



UMBRAGIA
REALMS OF SHADOW

CORE RULEBOOK
JAGGED EDGE GAMES



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CORE RULEBOOK

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SPECIAL THANKS: S. JOHN ROSS

Jagged Edge Games would like to thank *S. John Ross* for his contributions to this work. Although he did not *directly* write anything, he was an inspiration and wrote the works that the magic system presented within this document was based upon. The UMANA and Elemental Magic systems, written originally for the GURPS[®] system and (in the case of UMANA) published in Pyramid Online Magazine[®], was used as a framework (with permission from *S. John Ross*) for the modifications to the Dungeon's and Dragons Magic system. More of *S. John's* fantastic work can be found at the **BLUE ROOM** – <http://www.io.com/~sjohn> – his personal web site. Don't miss it.

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Umbragia: Realms of Shadow Artwork: Don McInturff provided all of the nineteen pictures of the individual races included in the **Umbragia: Realms of Shadow** Core Rulebook, volume 1.0.0. His work was limited only by his imagination and the descriptions provided in the earlier zero-zero (0.0.1 through 0.0.4) releases of the book.

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The rest of the (admittedly inferior) artwork is either the authors work or public domain clip-art. It should not be too tough to tell which pieces of artwork belong to the professional artist...

SPECIAL THANKS: ERIC NOAH, MORRUS AND LIQUIDE

Back when this project was just a file sitting on my free Prodigy web-space, Eric Noah took me seriously and let people know that I was doing this on the Eric Noah Unofficial D&D3e News site (<http://www.ericnoah.com>). Not long after, I had people e-mailing me with ideas, comments and suggestions. I was so happy, I thought it could not get any better.

Then, after a short ICQ conversations with Morrus, I was being invited to place my material on his **EN World** pages (<http://www.d20reviews.com>) – and one of the most talented web designers around (**Liquide**, a.k.a. *Robert Ljung*) was helping me put the pages together in a much more professional presentation.

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DARK SHADOWS

Umbragia is filled with mystery and intrigue. It is a place where possibility becomes reality and reality fades away into dreamscapes. It is a place neither for the faint of heart, nor for those looking for the standard in *Fantasy Faire*.

The **Realms of Shadow** – or at least the one we are about to show you – are places that are a little different. True, it is fantasy. It does have magic, and monsters and histories that span millennia. Races that are as old as recorded time live side-by-side with peoples that can trace their history to the first ancestor. They are places of upheaval and ever changing political landscapes.

But this has all been done before.

“What,” you may be asking yourself, “*is so different? Why is this world such a stretch from the fantasy worlds we know and love so much?*”

These worlds assume nothing. You will not see a *Tolkien Orc* or an Elf that looks surprisingly like that of the *Elfquest* variety. In fact, you will not see an *Orc* or an *Elf* at all.

We did this to avoid the natural arguments that come about when people have vastly different views of what a ‘*real*’ orc or elf is. If we were to borrow any races from fiction or legend or myth, then some would see them as hopelessly flawed.

We wanted a labor of love that we could share with the rest of the world. But do not feel that we have created a completed work. This is a framework – a structure upon which to fasten your greatest dreams of adventure and most twisted plots of political intrigue.

Much of the detail of the world is left purposefully ambiguous. There is enough detail to spark the imagination and enough left untold to allow Dungeon Masters to have vastly different campaigns. We did not want to replace your imagination; we wanted to give it a foundation from which to grow.

We have planned several books to follow this one. Each one will add more detail, build upon the foundations that we form here. But none of those books will be required. Each will also be completely self-contained. You can mix and match, as you desire...

K. David Ladage

D20 INFORMATION

All of the legal information on the use of the d20 logo, the right to use the d20 system and so forth are located in the back of the book in the Appendices.

Any violation of these rules is unintended. We at **Jagged Edge Games** would greatly appreciate having any such violation reported to us immediately so that it may be corrected as soon as possible.

Thank you very much.



CHARACTERS

Many peoples make up the population of **Umbragia**. Some are just like us. Some are not. They all have enough similarity to feel familiar. And just like us, they all share things that bind them together or drive them apart.

When playing a character in this world, there are many races to choose from. But before we get into the specifics, a few general notes are in order.

First, there is no listing for the human race. This is no surprise for some, as many role-playing games simply assume you have a grasp on humanity, and get on with the other stuff. That is not the reason it is omitted here, however. Humanity is omitted because it is divided into three separate sub-races: the *Aesir*, the *Haitir* and the *Vanir*. A player wishing to play a human character needs to look at these.

Second, given the many combinations of race and culture, the possible backgrounds and overall feel for character construction are virtually limitless. However, the races are not meant to be restrictive (well, not *too* much anyway). They were each created, not to be color on the canvas, but to be the *canvas itself*. Additionally, we have done all we can to ensure that they feel *real*.

Lastly, it is not our intention to provide you with an exhaustive history of each race. In this authors opinion, this would be the perfect example of what *not* to do in a fantasy role-playing supplement. These races should be a framework for a Dungeon Master and her/his players to adhere their own ideas to, not some set of rules to tell the players what a *true* Nimori or a *true* Shadahs are really like. The idea is that a Dungeon Master might want to use these races in a campaign other than the **Realms of Shadow**. To that end, what we have provided is generic enough that any of them could be inserted into the background of nearly any game, if not whole, darn close to it. From a game mechanics standpoint, they should require no modifications at all. However, if you feel the need to change part of it because it doesn't fit your conceptions – please feel free. After all, you are the creator of your own dreams.

It is possible to introduce the races from other supplements or core d20 products. There is no reason that the typical *Elf* could not be found somewhere in the Realms. Keep in mind that either the races here (or those presented in the other supplements) may need some slight modification for this to work. For example, in most game worlds, the *Elves* were the oldest of the races. In the **Umbragia** campaign this is the *Murhavia* (later known as the *Shadahs*). And they are a far cry from *Elves*. Again, the modifications needed should not be extensive, just the brushing up of a few details like the one presented.

NOTES

Languages: *Common* refers to the most common language of man in that region. See the **nation** entries to see what languages are common for that region.

Races: The standard fantasy races are, by default, not available in **Umbragia**. Nineteen races that are available are on the following pages. Some of these races are *not* recommended as player characters. Specifically, Elgarph, Izhan, Khutai, Polymarie and Quina. None of these races will undermine a campaign, it is just that they are slightly weaker than most.

RACIAL ABILITIES

The following abilities are present on one or more of the races.

ADAPTABILITY

A race with this ability may choose two skills at first level that are treated as '*class skills*' for all purposes. Each even level beyond first (2nd, 4th, etc.) they may choose an additional skill to add to this list. The skills chosen cannot be exclusive skills.

ADDITIONAL ARMS

A race with this ability has an additional set of arms. The only race in this book that possesses this ability is the Xxyxx. This ability is a little complex, so the entire ability is described here instead of the Xxyxx page.

Xxyxx have six limbs. All carrying capacity and speed statistics are normal when the Xxyxx is walking upright using only the lower-limbs. If the middle-limbs are used as auxiliary legs, the speed of the Xxyxx is reduced by 30%, but the carrying capacity of the individual is doubled, and the individual receives +4 racial bonus on any roll to maintain their footing. When the middle-limbs are acting as arms, the Xxyxx is capable of wielding two 2-handed weapons at once, wielding a 2-handed weapon, a 1-handed weapon and a shield, four 1-handed weapons, etc. The combinations are endless.

The Xxyxx fall under the rules for multi-limbed creatures (Core Rulebook III, page 11). This means that they use the Multiweapon fighting and Multidexterity feats instead of the Two-weapon Fighting and Ambidexterity feats.

Optionally, a Dungeon Master may require that a Xxyxx that wants to use all limbs with equal precision may rules that a Xxyxx must take the Two-weapon Fighting feat as a prerequisite to the Multiweapon Fighting feat and the Ambidexterity feat as a prerequisite of the Multidexterity feat.

AMBIDEXTERITY

A race with this ability receives the feat Ambidexterity for free.

AQUATIC

A race with this ability is aquatic and is dependent upon submersion in water for survival. The race will list fresh or salt water. S/he must submerge her/his body in water for one hour each week (**note: a week in *Umbragia* is 8-days long**). If s/he does not accomplish this by the end of day eight, s/he is treated as though s/he is fatigued. S/he will suffer from 1d8 damage (non-healing) each 6-hours following the 8th day. At any time before death, this can be corrected by being submerged. Once submerged, s/he will recover 1d8 of the damage suffered in this manner for each full 3-hours of submersion.

AURAL SPIRIT

A race with this ability is highly sensitive to personality, intentions and emotions. They receive a +2 racial bonus on the skills *Animal Empathy*, *Diplomacy*, *Gather Information*, *Innuendo*, *Perform*, and *Sense Motive*.

AURAL TAIN

A race with this ability is highly resistant to all forms of Divination. Treat this as a Spell Resistance 15 against all forms of divination spells and spell-like abilities.

BONUS FEAT

A race with this ability receives a bonus 1st level feat.

BONUS SKILLS

A race with this ability receives a bonus skill point at every level. At first level, multiply this by 4 (like most other skill points).

CALCULATOR

Races with this ability are natural economists and mathematicians. They will receive a racial bonus of +2 on the skills *Appraise* and all *Profession* skills. Additionally, the Dungeon Master may add a bonus to any skill where the intuitive understanding of numbers and economics would be of benefit.

CHAMLEON

A race with this ability naturally blends into her/his surroundings. This gives her/him a racial bonus of +2 on the skill *Hide* as well as a +2 *Armor Class* bonus.

COLD-BLOODED

A race with this ability cannot operate in colder temperatures. They take double damage from cold-based attacks, as well as taking damage from prolonged exposure to temperatures below 50°F. For every hour of exposure, s/he will take 1 point of damage, plus an additional 1 damage for every 10 full degrees below 50. For example, at 0°F, s/he takes 6 damage per hour. A generous Dungeon Master may drop this to 1d6 damage per hour, if so inclined.

COLLECTED

A race with this ability receives a racial bonus of +4 to resist any and all effects of fear, intimidation, diplomacy, sense motive, etc.

COLORLESS VISION

A race with this ability cannot detect colors of any kind, seeing the world in black and white and shades of gray.

COMPULSIVE HONESTY

A race with this ability cannot lie...ever.

CULTURAL ADAPTABILITY

A race with this ability has a natural feel for cultures and traditions. S/he may make an *Intelligence* check at Difficulty Class 10 (modified by the degree oddity for the situation) to determine the proper course of action in any given situation.

DARK VISION

A race with this ability can see equally well in total darkness as a human can in normal daylight.

DYING RACE

A character from a race with this ability must select one of the character flaws listed for that race. They also do not get the standard 1st level feat.

ENCHANTING VOICE

A race with this ability has a naturally soothing and hypnotic voice. Anyone who hears and understands her/him is apt to believe. Treat this as a continuous *Charm Person* spell that the victim receives a bonus of +4 to save against. Once a victim saves, they are immune to the effects of that individual's voice for the next hour.

ENDURANCE

A race with this ability receives the feat Endurance for free.

FAST HEALING

A race with this ability has all of the bonuses associated with the extraordinary ability of Fast Healing. See **Core Rulebook III**, p10.

FEARLESSNESS

A race with this ability is immune to effects of intimidation, fear, horror and the like. This does not mean that they are foolhardy, just that they never lose their calm and ability to think rationally.

FOCUSED REFLEXES

A race with this ability has the ability to gain short bursts of tremendous speed, reaction and balance. S/he may use this ability once per day, plus one additional use per point of *Constitution* bonus. Each use grants the character a 50% bonus to their dexterity and speed for one minute. Immediately following each use, the character suffers a 50% penalty to their strength (not dexterity) and speed for the next thirty minutes.

For example, assume an average character with strength and dexterity 10, speed 30 feet. When using this ability, gains a bonus of (10 x 50%) +5 Dexterity and (30 x 50%) +15 feet speed. After one minute, the character's strength and speed drops to 50% normal (5 and 15 respectively) and will stay that way for the next thirty minutes.

FOCUSED STRENGTH

A race with this ability has the ability to gain short bursts of tremendous strength. S/he may use this ability once per day, plus one additional use per point of *Constitution* bonus. Each use grants the character a 50% bonus to their strength for one minute. Immediately following each use, the character suffers a 50% penalty to their strength for the next thirty minutes. For example, an average character with a strength of 10, focuses their strength gaining a bonus of (10 x 50%) +5 for a total of 15 Strength. After one minute, the character's strength drops to 50% normal (or 5) and will stay that way for the next thirty minutes.

GILLS

A race with this ability may breathe normally underwater and may not drown. Unless otherwise noted, this ability assumes that the race is amphibious and thus may function out of the water as well.

GREAT HEALTH

A race with this ability, when rolling for hit points rolls two dice and takes the higher of the two results.

HARD TO KILL

A race with this ability automatically has the REMAIN CONSCIOUS feat (from the book *Sword and Fist*, published by Wizards of the Coast) allowing them to remain conscious and take partial actions while their Hit Points are below 0. When HP reach -10, then s/he may make a Fortitude Save at DC10 to continue. Each -5 HP below -10 forces another Fortitude Save with the DC of that save equal to the negative HP value (DC 15, then DC 20 and so on). As long as this save is made, the character remains alive and able to perform partial actions. Once this Fortitude Save is failed, the character dies normally. If alive and below -10 HP, the character can be healed as normal. This is a *virtual feat* and thus does not need the normal prerequisites. Taking the actual feat REMAIN CONSCIOUS is required if a character wishes to have any feat that uses it as a pre-requisite. The abilities for having this do not stack in any way.

HEIGHTENED AWARENESS

A race with this ability receives the feat *Blind Fight* for free.

INCREASED ENCUMBRANCE

A race with this ability may carry 20% more weight than their strength would normally indicate.

INCREASED SLEEP

A race with this ability needs 50% more sleep than normal (typically 12 hours per day) to be effective. Additionally, races with this ability suffer a -2 penalty to resist sleep spells and spell-like effects.

INTERNAL CLOCK

A race with this ability has an uncanny awareness of the passage of time. They instinctively know exactly how much time has passed, even without any form of reference.

INTERNAL COMPASS

A race with this ability has an uncanny awareness of direction. They instinctively know exactly what direction is north, even without any form of reference.

KEEN HEARING

A race with this ability may hear four times as well as a human (reduce all penalties for hearing related checks by 75%). This will allow the race to distinguish between similar sounds, pick out a single voice in a crowd, etc. Additionally, this ability grants a +4 racial bonus on Listen checks.

KEEN SMELL

As per the *SCENT* ability in *Core Rulebook III*, page 10.

KEEN VISION

A race with this ability may see four times as well as a human in all light conditions (reduce all penalties for vision related checks by 75%). Additionally, this ability grants a +4 racial bonus to Spot and Search checks.

LUNAR INFLUENCES

A race with this ability has a personality that is tied to the phases of the moon. When the moon is full, s/he is calm, slow to anger and easy to deal with. When the moon is new, s/he is edgy, irritable and generally tough to deal with. While calm (full moon +/- 4 days), s/he gains a racial bonus of +2 to all skills they have at least one rank in. While edgy (new moon, +/- 4 days), s/he suffer a penalty of -2 to all skill rolls.

MAGE SENSE

A race with this ability can feel the presence of magical and spiritual energies. Treat this as though the individual were constantly casting the spell *Detect Magic* (this is involuntary. The longer s/he stays in the area, the more potent the reading of the area is going to be). This is a spell-like ability.

MAGIC DAMPER

A race with this ability disrupts the flow of magic in their general area. All use of arcane magic within 50 feet of the individual (meaning the caster is within 50 feet of the Magic Damper when the spell was cast) is treated as though the target had Spell Resistance +15. This will effect all spell use, even spells where SR normally does not apply. Divine magic is unaffected.

MANUAL DEXTERITY

A race with this ability receives a racial bonus of +2 on any use of skill where fine motor control could be a benefit (Dungeon Master's call). Examples include Pick Pocket and Open Locks.

MENTAL FOCUS

A race with this ability receives a +4 racial bonus on the skill *Concentration*.

NATURAL OUTDOORSMEN

A race with this ability receives a racial bonus of +2 on the skills *Animal Empathy*, *Balance*, *Climb*, *Handle Animal*, *Hide*, and *Wilderness Lore*.

NATURAL SPELLS

A race with this ability has natural abilities for casting spells. The exact spells, effectiveness and number of uses per day are explained with the specific race in question.

NATURAL TALENTS

A race with this ability receives bonus feats at 6th, 12th and 18th levels.

NIGHT VISION

A race with this ability can see four times as far in low light conditions as a normal human. In normal daylight, s/he can only see half as far as a normal human. Normal daylight is also somewhat uncomfortable.

SHARP CLAWS

A race with this ability has long, sharp claws. These claws do an additional 1d6 damage (slashing) with an unarmed attack.

SHARP TEETH

A race with this ability has very sharp teeth. They may do 1d6 damage (piercing) with a successful bite in combat.

SILENCE

A race with this ability makes very little noise. S/he receives a +4 racial bonus on the skill *Move Silently*.

S'IRA

S'ira is a concept unique to the Khutai race. Khutai are born with 0 points of *S'ira*. *S'ira* may never be negative. Each time a Khutai does something that detracts from the Khutai race, s/he accumulates a point of *S'ira*. Each time they do something that enhances the Khutai race, s/he loses one point of accumulated *S'ira*. For every 5 full points of *S'ira* accumulated, Khutai receive a racial penalty of -1 on all die rolls. See the nation of Tiasham for more information, such as the effect of *S'ira* within the Khutai caste system as well as the concept of *J'udis*.

SLAVE MENTALITY

A race with this ability has a physiological need for constant instruction or the slowly spiral into depression. For each day the character does not have a set of defined duties, s/he takes permanent ability damage, losing 1d4 Intelligence and 1d4 Wisdom (rolled separately). This ability damage cannot be healed by any known means, including restoration, wish, or miracle spells. If either score ever reaches 1, the character begins to lose 1 Hit Point per day (2 if both scores are at 1), and no longer heals Hit Points naturally (although magical healing will still work in order to keep the character alive). Treat any ability damage from Slave Mentality that would reduce an ability score below 1 as bringing the score to 1 – further damage from this hindrance is discarded (though this does not protect the character from ability damage from other sources). Should instruction ever be restored to the character, the ability damage from Slave Mentality is converted from permanent to temporary, and can be healed both naturally and magically. However, should the character find her/himself without instruction again before this ability damage is healed, it once again is considered permanent ability damage and cannot be healed by any known means.

SPELL IMMUNITY

A race with this ability has one or more spells and/or spell-like effects that they are completely immune to. The exact spells and/or spell-like effects will be spelled out in each instance of this ability.

SPELLBLIND

A race with this ability cannot take the feat *Dragon Touched*.

TAIL

A race with this ability has a thick tail capable of being used in combat. The tail strikes with a reach of 5 feet doing 1d6 damage (bludgeoning).

THIN-SKINNED

A race with this ability, when rolling for hit points rolls two dice and takes the lower of these two results.

TOUGH-SKINNED

A race with this ability will get to add their Constitution bonus to their Armor Class.

ULTRA-HEARING

A race with this ability has hearing that extends well beyond the normal range of hearing allowing them to hear higher and lower frequencies of sound than a normal human. This also confers a +6 racial bonus on Listen checks as well as any attempt to hear something, intuit the direction a sound came from, etc. In some circumstances, they could even track someone by sound alone. This also rendered the individual more susceptible to sonic-based attacks (DM's call).

UNEDUCATED

A race with this ability is lacking centers of learning, or has trouble grasping new concepts for some reason. They receive only half the normal number of skill points for each level of experience.

XXYXX SENSE

A race with this ability can, via antennae or some other means detect minute vibrations in the air. This has many effects, such as granting her/him the equivalent of *low light vision* (being able to 'see' twice as far in low light conditions). Additionally, a Dungeon Master may (as an option) rule that certain feats are more effective for her/him (such as *Blind Fighting*), or even assess penalties to anyone attempting to sneak up on her/him, etc.

RACES

The following pages detail the nineteen primary races of the **Realms of Shadow**. These races are the Acota, Aesir, Daermin, Elgarph, Goumin, Gyor, Haitir, Izhan, Khutai, Lukar'r, Nathas, Nimori, Polymarie, Quina, Shadahs, Vanir, Vasy1, Xxyxx and Zynar.

ACOTA

ECOLOGY

Acota are neo-barbaric, nomadic quasi-apes. They are covered in a thin fur, except for the face. Acota faces are dark, nearly black with a skin that is dull and non-reflective. The fur coat ranges in color from reddish-browns to deep, rich blacks. Acota have broad faces and noses and large, round eyes that are always of a silver-gray color. Acota arms are slightly longer than normal for a man, and they end in large, powerful hands. Acota typically stand from 6'0" to just over 7'0" tall and weigh from 350 to 450 pounds. Males are taller and heavier than females.

Acota prefer plains, woods and jungles. They are survivalists, and so can be found nearly anywhere except swamps and tundra. They are fishermen, craftsmen and hunter/gatherers hunting larger game in parties.

Acota are polygamous. Larger, aggressive males (Bulls) will have many mates (Heifers), while the smaller, weaker males will have none. Acota have gestation periods in excess of two years (122 weeks) and multiple births are almost unknown. Survival dictates that the females be almost continuously pregnant. Acota mature unnaturally fast and are full-grown at 4 years. They are accepted socially as adults at 8 years. Average lifespan is 36 years.

PSYCHOLOGY

Acota prefer nature to civilization. To the Acota mind, the word *civilization* is a fancy way of saying *slavery*. The Acota are free and intend to stay that way. It is not unknown for an Acota to leave the clans and live among men. Those that remain will pity the individual for his obvious ailment. Some would even label the poor soul "insane."

Acota tend to be very generous and kind-hearted. But they are very unforgiving of anyone that would betray that trust or bring harm to a clan or clansman.

Acota are not primitive. They have no schools or anyone dedicated to discovering new ideas, however. Thus, they are never what other races would consider educated. Do not confuse this with stupidity.

Acota rarely wear armor. Fewer still own any. The weapon of choice is the spear, since it is rather easy to make. Swords and other such weapons are rare due to the lack of blacksmiths. Acota have the ability to use swords and the like, but few choose to do so. They prefer the feel of heavier or longer weapons – pole arms, war-axes, and spears and so forth. Many are masters of trapping and can set some deadly snares.

Acota art, although rare, is not unknown. It tends to be simple, tribal in nature, small and portable.

IN THE REALMS

Acota are not natural. They were not created by the Gods, but by the Arch Magi of Ghorax in the **Age of Wizards and Heroes** to



"I believe that I have finally achieved unmitigated success. Through extensive use of the school of transmutation, I've been able to *blend* one of the species of wild ape (one male and one female) with two of my better servants.

"Observations show that the subject still retains much of its human foibles, such as a trifling sentiment toward generosity and a stubborn independence. Furthermore, the male seems to have picked up some of the aggressive tendencies from the animal source. These undesirable traits, I am quite sure, can be removed in due time.

"However, the physical changes were more to the desired end. The subject has increased in mass and stature enabling it to work at a substantially increased efficiency.

"Further experiments are needed. My current plan is to use source material from various blood-lines of the animal species and from my various servants, so as to create a stable population pool."

- *Gho'tal (the greater)*
Arch Magi of Ghorax

serve as a slave race / beast of burden – thus the terms Bulls and Heifers describing the sexes.

Staging a revolution against their masters in the **Age of Kings and Queens**, they have never been enslaved as a race since. Very few Acota will venture into the nations of Asgoth or Ghorax where they remain highly prized slaves and gladiators.

Although they are a magical race, Acota themselves cannot wield arcane spells. A few have managed to rise in ranks as clergy and have been able to cast divine spells. Most Acota feel that religion is just another form of enslavement, however, so this is rare.

The Acota get along with most races, but have been known to go into near blind rages upon seeing a Ghoraxian Wizard. As a general rule, they distrust Mages, but will tolerate Clerics.

ACOTA RACIAL TRAITS

Ability Scores: +4 to *Strength*; -2 to *Intelligence*, *Wisdom*, and *Charisma*.

Medium Size: As medium sized creatures, Acota have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.

Base Speed: 40 feet. Acota are faster than most.

Great Health: Acota always roll *Hit Points* using two dice and take the higher of the two results.

Natural Outdoorsmen: Acota receive a racial bonus of +2 on the skills *Animal Empathy*, *Balance*, *Climb*, *Handle Animal*, *Hide*, and *Wilderness Lore*.

Spellblind: Acota cannot take the **Dragon Touched** feat and therefore cannot cast arcane spells.

Tough-skinned: Due to a tough hide, Acota apply their *Constitution* bonus to their *Armor Class*.

Uneducated: The Acota do not have centers of learning. Coupled with a very short lifespan, they receive only half the normal number of skill points for each level of experience.

Automatic Languages: *Common*. **Bonus Languages:** None. Due to the lack of education facilities, Acota rarely speak more than one language. Acota have no native tongue.

Favored Class: *Barbarian*. A multi-class Acota's *Barbarian* class does not count when determining if s/he suffers an XP penalty.

"The mission was a total failure. We were unable to suppress the Acota uprising and their sentiments have spread to the other of their races.

"The whole city was in a state of panic when our force arrived. The Acota were cruel and efficient in their liberation forays. They act less like a force of soldiers than like a force of nature.

