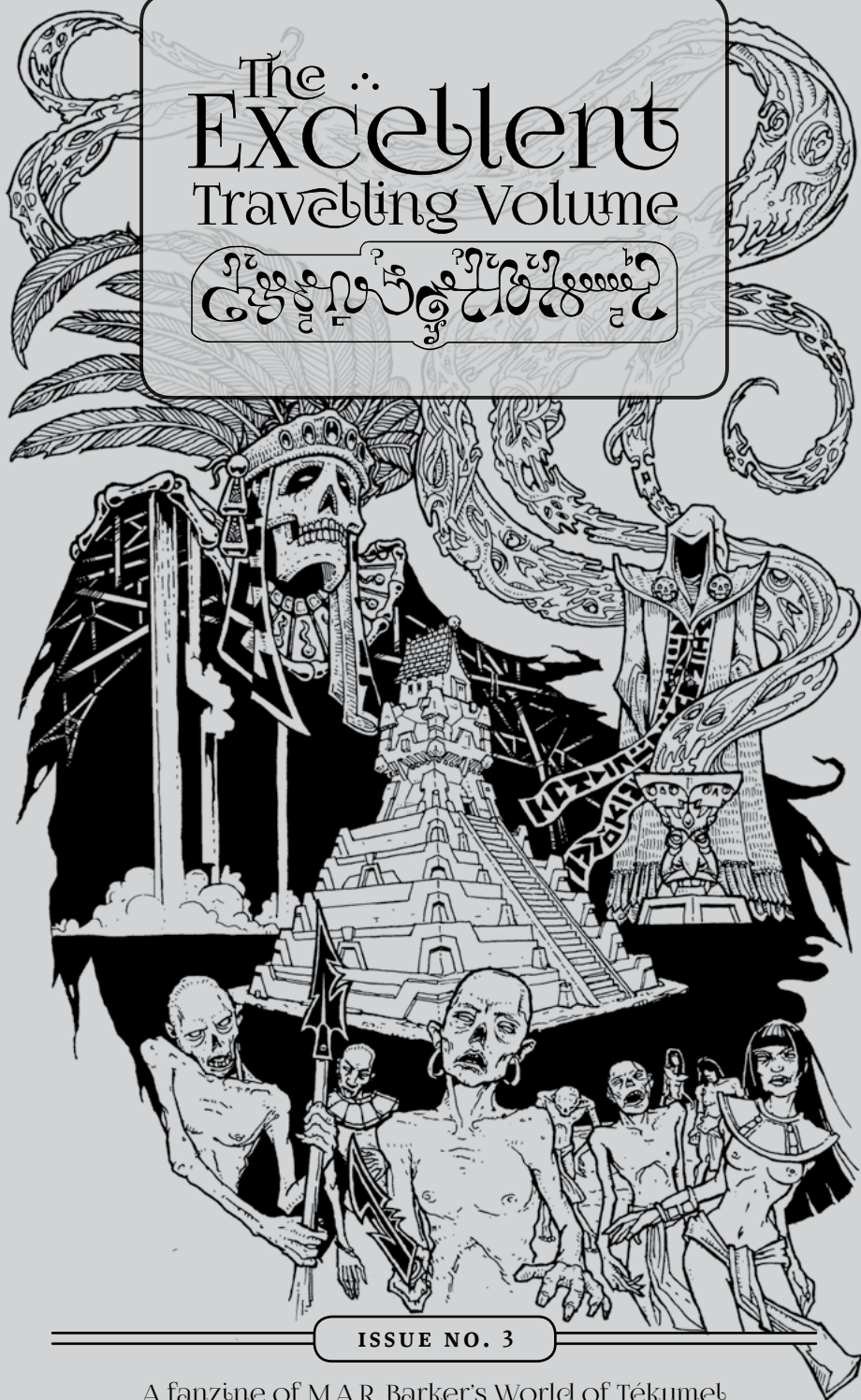


# The .. EXcellent Travelling Volume

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ISSUE NO. 3

A fanzine of M.A.R. Barker's World of Tékumel

# INTRODUCTION

In the fourth issue of *The Dragon* (December 1976), M.A.R. Barker referenced Robert L. Large Jr.'s "very fine and well-written article" in *The Space Gamer* #6, which "began with the premise that our beloved Emperor is already dead, and ... Princess Ma'in Krythai ... is now Empress." Professor Barker goes on to say that, rather than worrying about ensuring that all Tékumel campaigns unfold in exactly the same way, we should instead "declare all campaigns as equally valid 'parallel universes'."

This notion of parallel universes eventually worked its way into the metaphysics of Tékumel itself as Pavár of Gánga's metaphor of the "Tree of Reality." According to Pavár, Reality is like a tree with a vast trunk. This trunk consists of those universes that are the most probable. Deviations at certain points in time can cause a universe to "branch off" from the trunk. Subsequent decisions can create further sub-branches and even "leaves" — highly improbable pocket universes. So long as a branch does not deviate *too* much from the main time-line of the trunk, it is stable and may eventually rejoin the trunk at a later point.

I can't recall when I first learned about the Tree of Reality — it was probably on the Blue Room mailing list back in the '90s — but, when I did so, it almost immediately freed me from the creative paralysis I had long had about Tékumel. Though I had been a fan of the setting for some time, I hadn't actually taken the leap to referee my own campaign, because I felt I might "do it wrong." I foolishly believed that I had to keep completely abreast of the latest adventures in Professor Barker's own campaign to ensure that my own adventures didn't contradict them.

Unfortunately, there was no way I could possibly know *everything* about what was happening each Thursday night in the Twin Cities campaign. Even if that were possible, my own players would inevitably make decisions that would take my own campaign in a different direction. Total consistency between different campaigns played in different cities by different players is thus a Quixotic goal — especially when seeking it prevents one from *actually playing*. That's what was happening to me, until I came across the Tree of Reality metaphor. Almost instantly, I learned to stop worrying and *just play*.

In the years since, I've run four separate Tékumel campaigns of varying lengths, as well as many more self-contained adventures online or at conventions. In all of these, I started in the year 2354 A.S., with Hirkáne Tlakotáni upon the Petal Throne and rumours of war with Yán Kór on the horizon. Thenceforth, events unfolded according to their own logic. Thus, as referee, I paid far more heed to the decisions of my players than to what happened in Professor Barker's own campaign — which is how it should be in my opinion.

2015 is the 40th anniversary of the publication of *Empire of the Petal Throne*. It's my hope that fans of Tékumel the world over will celebrate this anniversary by just playing in this wonderful world Professor Barker has left for us. Let's stop worrying about "getting it right," as I once did, and add a few more branches to the Tree of Reality!

James Maliszewski  
June 2015

# The EXcellent Travelling Volume



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## Salarvyáni and Pecháni Characters

### (Additions and Changes)

My current *Empire of the Petal Throne* campaign takes place in and around the Tsolyáni city of Sokátis (see Issue #2 for details). Because of the city's location along the eastern border of the Imperium, Salarvyáni and Pecháni non-player characters make regular "guest appearances." In thinking about NPCs from these foreign lands for my campaign, I devised some modifications and additions to the *EPT* character generation rules. What follows are the most noteworthy of these rules alterations, all of which are explained in reference to the appropriate sections in the *Empire of the Petal Throne* rulebook. While I created these changes to aid me in the creation of NPCs, they are nevertheless complete enough that they could be used to create Salarvyáni and Pecháni player characters, should the referee wish to allow such in his campaign.

Though much of what follows is derived from information in *Swords & Glory, Volume 1: Tékumel Sourcebook*, some of it (e.g. the Salarvyáni names for the gods and cohorts of Pavár's pantheon) is my own invention and should not be considered an "official" addition or expansion of the Tékumel setting. It is nevertheless hoped that it will not only prove useful to *EPT* players and referees with an interest in generating Salarvyáni and Pecháni characters, but also as a reminder that creating new material for one's personal Tékumel campaign is not "wrong" but, rather, to be encouraged.

## 310. ALIGNMENT

Because the goddess Shiringgáyi (see Sec. 2100 below) is deemed to transcend such "limited" categories as Stability and Change, these alignments mean much less in Salarvyá than they do in Tsolyánu, especially among the noble classes. Of course, among Salarvyáni worshippers of Pavár's pantheon of twenty gods, the alignments are more influential, if only as philosophical concepts by which to explain the cosmos. Meanwhile, the Pecháni care even less about Stability or Change and their own religious system (described below) contains no reference to them.

## 320. CHOICE OF SEX

The institution of Aridáni exists in both Salarvyá and Pecháno, but it is far more uncommon than it is in Tsolyánu. Indeed, an Aridáni woman is viewed as something of an eccentric in Salarvyá, though her legal rights are nevertheless unquestioned. Though rare in Pecháno, Aridáni are treated with honour and respect. Indeed, many myths and folktales sing the praises of warrior women who stood with their clans as they fought against the Enemies of Man.

## 420. ORIGINAL SKILLS

Salarvyáni characters have access to a new Group III: Noble skill called Mentalist. The skill is only available to characters with a Psychic Ability of 21 or higher and grants a +1 to saving throws against spells and effects like (but not limited to) *ESP*, *Mind-Bar*, or an *eye of exquisite power over maidens*. It presents training (common among Salarvyáni nobles) to resist mental control and domination.

