticing aroma. The hand slaves paraded in carrying a large dome covered silver platter. The platter was placed on the table before us and the dome removed, the delicate aroma filled our nostrils. It was soon followed by the filling of our mouths with the soft flesh of the steamed Embyli, and he hadn't forgotten those plump little puppies with pink silky hairs fattened on olive lees....

The outside service comprises all the organizations regulating the Jann's interaction with the outside world, governmental and ceremonial offices, and the Jann's standing army. Among these is the chief gate keeper, who controls all the guards of the gates, and his yad who maintains the order and protocol at religious ceremonies and public street festivities. The quartermaster is responsible for the animals, stables carriages and sedan chairs as well as grooms, saddlers, and vets. The chief falconer heads the group responsible for the Jann's hunting birds. The chief taster serves meals to the members of the inner palace and waits at the banquets given to foreign ambassadors. The commander of the ambassadors oversees discipline on matters of state, controlling the embassies and couriers.

The "ministries" (Khassa) compliment this outside service. They are all located in the khassa enclave, where grand buildings of turquoise and scarlet terra cotta with cool courtyards dominate. They include the: College of Plutocracy; Ministry of Conquest; and the Ministries of Agriculture, Commerce, and Public Injustice.

The harem forms a palace within the palace. It is a private place forbidden to all outsiders. Its organization complements the slave system, an aspect of its character often overlooked in favor of more fanciful tales of lust.

"...From ankle to hip she was covered with a golden network of mesh, her waist was clasped by blue silk with crescent shaped slashings, her chest adorned by carbuncle pendants.

She had a head dress of peacock feathers, studded with gems and an ample cloak as white as the snows of the mountains. Her eyes and her



Simon Bray '88

diamonds sparkled, the polish of her nails emphasized the delicacy of the stones, which loaded her fingers. The two clasps of blue silk raised her breasts, between them fell a golden thread holding a plate of emeralds beneath the blue gauze.

She had earrings of sapphire and pearl, hollow, each allowing a drop of perfume, to fall and moisten her naked shoulders. Her hair covered in gold dust, hung down behind her in long twists ending in pearls. A scarf of yellow around her neck, her hennaed feet nestling in purple slippers. The vermilion on her lips gave added whiteness to her teeth and the antimony on her lids length to her eyes. Her arms were adorned with jewels of all kinds and issued naked from the sleeveless robes.

Between her ankles she wore a golden chainlet, to regulate her steps..."

Women for the Jann's palace are selected carefully from among prisoners of war, or from the slave markets. When they first come to the palace they pass through a long period of training and live together in large rooms and are known as novices. The Jann's mother has absolute authority within the harem. Under her strict supervision household they grow into refined and skilled women in the arts of lust, and in the skills of true womanhood. They learn the principles of Seseine, at the same time acquiring skills of sewing, embroidery, dancing, singing, playing instruments, puppetry or story telling each according to their capabilities. A woman who bears a child to the Jann receives special privileges. Ceremonially crowned and dressed in furs, she is allowed to kiss the Jann's hand, and is given an apartment

Garangordos leading captive slaves, from the Kafeamoro copy of the Garangrapha. Illustration by Simon Bray.

The Strictures Of Life

Martin Hawley
Pilgrimage

A pilgrimage to places in the vicinity of Hombori Tondo and to the city itself was prescribed from the very beginning, as both a religious activity and an attempt to regulate the activities of the cities by the walis of Hombori Tondo. The act of pilgrimage was soon expanded to include visits to individual cities by people of the hinterland and strictures enforcing pilgrimage to religious shrines. Holymen of Temmissrah claim this practice was adopted from the Ebbeshites. Alexahmed I was partially successful in reinstituting the great pilgrimage to Hombori Tondo, a practice once again being prescribed by the current Jann Astamanyx.

On War against Fonrit

Martin Laurie

Comments recorded by Sage Westher as uttered by Sir Transil, Fyrrst of the Fonritan Expeditionaries.

Fonritan armies are large, well equipped, disciplined, aggressive, merciless and virtually fearless! Yet, they have their weaknesses, as all armies do. Imagine them to be a mighty-bodied monster with a head like a pin and you can see potential for their destruction. Cut off that head and the great body is but a mound of flesh. Any slave culture relies on absolute obedience and total control. They issue commands from the top down whereas our men are free to act within the bounds of the

for her own use, sometimes leading to secret trusts or evil plots.