"Once the Acota are out of the city we have begun to break off any further pursuit. We quickly learned that our troops are not capable of matching the Acota in the wild.

"We have heard word has been sent from our country to Asgoth in hopes that their servants will not be further recruits for the force that is now rampaging through our countryside."

- Lt. Thomas Fairfield,
Ghoraxian Army

AESIR

ECOLOGY

Aesir are the smallest of the three human races (see also *Haitir* and *Vanir*). Aesir have delicate, angular features and pale, almost jaundiced look to their skin tones. Aesir have long, thin faces with eyes shaped like teardrops. Their hair colors range from light browns to black, with the darker shades being more common. Aesir eye color ranges from blue to green with true hazel (blue and green color shifting) being very common.

Aesir have long, thin fingers, arms and legs. They typically stand from 5'2" to 5'8" tall and weigh from 100 to 150 pounds. Males are slightly taller but no heavier than females. Although smaller in stature, Aesir are no less human than their larger cousins are. They may interbreed with the *Haitir* and the *Vanir*, but these unions will universally produce *Haitir* offspring.

Aesir are highly adaptable people and thus can (and do) live nearly everywhere. Aesir live amongst most races and are generally regarded as adaptive, intelligent, resourceful and competent.

Aesir thrive on a diet of fish and vegetables. Some go so far as to forgo fish and stick to a complete vegetarian regimen. Many have an actual physiological inability to handle red meats – for most, however, it a simple psychological and/or cultural restriction. See also *Vanir*.

They are not as populous as the other human races – this is due to many factors. When one looks at such things as the location of their population centers, their preference for coastal regions. Coupled with an adventurous lifestyle, the number of Aesir does not grow at the same rate as the *Haitir* and the *Vanir*.

Magical prowess, although as common in the Aesir as the other human races, is not a trait that is commonly practiced. Few Aesir have ever been noteworthy magi. This lack of true magi has never been seen as a problem, but can stir a few heated arguments from time to time.

Aesir are full-grown at 14 years. They are accepted socially as adults at 18 years. Average lifespan is 65 years, although it is the rare Aesir that dies of old age.

PSYCHOLOGY

Aesir are a hardworking and determined people. Aesir remain the most ocean-going of the three human races. Aesir have been a major force within the Realms for centuries, remaining the dominant species of only one kingdom: *Nephalous*.

It has been said that the Aesir only feel at home when they are at sea. Although not true, this is certainly a supportable argument. Historically, the Aesir have produced the greatest of the shipwrights, naval tacticians, and sailors.



"I'm tellin' ye that ye jus' canno' trust those damned Aesir! They can sing like nightingales and filch like ferrets!

"One night at the pub, I was a sittin' with a petite little lassy and a laughin' and drinking the night away.

"By the end of the night, I was as broke as a countryboy in the big city. And I never even opened me coin purse!"

- **Gan Fess,**
Haitir Soldier

Outside of their homelands, the Aesir do not find a lot of bigotry. Unlike other races, most civilized peoples accept the Aesir as equals. Even though the race has a long-standing history of producing **Umbragia's** greatest thieves, rogues, pirates and corsairs, the romanticism of these stories over the years has given the race a bit of a poetic reputation. One the Aesir do not seem too eager to disprove.

Aesir culture has developed several forms of unarmed combat as well as some very artistic styles of armed combat. It is the rare Aesirian sailor who did not know how to protect himself – armed or not.

Aesir speak *common* and other languages. As sea-going people, it is not unheard-of for a Sailor to know many, many languages.

IN THE REALMS

The Aesir are romantic-enigmas. They are at once hard working, honest and approachable – as well as shadow crawling, thieving and scandalous. They are what great heroic fiction is made of.

They are small in stature, and larger than life. The Aesir are a proud people, with rich and long standing culture and history. But they live for the moment. They feel that if you plan too far ahead, you loose sight of the here and now.

Although they are mainly found in Nephalous (over 80% of the Aesir ruling class), few nations with coastal cities will be without their own Aesir population – usually running the docks. Basically, if there are ships nearby there are Aesir. And if there are legends to write, an Aesir will be there. Willing and able to play the part of the protagonist.

AESIR RACIAL TRAITS

Ability Scores: +2 to *Dexterity* and *Wisdom*; -2 to *Strength*.

Medium Size: As medium sized creatures, Aesir have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.

Base Speed: 30 feet. Typical speed for a medium-sized creature.

Adaptability: An Aesir may choose two skills to add to the list of 'class skills' at first level. Each even level (2nd, 4th, etc) beyond first, s/he may select an additional skill to add to this list. The skills chosen cannot be exclusive skills.

Automatic Languages: *Common*. **Bonus Languages:** Any.

Favored Class: *Minstrel*. A multi-class Aesir's *Minstrel* class does not count when determining if s/he suffers an XP penalty. For information on the *Minstrel* class, see **Religion & Sorcery**.

"You ask 'why do you sail?'"

"And I answer that it's because when I am on the water, the wind and the sea sing to me. I've never written a song in my life that was not a pale imitation of those I hear each and every day when I but listen to the sea-winds and the ocean-surf. And you have called my work 'masterpieces.'

"There is not one single person that can match the song of a seagull on the wing; or a dolphin following in a ship's wake! If you want true art, true masterpieces, then you need but look to the water.

"You ask me then, 'why can't I hear the songs?'"

"And I answer that it's because, although you have two ears and but one mouth, you still speak twice as much as you listen."

- *Michiru Fairwind*,
Aesir Minstrel and Sailor

DAERMIN

ECOLOGY

Daermin are somewhat large humanoids with broad shoulders. They have solid, muscular frames. Daermin skin colors range from charcoal gray to midnight black. They have small, narrow, dark eyes, ranging from brick red to deep violet. Daermin hair is thick and long and comes in either white, silver or gray. Blondes are not unknown, but are universally female. Daermin are not fur covered, but do tend to have a lot of body hair. This hair, unlike the soft covering of their heads, is short, thin and always dark in color.

Daermin typically stand from 5'8" to 6'8" tall and weigh from 250 to 350 pounds. Males are slightly taller, but not as heavy as females. Daermin stamina is legendary. With a lifestyle that leaves them operating on a 48-hour sleep cycle, they will generally nap for 2-3 hours at a time getting a total of 4-6 hours of sleep every two days. Daermin are full-grown at 12 years. They are accepted socially as adults at 25 years. Average lifespan is 275 years.

PSYCHOLOGY

Daermin hold life sacred. Daermin warriors will generally attempt to subdue over killing in anything outside of a war. They hold the fear of repeating the events of so much of their own history. Daermin and Nathas are both very aware of the eyes of the past watching over them.

Daermin are moderates in everything they do. As a people with an extreme lifespan, they are patient. Daermin craftsmen have been known to spend a several decades on a project. Their religions tend toward faiths of strong work ethic, time-honored tradition and ancient history. They have no place faith in prophecy – they have seen many prophets come and go.

Daermin show no sympathy for anyone that squanders his or her life away. Even with nearly three centuries to live, they cannot see fit to let a day be wasted. Daermin cannot cast arcane spells. This complete lack of Mages has left them with a slight intolerance of magic. This isn't pathological. They have managed to produce **Umbragia's** greatest historical alchemists.

Daermin speak *common* and have a racial language (called *Dharian*, but most of the time it is referred to as *Daermin*).

IN THE REALMS

Daermin are not all living in the highest deserts, the most remote mountains and within the deepest swamps. Still, the reputation lingers. Historically, they were plains-dwellers driven from their homelands. During the days of the early wars between the Elder Gods and the Ancients, the Daermin were being slaughtered in the middle grounds. They sought peace but couldn't find it.

What they found was an ally – the Xxyxx. Betrayed at every turn by nearly every other race, they share little (besides history) with the near-alien insects. Yet the two peoples have managed to carve out the most long-lasting alliance in **Umbragia**. With their



"Slow and steady, young one. Never waste a blow on haste. Form the sword in your mind, see it, before you land the first strike of your hammer.

"Remember our lessons. Every work is a melding of two creations: one in your head and one in your hand.

"I've never ruined a sword by taking my time. Never let the shorter lived races fool you with their thoughts of 'quick gold and glory.'

"Nature has shown that rapid change leads only to great upheavals. Her greatest creation, the mountains, were built over time; old as the world."

- **Wegar Thronod,**
Daermin Master-Smith

aid, the Daermin were able to survive in the deserts, in the high mountains and the deep swamps.

Today, Daermin cities flourish and they have recaptured much of their homeland. Despite the Daermin reputation for moderation, they are extremists when it comes to the defense of their cities. The percentage of Daermin warriors is very high and they have produced the greatest warriors in the history of the Realms.

Daermin fill the roll of belabored *blue-collar* types. No city in **Umbragia** is devoid of a few blocks of hard-working Daermin craftsmen and shop-owners. Many have joined their close allies in the laberentian cities of the Xxyxx. Larger cities will have at least one aged Daermin alchemist, working days at a time completing potion after potion. These shops will be well guarded – by Daermin and/or Xxyxx warriors.

DAERMIN RACIAL TRAITS

Ability Scores: +2 to *Constitution*; -2 to *Dexterity*.

Medium Size: As medium sized creatures, Daermin have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.

Base Speed: 30 feet. Average speed for medium-sized creatures.

Endurance: Daermin receive the feat *Endurance* for free.

Hightened Awareness: Daermin receive the feat *Blind Fight* for free.

Mental Focus: Daermin receive a racial bonus of +4 on the skill *Concentration*.

Spellblind and Spell Immunities: Daermin cannot take the feat **Dragon Touched** and thus cannot cast arcane spells. Additionally, Daermin are immune to *sleep* and *charm* spells.

Automatic Languages: *Common* and *Daermin*. **Bonus Languages:** Any.

Favored Class: *Fighter*. A multi-class Daermin's *Fighter* class does not count when determining if s/he suffers an XP penalty.

"I worry not about my people and the hardships we have endured. Let the world continue to rain upon us.

"Like blows from of a smith's hammer, it will only ensure our continued strength and resolve."

- **Doron Gondo,**
Daermin Warrior

ELGARPH

ECOLOGY

Elgarph appear to be miniature Haitir. They have broad, soft facial features, large, sad-looking eyes that vary from bright red to light green. They have pale skin (bordering on albino) that can take on slight green tones. Elgarph typically stand from 3'0" to 3'8" tall and weigh from 40 to 60 pounds. Males are slightly shorter and lighter than females.

Elgarph lack anything resembling free will. Each member will bond with a master and will not leave that master until such time as they have been ordered to take on another. Or until they die, whichever comes first. Elgarph are eternally loyal. The idea of betraying a master, no matter how cruel, sadistic, twisted, or so far removed from a previous master, is simply not something an Elgarph is capable of thinking. Some have attempted to get one to shift loyalties, but to no avail. Until ordered or abandoned, they are loyal to the bone.

Elgarph are full-grown (and are accepted socially as adults) at 10 years. Average lifespan is 60 years.

PSYCHOLOGY

Elgarph are intelligent, hard working and inventive. Historically they have produced noteworthy warriors, thieves, wizards, alchemists, diplomats and at least one (albeit, very odd) religious leader. A cursory glance through historical records, however, will not show many Elgarph. Sadly, this is due to the fact that their deeds are generally attributed to their masters.

Elgarph are capable of handling specific and even highly complex instructions. In fact, they thrive on them. If given a feeling of servitude and a continuous set of instructions – Elgarph are quite happy and content to act upon those instructions. If left without instruction or routine, they would slowly drown in a pool of self-pity and despair. The more an Elgarph is responsible for, the happier s/he will be. Freedom is perhaps the most frightening and empty thought an Elgarph could ever have. This is not a condition, or something that can be repaired. It is a part of the Elgarph physiological make-up – much like breathing. They need order and direction in their lives. Elgarph are always Lawful Neutral. They will follow instructions given them to the letter without regard for the measure of right or wrong in the action. They simply do.

As such, they rarely take on a religion. Some have been Clerics, but few can muster the true passion of faith to be effective. There have been exceptions, but these are few and far between. Many races and cultures do not even consider the Elgarph to be



"I feel that the troubles that my namesake had with the Acota may be over. All the problems of the accursed race, I do believe I have solved.

"I made the new slaves frailer than the Acota, so they are far easier to control and are not able to break their bonds.

"I worked to improve the reasoning of the creature, so that they may handle tasks that were well beyond the bestial minds of the Acota.

"Also, they can even channel magical energy to aid thier masters.

"But my greatest triumph, and I cannot stress this enough, was the complete elimination of the nuisance known as 'free will.' Not only do these slaves actually enjoy their servitude, they require it. It is a fundamental need, like bread and water.

"Soon my creation will be in every household and my grandfather's shame shall be all but forgotten."

**- Gho'tal (the lesser),
Arch Magi of Ghorax**

sentient. To the vast majority, they are little more than easily trained domesticated animals.

Elgarph speak whatever languages they have been taught. If exposed to many languages, they are intelligent enough to pick up on them rather quickly.

IN THE REALMS

Elgarph are the second race created by the Mages of Ghorax to act as slaves and servants. The Magi had failed when creating the Acota. Elgarph were, sadly, a complete success. There are between 150 and 200 thousand in existence. Only 20 to 30 thousand are outside Ghorax. Most of these were *rescued* by well-intended souls wanting to save them from their lives of slavery. It did not take very long to figure out that slavery is what keeps them alive.

Elgarph outside of Ghorax are safer and tend to live longer, but are no happier. An Elgarph with a list of responsibilities and being regularly beaten is happier than one living in luxury with no responsibilities. Many have attempted to *cure* them of their *curse*, but to no avail.

It is important that the Elgarph condition not be glazed over. If the Dungeon Master sees them as nothing more than domesticated animals, then they have lost all of their potential emotional impact.

ELGARPH RACIAL TRAITS

Ability Scores: +2 to *Dexterity* and *Intelligence*; -4 to *Strength*.

Small Size: As small creatures, Elgarph have all of the bonuses and penalties associated with small size.

Base Speed: 25 feet. Elgarph are quick for their size.

Cultural Adaptability: Elgarph have a natural feel for cultures and traditions. Individuals may make an *Intelligence* check at Difficulty Class 10 (modified by the degree oddity for the situation) to determine the proper course of action in any given situation.

Fast Healing: Elgarph have the extraordinary ability of Fast Healing for 2 points every round.

Slave Mentality: Elgarph have a physiological need for constant instruction or the slowly spiral into depression. For each day s/he does not have a set of defined duties, s/he takes permanent ability damage, losing 1d4 *Intelligence* and 1d4 *Wisdom* (rolled separately). If either score ever reaches 1, the character begins to lose 1 Hit Point per day (2 if both scores are at 1), and no longer heals naturally. Should instruction ever be restored to the character, the ability damage from Slave Mentality is converted from permanent to temporary, and can be healed both naturally and magically. For more information on this trait, see **RACIAL TRAITS**.

Automatic Languages: *Common*. **Bonus Languages:** Any.

Favored Class: *None*. A multi-class Elgarph's always suffers an XP penalty.

"Today we liberated an entire household of Elgarph and yet they are still not free. I swear they yearn to be back in bondage.

"They look toward the land of their slavery and sigh with a remorse I cannot comprehend. The only time they seemed happy was when we were on the march and I was barking orders to my troops. But it passed when they realised that I was not about to begin ordering them around.

"Before today, I thought that even the Ghoraxian scum must have a soul or at least some deeply buried spark of pity in their hearts. After today, I am quite certain that I was mistaken.

"What do you do for a person that does not want to be free? The very concept is beyond me."

- **Alter Stein,**
Acota Ranger and Liberator

Goumin

ECOLOGY

Goumin are short, near hairless humanoids. They have thin faces and moderate skin tones. Most are bald, but when hair is present, it is thin and light-colored. Goumin eyes tend to be small, round and darker in colors. The 'whites' of their eyes have a blue-gray shade to them.

Goumin typically stand from 4'5" to 5'5" tall and weigh from 75 to 125 pounds. Males and females are about the same size. Goumin are full-grown at 11 years. They are accepted socially as adults at 22 years. Average lifespan is 150 years.

PSYCHOLOGY

Goumin are matriarchal. Goumin women bear children and care for the infants in community groups. When the child is physically mature, the Elder males (who act as the teachers of craft and trade) raise them. Once adult, Goumin males form the backbone of the labor and military might of the clan. Adult Goumin females will begin raising the next generation of infants (and having children of their own). Elder females form the ruling council of the clan.

An almost *religious* respect for clan Elders is ingrained into the upbringing of every Goumin. Elder status comes at various ages depending on the physical well being of the individual. For males, the status of Elder is conferred when they are no longer physically able to perform their duties. For females, the status of Elder is conferred once they are beyond the age of childbearing; traditions dictate that the Elder be at least 75 years old.

Goumin love wide-open spaces. They are neither claustrophobic nor do they fear closed spaces, castles or caves. They simply cannot understand the desire to *live* there. Goumin homes have high, cathedral ceilings with open areas where the outside can be seen. These accesses are generally low in the structure and designed to keep out the elements.

Goumin communities will pay taxes to whatever liege-lord they occupy the land of. Most kingdoms having no qualms with a Goumin tribe setting up camp. The Goumin are self-governing and will grant the local Lords men-at-arms in times of need, provided the Lord has treated them well. Goumin are noted farmers and country-folk types that avoid cities. Few kingdoms will not have large Goumin populations working the farms, mills, stables and other outdoor jobs. Magically, they have produced the most noted Weather-magi in history. Goumin also have a large number of artists, musicians and poets in their ranks.

Goumin are an even-handed people that are rather slow to react to new situations. This tendency to ponder an action long and hard before action has ensured that no kingdom has ever been dominated by the race. Goumin are not cut out for the rigors of ruler-ship.

Goumin speak *common* and have a racial language (called *G'harn*, but most of the time it is referred to as *Goumin*).



"Be slow when trusting the terapine. They have left their K'harn to go live among the city dwellers.

"Beware of those that do not show proper respect to the ages-old traditions of the K'harn and to the beauty of the wide-open spaces.

"I cannot say that I know what drives them from the path of truth and harmony, but I cannot see how their motives could possibly be pure."

- **T'sharn Redwall,**
Goumin Elder

Goumin tend towards neutral and good alignments, with equal regard for law, neutrality and chaos.

IN THE REALMS

Goumin are a private people. They live in small multi-family groups called *K'harns* (meaning *clans* or *tribes*). Goumin have rich oral histories. At least one member of a *K'harn* will be the clan historian. Larger clans can have as many as a dozen historians with up to 5 pupils each to keep track of the tides of history. The *K'harns* rarely war with anyone. The common sense approach and slow reactions limit the types of fighting they engage in. Goumin are well prepared to defend but very slow to attack. Still, few should underestimate them.

Goumin can be found outside of the *K'harns*. Typically, these will be merchants, performers or mercenaries. The *K'harns* tend to view these *terapine* (literally *outsiders*) with a degree of well-deserved suspicion. Since these are the Goumin others are most likely to meet, the entire race has a slight reputation for the unsavory.

GOUMIN RACIAL TRAITS

Ability Scores: +2 to *Wisdom* and *Charisma*; -2 to *Strength* and *Constitution*

Medium Size: As medium sized creatures, Goumin have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.

Base Speed: 20 feet. Goumin are not as quick as other medium sized creatures.

Collected: Goumin receive a racial bonus of +4 to resist any and all effects of fear, intimidation, diplomacy, sense motive, etc.

Increased Encumbrance: Goumin may carry 20% more weight than their strength would normally indicate.

Keen Vision: Goumin see four times as well as a human in all light conditions (reduce all penalties for vision related checks by 75%). Additionally, this ability grants a +4 racial bonus to Spot and Search checks.

Manual Dexterity: Goumin receive a racial bonus of +2 on any use of skill where fine motor control could be a benefit (Dungeon Master's call). Examples include Pick Pocket and Open Locks.

Automatic Languages: *Common* and *Goumin*. **Bonus Languages:** Any.

Favored Class: *Druid*. A multi-class Goumin's *Druid* class does not count when determining if s/he suffers an XP penalty.

"...and the journeys of Dero Bluestone, descendant of Reo Bluestone, resulted in her coming to a field of wheat. Amber grain stretched out as far as the eye could see.

"She then spake unto her *K'harn*, 'Watch the beauty of the wheat field dancing in the wind, for that is a sign of the good spirits of the air.

"The she spake saying 'I accept the sign and proclaim that here I, and my family, shall bide until the end of our days.'

"That, my apprentices, was how our *K'harn* home was selected. To this day we revere those same good spirits of the air by creating no structure that would restrict the comfort or passage of those spirits."

Founding of the Bluestone K'harn
as told by Erth Bluestone,
K'harn Historian

GYOR

ECOLOGY

Most Sages feel that Gyor are distant Goumin cousins. Gyor skin is thin, leathery and comes in shades ranging from reddish-browns to deep purple-blacks. Gyor eyes are set wide and deep and come in a vast array of colors. Gyor noses have a distinctive ridge pattern along the top and sides. Like their cousins, Gyor rarely have hair.

Gyor ears are long, pointed and downward sloping from a slightly elevated point on their triangular shaped heads. They have four long, thin fingers and two mutually opposable thumbs on each hand.

Gyor typically stand from 4'9" to 5'9" tall and weigh from 100 to 200 pounds. Males are slightly taller and heavier than females. Gyor are full-grown at 10 years. They are accepted socially as adults at 20 years. Average lifespan is 90 years.

It has been said that Gyor are people without a homeland. Still, they are everywhere. Gyor travelling by caravan from city to city, avoiding the harsher climates and the problems they see associated with civilized living, has become a staple of the **Umbragian** countryside. One can hardly travel at all without seeing a Gyor wagon train.

PSYCHOLOGY

Gyor are inquisitive. They are curious about the inner working of everything they see. They are observant, noticing relationships that others miss. They see patterns; causal connections and influences from seemingly unrelated events. They also have a feel for people. This has led to the misconception that they are all merchants.

With the noted exception of men-at-arms, the Gyor have exceptional individuals filling nearly every element of society. There have been noted assassins, wizards, clergymen, zealots and everything in-between. Magic certainly attracts the Gyor mind, but few have the gift for such things.

Gyor are a clan society. They organize into family groups called *Jia'noct*. Each *Jia'noct* is ran by a *Ti'morid*, or *elder pair*. The elder pair is comprised of the eldest male and female of the clan. They serve as guides, directing the wagon train. Keep in mind, to the Gyor, *eldest* does not mean *oldest*. The Gyor elder concept is based upon acts, deeds and reputation. Although age has some influence, it is not the final word. An elder could be just into the age of adulthood as long as the deeds are great enough.

IN THE REALMS

Paying taxes only when they are forced to do so, Gyor do not find the kingdom concept practical or very intelligent. Gyor



"No, no, no! It's so simple. See the problem for what it is! Honestly, don't the rest of you see how simple this is?"

"Look, 'A' causes 'B' and 'B' causes 'C' - it's really that simple. All you have to do is disconnect that gear over there, connect this coil over *this* gear here and **BAM!** This spring locks, the trap is disabled and we can pass!"

- **Rednal Quicken,**
Gyor Rogue
(while disarming a dungeon trap)

participate in wars only as brokers. They bring supplies to one side or the other – sometimes both.

Gyor do not hold allegiance to any government. Gyor feel that the family unit is community enough. Government, say the Gyor, should consists only of the **Rule of One** (The Rule of One states that one leads, all others follow). This rule is the whole of Gyor law. It should be noted that, although the clans are ran by an elder pair, it is the male that leads – the female is an advisor. Gyor do not trust authority given by birthright. They feel that a person must earn respect, not have it handed to them.

Gyor caravans have been known to travel along the edges of the Badlands. Some have even entered. Many have postulated that a few Gyor have discovered the secrets of the region and can travel it safely. If this is true, no one can say with any certainty. The Gyor are not talking.

GYOR RACIAL TRAITS

Ability Scores: +2 to *Dexterity* and *Wisdom*; -2 to *Strength*

Medium Size: As medium sized creatures, Gyor have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.

Base Speed: 30 feet.

Calculator: Gyor receive a racial bonus of +2 on the skill *Appraise* and all *Profession* skills. Additionally, the Dungeon Master may add a bonus to any skill where the intuitive understanding of numbers and economics would be of benefit.

Natural Spells: Gyor have a natural ability to cast spells. Upon reaching puberty, Gyor begin casting spells without training. By the time they are full grown, they may cast several spells. These spells are always cast as a 1st level caster, and each may only be used once per day. Gyor characters get a number of spell slots equal to four plus one per point of *Intelligence* and *Wisdom* bonus. Cantrips take one slot, first level spells take three slots. The number of cantrips must be greater than the number of first level spells.

For example: a Gyor with an *Intelligence* of 9 and a *Wisdom* of 14 would receive (4 base slots, plus 0 slots for having no *Intelligence* bonus, plus 2 slots for having a *Wisdom* bonus of +2) 6 spell slots. The player looks it over and decides that his Gyor character will have three cantrips and a first level spell and selects *Mage Hand*, *Detect Magic*, and *Daze* for the cantrips and *True Strike* for the first level spell.

Thin-skinned: Gyor always roll *Hit Points* using two dice and take the lower of the two results.

Automatic Languages: *Common*. **Bonus Languages:** Any.

Favored Class: *Rogue*. A multi-class Gyor's *Rogue* class does not count when determining if s/he suffers an XP penalty.