## 630. LEVELS OF EXPERIENCE

For Salarvyáni characters, use the following level titles rather than the Tsolyáni ones listed on p. 27 of the *Empire of the Petal Throne* rulebook.

Level	Warriors	Priests	Magic-Users
1	Geprén	Vrér	Zdán
2	Bakkárh	Eshír	Eshshú
3	Olmég	Knér	O'eshshú
4	Grumég	Kümür	Meneshshú
5	Quméch	Ghusán	Júm
6	Achmég	Qurdjár	Tságga
7	Kekkérja	Mrún	Uchchür
8	Sreddéq	Tsómmul	Nashshégy
9	Mbeggéshmu	Tirrúlar	Bajjógmu

Pecháni characters use the following level titles:

Level	Warriors	Priests	Magic-Users
1	Kaprún	Sháush	Ayó
2	Bakkárh	Szhír	Esszhu
3	Olmég	Kanár	Ha'áshzhu
4	Graumég	Káumir	Meneshshú
5	Khaumég	Hwáir	Dzáiggash
6	Akmég	Gháusszan	Dzáugh
7	Kekhergha	Ngú	Cháurrng
8	Shreddég	Dzáum	Ngáusszh
9	Mzanggú	Dórraulir	Kanghúa

## 800. THE “HIRILÁKTE” ARENAS

Hirilákte arenas are largely a Tsolyáni phenomenon. The Salarvyáni do hold feudal duels and tournaments (involving as many as 50 combatants) in their

stadiums, but fights between beasts, slaves, and gladiators are rare. The Pecháni have similar customs when it comes to arena combats.

## 900. STARTING THE GAME

In Salarvyá, the unit of currency is the gold Nzúggesh, which is worth 5 Tsolyáni Káitars. The Nzúggesh is divided into 4 silver Nzái. Each Nzái is, in turn, worth 50 copper Vrél. The Pecháni use an identical system, although the names of the coins are different (Shórz, Jaugásh, and Frái respectively). Starting player characters begin with 1–20 Nzúggesh (or Shórz) with which to buy equipment from the list in this same section.

## 2100. THE GODS, COHORTS, AND DIVINE INTERVENTION

Like most of the lands formerly ruled by Éngsvan hlá Gánga, Salarvyá gives homage to all twenty deities of the priest Pavár's pantheon, albeit under local names (sometimes several, particularly in the case of the Tlokíriqaluyal). The worship of these gods is most common among the rural folk and lower classes of western Salarvyá, though shrines and even temples to most of them can be found throughout the nation.

Among the gods of Stability, Hnálla is known as Nállma, while his cohort Drá is Dréshsha. Lord Thúmis the Salarvyáni know as Thámmü and Keténgku as Katán. Avánthe they call Evánu in the west and Ævuán in the east; both regions consider her an aspect of Shiringgáyi. Dilinála is named Dlénma. Belkhánu is worshipped as Ba'ákü and his cohort Qón is revered as Arkhúan. Finally, Karakán is Kérakü and Chegárja is Chakkárja.

The gods of Change are well established in Salarvyá, with traditions of worship stretching back to before Engsvanyáli

times. Hrü'ü goes by Herú and Wurú by Urú. Ksáru is known by several names in Salarvyá, most notably Grákka and Nammé. Grugánu, on the other hand, is called Güggún. The Salarvyáni pay homage to Vimúhla as Vomélha and Chiténg as Chnák. Like Ksáru, Sáрку is revered under several names, including Gu'úrg, Mshéq, and Qúrgha. Some theologians theorize that the deity Black Qárqa worshipped in the city of Tsa'avtúlgú is another form of Sáрку, while others insist that it is a separate – and more repellant – entity. Durritlámish, too, has many names, among them Adhém, Dü'ürúm, and Nrgé Cháth. Dlamélsh (whom the Salarvyáni consider an aspect of Shiringgáyi) is Tu'ulméya and Hriháyal is Ra'íl.

In addition, the Salarvyáni worship a number of other local deities, the most important and widespread of which is the oft-mentioned Shiringgáyi, whom the Tsolyáni deem an amalgam of Avánthe and Dlamélsh. For their part, the Salarvyáni see Avánthe and Dlamélsh as aspects of Shiringgáyi. The faith of Shiringgáyi is widespread and its priesthood influential, at least among the aristocracy. To complicate matters further, many coastal Salarvyáni give reverence to Mrettén, the Goddess Who Walks Upon the Sea, whose worship originated in the Nyémesel Isles and appears to be related to the Háida Pakálan deity She Who Strides the Wind. Like Shiringgáyi, the Tsolyáni view Mrettén as an amalgam of Avánthe and Dlamélsh, while the Salarvyáni consider such a view typical Tsolyáni narrow-mindedness. The nature of the relationship between Shiringgáyi and Mrettén (if any) is seemingly of little interest to the Salarvyáni, who, in general, are much more comfortable

with theological imprecision and “mystery” than are the Tsolyáni. After all, say the Salarvyáni, what mortal can claim to know the truth about the almighty gods?

The Pecháni worship their own gods known as “the Seven Deities of the Rising Peaks.” Some of these gods approximate divinities of Pavár’s pantheon, while others are unique to Pecháno. They are: Kazhérah (Master of Secrets, Lord of Luck), Nyésset (The Hero, Slayer of the Ssú, Conqueror of Cities), Quóth the Many-Eyed (He Who

Sees the World, King of the Gods), Séhta (Mother of Children, Scatterer of Seeds, Bringer of Rain and Harvests), Su’úrkha (Lord of Death, Guardian of Tombs), Tsómeq (Lord of Writing, Books, and Knowledge), and Vihár (Lord of Swords, War, Fires, and Iron).

## SALARVYÁNI NAMES

Naming practices vary in Salarvyá from region to region, but a few broad generalisations may be made. All Salarvyáni, regardless of sex or local tradition, have a personal name. In

Male Names	Female Names	Lineage Names
Arjuggósh	Birrishúna	Abbésra
Chikárja	Chagíllma	Archégga
Chnesúru	Cheyúshsha	Bordlyánu
Chegréshmu	Chgayár	Burrugásh
Dreshshélmü	Dreyyakanéya	Charéshshu
Driggulúnnu	Dre’éshma	Chráiga
Durritu’úna	Dzé	Di’ibála
Gdeshmáru	Greshtlan’úna	Dirritsámè
Kúrek	Hála	Dléru
Meshshúula	Hayeshmá’alla	Gárja
Mridákche	Hiréchchesha	Gazhzhá
Nekotlégggu	Maggadzá’ana	Harúkkku
Njúrja	Marúggechcha	Kalésh
Ovársh	Nashállmagga	Olligósh
Qaggéshu	Nía	Sharrínna
Qeshshélmü	Nrayén	Sriggélchu
Shirrínmü	Rayáshzè	Tiqónnu
Tekkümmikkhsha	Réshma	Tukkúshshmrü
Vajjáka	Trunéya	Valmiggásh
Vrummíshsha	Zarríshcha	Vorroggá
Vurréshu	Zéshsha	Vréchesh



the western parts of the nation, the personal name may be quite long. Such names have no inherent meaning but are instead the result of casting lots and consulting ancient syllabaries so as to create auspicious sounds. In the eastern parts of the nation, the personal name is generally shorter and derived from those of historical and mythological figures. In addition, all Salarvyáni have a lineage name that follows the personal name. A few examples of personal and lineage names can be found below, but, as ever, players and referees are encouraged to come up with their own, using these as models.

## SALARVYÁNI CLANS

As in Tsolyánu, clans play an important role in Salarvyá. However, the structure of these clans differs somewhat, especially as one ascends the social ladder. Whereas a typical Tsolyáni, even a noble one, has many lineages, Salarvyáni clans tend to be more tightly-knit and “familial,” which is to say, composed largely of individuals closely related to one another by blood. At the highest social levels, Salarvyáni clans are simply noble families whose clan name and lineage names are one and the same. The seven great families that rule Salarvyá’s mightiest cities are good examples of this.

The list below provides the names of several Salarvyáni clans. Noble ones are noted, as are those with a presence across the Tsolyáni border. The highest members of noble clans use their clan names as their lineage names as well.

*Black Pyramid*

*Bright Gold*

*Broken Reed*

*Carpet of Gold*

*Chruggilléshmu*: The noble ruling clan of Tsatsayágga (hex 1832), as well as the current royal clan of Salarvyá.

*Dark Horizon*

*Den of Profitable Joy*: A clan of professional thieves allied with the Thirreqúmmu clan (see below)

*Green Forest* (also Tsolyáni)

*Green Sheaf*

*Gürrüshyúgga*: The noble ruling clan of Tsa’avtúlgú (hex 2510).

*Hrúchcháqsha*: The noble ruling clan of Chame’él (hex 1618).

*Iron Hand*

*Khekhkhéssa*: The noble ruling clan of Héru (hex 1922).

*Mreshshél-Átl*: The noble ruling clan of Lake Mrissútl (hex 2430), which controls the Inner Shrine of the goddess Shiringgáyi.