On the day of compulsion, when the Jann casts the great spell of Darleester the Noose, all Afadjannis are bound by law and pain of death to wear about their necks a noose of black rope or cloth, which acts as the focus of the spell. The nature of the spell means that all those of Afadjann nature who do not wear the noose are open to psychic assault from the spirits of Ikadaaz and Ompalam summoned during the ritual.

Few Afadjanni have ever refused to participate in the ritual. In fact, the noose has become somewhat of a fashion statement among the masarin houses who pay extortionate rates to have the most ornate and intricate nooses made. These works of art are inlaid with jet, black pearls and black coral and are often made of rare timinit silk from Kumanku.

The Households Of Hombori Tondo

In the time of the Jann Tafamus, many strange strictures were declared and many peculiar happenings occurred in the city of Hombori Tondo. Tafamus declared that each year all the households of the masarin would parade before him for his pleasure, and any that didn't please him would be killed.

"They were separated into seventeen great sections and made to parade before the mad ruler. It

lasted three days and nights. The devoted subjects dressed in bizarre outfits and sublime costumes trying to outdo each other in amusing or amazing that idiot who was their ruler. All passed by in wagons drawn by huge creatures, the like I've never seen since, or on foot, with the instruments of the musicians blaring out insane music. The fruit sellers on wagons adorned with apples, apricots and poles of ribbons. Some dressed as women reciting songs to the greatness of Tafumus.

The household of the carpenters preparing wooden houses, the builders raising walls, the woodcutters with their lucans, the masons whitening shops. The toy makers on wagons with thousands of trinkets and trifles to amuse the insane Tafumus. In their train I could see some dressed as children with hoods and bibs, some as nurses, while the bearded babies cried for their playthings.

The house hold of the bakers were baking and throwing loaves of millet bread, covered with fennel and sesame seeds. The household of the captains of the white sea with huge ships dragged on cables. Music was played on all sides, the masts and oars adorned with pearls and set with jewels, the sails were of rich silks. The prostitutes of the lustful Goddess came next, many wearing very little except kohl and rouge.

The butchers passed clad in armor of black beetle, their float adorned with flowers and fat sheep. They passed, chanting praises to the Jann and cutting themselves with large knives. The Jann had decided that the sugar bakers should go next and along they came much to the annoyance of the fish cooks. They passed by throwing sweets to the slave children.

The households of the artisans, merchants, poets and scholars paraded past the elaborate pavilion as he watched, but the mad one mostly drooled and fornicated with the immense form of the one they called 'the Sugar Sack.'
Unknown source.

Hombori Tondo's masarin are divided into seventeen 'households,' a practice common with many Fonritan cities. These seventeen are named after traits of the original 'Brothers and Sisters' of Garangordos and form a hierarchy of social ranking among the masarin. The correct hierarchy of households was inscribed in the original Garagrapha by the hand of Garangordos himself; this 'Family tree' is housed in the secret chamber of the Jann. Individual households maintain their own copies of the Garagrapha, each with slightly different versions of the hierarchy, further justifying in their own eyes their attempts to regain their 'rightful position' in the household hierarchy. Position in the hierarchy is therefore not dictated by household size or wealth but rather by more intangible factors. Within each household each family maintains a position, as a result of past deeds and established guidelines.

An Agimori Del making eyes at an imported slave girl (some people say she looks Kralori or Teshnan). Illustration by Simon Bray.



Foreigners

Aside from the complex dress codes demanded by the Jann while in his realm, outsiders are treated to strict controls on their behavior. Many of the other Fonritans see these controls purely for the purposes of humiliation. Those from further afield hold views ranging from seeing them as quaint, if a little strange, to being highly suspicious of the motives of the Jann.

Foreigners are subjected to being blindfolded on their approach to the city. If from the sea, they are boarded by an imperial pilot and the harbor guard and instructed as to where to dock before their cargo is inspected and a tithe taken for the Jann and often for the harbor guard and pilot too! Foreigners are then escorted by the black guard to the foreigner's enclave, called The Place of Ignorance (*Jahilya*) by Afadjannis. Inside are elaborate houses of cedar and stucco with gardens of cool waters. Foreigners must remain in the enclave at all times unless they are granted an audience with the Jann, or more likely one of his high ranking retinue. Food and water are both brought into the enclave and foreigners are often visited by their intended contacts to conduct their respected business within its walls.

