

Living Greyhawk

journal

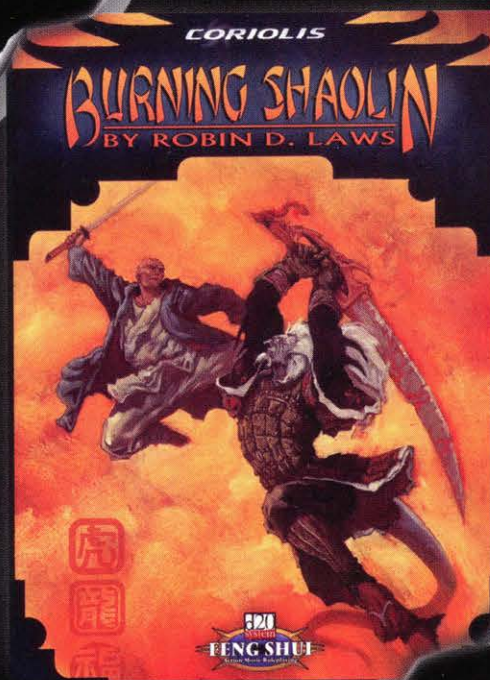


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Living Greyhawk[®]

Journal

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By Erik Mona

More tales of crooked professors and scheming students this issue, as we delve further into the district known as Clerkgurg. Grab a stack of scrolls and your best set of armor—whether studying for exams or working off a criminal sentence in the Free City Arena, you won't want to be caught unprepared.

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A brazen gladiator squares off against a chuul imported from distant Hepmonaland in Scott Fischer's rendition of a day in the life of the newly refurbished Free City Arena.

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The World of Greyhawk created by E. Gary Gyax

State of the Campaign

BY STEPHEN RADNEY-MACFARLAND

Scarcely a year and a half ago I got my first real taste of the LIVING GREYHAWK campaign. It was my first day of work at Wizards of the Coast. My computer had not arrived, and my new boss, David Wise, was not sure where my cube was going to be. I remember that Erik Mona, then the LIVING GREYHAWK campaign director, was poring over the last printer proofs of *The Fright at Tristor*, and finishing the first issue of this magazine. He needed immediate help with another LIVING GREYHAWK issue—the small stack of regional adventures that had grown since GEN CON 2000. In an abandoned corner cube, using Robert Wiese's spare laptop, I began work on the LIVING GREYHAWK campaign, and have never really stopped.

And when I say small stack, I mean small stack—you could count them on one hand. That stack was the molehill that turned into a mountain. Since that day, the LIVING GREYHAWK campaign has brought fun to more than 10,000 players. We've produced almost 250 adventures, hundreds of interactive events worldwide, and a path of fun and carnage that starts at the far reaches of the Udgru Forest and travels to the bustling docks of Oakenheart. The campaign has been the death of hundreds of characters: many falling in both of the special *Return to the Temple of Elemental*

Evil events, but even more fell valiantly in whatever games occurred at their weekly events. LIVING GREYHAWK has outstripped everyone's expectations. It took LIVING CITY years to grow to similar numbers, and the momentum of LIVING GREYHAWK shows no sign of slowing any time soon.

With growth comes pain and learning. Due to the ambitiousness of the LIVING GREYHAWK project, we have experienced a lot of both in the last year and a half.

I'm sure that you know that this special issue of LIVING GREYHAWK *Journal* is the last stand-alone version of the magazine. If you didn't know, this magazine now dwells in the larger whole that is *Dragon Magazine*. It seems a pity when the offerings of our favorite fantasy world are affected by the economic reality of the real world, but it happens. Still, having LIVING GREYHAWK *Journal* in *Dragon* has a great upside—it lets other D&D and LIVING GREYHAWK fans know about this campaign, which will drive even more folks to RPGA Network events.

Ah, *Tristor*! No conversation about the growing pains of this campaign would be complete without bringing up *The Fright at Tristor* at-home play adventure. The great news is that *Tristor* was an overwhelming success, generating play from a third of all LIVING GREYHAWK players. The

downside to that success is that it generated 500 person-hours of slow and tedious work in order to process results from all those tables. Still, I am happy to say that it got done, with as few snags as humanly possible. I thank everyone for your patience and understanding while weathering *The Fright at Tristor*. We are re-releasing the adventure in the near future, and in that re-release, the DM will be given the tools he or she needs to distribute rewards to characters, so if you have not played *Tristor* yet, I am happy to stay that in this next incarnation you'll receive your experience points and goodies in a fraction of the time it took your friends to get theirs.

We also weathered major rules changes, as we moved forward with the Adventure Certificates. Though I know the changes are not popular with some, and I have to apologize at the speed in which they were released, their implementation was necessary to the continued growth and well being of the campaign. There will be changes to these rules along the way, such as the recent changes that put the original rules for using magic item creation feats much closer to the core D&D rules, but it remains the campaign staff's goal to introduce as few "house" rules as possible for LIVING GREYHAWK play. I am a strong believer in one of the original tenants of the campaign—any player should be able to join the campaign with only the *Player's Handbook* and the current character creation guide. While rules from other D&D sources are constantly added to the campaign, those two documents are all a player needs to start.

Making sure that the campaign is viable and fun to new and old players alike is an extreme challenge for any organized play program, and extremely difficult for a long-term worldwide roleplaying game campaign. New players are overwhelmed by new sources, while seasoned players are reinvigorated by their added options. Most supplementary product produced for the D&D game assumes that an individual Dungeon Master is being very picky with what she allows in her campaign, but even in a home campaign with six or so players, a DM can easily

feel overwhelmed with the number of variables involved. Planning goes out the window, as the players pull something unexpected out of their character's hat. A good friend of mine said that PC doesn't stand for player character, it stands for plot corruptor, and in a very cynical way, he is right. Compound those problems by the thousand, and you have the plight of the typical LIVING GREYHAWK DM.

Help is coming, though, with the creation of a new GM Program which will greatly benefit the LIVING GREYHAWK campaign. In the next couple years, the primary emphasis of the RPGA Network will be on Dungeon Master support. Part of this program involves opportunities for regional DMs to hook up, exchange ideas and tactics, and gain special information and insight from their regional Triads, all away from the prying eyes of players. This kind of DM networking should only increase the quality of the LIVING GREYHAWK game experience. With the forthcoming GM Program, we are also looking into ways to expand LIVING GREYHAWK home play by offering experienced and creative DMs a chance to expand play in their own ways, and grant their players interesting and unique game experiences.

While the GM Program is designed to increase the quality of gaming at a very grassroots level, you are also going to see some exciting changes to your convention experience. This year at the Origins Game Expo, we will present a special event related to the mysterious Isles of Woe, said to have fallen beneath the waters of the Lake of Unknown Depths in antiquity. This dungeon delve is the first offering of a year-long plot. While a smaller version of the premiere *Isles of Woe* adventure will be made available for local conventions or smaller events, some future special events will be offered and playable only at select shows. We are also in the process of creating event packages for larger shows and conventions, including tools to advertise and present your LIVING GREYHAWK events.

We go forward with these plans with a restructured Circle. The current Circle, which will be fully in place by this year's Origins, administers five meta-regions, and the Regional Triads that make up each of these meta-regions. Each Circle member is also in charge of one long-term (2-year cycle) core adventure plot, and a group of meta-region adventures that are slated for release in the 593 CY campaign year (that's 2002 CE by the current calendar you are probably used to). These meta-region adventures support play for characters 12th level and higher. We hope creating a campaign structure with a regional emphasis can decrease the number of information bottlenecks the old system had, and create a better connection of interesting core and meta-regional adventures. The Triads will continue to function the way they do now, but with more timely and comprehensive support within the new structure.

How does all of this affect the average LIVING GREYHAWK player? Well, we are striving to give you the best D&D experience you can have.

I understand that's a tall order, and it's going to be tough to fulfill. Still, you can bet when hundreds of RPGA DMs start talking to one another, they are going to come up with some wicked and fiendish ways to test your character's mettle. But if you weren't into challenges, you wouldn't be playing D&D, would you? With these challenging times ahead, I predict that you'll look back on 2002 and 2003 as some of the best years of gaming you've ever had. Just in case you don't know it already, GREYHAWK is the best campaign that has ever graced fantasy roleplaying, and future LIVING GREYHAWK play will only reconfirm that fact. If you've any doubts about those statements, come join us at your next local RPGA event, and you'll see what I mean...just don't get too attached to your characters, or at least save enough gold for at least one resurrection.

STEPHEN RADNEY-MACFARLAND
Living Greyhawk Campaign Director
srm@wizards.com

THE "LOST" ISSUE

As you've most likely puzzled out by now, you're holding a copy of *Living Greyhawk Journal* #5, which was supposed to have come out way back in July, 2001. Seeing as how the magazine is now a part of *Dragon* and that the last issue was somewhere in the early teens, it's fairly clear we're running a little behind on getting this issue to press. The whole tangled story involves transfers, reorganizations, disorganizations, and worse, and would take far more time to cover than I've been afforded here. Grab me at a convention some time and I'll happily tell you about it, provided I'm already on my sixth or seventh beer.

I'm thrilled that we're finally able to bring this issue to you. You don't know how difficult it's been to sit on great material with no outlet for it. Finally, Fred Weining's secrets of Zeif can wind their way into your campaign, we see a little more of Clerkgburg, and we get a few more creatures from the mysterious Fiend-Sage. I'd like to specially thank Wendy Johnson for some last minute layout assistance.

We'll keep bringing you this sort of Greyhawk goodness, now on a monthly basis, in the pages of *Dragon Magazine*. Check the inside front cover for details on how you can subscribe. In the meantime, we'll see you in the Cairn Hills.
[Erik Mona, March, 2002]

Gem of the Flanaess

CITY OF GREYHAWK — CLERKBURG (PART 2)

BY ERIK MONA AND DENIS TETREAULT ILLUSTRATIONS BY MATTHEW MITCHELL MAP BY DENIS TETREAULT

Our survey of Clerkborg continues this month with a look at a more than a half-dozen buildings that form the core of Greyhawk's educational district. See the map on the inside back cover of the magazine.

C4: Black Dragon Inn

After Clerkborg's bustle of young scholars shuffling from hall to hall dies down to the comfortable din of early evening, students, young professors, political agitators, and weary menials crowd the Black Dragon Inn for rest, food, and the strongest drinks east of the Processional. Managed by a gregarious, bear-like retired adventurer named **Miklos Dare** [LG Ftr4], the Black Dragon boasts 60 private rooms for rent, one of the city's largest common sleeping rooms, and an unostentatious but skillfully delivered menu for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. More than the food or accommodations, however, the Black Dragon is known for being open at all hours of the day and night, and for the eclectic clientele attracted by such forgiving hours of operation.

Students from the surrounding colleges serve as bouncers, maids, bartenders, and housekeepers, and make up the bulk of the Black Dragon's customers. Traders from the Low Market, city watchmen, former students still caught up in the allure of intellectual debate, and Baklunish inhabitants of the "Little Ket" neighborhood across the Processional augment the youthful atmosphere. Walking from the bar to the private toilet off the taproom, it's possible to hear a heated argument over the rights of Wild Coast slaves whose masters were killed by the warbands of Turrosh Mak, bitter complaints about unfair business practices in the Petit Bazaar, and rampant speculation on the whereabouts of the dastardly Lord Robilar. Miklos Dare listens to all of this talk, and has established a significant body of lore and rumors, some of which happen to be more than the simple blustering of a young pedant striking an intellectual blow against a hated fellow.

DM's Notes: Among the various student social clubs or "literary societies" who congregate here can be found the Dunfalcon Alliance, a secretive body of young would-be revolutionaries who believe that the mayor and oligarchy are irredeemably corrupt puppets of the city's Thieves' Guild. Through the posting of seditious tracts, calumnious graffiti, and secret meetings, the Alliance seeks to undermine the authority of the city's rulers. Eventually, they'd like to depose the directors and mayor, replacing the system with a meritocracy similar to that found in Dyvers. Their charismatic leader, the thirty-two-year-old **Regalian Brax** [CN hm Rog6], emphasizes the need for secrecy among the order, and personally interviews potential recruits before allowing them into the fold. Thus far, the society has undertaken few direct actions—a midnight attack on the

business of Director Vesparian Lafanel led to the capture of six members in late 590 CY, and Brax appears reticent to risk further capture and possible discovery with another such blunder. PCs showing a public hatred for the government might find themselves contacted by a member of the Dunfalcon Alliance and, after a simple test of loyalty, indoctrinated into their ranks.

Few question how Brax manages to afford his rather comfortable lifestyle. He claims to have inherited a generous sum from an uncle slain while fleeing from the destruction of Elredd, but the source of his wealth can be found far closer to home. Regalian Brax is in the employ of Mayor Nerof Gasgal, whom he met while a least master in the Thieves' Guild several years ago. Brax had spent most of his time since then as a sleeper agent in Dyvers, and when Gasgal assumed leadership he recalled his former friend, a skilled liar and actor, to serve as his spy among the all-too-idealistic students of the Halls. Gasgal and Brax use the Dunfalcons to weed out those students and malcontents who pose the most serious ideological threats to the government, as well as to attract any rival agents from Dyvers, with whom relations have never been cordial. Once a "critical mass" of threats has been assembled, Brax sends them as a team on some mission in which they inevitably are betrayed. The six members captured last year, including the infamous Reductionist pamphleteer Liargo Kline, were captured by agents of the Assassins' Guild and dissolved in the acid vats of the city workhouse (Area F7). A poor, borderline-insane "guest" of the workhouse, an alcoholic halfling carter named **Alamant Bounder** [NG hlm Com2], overheard Lafanel's agents talking about the mayor's ties to the Alliance as they disposed of the bodies. He has been living as a veritable shut-in in his home in Burrow Heights (Area F14) ever since.

C5: Jewelers and Gemcutters' Guildhall

Consisting of three attached buildings, this ornate yet fortress-like structure is the headquarters for one of Greyhawk's most self-important guilds. Inside the buildings are numerous secure storage rooms, workshops, and meeting chambers so overdecorated with riotous collections of rich draperies, elaborate tapestries, exotic carpets, and miscellaneous miss-matched artwork as to bring tears to the eyes of the most devout cleric of Zilchus. Though the guild wields influence in the city befitting its members' roles as wealthy citizens and the guildmaster even serves as a city Director, the extent of ceremony at their hall can only be described as pompous.

Fortified beneath the guildhall are extensive vaults that hold an incredible wealth in gems (both cut and uncut). The impenetrability of the guild's vaults is legendary, and certainly includes both magical and mechanical protections. Periodically, trustworthy adventurers are hired (sometimes indirectly) to test the secu-

rity of the vaults. Guildmaster **Gerda Hollardel** [CN hf Rog3], daughter of the previous guildmaster, has a good business sense and is popular, if a bit headstrong and conservative.

DM's Notes: Gerda is secretly a low-level member of the Thieves' Guild. She and another Director, **Dernen Nathane** [N hm Ftr2/Rog5], have shared a romantic relationship for years (the two met while training in the Thieves' Guild, an organization to which Nathane also belongs). Nathane is a high-ranking member of the Merchants and Traders' Guild.