*Rippling Gauze*

*Roaring Black Wind*

*Rolling Thunder*

*Sapphire Bird* (also Tsolyáni)

*Shiggashko’ónmu*: The noble ruling clan of Jækánta (hex 2712).

*Thatched Cottage*

*Thirreqúmmu*: The noble ruling clan of Koylúga (hex 2627).

*Visible Night*



## PECHÁNI NAMES

Broadly speaking, Pecháni names follow the same pattern as Salarvyáni names, consisting of a given name followed by a lineage name. Unlike Salarvyáni names, however, Pecháni given names have inherent meanings. In addition, many are derived from the names of

celebrated historical and mythological figures. This is particularly true among the aristocracy. Listed below are a few examples to give players and referees alike an idea of what Pecháni names sound like.

Male Names	Female Names	Lineage Names
Báusszh	Chalís	Chélesh
Chauggáidz	Dérrauzha	Disé
Chogókh	Éris	Dórvo
Dórghu	Hwí	Farádzh
Hrihyúsh	Jerúa	Jaigash
Huáz	Líshcha	Jría
Húmzh	Mzíá	Kalášho
Hwirraúzh	Ngá	Ngáigh
Ka'ashkór	Nía	Pamiyó
Kanésh	Nírris	Sarái
Níkun	Shiána	Shirggúa
Pogórto	Taurís	Shirggúm

## PECHÁNI CLANS

Once again, the Pecháni follow Salarvyáni practice when it comes to their clans. The list below provides examples of several clans in Pecháno, including a couple of noble ones.

Beneshchán: The noble ruling clan of Mechanéno (hex 2630), as well as the current royal clan of Pecháno.

*Black Casque*

*Blue Petals*

*Dark Forest*

*Fire and Iron*

*Hidden Valley*

*Lost Home*

*Raging Bolt of Light*

*Rekhmél*: The noble ruling clan of Teshkóá (hex 2805).

*Shining Peak*

*Welcoming Hearth*

## A Portion of the Underworld of Sokátis

Like most Tsolyáni cities, Sokátis has an extensive Tsuru'úm, or underworld, beneath it. This underworld consists of many different strata (or levels), each one the result of the custom of Ditlána by which a city is “renewed” roughly every half-millennium by razing its buildings, filling in their basements and cellars, and constructing new edifices atop the old ones. What follows is the description of but a small portion of the underworld of Sokátis, located below the Foreigners' Quarter, a common starting point for new player characters. Issue #2 of *The Excellent Travelling Volume* detailed a portion of this map (areas 1–16), while the present issue details areas 17–31. Future issues will expand this map with more areas, but referees are encouraged to add to it as they wish or simply to use what is presented here as inspiration in creating their own underworlds.

### 17. Rest Stop

Hiding within this dilapidated chamber are three Level II priests of Ksáru, whose names are Abárshu hiChanúsa (hp 4), Tekkén hiMawár (hp 8), and Ka'á hiChanúsa (hp 7). All are members of the Cloak of Azure Gems clan. They have journeyed into the Tsuru'úm of their own accord, hoping to learn more about a supposed cult to Dlamélish that operated in the underworld and had stolen secrets of their own temple. Thus far, they have found only danger, such as the Hrá in area 16. If discovered before the Hrá is destroyed, they will offer a bounty of 500 Káitars to any party who succeeds in defeating the undead monster (payable by

their clan in Sokátis). If discovered after the Hrá has already been dealt with, they will offer to join the party in return for a share of any treasure found. All three priests are cowardly and untrustworthy and will not hesitate to take advantage of others (or even betray them), especially if they are aligned with Stability. The priests possess all professional skills through telekinesis. Abárshu also knows fear, Tekkén knows locate gold and gems, and Ka'á knows creatures.

### 18. Carrion Beetles

Two small Dlaqó can be found here, picking at the desiccated remains of a warrior in shattered chain armour.

**Dlaqó** (AC 2 MV 6" HD 3 HP 13, 11)

### 19. Chamber of Madness

This chamber is inexplicably illuminated by a faint greenish light emanating from a crystalline stone set in the centre of the floor. Anyone who enters the chamber must successfully save versus spells or be afflicted with by the spell madness. Worshipers of Dlamélish and Hriháyal are immune to the effect. A remove curse spell can reverse the effect, as can a visit to the altar to Dhashijéka in area 25.

### 20. Priestly Storeroom

The door to this room is locked (the key is in the possession of Mnélla who dwells in area 31). Anyone attempting to open the door without using the key activates a poison gas trap. Inside the storeroom is a supply of dried foodstuffs, wine, and priestly paraphernalia, such as candles, vestments, and the like. The contents of the room, if looted and sold, are worth approximately 2000 Káitars, but discovery of the theft would bring the wrath of the local temple of Dlamélish.

## 21. Collapsed Cellar

This small chamber is filled with rubble, broken masonry, and similar bits of dusty detritus. A careful search reveals a small chest containing 482 copper Qirgáls.

## 22. The Great Silver Door

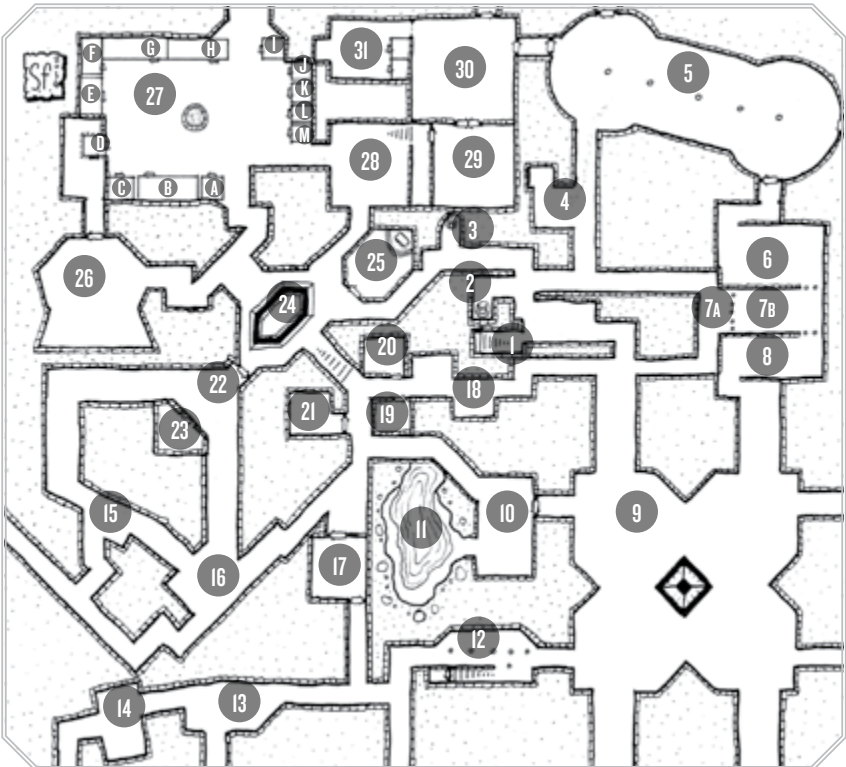
A single large silver door stands in an archway. The door is marked with the symbol of Dlamélish – a drop falling into a pool. The door has a handle but no obvious lock. Nevertheless, it does not budge when pulled and even the door control spell cannot open it. Guarding the door are a pair of Marashyálu, which have taken the forms of an exotically attractive man and woman. The creatures will not attempt to trick or otherwise harm worshippers of Dlamélish or

Hriháyal or anyone bearing a symbol of either goddess (like the one found in area 6, described in issue #2). They will not, however, allow anyone through the silver door, unless they also possess Mnélla's key (see area 31). The key enables the door to be opened, revealing a stable nexus point that transports any who step through it to area 23.

**Marashyálu** (AC 3 MV 12" HD 4 HP 20, 16)

## 23. Secret Cache

This hidden room is accessible only by means of the nexus point in area 22. Inside it is a large cache of treasure placed here by the temple of Dlamélish, whose members regularly take from and add to it. Devotees of the Emerald Lady or that of her cohort are free to take



anything they find here, provided they leave something else in return (though it need not be of equal value). If they do not or if a worshipper of any other deity takes something from the cache, they will be afflicted with a curse that permanently drains 1 percentile from the victim's Comeliness score per day until it is removed. Even if removed successfully, lost point do not return. If any character's Comeliness score should drop below 0, he becomes a hideous, unliving creature similar to a Mrúr who serves Dlamélish and her priesthood. Nothing short of a wish can restore such a character to his original form.

The room's treasure consists of the following: 4637 copper Qirgáls, 2938 silver Hlásh, 6066 gold Káitars, 6 gems (worth 50, 100 (x4), and 5000 K.), 5 pieces of jewelry (worth 2000, 3000, and 5000 (x3)), an eye of incomparable understanding 58 charges, indicator in Tsolyáni), an eye of allseeing wonder (33 charges, indicator in Pecháni), a warhammer +2/+1, and a complete set of steel plate armour (includes helmet and shield).