"Stay with me young one, and learn the ways of travel. Though you simply see me as just another Ti'morid, some day you may earn my place.

"Those are the Badlands and time flows differently there. I'll teach you what I know of the causes and of the effects of that land and, perhaps, you too will be able to travel there safely.

"If you wonder why others dare not travel there, listen and I shall tell you. They do not enter those lands because they do not understand them. To them, the Badlands is an unsolvable mystery; but to me, it is a device. It is not more difficult to understand than this wagon that we ride upon.

"The reason we have taken the time to learn about it is simply because, long ago, one among us was curious enough to ask the most important of questions: 'why?'

"Never be afraid to ask questions. A life spent in ignorance is no life at all."

- Swer Ysebri,
Gyor Ti'morid

(while riding along the Badlands)

HAITIR

ECOLOGY

Haitir are humanity (see also *Aesir* and *Vanir*). They are the *baseline* in the Realms. Haitir have all of the standard ranges of skin tone, eye color and size. When creating a Haitir character, please take a look at the descriptions of the *Aesir* and the *Vanir* – Haitir typically do not look like these two races. Just about any other human description will work. Check with your Dungeon Master.

Haitir typically stand from 5'0" to 6'0" tall and weigh from 125 to 225 pounds. Males are slightly taller and heavier than females. Haitir are full-grown at 14 years. They are accepted socially as adults at 18 years. Average lifespan is 75 years.

Haitir are everywhere. They are organized and prolific. They swarm over the countryside like a plague. Haitir are inventive and self-reliant. There is no climate (save the most frigid and barren wastes) that they cannot thrive in. Aside from the depths of the earth and sea, Haitir have built civilizations in every type of terrain and climate imaginable.

Of all of the races, however, they share no bond with one another. Haitir will not hesitate to declare war on another nation of Haitir any more than they would a nation of Izhan, for example. The famed Vasylian Sage, Chen'halge wrote:

"The Haitir are short lived, fragile, diverse and are, of the known peoples, the most likely to declare war on themselves. They are a dangerous race of near psychotic paranoids who will, no doubt, one day destroy themselves. But not before they have conquered the whole of the world."

PSYCHOLOGY

What can be said about the psyche of humanity? Only that it cannot be summed up in a few paragraphs. When the other races are described, it is with the Haitir as a backdrop to show contrast. With the Haitir themselves, there is nothing to contrast them against. They are humanity. They have no bounds.

IN THE REALMS

So, who are they? *What* are they? The Haitir are what we are. They are the most populous of the Human races. In fact, they make up nearly a quarter of the whole of the **Umbragian** population. In a world with more than a score races, this is an amazing figure.

Haitir dominate six kingdoms, are present in nearly every kingdom and in no kingdom can they be safely ignored. At least



"Nothing they do makes any sense! They slay themselves as easily as they slay others. They disregard the *Rule of One* and fracture their leadership across a sundry of people.

"Foolish is the only word I can use to describe them! And yet they still spread across the land, always gaining in power.

"Do you know why?"

"Because they can do absolutely anything! There is so much that can be said of those that can adapt to the changing landscapes. Observing nature shows us they when the world changes, it is not the strongest that survive - it is those that are most able to adapt to the new world that survive."

- Swer Ysebri,
Gyor Ti'morid

two dozen would-be monarchs have discovered this a few moments too late.

Haitir have a tendency to produce incredible heroic individuals. No less than two hundred fifty Haitir heroes of legendary proportion are recorded in the major historical texts of **Umbra**gia. These include the most amazing kings, most powerful wizards, most successful thieves, most prominent clergymen, most evil villains, most depraved wretches, most wealthy merchant-princes, most talented performers, most skilled craftsmen and the most chivalric knights. Again from the texts of Chen'halge:

"The Haitir have no major weaknesses. This, if anything can be said, is the saving grace of the people. This is the reason that all of the other peoples of the known world will be long forgotten before they are gone. Nothing holds them back - no matter what they need to do, there is an individual somewhere who can do it and is willing to risk all to accomplish it. No other people in history can say that."

Haitir have invented many things. Two of particular interest: the Feudalistic and Military structures. These two concepts have been copied by nearly every other race and nation of the Realms. The only major exception would be the Gyor who feel that the feudal structure is abhorrent to everything they believe in.

HAITIR RACIAL TRAITS

Ability Scores: no adjustments.

Medium Size: As medium sized creatures, Haitir have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.

Base Speed: 30 feet.

Bonus Feat: At first level, Haitir receive a bonus feat.

Bonus Skills: Haitir receive a bonus skill point at every level. This point is multiplied by 4 (like most other skill points) at first level.

Automatic Languages: *Common*. **Bonus Languages:** Any.

Favored Class: *Any*. A multi-class Haitir's *highest level* class does not count when determining if s/he suffers an XP penalty.

"The Haitir are everywhere. They are insects, roaches that scurry around when the light is upon them.

"They survive in horrid conditions; they eat anything and they breed like wild rabbits.

"But remember: when our plans have come into fruition, we shall not notice them any more than the innkeeper soldier notices the ants he treads on as he marches into war."

**- Izam Hakuru
Izhan Warlord**

IZHAN

ECOLOGY

Izhan are large and brutish yet somehow regal in appearance. They are the most feared race of **Umbragia**, save perhaps the Khutai. Izhan eyes are universally bright (almost glowing) yellows with no discernable pupil.

Izhan come in three sub-races: Izhan-em (*green-skinned*), Izhan-on (*black-skinned*) and Izhan-ru (*red-skinned*). Izhan skin colors are dull with a smooth, suede-like appearance. The sub-races can interbreed. The resulting offspring will always be a mule (sterile) Izhan-on. Izhan clans highly discourage the practice. Oddly, they have nearly perfect distribution of 33% each.

Izhan typically stand from 5'5" to 6'5" tall and weigh from 165 to 285 pounds. Males are taller and heavier than females. Izhan are full-grown at 8 years. They are accepted socially as adults at 12 years. Average lifespan is 90 years.

PSYCHOLOGY

Izhan cannot feel love. This is the defining characteristic of their psyche. Not only have they never felt love, neither giving nor receiving, they are incapable of the emotion. Even friendship is somewhat alien to the Izhan mind. On the other side of the coin however, Izhan have the inability to feel true hatred. Izhan do not understand the emotional aspect of hatred. In the Izhan mind, if anything could stir that sort of emotional reaction, it should be destroyed. Why expend the effort to hate it?

Many have made the mistake, then, of assuming that Izhan are either non- or semi-sentient. Izhan are fully aware. They can be happy, sad, angry, elated or even melancholy. Izhan have some emotional states that have no human parallel such as the odd, almost euphoric state they enter during prolonged battles.

Female Izhan have a strong maternal instinct. Once the child has physically matured, however, it is handed over to the tribe for placement within society. Males typically begin training for whatever job is needed at the time while females are given over to a ranking male to begin producing more offspring.

IN THE REALMS

Izhan will amass large armies and ride against foes more than a month's march from home. Few, if any, will understand why they have done this. Izhan have populations living in hiding all over the world even after the super-clan was formed. A whole kingdom was forged from the clans and they have managed to protect it. Izhan are independent, resourceful, and cunning fighters, thieves and scavengers. Izhan are tribal. Over several centuries they have organized a clan uber-structure allowing them to maintain their own kingdom. It is estimated that two-



"Patience. It is only a matter of time.

"We have waited, bided our time, and we were rewarded by the formation of the great clan. This is our land now, but soon our lands will extend from North Sea to the Great Southern Ocean-Sea; from the Sea of teh Moon's Eye to the farthest reaches of the Dragonlands.

"Our forces will be unstoppable. When we truly unleash the might of the great clan, all others shall be our slaves. They will dance for our amusement."

- **Izam Hakuru,**
Izhan Warlord

thirds of the Izhan population are not a part of this collective, however.

Izhan have their own language called *Izha'korin* (usually called *Izhan*). They will also generally speak common.

Izhan have watched from the distance and seen the things that humankind and the other races do. Izhan have seen the swords and have stolen them. They have seen others ride horses and have gathered animals to ride. They have seen wars and how the victor of a war gets everything. The victor of a war gets everything... Izhan want everything.

IZHAN RACIAL TRAITS

Ability Scores: +4 to *Constitution*, -2 to *Intelligence*, *Wisdom*, and *Charisma*

Medium Size: As medium sized creatures, Izhan have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.

Base Speed: 30 feet.

Automatic Languages: *Common* and *Izhan*. **Bonus Languages:** Any.

Favored Class: *None*. A multiclass Izhan *always* suffers an XP penalty. Izhan may only be Clerics, Fighters, Rogues or Mages. Mages, although available, are very rare.

IZHAN-EM

Ability Scores: +2 *Strength* (this is in addition to the scores listed above)

Great Health: Izhan-em always roll *Hit Points* using two dice and take the higher of the two results.

IZHAN-OR

Keen Hearing: Izhan-or may hear four times as well as a human. This will allow the race to distinguish between similar sounds, pick out a single voice in a crowd, etc. Additionally, this ability grants a +4 racial bonus on Listen checks.

Silence: Izhan-or make very little noise. Izhan-or receive a racial bonus of +4 on the skill *Move Silently*.

IZHAN-RU

Ability Scores: +2 *Dexterity* (this is in addition to the scores listed above)

Tough-skinned: Due to a tough hide, Izhan-ru apply their *Constitution* bonus to their *Armor Class*.

"Fools!

"Do you not understand the beauty that is dance of blades? Are you so primitive as to not see and understand understand the song of steel against steel? Do you not comprehend the power that is victory?"

"You look at the battle, and all you can see is death!? Look again, for the battle is life! It is blood coursing through veins and spilled upon the grasses.

"You do not know the glory, that feeling of being alive, that is ripping into your foes exposed flanks; that feeling of meeting a charge and walking away from it.

"You are so damned preoccupied with love and hate that you miss what's really important! The dance of blades."

- *Gera Nonko*,
Izhan Warrior

KHUTAI

ECOLOGY

Khutai are pseudo-snakes consisting of a head, two arms/hands and a large torso/tail. The torso is rounded like a snake, but flattens just above the ground contact point. Khutai skin comes in all colors; olive-green is the most common. Royal families have bright colors such as red and yellow, as well as black. Khutai eyes are universally red-pink in color.

Khutai skin is covered with a thin film of oil that gives it a slight sheen. This oil is imperative to their health. Many Khutai are compulsively clean. Khutai wear no clothing because it interferes with these oils. Khutai love jewelry, however, and rarely are seen without a half dozen pieces.

Physically, males and females differ only by the existence of three tiny pairs of breasts that line the upper torso of the females. This is odd as Khutai neither give birth to live young, nor do they nurse their infants.

Khutai need warmer climates. Any prolonged exposure to temperatures below 50 degrees can be life threatening. Most other races thank the gods that they are this way.

Khutai typically stand from 4'11" to 5'11" tall and weigh from 200 to 300 pounds. Males and females are the same size. Total body length (from head to tip of tail) is approximately twice the Khutai's height. Khutai are full-grown at 12 years. They are accepted socially as adults at 25 years. Average lifespan is 80 years.

PSYCHOLOGY

All that is known of Khutai psychology, after several centuries of study, is that they are uninhibited, ancestor-worshipping sensualists. Khutai are a caste culture. They believe in reincarnation. The whole of Khutai society rests of the concept of the *living atonement*. The living atonement states that each Khutai must make a distinct contribution to the people and the culture. Failure to do so results in the accumulation of *S'ira* (a sort of *negative karma*). Enough *S'ira* and the soul will be reborn into a lower caste. Those of the lowest cast, the *Oviim*, that continue to accumulate *S'ira* could be born *J'udis*.

J'udis suffer from a condition known as the *Living Echo*. These poor souls are forced to constantly re-live the mistakes of past lives. *J'udis* are ostracized from society. This results in them being the most common type of Khutai encountered outside of the Khutai lands.

Some more depraved Khutai have been known to seek the *Soul Path* (the lineage of lives) of great Khutai heroes. Most Khutai considers this a sacrilege. The *Soul Path* is a private issue



"I was a fool. In my past line I reached the heights of hubris and sought that which should not be the providence of mortals. The call of the *Soul Path* was too great.

"I killed for that knowledge and in turn was killed. Now I am *J'udis*.

"I close my eyes and I see the fear in their eyes. I close my eyes and I taste their blood. I close my eyes and hear the Living Echo.

"And my fear only grows. When I open my eyes, I see nothing but the sins of my hands.

"My *S'ira* will never leave me."

- *Ssera Kinslayer,*
Khutai J'udis

between the individual and their Ancestors; it is not the business of the living.

Khutai are quiet and tend to remain solitary. They are social creatures, gathering with family and friends and tell stories and the like. Even in the most social of gatherings, however, they will visit with a few known individuals and spend the rest of the time listening and gathering information. Gathering information is a natural reaction to nearly any situation a Khutai finds her/himself in.

Khutai have a native language (*Khutai*). Most also speak common.

IN THE REALMS

See the nation of Tiasham for more information on this strange, enigmatic people.

"Glorify the Khutai race! Follow the ways our ancestors. Listen and learn and then react. Speak to those that know and they will tell you!

"Others are hypnotized by our voice, so use that to your advantage. There is nothing we cannot learn if we try.

"And fall not into the crooked way. For S'ira shall weigh upon you as a mountain if you do."

- *Thera Ghondu,*
Khutai Cleric

KHUTAI RACIAL TRAITS

Ability Scores: no adjustments.

Medium Size: As medium sized creatures, Khutai have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.

Base Speed: 25 feet. Khutai are hampered in speed a little by their mode of movement (slithering).

Cold-Blooded: Khutai cannot operate in colder temperatures. They take double damage from cold-based attacks, as well as taking damage from prolonged exposure to temperatures below 50°F. For every hour of exposure, Khutai take 1 point of damage, plus an additional 1 damage for every 10 full degrees below 50. For example, at 0°F, Khutai take 6 damage per hour. Optionally, a generous Dungeon Master may drop this to 1d6 damage per hour.

Enchanting Voice: Khutai have a naturally soothing and hypnotic voice. Anyone who hears and understands the Khutai is apt to believe her/him. Treat this as a continuous *Charm Person* spell that the victim receives a bonus of +4 to save against. Once a victim saves, they are immune to the effects of that individual's voice for the next hour. Additionally, as a normal action, once per day, the Khutai may enhance their voice further. This acts as a *Charm Person* spell that the victim receives a penalty of -4 to save against.

Sharp Teeth: Khutai have very sharp teeth. They may do 1d6 damage (piercing) with a successful bite in combat.

S'ira: Khutai start with 0 points of S'ira (it may never be negative). Each time they do something that detracts from the Khutai race, s/he accumulates a point of S'ira. Each time they do something that enhances the Khutai race, s/he loses one point of accumulated S'ira. This effect is entirely at the judgement of the Dungeon Master. For every 5 full points of S'ira accumulated, Khutai receive a racial penalty of -1 on all die rolls.

Tough-skinned: Due to a tough hide, Khutai apply their *Constitution* bonus to their *Armor Class*.

Automatic Languages: *Common* and *Khutai*. **Bonus Languages:** Any.

Favored Class: *Cleric*. A multi-class Khutai's *Cleric* class does not count when determining if s/he suffers an XP penalty. All Khutai clerics worship the Great Ancestors.

LUKAR'R

ECOLOGY

Lukar'r are strong and powerfully built humanoids. They are easily distinguishable from the human races by two features: Lukar'r have large black on black eyes and they do not have a pronounced ear.

Lukar'r hear through two small slits on either side of their necks. Lukar'r hair is typically brown; skin tones is typically tan. This accounts for over 95% of the race. Certain variations on Lukar'r appearance hold significance to the race, see psychology.

Lukar'r typically stand from 5'8" to 6'8" tall and weigh from 175 to 300 pounds. Males are slightly shorter but heavier than females. Lukar'r are full-grown at 10 years. They are accepted socially as adults at 20 years. Average lifespan is 90 years.

PSYCHOLOGY

Lukar'r are insane. This is the pitied belief of the other races. Lukar'r are harmless enough and follow the laws of the lands and so most simply ignore them. Lukar'r prefer it this way.

Lukar'r do not force their beliefs onto anyone. They have many beliefs that cause great stress and tension with other races. Lukar'r are more than likely to simply back down when such topics come up than to start a confrontation. This is due to the fact that they are most likely outnumbered anywhere they happen to be.

Lukar'r are friendly and generous. They pity the world for its blindness to that which they see so clearly. For example: Lukar'r believe that physical appearance is a direct reflection of the soul. Silvery hair, they believe, indicates great magical power. Yellow or blonde hair indicates an evil soul. Red eyes indicate a great warrior.

Strangely enough, all Lukar'r with the gift for magic have in fact had silver hair, all of the great Lukar'r warriors have had red eyes and the Lukar'r kill every infant born with yellow or blonde hair.

This has caused some orders of priesthood to employ thieves to steal blonde Lukar'r infants before the cleansing rite can be performed. Lukar'r resent this practice and can fly into a rage if the poor priestly employee is caught.

Lukar'r are lunatics. They need the moon like a child needs its mother. They are at ease when the moon is full and when the moon is gone they are edgy.

Lukar'r live in the cities of the other races (avoiding populations of Izhan or Khutai). They obey the laws of the lands they inhabit. The Lukar'r have no historical thieves. Lukar'r have a deep-rooted belief in the teachings of Lavarisia. These teachings state quite clearly that all laws of man must be obeyed where they do not directly violate her laws. This fact alone has made the Lukar'r generally welcome throughout **Umbragia**.



*Mother Moon.
Fair Lavarisia.
We remember your laws,
and speak no word in deceit.
When your light falls upon us,
the world is at peace;
When the Blanket of Night descends,
we seethe in rage.*

Lukar'r Ritual Chant

IN THE REALMS

Lukar'r have no homeland. However, nearly 60% of the race is literate, most have two or three trades that they are proficient in and few are unemployed for any significant length of time.

Lukar'r are proud as a people. Legend states that after the Great War of the Heavens, when Lavarisia was cast unto the moon, two of her most dedicated priests (man and woman) wandered the lands for 49 months. The master of beasts took pity on them and sent Hew'ars (the mother of Wolves) to guide and protect them. Upon drinking Hew'ars' milk, they were changed and the Lukar'r were born. Many sages have refuted the story, but none can deny that the records have no word of the Lukar'r before the formation of the moon...

LUKAR'R RACIAL TRAITS

Ability Scores: +2 to *Strength*.

Medium Size: As medium sized creatures, Lukar'r have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.

Base Speed: 35 feet. Lukar'r are strong runners and are slightly faster than normal for their size.

Compulsive Honesty: Lukar'r cannot lie. Ever.

Focused Strength: Lukar'r have the ability to gain short bursts of tremendous strength. S/he may use this ability once per day, plus one additional use per point of *Constitution* bonus. Each use grants her/him a 50% bonus to their strength for one minute. Immediately following each use, s/he suffers a 50% penalty to their strength for the next thirty minutes. For example, an average Lukar'r with a strength of 12, focuses their strength gaining a bonus of (12 x 50%) +6 for a total of 18 Strength. After one minute, the character's strength drops to 50% normal (or 6) and will stay that way for the next thirty minutes.

Lunar Influences: Lukar'r have personalities that are tied to the phases of the moon. When the moon is full, they are calm, slow to anger and easy to deal with. When the moon is new, they are edgy, irritable and generally tough to deal with. While calm (full moon +/- 4 days), they gain a racial bonus of +2 to all skills they have at least one rank in. While edgy (new moon, +/- 4 days), they suffer a penalty of -2 to all skill rolls.

Automatic Languages: *Common*. **Bonus Languages:** Any.

Favored Class: Fighter. A multi-class Lukar'r's *Fighter* class does not count when determining if s/he suffers an XP penalty.

*Silver hair and magic's there.
Red eyes and the enemy dies.
Yellow or blonde? They'll soon be gone*
Lukar'r Child's Song

NATHAS

ECOLOGY

Nathas are thin yet surprisingly solid. They have chiseled features that appear to have been sculpted more than grown. Nathas skin tone ranges from dark blue to deep (near black) purples. They have plain white eyes with no pupils.

Nathas typically stand from 5'2" to 5'10" tall and weigh from 125 to 170 pounds. Males are taller and heavier than females. Nathas are full-grown at 12 years. They are accepted socially as adults at 16 years. Average lifespan is 75 years.

The Nathas are as varied as the realms of humanity. They are as evil, depraved, honorable and chivalrous as any human has ever been. Nathas love life and live it to the fullest.

PSYCHOLOGY

Nathas are **Umbragia's** *voice of reason*. When war erupts they are restraint. It is a rare Nathas that holds an extreme alignment – most are neutral of some sort (even if that is neutral evil or neutral good...).

Nathas claim to be the most ancient of the races in the **Realms of Shadow**. They have many documents to back up this claim. Current religious thinking places that claim squarely on the heads of the Shadahs. Nathas recorded history includes specifics on events that are only the most vague of shadowy legend in the records of other races. These records have seen ages come and ages go. The tales would suggest that the Nathas have witnessed the last six ice ages.

Nathas are very calm and do not get excited easily. They are fearless explorers of the unknown, tempered with wisdom. They do nothing without a plan. *"Knowledge is the greatest of all possible rewards,"* so the Nathas say, *"and experience is only gained through the improper use of that reward."*

Nathas have the second largest percentage of magically adept individuals. Still, few are true magi. Most so gifted are content to act as wise-women/wise-men. Some will even wander the countryside offering sagely advice and aid through magical means. Others will abuse this reputation for personal gain.

IN THE REALMS

Were the Nathas the first to live in the Realms? Could they have been around long before the Shadahs? Could the ancient texts in their native tongue be telling the truth, while all of the sages of **Umbrasia** study a false history?

It is certainly possible. They have always shared what knowledge they have, from the most mundane to the most magical. Nathas even have texts that speak of other places, other Shadows, some long beyond the veil of night. Still, most scholars scoff at such things and treat them as legends and lore.

Today, Nathas have good relationships with most other races. The one glaring exception is the Shadahs. In the previous age,



"The most effective weapon that can be employed against ones enemy is neither sword nor axe nor spear. It is a well crafted, carefully considered and disciplined battle plan.

"Forewarned, the ancients say, is forearmed. And they are most correct.

"Never willingly enter a battle for which you are not prepared - correction! Never enter a battle unless you are better prepared than your enemy! No enemy can best you if your plan covers all contingency.

"My single greatest triumph was not created by a stroke of luck or an attack of opportunity. It came about because I knew all that could be known about enemy. In the end, I am quite certain that I knew that enemy better than they knew themselves.

"Knowledge was my sword."

- **Serus Hawk,**
Nathasian General

the Nathasian Sage *Aromundi* predicted the downfall of the Shadahs Rooks. He said:

"I can see the death of the Shadahs, not from sword or spear, but from a heavy heart and a troubled soul. The Rooks shall fall and the skies shall be devoid of the children of the air. And they shall have none to blame."

With the first generation of stillborn, the Shadahs blamed the Nathas and the infamous *War of Tears* came. The Shadahs eventually surrendered, but none can be said to have been the victor. Even though it has been over two thousand years, and the Nathas hold no grudges, the Shadahs have never forgotten their only wartime defeat.

NATHAS RACIAL TRAITS

Ability Scores: +2 to *Wisdom* and *Charisma*; -2 to *Strength*.

Medium Size: As medium sized creatures, Nathas have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.

Base Speed: 30 feet.

Fearlessness: Nathas are immune to effects of intimidation, fear, horror and the like. This does not mean that they are foolhardy, just that they never lose their calm and ability to think rationally.

Hard to Kill: Nathas automatically have the *REMAIN CONSCIOUS* feat (from the book **Sword and Fist**, published by Wizards of the Coast) allowing them to remain conscious and take partial actions while their Hit Points are below 0. See *RACIAL TRAITS* for more information..

Keen Smell: As per the *SCENT* ability in **Core Rulebook III**, page 10

Automatic Languages: *Common* and *Nathas*. **Bonus Languages:** Any.

Favored Class: Any. A multi-class Nathas' *highest level* class does not count when determining if s/he suffers an XP penalty.

"The Wheel that turns as the ages turn shows that history, like many other things you will learn about, runs in cycles.

"History, you see, repeats itself. That is why we are never surprised. For our history runs to the depths of the land.

"There is nothing born under the sun that was not born before, ages ago. We were there when the gods walked the land. We are here now that they are gone.

"We saw the battles that sundered the lands. We saw the coming of the night, the birth of the sun, the moon, and the stars.

"But don't let this overcome your reason.

"History has also shown us the errors born of arrogance."

**- Aromundi,
Nathasian Sage**

NIMORI

ECOLOGY

Nimori are large humanoid cats. They are covered in a thin fur that comes in all of the standard colors for great cats. They have cat-like eyes as well. Nimori have long, non-prehensile tails. Some, depending on the breed, have manes.

Nimori is the collective term for any of several separate sub-species, or *breeds*. Nimori *breeds* range from Cheetah (*Dumanimori*) to Panther (*Pumanimori*) to Tiger (*Tigrinimori*). The *breeds* tend to separate into *prides*. The *breeds* are identical from a racial standpoint, varying only in appearance and culture. Nimori breeds can interbreed, the resulting cub having traits of both parents. Nimori cannot breed with standard cats. The suggestion that they can or do is the lowest insult known to the race.