Gerda is not the first master of the guild to have regular dealings with the city's underworld. In his day, her father Bodmi (a personal friend of Nerof Gasgal and Org Nenshen) provided the thieves with information on the shops of fellow guildsmen in exchange for protecting his own holdings and the guildhall itself from intrusion by thieves. In 589 CY, a fellow jeweler was killed when a group of junior thieves bungled a burglary at his shop, and though Bodmi Hollardel was never implicated for providing information to the thieves, he nonetheless retired in anguish. His daughter has continued the practice. If his role in the affair were to come to light, the resulting scandal would rock the Directing Oligarchy.

The entire guild has been atwitter for much of the past month after the guildhall suffered a major theft, despite the unofficial protection from guild thieves. Somehow, a single rogue penetrated the guild's most secure vault. Ignoring items of astounding value, the interloper stole only a single unremarkable ruby with a weak enchantment (previously identified as *Nystul's magic aura*), leaving behind a white glove featuring a monogrammed "Z". Gerda has made no official comment on the theft, but the more vociferous jewelers in the guild have taken the occasion to call for new leadership, citing Hollardel's negligence in allowing the guild's vaults to be plundered.

C6: University of Magical Arts

Across the whole of the Flanaess, the rich and the humble alike dream of sending their children to Greyhawk's prestigious University of Magical Arts. Rightly considered the finest training institution of the arcane arts on the continent, the university accepts applicants based on merit and potential magical aptitude, paying little heed to such meaningless trifles as social class, race, or familial connections. Both wizards and sorcerers are accepted, though many of the more traditional instructors favor wizardly hopefuls, finding it easier to confer magical teachings through rote study of arcane formulae than to guide a would-be sorcerer through the process of tapping her inherent potential for magic through far less tangible means.

The university is situated within a massive pyramid that many scholars consider one of the greatest architectural marvels of the modern Flanaess. Each of the structure's three sides is exactly 222 feet long and 181 feet high. No doors, windows, or marks of any kind mar the pyramid's walls—low-level students announce themselves at a pre-arranged spot and are taken within by tutors armed with magical means to bypass the pyramid's many protections. A six-foot-high wall surrounding the pyramid is likewise featureless.

The pyramid features an immense underground auditorium and nine floors, each representing a specific level of arcane magical study. Initiates learn cantrips and 1st-level spells on the



Magic lessons at the University

main floor, and as they progress in study, students move on to higher floors and more rigorous curricula and tutors. The floors get smaller and smaller as they approach the pyramid's zenith. A mess hall takes up a large portion of the ground floor, as do dozens of small dormitories for the use of students in their first through fifth year of study. More experienced students and instructors are expected to keep quarters in the city proper, or on some demiplane parallel to the university's metaphysical axis.

Though instructors and senior students pass in and out of the university with regularity, the youngest and rawest applicants do not leave the pyramid for at least two years after their initial visit. During that time, the would-be arcanists study the fundamentals of magical theory. Graduates of this strict regimen, during which no spells are actually taught, liken the process to a test of endurance—a weeding out of dilettantes and those who lack the discipline required to channel arcane magic appropriately. The college expels students only under the most dire circumstances (theft of a magical treasure from the vaults, destroying university lore, and murder top the short list of exile offenses). Nearly every student who leaves the university does so by her own volition (the longest apprenticeship on record was that of Bandul the Keen, an indolent lout who dithered at the lowest levels of the college for 27 years before accepting a position as a minor functionary in Hardby's unremarkable guild). If an apprentice leaves the university for any reason, she may never return to it unless she does so as an accomplished mage.

Students reaching the end of their apprenticeship (gaining a first level in either the wizard or sorcerer class) are encouraged to leave the school and "explore the world" (read: roam about violating ancient tombs and vanquishing monsters with magic). Such encouragement has led some of the more staunch magical

guilds and institutions of the Flanaess to coin the term "Greyhawk Method" to signify an intellectual pursuit tainted by commercial or foolhardy concerns. Such paragons decry the university as a training ground for base mercenaries, which many professors view as a kind of unintentional endorsement.

The first floor houses about 100 apprentices (who possess no actual spellcasting power), two dozen functionaries who keep the place running, and five priests of Boccob who spend most of their time magically generating food and drink for students not allowed to leave the premises. About 60 1st-level novitiates study on the second floor, 40 2nd-level novices on the third, 20 3rd-level arcanists on the fourth, 12 4th-level casters on the fifth, and six 5th-level wizards and sorcerers practice their abilities on the sixth floor. Floors seven through nine sport at most three or four students each, usually taught by a single instructor (teams of varying sizes oversee students on the lower floors). Generally, instructors are about three levels higher than their brightest student, though the gap grows larger the further one ventures up the pyramid. None are lower than 7th level. Lower-level teachers draw a respectable salary, but the best and most skilled instructors usually bargain a term of service with the university in exchange for spells or lore unavailable anywhere else. The life of a powerful instructor is an easy one, especially when compared to the dangerous adventuring through which most gained their magical experience. Tutors generally view their terms in a pleasing light.

The university's principal, the canny **Kieren Jalucian** [NG hm W21], faces the daunting task of keeping order in an edifice teeming with miscast spells and often extremely self-interested students and faculty. Jalucian tolerates no serious conflict among his staff or students, encouraging antagonists to solve their differences in non-lethal mage duels in an auditorium-like chamber in the university's understructure. The institution officially excludes no one on the basis of alignment, though Jalucian personally has little tolerance for openly evil members of his staff, a practice that has led to some serious difficulties with the new Senior Tutor. The Principal keeps personal rooms at the apex of the pyramid, where he can sometimes be found in the company of his paramour, Jallarzi Salavarian of the Circle of Eight. Rumors tell that Kieren was invited to join that august order after the destruction of Otiluke and Tenser, but that he refused due to his duties as master of the Guild of Wizardry (on top of his position with the university). Now that he has passed on his role in the guild to another, it may only be a matter of time before he opts to join Bigby, Otto, and the others. That is, if Mordenkainen, who has openly derided Jalucian as a "hopeless idealist," will have him.

Until the end of 591 CY, the university's Senior Tutor was an ancient, decrepit wizard by the name of Tobin Potriades. In Patchwall of that year, his body finally gave out, and he died peacefully in his sleep. The archmage's most tenacious political opponent, **Abrazaldin Hosk** [NE hm Wiz20] was only too happy to move into Potriades's ostentatious chambers in the pyramid's top floor, which he had coveted for more than 40 years. Though he appears to be approaching 50, Hosk claims to be more than 100 years old, a refugee from Dorakaa who fled when the rise of luz turned the former Ferrondian regional capital into a living nightmare. The archmage's hatred of luz is one of the few reasons he is trusted by the other instructors at all, as Hosk makes

few attempts to disguise the fact that he is interested in making himself more powerful regardless of the philosophical ramifications of his actions. Worse, he seems determined to pass on his work ethic to his students. Jalucian and other highly placed tutors manage to stave off most corruption by ensuring that Hosk receives mostly students who proved themselves to be debased or unbalanced long before coming to the university.

Admission to the college requires the sponsorship of another wizard, approval by a board of tutors, and an initial admission fee of 100 gp. Older wizards often foot the bill, gaining the apprentice's services for the length of his or her initial studies. Training fees for more experienced arcanists vary, and sometimes involve quests of magical lore retrieval rather than cash transactions.

Members of all the common races can be found in the university, though by far the bulk of students come from Greyhawk or the surrounding region (the tutors tend to favor "home grown" magical talent during the approval of potential apprentices). Most students and tutors are of Neutral alignment, and all at least pay lip service to Boccob the Uncaring.

DM's Notes: The tomes and scrolls secreted within the university hold countless secrets, but perhaps none so alluring as that which lurks behind the pyramid structure itself. Seven years ago, a student or instructor experimenting with extremely powerful magic on the pyramid's highest floor miscast a delicate incantation. The spell shifted the pyramid ever so slightly out of synch with the surrounding reality, bringing it closer to (still hypothetical) alternate Material planes. Students and teachers alike periodically glimpse "ghost proctors," faintly translucent humanoid images of learners and masters who seem to walk about the university as if they belonged there, completely oblivious to any onlookers.

Though word of these apparitions has spread throughout the Halls, Jalucian discourages investigation of the phenomenon, officially discrediting any mention of the ghost images as the banter of idealistic students still struggling to comprehend the rudiments of illusory magic. Others in the higher echelons of instructors urge further exploration. Led by **Abrazaldin Hosk**, this faction knows that the barriers between worlds can be pierced. Their certainty derives from a little-known event last year, in which an elderly human wizard with an all-too-familiar face appeared within the structure, claiming to have come from a world known as Yarth. Hosk caught the archmage unawares and imprisoned him upon his private demiplane, but not before the strange visitor had a chance to introduce himself as **Xagig Yragurne**, Lord Mayor of the city of Greyhawk.

C7: City Mint

The guildhall for the Mintworkers' Guild is the stamping and casting center for the official coinage of the Free City. This heavily fortified, windowless hall has but one entrance and is always guarded by one elite and two standard City Watch patrols, all with magical and mundane protections. Redundant warning procedures can summon reinforcements from the City Watch and the Guildhall of Wizardry at a moment's notice.

Lead-lined, heavy stone vaults beneath the structure reportedly store staggering amounts of platinum, gold, electrum, and silver, as both bars and coins. As a result of recent inflation caused by treasure-hunters returning to the city bearing their new-found

wealth, the mint no longer manufactures bronze or iron coinage. Copper commons are falling out of fashion (except in Old City), and the guild has petitioned the city for permission to halt their production, though there is some political resistance. About once a week, at unpredictable times, coins minted here are transferred under heavy guard to the city's moneylenders and other city-approved repositories.

Guildmaster **Wilyard Greathand** (LN hm Ftr3) is best described as aggressively paranoid, and rarely leaves the City Mint for any reason. Wilyard has, over the years, acquired quite an extensive personal collection of antique coins from around the world, and the only time he will meet with any outsider is for the purpose of acquiring new coins for his collection.

DM's Notes: Although the Thieves' Guild sometimes manages to skim wealth from shipments once they arrive at moneylenders' establishments, Org Nenshen (Guildmaster of Thieves) and Lord Mayor Nerof Gasgal have forbidden any direct assault on the City Mint, though young thieves can always dream.

In addition to the standard types of precious metals, the mint also holds a small supply of iron-alloyed mithral and adamantite ingots for specialty weapons manufacturing. Other types of specialty metals may periodically be present.

Wilyard's paranoia seems to have reached new heights in recent months. Becoming even more reclusive and beginning to distrust even his most loyal workers, Wilyard has become convinced that some unknown individual or organization is planning a major assault upon the wealth of the Mint. As a result, he has taken the unprecedented step of hiring an independent investigator, one **Gom the Enforcer** (NE hm Rog8/Ass3), to uncover this suspected plot. Wilyard's associates are afraid of the depths to which this shady character will delve in the pursuit of his mission.

C8: The New Mill

The "New Mill," or New Mill College, is one of two functioning mills within the city walls, and serves as the headquarters for the Guild of Bakers and Cooks. Although some staffers at the Old Mill resented its construction, in truth the output from the New Mill isn't high enough to make any competitive impact since New Mill is first and foremost an educational institution. Here the various skills of food preparation, from the grinding of grain and the storing of milk to the final spicing and steaming of an exotic dish, are well taught by expert chefs from across the Flanaess. The college is also the site of a great cooking competition at the end of Brewfest. The mill's cellar sports a small slaughterhouse and ale-brewing facility.

Next to the mill building is the Chateau, a small yet elegant student-staffed restaurant that is rapidly gaining a reputation as one of the finest eateries in all the Free City. The Chateau is open only for dinner, and serves only foods and beverages produced at the school. Prices are reasonable, and the food is superb. Always crowded, it is best to make reservations at the Chateau at least a day ahead.

Tuition at the New Mill College is double that of Grey College, however advanced students are in great demand around the Flanaess as highly paid master chefs. About a quarter of the 40-50 students here are halflings, many from the nearby community of Elmshire.

DM's Notes: Apparent attacks on the Old Mill operations (see *Living Greyhawk Journal* #4), including several deaths, have caused some anxiety among students and functionaries at the college. A recent outbreak of food poisoning, though most likely accidental, has some seeing Scarlet Brothers in every shadowy corner. Known only to senior faculty is the fact that threatening notes have been found in several sensitive food-preparation areas, and security is being tightened, including the hiring of several guards. The headmaster has been contacting adventurers in a secret search for magical devices that detect and remove poisons and pests. The wizard Otto, an anonymous benefactor of the college and sometimes guest-instructor, has now taken an interest in the problems at the two mills, although his travels keep him away from the Free City much of the time.

C9: The Bardschool

While the Great Library of Greyhawk boasts the best collection of written history in the entire city, Greyhawk's famous Bardschool houses a peerless collection of oral accounts, poems, and songs. Formed about a century ago by disaffected dons of Grey College, the Bardschool now serves as that august institution's greatest intellectual rival (in terms of scholarship) within the city's walls. In truth, it's not a very fair comparison, since the Bardschool offers a wide-ranging curriculum with a strong basis in the liberal arts, spoken histories, and folk traditions (pursuits the industry-minded professors of Grey College often see as "soft" scholarship).

Some students of the Bardschool are in fact bards, but the school is not a traditional bardic college and does not offer strong training in the magical arts. Its unusual name came from the self-deprecating scholars who founded the institution, who intended to head off criticism from their former colleagues that the school would cater only to listless jacks of all trades and not to serious scholars. The self-deprecating, laid-back nature of the school's name is echoed in the disposition of its students. Often hand-selected from the dropouts of Greyhawk's other universities, a Bardschool student often possesses much more smarts than ambition. Most would prefer tossing *bon mots* at each other over fresh beer to the dreary rote learning of a traditional education. When allowed to develop on their own schedules, however, Bardschool students often (eventually) produce work of true brilliance. Roughly three dozen students enroll here at any time, with educational programs usually lasting from five to six years, since the pace of learning depends entirely upon the interest and motivation of the student in question.

Lactile Furlo [N hm Brd12], the school's droll High Tutor, is a master bard. He's served the school for half of his more than 60 years, keeping a personal class of a half-dozen of the city's most promising bards and musical prodigies at his side throughout the day. He and his special charges maintain a "living" document known as the History of the Bards. This multi-volume work tells the story of the city of Greyhawk, supplementing the official documents of the Great Library and city government with a record of Greyhawk's art, beauty, and ever-developing culture. The work contains many references to possible adventure opportunities or lost hordes, and Furlo helps to finance his small school by charging treasure hunters a small fee to review the document.

GEM OF THE FLANAESS CONTINUES!

Point your Web browser to www.livinggreyhawk.com for monthly quarter-by-quarter coverage of the most important city of the Greyhawk Campaign. There are nearly a dozen more neighborhoods to cover, so look for Gem of the Flanaess to continue for a year or more, brought to you by the same creative minds who kicked off the series. See you online!

DM's Notes: Those who care little for the arts or scholarship in general still appreciate the Bardschool for its dedication to a century-old tradition of humiliating Grey College, its students, and its deans. The two colleges compete against each other at sporting events in the Free City Arena, and while the Bardschool simply isn't large enough to field competitive teams such events are always well attended by students and menials of the Halls, who hope to see the haughty folk of Grey College put in their place by a small pack of casual, devious geniuses. Past humiliations have included countless mascot abductions and bawdy cheers. At a jumps competition in 579 the entire Bardschool team emerged from their quarters absolutely naked save for the requisite boots of *striding and springing*, their heavily armored competitors staring in bewilderment at their audacity as the crowd screamed approvals and appreciation. To make matters worse, the Bardschool team actually managed to defeat their befuddled opponents, scoring thirteen rings to Grey College's eleven.

