

Document Revision

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Revision

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The Gazetteer of Gadirus and Colossus

By Gregory B. MacKenzie

A Setting For OGL Based Games

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The Gazetteer of Gadirus and Colossus

There are many legends about the Southern Seas. There is a sailor's tale of a Magical Lodestone Island, a floating land of plenty, where untold riches can be found. On nearing the island a ship's compass will point straight toward it. Upon the shores of this paradise are singing mermaids, goats roam freely over the land, and there are springs of wine pouring forth from the rocks. In short, any sailor would be happy to sight its shores and trade a hard wandering life for one of ease ashore. Those landing upon Lodestone Island would be unlikely to leave. Such are a sailor's flights of fancy.

However, far to the south of Lodestone Island sailors tell the tale of a terrible land of fiery mountains and great glaciers of ice. Approach to the land is treacherous due to the terrible storms and the grinding sea ice which can smash the sturdiest sailing vessel. Few ships venturing close to the pack ice have returned to tell the tale. On occasion those who sight the shore of Gadirus speak of the golden domes of far away cities. Who it is that lives there none can say.

The Peninsula of Gadirus

The Peninsula of Gadirus is one of the few habitable lands near the south pole. Much of the southern continent of Gadirus is inhospitable. The Peninsula of Gadirus, is almost completely isolated from the rest of the Dreamlands by a continually circling South Polar storm. Grinding sea ice, ice bergs, and floes endanger large sea-going vessels. This region is in the grip of an eternal ice age. As a result its culture is unique. Through the ages the peoples of Gadirus have benefited from the wreckage of ships of other lands. The cargoes of lost ships provide virtually the only link to the world beyond the storms of the South Polar Sea for such wood as can be found on the Peninsula of Gadirus is hardly suitable for the building of sea-going sailing vessels.

In this fabled and legendary land of Gadirus are the Seven City States of the Gadiri. The most hospitable internal regions of the peninsula are warmed by the heat of subterranean fires which rise to the surface in the form of volcano's, geysers. Here between the mountains lie the valleys of the Seven City States where can be found a civilization that seldom looks outward except to profit from the wreckage on the coast.

The inhabitants of Gadirus have long learned to live with the harsh elements, and are skilled in living off the land. However, the peoples of Gadirus have learned how to work with what nature has given them.

Far below the inhospitable and frozen overlands the people of Gadirus thrive in the Underlands. For, the people of Gadirus have learned it is far easier to travel in the Underlands than it is to travel in the frozen overlands above. The spires and golden onion domes of their cities are but the highest points over what is surely the greatest Underland civilization in Gadirus.



In the above map illustration at Atlas Scale (24 miles per hex) the power of the patron city deities is reflected by the territorial boundaries marked in red. The brown broken line shows the principal Underland roads, although the Underlands themselves are a warren of passages and caverns. There are no overland roads in Gadirus.

Volcanic mountains spew forth lava, ash, and pumice over the land which is frequently covered in snowfall due to the arctic and subarctic weather in this region of the Dreamlands.

The floating Island of Colossus at left is shown, but it circles the southern continent of Gadirus in the South Polar Sea. It was once attached to the peninsula between the cities of Opartos and Coldheim.

The influence of the Patron Deity Storm Wielder is indicated by the lighter red border lines.

Overland Climate

The "overland" climate of the peninsula of Gadirus varies considerably. Its most inhospitable regions are arctic and sub-arctic. However this region displays a volcanism which paradoxically creates temperate micro climates. There are many micro climatic regions where the climate is almost hospitable. The Gadiri favour these regions and it is here that the cities of Gadirus are heated and warmed by volcanic hot springs.

The coastline of Gadirus is rocky and blasted down to the bare rock by the stormy south polar sea, and the bare bones of the Dreamlands can be seen here. Deeper inland such trees as there are cling tenaciously to the ground with strong roots. These are always of hardy species of evergreens. This wood is extremely hard and knotty. Such trees do not grow very tall, no more than the height of three men, and not more than the cold wind will allow, and the wind nearly always blows.

In many areas there are frozen glaciers, cold waters, and even rivers of fire from the volcanic mountains. Wherever the fiery lava meets cold ice, steams and waters are released to cover the land in a blanket of fog.

Snowfall occurs regularly in all regions, and varies from light to heavy with the variation of the seasons. There is a brief summer here, when the land is warmed by the sun above, but this is all too short. There is a corresponding period in winter without a sun.

The peoples of Gadirus have long learned how to survive in this difficult environment. The weather frequently changes and it is not unknown for overland travelers to be forced into seeking shelter from the snowstorms, and unable to travel for days. Travelers need cold weather survival clothing and equipment, including snow goggles. Sleds are the favored means of transportation drawn by various kinds of animals. Snowshoes and skis are also used by humanoids. In the overlands the use of the wheel is virtually unknown, except for rare use in the cities. Such boats as the Gadiri have are used for coastal travel and hunting. These are made of leather and sinew, and ribbed with scraps of wood, whale bone or walrus.