#### 24. Tomb of Asulára

A single carved stone sarcophagus occupies this area. The sarcophagus holds the mummified remains of Asulára hiTekkunára, a high priestess of Dlamélish died shortly after the last Ditlána a half-millennium ago. During her lifetime, she was reputed to be the most beautiful woman in Sokátis and numbered both the city's governor and an Imperial prince among her many lovers. The sarcophagus, though heavy (it requires total Strength scores of 200 percentiles to lift), is not sealed, nor is it trapped as such. Asulára's mummified form is well preserved and wears a

necklace worth 3000 Káitars and a tiara worth 7000. Two rubies (worth 500 K. each) rest on her eyes. Should any of these pieces of finery be removed, the mummy springs to life and attacks as a 7 Hit Dice creature. The mummy has only 15 hit points, however, and crumbles to greenish dust when defeated.

#### 25. Altar to Dhashijéka

An ornate altar of green stone stands atop a dais. The walls and floors of the room are covered in mosaics of green, silver, and blue. There are also two idols in the room (both 1000 Káitars), one of which depicts an attractive nude woman holding a dagger in her outstretched hands and the other of which depicts a smiling nude male with hands opening as if to receive the dagger. The altar is dedicated to the aspect of Dlamélish called Dhashijéka, known as the lover of Lord Ksárul and the last deity of Change to abandon him at the Battle of Dórmoron Plain. If anyone other than worshippers of Dlamélish or Ksárul touch the altar, they receive a small shock, dealing 1–6 points of damage. Worshippers of those gods instead receive a one-time blessing that duplicates the effects of the eye of exquisite power over maidens, except that the effect works only on devotees of the other temple (i.e. Dlamélish for Ksárul devotees and Ksárul for Dlamélish devotees).

There is a 30% chance at any given time that 1–4 priestesses of Dlamélish from area 27 will be here, engaged in prayer or some other ritual. If four are present, they will be led by Mnélla (see area 31).

#### 26. Hall of Demons

This large room contains numerous dilapidated frescoes that depict Dlamélish in her capacity as "Mistress of Demons,"

along the names and frightful images of several demons who serve her: Chóm the Unthinkable, Marággu, Ngüngéthib, Pa'íya, and Quoyóve, to name but a few.

## 27. Apartments

The underground cult of Dlamélish that maintains this portion of the Tsuru'úm uses this area to house its lower-ranking acolytes. In the centre of the area is a well from which fresh water may be drawn. At any given time, there is a 50% chance that 1–6 priests of Dlamélish will be outside their apartments (chosen randomly from among those listed below).

### A. Empty

**B. Jinása** (Level IV priest, 18 hp) dwells here. She knows all spells through cure light wounds and the bonus spells calm, dispel evil/good, and petrification. She wears chain armour and wields a mace. Jinása also possesses 690 K. in a chest.

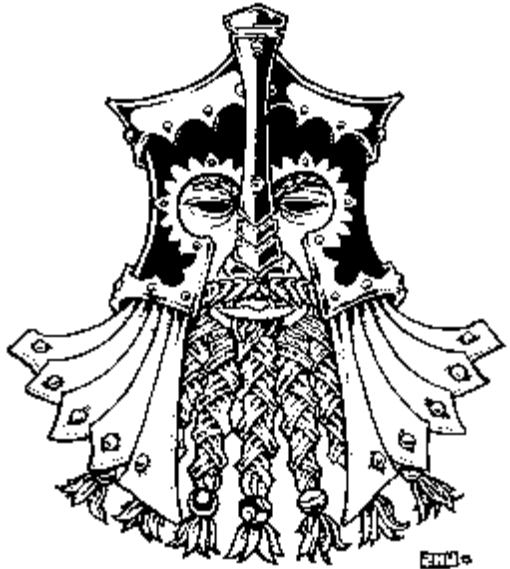
**C. Bekkánu** (Level II priest, 8 hp) dwells here. He knows all spells through produce light. He wears chain armour and wields a mace. Bekkánu also possesses 132 K. in a leather bag.

### D. Empty

**E. Ishála** (Level II priest) dwells here. She knows all spells through produce light and the bonus spell protection from evil/good. She wears chain armour and wields a warhammer. Ishála also possesses 562 K. in a chest.

**F. Miyamáshu** (Level I priest, 6 hp) dwells here. She knows all spells through produce light. She wears leather armour and wields a mace.

**G. Shreku'él** (Level III priest, 8 hp) dwells here. She knows all spells through



ESP and the bonus spells fear, levitate, madness, and sleep. She wears chain armour and a shield +1 and wields a mace. Shreku'él also possesses 266 K. in a hidden compartment in her apartment.

**H. Ubáisa** (Level III priest, 11 hp) dwells here. He knows all spells through cure light wounds and the bonus spells curse/bleed and withering. He wears chain armour and wields a warhammer +1. Ubáisa also possesses 532 K. in a footlocker.

### I. Empty.

### J. Empty.

**K. 4 Shédra** (AC 6 MV 9" HD 2 HP 5, 6, 8, 10) wait here until either the door to their chamber is opened or they are called for by one of the priests of Dlamélish.

### L. Empty

**M. 4 Mrúr** (AC 6 M 6" HD 1+3 HP 5, 6 (x2), 9) linger here until either the door to their chamber is opened or they are called for by one of the priests of Dlamélish.

## 28. Guard Room

A dozen serpent-headed Qól guard this large room, attacking any but priests of the subterranean Dlamélish cult from advancing further.

**Qól** (AC 2 MV 9" HD 1+1 HP 2 (x3), 3 (x2), 4 (x2), 5, 6 (x2), 7 (x2))

## 29. Vestry

Green and silver robes for a dozen priests hang from pegs on the walls of this room, along with other ritual garb. Also present are silver censers, ewers, and other paraphernalia, including sacrificial daggers. All together, these items, if sold to an appropriate buyer, would bring 4000 Káitars or more.

## 30. Inner Shrine

This room is draped with green and blue velvet and its walls are set with gems of similar colours. All together, these gems are worth at least 10,000 Káitars, assuming they could be safely removed from their sconces and a buyer found. The altar of green stone is set atop a sculpture of bluish-purple stone carved in the shape of a man and woman engaged in sexual intercourse. The shrine is completely quiet at all times. Indeed, there is an enchantment placed upon the room that makes it impossible for anyone other than worshippers of Dlamélish and Ksárul to speak or make any sounds while within its walls.

## 31. Chamber of the Priestess

Here dwells Mnélla hiDautlésa of the Cloak of Azure Gems clan. Formerly a priestess of Ksárul, her fascination (obsession?) with the legend of Dnashijéka, lover of the Doomed Prince, led her to scandalously abandon her own temple to seek out that of Dlamélish.

Mnélla does not see her shift in allegiance as a betrayal but rather a fulfilment of her devotion to Ksárul. Unfortunately for her, neither her former temple nor that of Dlamélish in Sokátis recognises her claim; instead, they treat her as, at best, a crank and, at worst, a dangerous heretic. Consequently, the cult she has established in the Tsuru'úm has only a few devotees thus far, but Mnélla hopes to attract more (including the player characters, if they are genuinely interested).

Mnélla is a Level VII priest (27 hp). She knows all spells through protection from evil/good and the bonus spells dispel evil/good, invisibility, and sleep. She wears chain armour +1 and carries a shield +1. She possesses an eye of frigid breath (87 charges, indicator in Salarvyáni), the wondrous enhancer of jewels, in addition to 1206 Káitars and the key to open areas 20 and 22. Mnélla prefers not to fight, but she does not take kindly to anyone who has harmed her acolytes or the servitor creatures of the shrine. As noted above, she would prefer to gain new allies (or believers) for her cult.

## DHASHIJÉKA

Also called the Obsidian Princess, this Aspect of Dlamélish is Lord Ksárul's lover who marshaled his demonic legions at the Battle of Dórmoron Plain. Devotion to her is unusual but not unheard of, at least within Tsolyáni temples, where this Aspect is often not listed in standard theological texts. Interestingly, the Aspect is better known in Mu'ugalavyá, where there are magnificent shrines erected to her in the cities of Ch'óchi (hex 42 19), Ssa'átis (hex 4524), and Trahlú (hex 37 27). Perhaps for this reason, Tsolyáni worshippers of Dlamélish tend to be suspicious of Dhashijéka, viewing her as "foreign" and thus unworthy of serious attention. There once was a small shrine in her honour in Sokátis, but it was destroyed during the unrest of the civil war of 1,010–1,026 A.S. and was never rebuilt.

## Demons of Ksáruł and Grugánu (Addition)

While peasants may use the term “demon” to refer to almost any inimical creature or misunderstood phenomenon, scholars use it refers to a specific type of being, usually (but not always) native to one “the Planes Beyond” —

extra-dimensional realms whose physical laws are often quite different than those of Téकुमेल. Demons (whom the Tsolyáni call Sharétkoi) are entities of power, who draw some form of sustenance or energy from the beings or planes of their patron gods.

Demons native to a plane controlled by a particular god may be said to be of that god’s “substance.” Those whose goals and behaviours indicate an alliance with a given deity are said to be of that god’s “essence.” However, since the goals, alliances, and planes of the gods and demons are not truly within the grasp of mortal understanding, these terms are, at best, gross approximations of reality. What is known is that certain demons seem to ally themselves with or do the bidding of various gods and that these demons will usually respond more favourably to requests made by mortal worshippers of their patron deity.