"We approached the main Imperial Gateway and through it into the first court of the Jann the so called Courtyard Of Oranges was thronged with people some watching the public execution near the Gate of Death of Kaddam brought from the Hall Of Justice And Worth; others ritually washing themselves in the ablution's fountains. Huge red and white striped arches dwarfed groves of orange trees, above the 17 naves of the driba hall perched the womens mestonda; we walked through the sebka portico of the Gate Of Salutations under the shadows cast by the walls of the Ribat, where the Amir and the garrison are based. Out into the hypostyle Hall Of The Ancestors, to each side were mihrabs with white marble statues of previous Janns, and ahead was the cella sanctum. We emerged into the inner Mechour courtyard, the rainwater cisterns and the looming Gate Of Salutation ahead, once past the gate house of the

Nador watchtower we stood under an elaborate wooden Laceria ceiling, lawns studded with fountains and plane trees radiated out, the Segban hound master stood conversing with a Serdar of the guard. The glimmering Gate Of Bliss faced us, flanked by the Agimori Kapici gatekeepers we were led into the Hall Of Wisdom, the conclusive intersection between the outer and inner world. The whole area was silent, flanked by the Gate Of Felicity, leading to the harem The Abode Of Bliss that place of forbidden entrance for men, that abode of gratification and carezza, sapphic and tribadic lusts; and the Janna Gardens. A most wonderful confusion of exquisite trees and flowers these gardens combine beauty, variety and grandeur and magnificence on every side. The outstanding Cascading Staircase, where water flowed down the balustrades of stone, at the base were numerous decorated belevederes. Water fresh, clear, and drinkable, flowed in abundance on every side through rills and pools and out of fountains. The irrigation waterwheel, padded as to not disturb the sleep of the First Kadin wife. Flocks of birds, chattered and warbled, water trickled from bowl to bronze bowl of an elaborate device that I later found out to be a clock to mark the passing of the day, echoed by the huge bell of the Tower Of The Borj. I wandered on and discovered the Patio Of The Junipers, tall sculpted trees surrounded a dark and secretive walled garden. It was here I was told that the slave girls brought their lovers for illicit trysts. Yet beware of the Bostancis gardeners for they are sinister executioners who kill with a silken cord. We waited at the Seraglio, with its scented myrtle bushes and marble colonnades, before being allowed into the Hall Of The Ambassadors. Under the domed zelliji tiled ceiling we waited for our turn, marvelling at the elaborate mosaic decorated stucco walls. Finally we were allowed to progress to the base of the spiral staircase in the huge seventeen storey Tower Of Supplication, which if we were worthy would lead us to the Jann's Star Chamber. I lifted the flowing dress of pink silk and stepped forward in my green slippers to prove my worth in the first chamber.

Visit To The Palace Of The Jann. Lydia
Dhu'Hasan Bint Farrash Al'Attar 1127.

plan and so we see opportunities from the bottom up!

Thus I recommend two main strategies when confronting the power of a Fonritan army in the field.

(1). Endeavor to decapitate. Kill their leaders at all costs. As the slave regiments cannot replace a high rank with a lower rank (this being heresy to these folk), they have to find a higher rank in another unit or place on the field of battle before they can receive orders and function once more. Thus the Fonritan army is effective in pitched battle where their command systems are close at hand but is very vulnerable in long drawn-out attritional campaigns of raid and ambush where command is dispersed. Naturally my men are masters of such means of war.

(2). Endeavor to confuse. Their chain of command is vulnerable to confusion simply because there are so few sources of acceptable information for the higher ranks to hear from. A common soldier may not even approach a general without feeling a sword on his neck. Thus surreptitious use of agents, spies and deceptions can feed false information into their system of command and lead them to make poor decisions.

Above all one should never engage Fonrit in the field of battle without strong forces and preferably a flanking column to disrupt their battle plans. I have found that the followers of the Storm gods and their Mastery of Movement are particularly useful in this way. Storms, sudden teleportations, flying troops, tornadoes etc. all combine to bring disorder to the Fonritans. They are a people of order and stasis. Nothing annoys them more than things not going to plan!