Nimori typically stand from 5'6" to 6'6" tall and weigh from 135 to 185 pounds. Males are shorter and lighter than females. Nimori are full-grown at 14 years. They are accepted socially as adults at 15 years. Average lifespan is 50 years.

PSYCHOLOGY

Nimori are proud. This is the classic penultimate understatement. A Nimori identifies with three things: *self, pride, race*.

Self refers to the understanding of ones own limitations. Nimori are not arrogant, they are prideful. They will brag, but only about the truth. Liars are the lowest class of being to the Nimori. This has lead to unspoken respect for the Lukar'r.

Pride refers to the Nimori's clan. Nimori are family oriented, but not just to the immediate family. Nimori feel no less grief over the loss of a neighbor than over the loss of a sibling. The extended family is the important thing.

Race refers to all Nimori. As a dueling culture bloodshed is common. Death at the hands of another Nimori is rare, however. A scratch with blood drawn will end a duel. No Nimori Civil War has ever been recorded.

Nimori have over one hundred separate *breeds*. Mixed breeds are rare, but not outcasts. Due to long standing Nimori traditions, these mixed-breeds cannot hold noble title. Aside from this, they are treated as a sister/brother.

IN THE REALMS

Nimori are sometimes called *Cat People, Caitians* or *Felines*. Nimori have never been a driving force in the history of **Umbragia**. But they have never been on the sidelines either. Nimori have provided the Realms with its most notorious mercenaries. They are active in the political circles of nearly every nation.



"Their are three cardinal truths, three prime facets of *pride*.

"The first one is to yourself. Your achievements are representations of your spirit. Never be shy in stating your deeds and displaying your trophies. However, it is better to have never achieved a goal at all, than boast of deeds you have never accomplished. Liars have no place in the pride.

"The second is to your pride. You are a direct reflection of family. Do nothing that would bring disgrace upon them and they will not disgrace you. The pride's loss is your loss.

"The last, and perhaps the most important, is to your race. You are a Nimori above all things."

- **Xavier Traks,**
Nimorian Teacher

The majority of Nimori prides can be found in Darienth. Here, Nimori have three Dukes, several Barons and untold numbers of Knights. The prides can be found everywhere, however. In a break with tradition, Jianthor has one mixed-breed noble – Archdutchess Sheana vol'Dumanimori. She is the primary advisor to the Jade Dragon. She is a mix of Cheetah and Black Panther.

Nimori have their own language (called *Nimoserri* but usually referred to as *Nimori*) that is a mixture of guttural sounds and sharp tones. This language can be learned by non-Nimori, but not spoken.

"I once heard an Acota call a Nimori 'kitty' to his face. I heard he was found that night, dead, a pound of catnip shoved down his throat."

- *Edward Greenlawn,*
Vanir Innkeeper

NIMORI RACIAL TRAITS

Ability Scores: +2 to *Dexterity* and *Wisdom*.

Medium Size: As medium sized creatures, Nimori have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.

Base Speed: 40 feet. Nimori are faster than most medium-sized creatures.

Colorless Vision: Nimori cannot detect colors of any kind, seeing the world in black and white and shades of gray. The vision of a Nimori is not adept at detecting stationary objects, either. Thus, they suffer a -2 penalty on spot checks.

Focused Reflexes: Nimori have the ability to gain short bursts of tremendous speed, reaction and balance. S/he may use this ability once per day, plus one additional use per point of *Constitution* bonus. Each use grants the character a 50% bonus to their dexterity and speed for one minute. Immediately following each use, the character suffers a 50% penalty to their strength (not dexterity) and speed for the next thirty minutes.

For example, assume an average character with strength and dexterity 10, speed 30 feet. When using this ability, gain a bonus of (10 x 50%) +5 Dexterity and (30 x 50%) +15 feet speed. After one minute, the character's strength and speed drops to 50% normal (5 and 15 respectively) and will stay that way for the next thirty minutes.

Increased Sleep: Nimori need 50% more sleep than normal (12 hours per day) to be effective. Additionally, they suffer a -2 penalty to resist sleep spells and spell-like effects.

Keen Hearing: Nimori hear four times as well as a human (reduce all penalties for hearing related checks by 75%). This will allow the race to distinguish between similar sounds, pick out a single voice in a crowd, etc. Additionally, this ability grants a +4 racial bonus on Listen checks.

Sharp Claws: Nimori have long, sharp claws. These claws do an additional 1d6 (slashing) damage with an unarmed attack.

Automatic Languages: *Common* and *Nimori*. **Bonus Languages:** Any.

Favored Class: *Ranger*. A multi-class Nimori's *Ranger* class does not count when determining if s/he suffers an XP penalty. Pure-breed Nimori may also choose *Aristocrat* as a favored class.

POLYMARIE

ECOLOGY

Polymarie are a race of aquatic amphibian humanoids. Their skin is a dull black or blue color, but is almost entirely covered in multi-hued scales. Polymarie scales are usually in patterns, with like colored scales adjacent. The patters are fairly regular, allowing families of Polymarie to be easily identified.

Polymarie eyes are large and seem to blend into their long, thin heads. They are bipedal. Polymarie have thin membranes between their digits that act as fins when they swim. They have high pitched voices and find some **Umbragian** languages very difficult to pronounce.

Polymarie typically stand from 6'4" to 7'0" tall and weigh from 190 to 300 pounds. Males and females are the same size. Polymarie are full-grown at 10 years. They are accepted socially as adults at 15 years. Average lifespan is 75 years.

PSYCHOLOGY

Polymarie are sentient, yet have many animalistic tendencies. For example, the concepts of marriage, royalty, and family are alien to the Polymarie mind. Procreation is done for the maintenance of population, not emotional bonds. Royalty assumes some sort of lineage that they never follow. Family is the *school* or perhaps the whole of the Polymarie race. Some have mistaken this for some sort of a hive mind. Individual Polymarie are as likely as anyone to have selfish desires. But Polymarie selfishness stems from a somewhat alien baseline.

Very few Polymarie live on land. Those that do are always near the coastlines and never far from a steady supply of salt-water. Many Polymarie are deathly afraid of deserts. Polymarie villages, when they are formed, are made up of a few dozen or so individuals. They always send a representative to discuss the payment of taxes and such. So far, no Polymarie has ever explained what drives them to the land from their depths. As long as they pay their taxes on time, few nobles have even bothered to ask.

For over a century, Polymarie have occasionally been employed protecting the sea-lanes for national navies. This is particularly true with Tiasham and Tamoc. Polymarie are able to work beneath the waves undetected and without equipment.

IN THE REALMS

Polymarie once ruled the entire aquatic realm. This is recorded fact. It is a true oddity of history. Somewhere, deep beneath the waves, the scattered ruins of the glory that was their Undersea



"I am afraid that it isn't quite that simple. We don't speak of the War of the Oceans to those outside the school.

"Just know this: It was our mistake and our tragedy. We fought hard and paid a great price. It in the end the cause was remedied. That is all you need to know."

**- Bolodo Murk,
Polymarie Sage,
to an Aesir Explorer**

Nation sits undisturbed. None of those ancient cities are inhabited today. Those that have been found have been destroyed.

Polymarie history records many wars, both civil and against outside enemies. The worst of these conflicts was the War of Oceans against a vile race known only as the *Shurque*. Pictures suggest that they were a sort of cross between Polymarie and Sharks. In the process of defending themselves against this menace, the records state that the Polymarie "*pushed the Shurque beyond the edge of the world.*" None are certain as to the meaning of that turn of phrase...

Polymarie have a native language (usually called Polymarie). It cannot be spoken without being underwater, however. Any non-Polymarie learning this language is assumed to be learning the written language only.

POLYMARIE RACIAL TRAITS

Ability Scores: +2 to *Constitution* and *Wisdom*.

Medium Size: As medium sized creatures, Polymarie have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.

Base Speed: 15 feet; 60 feet (swim). Polymarie are very slow on land.

Aquatic (salt-water): Polymarie are aquatic and are dependent upon submersion in salt-water for survival. S/he must submerge her/his body in water for one hour each week (**note:** *a week in Umbragia is 8-days long*). If s/he does not accomplish this by the end of day eight, s/he is treated as though s/he is fatigued. S/he will suffer from 1d8 damage (non-healing) each 6-hours following the 8th day. At any time before death, this can be corrected by being submerged. Once submerged, the s/he will recover 1d8 of the damage suffered in this manner for each full 3-hours of submersion.

Fast Healing: Polymarie have the extraordinary ability of Fast Healing for 3 points per round.

Gills: Polymarie may breathe normally underwater and may not drown. Polymarie are amphibious, and thus may function out of the water as well.

Magic Dampener: Polymarie disrupt the flow of magic in their general vicinity. All use of arcane magic within 50 feet of the individual (meaning the caster is within 50 feet of the Polymarie when the spell was cast) is treated as though the target had Spell Resistance +15. This will effect all spell use, even spells where SR normally does not apply. Divine magic is unaffected.

Automatic Languages: *Common* and *Polymarie*. **Bonus Languages:** Any.

Favored Class: *None*. A multiclass Polymarie always suffers an XP penalty.

"Royalty?"

"What a strange concept. How could a single lineage be maintained separate from the school. What complete nonsense.

"You would fight the natural laws that present the most suitable mates in order to preserve this lineage, would you not? I assume that would be why so many of your 'royalty' suffer from afflictions, like thin blood.

"It only goes to show that by ignoring your nature, you only succeed in destroying yourselves."

**- Bolodo Murk,
Polymarie Sage,
To the Royal Court of Darienth**

QUINA

ECOLOGY

Quina are short, thin, delicate featured quasi-reptiles. They have long, moderately thick tails. Their skin has a natural tendency to alter its color pattern to match the colors around them. They resemble humanoid lizards or chameleons - and they are. Unfortunately they cannot control the ability to blend into their surroundings - this ability is not 'perfect' as it were... Native to warmer climates, swamplands and marshes, the reptilian Quina were once a flourishing people living freely off the lands of the central plains.

Quina typically stand from 3'7" to 4'5" tall and weigh from 90 to 125 pounds. Males and females are the same size. Quina are full-grown at 12 years. They are accepted socially as adults at 15 years. Average lifespan is 45 years.

PSYCHOLOGY

Paranoia and a look of inner fear mark the soul of the Quina. Some have described them as jumpy. This is not the half of it. They are the direct result of a thousand years of continuous slavery. Even within realms where slavery is not commonly practiced (even within realms where slavery is actively outlawed) it would seem that the subjugation of the Quina as a race has hardly caused the raising of a single brow.

Quina have learned how to survive and have adapted to the rigors of being beaten by cruel masters, punished severely for the simplest mistakes. This has left a large portion of the population on edge. They commonly suffer from one or more of the following disorders: acute paranoia, severe phobias, bipolar disorder, split personalities, flashbacks and severe depression.

Despite all of this, Quina are not completely helpless. Occasionally, they have been known to rise against their oppressors. However, Quina are not organized, few are proficient in any form of weaponry, and the last known specimen with any magical talent was over six millennia ago.

In some nations, Quina are used like animals in the arena. Fighting dogs, lions or condemned men, they are killed for sport. The saddest display of this 'sport' is when the organizers of the games pit two Quina against one another. Given the way the cards are stacked against them, it is unlikely that they will be a free people any time soon.

IN THE REALMS

Quina were not designed to be a Player Character race. But, there is nothing to prevent an experienced Role Player looking for a challenge from taking on **Umbragia's** most pitied race.

Playing a Quina is a challenging undertaking. When attempting to place them within the Realms, it helps to keep the movie 'Roots' in the back of your head. To the masses, Quina are just another 'beast of burden.' They are nothing more than an animal, not a sentient being.



"The Quina have proven to be a reasonable slave race. They are easily cowed and are agile enough for delicate work.

"However they seem to lack any common sense what-so-ever. Pitiful intellect proves them unusable for more complex tasks.

"Furthermore, they are neither hale nor hardy enough to act as effective beasts of burden. In the end, however, I may have a solution. I have planned experiments that may aid in reducing these problems."

- **Gho'tal (the greater),**
Arch Magi of Ghorax

Quina can speak – so can a parrot mimic its betters. Quina can use logic and solve problems – so can the dog, the horse and the trained monkey. As you can see – it is an uphill battle for the Quina.

When seen, Quina are normally looking down, following a master on a leash or working as a domestic in some of the more wealthy homes. More often than not, they are involved in harsh manual labor. If you plan to center a campaign on them, keep the emotions strong, or the effect will be minimal.

In the ancient history of the **Realms of Shadow**, Quina once had a large tribal community that ruled over 60% of the known world. But as the other peoples of **Umbrogia** migrated in, the lands that the Quina once roamed continued to shrink. Today, the entire Quina population has been enslaved.

Ancient records show that when the Quina were first encountered, they invited the other races in – offered no hostility at all. It was not very long before the deals of the other races began to falter, become modified or reinterpreted. By the time the Quina were aware of the fact that they were being swindled, it was too late.

QUINA RACIAL TRAITS

Ability Scores: +2 to *Dexterity*; -4 to *Wisdom*; -2 to *Strength*, *Constitution* and *Intelligence*.

Small Size: As small creatures, Quina have all of the bonuses and penalties associated with small size.

Base Speed: 30 feet. Although small, Quina are very quick on their feet.

Ambidexterity: Quina all have the feat *Ambidexterity*.

Chameleon: Quina naturally blend into their surroundings. This gives them a racial bonus of +2 on the skill *Hide* as well as a +2 *Armor Class* bonus.

Tail: Quina have a thick tail capable of being used in combat. The tail strikes with a reach of 5 feet doing 1d6 damage (bludgeoning).

Automatic Languages: *Common*. **Bonus Languages:** Any.

Favored Class: *None*. A multi-class Quina always suffers an XP penalty.

"They are pitiful little creatures. Their gross naiveté ensures they will never be free.

"It is my abject fear that, to try and organize, they will simply be inept at detecting the spies a suspicious master places among them.

"I fear it. I am quite certain that it will take far more power than I possess to free them."

- **Alter Stein,**
Aesir Ranger and Liberator

SHADAHS

ECOLOGY

Shadahs are medium sized winged bipeds. They have large bat-like heads and a pair of four-digit leathery wings extending from their shoulders. Shadahs hands and feet end in small, sharp claws.

Shadahs have a soft coating of fur over a tough leathery hide. The fur comes in colors ranging from ivory-white to ebony-black. Their eyes are small, black and have a “beady” quality.

Shadahs typically stand from 5’10” to 6’10” tall and weigh from 140 to 240 pounds. Males are slightly shorter and heavier than females. Shadahs wingspan is approximately double her/his height. Shadahs are full-grown at 14 years. They are accepted socially as adults at 21 years. Average lifespan is 60 years.

Shadahs, as a race, are slowly dying out. As an egg-laying species, Shadahs eggs are supposed to have thick, hard protective shells that the young claw their way out of at birth. For the last two hundred years, Shadahs eggs have been soft and cloth-like in texture. Many (most?) of their young have been still born. Those that survive birth are weak, and most of them die in the first two years. Of those that survive (as few as 2%), most will suffer from one or more of the following ailments: albinism, blindness, deafness, disfigurement and sterility.

PSYCHOLOGY

On the one hand, as one of the oldest races and cultures, Shadahs are proud and aloof. On the other hand, as a race and culture that sees its own demise all too clearly, Shadahs are desperate and private. None can say for certain why the Shadahs have the troubles that plague them. Shadahs are a race of flyers among ground-based races. In recent times fewer than 3% of the Shadahs have the ability to fly. Those that can rarely do, as it is a constant reminder to their brethren of their losses.

Shadahs history spans the whole of recorded time. In that time, they have suffered only a single wartime defeat. These days they care nothing for war and/or glory. Few enter the political arena and fewer still are adventurers. Nearly the entire race is dedicated to finding a solution to the plague-like curse.

Shadahs speak a language that many sages have noted is very close to the language spoken by *Ang’il* and *Due’il*. The language is called *Shadaptorsas*, but most refer to it as *Shadahs*.

IN THE REALMS

Shadahs are very proud. This cannot be stressed enough. A few Shadahs still blame the Nathas for their troubles. Their own stubborn pride has kept them from getting aid. Still, none have a solution anyway.

Although Shadahs Kingdoms (called Rooks) once dotted the landscape and the skies, their dwindling numbers have left them with little to no political clout. The population of the Shadahs has dropped by over 80% in the last two centuries.



SHADAHS RACIAL TRAITS

Ability Scores: -2 to *Constitution*

Medium Size: As medium sized creatures, Shadahs have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.

Base Speed: 30 feet (if the Shadahs can fly, s/he has a speed of 60 feet in the air)

Dying Race: Shadahs characters may (at the Dungeon Master's option) suffer from one of the character flaws listed below.

Sharp Claws: Shadahs have long, sharp claws. These claws do an additional 1d6 damage (slashing) with an unarmed attack.

Tough-skinned: Shadahs add their *Constitution* bonus to their *Armor Class*.

Winged Flight: Shadahs have wings. Not all of them can fly, however. Those that can have a speed of twice their ground speed. Shadahs also lack the ability to hover when they fly. See notes below.

Automatic Languages: *Common* and *Shadahs*. **Bonus Languages:** Any.

Favored Class: *Fighter*. A multi-class Shadahs' *Fighter* class does not count when determining if s/he suffers an XP penalty.

Flight: Shadahs that are still able to fly have three options. The first is for the Dungeon Master to consider Shadahs characters as having a level equivalent of Class level +1 (see Core Rulebook II, page 22 for more information). The second is for the Shadahs character to sacrifice her/his first two feat selections. Lastly, the Dungeon Master could state that the Shadahs has some other physiological defect to make up for this. This could include (but is certainly not limited to) anything from the list below under **Dying Race**.

Dying Race: Most of the Shadahs race suffers from one or more of the following conditions. The exact game effects are up to the Dungeon Master (each ailment could have many possible effects). The conditions are: weak musculature, weak bone structure, spasms, seizures, weak immune system, sickly, mental abnormalities, albinism, etc, etc, etc. Player Character Shadahs do not normally have these flaws, but a Dungeon Master may use this to balance the effectiveness of the Winged Flight ability.

"I'd die before asking those purple 'prophets' for help. After all, it is their fault I say!

"It was they that sent this plague upon our people, and all so that they could prove, once again, that one of the great prophecies had come true.

"We are the oldest of the old. Our reign was complete. I have no fear that we will eventually overcome this obstacle. And when we do, it will be those purple 'prophets' that will be seeking aid! They will feel the wrath of our vengeance.

"We will survive. We will build our rooks and they will, once again, reach unto the heights of the skies above.

"Our people will soar again."

- **Freda Dobleu,**
Shadah Revolutionary Leader

"The Shadahs are in a race against time. Pride is balanced against desperation. I see that the children of the air will die out and be as dust if they do not seek the aid of other peoples.

"I know not the cure. But I do know that no force of the Shadahs alone will find it. I only hope that Freda will see the light. And I hope she sees it before the sun finally sets upon them."

- **Aromundi II,**
Nathasian Sage

VANIR

ECOLOGY

Vanir are the largest of the three human races (see also *Aesir* and *Haitir*). Vanir, like Haitir span the gamut in appearance. Eyes tend toward blues and greens, but have no *most common* color. Vanir skin tone ranges from pale to medium with a hint of gold. Vanir facial features are rounded, soft and infantile.

Vanir typically stand from 6'0" to 7'0" tall and weigh from 175 to 300 pounds. Males are taller and heavier than females. Vanir are full-grown at 13 years. They are accepted socially as adults at 17 years. Average lifespan is 65 years.

Vanir, as an oddity to human physiology, have a high rate of multiple births – nearly 25%. These births are nearly always fraternal twins, one male and one female.

Vanir eat a lot of red meats and starches. Some have a physiological inability to digest green vegetables. For most Vanir, this is a simple psychological/cultural restriction. Sages throughout the ages have speculated as to how this might be related to the Aesir dietary restrictions.

PSYCHOLOGY

Vanir, as a whole, are a dichotomy of social contradiction. Within Kristophen they are self-indulgent, arrogant and spiteful. Outside they are self reliant, humble and forgiving. Many of these so-called refugees of Kristophen find great solace in the Priesthood.

All Vanir have a strong sense of personal honor. Few lack a sense of duty to family. These feelings run deep providing a drive that's more social than psychological. For example, the concept of peer pressure is unusually strong.

Vanir have troubles understanding where others do not see, feel or understand things the way that they do. The major exception to this rule is Vanir that have left Kristophen. These individuals are sensitive to (and have more complete understanding of) other's feelings as well as their own. This has left these poor souls with a feeling of pity towards their homebound brethren; all the while the nation of Kristophen mourns for the misguided unfortunates that have left home.

IN THE REALMS

Vanir can be found practically everywhere. There are very few places where a family or two, living quietly in the back corners as honest merchants and tradesmen, cannot be found.

As large as they are, it should not be surprising that many find themselves working as mercenaries, soldiers and the like. They are most comfortable wielding larger weapons or operating war machines and siege engines.



"Why should I worry? We have the strongest warriors in the world. None have what it takes to oppose us, save those that we have already forged alliances with.

"When our war machine grinds out over the lands, those whelps that dare to still call themselves 'Vanir' will grease our wheels with their blood."

**- Jameson de'la Dhomaris,
Grand Marshall of Kristophen**

Vanir, unlike the rest of the races described herein, are not historically indigenous to the region. It was not until after the "Age of Wizards" came to an end that the first of the Vanir ships found their way to the southern coasts.

Today, one true Vanir nation exists: Kristophen. It is a Spartan-like empire of slave drivers and warriors. They quickly found allies in the Izhan and the Khutai. This has given the people an unsavory reputation that is tempered only by the fact that those encountered outside the national borders are the epitome of grace and social merit.

This has caused some debate within the scholarly circles as to whether Vanir are actually two races instead of one. Others point to ancient Vanir tradition that speaks of the *d'ihari* (literally, *terrible twins*). This is a legend about twin brothers (the only recorded time a twin-set was not fraternal) and how they created a great rift in the old country. This war, it is said, nearly destroyed the Vanir.

Many a Sage has speculated that the Vanir of Kristophen could quite possibly have sailed here to escape the atrocities of that war. However, how the descendents of such a war would include a vast majority if the more war-like side of the race seems somewhat odd.

Vanir have their own language called *Kharis* (usually called *Kristophen Common* or *Vanir*).

VANIR RACIAL TRAITS

Ability Scores: +2 to *Strength* and *Charisma*; -2 to *Dexterity*

Medium Size: As medium sized creatures, Vanir have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.

Base Speed: 35 feet (slightly longer, powerful legs provide a small boost)

Natural Talents: Vanir receive a bonus feat at 6th, 12th and 18th levels.

Aural Spirit (*non-Kristophen Vanir only*): Vanir are highly sensitive to personality, intentions and emotions. They receive a +2 racial bonus on the skills *Animal Empathy*, *Diplomacy*, *Gather Information*, *Innuendo*, *Perform*, and *Sense Motive*.

Aural Taint (*Kristophen Vanir only*): Vanir are highly resistant to all forms of Divination. Treat this as a Spell Resistance 15 against all forms of divination spells and spell-like abilities.

Automatic Languages: *Common*. **Bonus Languages:** Any.

Favored Class: *Fighter* (Kristophen Vanir) or *Cleric* (non-Kristophen Vanir). A multiclass Vanir's *Fighter* (or *Cleric*) class does not count when determining if s/he suffers and XP penalty.

"Can you not see the ley lines that draw the world to the nexus? Our lost kindred in Kristophen are planning war, the Izhan are planning war... other's too.

"The world is on the brink, I say.

"It will be the job of us refugees to become the compassionate face of the Living Earth. We must heal the scars of war and seek to protect those we can."

- *Edgar de'la Dhomaris*,
Druid of the Temple of the Living Earth,
Son of Grand Marshal Dhomaris

VASYL

ECOLOGY

Vasyl (singular: *Vasii*) are tall, thin humanoids with dark charcoal-gray skin, dull gray-on-gray eyes that have no visible pupil. They have sparse body hair, if any at all. The hair on their heads is black or dark brown.

Vasyl have many unusual features, including a rather low body temperature (about 70°F), large hands, twelve-inch-long fingers with five joints each, and so on. One of the more interesting things about the Vasyl is their nocturnal nature. Although many Vasyl have adapted to life in the light (the most noteworthy being the Vasylian military, for obvious reasons), it is uncomfortable on their eyes to remain in the daylight for extended periods.

Vasyl typically stand from 5'8" to 6'8" tall and weigh from 135 to 215 pounds. Males are a couple of inches taller, but no heavier than females. Vasyl are full-grown at 15 years. They are accepted socially as adults at 25 years. Average lifespan is 275 years.

PSYCHOLOGY

Vasyl are long lived and with that comes a sense of slowness to the universe. They are not quick to adapt or change their way of life. Change, to the Vasyl mind, is a matter best entered into with extreme forethought and planning. This is the most likely reason for their losing ground over the last six centuries. As the shorter-lived, more adaptable races grow in numbers, Vasyl rely on ancient and time-honored methods of dealing with them.

Vasyl, however, pawn off to others those things that they cannot handle themselves. The most noteworthy bond and ancient alliance they have is with the Nathas. The Nathas people understand the Vasyl mind better than any other does.

Vasyl are at home in the forests and swamplands. Lacking these, they will live in caves before they confine themselves to some artificial dwelling.