In this issue, one demon mistress and two demon races associated with Ksáruł and his cohort Grugánu are described, along with game statistics for their use in *Empire of the Petal Throne* adventures. Their potency varies and, as such, they are not all suitable as opponents for low or even mid-level characters. However, they all provide the referee examples of what beings of the Planes Beyond might be like in order to aid him in creating his own. Future issues of *The Excellent*

*Travelling Volume* will include additional examples of demons, including some of those who serve the gods of Stability.



### THE DWELLERS IN SHADOW

Number Appearing: 2–12

Hit Dice: 7

Armour Class: 2

Treasure: nil

Movement: 9"

Lair: 20: 4–24

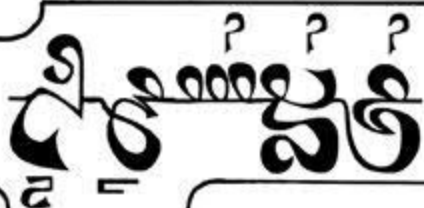
Treasure in Lair: F: 60

The Dwellers in Shadow are a race of 7-foot tall, shaggy, blue-grey, spider-like creatures who smell of rotting meat mixed with vinegar. They are minions of the demoness Llyanmákchi (see p. 16) and are of the substance of Ksáruł. They are never encountered on Téकुमेल unless summoned, usually by priests of the Ancient Lord of Secrets as part of the Inner Rituals of their temple. Their service can be purchased with either the minds and wills of human sacrifices or material items that are blue in colour — anything from blue gems (which are a particular favourite of these demons) to blue-lacquered armour or even blue cloth!



Name:

Player:



Strength



Intelligence



Constitution



Profession:

Clan:

Nationality:

Race:

Illustration or Likeness

Riches

Plebian

Skilled

Noble

Notes

Property



Constitution Psychic Ability Dexterity Comeliness



Alignment:

Professional

Spells

Level:

XP Bonus:

XP:

XP Needed:

Armor  
Class

hits



(Higher level casters use back of sheet)

Saving Throws

Poison:

Spells:

Paralysis:

Stun:

To hit

( / )

AC<sub>1</sub>:

AC<sub>2</sub>:

AC<sub>3</sub>:

AC<sub>4</sub>:

AC<sub>5</sub>:

AC<sub>6</sub>:

AC<sub>7</sub>:

AC<sub>8</sub>:

AC<sub>9</sub>:

Weapons & Armor

The Dwellers in Shadow instinctively flee from the light and suffer a  $-1$  penalty to all rolls while in it. Unsurprisingly, they prefer to skulk in the shadows, where they surprise opponents on a roll of  $1-4$  on a six-sided die. They may fight either with their own natural weapons or with saw-toothed enchanted steel swords that are  $+3$  to hit and to damage. They get four attacks per round with their natural weapons, but only two attacks per round with their swords. The Dwellers can also cast the Group I spell shadows at will. For every four Dwellers, the Group III bonus spell the silver halo of soul stealing may be cast once per day. If successfully cast, these demons then feast upon the victim's soul in  $1-6$  rounds, utterly destroying it and making it impossible to restore to his body.

## LLYANMÁKCHI

Number Appearing: 1  
 Hit Dice: 15 (90 hit points)  
 Armour Class: 1  
 Treasure: G:80  
 Movement: 15"  
 Lair: nil

Also known as "She of the Twisted Visage," Llyanmákchi is the demon mistress of the Third Circle. Though she serves no single deity (and, indeed, both her substance and essence are unknown), she is nevertheless strongly associated with Ksáru's faith to the point where even many erudite scholars of demonology consider her a servitor of the Blue Lord. She usually appears as an old woman of deformed visage, but this is not her true form. She may adopt other shapes as well, such as monstrous beasts, multi-limbed giants, and hulking invisible creatures. Llyanmákchi always appears first as a single being, but she shifts her appearance whimsically.



Fortunately, she is generally amicable in her demeanour, though a summoner who asks too much of her may incite her anger and she will turn on him.

Llyanmákchi has two noteworthy talents. The first is Imparting, by which she can teach her summoner the Group III skills of Alchemist, Geologist, and Scholar, as well as the Group III bonus spells *enchanted armour and weapons* and *research*. Her second talent is that of Marshalling, by which she can summon several minor races of the Demon Planes, like the headless Tsúghiyur, the Dwellers in Shadow (see p. 13), and the Ones Who Writhe. Her preferred offerings are the hands and feet of children and adolescents of any intelligent species, and the evocator should obtain a plentiful supply of these before attempting to summon her. When the tasks for which she has been summoned are completed,

the Llyanmákchi will return of herself to her own plane.

In combat, Llyanmákchi attacks twice per round. She is immune to ordinary weapons. She can also cast the following spells: (Group I) *creatures* (at will), *fear* (at will), *locate objects* (3 times/day), *seeing other planes* (at will); (Group II) *creatures* (3 times/day), *invisibility* (at will), *transmutation* (at will), *zoomorphy* (at will); (Group III) *change self or others* (at will), *the Demon* (1/day), *fly* (at will), and *walls* (3 times/day).



## MUNGGÁI

Number Appearing: 1

Hit Dice: 12

Armour Class: 2

Treasure: nil

Movement: 12"

Lair: 50: 1-4

Treasure in Lair: D: 40

The Munggai are a race of monstrous sickly blue and black worms 20 feet in length. Sometimes called “the Children of

the Infant,” after the demon lord they serve (Mi'royél, called “the Infant Who Eats Its Mother” in the dread *Book of Ebon Bindings*), the Munggai appear on Tékumel only at the behest of ambitious sorcerers hoping to harness their powers. These demons can see rips and tears in the skin of reality, using them to “burrow” to new locations without passing through the intervening space. The nexus points so created in this fashion are unstable, lasting between 2–12 hours before collapsing, but that is sufficient for many wizards, who happily provide the Munggai with the sacrifices of human blood they so crave.

In combat, a Munggai can slam opponents with its tail. In addition, its toothless mouth drips an exsanguinary mucous. Anyone whose flesh comes into contact with it must make a successful saving throw against poison or lose 1–6 hit points per round from blood loss until either he is dead or a curative spell (such as *cure light wounds* or *neutralise poison*) is applied. The Munggai can also cast the following spells at will: (Group I) *seeing other planes*; (Group II) *extra-vision*; (Group III) *teleportation*.

### Group III Bonus Spell: *The Demon*

The Dwellers in Shadow are a good example of an appropriately powerful demonic race that can be summoned through the use of this spell by priests and magic-users devoted to Lord Ksáru or his cohort, Grugánu. Worshippers of other gods and cohorts may summon other demon types (e.g. the Aerial Ones of Tu'unékélu for Dlamélish or the Entities of Light for Hnálla). Future issues of *The Excellent Travelling Volume* will describe more demon races for use with this bonus spell, in addition to others to be used as opponents, antagonists, and possibly even allies of the player characters in their adventures.

## On the Road

Though far from the only means to travel across the Five Empires, the great Sákbe road network is probably the safest and most efficient. Consequently, characters in *Empire of the Petal Throne* campaigns will likely make regular use of them as they move from city to city across Tsolyánu and elsewhere. Of course, the characters will not be the only ones making use of them, as Sec. 1122 of the *EPT* rulebook makes clear. What follows are fifteen sample encounters along the Sákbe roads, one for each type described in Sec. 1122. Most of their descriptions are brief and intended to spur the referee's imagination rather than to provide complete adventure scenarios. It is also hoped that these encounters will also shine a light on the diverse types of non-player characters that inhabit Tékumel.

### ADVENTURERS (LOWEST)

The characters encounter seven Salarvyáni adventurers consisting of four warriors (Levels III, IV, IV, and VI) two priests (Levels III and IV), and one magic-user (III and VII). The Level VII magic-user, a woman named Rayáshzè Valmiggásh of the Roaring Black Wind clan of Khúm (hex 2827), leads the party, along with her husband, a Level VI warrior named Rugó Charéshshu of the Bright Gold clan. If approached, Rayáshzè is friendly and explains that she and her comrades are on a long journey from their homeland to the ruins outside Ch'óchi (hex 4219) in Mu'ugalavyá, where they hope to explore the Tsuru'úm. Since their trek is a long one that will take them across the whole of Tsolyánu, they are especially keen to speak to Tsolyáni adventurers in order to receive advice about how best to travel

the Imperium without drawing undue attention to themselves. In exchange, they provide similar advice regarding Salarvyá and other locales to the east of Tsolyánu.

### COURTESANS (LOWEST)

Four courtesans belonging to the Emerald Circlet clan, along with nine guards (Level II warriors) and six musicians are encountered. The courtesans are led by Jorjúka hiSashán who is also a Level III lay priestess of Dlamélish. The courtesans and their retainers are on the way to the nearest large city, but they are quite happy to entertain the characters, should they be interested. The fees for the courtesans and the musicians range from 3–36 Káitars, depending on just what services are required. In addition, Jorjúka sells various amulets and charms that cost 100–600 Káitars. She claims they can reproduce one of the following effects (all Group I spells): *calm*, *curse/bless*, *fear*, and *madness*, though, in truth, only about 30% of them actually do so. They are one-use items and Jorjúka stresses that all sales are final.