This year, the Bardschool swore to take things seriously and field a competitive team. Students have for weeks spread rumors about "Killer Votz," their mysterious new team captain and star jumps player. No one has ever seen this star player, but the buzz (wholly generated by the devious Bardschool students) is so strongly in favor of the Bardschool that a few deans of Grey College have been spotted placing bets against their own team in certain low-class establishments around the district.

"Killer Votz" is, in fact, a much-abused goblin who has been charmed into thinking himself the greatest jumps player of all time. Votz stands just under three feet tall, and weighs about 150 pounds less than the weakest member of the Grey College team. He is, quite literally, a sacrificial lamb. The game of jumps involves a great deal of physical combat, with the ring carrier having to leap his way past a gauntlet of opposing players bearing iron-shod wooden staves. Each team includes one cleric, who tends to wounded players and who cannot be attacked. That said, Votz isn't likely to survive even one blow from such a weapon, which is exactly what the Bardschool players are counting on.

Votz, as it happens, is eldest son of Garrak Bloodbather, the warchief of the Broken Tooth goblin clan currently besieging Narwell, on the Wild Coast. The young goblin was captured by the older brother of the former Bardschool captain, a rambunctious, incautious dandy named **Asperd Vondragan** [CN hm Rog4]. Vondragan hopes to humiliate Grey College by forcing its players to kill Votz, which he hopes will so enrage Garrak Bloodbather that the goblin will march to Greyhawk itself. The plan is completely absurd and wholeheartedly dangerous, which is of course what makes it so appealing to the foolish Bardschool jumps team.

C10: Bridge of Entwined Hearts

Perhaps the most romantic locale in the city, this elegant stone bridge straddles the Millstream next to the Bardschool. The area is popular among students at Grey College, though it sees a fair amount of traffic from couples from all quarters of the city. A cosy balcony on each side of the bridge at its highest point holds a small bench for two, romantic nooks that have served as the setting for countless marriage proposals throughout the city's long history. When a suitor suggests taking his beloved on "a walk through Clerkgburg," it's a sure hint that a proposal is in the works. While some believe the bridge to be magical, most credit the pleasant atmosphere to the Bardschool's tradition of holding outdoor music practice nearby. In the secluded space beneath the bridge one can see many very personal messages of affection inscribed upon the stone blocks.

DM's Notes: The Bardschool does its best to encourage the magical reputation of the bridge, and performers purposefully choose to play romantic music, particularly in the early evening hours. Bardschool students even have good-natured competitions based on the types of amorous behaviors observed during each performance. Magical influence is not permitted during these competitions.

A frequent visitor to the area is an idealistic young Grey College student of religious lore named **Stakri Sreabl** (NG hf Clr4—Myhriss). Stakri believes that somewhere within the bridge is a block taken from the courtyard of Maid of Light and Dark herself, and would be grateful to anyone who helps to prove her thesis. Her professors remain unconvinced.

C11: The Savant Tavern

Once the stately residence of a Grey College chancellor, the Savant Tavern is a popular destination for tutors, sages, scholars, and other educated gentlefolk. The rambling maze of dimly lit small rooms, narrow corridors, and tiny alcoves, each with but a single table and several chairs, is the place to go for intelligent debate and good ale. The bookshelves lining nearly every wall contain many well-worn tomes, perused by those seeking a quiet, late-evening drink alone and perhaps a bite to eat from the limited menu.

DM's Notes: On most nights, a quiet scholar of Baklunish descent can be found sitting in an out-of-the-way alcove, drowning himself slowly on foul spirits while perusing ancient scrolls stained with spilled beer. The once-proud scholar, **Arkalan Sammal of Ket** (LN hm Expl7, Int 23), succumbed to the numbing, forgiving embrace of alcohol shortly after his older brother, the archmage Rary, turned traitor on the city, killing fellow wizards Tenser and Otiluke and immolating several blocks of the city in magical fire. Despite Arkalan's public disavowal of his brother in 584 CY, some Greyhawkers still cast an unfairly suspicious eye in his direction. He was sacked from his instructor position at Grey College in 585, and has spent the ensuing years in service to adventuring bands, a practice he loathes and continues only to finance his further submersion into the world of alcoholism.

His mind is still sharp, though his physical condition is deteriorating. Lost in despair, he fears his brother might turn on him at any time. Still, he hopes to find someone who can restore

Rary to his former rational self, as the brothers were once very close. Recently, Arkalan has had further cause for losing himself in drink with the news from Ket of a serious illness in the family. If Arkalan's skills of observation hadn't become so impaired, he surely would have noticed the several furtive figures who have been watching him from shadows in recent weeks.

CL2: Free City Arena

Oeridians have been obsessed with bloodsport since before the migrations, and a common truism throughout the Flanaess holds that one can determine the influence of Oeridians upon a given city by measuring the size and resplendence of its coliseum. Originally built during the reign of Ponjes the Bull, when Greyhawk was considered a *de facto* outpost of the Great Kingdom, Greyhawk's once-impressive arena was allowed to degenerate throughout the years, as the city swelled with autonomy and individualism. In ruins by the time the infamous Zagig Yragerne came to power, that worthy figure made improving the arena a crucial part of his early agenda. "We can still ignore the arrogance of the Overkings," he once said, "without ignoring the fact that it's amusing to watch two gladiators kill each other for the adoration of a loving public."

Zagig employed a cadre of architectural virtuosos to craft one of the most spectacular arenas in modern times. After Zagig's disappearance, the Directing Oligarchy forbade lethal combat in the arena, preferring to focus on athletic competitions between the city's many colleges (the brutal sport of jumps remains popular, no doubt in part because its players occasionally manage to suffer lethal injuries on the field). Last year, Mayor Gasgal reinstated lethal combat in the arena as a means to deal with overcrowding in the city's workhouses. Hardened criminals are now given the opportunity to do battle against imported creatures or each other at biweekly day-long festivals of violence. The irony that vicious criminals now rank among some of Greyhawk's most popular residents is not lost upon the

cynical inhabitants of the city.

In addition to sport and gladiatorial combat, the Free City Arena sees action as a home to militia and city watch drills, countless open-air performances, musical concerts, and holiday celebrations. At least once a year, guild wizards seal the field's two entrances with walls of force and flood the playing field allowing for simulated naval battles that draw observers from as far as Nyrond.

The arena holds up to 20,000 spectators, and consists of fifteen sections situated around an oval field of play. Four large gates at the east, west, and south of the arena allow large crowds to enter and exit the structure on a timely basis. Players and gladiators enter the arena from smaller gates at the east and west, which are in turn connected to a vast understructure of caves, animal pens, and storage chambers. Seats along the northern side of the arena command greater prices, with the most expensive section being that situated just left of the western gate. This section bears the Grand Box of the Lord Mayor, where Gasgal and his honored guests admire the competition under the shade of an elaborately columned roof. In addition to space for dozens of cronies and functionaries, the Box contains an elaborate wooden throne known as Zagig's Seat, which to this day is left empty should the city's infamous mayor drop by for a bit of sport.

DM's Notes: The catacomb of passages under the arena contain dozens of beasts and creatures from all over the Flanaess, and even a few from the outer planes. A current champion brawler, known locally as Vorrex the Bear-faced Mangler, has ravaged all opponents in the four months since he was first introduced. The ursine figure is in fact a guardinal, a normally chaotic good outsider dedicated to contemplative philosophical pursuits. In late 591 CY, a group of adventurers from Safeton known as the Crimson Cadre sold the creature to the arena for a pretty penny, claiming to have captured it in an expedition to the Pomarj. In fact, the beast's name is Abulax the Even-Handed. Captured by the cadre after he foiled their attempt to unleash the demon lady Ahrimanes to assist the forces of Turrosh Mak, the creature now suffers under a powerful magical compulsion. Abulax outwardly revels in his new destructive role while inwardly seething with rage at his current status. If released from his ordeal he might be able to point his benefactors in the direction of the Crimson Cadre, who no doubt plan to renew their demonic quest.★



The Rock of the West

EXPLORING THE SULTANATE OF ZEIF BY FRED WEINING

ILLUSTRATIONS BY VINCE LOCKE AND RAVEN MIMURA

The Sultanate of Zeif is the greatest of the successor states to the ancient Baklunish Empire. It has been the dominant force in the Near West for almost nine centuries, and it is still the pre-eminent nation of the Baklunish. Zeif has no great range of hills or mountains to define its territory, but the long valley of the Wadi Khijar serves to separate the eastern from the western lands of the sultanate. This valley runs from the Dry Steppes of the Paynims to the northern coast of Zeif. At one time a mighty river coursed through the Khijar Valley, but now only seasonal runoff normally flows over its rugged bed. In fact, the Wadi Khijar is dry for most of the year, though the valley may flood for weeks at a time during the rainy season.

The different regions of Zeif are also distinguished by the quality of their soil. The northeastern portion of the country makes up the tilled fields of Retsaba, where almost all Zeif's farmlands are found. Across the Khijar Valley in the rough and uneven northwestern lands are the mines of Vaar, from whence a wealth of chrysoberyls is taken for the sultan. South of both regions are the uncultivated grasslands called the Timarral; again, the lands to the west of the Wadi Khijar are generally rougher than those to the east. Finally, the harsh Plain of Antal is part of both the Paynim lands and the sultanate. It tends to be a lawless region, serving as a battleground for nomads and bandits, as well as other predators.

The people of Zeif place great importance on personal honor and family position; to them, any loss of reputation in the eyes of their fellows is the greatest calamity. Among themselves, the citizens of Zeif speak the Osfaradd dialect of the Baklunish language, but with infidels they will deign to use the Common Tongue of the Flanaess. Only the well educated are truly skilled in the use of Ancient Baklunish, making it the domain of the scholars, officials, and nobles who use the classical language in their professional affairs.

Politically, the sultanate is laid out in a haphazard-seeming assortment of lesser territories: pashaliks, beyliks, deylik's, timars, and the odd emirate or sheikdom. In theory, the sultan is the unquestioned ruler of all these lands, but in

practice he must contend with opposing forces among his nobles and within his own government. These forces can range from local administrators and rulers all the way to the ministers of the Diwan, and even to the grand vizier; but most insidious of all are the intrigues of the harem and its denizens, led by the matron sultana.

THE DIWAN

The Diwan is the sultan's cabinet, made up of the chief viziers of each government ministry. The sultan appoints its members with the assistance of his grand vizier, who in turn oversees the operations of Zeif's bureaucracy. The sultan may dismiss any of his viziers at will, though most officials have a network of allies in the bureaucracy that can make life difficult and dangerous for their replacements. However, any acts that disrupt the smooth function of government are considered treason, and the sultan may have offenders imprisoned or executed.

The current sultan did exactly this early in his reign when he purged the Ministry of the Treasury by executing the vizier and senior staff and selling their families into slavery. While this act was not universally applauded, it did stop the rampant embezzlement of treasury funds, and brought about remarkable improvements in the overall efficiency of his government. Of course, excessively brutal sultans must also beware of retaliation in turn, particularly if the offending viziers can gain the support of the matron sultana or other allies in the court.

THE MILITARY

The military of Zeif is broadly divided into cavalry, infantry and naval forces. The cavalry are led by the officers of the spahis, the sultan's knights. The senior officers, called spahi elders, administer their own fiefs, called timars, from which they must earn sufficient funds to maintain a ready force of mounted warriors. Commonly, they induct their relatives as junior officers, and hire paynim mercenaries to provide the bulk of their cavalry units.



A spahi, one of the sultan's honored knights

A spahi is responsible for the actions of his hired paynims, and must make reparation for any damages or casualties he causes among the citizens of Zeif. While some knights are very conscientious in their duty, many are not averse to permitting their mercenaries some small-scale raiding against travelers (particularly foreigners)—provided the spahi receives a generous share of the spoils.

The infantry is subdivided into two branches: the regular army and an elite group of orcish soldiers called the Uruzary Corps. The regular army is under the direct jurisdiction of the Ministry of War, which oversees the funding and assignment of junior officers to the different companies. Commonly, wealthy families will purchase an officer's commission from the Ministry of War for their otherwise unemployable offspring; it is then left to the senior commanders to provide for their training. The most successful officers learn to rely heavily on their enlisted staff in actual combat situations.

The Uruzary Corps is another matter entirely. The legendary sultan Jehef the Splendid created this renowned force of elite orcish infantry eight centuries ago to serve as his personal guard. The uruzaries are still the terror of the sultan's enemies at home and abroad, wielding their great two-handed swords to devastating effect. The corps has been enlarged over the years and its duties greatly expanded, but it is still funded by the sultan and considered part of his personal retinue. The uruzaries give their loyalty to no one but him. The senior uruzary commanders are always chosen by the sultan himself, and bear the title of aga; other officers of the corps are promoted from within the ranks. The uruzaries are renowned for both their fierceness and their iron discipline.

The Royal Navy of Zeif is nominally under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of War, but a high admiral called the kapudan pasha, who has direct authority over the navy and its captains, actually commands the fleet. Naval commissions are purchased in a manner similar to that of the regular army, save that payment must be made to both the kapudan pasha and the captain of the particular vessel on which the junior officer is assigned. Generally, these arrangements are negotiated with the ship's captain beforehand, allowing him to choose the most worthwhile candidate.

Sufficiently experienced officers may rise to the rank of naval captain, with the title reis, though such advancement is very expensive. The promotion often can be so costly that the potential reis will require the support of a wealthy patron, or patrons, from whom he can obtain the necessary tribute money. This might easily cause the captain's loyalty to be divided between his naval superiors and his civilian sponsors, but typically a reis of the Royal Navy will resolve this conflict by giving his first loyalty to himself.

THE CLERGY

The merchants' alliance known as the Mouqollad Consortium serves the sultanate by ensuring the continued flow of trade. Officially, it is an advisory body to government, with no granted authority. However, the vizier of Weights and Measures is usually a cleric of Mouqol (as are many in the Ministry of Trade), and he will work closely with his fellows in the Mouqollad to maintain the sanctity of the market-places of Zeif.

The Mouqollad also directs international trade, whether conducted over land or sea. Land trade is the province of the caravan-masters, and most caravan circuits are well established and assigned to specific merchant clans, though each journey offers its own unique dangers and challenges. Similarly, sea-trade is the province of the merchant-fleet captains. Local sea-traders may travel alone or in pairs, but those making longer journeys do so in larger flotillas of as many as a dozen ships. Candidates for mastery of a caravan or captaincy of a merchant-ship must have fulfilled many years of service to the consortium, and they will only be installed after rigorous examination by the Worthy Elders of Mouqol.

The Qudah is the Zeifan assembly of the Exalted Faith of Al'Akbar. The purpose of the Qudah as a whole is to strengthen and support the lawful institutions of the

The Sultan's Truce

Though the servants of the Caliph never ceased in their labors during the brief years of Ozef's reign, theirs was not the only voice the sultan heeded. Many of the lesser officials of the old regime had defected to the side of Ozef Khan (as he was then known) during his years of struggle against the false satraps who were their former masters. Some of these defectors now managed to ingratiate themselves with the new sultanate, and they worked to diminish the influence of the missionaries from Ekbir. Other long-standing conflicts began to re-emerge as well, whether between nomad and town-dweller, between orc and human, or simply between local clans and families revisiting old rivalries.