A Letter From Fonrit

Neil Robinson

Cousin,

I knew our expedition to the southern lands would be fraught with danger, but had no idea that a simple flower would be our undoing. You must presume me dead by now and my ship long lost. Rest assured that I still live, though I fear my ship and crew are nowhere to be found. I will make this missive brief, trusting Dormal and the prophet to protect it the

long journey past Magasta's pool. A trip I plan to make soon.

We visited many sites on the windward journey, seeing islands of giant gazzam, and jungles teeming with Aldryami. Along the way, we traded cheap trinkets to the simple natives for gems and precious metals. This trip was going to make my name famous and the family rich.

Calari

Simon Bray
Calari the Jumping Leopardman was a son of Rasout. He wandered the forests of Laskal accompanied by his tribe called the Calarimedjay, in honor of their leader and god. His people were great hunters and could track anything, even the Nowhere Bird, and the Lopers could not hide from them. The greatest skill of the Calarimedjay was the hunting of man. Calari had taught them this skill so that his enemies would never evade him. He had learned that man must be observed in his natural habitat. Just as the hunter learned the way of the forest animals by being with them in the forest, so would the Calarimedjay move amongst the tribes of the lands, watching and learning. When the Calarimedjay had found their chieftan's foe they would trap him and call their master. Calari would then change his form to that of the leopard and coming amongst his enemies devour them alive. When divine Garangordos the Cruel led his people into Fonrit, the Calarimedjay followed and were put to good use against the Veldang. Their skills pointed out the enemies of the Divine-Tyrant and fed the Jumping Leopardman's belly. Thus they pleased two gods and were remembered for it.

The Palam Flower

The flowers have seventeen petals, and according to legend, were formed from the blood of Jokot's severed body parts as Evukindu dragged them into hell (with his yads).

Our final port of call was a southern metropolis named Hombori Tondo. It was a hedonistic city of slaves ruled by a corrupt and decadent Jann. I could tell you stories that you would never believe. Even the Lunars couldn't top their extremes. Still, we were granted trading privileges, and set up our wares. Even this far from home, they recognized a limited version of the rites of St. Issaries. Trading went well, for they have never seen anything like our glassware. It was then that I granted limited shore leave to the crew. It is important to keep the crew happy, and although strange, our hosts seemed primarily a quiet and subdued lot.

The city teemed with starving slaves with skins of blue. They begged for food, work, and "Palam." I asked my guide, and he replied that palam just meant peace. That day I witnessed a strange ritual. Every week the Jann oversees opening the grain stores and handling out food to anyone in the city that asked. I watched in shock as the hordes of lethargic blues rose up and rushed the grain handlers and proceeded to gorge themselves until other blues inevitably knocked them away. Too much for me to bear, I turned away in disgust.

The city stood apart from the surrounding forests. Around the city were fields that stretched right up to the forest. Most crops look similar to the ones we grow, but I could also see acres of bright red flowers guarded by armed men. I commented on this to my guide, who answered that they were of religious significance. I thought no more of it.

Harsh storms kept us from leaving Hombori Tondo when I wanted to. We had sold everything I planned to here, so the men had little to do. Some took local women, and others experienced the place in other ways. It was after a full season here that I noticed the crew acting increasingly strange. Lethargy had settled in, almost like the course in Teshnos. I tried to work them harder, but they went about all their tasks in slow motion. After investigation, I learned that the men had taken part in the latest ritual. I endeavored to discover the secret magics of the ritual by taking part in it myself.

Prior to the next ritual, I hardened myself with prayers and what protections the creator blessed me with. During the ceremony I stayed aloof, participating only in eating the small amount of bread—that slip was my undoing.

The next day I felt a strange happiness pervading my entire soul. Always an early riser, I somehow didn't awaken until the Sun was far across the sky. It was several days before I came down from the euphoria. I blamed the euphoria on the ritual's strange magics, and went back to preparing for our departure. After the long delay, the ship needed some major repairs.

Later that the entire crew, myself included, started to act more irritably. Worse yet, I began

to yearn for something, something I didn't understand. Only the thought of the next ritual seemed to quell my cruel hungers. So off I went to the next ritual and the pangs were relieved.