Underland Climate

The climate of the Underland is entirely different. Near the surface the tunnels and caverns are cold and sometimes icy, but within a march of the surface the temperature of Gadirus internal fires can be felt, and as such the caves begin to warm. Here can be found an entirely new micro climate, populated by wondrous creatures banished from the surface in forgotten ages by the cold and finding new life below ground in the great caverns that honeycomb the peninsula.

How the original Underland came to be is uncertain. There are natural features, caverns, and passages created by lava and water. Perhaps the upper caves were also once the homes of Great Purple Worms delving in the darkness. It is a fact that the many creatures burrowing in the caverns over the eons have created a multi level labyrinthine environment suited to their needs. The peoples of Gadirus are merely one of the many contributors to this underworld.

The Underlands of Gadirus form a deep network of caverns and mines that link the cities together in a vast underground. Indeed, the cities of Gadirus are far larger underground than they are above ground and the tunnels that connect them run for many leagues. The cities streets are formed by great vaulted ceilings and the houses are carved from the rock. These are not crude settlements for attention has been paid to every detail, and the cities are of great beauty. The cities are warmed by underground heat, fresh water is brought in by aqueducts, and waste carried away by sewers. Specially adapted plants grow here in cultivated gardens.

Travel in the wild Underlands is much preferred to overland routes despite the dangers of the deep. Underground roads join the cities and other prominent areas of interest. Hardy adventurers are always needed to provide escorts, hunt, explore and clear the lesser known levels of the unknown darkness.

The Seven City States are in a near continual state of war which as far as anyone can tell has been going on since antiquity. Any peace between the cities is usually short lived. Much of the fighting between the cities has taken place underground. As such the way to each city is carefully guarded.

Greed provides the basis for what little trading that occurs, which is often brokered by a nomadic trading people rumored to be the descendants of the lost 8th City State. Without a land of their own

these nomads wander the seven city states and are the only people allowed to do so. The nomads are careful to take no part in the wars and politics of the seven city states.

Diplomats are the only other travelers protected by ancient law. Other travelers are stopped at the borders of each land and turned away, killed or captured. This means that those wishing to travel must do so by secret routes, ruses, and disguise. Turncoats, and exiles are not easily trusted or accepted and so these must inevitably turn to banditry and a life of desperation.

Shipwrecked on Gadirus

The shipwrecked characters who find themselves nearly drowned but still alive upon the shores of Gadirus are considered as having a special social status by the inhabitants of the seven city states. What freedoms a shipwrecked character has is a question of loyalty and allegiance and this is not something to be taken lightly. The more "Sea born" of declared allegiance a city has the greater is its status, hence the shipwrecked often find themselves as valued, well treated if confined guests until allegiance is declared.

Should a shipwrecked character profess allegiance a particular city and its god, that character is then considered a citizen, and may fully participate in the life of the city.

Those who remain undeclared in their allegiance may wander anywhere within a city walls but not to pass beyond them. The shipwrecked of undeclared allegiance find it difficult to escape due to their confinement, the storms, current and wind. In such a situation one would have to be truly determined, if not favored by destiny to escape.

The Peoples of Gadirus

Gadirus is peopled by many races in a multi-cultural setting. City allegiance and religious beliefs are of greater importance than a character's race. Even races once considered monsters can be found in some cities. A typical social setting in Coldheim might include Humans (30%), Elves (20%), Dwarves (15%), Halflings (5%), Goblins (10%), Gnomes (10%), and Human Cyclopes (10%). Rancor is therefore reserved for the citizens of other cities and their gods. City rivalry is part of the cultural mindset.

In a particular city religious beliefs tend to be homogeneous, with deviations tolerated until they become a threat to the city. The people are polytheistic, but religion centers around the city patron deity.

The colours and arrangement of clothing makes it very easy to spot a non-member of a particular city state, religious order, clan, or family. Forms of dress also reveal the social status of an individual.

Partly because of the need to wear snow goggles and layered clothing overland, a culture of masques and formalized dress has evolved for ceremonial use in each of the City States. In fact the ceremonial masque has evolved beyond its original practical functionality to the point where it has metaphysical meanings.

The heads of families wear masques handed down from generation to generation, and these represent more than an individual who wears it, the masque is an identity of a family founder or significant person from the family lineage. Masques are typically handed down from person to person depending on the social function of the masque. The consequences of losing a ceremonial masque through incident is a serious social issue. Consequently ceremonial masques are only worn on special occasions and are not for daily use in the Underlands.

The peoples of Gadirus have lost much of their original skin pigmentation over time in order to admit as much light as possible. It is a natural adaptation to the dark environment of the Underlands. Skins are often pale, and in rare cases almost transparent. Even some Humans (35%) have developed darkvision, a rare adaptation indeed.

Should a player wish to role play a Human Cyclops, the character does not make a good archer (-2 when attacking with missiles) due to the lack of stereo vision. The Human Cyclops is in every other respect a human with darkvision. All Human Cyclopes, both male and female, are bald.