Vasyl have a fear of cemeteries due to their ability to feel the presence of spirits and magic. Vasyl do not bury the dead – they cremate. The concept of “*last rites*” is one of the cornerstones upon which Vasyl society is built.

IN THE REALMS

Vasyl are the night stalkers. They are people to whom you never let your guard down. Vasyl are cunning and, although they are slow to adapt as a culture, they are quick to adapt as individuals. They have a culture that has endured unchanged for four millennia.

The wars between the Izhan and the Vasyl have resulted in many Vasylian POWs being tortured for their spirit-sensing talents. Although the last full war between them was over 200 years ago, it is not known how many (if any) Vasyl remain in Izhan controlled lands to this day.



"Within the landscapes of my memories, the war against the Izhan is an echo of a moment that just passed.

"When I walk nearby a cemetery, the screams still sound in my heart of the brethren captured and tortured...

"But the Izhan are breed that hastes due to the limitations of thier lifespan. They seek to quickly grab power and land.

"They will just as quickly release it if presure is placed correctly. All things come to those who wait."

**- Asenvole Nightbane
Noximari of Vashnia**

Once in every few generations, a Vasyl is born with none of the magical gifts of the race. These *toric na'ktu* (literally: *soul-blinded*) Vasyl are physically stronger than typical Vasyl. They have darker skin tones, yellow on yellow eyes and have an average lifespan of over 500 years. Over 40 such individuals live today.

VASYL RACIAL TRAITS

Ability Scores: +2 to *Dexterity* and *Charisma*; -2 to *Strength*

Medium Size: As medium sized creatures, Vasyl have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.

Base Speed: 30 feet.

Manual Dexterity: Vasyl receive a racial bonus of +2 on any use of skill where fine motor control could be a benefit (Dungeon Master's call). Examples include Pick Pocket and Open Locks.

Mage Sense: Vasyl can feel the presence of magical and spiritual energies. Treat this as though s/he were constantly casting the spell *Detect Magic* (this is involuntary. The longer s/he stays in the area, the more potent the reading of the area is going to be). This is a spell-like ability.

Night Vision: Vasyl can see four times as far in low light conditions as a normal human. In normal daylight, s/he can only see half as far as a normal human. Normal daylight is also somewhat uncomfortable.

Thin-skinned: Vasyl always roll *Hit Points* using two dice and take the lower of the two results.

Automatic Languages: *Common* and *Vasyl*. **Bonus Languages:** Any.

Favored Class: *Any*. A multi-class Vasyl's *highest level* class does not count when determining if s/he suffers an XP penalty.

TORIC NA'KTU

Ability Scores: No adjustments.

Medium Size: As medium sized creatures, Toric Na'ktu have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.

Dark Vision: Toric Na'ktu can see equally well in total darkness as a human can in normal daylight. Normal daylight is still as uncomfortable for them as it is for a typical Vasyl.

Spellblind: Toric Na'ktu cannot take the feat *Dragon Touched* and thus cannot cast arcane spells.

Tough Skinned: Toric Na'ktu get to add their *Constitution* bonus to their *Armor Class*.

Automatic Languages: *Common* and *Vasyl*. **Bonus Languages:** Any.

Favored Class: *Fighter*. A multi-class Vasyl's *Fighter* class does not count when determining if s/he suffers an XP penalty.

"The Vasii are relics of a bygone age.

"Like doddering old fools, they will be swept out of the way by the younger and the stronger. They are prime examples of what happens when you are stagnant.

"We are the force of change.

"Like a tidal wave carving into the coastline, removing the frail land. We will carve away the Vasii leaving the world of our choosing."

- *Lodfa Relthi,*
Izhan Warlord

Xxyxx

ECOLOGY

Xxyxx, an insectoid race, have a tough, yet semi-pliable exoskeleton that comes in colors ranging from browns to greens to earthy reds. Xxyxx have six limbs.

The largest pair of limbs is thickly padded and attached to the lower thorax acting as legs. They are set wide for stability and have no manipulative ability. The second set is just above mid-thorax. They are set closer than the 'legs' and have less padding. They end in a three-digit radial 'hand.' They use these limbs as either auxiliary legs or arms depending on the need. The third set is in the upper thorax and has very little padding. These end in a more traditional hand-like structure, with two large fingers and an opposable thumb.

Xxyxx have smallish, flat, triangular-shaped heads. The head is suspended on a stalk-like structure that allows the head to rotate nearly 300°. Xxyxx have six small honeycombed eyes, three on either side. Additionally, they have several short antennae that serve as the receptors for the senses of smell and xxyxx (see Xxyxx Racial Traits, below).

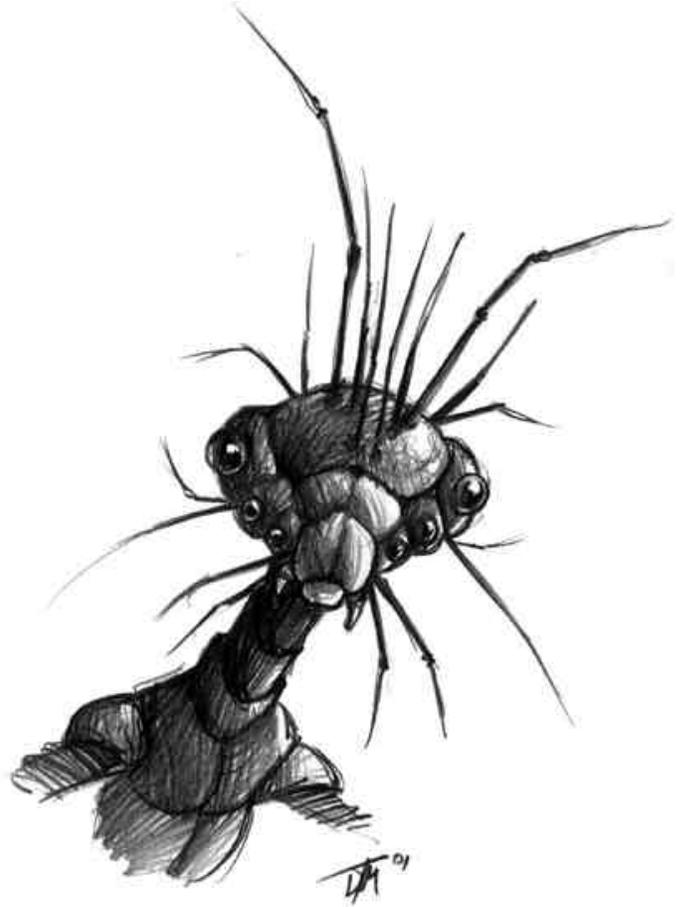
Xxyxx typically stand from 5'0" to 6'0" tall and weigh from 185 to 315 pounds. Xxyxx have only one gender. Xxyxx are full-grown at 10 years. They are accepted socially as adults at 20 years. Average lifespan is 95 years.

Each individual Xxyxx has the capacity to bear eggs and to fertilize them. Xxyxx cannot, however, its own eggs. Xxyxx may bear eggs once every five years (every 64 months). An individual can produce as many as 1,500 eggs each cycle. Xxyxx eggs take just over nineteen months to hatch. Typically, about 5% of those eggs laid will hatch and produce a live offspring. Of these, perhaps 15-25% will survive the first two years (known as the *chi'notsik* period) while the shell forms over their bodies.

The act of producing eggs is completely voluntary. When the cycle comes it effects the Xxyxx psyche much like the human menstrual period. If the individual desires to lay eggs, they will place themselves into a trance-like state. This lasts six months and renders the Xxyxx completely incapacitated. Once produced, the eggs have 72 hours to be fertilized by another Xxyxx before the eggs die.

PSYCHOLOGY

Xxyxx are by far the most alien mind of **Umbragia**. What drives them or motivates them is unknown. What brings fear into their hearts is a mystery. They are extremely social...but only with other Xxyxx. They make one exception, and that is with the Daermin. This alliance was forged in the dawning ages of **Umbragia** and has endured to this day. The reasons for their solitude are many, but the fact that the to them the non-Xxyxx mind is just as alien certainly plays a role.



"Most think the alliance between my people and the Xxyxx means we understand them better.

"No. They still seem as enigmatic today as they did to my forefathers. But we respect them for those differences.

"One of my Xxyxx compatriots would claim that to mean that we misunderstand them the least."

- **Wegar Thronod,**
Daermin Master-Smith

IN THE REALMS

Xxyxx are meant to be the outsiders. A Dungeon Master needs to decide if the oddities of the race are elements of a hidden logic, or perhaps elements of chaos theory in action. To comprehend the race would be to undermine their potential as non-player characters.

As player characters, players have free reign to act as odd and strange as desired. This can be a fun romp of role-playing without bounds as the character does all sort of unpredictable things. Or it can be the most challenging of roles as the player hides internal consistencies behind a sort of quasi-Zen logic.

Xxyxx have cities that can span hundreds of square miles where millions live in a militaristic harmony without crime, famine or disease. Xxyxx cities are described as immaculately clean and unnaturally calm. Xxyxx have their own language and are incapable of speaking other languages. Non-Xxyxx cannot speak the Xxyxx language either, but they can both learn to comprehend it. This makes diplomacy with Xxyxx very difficult, as both parties have to speak in one language and listen in another.

XXYXX RACIAL TRAITS

Ability Scores: +2 to *Wisdom*

Medium Size: As medium sized creatures, Xxyxx have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.

Base Speed: 30 feet.

Additional Arms: Xxyxx have six limbs. See **Racial Abilities**.

Hard to Kill: Xxyxx automatically have the *REMAIN CONSCIOUS* feat (from the book **Sword and Fist**, published by Wizards of the Coast) allowing them to remain conscious and take partial actions while their Hit Points are below 0. See **Racial Traits** for more information.

Tough-skinned: Xxyxx get to add their *Constitution* bonus to their *Armor Class*.

Xxyxx Sense: Xxyxx can, via antennae, detect minute vibrations in the air. This has many effects, such as granting her/him the equivalent of *low light vision* (being able to 'see' twice as far in low light conditions). Additionally, a Dungeon Master may rule that certain feats are more effective (such as *Blindfighting*), or even assess penalties to anyone attempting to sneak up on her/him, etc.

Automatic Languages: Xxyxx. **Bonus Languages:** Any (cannot be spoken).

Favored Class: *None*. Multiclass Xxyxx always suffer an XP penalty.

"A warrior went on a journey in search of truth. He came upon *All-in-Nothing* and spoke out, 'Great Master, you must know truth. Please tell me.'

"However *All-in-Nothing* gave neither reply nor sign that the warrior was even noticed. Frustrated the warrior went on.

"He next came upon *Everything-to-Extremes*. He spoke out again saying, 'Great Master, you must know truth. Please tell me.'

"*Everything-to-Extremes* replied, 'I shall tell you all.' But then he fell silent and seemed to even forget what he was saying. Frustrated once again, the warrior went to his Lord.

"He came to his Lord and spoke again, this time saying, 'Great Master, I sought the truth from *All-in-Nothing* and *Everything-to-Extremes*. Still, I do not know the truth. Can you tell me?'

"The Lord replied, '*All-in-Nothing* is correct. *Everything-to-Extremes* is close. However, we are completely wrong, as any that would speak of it, know nothing of it.'

- A Xxyxx fable

ZYNAR

ECOLOGY

Zynar are large humanoid canines. They are covered in a fur that comes in colors normal for canines. They have long, non-prehensile tails. Some, depending on the pedigree, have large manes.

Zynar is the collective term for any of several separate subspecies, or *pedigrees*. Zynar *pedigrees* range from Keeshonden to Shepherd to Wolf to Fox. The *pedigrees* tend to separate into *packs*. The *pedigrees* are identical from a racial standpoint, varying only in appearance and culture. Zynar *pedigrees* can interbreed, the resulting pup having traits of both parents.

Zynar typically stand from 4'9" to 5'9" tall and weigh from 115 to 195 pounds. Males are taller and heavier than females. Zynar are full-grown at 12 years. They are accepted socially as adults at 15 years. Average lifespan is 60 years.

Zynar packs can, and do, live everywhere. They thrive in every known environment from the arctic to the tropical. Although the Zynar have built few civilizations, they have been a driving and contributing force in nearly every civilization that has ever been built.

PSYCHOLOGY

Zynar are pack and den creatures. They are friendly, outgoing and above all, social. They have tales of grand epic proportions and love legends and lore from all races.

Zynar are hard working. They tend to be most comfortable in occupations that allow them to work outdoors. They are farmers (leaning toward herding animals over tilling the ground), smiths and above all – *trackers*.

Zynar have produced the most legendary trackers in history. However, this is not all that they do. They are adaptable and have a demeanor suited to nearly any profession. Zynar are not so easily defined as they are perhaps the most fundamentally diverse race in **Umbagia**.

Zynar need social interaction to survive. An individual removed from his pack will slowly drop into a fit of depression. This *pack* need not be other Zynar. If Zynar are not available, the lone individual will cling to whatever he considers the '*alpha*' of the group he is in. Once a level of respect is set, the Zynar will follow this new leader to the ends of the earth if needed. Likewise, a Zynar that considers himself to be '*alpha*' expects the same sort of loyalty.

Zynar respond well to leadership. A strong leader will be followed; a weak leader will be disposed of. Loyalty to ones leader is the highest honor a Zynar can pay, and so it is not given lightly. To be betrayed by a Zynar is practically unheard of.

Many have expected that the Zynar and the Nimori to be enemies. This is not the case and to be honest, both races resent the implication that they are nothing more than animals.



"Run to the ends of the Realms of Shadow, and I will follow. You betrayed my leader and shunned your bonds of loyalty. Now the pack will hunt. I hear your terror and will show you the mercy you showed him.

"Look over your shoulder, I'll be there."

- **Grol Longshank,**
Zynar Ranger

IN THE REALMS

Zynar are sometimes called *Wolfen* or *Canines*.

Zynar are a mixed culture, adapting to the local environment and social dynamics quickly. Although they have never driven history, they have always been in the background, contributing to it.

Zynar, aside from Trackers, have provided the **Realms of Shadow** with its most infamous assassins and shady characters. Although they rarely play any direct part in the politics of a region, they are usually pulling a few strings from a distance.

Zynar do not have a language. They instead adopt the local tongue. Most, due to the growling nature of their voices, will have a peculiar dialect of whatever language they are speaking.

ZYNAR RACIAL TRAITS

Ability Scores: +2 to *Dexterity* and *Constitution*; -2 to *Strength*

Medium Size: As medium sized creatures, Zynar have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.

Base Speed: 35 feet. With their powerful legs, they are slightly faster than most.

Internal Clock: Zynar have an uncanny awareness of the passage of time. They instinctively know exactly how much time has passed, even without any form of reference.

Internal Compass: Zynar have an uncanny awareness of direction. They instinctively know exactly what direction is north, even without any form of reference.

Sharp Teeth: Zynar have very sharp teeth. They may do 1d6 damage (piercing) with a successful bite in combat.

Ultra-hearing: Zynar have hearing that extends well beyond the normal range allowing them to hear higher and lower frequencies of sound than a normal human. This also confers a +6 racial bonus on Listen checks as well as any attempt to hear something, intuit the direction a sound came from, etc. In some circumstances, they could even track someone by sound alone. This also rendered the individual more susceptible to sonic-based attacks (DM's call).

Automatic Languages: *Common*. **Bonus Languages:** Any.

Favored Class: *Ranger*. A multi-class Zynar's *Ranger* class does not count when determining if s/he suffers an XP penalty.

We'll follow our leader
Wherever he may go, he may go
Over the hills, and through the snow
Through the snow, oh no, oh no

One, Two, What to do
Three, Four, a little more
We'll follow our leader
Where he does go, a little mo?

One, Two, we are through
Three, Four, no more!

- *Zynar Marching Song*

CLASSES

The normal classes from Core Rulebook I are (for the most part) available. Some modifications and considerations must be made for the cultures of **Umbragia**. The most significant changes come in the realms of magic.

STANDARD CLASSES

The classes from **Core Rulebook I** should be treated as follows:

- **Barbarian**: available, but only to the Acota.
- **Bard**: Not available. However, in the supplement **Religion & Sorcery**, there is the Minstrel class that fills the role of the Bard.
- **Cleric**: available with the following modifications. Due to the death of all of the old Gods, clerics are restricted in their use of spells. Thanks to the living minions, this is not as bad as it might first appear – no spells greater than 4th level. See *MAGIC* for more information. This will allow you to start playing a Cleric now – however, **Religion & Sorcery** offers a lot more options and flexibility to the Cleric class.
- **Druid**: available with the following modifications. Due to the death of the old Gods, druids are restricted in their use of spells just like the clergy. No spells greater than 4th level. See *MAGIC* for more information. This will allow you to start playing a Druid now – however, **Religion & Sorcery** offers a lot more options and flexibility to the Druid class.
- **Fighter**: available with no modifications.
- **Monk**: not available.
- **Paladin**: not available. However, in the supplement **People of Prestige**, there are several classes that fill the role of the Paladin.
- **Ranger**: available with the following modifications. Remove the 'favored enemy' ability and replace it with the ability to select one of the following abilities instead: Animal Companion, Nature Sense, Trackless step or Woodland Stride (all of these are Druid abilities. See **Core Rulebook I**, page 35 for full descriptions of these abilities). No spells greater than 2nd level are available. This will allow you to start playing a Ranger now – however, **Religion & Sorcery** offers a lot more options and flexibility to the Ranger class.
- **Rogue**: available with no modifications.
- **Sorcerer** and **Wizard**: not available. These classes are replaced with the Mage class. See *MAGIC*. This will allow you to start playing a Mage now – however, **Religion & Sorcery** offers a lot more options and flexibility to the Mage class.

OTHER CLASSES

In future products, such as the Nations books, more classes will be presented. The available classes above are simply those that are available in all nations. **Umbragia: People of Prestige** will also include some new classes for the **Umbragia** campaign, as well as a fresh look at some old favorites.

NPC CLASSES

The NPC classes from **Core Rulebook II** should be treated as follows:

- **Adept**: Not available. However, in the supplement **Religion & Sorcery**, several classes fill the role of the Adept.
- **Aristocrat**: available without modification.
- **Commoner**: available without modification.
- **Expert**: available without modification.
- **Warrior**: available without modification.

PRESTIGE CLASSES

There are many Prestige Classes in the **Realms of Shadow**. This volume will not be detailing them, however. For those advanced professions of the realms, see the future volume entitled *Umbragia: People of Prestige*.

The prestige classes from the **Core Rulebook II** should be treated as follows:

- **Arcane Archer**: available with the following modifications. Change racial requirements to *Nathas* or *Vasyl*. Add *Dragon Touched* to the feat requirement list.
- **Assassin**: not available. However, there are Assassin-like classes in **Umbragia**. For more information on these, see **PEOPLE OF PRESTIGE**.
- **Blackguard**: not available.
- **Dwarven Defender**: available with the following modifications. Change name of class to *Defender*. Change racial requirements to *Daermin* or *Lukar'r*.
- **Loremaster**: not available.
- **Shadowdancer**: available with the following modifications. Add a racial requirement of *Nimori*, *Shadahs* or *Zynar*. Add *Dragon Touched* to the feat requirement list.

Although there are no **SORCERERS** or **WIZARDS** in **Umbragia**, there are **MAGES**. See the **MAGIC** section of this book for more information on the **MAGES** of **Umbragia**.

MAGIC

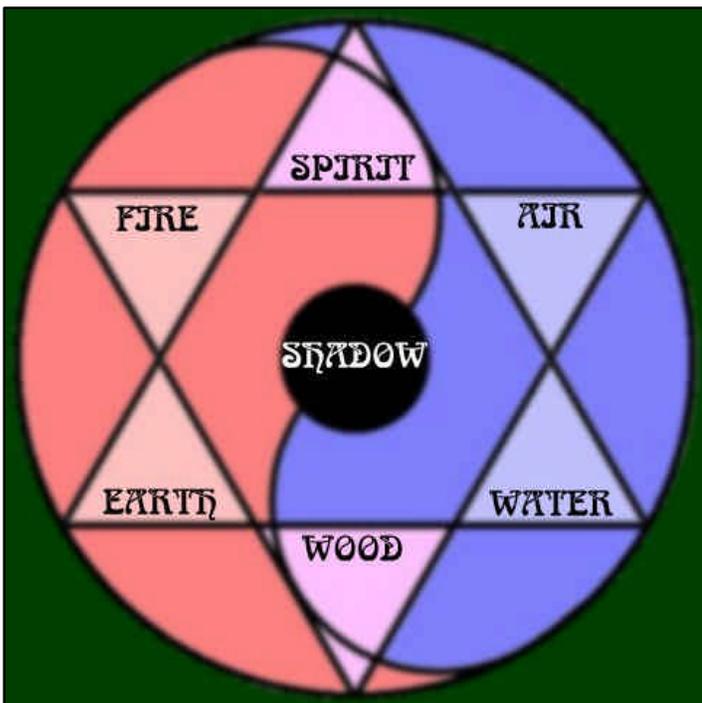
ARCANE MAGIC

It was a terrible time. The Wizards of the old days had made an attempt to smite their enemies and what resulted was a backfire unlike anything that came before it. The Wizards died when the magic died.

It took many years for magic to return to the lands, and when it did, it was not the same as it had been. Wizards, like the old days, were no longer. But for some, those with the gift and talent, magic could be wielded. They are collectively known as the *Dragon Touched* thanks to some early theories of those that could cast spells. But even for those that have the talents, magic is simply not as safe as it once was...

The supplement **Religion & Sorcery** will present the entire **Realms of Shadow** magic system. A synopsis follows:

- **Dragon Touched:** All arcane spells require this feat.
- **The Seven Spheres:** magic has been shattered into seven spheres, *Air, Earth, Fire, Shadow, Spirit, Water* and *Wood* (sometimes called *Nature*). Each mage selects one of the four primary elements (*Air, Earth, Fire* or *Water*). Additional feats can unlock other spells later.
- **Magical Backfires:** magic has become a dangerous thing to wield. Mages can cast as many spells as they like, but after a while, it becomes dangerous.



FEAT: DRAGON TOUCHED

Dragon Touched [Metamagic] is a prerequisite for all arcane spell casting. To take this feat, it must be the first feat chosen (i.e.: you are born with it). Once the character has begun play, this feat is no longer available. All characters with such a feat are marked in some way (an unusual birthmark, eyes are different colors, etc.). When taken, this feat also grants the character one sphere (see below).

THE SEVEN SPHERES

There are seven shards of magic known as the seven spheres. The spheres act exactly like **Divine Spell Domains**. Each sphere grants a special ability as well as the availability of one additional known spell per spell level. Each sphere is a metamagic feat. The spheres cannot be taken more than once.

All spells that are available from the various spheres are not normally available to Mages without those spheres. For example, the sphere **Fire** has the first level spell *Burning Hands*. A Mage without this feat (sphere) cannot choose the *Burning Hands* spell. All domains not listed in the spheres below are not effected by the restrictions of the Sphere system.

AIR [METAMAGIC]

Prerequisite: *Dragon Touched, Female Gender*

Granted Ability/Spell Listing: As per *AIR DOMAIN* in **Core Rulebook I** (page 162).

EARTH [METAMAGIC]

Prerequisite: *Dragon Touched, Male Gender*

Granted Ability/Spell Listing: As per *EARTH DOMAIN* in **Core Rulebook I** (page 163).

FIRE [METAMAGIC]

Prerequisite: *Dragon Touched, Male Gender*

Granted Ability/Spell Listing: As per *FIRE DOMAIN* in **Core Rulebook I** (page 163).

SHADOW [METAMAGIC]

Prerequisite: *Either the Spirit or Wood Sphere*

Granted Ability/Spell Listing: The Mage may select one of the following domains from **Core Rulebook I** (pages 163-165). *DEATH, DESTRUCTION, LUCK, TRAVEL* or *TRICKERY*.

SPIRIT [METAMAGIC]

Prerequisite: *Either the Fire or Air Sphere*

Granted Ability/Spell Listing: The Mage may select one of the following domains from **Core Rulebook I** (pages 163-165). *CHAOS, EVIL, GOOD* or *LAW*. Any character that is not true neutral must select a domain that matches at least one aspect of their alignment (i.e.: A Lawful Good Mage must select either Law or Good).

ARCANE BLAST!

A blast of magical energy explodes from the caster doing the listed amount of damage multiplied by the level of the spell that triggered the effect to everything within 50 feet. Each additional 25-feet from the caster will reduce the damage by 50% (normal damage up to 50 feet, ½-damage from 51-75 feet, ¼-damage from 76-100 feet, and so on). Walls, armor or other barriers is no save from this damage. The caster her/himself suffers twice the normal damage. A successful Fort save (DC 10 + Spell Level) for the caster and all in the affected area will half this damage.

ARCANE CURSE!

Within the local region (about 40-60 miles radius) strange things begin to happen. Plagues of locusts, calves are born with two heads, unusually large numbers of twins or stillbirths, crop circles, spontaneous combustion, etc. Be creative.

This lasts for as long as 20 years. The Dungeon Master is free to shorten the time and make the effects more severe, or lengthen the time for more mild effects. Although this can never be traced back to the caster, the caster will be very aware of the fact that these effects were her/his fault.

ARCANE MARK!

The caster has shifted the flow of magical energies in the area. For the duration of the effect, no spells of activating spells type (Abjuration, Conjunction, etc.) will function within the area. Duration is 1d4 days per Spell Level. Base area is a circle centered on the spot the caster was in when the spell was cast extending out 10 feet. Each level of the spell and the caster doubles this radius. So, for example, 10th level Mage casting *Cloudkill* (a 5th level spell) creates a mark of (10 feet x 2¹⁵ =) 6.2 miles radius in which no Conjunction spells will function for 1d4 days.