### IMPERIAL MESSENGER (HIGHEST)

A single lean-looking man dressed in light blue attire is jogging behind the characters. A small hide bag is slung over his shoulder. The man is Visárga hiTurshína, an Imperial messenger and a member of the Plume of White clan. When he catches up to the characters, he slows down to engage them briefly in conversation, asking if he might “rest” with them for a short time – his definition of resting being walking at a brisk pace rather than running or jogging. Visárga also asks if the characters

might spare some food or water for the final leg of his journey. Under no circumstance will he say what messages he carries or for whom. He will, however, take the characters names and clan affiliations and, if they are helpful to him, speak highly of them at his destination. At the referee's discretion, Visárga's praise results in a small boon to them as a result of their aid to an Imperial agent.

### **IMPERIAL OFFICIAL (HIGHEST)**

The characters encounter Makésh hiVáshkoru of the Golden Dawn clan, who has recently been appointed as the Examiner of Imperial Edifices for a nearby province. Accompanying him are 25 guards (all Level I warriors) and four clerks. Despite his lofty title, Makésh is little more than a petty bureaucrat charged with taking an inventory of buildings owned by or gifted to the Petal Throne. His medium-ranked clan, however, is ecstatic about his posting and have provided him with the guards who accompany him (all of them clan-cousins). They treat this as "the start of something big," much to his chagrin, as he has little interest in Imperial service, let alone service as boring as this one. If he gets the sense that the characters are having fun on their journey (by eating, drinking, gambling, etc.), he tries to join in with the festivities, as a way to overcome his boredom. While doing so, Makésh will happily gossip about his clan and the city to which he is headed, which make provide the characters with some useful information.

### **LORD (HIGHEST)**

Tinkóresh hiChánkolu is an intelligent young scion belonging to the high clan of Dark Water. He, along with 30 guards

(all Level I warriors), is on his way to a nearby city where is to meet Qilái hiMriyén of the Cloak of Azure Gems clan, whom his elders have arranged for him to marry. Tinkóresh is not very keen on this arrangement. For one, he is more interested in scholarship (he is a Level III priest of Ksáruł) than in marriage, but, more importantly, he knows that his intended bride is a materialistic social climber. He dreads the thought of being yoked to her, even if the match is a good one politically and could help to advance his own position within his temple. Tinkóresh will openly express his reservations to any traveller he comes across; he will also eagerly listen to any suggestions or even schemes that might save him from this marriage.

### **MAGICIAN (LOWEST)**

Shurmála hiVordésa of the Grey Wand clan is a Level VII lay priestess of Thúmis. She is travelling with two colleagues, one of whom is her younger sister, Elué (Level IV magic-user). Her other colleague is Ge'éru hiUsuétl of the allied Grey Cloak clan. All three of them are on their way to a nearby city where they hope to recruit warriors to accompany them on an expedition into the wilderness. If the characters take any interest in this, Shurmála and her colleagues will explain the nature of their expedition in greater detail (and offering salaries comparable to those detailed in Sec. 1011, should the characters be interested). The trio are seeking out the location of a reputedly "haunted" tower belonging to a wizard of old (see pp. 23-28 for an example of such a tower).

### **MERCHANTS (LOWEST)**

A dozen Salarvyáni merchants, led by

Arjuggósh Vréchesh of the Green Sheaf clan (which exists in both Tsolyánu and Salarvyá), occupies a resthouse along the Sákbe road the characters are travelling. The merchants are protected by nine Tsolyáni guards (Level I warriors) – all local clan-cousins whom they hired to make their journey easier. The merchants sell dyes and cloth, including both Gúdrú silk and Thésun gauze. Arjuggósh is extremely personable and charming. He calls the characters over and attempts to interest them in his wares. Barring that, he takes note of their clans' businesses (if any) in hopes of making connections in the next Tsolyáni city his caravan visits. If pressed, he can also provide information about events in the western territories of Salarvyá, where his own clan is located.

### NONHUMANS (LOWEST)

A dozen Ahoggyá march together, led by a scarred individual whose bristly body is covered with peculiar greenish blotches that look like moss. True to their kind's reputation, they care little for the niceties of human society. In this case, they brusquely push aside any other travellers on the Sákbe who get in their way — including the characters. If confronted about this behaviour, the leader, who calls himself something unpronounceable by human mouths, insults the characters in heavily accented Tsolyáni, daring them to make his troupe regret their actions. The Ahoggyá are all Level III warriors with 5+1 hit dice each. They all carry shields (lowering their AC to 3) and wield wickedly curved swords (the leader's being a *scimitar* +1). They will fight ferociously, even to the point of killing a character, but, after a half-dozen combat rounds, they will stop and laugh uproariously so long as the characters have shown a willingness to fight with

equal ferocity. Assuming the characters do not resume combat, the Ahoggyá then depart, praising them for “fighting almost as good as an Ahoggyá.”

### OMNIPOTENT AZURE LEGION (HIGHEST)

A large and impressive collection of individuals can be seen on the Sákbe roads. Travelling together, they consist of a Level VI warrior named Chúrine hiCháshmüdu of the clan of Sea Blue, who is a member of the Omnipotent Azure Legion. Accompanying him are a dozen Level III warriors who act as his bodyguards and three Level IV priests of Karakán. Unless the characters impede his progress, Chúrine and his compatriots do not interact with them at all, preferring to keep to themselves as they make their way to their ultimate destination. If anyone attempts to engage him or any other members of his party, they will be respectful and polite but reserved, saying nothing about their true identities or the nature of their current assignment. However, any warrior who has served in a Legion or any character with the Scholar skill will recognise the insignia they wear as that of the OAL.

### PRIESTS (LOWEST)

Nine priests belonging to the sect known as “the Perfect of Drá” are encountered. They are immediately recognisable as such because, unlike most other worshippers of the cohort of Hnálla, these men do not wear robes of white and tan but rather *nothing at all*. They are completely naked and carry no possessions. Eight of the priests are Level II and one is Level V. Except for one of the Level II priests, none of them interact with the characters or even acknowledge their existence. The Level II priest gives



his name simply as Chidámu and says that he has “been chosen to speak for the Perfect.” He does not identify either his lineage or clan and, if asked, will claim that “the Perfect do not concern themselves with such ephemera. Our only concern is reflecting Lord Hnálla’s Perfect and Eternal Light.”

Chidámu has little else to say, though, if pressed, he will give a basic overview of Drá’s doctrines. In such a case, he will also ask the characters if any of them would be “a mirror of a mirror,” a ritual way of asking if they would provide aid to the Perfect. Should any character offer the Perfect food, water, or other such assistance, Chidámu will thank him and the Level V priest will cast *bless* upon him and 2–5 of his companions in gratitude.

### PEASANTS (LOWEST)

A workgang of 29 members of the very low Glass Spear clan are busy repairing damage to the Sákbe road. Their leader is an elderly clan member named Pórodu hiDísonu, who has been entrusted by the governor of the closest nearby city to ensure that this work is done efficiently and adequately. Pórodu is a stern and serious oldster, but he nevertheless enjoys conversation with travellers. Though he will be deferential to anyone of higher clan or status than himself (i.e. most people), he enjoys engaging in gossip and tale telling. Characters who take the time to speak with him for even a short length of time may learn several interest tidbits about events in nearby cities (though it is up to the referee to decide their veracity).

### PRISONERS (LOWEST)

A group of 20 soldiers (all Level II warriors, except their commander, who

is Level IV) are guarding three prisoners. If approached, the commander, Chatán hiHoqquén of the Red Stone clan, will wave the characters off, stating that he and his men are escorting “dangerous Yán Koryáni spies” to the nearest city under orders from the Omnipotent Azure Legion. Should anyone ignore his warning, he will draw his sword, as will several of the other soldiers and repeat his statement. The supposed spies consist of a man, a woman, and a male adolescent. They are silent, in chains, and show signs of having been beaten and/or tortured.

### SLAVES (LOWEST)

Ten guards (five Level I, four Level II, and one Level III warriors) guard a group of 48 slaves. The slaves are all recently captured members of a tribe living outside the nearest Tsolyáni border and belong to Collar of Bronze clan. The Level III warrior, Jnáika hiVu’úrtesh, is a hard-looking woman with a good head for business. She attempts to interest the characters in purchasing some of the slaves at “bargain prices.” Most of the slaves are untrained labourers whom Jnáika offers for 150 K, but a handful are skilled in plebeian occupations and are available for a “mere” 1500 K. If the characters are not interested, she orders her group to move on toward the nearest city.

### SOLDIERS (MIDDLE)

A Tsurúm (400 troops) under the command of a Kási (Level III warrior) named Balshómo hiSarétqa of the aristocratic Might of Gángá clan. The troops are returning from patrol duty on “the border” (the closest one to the character’s current location), where they

have been posted for the last six months. They are medium infantry troopers (the referee can choose an appropriate legion) who look forward to several weeks of rest and relaxation in the nearest large city. Balshómo, despite his rank, is young (age 22) and has seen very little combat himself. His troops think very little of him as a soldier, but are obedient and loyal nonetheless.