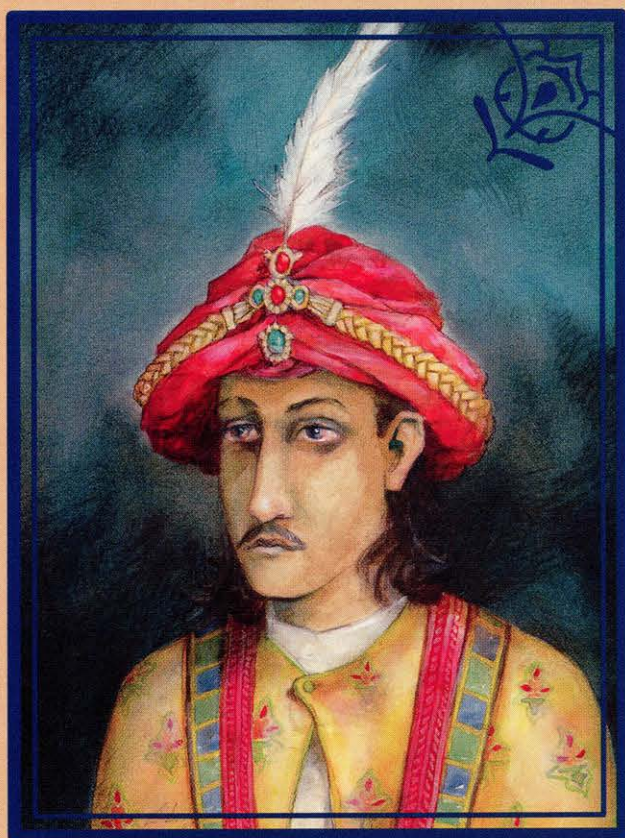
Ozef's answer to this was the sultan's Truce. Still considered the first law of Zeif, the sultan's Truce declares that the sultan is the single ultimate and proper authority in the Sultanate. It dismisses the claims of all others and binds the fate of the entire nation to the sultan's will.

By invoking the first law of Zeif, Ozef removed many petty, local tyrants from power and placed his own loyal servants in charge of towns and villages throughout the new Sultanate. Even commoners could be elevated to positions of authority, and this often was often a necessity, for the only nobles recognized in Zeif were members of sultan Ozef's personal clan, the Osfaradd.

However, members of the old aristocracy quickly joined this group through intermarriage and adoption, until now all that truly remains of the first sultan's clan is the family name and their particular dialect of Baklunish.

sultanate, but many of its member clerics also take it upon themselves to protect the interests of the common people. While there are certainly other clerics of Al'Akbar in Zeif, only the members of the Qudah are officially recognized by the government. This group also differs from Zeif's other bureaucracies in that it has no tradition of hereditary succession, and almost all its members are from families of common birth.

Their chief priest is called the pir qadi, and he has the unenviable responsibility of reconciling the ethical requirements of the Exalted Faith, under the authority of the Holy Caliph, with the duties imposed upon his assembly by the laws and government of the sultanate. The appointment of any cleric to civil or military office ultimately derives from the sultan and the Diwan, but among the faith of Al'Akbar such



Mogh Sultan Morad appears young, he has ruled nearly 40 years

an assignment is also based on the official recommendation of the *pir qadi*.

Many other religions are represented in Zeif, and some are widely followed—particularly those of the familiar feminine Baklunish deities. However, the activities of these conservative ethnic religions in modern Baklunish society are more limited, perhaps due to the influence of priesthoods drawn mostly from the aristocracy. (The exception to this is the faith of Geshtai, which is vitally important to the agrarian economy, and plays a very practical role in the lives of its adherents.) Traditional element-worship is not uncommon, but most of these religions are only loosely organized. Likewise, numerous hero and ancestor cults, some of which may be quite prominent in certain small communities, play only a minor role overall.

A SURVEY OF MODERN ZEIF

The Sultanate of Zeif boasts some of the most populous cities of the Baklunish West, each with a host of intrigues and interesting locales. From the crowded avenues of the capital to the desolate, airy markets of Antalotol, Zeif offers countless opportunities for an adventurer to make a profit, and to get himself in a great deal of trouble... (See the map of Zeif on the inside back cover for geographic details.)

ZEIR-I-ZEIF

This coastal metropolis is the capital of the sultanate that bears its name. Often called Zeif City by infidels, it was founded by Ozeif the Warrior almost 900 years ago at the site of his coastal encampment. Here the ships of Ekbir first landed, bringing aid to their beleaguered ally during his war against the Imperial Pretenders. After Ozeif's final victory in 2353 BH destroyed the last traces of the Satrapy of Ghayar, the caliph himself journeyed here from Ekbir to inaugurate both the new sultan and the new nation of Zeif. Unfortunately, the close relationship between the zeif and Ektoir did not survive Ozeif's demise at sea in 2366.

Ozeif reigned as sultan for only 13 years. He accepted the invitation of the caliph to visit Ekbir in 2366 BH, but tragedy struck when his galley was attacked by a huge sea-monster—the terrible dragon turtle Xoshour. Xoshour had been a menace to sea-travelers for over three and a half centuries, though it had not been encountered within sight of the coast in all that time.

Yet the monster struck the sultan's vessel even as it passed by the mouth of the Tuflik, overturning the ship and scalding escaping crewmembers to death. Witnesses on shore saw one figure fighting the dragon turtle from the keel of the overturned ship until it was lost from sight within the steaming vapors of the battle, but no survivors emerged from the combat. Ozeif's remains were never found.



The great dragon turtle Xoshour

Sailors have reported sightings of Xoshour over the years, now with but a single eye, the other having been put out long ago in its confrontation with the first sultan. If it still lives, as some scholars believe, then the monster must be ancient indeed, and they surmise that the dragon turtle may possess a great store of the sorcerous lore of old. Most adventurers simply presume the monster's hoard to be immense, perhaps containing treasures from the imperial Baklunish era as well as the lost heirlooms of Ozeif the Warrior, and for this reason alone will continue to seek out the beast.

Even in the wake of Ozeif's tragic death, both the city and the Sultanate of Zeif continued to grow. The city expanded out from the shore and is now encircled by 18 miles of multi-leveled wall made of blue granite from the western Vaar. Ismuyin the Wise began construction of this wall in 2550 BH, and it is still called the Sultana's Girdle in her honor. Each of its ten grand gates is covered in patterned mosaic designed by the esteemed lady herself to represent the name of the goddess Istus.

Even as the heirs of Ozeif have been installed on the sultan's Couch in their turn over the centuries, so have the customs of the court become more entrenched, until only a strong will and ruthless mind may hope to control Zeif now. Usually, the prestige of the matron sultana and the authority of the grand vizier serve to check the power of the sultan, whose tyranny

would otherwise be absolute, while he in turn will favor one against the other in hopes of diminishing the influence of both. Thus is formed the traditional conflict that has played out many times through the years in the Palace of Peh'reen.

PALACE OF PEH'REEN

The heart of government in Zeif is the palace of Peh'reen. It is the home of the reigning sultan, Murad (LN human male Ftr15). He is called "the Proud" because of his claim to be the rightful sovereign of all the Baklunish, but in truth he has done little to enforce this claim, and thus often is called Murad the Wary instead. This is appropriate, for the sultan is suspicious by nature and difficult to decipher.

The palace itself was commissioned by sultan Jehef "the Splendid" and completed in 2481 BH. Its golden-hued walls are made of the richest marble in Zeif, and its bronze gates were worked by the finest craftsmen in the Near West. Peh'reen is a world unto itself, divided into three major sections to serve as government capitol, royal residence, and private academy.

The first section is called the Outer Palace, and houses the ministerial offices and the Chamber of the Diwan. It is the demesne of the grand vizier, Okolloz Seyish (N human male Ftr8/Wiz11) "the Statesman." This is the only portion of Peh'reen that a typical citizen or visitor can ever expect to see; even the royal viziers must have the sultan's permission to enter other sections of the palace, though it is usually granted to them as a matter of course.

The grand vizier himself is an imposing figure, well past middle age, but strong and remorseless. His devotion to the sultanate is unwavering, but as a devout follower of Istus, he tends to leave the disposition of individual lives in the hands of fate. His concern is the nation of Zeif as a whole, and he encourages the sultan to rule rationally, despite the influence of other members of the court and the royal family. The rest of the sultan's court tends to follow policies based on whim if not strongly held in check by the grand vizier.

The royal chamberlain oversees the Inner Palace, as the second section of Peh'reen is known. The current royal chamberlain is Awan Mevet (N human male Wiz7/Lor6), who often is called "the Panderer of Petitions," for he has been known to accept gifts of money or other favors in return for using his influence with the sultan. Also part of the Inner Palace are the Twelve Vaults, as the great archives and treasuries of the sultanate are known, though the last of these remains empty, having been built only to house the fabled *Jacynth of Inestimable Beauty*, which was lost before the palace was completed.

The privileged residents of the Inner Palace also include one hundred of the most disciplined and fiercely loyal of the uruzaries, who serve as the sultan's personal guard. Of course, the sultan's personal chambers are located here as well, though he often will be found elsewhere, for he has many dwellings to choose from.

Perhaps chief among these alternative dwellings is the third and most infamous section of the royal palace—the Harem. Ruled by the matron sultana, this is the home of the sultan's numerous concubines and consorts. All of these are chosen for their beauty and kept secluded from outsiders, at least until they have served long enough to be entrusted with the title and privileges of a sultana.

The Harem also has many other residents, the most important of whom are the sultan's own children. They are generally kept segregated from the adults. There are well-appointed nurseries for the youngest, and dormitories and schools for the elder. The finest scholars in Zeif are retained to instruct the sultan's offspring, and the children of favored nobles are also permitted to receive their education here. Thus, many in Zeif's ruling-class are close acquaintances from their youths, and the friendships and rivalries formed in these years are often sustained throughout the rest of their lives.

The matron sultana is the sultan's mother. She is named Nur Karu (LE human female Rog6/Asn10), and began her career as a beautiful young concubine of the current sultan's father. With the passing of the years, she has become an increasingly powerful and mysterious figure, so that she is now often referred to as "the Veiled sultan."

The notorious rivalry of the matron sultana with the grand vizier has grown so great in recent years that a state of palace warfare has developed between the two. Each competes against the other to gain a greater number of allies at court, with the ultimate prize in this game of political chess being Murad; but both parties have proven willing to use any means necessary to secure their own advantage, including execution or assassination. Currently Okolloz maintains the upper hand, but Nur Karu is always searching for ways to embarrass or demean her opponent in the eyes of the sultan, and she has found her share of allies in the Diwan who chafe under the strict supervision of the grand vizier.

FORTRESS OF THE SEA LION

Across the causeway from Zeif City sits the fortress of the Sea Lion, home port to the high admiral of the royal navy, Pandhar Reis (N human male Ftr16), the kapudan pasha. For 26 years Pandar Reis has flown the sea-lion banner from his mast, and he has sent many of his sons to die in battle for the further glory of Zeif. The kapudan pasha is more often away at sea than at his island home, but both his harem and his treasury are well stocked and well guarded.

A large man with huge appetites, his lust for travel is perhaps his greatest craving. On his ostentatious, seven-decked galley, the *Lion's Mane*, he roams throughout the gulf waters and the southern Dramidj. He gives lip service to the Lady of Fate, but if he has any true religion it is the sea. As a practical matter, he also reveres the elemental powers of wind and wave, sacrificing to them as the need arises. Though he is seldom seen at court, the kapudan pasha is still a favorite of the sultan.

Battle Beneath the Waves

The naval disaster called the Battle

Beneath the Waves was the culmination of many years of tension with Komal and the merfolk of the gulf. The battle itself took place in 3095 BH, after a series of Komali raids against the port of Yif Qayah.

Despite warnings from his locathah scouts about a large gathering of mermen, the kapudan pasha of the Zeifan fleet pursued the Komali flotilla into the shallows of Ikayal Strait. The broad-ribbed coasters of Komal were no match for the huge war-galleys of Zeif in a direct conflict, and the Zeifan captains looked for an easy victory. However, once in the strait, the Zeifan captains found their oars bound and their ships breached beneath the waterline.

One third of the Zeifan fleet was lost that day, and nearly half the remainder was lost before they could reach their mainland ports. A huge number of prisoners were taken, with all of the officers being claimed by the merfolk. Most of them were eventually ransomed, but not before they had spent several years in servitude to the mer-sheiks. Yif Qayah came under the sovereignty of Komal, while many of the other island colonies of Zeif shook off the yoke of the Sultanate and began to form their own alliances. Piracy went nearly unchecked for many years in the gulf and in the Qayah-Bureis chain. Zeifan supremacy in the southern Dramidj was brought to an end and Zeifan sea power was crippled for half a century.

the Assayers of Magic, and who will be advanced to the level of master assayer. This three-week event brings candidates from all over the Baklunish lands into Zeif. Its conclusion coincides with the beginning of caravan season, when old assignments are confirmed or concluded, and new assignments are made for the coming year's trading missions.

This year, there may even be candidates for admittance to the Assayers of Magic arriving from beneath the Baklunish seas, as members from both of the Mouqolladi mer-clans are expected to take their examinations in spring. A special seawater fountain is kept in one of the inner courtyards of the Bedestan, attached to several submerged chambers specifically designed to house such guests.

ZEIR IMARET

First among the imarets of the sultanate, this edifice serves not only as a hostel, but also as the gathering place for the leaders of the Zeifan branch of the Exalted Faith. They meet here when summoned by the sultan to determine issues of religious practice, and here they remain until they render a judgement that is pleasing to him. Their chief priest is Pir Nerrim Qadi (LG human male Clr14 of Al'Akbar). This tall, highly energetic leader of the Qudah is, at age 36, the youngest pir qadi in three centuries.

The clerical assembly holds council on other matters, as well. Evidence gathered by the ongoing quest for the *Cup and Talisman of Al'Akbar* is regularly reviewed here, and the most promising reports are assigned to teams of experts for further investigation. The Qudah also engages in exploration of other events beyond Zeif's borders; one such expedition is being formed for a journey into the Dry Steppes, where the Qudah seeks to learn the truth behind rumors of a new Mahdi among the Paynim dervishes.

KABIR KAFEZ

Sultan Firouz built this edifice on the grounds of the royal mausoleum in 3049 BH to house his younger brother, Mansur. While not a part of the city of Zeif proper, the Kafez is still purely dependent on the capital city for its existence. It is the prison palace, the residence of the sultan's heir apparent. Upon reaching his majority, the royal heir is promptly removed to the prison palace and given the title Sheik al-Kafez. The current Sheik al-Kafez is Tariq (N human male Ftr9), sixth son of sultan Murad, who has resided here in isolation with his small retinue for nearly three years. The sheik is considered sovereign within his palace, but he has no direct contact with any outside its dark walls.