Should a player wish to role play a Goblin, the character is similar in many respects to a Dwarf, with a small or grotesque appearance. Goblins can be helpful but are often mischievous, some are evil. Goblins have abilities similar to that of Dwarfs. They have magic resistance adding two levels when rolling saving throws. They note sloping passages, traps, and shifting walls in underground construction. They are able to speak Dwarfish, Gnomish, and Kobold. Goblins are deadly accurate with missiles adding +2 to hit.

However Goblins are always chaotic in alignment, and are limited in level progression to 6th level Fighter.

Should a player wish to role play a Gnome, the character is similar to a Dwarf. Gnomes are limited to the classes of Wizards or Fighters and may not progress beyond 6th level. Gnomes are great miners and are able to sense the location of gold silver and gems under ground within 30 feet twice a day. They often knock the wall, leaving a secret mark that they can read later indicating the location of rich ores. They note sloping passages, traps, and shifting walls in underground construction. They are able to speak Dwarfish, Goblin, and Kobold. Gnomes have magic resistance similar to that of dwarfs adding two levels when making saving throws. Gnomes cannot wield the +3 Magic War hammer as a Dwarf.

The people of the 8th Lost Kingdom (the Bat or Bear Clans) are the only truly nomadic culture in Gadirus. They have lost contact with their kin on Colossus which was sundered from Gadirus in ages long past. They favour clothing of naturalistic colour that blends with their surroundings. There are two major clans and many septs, the Bear Clan favour the overlands while the Bat Clan live in the Underlands. Neither clan will participate in the disputes between the cities and neither has a city of its own as such would endanger their status and merely make them a rival of the city states. They never worship the city patron deities. The Nomads are content to live free in the world and wander the lands of Gadirus as traders, hunters and guides.

The Seven City States

Coldheim

Coldheim is the city most likely to be the home of the player characters due to its homogeneous culture. The city is ruled over by a Triumvirate, the Lord of Arms, the High Priest of the Beetle God, and the Sorcerer of the College of Magick. The Triumvirate is advised by the Patrician Council of 100, from whose membership the Triumvirate is elected to office for a period of two years. The daily affairs of the city are administered by the Patricians, who have divided the business of the city into several bureaucratic offices, sometimes with overlapping responsibilities.

Coldheim is built in the corner of a great cavern and surrounded by defensive walls. A great staircase ascends to the city above. The Underland city of Coldheim is lit by the Wizards Star suspended from

the highest roof peak of the cavern; constructed by the College of Magic in ages past. This artificial light burns without heat, but illuminates the city below. This light dims at night to a silvery light similar to that of the moon, in mimicry of the natural world above. It reveals the beauty of the sculptured city, either carved from the rock of the Underlands, or where nature did not provide, built by skilled masons from stone. Decorative elements wrought in silver shine in the patrician part of the city. Coldheim gains its name from an underground river which wells up and supplies it with fresh cold water. This water is carried to all parts of the city by aqueducts, piping, and flushes waste away into the Undernight Abyss. So strong is the Coldheim, that the excess water must be diverted to cascade over the walls of the city in the great Roaring Falls.

Coldheim's beauty is second only to its defensive structures, which are enormous and calculated to resist determined and prolonged assault. The Coldheim river can be diverted to points in the walls, to flood the surroundings, and wash away attackers. The city maintains a standing army, which is supported by less well trained citizen soldiers. The city uses conscription to maintain its army but serving is considered a privilege, for indeed no one can vote, live in the patrician part of the city, or serve on the Patrician Council unless they have served in the army.

The overland city of Coldheim is beautiful but smaller than its Underland counterpart. The roofs are high peaked to throw off snow, and the most important buildings have roofs of gold. There are buildings principally for public use, including a public bath heated by hot underground springs. The city boasts a library, and museum of antiquities scavenged from the wrecks of ships washed ashore on Gadirus.

The Patron City Deity of Coldheim is the Beetle God, a most unusual choice for humanoids to worship.

Coldheim is the only city to have a mutual defense and non-aggression treaty with another city, Delium. Aid can be summoned from Delium by presenting an ancient and battered Red Shield to the Council of the Dwarfs. This shield hangs in the council chamber of the Triumvirate. Delium in turn can summon Coldheim to its aid by presenting the Black Stone to the ruling Triumvirate. The black stone is kept in a silk lined wooden box under guard in the Citadel of the Dwarfs. The exact origin and significance of these two items is lost to history, but everyone knows what they mean when they are presented. Neither has been used in some time.

The deadly enemies of Coldheim and Delium are Necratus and Texotlanset who have separately attacked the cities on more than one occasion. These dire foes are shown little mercy on the battlefield, and battle is joined whenever patrols encounter these enemies.

Delium

The overland entrance to Delium lies in the badlands north of the great forest. In the rough lands there is a secret gate in a rocky cliff face. This is known as the Gate of Horn. Within a mine stair descends to the great underground city below.