CAUSAL BREAKDOWN

This is a series of effects that take place in a rather standard order. During the entire episode, the caster will suffer from the effects of a Mana Shower. For 2d6 + Spell Level hours, the caster suffers from Mana Sickness. The caster also suffers from Nightmares for 3d6 + Spell Level days. When the Nightmare duration is over, the caster must make a Will save (DC 18) or they will continue another night. Roll each night until the Nightmares pass. Once the Nightmares cease, the caster suffers the effects of a Spell Breech for the next 1d6 weeks. Like the Nightmares, it is not over when the duration is over. Roll a Will save (DC 20) each day to end the effects.

MANA BACKLASH

This is a magically induced migraine headache often accompanied by severe nausea. While this is taking place the caster cannot cast spells and is limited to partial actions.

MANA SCAR

This is a swirling vortex of unstable magical energy surrounding the caster. Although it is invisible, anyone with the *Dragon Touched* feat will know that the energies are there. All spells

require double *Mana Pool* expenditures and all *Mana Recovery* rates are reduced by 50% within 2d6 miles of the caster (yes, it moves with her/him) for the duration of the effect.

MANA SHOWER

This is a minor effect where the magical energies around the caster's body have exploded into a light and sound show! The caster's skin and clothing crawl with strange energies, sparks, or other audio-visual effects. This renders stealth impossible and frightens small animals and many mundane people for the duration of the effect.

MANA SICKNESS

This is a magically induced illness. For the duration of the effect the caster is a -1 per spell level (2 minimum) to all ability scores.

MANA SURGE

This is a sudden surge of wild-magical energies. Roll again on the Magical Backfire chart, adding an additional +10 to the roll. This effect is stackable, so if the Mana Surge effect is rolled a second time, then roll again adding +20 to the roll and so on.

NIGHTMARES

This is severe, sleep depriving nightmares. Due to the lack of sleep, the caster suffers a penalty of -4 to all ability scores until they can get a normal night's sleep. A successful Will save (DC 18) each morning will lessen the effects by 50% for that day.

PSYCHOSIS

The caster has begun to lose track of reality. This can bring on any form of mental effect on the caster. The form of the psychosis is entirely up to the Dungeon Master but can include phobias, delusions, flashbacks, and so on. Duration is generally permanent, although a Dungeon Master is free to invent any number of ways of curing the poor Mage.

SPELL BREECH

This is a condition where the caster begins to have trouble casting spells at all. For the duration, all spells are cast with a +10 Spell Resistance in effect.

TAINT

Sometimes called the *Black Seam* or *Taint of Darkness*, this is one of the most feared effects of Magical Backfire. The duration of a level of *Taint* is 1d6 days. At the end of that duration, unless the caster succeeds a DC 15 Will save, another 1d6 days is added to the duration. Additional levels of *Taint* stack all effects. While s/he is suffering from *Taint*, several things happen.

- All spells cast by the caster require an expenditure of *Hit Points* equal to Spell Level +1.
- *Mana Pool* cost for spells is increased by +1.
- *Mana Recovery* is reduced by -1 (MR cannot go below 0).
- All spells are cast as if the caster's level were 1 lower.

Thus, if a caster were to have three levels of *Taint*, then a 1st level spell would require 6 *Mana Pool* and 6 *Hit Points*; *Mana*

Recovery would be reduced by -3 and all spells would be cast as though the caster's level were three below normal.

TIME SPIKE

The caster has managed to create a bubble of unstable time. This has the effect of aging the caster 1d6 years per Spell Level instantly.

THE MAGE CLASS

This is an overview – a full treatment of the class will appear in **RELIGION & SORCERY**. The Mage is a class very similar to the Sorcerer from **Core Rulebook I**. The Mage knows a certain number of spells and can cast any of these spells s/he wishes within the limits of her/his *Mana Pool*.

The Mage's primary abilities are Charisma (*force of will and personality*) and Intelligence (*ability to control and wield magical forces*). Unlike the sorcerer, Mages do not automatically get the *Summon Familiar* ability.

The Mage's Base Attack Bonus, Saving Throws, Hit Dice, Skill Points and Class Skills are the same as for a sorcerer (see **Core Rulebook I**, pages 48-51). A Mage can know and cast a spell as long as her/his Charisma score is at least equal to the spell's level +10. The mage, however, gets bonus known spells based upon her/his Intelligence score.

The known spells for a Mage are the same as for a sorcerer (however, please note the bonus spells for each sphere of magic the Mage has taken a feat in).

A Mage also has a score for *Mana Pool* and *Mana Recovery* (see **ARCANE MAGIC** above). Each level the Mage gains Mana Pool equal to twice the new level they have achieved plus their Intelligence bonus. So, for example, a 4th level Mage with an Intelligence of 12 (INT bonus +1) would have [(2+1)+(4+1)+(6+1)+(8+1)] 24 Mana Pool.

Mana Recovery is equal to twice the Mage's level plus her/his Charisma bonus. Thus, this same 4th level Mage with a Charisma of 12 (CHA bonus +1) would recover 9 points in her/his Mana Pool each day.

The cost to cast a spell is equal twice the spell's level plus one (zero-level spells cost 1).

| Spell Level | Mana Cost | Spell Level | Mana Cost | Spell Level | Mana Cost |
|-------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| 0 | 1 | 4 | 9 | 8 | 17 |
| 1 | 3 | 5 | 11 | 9 | 19 |
| 2 | 5 | 6 | 13 | 10 | 21 |
| 3 | 7 | 7 | 15 | 11 | 23 |

DIVINE MAGIC

Since before recorded time, the Gods have been dead. This leaves the Divine Spell Casters (Clerics, Druids and Rangers) without a source of energy... Well, without the primary source anyway. What remains of the old Gods is their minions, godlings and demi-gods. They do not have the resources of the old gods and so cannot afford to power the entirety of the church structure. But they do what they can.

Working diligently, they are able to maintain all clergy in spells up to 4th level. Beyond this, they are a little more selective. When the spot a member of the fold that seems promising, they might approach them and offer them a Divine Quest. If this quest is accepted and completed, then further spell advancement becomes possible. From a gaming point of view, this is a series of additional feats that the divine caster will need to take (see *The Three Quests*).

The number of spells that a Cleric in **Umbragia** has access to is not quite as great as **Core Rulebook I** would tend to suggest either. Each church has a listing of spells that the Cleric can choose from – but the cleric does not need to prepare them. Much like a typical Sorcerer, the Cleric can decide, on the fly, what spells to cast. See **Religion & Sorcery** for the full details; a short synopsis follows.

THE THREE QUESTS

FIRST QUEST [METAMAGIC]

Prerequisite: Complete a Divine Quest, Have the ability to handle 5th level spells

This feat grants two things: it opens the doorway to 5th and 6th level spells as well as granting an additional spell per day in each level from 1st to 4th. But to get this feat requires the completion of a divine quest and the normal access to 5th level spells. What this means is that a Ranger can never take this feat (they never have access to 5th level divine spells), but if a 9th level Druid or Cleric wants to cast 5th level spells, they will need this feat.

SECOND QUEST [METAMAGIC]

Prerequisite: First Quest, complete a Divine Quest, ability to use 7th level spells

This is very similar to **First Quest**. This feat allows the use of 7th and 8th level spells as well as granting an additional spell per day in each level from 1st to 6th.

THIRD QUEST [METAMAGIC]

Prerequisite: Second Quest, complete a Divine Quest, ability to use 9th level spells

This is the final Divine Quest feat. It results in the Priest becoming a Divine Minion of the faith. It grants the ability to use 9th level spells as well as granting an additional spell per day in each level from 1st to 8th.

CHURCHES

These churches and many more will be fully detailed in the supplement **Religion & Sorcery**. That supplement will also have more domains, more spells and more magic items. Don't miss it!

Below are a few of the more common churches (and one or two obscure ones) and the domains that they follow. Remember that the restrictions on alignment only apply to the clergy – the worshippers and general congregation can be of any alignment.

CHURCH OF THE ETERNAL FLAME

This is a combination of three of the ancient churches. The Church of Aarissetri (Goddess of Knowledge), Czalmin te'Langthrow (God of Warriors) and Pourticia (Goddess of Puzzles and Logic). These three ancient gods are ones that were members of the Army of Lavarisia and Shada. They joined into a single church before the great fall of all gods in order to glorify them. Today, they are more a political entity than an active church.

The church consists of three branches; each headed over by the traditions of one of the three ancient churches. Aarissetri is the head Goddess of the three and so the Priestesses of Aarissetri administer the church. Males cannot enter the Priesthood in her name.

The Priestesses of Aarissetri are always of good alignment. They may choose two of the following domains: *Good, Healing, Knowledge or Protection*.

The followers of Czalmin te'Langthrow serve as warriors and protectors of the church and its interests. Females cannot enter into this religious order. These warriors are always of lawful alignment.

The followers of Pourticia are both male and female and serve as bookkeepers, recorders of history and such. Some are talented in the ways of magic, but are never granted spells by the Minions of the ancient Goddess. These cloistered are always of neutral alignment (LN, NG, N, NE or CN).

CHURCH OF THE LIGHT

A minor church, this is the last remaining followers of the teachings of Lavarisia. They are seen by most as a cultic following, and even they have trouble not agreeing with the label. They do not have any of the major Minions backing them up, and so cannot cast spells greater than 3rd level – they may not select any of the Questing feats, either.

They have, however, all four of the Elemental Domains (Air, Earth, Fire and Water – they are very akin to the Druids) and may select any one other. They lack the undead turning capabilities of other Priests – such are the sacrifices for their flexibility. They are always of Neutral Good alignment.

Although not normally found in the ranks of the Priesthood, most all Lukar'r are followers of this church.

CHURCH OF THE LIVING ATONEMENT

This is the cultural church of the Khutai people. It is an ancient church of ancestral worship, and so does not need the three quests to access the full extent of their spells. Granted, they do not get spells above 4th level.

Each spell slot above 4th level, when it would normally be available provides instead two slots of 0-level to 4th level spells. The only rule being that the cleric can never have more slots in a given level than s/he has in any level below it. Clerics of the Living Atonement always have the *Death* and *Trickery* domains.

CHURCH OF THE ONE TRUE PATH

This is the national church of Al Hadim. It is actually a splinter faction of the Church of the Word (see below). Although no one god or being is named as the object of their worship, the church is based on a creed that includes a strong personal accountability in ones life and strict adherence to the laws. Its major pillar of faith resides in the belief that the accepted cosmology is false and that a single faceless God (or Goddess) created the whole of the universe and the many peoples that populate it. Further, it believes that the gods of legend were simply men of power that defied the One True Path.

Many have scoffed at the church as a passing faith but none can deny that the Priests and Priestesses are granted power from somewhere. They always have the *Law* and *Strength* domains.

CHURCH OF THE SLEEPING GOD

The Church of the Sleeping God is the national church of Asgoth and is a cultic faith worshiping the memory (and praying for the return) of Izha, Lord of Darkness. These Priests are always of evil alignment. They have the *Evil* domain and may select one of the following domains as well: *Knowledge, Magic* or *War*.

CHURCH OF THE WORD

This is the core church that formed the Church of the One True Path and the Followers of the Word. Like the others, the central tenant of the faith is that the entire cosmology of the **Realms of Shadow** is a lie and that a single faceless God (or Goddess) created all that exists.

Unlike the Church of the One True Path, the Church of the Word is a little more tolerant of other faiths. They also proclaim that the Redeemer was the Avatar (or physical incarnation) of the faceless God. This one fact has caused the split with the Church of the One True Path (that believes that the Redeemer was simply a prophet) and the Followers (that believe that the Redeemer is the Face of the Faceless God). Clerics of the Church of the Word are always of Lawful alignment. They always have the *Law* and *Sun* domains.

CULT OF GZIADONIMO

In many regions of the Realms, even stating the name of this church can get you a death sentence. Of all of the cultic religions, this one is the most violent, depraved and desperate.

Cziadonimo was a powerful Due'il. When the Gods fell, he rose to claim his place in the heavens and was beaten down by many of the Ang'il. However, it is not just him that had to be dealt with – he had taken the time to sew the seeds of destruction by forming a religion and an earthly church. His priests and priestesses can never cast spells greater than 4th level (and no quests are offered). Each spell slot above 4th level, when it would normally be available provides instead two slots of 0-level to 4th level spells. The only rule being that the cleric can never have more slots in a given level than s/he has in any level below it. Clerics of the Cult are always Chaotic Evil and have the *Chaos* and *Evil* domains.

They are a bigoted lot that, although they have no power that stems from the Tower itself, do worship in other churches and can have great amounts of power from them. Oddly enough, many of the members of this '*faith*' are also members of the Ghoraxian aristocracy.

The Tower of Truth can be found in all nations, in all walks of life. They are organized like other churches, but function more like a fraternity. In some areas, the Tower is so strong (politically) that it would be darned near impossible to arrest a member. These areas are, fortunately, few and far between.

FOLLOWERS OF THE WORD

Although most put them into the classification of cult, the Followers are as strong and devoted a bunch as there has ever been. Although they have numbers that could hardly fill a church of the other faiths, they are fanatical and cannot be ignored.

The Priests of the Faith are hidden in the ranks of the Church of the Word and the Church of the One True Path. Sometimes they strike out and let the world know that the One True God will return...

MASTERS OF THE NEW AGE

A relatively new church, and a small one. A relatively obscure individual in Northern Quinara started the church. The basis of this belief is that, with the old Gods gone, there can be no salvation until new ones are created. And so, he set about creating a church to, of all things, himself. The Masters have no real power and are, therefore, limited to 2nd level spells. They may, however, choose any two domains and may be of any alignment. Each church structure is dedicated to the worship of the High Priest of that structure. This makes the Masters the only church of living gods in **Umbragia**.

TEMPLE OF THE LIVING EARTH

This is the faith of the Northern Druids. It is not so much a church as it is a congregation. Although there are other Druidic faiths, this one is by far the most organized.

They are most known for the temples that they build. These large stone structures can be found all over **Umbragia** at what they call 'nexus points' – it seems that they believe in a force that flows through the earth along 'ley lines' that binds all of nature together.

The faith of the Temple is rooted in the animal legends (such as Hewars) and so attracts many Lukar'r followers. However, even here, the Lukar'r will follow the Laws of Lavarisia.

TOWER OF TRUTH

Rather powerful underground '*church*' of the Realms that, if it were to reveal its numbers would rival the followers of the Church of the Eternal Flame. The church is dedicated to the supremacy of the Human races – more specifically, to the supremacy of the Aesir and Haitir peoples.

HISTORY

Notes:

- All dates are given according to the Vasylian Star Calendar (VSC).
- All dates before the formation of the Vasylian Star Calendar in the year 0 are estimates (exceptions are noted).
- An accurate recorded history did not begin until the year 73 VSC.
- What follows is a brief overview of historical tides. Most of the specific events are not described in any real detail, they are just written to give on an impression of the overall flow of time. In the books detailing the nations each nations history will be covered in much greater detail.

THE NINE AGES OF THE BEGINNING AND OF THE CREATION

(CIRCA -50,112 TO -36,288)

In the beginning, when the universe was born...

Well, to be perfectly honest, none live that can be sure of the beginning. Each religion has its own story of the creation - but most follow the pattern of the story that is related below.

Certainly, each has its own spin, its own variation on the themes present. And just as surely, they are all wrong on some level. There are even those odd, cultic religions that have beliefs that are vastly different than these - in the most recent years the Church of the Word comes to mind - but the most commonly accepted story goes like this:

In the beginning, when the universe was born, there was not darkness; there was not light. There was neither heat nor cold. There only was.

In the cool gray of the vastness of reality, there were the underlying forces of Law and Chaos (sometimes called Order and Entropy). These essential forces lay the foundation of reality. From reality was born nature. From nature was born Magic.

From Magic was born the first life - the eldest of the Ancient Ones. Being without a name, he is most often referred to as The Father of All (or simply Father). Father spent a great deal of his existence exploring the vastness of the universe. He found the vastness to be empty and without meaning, and so set out to create companions. These companions are known collectively as the Ancient Ones. However, they were without life - they were mindless automatons.

THE NINE AGES OF THE ANCIENT ONES

(CIRCA -36,288 TO -20,736)

In the Tenth Age (usually called the First Age of the Ancient Ones) Father's creations awakened. That is to say they gained consciousness and awareness of themselves. These beings included such names as Izha, Lavarisia, Shada and Vaxirii.

Father entrusted each with the task of creating purposes for themselves. This meant that they were to create things for Father to enjoy. And so, they went forth creating, molding the laws of reality and Mother Universe into workable forms.

At first the creations were the most basic, fundamental and physical concepts such as light and darkness. Eventually it began to include the purely conceptual - good and evil.

At the moment Evil was created, Father was angered. He could not believe that one of his creations had introduced something as ugly and vile as evil was. His rage was unleashed upon the Ancient Ones.

Father killed nearly all of his creations (some 200 plus beings) before he was defeated by Izha and Shada. Of all of the Ancients, only the four I spoke of earlier remained. Father was bound in a prison of Magic and cast from the Universe that bore him. Father was never seen nor heard from again.

After Father was banished, the remaining four Ancient Ones felt somewhat lost and defeated themselves. Little happened for a great while until Vaxirii made an important insight. Evil had never been created. Vaxirii noted that in all of time, creation had been in a state of duality. For example, the creation of light resulted - quite automatically - in the creation of darkness. The concept of 'up' is quite meaningless without the concept of down. Sound has no meaning unless one understands also the concept of silence.

Due to this, Vaxirii sets forth to create something without duality.

THE NINE AGES OF THE CREATION OF THE REALMS OF SHADOW

(CIRCA -20,736 TO -5,184)

Vaxirii begins work on a creation that would utilize most (if not all) of the previous creations. His goal was to create something in a higher order - a pure creation without duality.

The result is known as The Realms. Collectively, they are known as The Realms of Possibility. It is not known which of the realms came first, but according to the Scrolls of Shenyar, he created a total of twelve realms - known as the Prime Realms.

Each of these Prime Realms casts forth shadows - each shadow resulting in yet another reality. Some of these shadows overlapped creating pockets of altered reality within the realms, as well as gateways that bridged the realities together.

Each shadow realm was similar to (yet fundamentally different is some way from) the parent realm. The Scrolls of Shenyar state that each prime cast from itself twelve realms of twelve orders of twelve realities. To be honest, nobody has ever been entirely sure what this meant. Although (since the creation of the Vasylian Star Calendar) it is believed that this is telling us that there are more than 20,000 separate dimensional realities - 1,728 from each of twelve prime realms.

These are concepts that are, to be quite honest, far beyond the understanding of even the most learned sage of the lands. What is understood from all of this however is that we, the inhabitants of the lands of Khintarria, along the western shores of the continent Ghailen are living in but one of the near infinite realms of possibility. We are living within the **Realms of Shadow**.

When Lavarisia, Shada and Izha saw the realms, they were, at first, not impressed. However, when Vixirii began the creation mosses, grasses and plants that flower, then trees - they each in turn took great notice.

This resulted in an age of continuous creation. However, here the various texts are inconsistent. Some say that the Ancient Ones created the flora and the fauna of all of the realms. Other say that they created the flora and fauna of the prime realms and that from this, **Umbragia** took on wild and sometimes strange variations of those creations. Still others say that the Ancient Ones only guided the processes and that the prime realms began producing the flora and fauna on their own, quite spontaneously.

What they all agree on, however, is that it was in these ages that the mosses, grasses, plants and trees formed, with the insects, fish, animals and birds to follow.

Near the end of this age the Murhavia (literally, First Ones) were risen from the beasts and became the first of the mortal races. Which (if any) of the Ancient Ones was responsible is unknown; but they were entrusted with their protection.

THE AGE OF LEGENDS, MYTH, AND THE HEAVENS WARS

(CIRCA -5,184 TO -3,456)

The Murhavia were the first, but they were far from the last. By the time the Age of Legends of Myth would dawn, nearly forty races would be scattered about the lands.

And when the Ancient Ones saw the beauty of the creations they nurtured, they took from them wives and husbands and begot the Elder Gods - known as The Old Ones. These beings include such names as Chaiindrul, Luquine, Tiar and Varhghile. Soon after, the Old Ones also took husbands and wives and begot the Guardians and the Banished. In the Old Tongue, they were known as the Ang'il and the Deu'il - Soul of Light and Soul of Darkness, respectively. Today the Ang'il are known as the Angels and the Sentinels while the Deu'il are known as the Devils and the Demons.

The Scrolls of Shenyar are unclear as to why some would be born Angelic and some Demonic. However, it is known that the root word Deu (meaning Darkness) comes from the god Deumastique (meaning Master of Darkness or Harbinger of Destruction).

When Vixirii sees the demonic births, he sees fear for the first time. He forbids any of the Ancients from taking a mortal mate - this spurs a war between the Ancient Ones. Near the end of the age, even the Old Ones are involved. This war is not chronicled very well. As far as wars go, it is fairly benign.

THE AGE OF LIGHT, DARKNESS AND THE DEATH OF ALL GODS

(CIRCA -3,456 TO -1,728)

The war sparked off into full-fledged fighting, however, at the dawning of the Age of Light and Darkness. Who struck the first blow is not known, but the first casualty was Vixirii - destroyed by Izha.

This war started in the but soon migrated to the many realms. It was sometime in circa -3,300 VSC that the Murhavia (the chosen peoples of Shada) made first contact with the Namigre (the chosen people of Izha).

This first contact resulted in one of the longest and bloodiest wars in recorded history. After a full 500 plus years of battle and warfare, the Namigre encountered the Xxyxx, and were forced to continue the war fighting on two fronts. The Shada were unaware of their good fortune and would not encounter the Xxyxx for another 150 years. Between the two fronts, the Namigre were eventually driven forcibly from the lands.

Although it is not known exactly how many died in this conflict, it is known that the ending of the mortal war was not the ending of the war between Shada and Izha. Izha, unwilling to concede defeat on either the mortal or heavenly wars expends nearly all of his energies in the creation of the Blanket of Eternal Night, starting the Long Nightfall. This weakens Izha enough that Shada was able to defeat him, banishing him to the Eternal Sleep (sometimes translated as Eternal Deep). However, the Blanket of Eternal Night remained.

Shada, seeing darkness reign over his people (and all others in the Realms) weeps for forty years (some stories claim that this is what created the Great Southern Ocean-Sea - but this seems highly unlikely). After mourning, he creates the Sun (called Shad) in a creative effort that consumes him. Shada died.

The sun can combat the eternal night leaving the world in a state of constant struggle. Religious leaders of the Murhavia watch in awe as the Sun is born. From that day forward, the Murhavia were known as the Shadahs (translated to The Children of the Sun). Lavarisia mourned for the loss of her brother and husband, Shada. Grieving, she died. From her death was born the moon (called Lavhadas) to give day some dominion over night. Her tears, it is said, formed the stars.

THE AGE OF WIZARDS, HEROES AND MORTAL TEMPTATION

(CIRCA -1,728 TO 0)

With the Ancients gone, the Old ones destroyed - there were no more Gods. Without the Gods, there was nothing to prevent the mortal races from practicing Magic themselves. The mortal races had always had the sage, the mystic or even the rogue practitioner of the dark arts. But sometime circa -1,600 was formed the High Council of Mages (commonly called the Guild of Mages or the Wizard's Guild). This organization dedicated itself to the scientific study of magic and magical phenomenon. In addition, it managed to branch out into nearly every known field of study within its first 250 years. Most learned men of the day had spent some time studying in one of their many Guildhalls.

When the Age of Wizards and Heroes began, **Umbragia** also saw the formation of the first cities. The first of these constructs was Nathasia - built by the Nathas. The Khutai began the settlement of true cities circa -1,250 followed shortly by the rest of the races.

In other wards, it was a time of painful growth. Nations were forming, the Quina were being enslaved for forced labor camps, and enlightenment was on the rise...as was decadence. This growth was culminated circa -400 (scrolls describing the stars set the date near -408) with the founding of the Great Crystal City of Nephara. This was the grandest, most impressive, most expensive and most militaristic city in the known lands. The city was centered round a castle of pure crystal-like rock. It was circled by fortified walls, one hundred fifty feet in height, more than fifty feet thick and made of solid marble. The gate to the city is said to have been a twenty-five foot thick solid single piece of enchanted oak.

The cost to build the city was immeasurable. However it is known that it cost the lives of over three million slaves, peasants and skilled laborers to complete.

In the years circa -300 or so came the War of Tears. It was a war like no other – not fought over lands, rights, politics or religion; it was fought over the pain of one race and the predictions of another. When the Shadahs started noticing an epidemic in their ranks, the writings of the Nathasian Sage Aromundi were cited. The war was not long, although it was brutal. This was the only wartime defeat for the Shadahs. Since this time, their numbers have continued to decline and the once mighty Rooks of the Shadahs people are but a distant memory.

Just as the age was coming to a close, a violent storm off the southern coast of modern Siamar resulted in a fleet of ships being wrecked. A race of people calling themselves the Izhan asked for refuge and told of being persecuted and tortured in their homelands. The Shadahs aided them in surviving their first winter and provided them with protection from the other more predatory races.