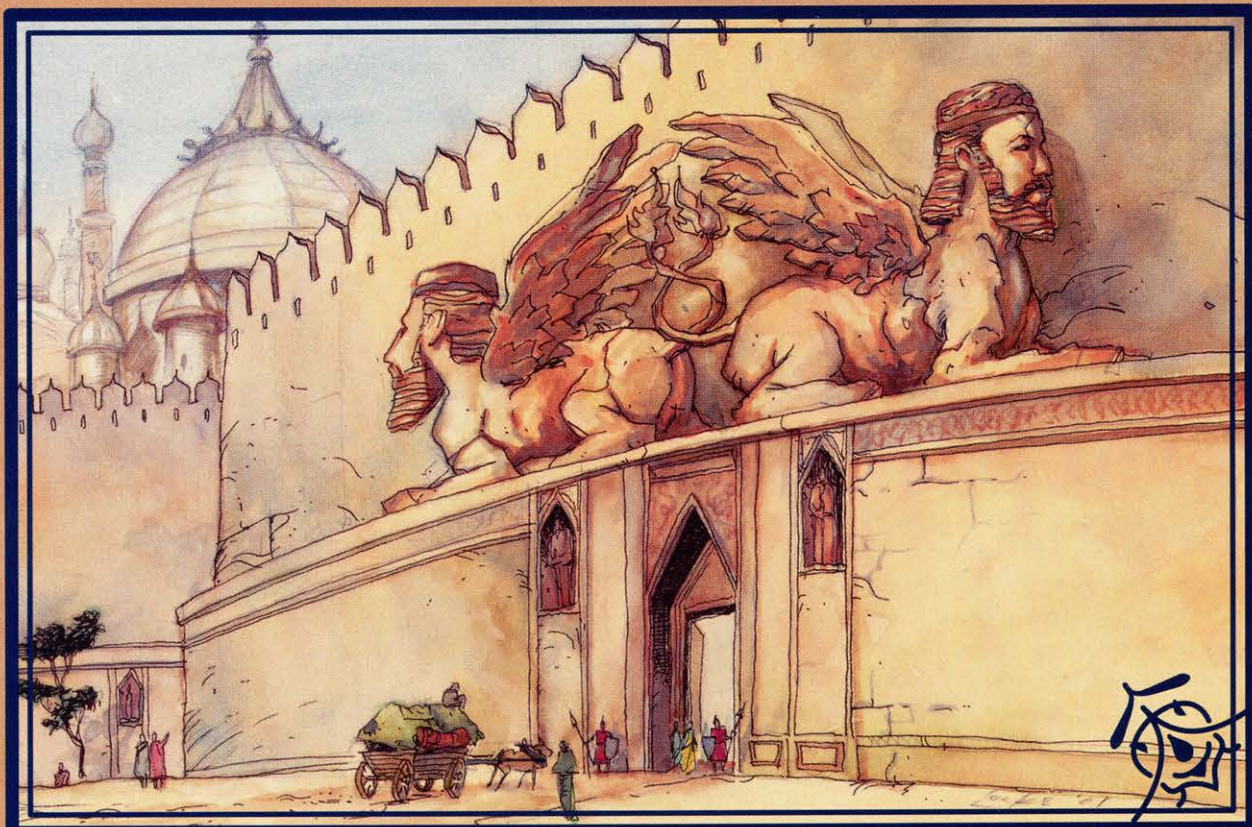
The true master of the Kafez is black Naubek (NE lich male Sor18/Clr11), who is called the Grim Vizier. Once a powerful sorcerer-priest, the Grim Vizier has held his current office for over two centuries. He seldom leaves the crypts of the Kafez, but when he must, he is swathed in deep, heavily scented robes and accompanied by a train of servants both

and he always brings ample tribute when appearing before his sovereign to ensure that this remains so.

THE HIGH BEDESTAN

As headquarters of the Mouqollad, this complex is both a temple and a working marketplace, though its most important function is the administration of the merchant's consortium. The Worthy Elders of Mouqol hold court here on a monthly basis, receiving petitions from consortium members and hearing news from the trade missions. They are led by the Most Worthy Feyin Cemul (N human male Clr19 of Mouqol), an aged priest whose contemplative demeanor belies his skill as a master negotiator.

Sages and specialists from within the ranks of the consortium are brought in to augment the priestly council during the spring of each year. This is when examinations are held to determine who will be admitted into the prestigious order of



Dhabiya's ancient gates

living and unliving, including famed odalisques from years past. An appearance by the Grim Vizier at the court of the sultan is an occasion of the greatest dread and embarrassment. The Grim Vizier is responsible both for the protection of the royal heir, and for his disposal when the need arises. Once the sultan's heir has been delivered into Kabir Kafez, he will not be released until the sultan himself is surrendered once more into the care of the Grim Vizier.

DHABIYA

Though it was little more than a remote provincial village at the time of the Invoked Devastation, many Dhabiyaans still consider their home to have the most ancient pedigree in Zeif. First built by imperial satraps in the last years of the Baklunish Empire, it remains a stronghold of traditional elementalism (particularly fire-worship) to this day. The upper gates of the city even bear the twin-shedu emblem of the Baklunish Empire. The upper city itself is seldom visited by outsiders, but the lower city is the hub of trade for the northern Zeifan coast. Shipbuilding and sea-trade are prominent here, and most commerce is dominated by the Mouqollad. The exception to this is the slave trade, which remains the province of the city's old families. This also serves to indicate the divided nature of the community.

The old families of Dhabiya make up a nearly closed society. Many of them are related to the inhabitants of the Ataphad islands, and are distinct in their traditions and even in their speech; they do not favor the Osfaradd dialect of Zeif, preferring to use Ancient Baklunish with outsiders. They have little affection for the Mouqollad (whom they consider upstarts) or the Qudah (whom they deride as "peasant-priests"); they also sneer at the royal navy, whose captains are so readily bought. They do seem to avoid offending the uruzaries and the spahis, but few of the orc-soldiers are stationed in Dhabiya, and the knights seldom visit the coast.

The common folk of Dhabiya are usually very deferential to the local aristocrats, though newcomers who have dealings with the old families often find that they have unknowingly violated some unwritten rule of conduct. When this happens, the offending persons are best advised to leave as quickly as possible, otherwise ill-fortune will certainly befall them. Commoners refer to this as the "evil eye" and will do their best to avoid contact with anyone so afflicted. Even prominent officials have been thus beset, so few outsiders seek service here. Administration of the town is therefore generally left in the hands of the old families.

The sovereign of Dhabiya, Rafayda Amir (NE human female Ftr9/Blk6), rules her town almost independently of the Diwan. The amir appears slight, but is agile and untiring.

and is a formidable swordswoman. While she can be very charming, she is also utterly ruthless and disdains charity in any form. It is rumored that her family fortune was made in illegal flesh trade with the Ataphads (where slaves are commonly used as ritual sacrifices), and many people suspect it continues still.

THE SANSEMAIL

Built during the final days of the empire, the Sanserail is one of the oldest structures in Zeif, sitting above the city of Dhabiya like a pillar of indifference. Legend says that the last imperial high priestess of Istus sent her followers here with consecrated tapestries and orders to begin construction on a new sanctuary. The temple was still incomplete when the Invoked Devastation struck, and has for over a thousand years remained unfinished. Though the imperial high priestess died in the cataclysm when the ancient home temple was destroyed, the priestly line and legacy of Istus were able to continue unbroken here in the north.

Rather than being domed, the roof of the Sanserail is made of canvas that is re-draped every three years. By tradition, the old canvas is transported to the ruins of one of the ancient temples to be burned. The regular daily rituals of Istus are conducted in the outer passages of the Sanserail, while the inner sanctuary remains a place of meditation. Private rituals are also conducted on certain nights, but only members and servants of the old families are normally invited to participate.

NAFIQ

Originally a Zeifan naval base, the town of Nafiq later grew up around the docks, and it still retains much of its original military character. Its thick walls and broad streets are laid out evenly, radiating from the dey's palace in the north central section of the town. Twin-towered gates are set in the walls facing south, east, and northeast, while a great, lone tower guards the harbor.

Many years after the Battle Beneath the Waves, when a lasting peace had been achieved with the merfolk of the gulf, the sea-people returned a large number of captured sailors here at the order of their great *sidi*. Since then, Nafiq has provided a home for elderly seamen—both naval officers and common sailors alike. Officially, the government provides these lodgings, but the Mouqollad supplies most of the financing, just as they have for over a century and a half.

Representatives of the mer-sheiks still travel Nafiq for trade, festivals, or other ceremonial engagements, and Zeifan naval officers will often guest with them at their submerged oases in order to maintain friendly relations between the royal navy and the sea people. These air-filled grottos offer shelter and sustenance for surface-dwellers, along with other necessities that give such visitors from the surface the temporary ability to breathe under water.

The current ruler of Nafiq, Yildwar Dey (LN human male Rog4/Ftr10), is well liked by both the local inhabitants and the neighboring merfolk. This aging veteran of the royal navy is a skilled leader, though his ambition reaches no further than his current station. His family was of high enough position for him to receive his education in the Harem alongside the future sultan, Murad. They were close friends in their youth, but Yildwar has seen what the years in high office have done to Murad and he wants no part of life in the sultan's palace.

ARM OF KWALISH

The inventor Kwalish lived here over 400 years ago, and the fortified workshop he built for himself is still to be found high on an inaccessible rock pillar several hundred yards from the mainland. A narrow arch once spanned the gap between the cliffside and the pillar, but that has since crumbled into the surf below. The upper works are also much weathered but local residents still know this place as the Arm of Kwalish. It is thought to be filled with traps and guardians designed by the great inventor himself, along with a number of his other intriguing but generally less dangerous works.

Many examples of his works—murals, sculptures, and bas-reliefs, as well as other, specifically mechanical inventions are found throughout Zeif and abroad. Even the *Sidi* of the sea people was one of his patrons. Kwalish designed the great Dome of the Reef for that renowned ruler of the mermen, as well as numerous devices for the use of his subjects. The various minor inventions of Kwalish are still highly sought after by collectors, as are the original plans for his creations. Some believe that Kwalish left scrolls with his outlines for several major unfinished works hidden somewhere in his workshop; but if he did so the plans are well concealed, for they have never been brought to light.

BEIT CASTAN

The seaside town of Beit Castan is the southernmost port within the borders of Zeif. Its low walls and narrow towers give little evidence of having faced any assailant save the weather, and the dey's palace is an unassuming villa overlooking the shore. The unpaved streets of Beit Castan circle the town, weaving in and out of the plaster-walled buildings with no apparent pattern.

Once considered part of the Bakhoury Coast, this town came fully under Zeifan administration following the self-exile of its famed Last Amir two centuries ago. The old families of Beit Castan still have many ties to the other coastal settlements, and traders from Oum al-Ghayar and points south are frequent visitors to this port. Many come for the fine pearls that are gathered here, for the pearl beds of Beit Castan are among the richest in the gulf.

Not all trade is quite so open, however. Beit Castan is known to harbor members of a smuggler's cabal called the Dusk Lash that operates throughout the gulf. The cabal makes

Four Feet of the Dragon

To a perceptive few, the Pillars of Istus have come to represent the folly of men and women whose desire to rule the world nearly brought its end. However, the vast majority of people hold a great reverence for anything associated with the Lady of Fate and the days of empire. It is generally believed that the Four Feet of the Dragon (a simple philosophy based on honor, family, generosity, and piety) was first expounded here, and that an oath sworn on the Pillars of Istus is sacred. Anyone breaking a vow made on the Pillars will certainly find his reputation destroyed, and the onus will continue to follow him wherever he goes.

its local headquarters in a dockside kiosk that abuts the temple of Xan Yac. It is well known that most cabal members are worshippers of the goddess, but so are many people in this region.

The ruler of Beit Castan is Turhan Dey (N human female Rog5/Shd7), who is also one of the few licensed privateers outside the Bakhoury Coast. Her ship is named the *Silent Siren*, and has had surprisingly good luck in encounters with the ubiquitous coastal smugglers. The patrols of the royal navy have met with less success in the region, but they are still treated with respect by the locals.

GARDEN OF SHADRAKIR

This narrow tract of parkland on the northern side of the town was walled off by the Last Amir and dedicated to his old friend, Shadrakir the Seer. It is filled with an abundance of plants and many small animals, some of which seem unusually intelligent. Like nearly everything associated with the Last Amir this place is rumored to be cursed or haunted, perhaps because its features seem to inexplicably change, becoming suddenly dangerous to trespassers.

However, this does not keep the inhabitants of Beit Castan from having a certain pride in its presence. They believe visitors to the Garden will not suffer any misfortune if they are properly respectful, and this feeling seems to be confirmed by the fact that a small group of monks dedicated to Zuoken are able to dwell here on a permanent basis without apparent harm.

The Zuokenai monks tend the paths, bridges and other buildings, and spend their remaining hours meditating at Shadrakir's modest shrine. It is said that two small pyramids

within the shrine display strange inscriptions that change over time. A few adventurous sages and scholars have visited the shrine to view the inscriptions and consult with the resident monks. At least one visiting sage believed the inscriptions that he read foretold the reappearance of the Last Amir's island lair, and so he organized a voyage to find and explore it several years ago. Neither he nor any of his companions has ever returned.

BARAKHAT

The town of Barakhat lies in the open grasslands north of the Plains of the Paynims, and the prevailing culture here is that of the mounted warrior. But rather than being the domain of tribal nomads, Barakhat is the stronghold of the spahi knights of Zeif. The town itself is more an intersection of trails than a single community, having neither walls nor gates. Therefore the temple and caravansary of Mouqol that sits at the center of town has its own walls, gates and guard towers. The handful of other large structures in town (most notably the sheik's palace) are similarly fortified.

Several major timars are located in this region, which represents the western end of the spahis' territory. From here these rural holdings spread across central Zeif in an arc toward the Tuflik valley. Those timars east of the Khijar Valley are much smaller than the western fiefs, being hemmed in by the tilled fields of Retsaba to the north and the tribal Paynim lands to the south.

Fierce Harvest

The highest ambition for most Zeifan orcs is to have their offspring taken into the military brotherhood of orcish soldiers who serve the sultan: the Uruzary Corps. Every four to six years, lieutenants of the corps gather orcish youth from throughout the Sultanate in a ceremony called the Fierce Harvest. Up to half the candidates presented are chosen for training, and the tribal leaders receive a head-price for each young orc that is accepted by the corps.

If the new uruzary conscript survives his training, he is then indentured to a 20-year active term, during which time he belongs entirely to the corps and the sultan.

Officers may remain for much longer periods, if the sultan permits, but no active uruzary is allowed to have personal property, family attachments or partake of anything that is not provided by the corps, regardless of rank.

The elected sheik of Barakhat, Koyun Kinja (N human male Rgr14), has ties to the jann tribes of the central plains. He is an elder of the spahis, but his daughter Deshani (N human female Ftr10) holds his timar in trust while he governs in town. She was a successful adventurer for a short time, travelling as far south as the Sharifate of Risay, and as far east as the Shield Lands of the central Flanaess. Her father, the sheik, understands that she desires to resume her adventurous wanderings but he wishes to groom her for a political career in her home country.

Barakhat is a rival of Antalotol to the east, much as the spahis rival the uruzaries. Both towns court trade coming north through the plains, but Barakhat has certain advantages due to its connection to the nearby Paynim tribes. Many of the Paynim are employed as auxiliary troops under spahi command, and their long history of cooperation increases the likelihood of nomad guides "steering" caravans westward towards Barakhat. The natives of Antalotol are well aware of this, and it increases their dislike of their western neighbors.