Delium is the iron citadel of the dwarfs and is located in the center of a great underground cavern. It sits on the spire of a great stalagmite. At the top of the stalagmite a wide stair descends to the floor of the cavern. Nine gates defend the stair, with a great gate at the bottom of the cavern. Its great iron doors remain closed to outsiders, as they have been for generations. The dwarfs admit no one not both a citizen and a dwarf, gnome, or goblin within the walls, and seldom do they emerge from their self imposed exile. The minds of the dwarfs are turned inward upon their inventions and magicks, and seldom do they interfere in events in the world beyond. Nevertheless, there are some who break tradition, or are sent, to venture out through the lesser known Gate of Horn on such secret affairs as are the business of the dwarfs.

The city is one large workshop, and library, for the dwarfs, gnomes, and goblins are great inventors. The city has a large Academy, with divisions for all the learned disciplines. A large bureaucracy runs the city, and allocates resources for the benefit of all in the city. The dwarfs are obsessed with figures, facts, and administrative details. No task is too small that it does not figure in their accounting.

The city is managed by the Corporation Board of Administrative Assessment whose Chairman makes final decisions that are often hampered by the denseness of the civil bureaucracy, wheels turn slowly in Delium but they do turn. Factions within the bureaucracy often twist resources and rules to benefit their goals.

Delium has a standing army which, at the behest of the civil bureaucracy, guards the city against attack. Since the city has not been attacked in some time the army has been re-assigned to public works. Nevertheless the General and Chief Dustdwarf has executive authority in the event of the approach of an enemy, and can mobilize the dwarf defense. The Iron Gates of the city feature two giant automata, which each wield large spiked fists with effects similar to the blow of a giant. These appear to be two large iron statues on either side of the gate and when activated strike all attackers within reach.

The patron deity of Delium is the Lord of Masques.

Texotlanset

Texotlanset has a reputation for evil second only to that of its Patron Deity, Set Seven Claw. Its culture is a curious mix of Texoltec and Pharaohsphinx cultures. The city was founded by a sect of corrupted Pharaohsphinx and is ruled over by its undying Pharaoh, Uhatop Axalan [a lich]. The Pharaoh has a habit of starting wars and sending war bands abroad in order to capture prisoners for sacrifice. Needless to say this is not popular with neighboring city states.

Texotlanset is one of the few Gadiran cities built largely above ground with an extensive mine below the city. The city has strong walls for defense, and is built in tiers on the mountainside. The entrance to the larger Underlands is guarded by a single large gate of stone. Due to the proximity of Set's Horns, the area enjoys a temperate micro-climate where snowfall melts quickly and rarely lasts long. This does not prevent snowsqualls, blizzards and other weather from dropping on the city.

Texotlanset's notable architecture is devoted largely to its religious works and death cult at the center of which is the blood drenched seven step pyramid of Set Seven Claw. The architecture is a mixture of Pharaohsphinx and Texoltec influences blended into one unholy style. At the top of the pyramid is a ceremonial temple to Set Seven Claw. The pyramid has a wide stair, and at the top is a sacrificial altar.

The remaining civil architecture consists of housing and public buildings devoted to the necessities of life. The architecture reflects the status of the individuals with the poverty stricken slums being in the outermost regions.

Hulia

Hulia is bathed in a near continual fog because it lies near the underwater volcano Frostfire Mountain. The waters of the inland sea are heated by the mount, forming great steams in the cold air of Gadirus. Hulia is the home of the Human Cyclopes who consider themselves fortunate to be relatively distant from their neighbors. The human cyclopes are the only other Gadirans aside from the Opartans skilled in the use of boats. Hulia is the city of the Patron Deity Frostfire.

Klaadro

Klaadro is the home of the Klaadri, a race of intelligent insects. Their White Pyramid is the Patron City Deity of the Klaadri. It is a very ordered caste society with various types of worker insects fulfilling clearly defined roles in the society. The city is ruled by the Queen of the Klaadri whose primary function is to produce the many offspring needed by the city. The Klaadri should not be underestimated for they are extremely intelligent, quick to learn, and have emotions. The society has insects that fulfill the roles of Fighters, Clerics, and Wizards.

Although it is termed a "city" the home of the Klaadri does not resemble more than a great fluted mound in a cavern, and surrounded by gardens tended by the Bandri.

The orders of the Klaadri are:

Ithiri - The Queens

Siltri - Winged stick bug like creatures with fine features, often Clerics or Wizards.

Mektro - Mantis like warriors to guard the others

Gurkta - Enormous miners

Bandri - Beetle like workers, for all tasks

Note that all the Klaadri can fly if for short distances.

Periodically, a new queen is born, at which point the new queen and many caste workers follow her to found a new city, this is called the Klaadri madness. The rampant horde destroy and consume all in their path. Occasionally the new queen and her adopted brood attack one of the other cities.

Klaadri are particularly fond of eating fungi, including mushrooms, toadstools, and Shriekers. Fungi harmful to other living creatures have little or no effect on Klaadri.

Necratus

The overland city of the Necratus is abandoned. It was once a beautiful and ornate city of white stone but has long since fallen into decay. The Necrati, fallen into decadence, live in the Underlands.