THE AGE OF KINGS, QUEENS, NATIONS AND MAGICAL UPHEAVAL

(CIRCA 0 TO 1,728)

The Vasylian Star Calendar was calculated and predicted circa -12. It proved correct, and the Age of Kings and Queens was ushered in with the formation of today's standard time keeping system.

High Lord Aentire, first king of Vashnia, declares this to be the standard for timekeeping for the Vasylian people. By the year 135, it is adopted by nearly every race.

It is recorded that in the year 9, an earthquake shook the foundations of the earth. The quake destroyed more than a dozen cities housing nearly six million people. Large chunks of the earth fell into the sea and were swallowed by the deep. The Great Crystal City was destroyed as it sank into a watery grave. The violent shakes lasted for nearly a year before they settled into the occasional rumble. As the sea expanded into areas that were once rich farmland and valley and prairie and field, the Sea of Astenmoore swallowed the lands whole north of modern Cheldor formed the Dragon Channel and linked the North Sea with the Sea of the Moon's Eye.

In the year 52, the religious cult known as the Followers of the Word is formed in the region of modern Jianthor/Quinara. The

cult is based upon the teachings of an ancient prophet known as The Redeemer. Although the church is comprised of mainly Shadahs and Haitir, their message manages to spread from the North to the Southern seas. The central theme of their message is the belief that, when the Redeemer spoke of the return of evil around the year -1500, he was indeed speaking of the Namigre. In addition, they believed (quite rightfully so) that the Namigre are actually the Izhan. Few listened with any real enthusiasm.

In the year 73, when the city of Dahnize (modern Crent) completed the Library of the Ages (and true recorded history began), records gave the name of the Ancient One known to most as The Harbinger of Night. His name was Izha. Until this time, Izha had been all but forgotten. Once remembered, the connection was made. However, before an offensive could be mounted against the Izhan, they had begun their own. The result is the nation of Asgoth (officially formed in the year 666 with the coronation of the first Blood King).

In the year 454, the Izhan begin a campaign into the region controlled by the Ghoraxian Mages. This proves costly...for both sides. In the year 456 a small band of Mages from Ghorax cast a series of spells to smite the Izhan Armies within their borders. This will prove to be the largest magical backfire in history. The resulting release of magical energies destroyed all life in a 300-mile radius (including the mages) and formed a dead valley known in later times as the Valley of Tears.

The Ghoraxian council sent no less than two dozen expeditions into the dead valley and discovered that it was rapidly becoming a no-mana zone. By the year 645, over 50% of the known world had been engulfed within a zone of no-mana. By the year 834 all of **Umbragia** is mana dead. This destroyed the Ghoraxian Manacracy.

Wars were fought. Nations were born, rose to power and died. Life continued. But for over 400 years, history it seemed stopped. Nothing is recorded of the time following the death of magic until the year 1296 when the first mana springs were discovered near the Valley of Tears (by this time known as the Badlands).

In 1301, the first true mage once again rose to power (Wanda Nicorin James) and re-established the Ghoraxian Manacracy. All of **Umbragia** once again thrived in magical energy by the year 1477.

War, it would seem echoed through the age of Kings like nothing else. Civil wars resulting in the formation of new Kingdoms (Cheldor in 1538 for example) -- nations swallowed whole by larger nations and other oddities such as the Confederacy of Jianthor. Then...

In the year 1584 Lord High Marshal Kristophen lands at Varthis Point and begins a crusade to pacify the realms. By 1722, they have conquered all of the Vast Wastelands and the southern nations save Ghorax -- reaching their modern boundaries.

Today, in the year 1727, we are on the precipice of the new age. The Year of the Dragon looms just over the horizon and the world, as it has in every age, will soon change.

CALENDAR

The most common of the time keeping systems used in **Umbagia** is called the Vasylian Star Calendar. It is not a calendar of seasons, but one marking the movements of three stars, and the cycles of the moon.

First, there is the moon (called Lycan or Lavhadas). Every 32 days it is full in the sky. This marks the start of a new Vasylian month. Every 12 months, the moon will be full and sit squarely overhead in its highest point in the sky. This will mark the start of a new Vasylian year.

The largest and brightest star in the heavens is Fia'nar -- the evening star. It is the first seen in the heavens in the evening and is rivaled in brightness only by the moon. Every 12 years it sits squarely atop the moon in the sky while Lycan is full. This period is known as a Fia'shan.

The next largest star in the heavens is Noxi'nar. Noxi'nar is the morning star (last seen each morning before the dawn). Every 12 Fia'shan (or every 144 years), Noxi'nar will sit alongside Fia'nar and mark the completion of a Noxi'shan.

The tiny red star of Mari'nar completes the calendar. It is rarely seen in the skies (and when it is, it is an ill omen indeed). But every 12 Noxi'shan (or every 1,728 years), Mari'nar will sit atop the other two stars in the sky forming a perfect equilateral triangle above the full moon. This marks the end of a Mari'shan. A Mari'shan is usually called a Cycle or an Age. The year in which this event takes place is known as the Year of the Dragon.

When a Cycle is complete, it indicates a radical shift in the patterns of reality. It has been followed in history by such events as the last war of the heavens, the formation of true mages, and even the beginning of creation. All dates in **Umbagia** assume the use of the Vasylian Star Calendar.

| Seconds | Minutes | Hours | Days | Weeks | Months | Years | Fai'shan | Naxi'shan | Mari'shan |
|---------|---------|-------|-------|-------|--------|-------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 60 | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| 3,600 | 60 | 1 | | | | | | | |
| | 1,440 | 24 | 1 | | | | | | |
| | | 192 | 8 | 1 | | | | | |
| | | 768 | 32 | 4 | 1 | | | | |
| | | 9,216 | 384 | 48 | 12 | 1 | | | |
| | | | 4,608 | 576 | 144 | 12 | 1 | | |
| | | | | | 1,728 | 144 | 12 | 1 | |
| | | | | | | 1,728 | 144 | 12 | 1 |

CYCLES OF THE MOON

There are twelve months: Jaatec, Feugab, Marnoa, Avramm, Meiada, Jengal, Jatisp, Astuad, Seombi, Okater, Nouine, and Demack. Spring starts on the first day of Jaatec; Summer on the first of Avramm; Autumn on the first of Jatisp; and Winter on the first day of Okater.

| | | |
|----|---|---------------|
| 1 | ● | Day of Fire |
| 2 | ● | Day of Air |
| 3 | ● | Day of Water |
| 4 | ● | Day of Earth |
| 5 | ● | Day of Wood |
| 6 | ● | Day of Spirit |
| 7 | ● | Day of Shadow |
| 8 | ● | Day of Rest |
| 9 | ◐ | Day of Fire |
| 10 | ◐ | Day of Air |
| 11 | ◐ | Day of Water |
| 12 | ◐ | Day of Earth |
| 13 | ◐ | Day of Wood |
| 14 | ◐ | Day of Spirit |
| 15 | ◐ | Day of Shadow |
| 16 | ◐ | Day of Rest |
| 17 | ◑ | Day of Fire |
| 18 | ◑ | Day of Air |
| 19 | ◑ | Day of Water |
| 20 | ◑ | Day of Earth |
| 21 | ◑ | Day of Wood |
| 22 | ◑ | Day of Spirit |
| 23 | ◑ | Day of Shadow |
| 24 | ◑ | Day of Rest |
| 25 | ◒ | Day of Fire |
| 26 | ◒ | Day of Air |
| 27 | ◒ | Day of Water |
| 28 | ◒ | Day of Earth |
| 29 | ◒ | Day of Wood |
| 30 | ◒ | Day of Spirit |
| 31 | ◒ | Day of Shadow |
| 32 | ◒ | Day of Rest |

NATIONS

The cultures of the **Realms of Shadow** are as varied as the races. In the Races chapter it is explained that it is this authors opinion that too much information about something in a core-book fantasy role-playing supplement is actually worse than not having any information at all.

The nations described in the following pages (and the history section following it) are provided enough information to get a Game Master and his players started.

In other words, what we are providing is not the colors on the canvas, but the canvas itself. A backdrop and foundation upon which you can build your own stories, histories and adventures. Each nation of **Umbaglia** has a rich history and a distinct culture. Sometimes many more! Many of the cultures described are blended mixture of the neighboring cultures or cultures from the nations history.

RATINGS

Each nation is rated on several scales. These ratings will give some insight into the culture itself and act as a foundation for the descriptions that follow them. Each rating is on a scale from Extremely Low to Extremely High as follows:

| | |
|----------------|--------|
| Extremely High | (++++) |
| Very High | (+++) |
| High | (++) |
| Above Average | (+) |
| Average | () |
| Below Average | (-) |
| Low | (--) |
| Very Low | (---) |
| Extremely Low | (----) |

CONTROL (C)

The Control Rating is the measure of the strictness of the laws and the nation's dedication to enforcing those laws. It tells how much of the citizenry's freedom and privacy are likely stripped from them.

A high control rating does not necessarily indicate a population that feels oppressed or is ready for revolution. In fact they may actually see less controlled societies as chaotic and dangerous! Nor is a high control rating an indication of oppression (the real-world nation of Singapore comes to mind).

A low control rating may not mean a society that is freewheeling and dangerous. A society may not have many laws or law enforcement due a lack of a need for such thing.

LOYALTY (L)

The Loyalty Rating is the measure of the amount of loyalty the average citizen feels towards the government. Where the Control Rating measures the impact of the government on the citizen's

life, the loyalty rating is the reaction that the citizen has to that control.

This measures the degree to which the nation has managed to deal with crime, dissident behavior and revolution. It is a measure of internal peace and contentment. Taking this rating and the control rating together can give a fair picture of the tone of a nation's people. It is also related to the Stability Rating detailed below.

STABILITY (S)

The stability rating of a government is related to the loyalty rating. Where loyalty shows outward appearances, stability shows the (solid or rotten as it might be) core that lies beneath it.

For example, if a nation has a high loyalty rating and a low stability rating then the nation may have the outward signs of peace with a growing revolutionary underground element festering at its core.

Flip these values and you might have a citizenry that openly criticizes the government without the organization or drive to host open rebellion or revolution.

Again, as stated above, any one of these ratings is only really useful when placed in contrast and comparison with the other ones.

WEALTH (W)

This is the measure of the wealth of the nation. Do not confuse this with the wealth of a given citizen!

A high rating tends to indicate efficient use of resources that can result in a well-supplied, funded military, strong growing economy, stable prices, etc.

Lower ratings indicate corruption and inefficiencies that can result in an ill-equipped, under-funded (or relatively small) military, unstable or weakening economy, uncontrolled inflation, etc.

Optionally, the GM may use this rating (along with others) to set the baseline prices and availability of goods and services within a nations borders. For example, richer nations could have a more things available and at moderate prices, while poorer nations have fewer services that cost more to obtain.

OTHER STATS

In addition to the ratings listed above, each nation is given several other semi-standard descriptors. These are described below. Each of these is not given a scale, as these are absolutes, names and locations.

CAPITAL

Capital is the name of the city housing the centers of political power. In those cases where more than one city is listed, this indicates multiple centers listed in order of relative prominence. Keep in mind that the largest city is not necessarily the Capital.

For example, modern New York, Los Angeles and Chicago are all much larger than Washington, DC.

GOVERNMENT

Government is the system of political power used. If the government is actually a hybrid of several systems or a variation of a standard system, then it will be noted. However, the full description will reside in the nation's narrative.

For the most part, **Umbragia** is dominated by Monarchies -- but even within the concept of Monarchy there is plenty of room for individuality.

RULER & TITLE

Ruler and Title is the name and honorific given to the supreme leader of the nation. In the cases where more than one 'ruler' exists or where the political power of the nation is decentralized, each title is listed in order of relative prominence.

In this section will also be included a nobility social ladder listing the titles of the various levels of nobility and their relative ranking within the nations political structure. Keep in mind that some titles are considered high ranking, but could be purely honorific in nature and hold no actual political authority.

CLIMATE

Climate is a brief description of the overall temperature and rainfall of the nation. In the case of very large nations, this description may be broken into regions. Standard weather and climate terms are used where possible.

This source book contains no 'rules' for dealing with weather or weather conditions. It is assumed that weather is (primarily) a tool used by the Game Master to influence decisions and actions or help move the story.

RESOURCES

Resources are those goods the nation produces in sufficient surplus to have exported. The list is in order from most to least. Although this information will not be of any major use in many types of campaign, it can be a jumping point for an adventure.

This source book contains no 'rules' for macroeconomics. This information is only helpful if used as it was intended -- as a way of giving some indication of the type of economy that the nation runs, as well as the sorts of events that might aid or disrupt that economy.

RELIGION

The religion most practiced by a nation is generally singular (however, see Jianthor). Some nations have multiple religions, and these will be listed in order of relative influence. Each religion also has its own listing under CLERICS.

Generally speaking, history has shown that most nations are formed along the lines of religious practice. However, in some instances multiple religions (rarely) coexisted.

LANGUAGES

The languages used by the peoples of the nation. This is listed in order from most common to least common. To be listed means that at least 25% of the population speaks this language. Characters coming from this nation can use any of these languages as their 'native' tongue (i.e.: this is the *common* language for that region).

A generous GM might even give a discount for speaking other languages of the nation, as the individual would have had at least some exposure to the spoken elements.

FOREIGN RELATIONS

All of the other nations in **Umbragia** are listed in this section. This listing is grouped into seven basic ranks of relation: Superb, Great, Good, Fair, Mediocre, Poor and Terrible (this scale borrowed from the RPG FUDGE, www.fudgerpg.com). This value should be taken as a rule of thumb for basic international affairs.

POPULATION

This number represents the estimated population of all citizens of the nation. This will not include populations of non-citizenry, for example the nomadic caravans of the Gyor. However, these numbers are just estimates, and could be off by as much as +/- 10%.

DIVERSITY

Diversity is a breakdown of the racial make-up of the nation. Each race is listed with the estimated percentage of the population that they make up. This listing includes any and all races that comprise at least 5% of the population, thus the number will rarely add up to 100%.

NARRATIVE

This is the semi-detailed view of the nation, some historical notes and a summary of just what all of the information listed above has to do with the nation's place in **Umbragia**.

Please keep in mind that the information presented here is a brief sketch of the nations of the Realms. This is enough information for a group to start even the most politically based campaigns.

Planned in the near future is a series of books dedicated to the finer details of each of the nations. Each book will detail two of the nations and show them in a contrasting light.

Included in the Narrative will be at least a cursory glance at the movers and shakers of that region. At a minimum will be the ruler and the higher ranking nobility.

MAP OF UMBAGIA: REALMS OF SHADOW

The map below shows an area approximately 3000 miles East to West and 3000 miles North to South. All thirteen nations and three non-allied regions are shown.



AL HADIM

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Control: | (+++) |
| Loyalty: | (++) |
| Stability: | (+++) |
| Wealth: | () |
| Capital: | Al Hadim'Noore |
| Government: | Feudal Religious Monarchy |
| Ruling Title: | Alkha, High Lord and Champion of the One True Path |
| Current Ruler: | Ahk'med of Alvoran |
| Climate: | Hot and dry (desert) year round. Outlying areas have severe summers and mild winters. |
| Resources: | Semi-precious stones, Fishing along the coastline, Livestock (sheep, goats) |
| Religion: | The Holy Church of The One True Path |
| Languages: | Hadamas, Siamese, Dharian |
| Foreign Relations: | |
| • | Good <i>Darienth, Jianthor, Siamar</i> |
| • | Fair <i>Nephalous, Quinara</i> |
| • | Mediocre <i>Cheldor, Ghorax, Tamoc</i> |
| • | Poor <i>Asgoth, Tiasham, Vashnia</i> |
| • | Terrible <i>Kristophen</i> |
| Population: | Approximately 2.5 million |
| Diversity: | Haitir (35%), Daermin (15%), Gyor (15%), Goumin (10%), Aesir (10%), Nathas (5%) |

The Nation of Al Hadim is situated along the North Sea and the Sea of Astenmoore. It shares borders with Cheldor, Jianthor and Tamoc. One could argue that the Dragon Channel (that strip of water connecting the North Sea and the Sea of Astenmoore) has been Al Hadim's most volatile border due to over a dozen wars with Tiasham.

Al Hadim is a desert nation. Given the inhospitable nature of the climate, one has to wonder why any would live in such a place. The people of Al Hadim do not think of such things as they would live no where else. Given the climate, the preferred beasts-of-burden are Llamas and Camels. A Horse, when found, will usually be under a Noble and trained for war, not farm-work.

Polygamy is quite common in Al Hadim. Al Hadim is a male-dominated society. Females are considered second-class citizens or valuable property. They are the property of their father's until the day they marry, when they become the property of their husband. Children are also considered property of their father. The exception to this rule is the Priestesses of the One True Path. Once ordained, they are no longer women, they are the authority of the Church.

Al Hadim is a strict society with many laws. Laws are written as religious doctrine. When you cross the border in the nation, you are expected to act accordingly and ignorance is no excuse. Punishments are generally harsh and swift. There is no such thing as an appeal. Any citizen of Noble blood may enforce the laws of Al Hadim as may all ranking members of the Clergy. A Noble or Clergy caught using these laws unjustly is dealt with much more harshly than any commoner.

The Shemya (meaning Warrior of the Light or Master of the True Path) are some of the most well trained and feared knights in the lands. They are specially trained Noble Priests and are the highest ranking law enforcement officers in Al Hadim. Given the extreme authority granted them from both the Church and the State, there are rarely more than a few dozen Shemya at any given time. They are the only knights that outrank a Kha'vex (see below).

Dueling is a relatively common practice and is completely legal as long as it is fought according to tradition and witnessed by a Nobleman or Clergyman. Most duels are fought to first blood. Under dire circumstances, the law can permit a duel to the death.

The nation has a lot of trade going through it and this has attracted a sizable amount of brigands, bandits and thieves.



The Symbol of the Al Hadim deserts is the coiled snake. The deserts of Al Hadim are teeming with venomous reptiles of all sorts. Al Hadim has used this symbol for the last six hundred years.

Piracy is also a concern, but on the high seas, Al Hadim sailors consider the Tiasham Navy a much larger threat than any pirate.

Al Hadim is a feudal society. The King (Alkha) Ahk'med of Alvoran is granted his rights through divine prophesy; the title is not hereditary. The Alkha is given his high-office after a rigorous and lengthy religious ceremony that is presided over by the Church of the One True Path. This ceremony ends with the search for the new Alkha. The Alkha is the head of the state and the church, however he has limited real authority until he reaches adulthood. The Alkha may be of any race (nearly all have been chosen at one time or another) but is always male. All Alkha have been less than a month old when found.

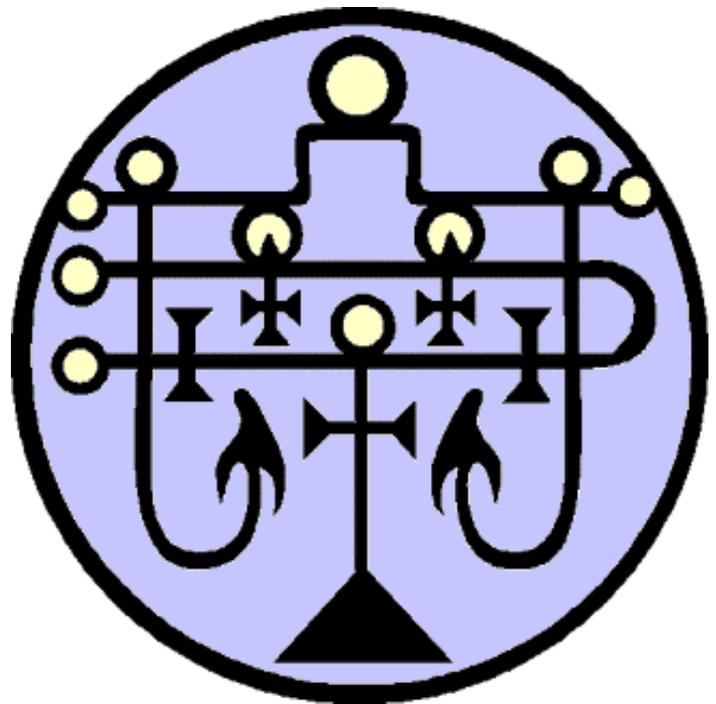
The Alkha may marry. The spouse is given the title of Alkhaque (Queen). This is an honorific and holds no actual authority. She is married to the head of state, however, so it is not wise to cross her. The current Alkhaque is Valeos al'Miteran of Norland.

Parents of the Alkha are known as the Alkha'for and Alkha'mor (Lord-father and Lord-mother). Although they have no political power, they are high figures within the church. Siblings of the Alkha are treated as his children and are thus his property. Children of the Alkha are known as Alprine (Prince or Princess, literally '*of the Royal House*'). The Alprine males are granted a small fiefdom once they reach adulthood and/or have achieved the status of Kha (Knight). Alprine females are given in marriage to powerful Kha, thus raising the Kha's status. Sometimes female Alprine go into the church and rise to some power. Alprine that are Kha, or Kha that are given Alprine as wives, are known as Kha'prine (*Knight of the Royal House*).

Kha means *Greatsword* or *Arm of Justice* and is the title given to the Knightly Warriors. It is a Noble title and a military title. Kha come in five separate ranks. They are (from least to greatest) Kha'man, Kha'shem, Kha'lor, Kha'ren and Kha'vex. Kha'vex are sometimes called Field Marshals. There are also the Kha'prine, but these are simply Kha'vex married to the Royal House.

Each Kha'vex will command between 2-5 Kha'ren. Each Kha'ren will command 2-5 Kha'lor, and so on. Each Kha'man will command between 5-25 men-at-arms. A Kha'vex will generally command between 1,000 and 2,000 men-at-arms, but as you can see, in theory, it could be as high as 15,625!

Kha'prine Haqueem al'Cuarine of Norland was Al Hadim's most legendary (and most powerful) Kha'vex, commanding as many as 14,900 fighting men at the height of the Tiasham War. Each major city of Al Hadim will have at least one Kha'vex governing it. Minor cities and townships may be governed by a Kha'ren or Kha'lor and will report to the nearest Kha'vex. A Kha'vex may promote his own warriors through the ranks, and may knight man-at-arms making them Kha'man. Only the Alkha (the King) can make a Kha'vex, however.



The Symbol of the Kha Orders is actually an ancient text written in a forgotten language. It is used to decorate pottery, shields, swords and other instruments. None live that know what the full meaning is.

ASGOTH

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Control: | (++) |
| Loyalty: | (+) |
| Stability: | (++) |
| Wealth: | (--) |
| Capital: | As'Igota |
| Government: | Clan-based Militaristic Theocracy |
| Ruling Title: | Xeh'Dharkun (Blood Mystic or All Priest), The Will of the Sleeping God and the Xeh'Ghurma (Blood-King or All Father), The Fist of the Sleeping God |
| Current Ruler: | Ja'meinqna Blooded-Axe and Ve'riekh Fork- tongue |
| Climate: | Temperate with heavy rainfall. Violent storms are common through spring/fall. |
| Resources: | Livestock (cattle, pigs), horses, food (grains) |
| Religion: | Church of the Sleeping God |
| Languages: | Izha'korin, Siamese, Quinase |
| Foreign Relations: | |
| • | Great <i>Kristophen</i> |
| • | Good <i>Tiasham</i> |
| • | Mediocre <i>Darienth, Nephalous, Tamoc, Vashnia</i> |
| • | Poor <i>Al Hadim, Cheldor, Jianthor, Quinara, Siamar</i> |
| • | Terrible <i>Ghorax</i> |
| Population: | Approximately 11.5 million |
| Diversity: | Izhan (75%), Various Slaves (25%) |

Asgoth is the most feared nation in **Umbaglia**. Asgoth is situated along the northern coast of the Sea of the Moon's Eye and shares borders with Siamar, Cheldor, Jianthor, Quinara and the Badlands.

There is a King in Asgoth, but his title is largely honorary. The true power in Asgoth is in the hands of the Xeh'Dharkun - *the High Priest of the Church of the Sleeping God*. It was Xeh'Dharkun Ja'meinqna Red-Teeth that forged the super-clan in the year 666, formed the seat of the Blood-King and built a nation. His family line continues to control the Church, the nation and the minds of the people in Asgoth. His line has pulled the strings of Asgoth for its entire history.

Asgoth began when several ships of Izhan were stranded and aided (ironically) by the Shadahs. It was not long before they forged a nation and conquered against all odds. It has been centuries since those days, and some have forgotten, or consider the tales to be legends. But some remember.