PILLARS OF ISTUS

The Pillars of Istus are group of ruins found on a high tel south of Barakhat that provides the most prominent landmark in the area. They are the remains of an old temple complex of the goddess Istus, dating from the last years of the Baklunish Empire. Though no longer used as an active temple, they still serve as a memorial to the empire and its ultimate fate.

One ceremony is still regularly conducted here in the name of the goddess: the holocaust of roof-canvas from the Sanserail. This is done at nightfall, in view of a gathered crowd of observers, and followed by feasting and celebration until dawn. The firing is considered particularly successful if it brings with it a manifestation of the First Servant of Istus. This being appears as a great whirlwind that raises the flames high into the air, then consumes the ashes of the sacrifice. The attending clerics will then be given portents and visions of momentous future events. However, the First Servant has not manifested since the firing of 579 CY, and the followers of the goddess are anxious for his next revelation.

ANTALOTOL

Near the southern border of Zeif, the caravan-town of Antalotol sits on the edge of the desolate Plain of Antal. The town itself is strategically placed, being built on the only high ground for 10 leagues in any direction. Its walls are constructed of local limestone, and the wood for its gates is bronze-wood imported from the Ulsprue Range. Almost half of the inhabitants of this moderate-sized settlement are orcs, for the major portion of Zeif's orcish population lives in the scrublands surrounding Antalotol, though many travel to other areas (such as the mines of Vaar) in search of work.



An uruzary, elite orc warrior of Zeif

Ziefan Lineage

All dates given in the Baklunish Hegira.

3250 BH = 591 CY.

Ozef (2353-2366), the Warrior
Marut (2366-2402), the Mournful
Tembel (2402-2441), the Lamented
Jehef (2441-2529), the Splendid
Ismuyin (Sultana) (2529-2577), the
 Wise (the Weaver)
Ayusen/efez (2577-2608), the Serene
Irmun (2608-2625), the Beggar
Zeyim/efez (2625-2668), the Scholar
Melek I (2668-2702), the Clever
Payezif I (2702-2746), the Poet
Yazerak (2746-2770), the Thunderous
Mirzad (2770-2811), the Holy (the Dervish)
Beroz (2811-2847), the Mariner
Kouroz (2847-2892), the Cruel
Keshkadar (2892-2944), the Golden
Melek II (2944-2982), the Restless
Payezif II (2982-3019), the Pure
Garod/efez (3019-3041), the Reviled
Firouz (3041-3062), the Dark (the Faithless)
Mansur (3062-3091), the Damned
Turuvez (3091-3122), the Triumphant
Muktar (3122-3148), the Crafty
Kamuran (3148-3189), the Fortunate
Selim (3189-3213), the Scoundrel
Murad (3213-3250), the Proud

Zeif's orcs are descendants of the first humanoid mercenaries enlisted during the Baklunish-Suloise wars. Though once led by powerful chieftains, they now form an impoverished underclass, earning their livings as miners and laborers, or merely surviving day to day as scavengers. Orcs in Zeif are commonly thought of as "tribeless" though this is not entirely correct. But it is true that they no longer display their once feared tribal totems and symbols. The orcish language is not publicly spoken either, though many orcish words have found their way into the argot used by thieves and other criminals in Zeif.

The ruler of Antalotol is Nejak Pasha (LE human male Sor8), a bureaucrat who briefly served on the royal chamberlain's staff in the Inner Palace of Peh'reen. He has held his

current office for almost seventeen years, far longer than most of his predecessors. The pasha is stocky and heavy browed, with broad features rather than the typical aquiline Baklunish profile. Inevitably, he is thought to have orcish blood himself, but this is unlikely, for no orc has ever held non-military office in Zeif.

MUKHAZIN

In the final years of the Baklunish Empire, the city of Mukhazin was the capital of the most powerful orcish malik in the Satrapy of Ghayar. After the empire was destroyed the human survivors of the Invoked Devastation fled from their ruined homeland, and it was in Mukhazin that they first found shelter but lost their freedom. Many were enslaved to orcish masters in those days, as were their descendants until the city was razed by Ozef Khan at the beginning of his war against the Imperial Pretenders. Now there is little left above ground but weathered stones, though there are said to be innumerable chambers and passages still partly intact beneath the upper city ruins. Adventurers are sometimes allowed to explore this underground environment, but only with the permission of the local authorities—who, in this case, are retired uruzaries.

A fortress called Dar-Zaribad is built on the ruins of the old city, and it is manned by ex-uruzaries who are very protective of their ancestral home. The commanding officer here is Uluj Aga (LN orc male Ftrl6), a scarred, forty-year veteran of the corps. His troops guard both the fortress and the remains of the city. It is said they do so even in death, for the fallen of the Uruzary Corps are brought here to be entombed under their old banners alongside their fellow soldiers, and in dire need may be called forth to fulfill their vows once again. According to legend, one such army of the dead, led by spectral officers, rose to take vengeance against a tribe of nomad marauders from Ull before turning their wrath upon the surviving Zeifan soldiers who had allowed themselves to be defeated in the first place.

CESHRA

The port of Ceshra lies on a bend of the Tuflik across the river from Sefmur, capital of Tusmit. These cities are historic rivals, dating from the early days of Zeifan hegemony, when the pasha of Sefmur claimed authority over the bey of Ceshra. While Sefmur has grown greatly over the years, Ceshra has added only a few small groups of buildings outside its old flintwork walls. These structures line the broad roads leading to the southern and western gates, while the narrow, paved streets within the confines of the town all slope gradually down toward the riverside.

Ceshra is the hub of trade moving between Ket and Zeif, and local merchants often employ Paynim mercenaries to guard their caravans against bandits and tribesmen, particularly in the vulnerable area of the Tuflik Gorge. This practice is

now more common than ever, due to troubles in Ket, for its patrols have been reduced and it makes little attempt to control the unruly tribesmen of the Banner and Tusman hills.

Like all settlements in the region, Ceshra has also long had to contend with raids and extortion by Paynim bandits. This has lessened over the last two decades, for representatives of the sultan have made alliances with several of the major nomad tribes and encouraged them to turn their aggression towards Ull. The Paynim have not conducted a major raid against Ceshra in over fifteen years, though small bands still sometimes push northward, striking the eastern holdings of Zeif or across the river into southern Tusmit.

The ruler of Ceshra is Hassan Bey (LE human male Arill), a middle-aged, life-long civil servant who bears the distinction of having survived both the sultan's purge of the Ministry of the Treasury 37 years ago, and his purge of Ceshra 13 years ago. Meanwhile, within the past decade the pasha of Tusmit, Muammar Qharan, has allied himself with the court of the sultan. While this has done little to assuage tensions between Ceshra and Sefmur, it does reduce the likelihood of actual armed conflict between the two.

However, the bey of Ceshra is not personally impressive, and he is jealous and fearful of the charismatic young pasha's growing favor in the sultan's court. Therefore, he works to diminish Muammar's popularity at home, and he keeps a group of spies in Sefmur in his personal employ for just this purpose. The sultan has directed Hassan Bey to support Muammar Pasha, especially in the latter's opposition to Ekbir. The bey has secretly defied the sultan's command, for he does not believe the Tusmite alliance can be maintained. Instead, Hassan Bey has his agents sow dissent in the pasha's capital, and spread rumors of his debauchery throughout the countryside.

DAOUD'S QUOIN

When Daoud, the legendary philosopher-pasha of Tusmit, was exiled from his homeland by the forces of the Caliph he settled here on the outskirts of Ceshra. Having been stripped of all his status and wealth (including his *Wondrous Lanthorn*), he lived as a beggar whose only shelter was in the corner of an old fallen minaret, where Daoud the Mendicant dwelt in utter poverty, contemplating the ways of Istus and the harshness of fate.

Daoud gathered adherents to his ascetic way of life while he dwelt in the shadow of the quoin, and his teachings found a spiritual resonance that allowed him to grant clerical gifts to his followers. It is said that at the time of his departure more than 200 years ago, the jagged walls of his quoin parted, opening like a doorway to a distant plane. Through these doors he took his final mortal steps, and when they closed again the substance of the quoin had become the strange, prismatic crystal that it is today.

A Zeifan Chronology

All dates given in the Baklunish Hegira.

3250 BH = 591 CY.

- 2353** Sultan's Truce (Zeif founded)
- 2454** Uruzary Corps established
- 2529** Merchants' War
- 2614** Eastern Fortification
(Lopolla founded)
- 2769** War of Possession
- 2788** Banishment of the Sorcerers
- 2813** Western Colonization
(Bureis founded)
- 2871** Slaughter of the Sea People
- 2878** Theft of the Relics in Ekbir
- 2917** First Khedivate in Mur
- 2958** Secession of Tusmit
- 2972** Paynim Unrest; Severing of Ket
- 3095** Battle Beneath the Waves
- 3133** Khedivate of Mur granted autonomy
- 3158** Bakhoury subjugation begins
- 3186** The Sand Battle; Imam overthrown
in Risay
- 3207** Siege of Zirat
- 3237** Purge of Ceshra
- 3250** The current year

Daoud's Quoin is a sacred place to his worshippers, serving as their main pilgrimage destination. It is revered as the site of his apotheosis, but also has the unusual property of disrupting all magics involving illusion, deception, or compulsion. Often, people thought to be under the influence of such magics will be brought to the quoin for the purpose of removing the effects. It is believed by many that were the crystal walls of the quoin exposed to the rays of the *Wondrous Lanthorn*, the latter artifact's healing properties might be amplified beyond measure. Others say that the purity of the resulting light would destroy anything it touched, perhaps including the *Lanthorn* itself. ✨

Enchiridion of the Fiend-Sage

(FIFTH REPORT)

BY SEAN K REYNOLDS

ILLUSTRATIONS BY SAM WOOD

Planting, 591 CY

My dark sponsor,

I am certain that the outbreak of sons of Kyuss in the outskirts of the city has been contained, and I am working on discovering the identity of the one responsible for its origin. The overly pleasant clerics of Pelor who aided in the eradication of the sons were paid with the golden charm of Tarruk-Tree, a minor artifact valued by that faith which we had secured. I have arranged for it to be stolen by a third party and returned to us, as the thing may prove useful to you despite the damage it causes to undead or fiendish flesh.

Yach-Tek the cambion sends his regards, and wishes to know if we have a copy of Nolzur's chromatic binding spell.

I regret to inform you of the passing of your artificer, Rengalam. My surgeons labored upon him for three full days, but in the end his passing was unavoidable. We had hoped that the replacement of his anterior lobe with a portion of the brain of an intellect devourer would grant him the ability to detect the thoughts of those who work against you, but alas his body wasn't up to the challenge. If you have other traitors with which we might further our experimentation, by all means do send them to my abode. If, like Rengalam, they have a bit of fight in them, so much the better. - The Fiend-Sage

Beastfolk

These kind and benign humanoids have no useful skills and respond poorly to training, conditioning, or torture. Their hides, however, are quite remarkable, and I have been able to use them to create a magic cloak similar to a cloak of elvenkind but only effective in forested environments. Be forewarned: the hide must be extracted from the creature while it is still alive. I am attempting to identify what makes them so resistant to magic; I suspect it has something to do with their bones.

Medium-Size Humanoid

Hit Dice: 2d8 (13 hp)

Initiative: +2 (Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 12 (+2 Dex)

Attacks: Shortspear +1 melee or
dart +3 ranged or net +3 ranged

Damage: Shortspear 1d8 or
dart 1d4 plus poison or
net entangle

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Poisoned darts

Special Qualities: Low-light vision,
SR 20

Saves: Fort +0, Ref +5, Will +3

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 15, Con 11,

Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 10

Skills: Climb +2, Hide +4*,

Move Silently +5

Feats: Iron Will

Climate/Terrain: Warm forest

Organization: Band (2-12)

or tribe (30-60)

Challenge Rating: 1/2

Treasure: 1/2 standard

Alignment: Usually neutral

Advancement: By character class



Beastfolk

Beastfolk are highly magic-resistant primitive humanoids adept at camouflage. They have a cooperative society that does not believe in the supernatural.

Beastfolk have a fine coat of dark green or olive hair covering their entire bodies. Underneath this outer coat is a layer of coarse black fur. They can cause the outer hairs to raise or lower, exposing the darker hair in patterns that help them hide in their jungle environment. Beastfolk wear very few if any clothes, and prefer to keep themselves far from hostile creatures, living peacefully in their remote villages.

Beastfolk speak a very limited form of Sylvan, augmented by hand and body gestures and alterations in the color patterns of their fur. A speaker of Sylvan can communicate rudimentary concepts but usually cannot master the nonverbal aspects of beastfolk communications.

Combat

Beastfolk usually attack from ambush, but rarely fight except for food or to defend their territory. On rare occasions they choose to take prisoners rather than slay enemies outright, capturing them with nets. Captured prisoners are stripped of all possessions and then released outside the beastfolk territory, although subdued opponents that are considered a serious threat are put to a painless death rather than released.

Poisoned Darts: Beastfolk use greenblood oil (DC 13, 1 Con/1d2 Con) on their darts against creatures they consider a threat (rather than food).

Skills: *When in areas of thick greenery, such as their forest habitat, beastfolk have a +8 racial bonus to Hide checks.

Beastfolk Society

Male and female beastfolk are treated equally, they divide tasks so that each utilizes its best skills. The tribal leader changes often, with the most talented individual for a given situation taking charge as long as needed. A village holds young equal to 30% of the adult population. Because of their high spell resistance, beastfolk are rarely harmed by magic and therefore largely discount its existence. They have no spellcasters, relying on herbs and other mundane methods to treat their sick and injured.

Beastfolk Characters

A beastfolk's favored class is rogue. They have no concept of deities (or anything they cannot directly see or touch) and so even beastfolk exposed to creatures that worship deities are very unlikely to ever gain levels in classes that feature divine spellcasting.

Crypt Fling

Locating one of these rare guardians was problematic, and approaching it even more so, for it was more reclusive and uncommunicative than a typical creature of its type. My agents were finally able to approach it after shrouding themselves in dimensional anchor spells. Something inherent in their nature makes them prefer nonlethal methods of dealing with intruders, but we may be able to find some way to create a similar intelligent creature that is not adverse to slaying intruders instead of repelling them.

Medium-Size Undead

Hit Dice: 6d12 (39 hp)

Initiative: +1 (Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 17 (+3 Dex, +4 natural)

Attacks: 2 claws +6 melee

Damage: Claw 1d6

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Scatter defilers

Special Qualities: Undead, +4 turn resistance

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +7

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 16, Con —, Int 11, Wis 15, Cha 13

Skills: Bluff +6, Diplomacy +10, Escape Artist +8, Intimidate +8, Jump +5, Listen +7, Sense Motive +7, Spot +10

Feats: Deflect Arrows, Weapon Finesse (claw)

Climate/Terrain: Underground

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 3

Treasure: None (see text)

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement Range: 6-12 HD (Medium-size); 13-18 HD (Large).



Crypt Thing

A crypt thing is a kind of guardian undead, built to watch over a particular site or object and deal with intruders in a nonlethal manner.

A crypt thing appears as nothing more unusual than a skeletal figure in tattered robes. When active, its eyes are lit with a fierce red light. A crypt thing exists only to guard, typically a religious treasure, tomb, or holy site. It normally waits in an alcove or on a chair provided for it. It speaks Common, and is willing to converse with those that do not threaten it, and tries to scare away creatures it thinks are easily cowed.