The Underland city is constructed of black stone in the middle of a large foul underground swamp that extends for many leagues. In the swamp the fires of encampments can be seen, belonging to tribes of cavemen. As a further impediment to attack, Necratus is surrounded by a moat of deep water. The city itself is ornate, if morbid and decadent in appearance and further protected by a high wall. The Necrati are served by both cavemen and human followers, and the city is divided into thirds to reflect this. The lowest level is for the cavemen, the second tier for the humans, and the third for the Necrati themselves. Entrance to each level is through but a single gate. The Necrati do not live in the city above the surface, and it is deserted. Secret passages link it to the cavern below, but not Necratus itself. The city is guarded by an army of humans, and bands of cavemen. These are led by Necrati, for no Human or Caveman can give an order, this is forbidden in the caste system of the Necratus.

The city of the Necrati is ruled over by the Overseer of Necratus; its patron deity is the Cauldron Lord.

The origin of the Necrati is unknown outside the Cult of the Cauldron Lord, and is a closely guarded secret. The Necrati are the darker halves of one spirit. Secret writings tell that once in ages now forgotten the Necrati were a people who thought to throw off their darker impulses, using magic to separate Law from Chaos, Good from Evil. This proved a terrible mistake and began a long conflict between the opposing spirits for although evil could be separated from good it could not be entirely destroyed by the magic the Necrati possessed. Into the paradise the Necrati thought to create slowly crept their evil

spirits. Through intrigue and treachery the Chaotic Necrati triumphed over their purer selves. They soon possessed the bodies of the Necrati forcing out the purer spirits.

In the city above the spirits of the Lawful Necrati are compelled by darker magical spells to remain and wander without physical form. Here the Necrati now fear to tread lest their spirits be forced out or worse, rejoined. It is a Necrati law that the city above should be guarded, and Cavemen led by Necrati Priest Warriors patrol the areas around the city to prevent access to it. To enter the city is an offense punishable by death.

Although they should have long since passed from the world the evil Necrati have found a way to give physical form to their dark spirits. The Necrati are in resemblance human but have "coarse" texture and features, as if they were imitations of humans. There do not appear to be Necrati women.

The Necrati are organized into a rigid castes of priest warriors (Lawful Evil) and speak a secret language which they use only to converse between themselves. They speak common to beings "lesser" than themselves when conversation is deemed necessary. Their ultimate goals are not clear to anyone apart from general aggression. As such, they do not really care whether or not others live or die so long as their goal is achieved. To this end they will treat others as well as is required to further their purposes.

When encountered, the Necrati (1-2) are typically 2-3 hit die and accompanied by 1d8 Cavemen. The Necrati stand apart in their dull yellow robes and bald heads. Under their robes the Necrati wear a tough leather armor, and favour poisoned daggers or swords as weapons.

The Necrati are "Clerics" with the exception that they use sharp weapons and only wear leather armor. The poison causes 1d8 damage, and reduces natural healing (and healing spells) to 1/2 their normal benefit. The poison is an all or nothing affair so a successful saving throw negates it entirely.

Necrati carry a harsh potion with them that heals at twice the usual potency. Good aligned characters should not consume this potion as it is evil, possibly causing a shift in alignment (st vs magic to resist an alignment shift). Give good aligned characters a bonus for refusing it, 200 xp.

Weapons only cause half damage to the Necrati unless they are of the magical sort. When a Necrati is killed the priests quicken another in a magical vat that they use, adding the bodies of corpses, until after an appropriate length time a fully formed Necrati steps forth to take the status of the lowest caste in the cult, which is a punishment for dying.

This quickening process takes 3d6 months. One of the Cult secrets is that there are in fact a fixed number of Necrati "consciousness's" to take the bodies, which is fortunate otherwise their numbers would grow beyond all proportion. Thus the Necrati must seek to safely manipulate events from behind the scenes whenever possible.

The only thing the Necrati fear is losing their position in the caste hierarchy, since they do not fear death itself. It is entirely possible that the character party may defeat a particular Necrati only to have the warrior priest return to seek vengeance. The Necrati never forget a wrong (in their eyes) done to them and savor revenge.

The Necrati assure their non-necrati followers that reincarnation awaits them. It is a powerful and persuasive tool that they use to advantage by publicly demonstrating it. In reality the Necrati can only resurrect other beings in the usual manner (following the resurrection rules +10%) but this always results in the character suffering an alignment shift to Evil and does not extend the number of resurrections beyond the norm.

Opartos

Opartos is a Atlantean colony founded by a group of the explorers whose ships were wrecked upon Gadirus. The Atlantean culture remains strong. The Atlanteans are ruled by hereditary kings, the brothers Poloneus and Aristocles, who because one will not yield to the other govern Opartos in alternating years. The King of Opartos is advised by the Court Magician and Elders. The Atlanteans retain their curious explorative nature, and spend much of their time trading and exploring the lands of Gadirus. They are skilled boat makers, although these are only suitable for traveling the coast. Opartan traders are almost accepted by other Gadiran cultures, so long as they remain on neutral ground and do not cross the border of a city state. The Opartans often rely on the Nomads as middlemen in their trading practices. The Patron City Deity of Opartos is Shining Star.