### TAX COLLECTOR (HIGHEST)

The huge entourage of Kánbe hiMawár of the Victorious Globe clan looms ahead of the characters. Kánbe is a tax collector for the province through which the characters are travelling. His entourage consists of a Semétl (20 Level I warriors) commanded by a Level II warrior and 18 clerks and officials who answer to him. Kánbe travels in a palanquin, which does not deign to leave. His lieutenant, a harried middle-age woman named Zizháka hiSánga (of the Golden Sapphire clan), acts on his behalf. She will approach the characters to exchange pleasantries and information. She is particularly interested in whether they know anything about rumours of civil unrest in the rural areas of the province. In return, Zizháka can provide news about some of the nearby urban areas Kánbe and the entourage have visited.

### SÁKBE ROADS

The *Empire of the Petal Throne* rulebook notes that the Sákbe roads “contain stepped pathways: the highest is for Imperial officials, nobles, and messengers; the next highest is for troops; the third and lowest is for caravans of goods, traders, and ordinary folk.” However, Sec. 1122 makes no mention of these three different levels, which can make use of the encounter

tables provided in that section difficult, or at least in need of some interpretation.

That is why the foregoing encounters all include one of three parenthetical notations — Lowest, Middle, or Highest — that indicates where it can occur on a Sákbe road. Generally speaking, player characters are going to be travelling on the lowest of the road’s three tiers, meaning that encounters on the middle and highest tiers, are unlikely. What then to do when the dice indicate that an encounter that “should not” be there?

There are several approaches, all of which I have used in my own campaigns. The simplest is to assume that there is simply no encounter whatsoever. If the dice indicate that the characters encounter an Imperial messenger when they are travelling on the lowest level of the Sákbe, the referee treats the roll as if there were no encounter, since it is impossible to run into an Imperial messenger on that level. Another option is to say that, while the characters cannot interact with the encounter, they can see it above (or below) them. This approach adds some colour and ambiance to a journey, breaking up the monotony of lengthy overland travel, even if it affords little opportunity for roleplaying.

The final possibility — and one I have used several times — is to find a good and interesting (i.e. adventure-worthy) reason why a noble lady or an agent of the Omnipotent Azure Legion is travelling on a tier below his proper social station. Perhaps the lady is incognito, attempting to avoid drawing the attention of her clan for some reason, to cite just one possibility. One of the things I love most about Tékmel is that, while much information has been provided about the setting, there is still plenty of scope to come up with characters and places and situations that provide counter examples — exceptions that prove the rule.

## The Tower of Wachánu (with apologies to James Edward Raggi IV)

Like “The Hidden Shrine” from issue #1, what follows is a small keyed locale intended to serve as the basis for a short adventure for low-level Empire of the Petal Throne characters. The eponymous tower can be placed in any out of the way forested location within Tsolyánu that is removed from a large urban area.

### BACKGROUND

Though the Plain of Towers west of Mu’ugalavyá are the most well known location to house the abandoned starships of the Ancients, it is not the only one. In a remote forest in the wilds of Tsolyánu stands another space vessel, albeit a fairly small one. A little over a century ago, an ambitious lay priest of Thúmis named Wachánu hiDlarútu stumbled upon it and decided to explore its interior. He found the ship wholly devoid of life but filled with all manner of treasures, including Ancient machines that “spoke” to him not only of journeying to Tékmel’s two moons, Gayél and Káshi, but also its sister planets – and beyond.

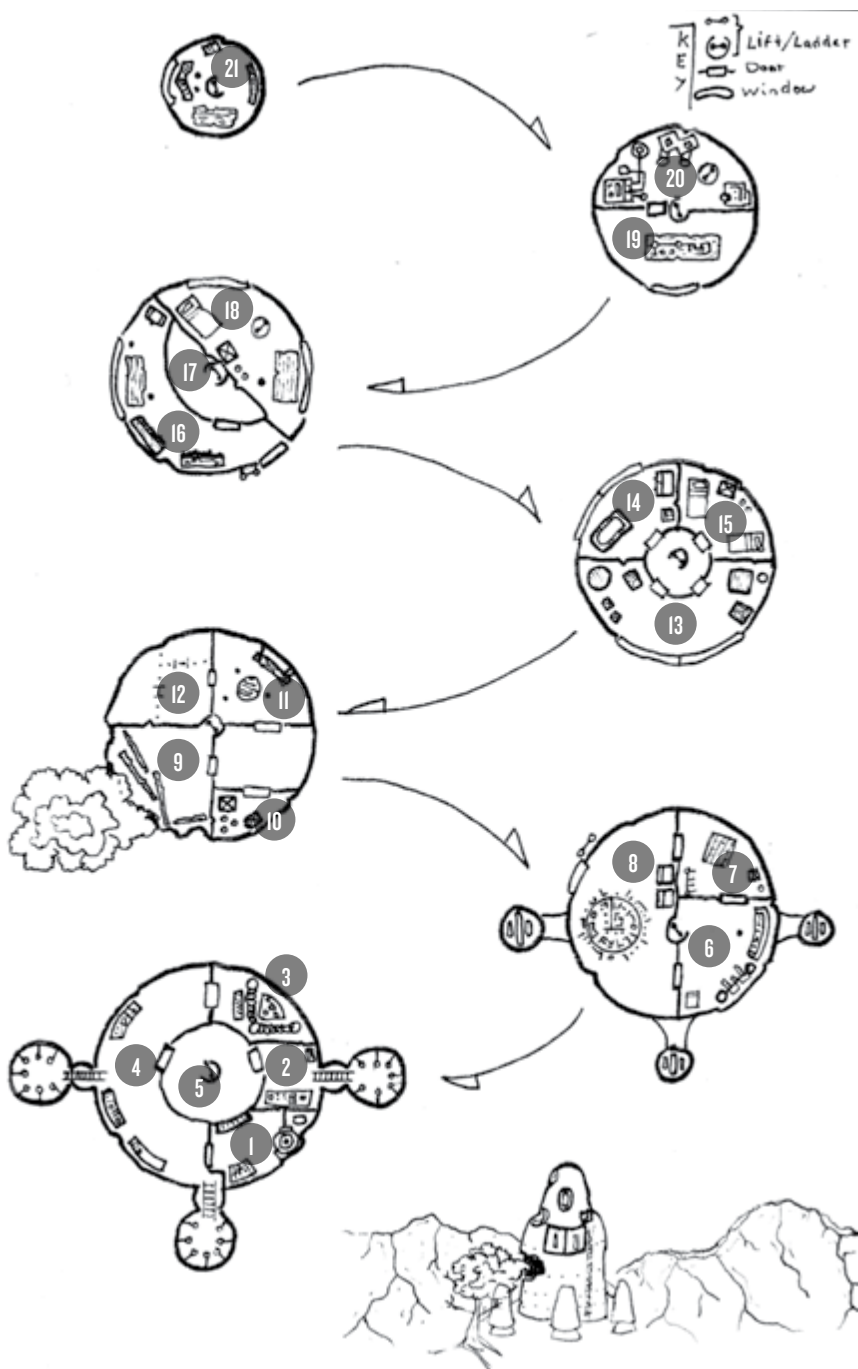
Intrigued, Wachánu made the vessel his home, converting it into a wizard’s tower, like that of Ruvádis in his native Jakállá. He set about learning more from the machines found within, hoping to find a way by which he might one day be able to leave the surface of Tékmel, as had the Ancients so long ago. Wachánu also travelled extensively, especially to Livyánu, where he acquired ancient texts and items that he hoped might aid him in his quest.

It was in Livyánu that he came across a seemingly unique copy of the Llyáni text *Mó’om Tē’ep Sráśy*, known in Tsolyáni as “The Exquisite Codicil of Srá.” In addition to the effects described on p. 86 of the *Empire of the Petal Throne* rulebook, Wachánu’s copy had an appendix that purported to teach a spell that would open a nexus point to Gayél, enabling the magician to achieve his dream of leaving Tékmel.

Unfortunately for Wachánu, either the spell was inherently flawed or simply badly transcribed, because, instead of opening a nexus point, it created an impermeable barrier that not only trapped him within it, unable to escape, but also prevented the passage of time – *but not Wachánu’s perception of it*. Thus, the lay priest has not aged a day since the accident that trapped him. He is, however, hopelessly insane and alternately filled with rage against anyone and anything who might enter his tower or despair at ever being freed (see below).

### TOWER EXTERIOR

The tower consists of seven levels and twenty-one distinct rooms and stands approximately sixty feet tall. Its exterior is made of some sort of alien metal alloy unlike any commonly seen on Tékmel today. Entry into the tower is possible at only two points. The first is by means of a ladder on one side that leads to Room 17. The other is by scaling a Tíu tree that has grown up next to the tower and whose branches reach into a breach in the hull. This breach leads to Room 10. Otherwise, the tower is impenetrable; its windows are not made of glass and thus cannot be shattered by ordinary means.



## WACHÁNU'S MOOD AND THE RU'ÚN

An important element of this location is the mood of Wachánu's insane mind, which changes wildly from day to day. The first time the characters set foot inside the tower, the referee should roll percentile dice. A result of 01-50 indicates that Wachánu is angry, while a result of 51-100 indicates that he is despairing. If he is angry, the Ru'ún he created using "The Exquisite Codicil of Srá" will be active, patrolling the tower room-by-room for intruders. If he is despairing, the Ru'ún is inactive.