A cleric 14th or higher level may use the *create undead* spell to create a crypt thing.

Combat

A crypt thing only attacks if attacked or if it believes it cannot drive away those that enter the place it guards. Its first act is to use its scatter defilers ability, and then

follow up with claw attacks until all of its enemies are dead or fleeing. If approached by creatures it has dispersed by its scatter defilers ability, it attacks immediately.

Scatter Defilers (Su): Once per day a crypt thing may target its enemies with a teleportation effect, causing them to be transported 10d10x10 feet in a random direction (use the second deviation diagram on page 68 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). Targets may resist with a Will saving throw (DC 14). The targets always arrive safely, appearing in the closest open space to the target location (including shifting up or down if necessary) if that location is occupied by a solid body. This ability affects a number of enemies equal to the crypt thing's hit dice, all of which must be within a 30 foot burst centered on the crypt thing. The transported targets cannot take any actions until their next turn.

Turn Resistance (Ex): A crypt thing only has its turn resistance when it is within 50 feet of the place or object it guards.

Dakon

It is my estimation that these ape-men are almost certainly the d'kana, a race of intelligent apes that controlled much of the Amedio Jungle millennia ago. My spies located ancient d'kana burial caves, and the physical resemblance of the remains therein to the dakon is too similar to be coincidental. Furthermore, the presence of spell components and other arcane items among the dead corroborates the relation with the dakon leaders' wizard abilities. It seems the d'kana practiced advanced illusion and abjuration magic, and fragments of some of their spellbooks are likely to result in some interesting breakthroughs in those fields. I believe the d'kana retreated from the waves of deliciously brutal Olman that eventually migrated there and became nomadic near-civilized creatures. Their remote location and lack of interest in conquest make them unsuitable trading partners, nor have I been able to find any magical uses for their body parts.

Medium-Size Humanoid

Hit Dice: 1d8+1 (5 hp)

Initiative: +2 (Dex)

Speed: 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

AC: 14 (+2 Dex, +2 natural)

Attacks: 2 slams +4 melee

Damage: Slam 1d3+4

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Qualities: Scent

Saves: Fort +0+1con, Ref +2+2dex,

Will +0+1wis+2ironwill

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 15, Con 12,

Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 11

Skills: Balance +6, Climb +12, Hide +4,

Jump +6, Listen +3, Sense Motive +5

Feats: Iron Will

Climate/Terrain: Temperate and warm forest, hill, and mountain

Organization: Company (3-12) or tribe (10-40)

Challenge Rating: 1/2

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Usually lawful neutral

Advancement: By character class



Dakon

Dakons are quiet and reclusive intelligent apes with a talent for wizardry that prefer to avoid conflicts with other creatures, particularly humanoids.

Dakons are usually light brown, with green eyes and black hands. Very social among their own kind, dakons can be befriended by beings that follow their lawful customs. They do not associate with apes. They speak their own language, and those with Int 10 or better also speak Common.

Combat

Dakons use their great strength to their advantage, pummeling their foes or grappling. They often grapple their opponents into unconsciousness, leaving the invaders bound outside their territory. If confronted by a superior foe or if they have no reason to fight, they retreat.

Skills: Dakons have a +4 racial bonus to Balance and Sense Motive checks.

Dakon Society

Dakons are believed to be the same creatures as the d'kana, a race of intelligent gorillas that held a peaceful empire in the Amedio Jungle over 2,000 years ago. Now existing in a much more primitive state, they have a tribal organization led by an alpha male and female and their close family members. Tribes occasionally mix to allow young adults to find mates. Dakons sometimes study arcane magic, and the leaders often have levels in wizard.

Dakon Characters

A dakon's favored class is wizard. It is thought that they worship deities such as Boccob and Obad-Hai, albeit under different names.

Phalango Vermin

A few mages have some of these strange insectoid guardians as guards, and I was personally able to steal one for study. They resemble the tales of a mindless army of insect-men ruled by a cabal of mind-mages known as the Hive Council, who allegedly hold some amount of power in the Fabled City of Dar-Kesh Anam. I caution you about holding these unsubstantiated legends as truth, however.

The creature has vestigial growths on its back and arms, which may indicate that it is just one type of creature from within a many-shaped common race of creatures featuring specimens with wings or even more limbs. Growths within its primitive brain have convinced me that some of these variants may be more intelligent. The thing's scent detectors are very keen, and it is likely that the mages that own them (and, presumably, their intelligent cousins, should they exist) can control them with spells or alchemical items that produce certain scents.

Medium-Size Vermin

Hit Dice: 2d8+2 (11 hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 40 ft.

AC: 18 (+7 natural, +1 shield)

Attacks: Halfspear +2 melee or light crossbow +0 ranged

Damage: Halfspear 1d8+2 or light crossbow 1d8 plus poison

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Qualities: Scent, living crossbow, vermin

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +1

Abilities: Str 14, Dex 10, Con 13, Int —, Wis 13, Cha 11

Skills: Hide +4, Listen +5, Spot +5

Climate/Terrain: Any temperate and warm land and underground

Organization: Gang (2-5) or Squad (5-30)

Challenge Rating: 1

Treasure: None (see text)

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: 3-4 HD (Medium-size), 5-6 HD (Large)



Living Crossbow: CR 1/4;
Tiny vermin; HD 1/2d8+1; hp
4; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 14
(touch 12, flat-footed 14); Atk
+2 ranged (1d8 plus poison,
dart); Face/Reach 2 1/2 ft.
[TS] 2 1/2 ft./0 ft.; SA poi-
son (DC 11, 1d2 Str/1d2 Str);
SQ vermin traits; AL N; SV
Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +0; Str
3, Dex 10, Con 14, Int —, Wis
10, Cha 2.

Skills: Climb +0, Hide +15,
Spot +7.



Phalanx Vermin

Phalanx vermin are man-sized and man-shaped insect creatures with strange natural weaponry. They carry symbiotic insect creatures they use as weapons.

A phalanx vermin is an upright vaguely humanoid insect with a hard carapace, two stout legs, two small arms with small primitive hands, and two large arms, one of which is shaped like a spear and the other a small shield. Its head has two eyes, antennae, and pincers around the small mouth. Small spiky growths cover its large arms and back, but they serve no combat purpose. A phalanx vermin can travel at great speed or stand completely still for hours. The large arms are used for fighting and hunting, while the small ones are used to manipulate items such as food or drag slain prey to a lair.

Phalanx vermin have no apparent means of communication, but like some sorts of normal insects they are capable of guarding an area against intruders or coordinating their attacks against large opponents. They do not speak or understand any known languages but may be capable of relaying simple information via odor.

Combat

Phalanx vermin attack in number, acting as shock troops with no concern for their own lives. When guarding or idle, they often cluster together in close formations, which is how they got their appellation in the Common tongue.

Living Crossbow (Ex): Some phalanx vermin carry strange insects about the size of a small shield. These creatures attach themselves to the underside of the phalanx vermin's shield-arm and act like a light crossbow, firing a poisoned dart when prodded by one of the phalanx vermin's lesser arms. These "living crossbows"

can live independently of the phalanx vermin, and a normal creature (such as a human) can use one as a weapon if he has at least one rank in the Handle Animal skill and takes an Exotic Weapon Proficiency to learn how to aim and trigger the creature's firing reflex. The living crossbows require food and water like any animal, but can easily subside upon meat paste and sugar water. If not fed, it attacks nearby creatures (including its "owner") for food.

The living crossbow is treated as a Small ranged weapon that inflicts 1d8 piercing damage, has a threat range of 19-20 for x2 damage, with a range increment of 20 feet and weighs 6 pounds. It can fire up to ten darts per day before its store is depleted (it grows its own darts). Triggering a living crossbow is the equivalent of triggering a normal light crossbow. It reloads itself automatically each round. The living crossbow must cling to one of its wielder's arms in order to be aimed; this arm is treated as carrying a small shield for the purpose of determining what you can do with that arm.

Phalanx Vermin Society

Phalanx vermin appear to have no society, although they have been encountered so infrequently that it is possible they are part of some larger whole, perhaps the mindless warrior caste of an insect society such as the formians. In any case, among themselves they seem content to hunt, store food, and guard their lair, honoring no apparent leaders. ★

Dispatches

NEWS FROM AROUND THE FLANAESS



Ahlissa (Adri/Innsa)

The mystery behind the dragon statuettes being gathered from the Adri by a mysterious stranger continues to deepen. One such statuette, given not to the strange collector but to the local temple of Heironeous (now only a shadow of its former self), recently was stolen from the library in which it had been placed. It took the actions of a stalwart group of adventurers to return the object. Upon returning from the mission, these heroes told an amazing tale. Not only had they managed to apprehend the thief (without discovering the nature of his employer), but they also claimed to have met and old Knight Protector of the Great Kingdom during their ordeal. If the once-great knights are active in the region once more, interesting times are in store for the reigning Princess Karasin.



Bissel

Ebbenant is set to see its inns filled to capacity in the coming weeks. Two major events will bring hundreds to the town. The first is the Feast of Fate, an important holy day of Istus, at which a prophetic tapestry will be unveiled. The second is Brewfest, which culminates with the arrival of the extremely popular Barrier Brew, a secret recipe brewed by the nearby dwarves of the Barrier Peaks.

Baron Nanjari of the Barony of Bandalar has been resistant to the Margrave's tax on Bissel's Baklunish citizens, refusing to collect it. As punishment, Larrangin has increased the taxes on Nanjari's entire estate and the presence of the Knights of the Watch in Bandalar. The increased tensions have led to skirmishes between the baron's troops and the Watchers. The Bisselite Ruling Council is concerned the conflict will escalate, leading to interference from Ket, and they are pushing for a compromise between the two parties.



Dyvers

Surviving merchant vessels continue to limp into Dyvers after repelling pirate attacks on the open water. More than a dozen ships have disappeared, leaving many to speculate about whom might be behind the ruthless attacks. One survivor from a ship in the Siggeran shipping fleet came forward to claim her ship was boarded and then

scuttled by men from two ships bearing yellow sails.

Meanwhile, as if the pirates didn't threaten to disrupt trade enough, shipments traveling north out of the Gnarley Forest continue to experience problems with mysterious attackers. The Gnarley Rangers, in collaboration with heroes from around the nearby countryside, have made some progress at determining what is behind the attacks. Still the attacks persist. On a more positive note, the deranged rogue Kaphas and his minions, who had troubled routes from their lair south of the city, were found and dealt with, leaving the other overland routes at least a little safer.



Geoff

The Gran March's Army of Retribution and Geoff's Army of Liberation scored a stunning victory over a large giant force sent against Hochoch at the Battle of Bloody Ridge. The combined armies shrugged off wave after wave of orcs, ogres, and then finally giants before charges by the Gran March cavalry and Knights of the Watch broke the giant lines. The routed giant force retreated to the west across the Javan River.

Grand Duke Owen led a triumphant procession across the Realstream and entered his lands for the first time since Geoff fell to the giants eight years ago. Owen's return, coupled with the discovery of the fabled *Gonfalon of Gyruuff*, has lifted spirits in the beleaguered land. The Army of Liberation grows daily as the *Gonfalon*, with its image of the Greenman and the Gyric Griffon, flies over the camp. Gyric refugees that settled in Keoland, Sterich, and the Gran March are returning to Geoff in droves.



Gran March

Recent conflict in and around Hochoch has led to the appointment of Watcher Catcial Fangorn, Vengeful Elder Wyrn, to a new post in Hochoch. Officially, Watcher Fangorn and his entourage are responsible for clearing the way for more troops and supplies to enter the war zone. All work crews and caravans on the Buxton's Crossing—Hochoch route now report to him. Several rumors make his real purpose out to be something more sinister, though such rumors have been extremely vague thus far.

Elector Basilio Gsmundo of Barony Dieren died in honorable combat with the Champion of the Realm after being brought up on charges of gross dereliction of duty in

regard to recent troubles in Liabac while he was away attending to personal business in Thornward. He is succeeded by his 14-year-old son, Esmil. A regent has been appointed to oversee the Electorate until Esmil has completed his military service.



Greyhawk

Nak Perjurer, a notorious lowlife common to the lowest avenues of the Slum Quarter, recently stirred up something of a controversy when he appeared at the prestigious Patrician's Club decked out in the latest fashions and a bulging purse.

The thin, uneducated man prattled on for nearly an hour about a treasure chest he won from the clutches of a demon in the Cairn Hills, though after a few drinks it became apparent that he referred to a warped wooden crate he'd discovered while scavenging Garbage Hill. The "Stygian Trove," as he called it (undoubtedly not its real name) contained five small sealed ceramic casks filled with some sort of liquid. Nak claimed to have sold four of the casks to a "Halls toff" for an exorbitant fee, saving the last for "special circumstances."

Though members of Greyhawk's upper class were inconvenienced by Nak's presence at the club (by his smell alone if nothing else), such affairs occur somewhat regularly. What makes this item noteworthy is that, days later, the Nightwatch pulled the body of Nak Perjurer from the city's sewers, near the School of Clerkship. Among his belongings was an empty cracked ceramic cask topped with a stylized clay animal head. The man's eyes had been removed, seemingly by talons or claws. Following up on stories heard from Patrician's Club patrons, the Watch made a cursory investigation in Clerkgburg to find and warn the noble who purchased the remaining four casks, but were unable to locate him.



Highfolk

Highfolk town was gravely threatened with total destruction recently, as the forest which comprises the northern reaches of the community was set ablaze. The Home

Guard, along with many of the adventurers

in the area, managed to contain the conflagration before the community itself was harmed. Apparently, creatures from the Elemental Plane of Fire were behind the disaster. A one square mile area of the forest was destroyed. Mayor Ersteader and the Town Council are scheduled to meet soon on the disposition of this land.

Various factions devoted to protecting the Vesve Forest from the ravages of evil are asking for assistance in matters involving containment of the humanoid threat that continues to grow in the great wood. The eastern and central forest has seen a rise in evil humanoid activity, including the construction of outposts. In the western Vesve, reports of abductions of the reclusive beastfolk that dwell in the area have the Rangers of the Vesve very concerned.



Luz

Scouts along Furyondy's northeastern border report excitement across the river in the hobgoblin Veng Camps. According to their reports, Luz's armies, which had remained relatively constant in size since the close of the Greyhawk Wars, have received hundreds

of new recruits from deeper in the cambion lord's domain, bolstering the demigod's ready military forces.

It's unlikely these soldiers came from the Howling Hills region, as Luzite troops stationed at Fort Krangord have been beset by a large group of horsed Wolf Nomads for much of the past month. Led by Leshek Khan, second son of Tarkhan Bargru, the Wegwiur force numbers about a thousand horsemen. Their attack came as a result of the murder by Luz's forces of Bargru's fifth son, Molosh Khan, in Coldeven. Leshek has sworn that his force will not quit the field until Krangord has been reduced to rubble.



Keoland

Unrest continues in Niole Dra as King Kimbertos Skotti remains absent from the capital at the Axewood estate of Baron Anladon. In his absence, the partisan fighting between factions supporting and opposing his diplomatic initiatives has intensified, with duels and street brawls

between factions escalating.