Gods of the Seven City States and the Peninsula of Gadirus

Each of the Seven City states has a patron god that is intolerant of the other Deities. It is likely that at least part of the conflict between the cities is due to the subtle manipulation of the followers of these beings who seek to expand the power of their Deity and City. The overall conflict can be generalized as a battle between good and evil, law and chaos. Were the Clerics of one city to destroy the temple of their Clerical enemies in another they would rob their foes of all power.

The Gods of the City States are as insular as their inhabitants; each having a sphere of influence indicated by the territorial boundaries on the map. There are other Deities, Demons and Entities that roam freely over the Peninsula but these are relatively insignificant and of lesser power, with one or two exceptions.

The people of Gadirus are polytheistic, in that they worship their patron city deity, and any number of lesser deities. However, to worship the deity of another city would be a heresy. Any characters wrecked on the shores of the peninsula (the sea born) are eventually expected to adopt the Patron Deity of a city state by the Clerics of that city. Characters not of Gadirus will be actively recruited by Clerics who consider this extremely important. Religious conversion, or acceptance of the patron deity, will change the alignment of the character to match that of the deity. Characters refusing the deity are eventually cast out of the city as heretic outlaws and forbidden to re-enter the territory of the deity, note that a deities area of influence is physically greater than that of the city.

Clerics of a particular deity who have detected the alignment of a character, can also detect whether or not a character has been designated a heretic. In their eyes such a character is an outlaw, and as such should be attacked.

Clerical power is an issue of a regional nature. Clerics are almost always devoted to a single patron deity unlike the polytheism of the general populace. The obtaining of clerical spells therefore can only be achieved only in the area of influence of a particular deity. A Cleric will find themselves unable to obtain spells outside the region of their Deity.

The effect of a deity on clerical spells can be managed simply by the following example: A Cleric of a city communes to obtain spells, and journeys to the area of an enemy where he/she casts spells there. The

Cleric is unable to obtain more spells in an area outside that of their deity, and so must return to their own deities area of influence to commune.

Potentially, were the Cleric also a member of a second (alignment compatible) religious order he/she could commune with that deity to obtain spells.

Note that in the region of Gadirus only the Patron Gods of the City States have the full complement of spells in the spell list available to their Clerics. The lesser Deities, Demons, and Entities have but partial spell lists available for their Clerics to choose from. It is extremely important for the GM to determine what spells are available to what Clerics!

Typically only the much weaker Deities, Demons, and Entities can be found throughout Gadirus, thus to take the battle to the stronghold of their religious enemies the Clerics of the Patron City Gods must enlist the support of the Clerics of lesser beings.

Patron Deities of the City States

Lord of Masks

This deity has been supplanted by an Entity who has discovered the Dreamland Plane and has gained a foothold here. The Entity has been extremely shrewd and imprisoned the original deity in a crystal where the Entity can torment and question it in order to understand the dreamland and manipulate the followers of the Lord of Masks. The Entity seeks to control more of the dreamland but has difficulty in persuading the inward looking dwarfs of Delium to expand beyond their city walls.

The former Lord of Masks seeks release, and revenge against the Entity, and can commune with some lower level priests in an attempt to conspire release, yet not grant spells beyond 4th level. These experiences are very disturbing to the priesthood. Masks represent this deities different aspects.

Set Seven Claw

This deity has seven faces representing aspects of its chaotic nature. Its sign is a blood drenched seven step pyramid. Its priests ritually scar themselves as a sign to the deity of commitment, and many

activities require sacrifice. The deity is sustained by blood sacrifice, particularly by that of an enemy.

White Pyramid

This deity represents that which is good, pure, and ordered. Priests of the Order of the White Pyramid wear white robes and shave their heads as a sign of humility. They value learning. Higher members of the order wear a lock of hair at the side of their head, which is beaded to show their status. The deity always appears to its followers as a shining pyramid. The White Pyramid has begun to suspect that there is something out of place with the Lord of Masques, as that deity has changed its behaviour.

Frostfire

In appearance this deity resembles a bearded humanoid walrus with great tusks. It lives in the sea near a fiery underwater mountain but is the patron of the city of Hulia. It has a complex nature representing the elementary nature of earth, air, fire, and water.

Beetle God

The Beetle God is an unusual deity to be worshiped by humanoids, choosing to appear to its followers as a giant black beetle. The Beetle God nevertheless enjoys a strong and faithful following in its home territory, for the city has never been successfully attacked by any of the other city states. This may be in part to its cold and calculating insect nature.

Shining Star

Shining Star appears to her followers in the form of a woman, either young and beautiful, or as an old hag. Her symbol is that of two bright stars on a blue field, one star is larger than the other. She is often accompanied by The Guardian, an entity which often manifests itself any of the large or small cats in the feline family. The guardian is more than this though and can shape change itself at will.

Clerics of Shining Star wear robes of dark blue, and a small stone mounted in a silver circlet. The sign of their office is a staff surmounted by a lion's head. Their status is usually indicated by the quality of the staff and circlet.