Weeks went by, and it seemed that we got no closer to leaving. There was always some reason to delay us, and another ceremony to look forward to. The port fees continued to mount, so I ended up selling my remaining trading stock to cover them. One day they came for the fees and I couldn't pay them. They took the ship, and any sense of self-control I had left.

I can't remember much after that until I woke up in a teeming mass of bodies. I struggled my way out of the stinking blue bodies and weakly got to my feet. You wouldn't have recognized me cousin. My once portly frame was now just loose folds of flesh over bones. And my eyes were taking on a bluish tinge (1). Cousin, I looked like a Blue. (2)

My stomach rumbled with hunger, as if I hadn't eaten for days. But I had a strange clarity too. All at once I realized that it was the bread from the ceremony. Something in the bread that had drawn me down into this personal hell. Something in the bread that caused me to lose all my worldly cares and slumber into blissful peace. Oh, now it is all too clear. That Palam, that flower—it was the evil.

No more do I take part in the rituals, and no more do I eat the free bread given to me by city priests. Instead I survive on paltry handouts and what few rats I can catch. I beg for work, but few will trust a skinny Palam-blessed Blue.

Take this message as a warning to any of our ships entering Hombori Tondo or surrounding ports. Keep the men on the ship and leave as soon as you can. I'm hoping to earn enough money to catch a ship myself soon and get out of this Hrestol-blasted pit. I'm still to thin to accepted as a crew hand on an outgoing ship. Meanwhile I fight my longings for the demon flower days. Who knew how deadly peace could be?

Your cousin,
Enrico Capriatis

- (1) Prolonged usage of Palam seems to give one's irises a bluish tint.
- (2) The Veldang have blue eyes as well as their characteristic slate-blue skin.

The Military Forces of Hombori Tondo

a secret report from the Eyes of Archiomoides, the Kareeshtu ambassador to Afadjann

Duncan Rowlands

Hombori Tondo boasts a large, predominately slave, standing garrison, drawn from all parts of Afadjann. Whilst each city of Afadjann can muster its own militia, the garrison of Hombori Tondo is effectively the permanent, elite, forces of Afadjann.

As the garrison, with its attendant support staff, is over a third of the size of the actual population of Hombori Tondo proper, it puts a great strain upon the city for its support.

Whilst much of the physical work required in maintaining such a force is carried out by the forces themselves, mainly by the Agimori infantry, preventing starvation requires good logistical organization. Supply caravans arrive constantly by both land and sea bringing tribute in the form of provisions from the other cities of Afadjann. The great fertility of the land which enables two harvests to be taken each year makes this possible.

One other action which makes it all possible is the practice of sending various sections of the armed forces on exercises to various parts of Afadjann. Whilst on exercises the forces become the responsibility of the nearest city to provision, easing the burden on Hombori Tondo by transferring it to the other cities for a time. Sending troops around the country in this manner also serves to remind the various cities of the strength of the Jann, and thus is important politically as well as practically.

The military is organized in accordance with ancient mystical dictates which, although not very logical or overly practical, seem to work for Hombori Tondo. The armed forces officially number 4913, although the actual number may be higher as there may be a large number of people being trained as replacements for battlefield casualties in times of particular strife and the Black Watch is notoriously secretive about its activities and numbers. It is rumored that not even the Jann is fully aware of the Black Watch's activities.

The overall military commander is the Jann of Afadjann, who is advised by a command staff consisting of the Grand Master of Crushing Hooves, the Master of the Standing Spears, the Master of the Dashomo Sea and the Commander of the Black Watch. Each of these four advisers is of Emir status and own the members of their commands. They are assisted by three aides-de-camp of masarin status. Due to the incredible scarcity of horses in Pamaltela the Grand Master of Crushing

Hooves has only a small number of men under his command. These are, however, elite troops trained from infancy for war and equipped with metal armor and barding. The cavalry only numbers three troops of seventeen men bearing bow, lance, yataghan and shield. Each trooper is supported by three highly trained footmen equipped with chainmail, yataghan and shield. The troopers are all freemen of masarin status, usually the younger sons of rich families, while the footmen are kadz owned by the individual troopers.