Regardless of his mood, the Ru'ún's initial location is determined by rolling a twenty-sided die. If active, the Ru'ún moves to the next higher-numbered room every turn (10 minutes). That is, if the Ru'ún is initially in Room 7, it will go to Room 8 after 10 minutes. The automaton can use the tower's central ladder, but it is slow. Add another 10 minutes to its movements between levels. The Ru'ún keeps to this pace provided it does not detect any movement in another room of its current level. Its senses are keen, but they are limited by the thickness of the metal alloy from which the tower is made.

**Ru'ún (AC 2 MV 15" HD 11 HP 35)**

## 1. MAINTENANCE AREA

Several inoperative Ancient machines can be found here, along with two small metal boxes filled with peculiar metal tools. Though their use is unknown to the characters (or indeed almost anyone on contemporary Tékmel), the tools are valuable for their metal alone. They could probably fetch 500 K. each, if not more.

## 2. FUEL STORAGE

In addition to more inoperative machines, there is also a single large canister with writing in the thorny script of the Ancients. The canister contains a small amount of the fuel that once powered this vessel. The canister is heavy (about 200 pounds) and awkward to carry. It might be of use to the priesthoods of Thúmis or Ksáru, who take an interest in the devices of the Ancients. Opening the top of the canister exposes the characters to intense radioactivity that deals damage to their Constitution score (–1 percentile for every 10 minutes of exposure).

## 3. MATTER TRANSMITTER

In this room is a matter transmitter, which functions almost exactly like the Group III bonus spell teleportation. Figuring out how to use the device requires a successful percentile roll under the operator's Intelligence score.

## 4. CARGO AREA

Besides a few inoperative machines, this large area is empty.

## 5. CENTRAL SHAFT

The only means of moving between levels of the tower — a ladder — begins here and extends all the way to the highest level.

## 6. ENGINEERING

Numerous metal tools, along with faintly humming devices can be found here. The tools, if collected and sold, might fetch 1000 K. for the metal alone. The devices, despite the noise they make, do not vibrate or give off any heat.

## 7. WORKROOM

Wachánu converted this area of the vessel into a makeshift workroom, complete with a wooden table and several bookshelves. The shelves contain many scrolls of historical and theological interest that, together, are worth 2500 K. or more to the right buyers. Open on the table is Wachánu's copy of "The Exquisite Codicil of Srá." Even though the ritual listed in the appendix does not work (see Room 8), it is a unique example of this particular book and thus of considerable interest to scholars. As such, it is worth considerably more than ordinary versions.

## 8. TIME-STOPPED ROOM

This large chamber now holds Wachánu, trapped within an inscribed magical circle that resembles the Circle of Diodásü and the Station of Kelúo, though any character with the Scholar skill will notice many differences. Inside the circle is Wachánu, still in the act of attempting to open the nexus point he believed he had learned how to bring into being. The magician takes no visible notice of anyone who enters the room, though he does perceive their presence.

Wachánu is a Level X magic-user (35 hp) who knows whatever spells the referee wishes him to know. Of course, within the magic circle, he is utterly unable to cast any spells or indeed take any action whatsoever, including making his wishes known to the characters. Should the characters in any way break the magic circle — it is inscribed on the floor with pigments — it will be broken and Wachánu freed. If his mood is angry, Wachánu will attack the characters and most likely destroy them, given his magical puissance. If he is despairing, however, he will offer them desultory

thanks and then ask them to leave the tower and never return, "lest they suffer the same fate as he did for so long." If they do not obey his wishes, his mood will change to angry and he will attack as above. It should be noted that, if despairing when freed, Wachánu will not care if the characters have looted his tower or taken anything from it. The only exception is "The Exquisite Codicil of Srá," which he insists remain in the tower with him.

Otherwise, the room is mostly devoid of anything of interest, except for a couple of storage units that are currently empty.

## 9. DAMAGED ROOM

The window to this room has been shattered, allowing a Tíu tree from outside to grow into it. There are bits of debris scattered on the floor, including many branches, dried leaves, etc.

## 10. GENERAL STORAGE

A dozen metal cubes are in this room. The cubes are lighter than one might expect them to be, given their size. Lifting them reveals that they are hollow, though most of them contain other objects inside of them. Jostling or shaking them cubes makes this even more apparent. Unfortunately, the cubes have no obvious seams or openings; there is no visible way to reach inside them and get at their contents, whatever they are.

## 11. FOOD PREPARATION ROOM

Automated machines still operate in this room. By punching a sequence of buttons, foodstuffs are prepared and offered from a slot in the machine. However, there is only a 25% chance that the foodstuffs are edible. Otherwise, any



character eating the food must make a successful saving throw against poison or suffer  $-2$  to all rolls for the next  $1-6$  hours due to severe stomach pains.

## 12. OPEN AREA

Whatever the original purpose of this area, it is now empty. There are, however, marks on the floor suggesting that furnishings of some sort were once bolted to the floor here.

## 13. LIVING AREA

The remains of metal chairs, couches, and tables can be found here, along with crystalline screens set in the walls. Touching the screens brings them to life. Images play across the screen and human voices speaking an unintelligible human language can be heard. The images depict strange scenes of human, Pé Chóí, and Ahoggyá making use of devices of the Ancients to travel through a lush

environment filled with red and yellow vegetation.

## 14. CREW QUARTERS

The metal frames of beds and chairs can be found in this chamber.

## 15. CREW QUARTERS

This chamber is very similar to Room 14, except that there is also a small metal box placed beneath one of the bed frames. Inside is a *thoroughly useful eye* (with 37 charges and an indicator in Classical Tsolyáni).

## 16. SECONDARY BRIDGE

Three large banks of machinery blink and hum in this area. If approached by a character with a Psychic Ability of 81 or higher, a telepathic human voice is heard in the character's head, but she speaks in an unknown language.



## 17. CENTRAL SHAFT

Lying haphazardly on the floor of this room is a Chlén hide symbol of Thúmis.

## 18. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS

Before he became trapped, Wachánu slept in this chamber, which contains his meagre personal possessions: a walking staff, several cloaks, a dagger, etc. There are also a large collection of scrolls and papers devoted to magical spells and rituals, including the translation of the appendix to the “The Exquisite Codicil of Srá.” One of the scrolls contains the spells *locate gold and gems* and *seeing other planes*.

## 19. SUMMONING ROOM

This room is empty, except for a rectangular diagramme drawn on the floor with pigments. The diagramme is unfinished, but characters with the Scholar skill may recognise it as party of the Eight Interlocking Squares of Djaréva.

## 20. BRIDGE

Located here are several working machines of the Ancients, as well as the metal frames of numerous chairs. The machines “talk” in an undecipherable human language, but any character with a Psychic Ability of 81 or higher can telepathically understand snippets of what they say. Most of their dialogue is along the lines of “vessel in need of repair – recommend contacting Lunar Base One for assistance.” With time and effort, a character can learn to reply to the voice he hears in his head, even asking it questions. The referee should determine exactly how much information the machines can provide, but, since most of it is untold millennia out of date, there

will be few consequences to being very liberal in the answers. The machine “speaking” is the central navigation computer. Its knowledge is limited to space travel and is, of course, from the before the Time of Darkness.

## 21. OBSERVATION DECK

The topmost level of the tower houses an array of sensor devices that are partially damaged and, therefore, do not operate at full capacity. A successful percentile roll under a characters Intelligence score is necessary to activate and use these sensors with any precision. Doing so enables the character to view sights up to 1000 Tsán distant from the location of the tower. There is also the capacity to zoom in on anything so viewed, but it will take time and practice before the character is able to do so with any reliability.

## AFTERMATH

Depending on the characters’ actions, the tower of Wachánu may or may not become a matter of great interest after their initial investigation. Should its existence be made known, one or more of the temples (particularly that of Thúmis, to which Wachánu belonged, and that of Ksárul, which is well known for its obsession with the technology of the Ancients) may attempt to lay claim to it. The Omnipotent Azure Legion might also wish to know more about the tower, not just because of its treasures, but because of what Wachánu was attempting to do while he resided there. Anything involving nexus points represents a potential danger to the security of Tsolyánu and thus falls within the OAL’s sometimes expansive notions about its duties.

Name:

Player:

Strength

Intelligence

Constitution

Psychic Ability

Dexterity

Comeliness

Profession:

Clan:

Nationality:

Race:

Alignment:

Level:

XP Bonus:

XP:

XP Needed:

Illustration or Likeness

Riches

Plebian

Skilled

Noble

Professional

Spells

Notes

Armor  
Class

hits

Property

(higher level casters use back of sheet)

Saving Throws

Poison:

Spells:

Paralysis:

Eyes:

To hit  
( / )

AC<sub>1</sub>:

AC<sub>2</sub>:

AC<sub>3</sub>:

AC<sub>4</sub>:

AC<sub>5</sub>:

AC<sub>6</sub>:

AC<sub>7</sub>:

AC<sub>8</sub>:

AC<sub>9</sub>:

Weapons & Armor

# The Tékumel Project

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