The Cauldron Lord

The Cauldron Lord is the patron god of the City of Nocratus. The city is led by the Nocrati, an order of priests dedicated to serving this evil deity. The Deity grants its closest followers unending resurrection, but the numbers of this inner circle of the Nocrati are limited which is fortunate or their numbers would grow.

The cauldron lord is represented by an idol called the great eater, a great fanged mouth gnashing corpses.

The Nocrati are great intriguers, seeking to further their political and religious goals by trickery and deceit. In fact were it not for the fact that their greatest treachery is turned inward upon each other they would be an even greater threat. This is unlikely however, due to the undying rivalries within their own order for the Nocrati never forget an insult or an injury. They do not fear death, only the loss of their status within the order of the Nocrati.

Wandering Spirits

These are the deities of the Nomads, respectively the Sky Spirit (overland) and the Bone Spirit (Underland). These are spirits that embody natural phenomena. The wandering spirits do not have power in a city hex, thus the nomads will not linger long in the hex of a city.

The Nomads once worshiped a patron city deity called Storm Wielder. There are one or two minor shrines on the peninsula of Gadirus where the deity has localized power. These are occasionally visited by the nomads but Storm Wielder no longer is their principal deity. The nomads have a saying when something is of little consequence or is unlikely to occur; "When the Kingdom returns," as they do not expect Storm Wielder to return their lost city.

Other Godlings, Demons, Entities, and Heroes

The following are just a few:

Nek Niltoh and Hev Hudla - Heroes of Coldheim

Nek Niltoh was a legendary hunter and hero of the Gadiran peninsula. Nek traveled from one end of Gadirus to the other accompanied by his friend Hev Hudla and sometimes rocks can be found with his "NN" sigil carved in them. These are holy places to the followers of Nek Niltoh

but they also serve a practical use of marking entrances to the Underlands.

All good things must come to an end and after virtually defending the city gates of Coldheim almost singlehanded Nek was slain at the end of the battle by the Overseer of Necratus only to vanish in a blaze of light. Neks personal sacrifice caused the Necrati such a delay they were defeated at the last moment by reinforcements led by Hev Hudla.

Hev Hudla was the sidekick of Nek Niltoh, never far from his idol and always trying to go one better. Hev Hudla's unending shame was not dying at the gate with Nek Niltoh. Hev ultimately drank himself to death at the Hero's Gate Festival in a contest to consume more beer than any rival. This being can be sullen and brooding should the name Nek Niltoh come up in conversation, resentful of the pre-eminence of his rival. The real irony is that Hev is just as popular as Nek for saving the city of Coldheim.

The Ice Fisherman

Often seen on an ice floe in Partas Bay is the fishing hut of Oithin Og the Ice Fisherman. The Ice Fisherman appears to be an old man, often seen fishing through a hole in the ice. From this hole he can pull out as many fish as he needs. Despite his eccentric appearance, and apparent age, Oithin Og is actually quite powerful [as a 9th level Wizard], and no magic cast against him has any effect within the walls of the ice hut. The ice floe can be steered anywhere along the coast of Gadirus that Oithin Og desires. He is disposed to be kindly unless he detects hostile intentions in those he encounters. The stove in the ice hut is always burning and keeps the hut warm inside without requiring any fuel.

Oithin Og dislikes the wind, hearing something in it that howls round the hut on stormy nights. This is the Great Frost Hound, that freezes anything within hearing as it howls, st vs magic. The Howl has no effect within the hut.

Gulcania

This entity is a fiery demon imprisoned within the Volcano Gulcan, it relishes the sacrifice of unwilling victims cast into the burning depths. It longs to be freed from the chains that bind it. Its torment and struggle cause near continual eruptions from the volcano.

Lawful Spirits

The spirits of the Lawful Necrati are still a presence in the overland city of Necratus. Even though they are confined to the city they can manifest themselves as a ghost when the occasion suits with all the powers of a ghost. They aid the lawful and attack the chaotic.

The Isle of Colossus, or Lodestone Island

The South Polar sea circles the globe in an unending virtually unbroken storm except where it passes between the Horn of Iernia and the Peninsula of Gadirus. This sea is extremely dangerous for the passage of ships which must beat before the wind. Few ships if any would dare passage through the Strait of Iernia if it were not for the rich trading to be found in waters beyond it.

More perilous still to navigation in these waters is the occasional presence of a legendary and mysterious island, Colossus. This floating island circles the globe within the storms of the South Polar Sea, passing periodically through the Strait of Iernia between Iernia and the Peninsula of Gadirus. Colossus is held in suspension above the surface of the Dreamlands by a large lodestone that lies within it. It is this same lodestone that prevents it from colliding with the continents. In structure the rocky island is indeed similar to an iceberg as much of it lies beneath the waters. It travels in an unpredictable pattern due to currents and wind, but never strays far from the coasts of Gadirus, and can always be found within the eye of a storm. The lodestone throws the compass of any nearby ship off course, and is often the cause of wrecking upon the shores of the island or upon the Peninsula of Gadirus.