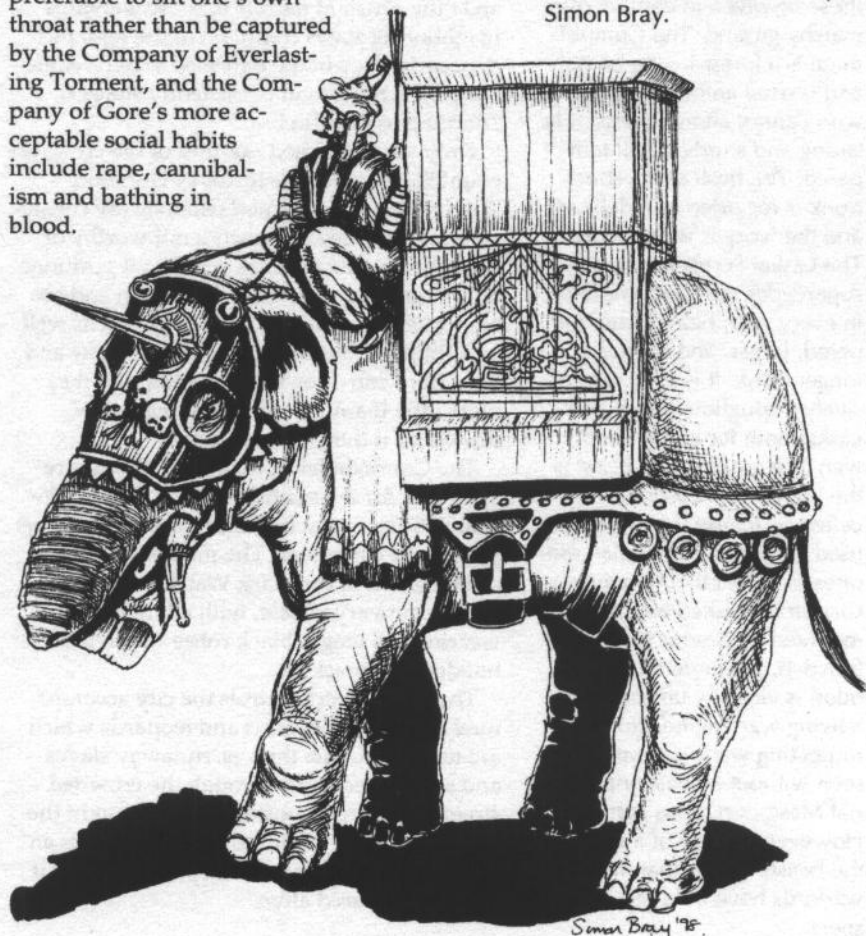
The three companies each have their own highly distinctive standards and are known as the Company of Fiery Truth, the Company of Everlasting Torment and the Company of Gore. These units strike fear into the enemy. The Company of Fiery Truth standard is a transparent jar containing the still beating heart of a long vanquished foe wreathed in flames but never consumed. It is preferable to slit one's own throat rather than be captured by the Company of Everlasting Torment, and the Company of Gore's more acceptable social habits include rape, cannibalism and bathing in blood.

Elephants in Fonrit

Sandy Petersen

The number of elephants your army can boast is the main measure of how ready you are to go to war. Also the quality you have—if you have all Imperial Mastodons, and your enemy only has midget shovel-tuskers, you have a big advantage.

A war shovel-tusker and mahout. This unique sub-species of shovel-tusker is now only found in captivity. It's commonly known a Garangordos's Shovel-tusker. Illustration by Simon Bray.



Elephants

Simon Bray

Elephants and their kin are very important in Fonrit. They are used as beasts of burden, but more importantly beasts of war. Native forest elephants are small, docile and are only used for meat, sport and as pack animals. Other species encountered in Fonrit are the shovel-tusker, the Gomphithere, the Laskali Greater Forest Elephant, and the Imperial Mastodon. The shovel-tusker is a water loving animal, and can be encountered at river crossings where rich masarin ride in special howdahs across the waters. Some farmers use the strange beast to assist them in dredging rivers and canals. They are sometimes used in war, but only by the poor or those involved in conflict over marshy ground. The Gomphithere is a forest-loving beast and is used amongst loggers who cannot afford lucans. It is strong and sturdy but ill tempered. The flesh of the short trunk is regarded as a delicacy, and the ivory is widely used. The Laskali Forest Elephant supercedes the Gomphithere in every way, being better tempered, larger, and having a longer trunk. It is used extensively throughout Fonrit and Laskal both for burden and war. The greatest war beast is the Imperial Mastodon, so called because they were used by all the Pamaltelan empires to defeat their enemies. Clad in burnished armor and mounted by a stout wooden howdah, the Imperial Mastodon is virtually unstoppable, a living war engine. No self respecting warlord would be seen without at least one Imperial Mastodon in his garrison. However the cost of importing the beasts means that many warlords have little self respect.