In Cryllor, tensions between the refugees and the local guilds continue to grow as the countess continues to reverse her father's policy of supporting the local guilds in excluding non-humans from their ranks.

From Gradsul, new reports of disappearances in and around logging camps cutting wood for the naval expansion are causing worries for the duke and local merchants. Guards are being sought to escort caravans into increasingly dangerous areas.



Ket

A representative of the Mouqollad Consortium publicly chastised Falwur for the recent and sharp decline in the safety of caravans travelling in the province. The representative cautioned that if this continues,

trade would avoid the area in favor of the traditional east-west trade routes. He also cautioned that, of course, if trade were to decline, there would be a corresponding decrease in the contributions to charitable works in the Bramblewood Gap.

Many rumors surround the recent trade disruptions in the region. Some reports insist that the bandits are raiding out of the neighboring Nehez province, while others place the blame at the feet of the Knights of the Watch. However, the involvement of the Knights of the Watch has been officially denied with a note from Lopolla that with the recent thinning of the Watcher's ranks in recent years the Beygraf now considers them at best a minor nuisance.



Nyrond

The social elite of Nyrond are aghast at the news that the planned party to celebrate King Lynwerd's fifth year of rule has been cancelled. Rumor has it that Lynwerd felt the money could be better spent to benefit the citizens of Nyrond.

Some bards claim the real reason is that

Lynwerd ran out of money and had to cut corners to meet other commitments. Word around court also suggests that the improvements to the kingdom's infrastructure have been going along very well. Rumors abound that the head of the Alchemists' Guild, a gnome known for his treatment of disorders of body as well as spirit, has been called to visit the king's stricken fiancée, Lady Xenia Sallavarian. The summons, which has been much discussed among the guilds of Rel Mord, gives further proof that whatever ails the poor woman is far more significant than a simple case of heatstroke.



Onnwal

Recent weeks have seen a dramatic increase in rebel activity around the besieged city of Scant. Farland Marshevel, the new commander of the forces surrounding the capital, seems determined to gain entry to the city,

unleashing several probing attacks against the city's walls. The most notable of these succeeded in causing severe damage to the fortifications defending the Langneck. The heaviest fighting occurred on Gate Hill, where part of the outer wall is thought to have collapsed.

The Brotherhood has thus far managed to repulse these assaults, albeit with reportedly heavy losses. Conditions within Scant itself are terrible. The Brotherhood are thought to be employing labor-gangs to repair their battered defenses. Conditions for those unfortunate enough to be pressed into such organizations are thought to be brutal. Little reliable knowledge of events within the city is known. The few who escape Scant, however, paint a uniformly bleak picture of life within its walls.



Pale

Recently a small town near the nation's northeastern border of the was rocked when the Church Militant moved in and converted the entire town into a New Dawn Camp in order to rehabilitate the inhabitants for

their crimes. The citizens of the town have been found guilty of the crime of murder in the second degree; so instead of moving the people in the town, the Church Militant decided to just imprison the town and allow them to prove their worth to Pholtus by their deeds. No one has been put to the flames yet. One priest, a young elf, has been taken to a Dawn Camp in another part of the country, this one run by the notorious Prelate Zacktinerim, renowned for her harsh treatment of those who stray from the One True Path. It is not known when, if ever, the town of Tristor will be released from its bonds.



Perrenland

Rumors have begun to circulate around the taverns of the city of Clatsberg that small groups of men and women from many different clans have been seen heading toward the Roodberg, a castle outside the city, over

the last few weeks. Speculation abounds that this is a muster by the Roodberg Psafsgraf for an expedition to finally quell the rebellious elves of Kershane Pass.

The lizardfolk inhabitants of the Northern Quag swamp (in Yattenheid) have been heard beating their war-drums. The people of Yattenheid have lived peacefully with these reptilian creatures, but something has stirred them up. Recent attempts to contact them diplomatically have failed, having been turned away without discussion. As a result, the local Hettmann is calling for stout adventurers with proven diplomatic skills to go forward and resolve whatever issue is at hand.



Ratik

From troubles on its borders, Ratik now looks inward to its cities. A strange beggar has appeared on the docks of Marner, Ratik's capital. He claims to be a squire of Alain, the lost husband of Lady Baroness Evaleigh,

and that Alain is still alive. Is this just another sadly confused veteran of the Bone March campaign?

In Ratikhill, bastion city of Kalmar Pass, Sir Gatoril, High Defender of Ratik, has yet again declined Lady Abril's invitations of marriage. Though it is not uncommon for women of Ratik to openly court men, Lady Abril, the widowed ruler of house Bresht, has taken her courtship of Ratik's defender to extremes. Sir Gatoril's repeated refusals, accompanied with his refusal to allow Sir Lothak, lady Abril's only son, entry into the High Guard of Ratikhill, does not bode well for the military leader. The noble house Bresht is not used to being denied.



Sea Barons

Times are changing in the Dominions of the Sea Barons. Old and mistrusted enemies might soon become friends, as some of the nation's best diplomats have contacted Ratik and Her Prominence Lady Evaleigh,

looking for a chance to sign commercial treaties with Ratik. This way, the Sea Barons ships could perhaps reach the coastal city of Marner, and by doing so the Sea Barons will greatly improve business with northern countries.

In the meantime, rumors tell of a beautiful elven maiden named Aleena coming from the Grandwood. Some sailors saw her in the village of Port Elder, Fair Isle, talking to the nation's best admiral, Yendrenn Harquil, the Seawolf. Those who witnessed the event suggested that the woman seemed to be recruiting adventurers for a dangerous quest in the southern part of Fair Isle, close to Cape Rarn's haunted ruins.



Shield Lands

The border forts have been on heightened alert since a group of Pathfinders on a mission into the Occupied Lands reported a large force of Iuz's minions gathering at

Gensal. This was a direct contradiction to an

earlier report stating Gensal was undermanned and vulnerable. It appears that the earlier report may still have been correct, as it has been several weeks and no attack has materialized. The bulk of the Shield Lands' forces are being kept on high alert, limiting the resources available for another foray into the Occupied Lands to verify either report.

A series of grave robberies have been committed in cemeteries around the city of Bright Sentry. It appears that all of the corpses stolen were convicted murderers. Elsewhere, a number of bloody fights have broken out in areas throughout Bright Sentry, causing many to wonder if the two events might be related. The Church of Pholtus has downplayed these incidents as coincidences, but investigations continue nonetheless.



Ulek, Principality of

Tension in the Southwestern portion of the Principality of Ulek grows as many of the human residents there are now asking for Prince Olinstaad Corond to consider rejoining the Empire of Keoland. With a lack of

troop support from the Throne of the Lion, however, relations remain strained between the two countries. Corond has nonetheless ensured the Council of Niole Dra of his intention to send several diplomats to Keoland for talks on these matters.

The ancient treasure stolen from Rudd Rockcutter's long-lost vault has been recovered with the exception of one item of note, a scroll that now resides in the possession of one of the warlords within the Disputed Territory. The true importance of this scroll is currently unknown, but is a matter of rife speculation. Could it detail the location of Jolomislag's hoard of treasure? Or perhaps it has some well-kept secrets on the Cult of the Earth Dragon? Whatever it is, most good-hearted folk agree that this information can do no good in the hands of any of the Pomarj forces in the Disputed Territory.



Urnst, Duchy of

Lord Bylan Grek now stands before the Third Magistrate of the Seltaren High Court, accused of aiding the bandits and brigands that have so recently beset the city.

The First Lord of Seltaren's Special

Commission has put forth that Lord Bylan, a High Constable of the city, had dealings with renegade members of the brigand centaur order known as the Scouring Wind and on numerous occasions sought to divert attention from their banditry. Lord Bylan has adamantly refused to disclose the whereabouts of his alleged allies or to show proof counter to the commission's accusations.

Parties of dwarves from Dumadan have been seen wandering the old Maure Suel lands on a quest they will not name. The

Gate Keeper of the Hidden City has vehemently denied reports of the death of the Seer of Dumadan, though the Seer has refused all entreaties from the Ducal Court and inquiries into his well-being.

Giant insects and strange nightly visitors have plagued County Altenmaure and the vales of the Cairn Hills March. Farmers are reporting losses of livestock and crops, ranchers are missing cattle, and the Pfarinni shepherds fear that they will be unable to bring any of their famous naturally black wool to market at Pontyrel Faire. Rumors blame a renegade priest of Bralm.

Finally, Nellix and the College of Sages and Sorcery are recovering nicely from their recent "troubles." Repairs are underway on the College Library. Several students and commoners have been treated for "mysterious ailments" by the Church of Lydia and are recovering nicely.



Vcluna

Rumors abound about a sickness going through the College of Bishops. Some say it has been happening for over a year, while others merely think it's some magic-resistant strain of a common illness. Whatever the

cause, the malady has caused the bureaucracy in several dioceses to grind to a total halt. The Canon himself is rumored to be at his personal retreat and has not been seen in two months. Whether he is sick or just waiting for the illness to run its course is unknown.

Nightmares walk the streets of Grayington. Children have been waking up screaming in terror night after night. Rhennee fortunetellers tell of the arrival of the great darkness within and are being run out of town by the Plar as fast as he can find them. To make matters even worse, Bishop Velt Harkin has gone missing. Plar Sarneth is tearing apart the city and the surrounding countryside looking for him while the local nobles point fingers, blaming him for their current troubles.



Yeomanry

Independent reports from Little Hills forts, the Iron Wood elves, and Cottonton all seem to point to a strange tremor that occurred earlier this month. Powerful enough to shake buildings and trees alike, the force was

felt throughout the northern Yeomanry for nearly an hour before subsiding. No cause has been determined.

Elsewhere, stirrings of the Old Faith are sending tremors of another sort through villages in the League. Representatives of the Church of the Seven Faiths deny allegations of uprisings against citizens accused of "heretical behavior." Other sources suggest an organized movement within the Church; one targeting those who follow any other belief.

Despite disturbing reports of Yeoman deaths at the hands of foreign nationals from the Gran March, talks are moving ahead in what appears to be an official accord between the two nations. While no details have been disclosed, the compact has been described as "groundbreaking." ✨

Living Greyhawk Contact List

The LIVING GREYHAWK™ campaign is controlled by Regional Triads, groups of three RPGA GUILD-LEVEL™ members who keep an eye on local activities. The Point of Contact for each triad has been listed below. The overall campaign is managed by The Circle, who oversee international plots, handle rules disputes and issues, and guide the entire campaign. Getting involved is as easy as sending an email to your Regional Triad's Point of Contact.

The Circle

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Communications Director

David Christ
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Regional Triads

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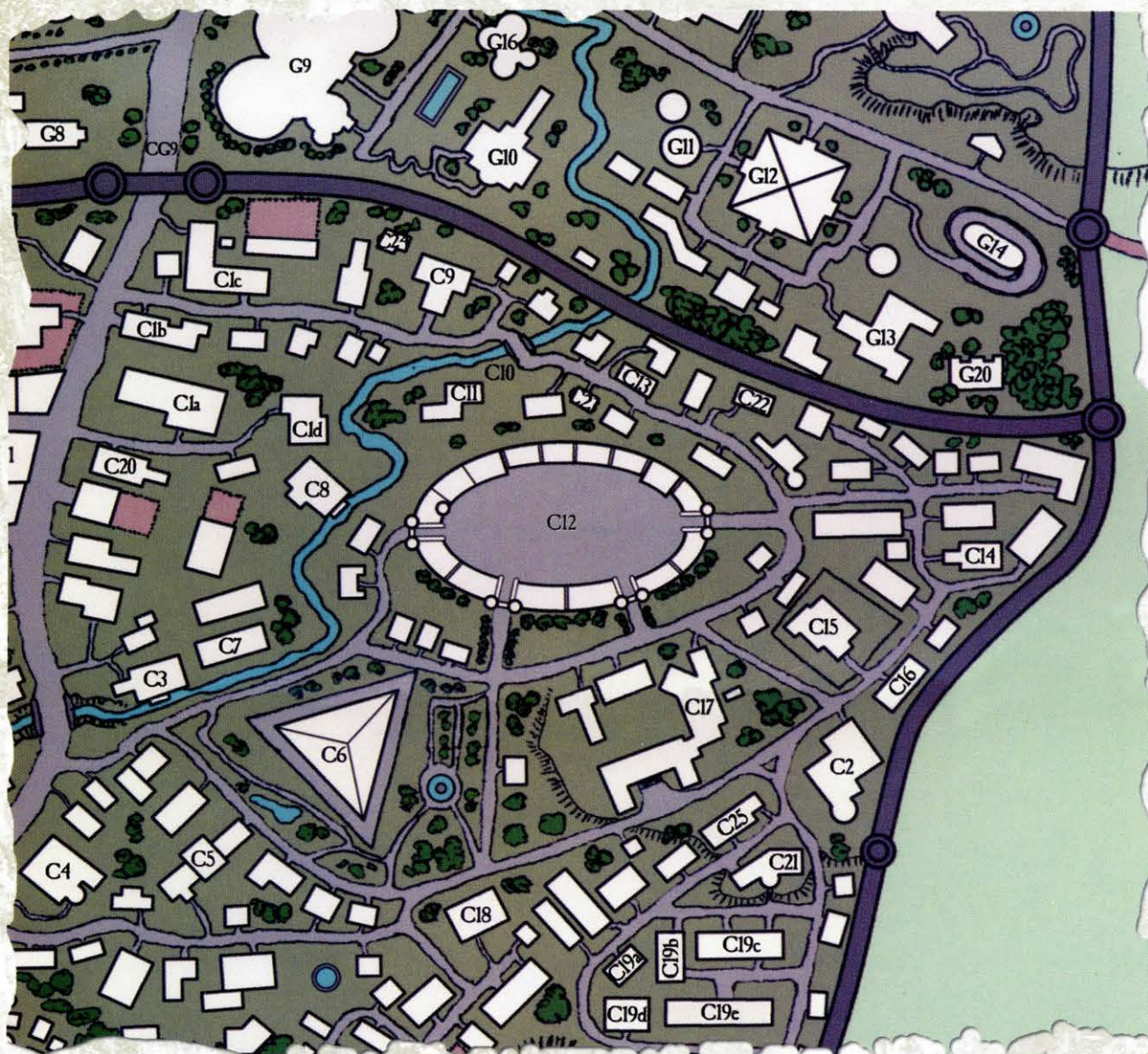
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CLERKBURG

Location Key

Cla-d: Grey College
 C2: Great Library of Greyhawk
 C3: Old Mill
 C4: Black Dragon Inn
 C5: Jewelers' and Gemcutters' Guildhall
 C6: University of Magical Arts
 C7: City Mint
 C8: New Mill College
 C9: Bardschool
 C10: Bridge of Entwined Hearts
 C11: Savant Tavern
 C12: Free City Arena
 C13: Clerkgburg City Watch Station

C14: Roc and Oliphant Tavern
 C15: University of the Flanaess
 C16: Nightwatchmen's Guildstation
 C17: School of Clerkship
 C18: Gnarleyhouse
 C19a-e: "Students' Quarter"
 C20: Guildhall of Lawyers & Scribes
 C21: Temple of Celestian
 C22: Boardinghouse
 C23: Residence—Derider Fanshen
 C24: Residence—Elranicel Tesmarien
 C25: Temple of Boccob

the SULTANATE of ZEIF

one hex = 65 miles