Colossus may once have been attached to the Peninsula of Gadirus, for legends there tell of a lost mysterious kingdom nestled in a valley between four mountains until it was sundered by a great storm, and carried off into the unknown. Upon Colossus are deserted and mysterious temples, perhaps built by the original peoples of the four peaks or the survivors of shipwrecks, and in the temples to lost gods can be found gathered the treasures of many ages. Colossus is now the home to evil monsters and horrid creatures beyond description and any sailors shipwrecked upon its shores can expect to find no sanctuary contrary to the myth.

Colossus drifts with the wind and current, seemingly without direction. Its speed when propelled by wind or current can exceed that of many

sailing vessels. Many a vessel has been borne down upon and wrecked against hidden under water shoals. Because of the enormous lodestone, any ship approaching the island will have its compass diverted to point north, toward the island, rather than magnetic north.

The island usually travels within the eye of a great cyclonic storm, and appears to be a haven at first. It is not, and while a ship may approach the island, jagged rocks are soon betrayed by white water, and usually result in any vessel grounding. The rocks tear the bottom out of the ships, spilling the cargoes and drowning the crews.

Such treasures as do wash up on the beach are gathered by the numerous Giant Cyclopes that live on the island to be pawed as trinkets in the lairs of the monsters. In the valley floor lie the ruins of a once beautiful city, where cyclopes now live in the broken houses and temples.

Far above the valley is a new terraced city of white stone on the mountain side which can be glimpsed between the clouds. This is the city of Overmoon and it is where the people of the 8th City State now live. When the island became inhabited by cyclopes the people of the city were forced to move beyond the reach of the man eating monsters. Through secret passes and dark caves they trekked along a hidden way into the mountain and blocked the way behind them as they went. On the mountain they built a new city and learned to live in the air. They have tamed giant birds and now the most adventurous fly from place to place to hunt. They also make a manly sport of stealing the cyclopes treasure.

Unlike the cultures of the Seven City States on the Peninsula of Gadirus, the people of the clouds wear no masks. They do not make war on any except the monsters of the valley, and will attempt to rescue anyone shipwrecked upon the shore from the cyclopes.

The people of Overmoon have entirely lost contact with Gadirus but have not forgotten the other cities despite the passage of many years.

The patron deity of Overmoon is Storm Wielder. This being appears as a heavy set warrior with a broadsword but is perfectly capable of throwing lightning bolts. Storm Wielder has separated the 8th kingdom from Gadirus as a defensive measure against the other patron deities. It is Storm Wielder who keeps the island surrounded by a cyclonic disturbance. The other patron deities of Gadirus have not forgotten him but it would take several of them banded together to return the

island to Gadirus against his will. This is extremely unlikely. Storm Wielder will lure ships to wreck on the island if the population of his city drops too low.

Storm Wielder is in contact with a few followers on Gadirus and keeps an eye on events there; rarely interfering except to "stir the pot" and keep the other patron city deities in conflict. However, he cannot grant his Clerics on Gadirus the full complement of powers and thus these Clerics have a limited spell list. The Clerics often say "When the Kingdom is restored" as looking forward to the day when Storm Wielder returns to Gadirus. Storm Wielder has no immediate plans to return the 8th Kingdom to Gadirus.

Adventure Hooks for the Peninsula of Gadirus

There are any number of possible adventures but how does a character start?

Dungeon exploration – find treasure and other goodies in an unexplored region of the Underlands, the Caverns of Pain. There are many unexplored Underland dungeon areas for the GM to develop.

The Lord of Masques (the Entity) spirits to Odd Earth some sleeping characters to perform some as not yet clear goal. The characters must discover what has happened, why they have arrived in Gadirus, and what the Entity wants them to do. Can they escape the plot of the Entity and awaken in their own lives?

The characters start in Coldheim. A member of a Patrician house has disappeared on a journey through the Underlands. Can the characters locate and rescue the family member? Are the Necrati involved in the disappearance or is the Textolanset? The characters explore the Underlands.

Escort a Diplomatic mission to the Klaadri through the Underlands, but avoid Underland perils on the way. The character party is pursued by Textolanset warriors, assailed by monsters, and set on by bandits.

Why is the Overland City of the Necrati empty? Spy on the Necrati city, but don't get caught by the cavemen. Discover the secret peril that lingers in the city.

Shipwrecked characters are found by the Nomads and are escorted to a city, but are they delivered into the arms of friendly welcome, or treated as a commodity by the Nomads and betrayed for gain.

Shipwrecked characters are found by a Patrol from Coldheim. On the way they are attacked by strange wild insects. They arrive at the city just in time to fend off a Klaadri Madness attack.

The Chief Dustdwarf in Delium is replaced by a duplicitous rival planning a coup in that city. Under the pretense of an enemy attack on Delium the duplicitous rival plans to mobilize one faction in the city and make himself Chairman. Prevent the coup. Looks like that Polymorph to Dwarf potion that dubious character in the alley sold you might come in handy.

Coldheim is under attack by Necrati and aid must be summoned from Delium. Take the red shield to Delium through the Underlands or Overlands and return with aid.

Escort an Opartan merchant trading caravan through the Underlands. Dicker with the Nomads. They know a shortcut through the Underlands, although it might be easier to try an overland route.