The Master of the Standing Spears commands the largest contingent of the armed forces of Hombori Tondo. The infantry consists exclusively of slaves of Agimori blood who are bought from the outland tribes as children and raised as a large family by the regiment, thus having no family ties or loyalty other than to the regiment and the Jann. This inculcation and group bonding from an early age greatly enhances the infantry's morale and cohesiveness on the battlefield.

The 2703 Agimori in the infantry are split into three battalions, each of which is led by a commander, who is assisted by a sub commander, and has its own standard bearer. These three are protected by an elite body-guard of fourteen spearmen and the rest of the battalion consists of seventeen units led by an overseer. Each unit is divided into three equal squads who fight as brothers in battle. Each infantryman is equipped in the traditional Agimori manner with a large shield, spear and javelins, but little armor.

The Master of the Dashomo Sea is effectively the admiral of the Afadjanni fleet. His fleet consists of seventeen squadrons of three ships which constantly patrol the waters around Afadjanni in squadron strength. Each ship is small, very swift and maneuverable, but of limited safety in heavy seas. Such patrols are usually of short duration as each ship only carries enough supplies for seven days at sea. Despite the constant patrols of these warships neighboring states complain of the high incidence of piracy in the patrolled waters, something which the Jann consistently states is "nothing to do with him."

Only the 867 armed marines of the crews are counted as part of the forces of Hombori Tondo whilst the chained oarsmen are considered lowly galley slave scum not worthy of recognition. The marines occupy all positions on a ship other than that of oarsman and are responsible for sailing and navigation as well as fighting. They are equipped with bow and yataghan, and often buckler, although they wear little if any armor due to the risk of drowning if they fall overboard.

The Commander of the Black Watch is responsible for the members of the Calari, officially 867 strong, who fulfill the roles of secret police and city guard. The membership and organization of the Black Watch is highly secretive but very visible, with all members wearing full length black robes which are hooded and masked.

The Black Watch patrols the city accompanied by trained baboons and leopards which are used to pursue thieves, runaway slaves and other miscreants through the crowded streets and across rooftops. When caught the animals tear the victim to pieces, which is an easier death than that which would follow if he were captured alive.

The final section of the armed forces is under the immediate command of the Jann. This body consists of 255 Veldang eunuchs, chosen in infancy for their size and strength. These men are truly huge and impressive. They are shaved of all body hair, wear only a loincloth and carry a drawn kora at all times. As a sign of their status as a eunuch they carry their still living genitalia in a sealed transparent jar worn about their necks. These eunuchs guard the Jann's palace, harem and person at all times. They are occasionally assigned to guard Emirs and ambassadors in the Jann's service.

Notes

The Veldang eunuchs of Hombori Tondo are completely emasculated in infancy and their genitalia placed in a transparent sealed jar. By some strange magic the genitals remain alive and actually develop as the eunuch grows as if they were still attached to the Veldang, who proudly display their fully grown manhood by wearing their jars around their necks in full view at all times.

The day-to-day organization of the eunuchs is controlled by Anuki, the Chief Eunuch, who stands seven feet tall and is immensely strong. The Jann appointed Anuki to his current position after seeing him prevent a drunken masarin from disrupting the harem by breaking his neck and tearing the masarin's head from his shoulders with his bare hands. To ensure his own personal safety the Jann has made Anuki subject to his own Compulsion spell but immune to this spell cast by anyone else.

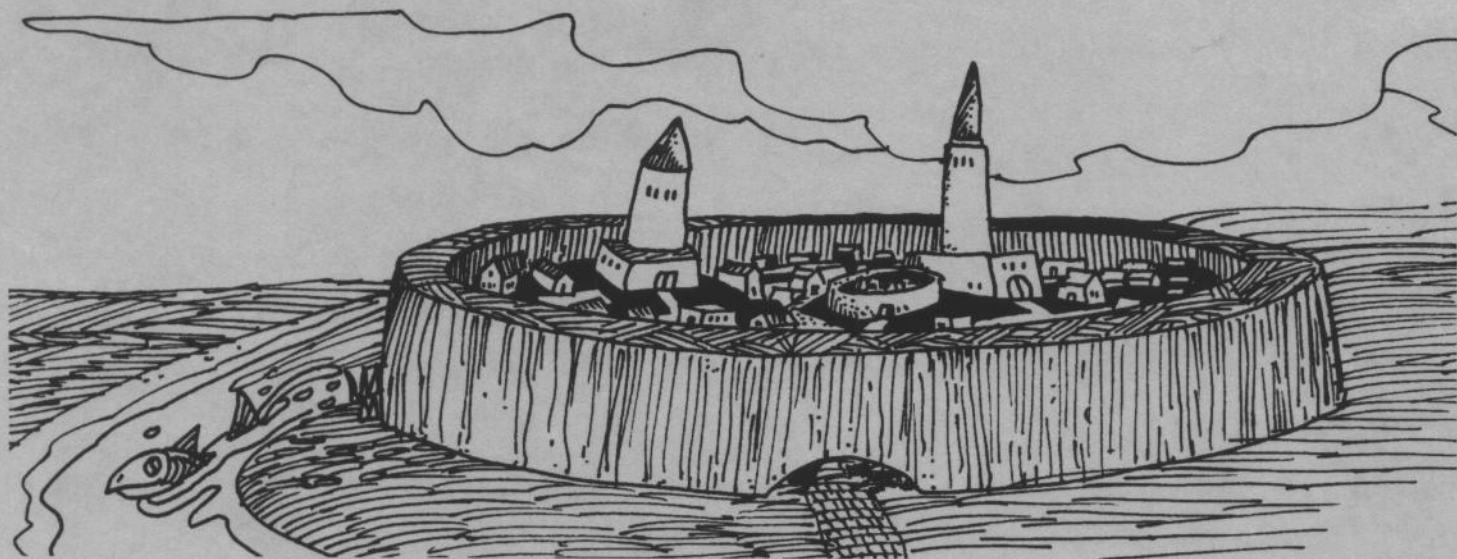
The armed forces of Hombori Tondo favor the use of two different types of sword. The yataghan is in common usage. It's a broad-bladed single edged incurved sword about three and a half feet in length used in one hand. Veldang eunuchs prefer the wide, flared-bladed single edged kora, which is about four and a half feet in length and used in both hands.

Afadjanni Warship

Length: 17m Beam: 4m Draft: 2m
Freeboard: 3m Tonnage: 35 (5 tons cargo)
Crew: 17 sailors/marines, 34 oarsmen.

These ships form a crucial part of the defense of Hombori Tondo, patrolling the straits and out into the Dashomo Sea. They are small, sleek, very fast and highly maneuverable.

There is a small quarter-deck, on which stands the helmsman, and a single lateen rigged mast for cruising. For greater speeds and for battle the ships are propelled by chained oarsmen, seventeen on each side arranged on two levels, nine rowers on the lower rank and eight on the upper. Usual tactics are to surround a target vessel and close under the cover of missile fire to grapple and board. Prisoners are normally taken for ransom or to be sold into slavery.



Welcome to the Enclosure, the great temple of the city of Alkoth. Here, corpses are burned and slaves sacrificed to mighty Shargash the Destroyer. Alkoth is one of the three main cities of the Dara Happan Empire.

To the south live fierce farmers descended from the storm god Orlanth. From the tumultuous disputes of their heroes arose the famous "Immolation Song."

Across the great ocean lies the exotic land of Fonrit, where blue-skinned slaves toil for the pleasures of their decadent masters.

These are just three parts of Glorantha, an intricately detailed fantasy world created by Greg Stafford. Glorantha has been explored before in the games RuneQuest, Dragon Pass, and numerous other publications, including King of Sartar.



A Soapy Frog Creation

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