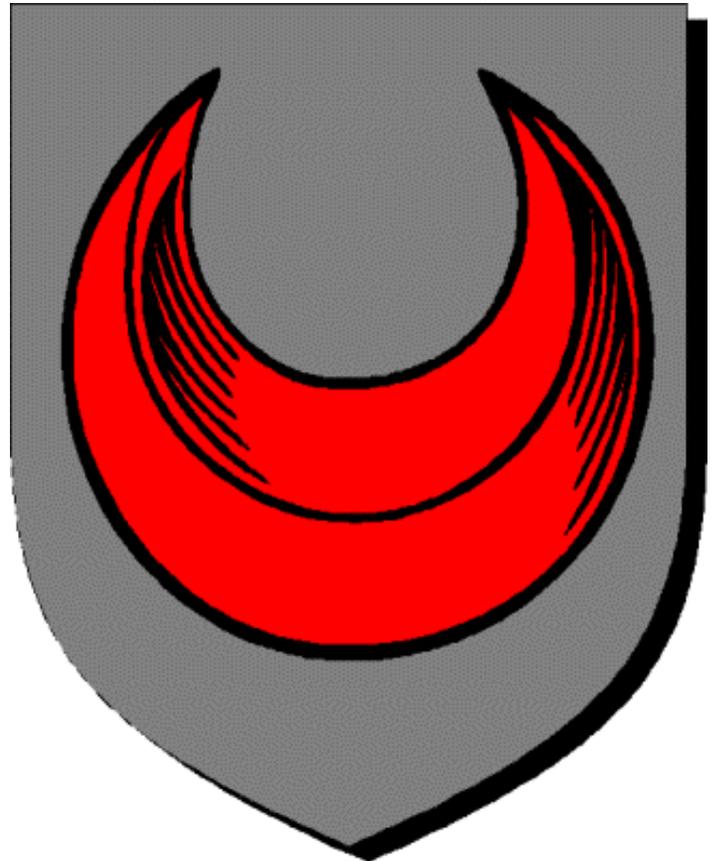
Asgoth has one law that sits above all others: racial purity. Izhan are pure from the day Izha chose them. All others are

abominations. The Izha are patient. They do not wish to conquer the whole world at once. They have strategies that defy logic to other races. They will ride, attack and soon after call for truce, inching across the landscape. They know that destiny is on their side.

Over the years, the Asgothian society has forged good relations with Kristophen (*similar world-view*) and Tiasham (they see Tiasham as being a *useful ally*, Tiasham sees them as being *easy to manipulate*). For other cultures, the degree of mistrust is directly proportional to proximity.

The current ruling family is the Ve'riekh clan. They have held the Blood-Throne for nearly two hundred years. It has been noted that they are basically weak rulers -- Ja'meinqna Blooded-Axe has acted as a puppet master over the last three Blood-Kings. It is not sure if this will last much longer, however, as Fork-Tongue has been getting much more willful in recent years. To date, he has not pushed so far as to cause Blooded-Axe to act irrationally, but he has seemingly felt the boundaries of his authority. Some speculate that a civil war brews in Asgoth. Others wonder what outside influences might be at work here.

Throughout history, Asgoth has been a model of stability and a pillar of internal harmony. Twenty years ago, the *Loyalty* and



Asgoth's symbol of the Crescent Moon is a polished version of an earlier 'broken moon' symbol from about three centuries ago. It acts as a reminder of the lost domination of night brought about by the Goddess Lavarisia.

Stability ratings would have both been a couple of levels higher. Today, there seems to be a growing split in the population over who truly should rule the nation.

The Blood-King is the only Noble title in Asgoth. From that point on you have the two halves of the ruling classes: the clergy and the military. Each clan (Conti) has a head -- this is the Ghurma (*grandfather*) and he will decide on the day-to-day running of the clan. All able-bodied males within the clan are considered basic soldiers. They will come in two ranks, Valo (*favored*) and Tahn (*disfavored*). These ranks are entirely dependent upon the whim of the Ghurma. All able-bodied, non-pregnant females will work fields, cook food, tend to the children, and so on. This is not a hard-and-fast rule, however, as history records many a Valo that were women...even a few Ghurma. Each larger clan will have a Fharg (*pain master* or *slave master*) to maintain discipline within the clan's slave population. More often than not, this is a job given the most favored Valo warrior. The most feared of these have been female. Every clan will also have a Dharkun (*seer of darkness*) or Wise man / mystic that will act as priestly council to the clan.

For those clans that exist outside of Asgoth, this is the entirety of the clan structure. Within Asgoth, however, there are a few more layers, as well as some other positions within the clan. These are not complex, but are strictly adhered to. The names of the layers are based upon the numbering system of the Izhan language. The numbers from one to eight are Beh, Seh, Deh, Feh, Geh, Jeh, Neh and Peh.

A group of 2-12 Conti is called a Beh'Conti; is ruled over by a Beh'Ghurma; and is guided by a Beh'Dharkun. A group of 2-12 Be'Conti is called a Ceh'Conti; is ruled over by a Ceh'Ghurma; and is guided by a Ceh'Dharkun. This continues through eight levels.

The prefix Xeh (used in the titles for the Blood King and the Blood Mystic) is a concept meaning countless or infinite. It also refers to an ancient Izhan legend where the great warrior, Zy'nerix Jagged-Tooth, was cursed by Shada to bleed forever. Oddly, this legend appears only in Izhan texts.

The Blood Dagger (or *Xeh'magri*) is the preferred weapon of the Asgothian Priesthood. The weapon has a small channel down the center of the blade used to deliver powerful toxins.

BADLANDS, THE

In the year 456, the greatest magical backfire in history took place. The most obvious reminder of this time is the Badlands. This region, situated along the coastline of the **Sea of the Moon's Eye**, shares borders with Asgoth, Ghorax, Quinara and Vashnia.

The first thing the astute traveler will notice is that the night sky is not the same from night to night. In addition to this the Badlands are filled with the strange and the unusual. Some things tend to be a little unpredictable here. For example:

CAUSAL RELATIONSHIPS

Within the Badlands causal relationships tend to be skewed. Thought or speech takes on a reality of its own. For example, if an adventuring party is worried about the weather, expect bad weather; if the party is concluding that some creature has taken a friend then expect some creatures of that type to be nearby.

DOMESTICATED ANIMALS, INNER FEAR

Domesticated animals will have a feeling of apprehension or fear while within the Badlands. Smarter animals may refuse to enter all together. Sentient races will have a heightened sense of fear and paranoia. Any and all mental/emotional/psychological misgivings that a character may have will be intensified. This is at the whim of the Dungeon Master. For example, the Badlands may not make a man more honest, but his fear of Spiders will be intensified...and more than likely, the Badlands will deliver (see Causal Relationships).

MAGICAL GATES

Sometimes, within the Badlands, gateways open up to other realms. They are rare, last only for a few moments usually and rarely return to the same location. These occur far too rarely to be simulated via a random roll, but they are a possibility for an adventure hook. Keep in mind that most (perhaps 75-85%) of these last only long enough for some creature to be transported to this realm. Being in the presence of this can be deadly, depending on the creature in question.

Figure that any gate will remain active for 1d20 seconds. Common places for this to happen are small pools of water or any reflective surface where the 'other side' will suddenly become visible and reachable.

TIME

Each day, time may slow down or speed up. What ends up being a day in the Badlands will take but a day outside of the Badlands and will age those within the Badlands only that day. But how

much subjective time takes place can be rather unpredictable. Each day spent in the Badlands, roll 1d20 and consult the chart below.

So, for example, if a day turns out to be six hours long, then the party will see the sun rise, cross the sky and set with the next sunrise only six hours after the first. They will have experienced only six hours of time, will only have been able to cover ground as if only six hours has elapsed, etc. Yet they have aged a full day and a full day has passed – both in and out of the Badlands.

If a day turns out to be ninety-six hours long, then the party will see the sun rise, cross the sky and set with the next sunrise a full ninety-six hours after the first. They will have experienced ninety-six hours of time, will have been able to cover ground as if four days had passed, etc. Yet they have aged only a day and only a day has passed -- both in and out of the Badlands.

Keep in mind that having a day that lasts 48 hours will result in a full 24 hours of darkness, when every monster, wild creature and nocturnal animal is likely to be active.

| <u>ROLL</u> | <u>RESULT</u> |
|-------------|---------------------------------|
| 01 | Day is 45 minutes long |
| 02 | Day is 90 minutes long |
| 03-04 | Day is 3 hours long |
| 05-06 | Day is 6 hours long |
| 07-08 | Day is 12 hours long |
| 09-12 | No effect on time. |
| 13-14 | Day is 48 hours long (2 days) |
| 15-16 | Day is 96 hours long (4 days) |
| 17-18 | Day is 192 hours long (1 week) |
| 19 | Day is 384 hours long (2 weeks) |
| 20 | Day is 768 hours long (1 month) |

OTHER EFFECTS

Beyond these things, a creative Dungeon Master is encouraged to come up with other random and odd effects of this man-scorched land. Perhaps the terrain is not a constant thing with mountains growing and shrinking in the span of days. Perhaps entire cities appear from nowhere, only to disappear again taking whoever is standing near with it – or stranding some if its citizens here. Perhaps the dead do not stay dead. Perhaps this is a gateway to the *Angels* and the *Demons*. Perhaps its worse that any of these things.

To this day, the Izhan and the Mages of Ghorax avoid this place like the plague. Most others do not venture lightly. It has been said that a great many condemned men have gone into the Badlands and never returned. It is not known if they have not returned because they cannot return, or because they do not want to return. But regardless of the many races' views, it is well recorded that the Badlands are teeming with life...and *unlife*.

CHELDOR

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Control: | () |
| Loyalty: | (+) |
| Stability: | (++) |
| Wealth: | (++) |
| Capital: | Cheldor |
| Government: | Feudal Monarchy |
| Ruling Title: | King or Queen, His or Her Majestic Lord or Lady |
| Current Ruler: | Suzanne of Cole |
| Climate: | Moderate/Temperate with mild winters and warm summers/springs |
| Resources: | food (grains), livestock (sheep, buffalo), heavy metals (iron, lead) |
| Religion: | Various Nomadic Religions |
| Languages: | Siamese, Hadamas |
| Foreign Relations: | |
| • Fair | <i>Darienth, Jianthor, Nephalous, Tamoc</i> |
| • Mediocre | <i>Cheldor, Quinara, Siamar, Vashnia</i> |
| • Poor | <i>Asgoth, Ghorax, Tiasham, Kristophen</i> |
| Population: | Approximately 9.5 million |
| Diversity: | Haitir (15%), Shadahs (15%), Aesir (10%), Vanir (10%), Zynar (10%), Acota (5%), Daermin (5%), Gaumin (5%), Lukar'r (5%), Nathas (5%), Vasyll (5%) |

Cheldor is situated along the southern coast of the Sea of Astenmoore sharing borders with Siamar, Asgoth, Jianthor and Al Hadim. Practically every race known has hamlets and villages along the countryside.

The Government is a Feudal Monarchy. The power of the King or Queen comes from the people, not from the any divinity. In fact, Cheldor has no state religion. Religions are tolerated; each village or hamlet will usually only have one church-like body; cities might have a dozen or more. Clergy are given respect by the knights and citizens of Cheldor, but they have no real political power. On the other hand, if the local Baron follows a given church, it would be unwise to cross a Priest of *that* faith.

Wealthy families in Cheldor have managed to maintain a system of *Noble Title*. These titles have come from many cultures over the years, but in recent times have settled into a rather structured scale. The King (Queen) sits atop the scale, governing the whole of the Kingdom. The Monarch has power as long as s/he can keep the various Dukes and Duchesses in line. Each swears fealty to the Monarch.

The Archduke or rchdutchess is the highest ranking Duke-level Noble. Like all at this level, s/he is sworn to the Monarch. However, the Archduke has the added responsibility of tending

to the Monarch's protection.

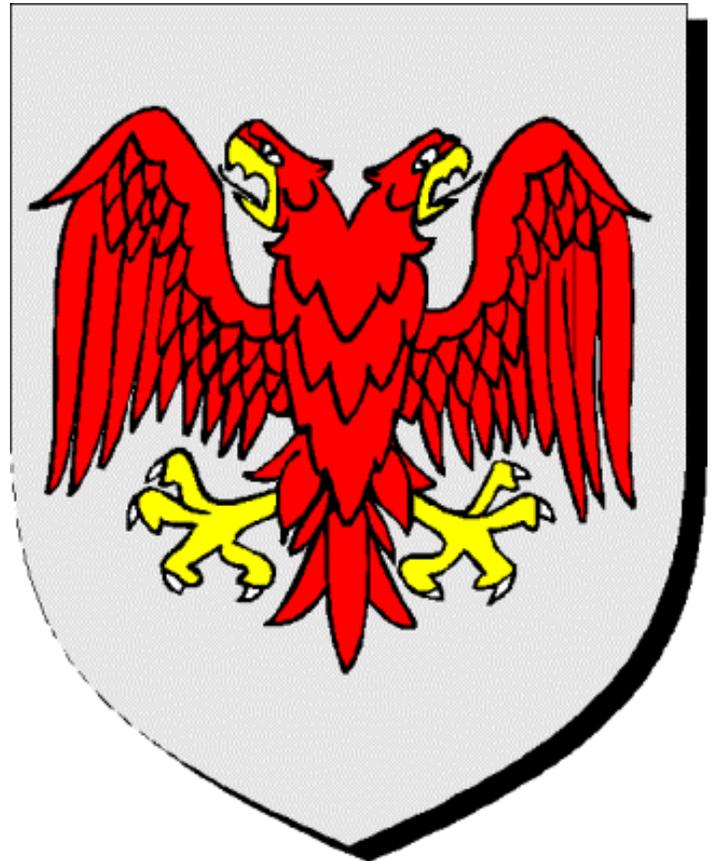
Dukes and Duchesses are the rulers over the various duchies of the kingdom. Each is sworn to the monarch and must provide taxes and military support when demanded, each commanding 1-6 Barons.

Barons command the various baronies of the kingdom. Each is sworn to a Duke or Duchess and must provide taxes and military support when demanded, each commanding 2-12 Lords.

Lords and Ladies command the various towns, hamlets and cities. Sometimes called '*Governors*,' they administer the local militia and trained fighting forces, as well as the day-to-day operations of the local townsfolk. They are each sworn to a Baron and must provide taxes and military support when demanded. Each commands 3-18 knights.

Knights and Knightesses of the realm are the true military leaders. Although they have Noble title, they themselves rarely have land save perhaps outposts and/or border fortifications where the knight reports to a nearby village (and thus a Lord or Lady). Each is sworn to a Lord and is the military support of that region, each commanding 100-5000 troops.

The military also has a ranking structure of Marshals, Captains,



Cheldor's Two-headed bird is a symbol of the flight from their Siamarian brothers. Siamar's wounds have healed over the years and the two nations have a decent relationship. But there are reminders of a more violent time.

Lieutenants, Sergeants, Corporals and Men-at-Arms. All of these will report to the local knight.

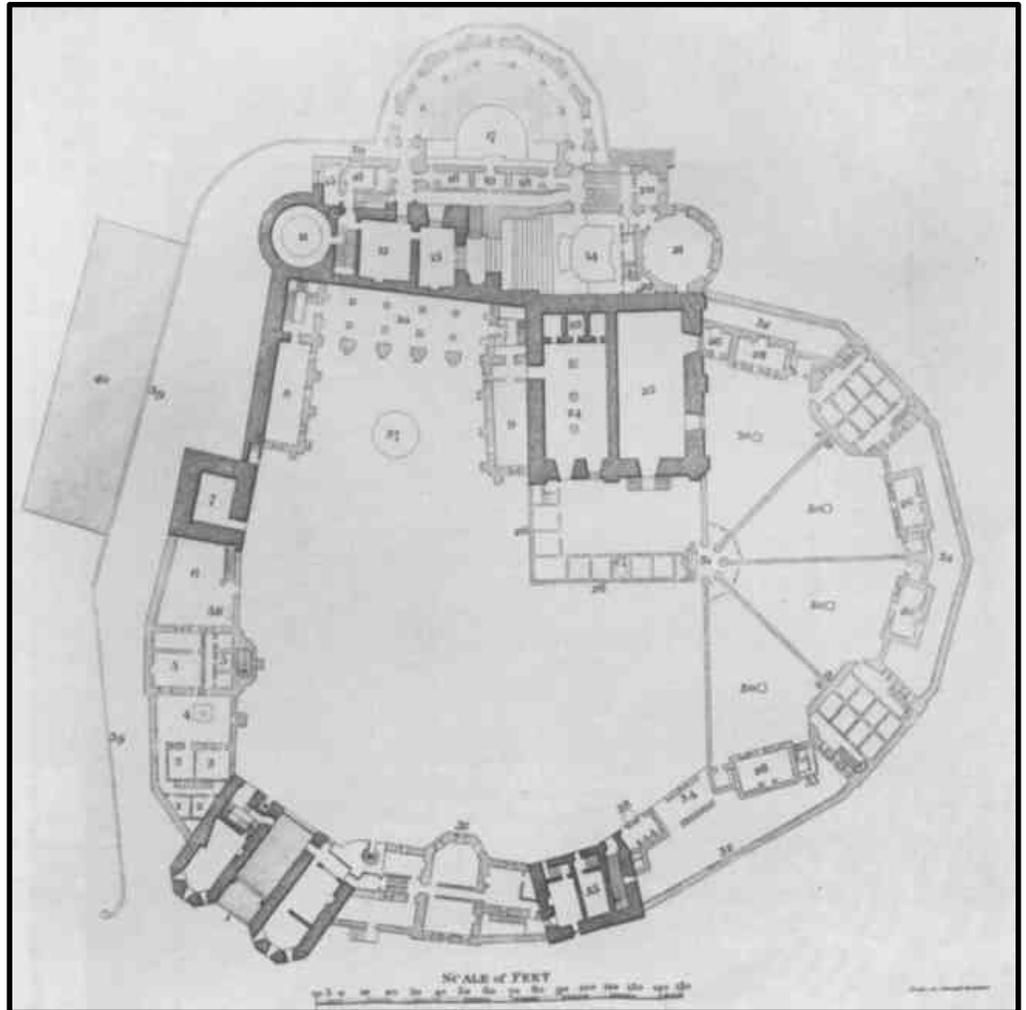
There are some purely noble honorific titles including Prince, Princess and Earl. These are usually accompanied by some duty to the throne or (in the case of Prince and Princess) some birthright, but more often than not are simple gifts given nobles to make their names sound that much more important. Perhaps the most obvious of these was Prince Velerian of Astenmoore who, upon giving his entire title once took up over six hours in Court.

Cheldor enforces its law through a system of courts. Duke-level Nobility are considered officers of the court as well, so they are generally immune to the rulings.

Cheldor was, until the year 1524, a part of Siamar. The relationship between the two nations has ripped and ebbed until it has settled into a tense understanding.

Currently, Queen Suzanne of Cole has sat in the throne for 15 years. She has no husband and no heirs, but this is not usually a problem in Cheldor. No successor to the throne has ever sat upon that seat of power without a little bloodshed, and fewer still have ever followed any line of succession. The current favorite to succeed her is her own Archduke Fredrick of Uberland. Should he succeed, he will be Cheldor's first Shadahs king.

Cheldor is the only nation in **Umbragia** to completely outlaw magic. The practice of magic is a capital crime and punishments are generally handed out swiftly. One might believe that this would hinder them, but this has not been the case. Having such a diverse population has resulted in the highest technological level in the Realms. They have in their arsenal weapons up to and including cannons (both land based and on their ships). The armor they manufacture is prized throughout the land as some of the best made. And they have one of the healthiest populations in the world.



Cheldor's primary castle is a masterpiece in castle design. It is defended with cannons and musketeers, as well as the more traditional hot oils, archers, soldiers and the like. In its history, it has never been taken.

DARIENTH

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Control: | (+++) |
| Loyalty: | (-) |
| Stability: | (--) |
| Wealth: | (--) |
| Capital: | Kasemme |
| Government: | Totalitarian Dictatorship |
| Ruling Title: | Varies from ruler to ruler |
| Current Ruler: | [<i>volatile</i>] uncertain |
| Climate: | Cool with harsh winters and a short growing season |
| Resources: | Very little is produced in amounts needed for export. |
| Religion: | Church of the Word |
| Languages: | Dharian, Quinase |
| Foreign Relations: | |
| • | Good <i>Al Hadim, Jianthor, Siamar</i> |
| • | Fair <i>Cheldor, Quinara, Tamoc</i> |
| • | Mediocre <i>Asgoth, Ghorax, Vashnia</i> |
| • | Poor <i>Nephalous, Tiasham, Kristophen</i> |
| Population: | Approximately 16 million |
| Diversity: | Haitir (20%), Nimori (20%), Aesir (15%), Lukar'r (10%), Acota (5%), Gyor (5%), Shadahs (5%), Vanir (5%), Vasyl (5%), Xxyxx (5%) |

Darienth is situated along the middle of the Dragon Lands and shares borders with Tamoc, Jianthor, Quinara and Ghorax. Known throughout the land as a place of plenty and diversity, having a diversity to rival that of Cheldor. It is the only population of Xxyxx that live openly among men.

One hundred ninety-five years ago Darienth had a massive outbreak. The High Lord and King, Karl Von Oustine, quarantined the nation; none could enter or leave. Should one enter, they were detained within the borders until natural death. Most nations issued similar proclamations.

Within fifty years, Darienth population was cut in half. Some simply could not take it. Darienth had rates of suicide to rival any nation, in any time. They were weakened, yet none dared attack them for fear of the plague.

Then, about a century or so ago when the illness was no longer a national threat and the population was gaining its health back, the standing High Lord and King, Manfred Von Oustine, refused to lift the proclamation. This plunged Darienth into a violent civil war that continues today.

In this century there have been more than a score Kings and Queens from over a dozen families. Sometimes two or more will

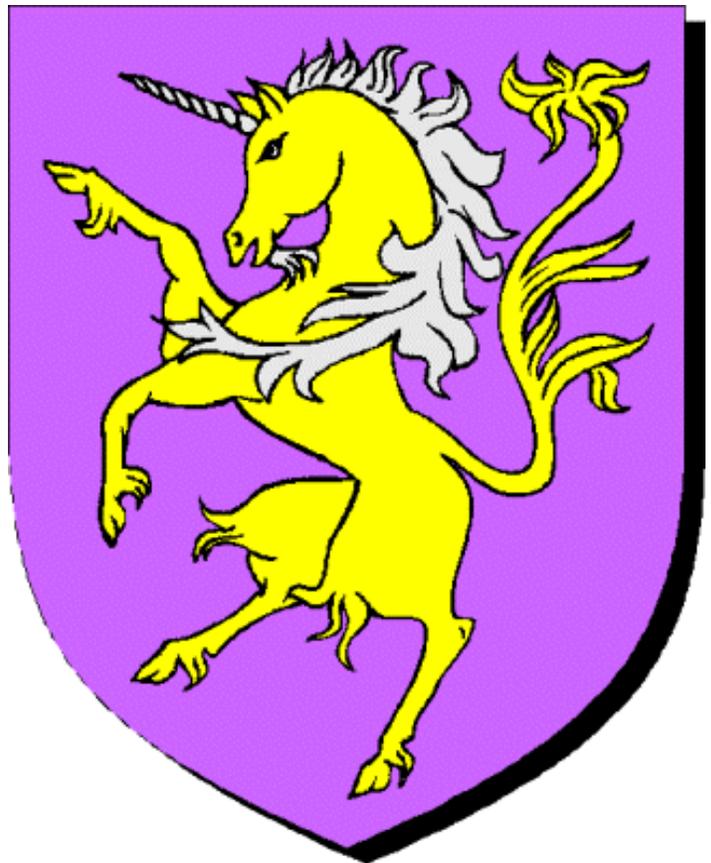
proclaim themselves King at the same time – each with an official or two from the Church to back them up sending the nation into yet another round of battles and bloodshed. Today over a dozen such overlords claim supremacy.

Al Hadim and Jianthor have both been working in the background, trying to put the young Prince, Alfred Von Oustine (the one true heir to the throne) into power. Both have limited their involvement to non-military actions (providing needed supplies, etc).

Quinara has taken the opportunity to subjugate some of the lands along their shared border. Perhaps some 10,000 square miles of territory have been taken recently as each new leader grants Quinara lands in exchange for peace. So far Quinara has accepted all land offered.

Ghorax, on the other hand, has not had interest in land, but in the subjugation of some of the Acota and Elgarph populations. Mages from the nation have entered and taken these citizens back to their homelands. Darienth has not been organized enough to do anything about it. They make threats but cannot seem to carry them out.

In recent years, the level of internal strife has dropped



Both the Pegasus and the Unicorn are symbols of the Nation of Darienth. In all cases the colors yellow and purple will appear in Darienth symbology. For nearly two hundred years they used a hybrid of the two creatures on their shields.

significantly. Many have speculated that the nation will either fragment into several smaller states or will become something along the lines of Jianthor. Either way, it's lucky that Darienth has gone through this during a time when the other nations have been busy with their own affairs so as to be able to survive this.

The most powerful of the lords of Darienth is the Duchess Giovanna Von Keuter. She currently has just over 50% of the Nobility and military behind her. If any will be successful in reuniting Darienth, she is the most likely. Al Hadim and Jianthor refuse to support her due to her outspoken contempt for the old lineage of Kings.

Second in power is Duke Reginald Von Hellsing. His power has begun to wane in recent years as his army tires of the constant battle. Al Hadim has been known to support the Duke, but can never seem to supply him with enough.

Jianthor has been behind Duke Marcos Von Ghelding (the only remaining Daermin Duke of Darienth) and has kept him in supplies. So far he has not been able to excite the imaginations of the people; he has fledgling support.

The only leader that openly calls for the return of the Von Oustine family is Duchess Alexis Von Semian. Her might is low, her moral is waning and her supplies are running out. Whenever a major fight takes place, one can be assured that it is more than likely an attack on Duchess Von Semian's forces.

No one is quite sure the current location of Prince Von Oustine. The last time his position could be verified, he was visiting the capital of Al Hadim under the protection of the Al Hadim Royal Family. His departure was done at night and if/when he returned to Darienth is uncertain.

The Prince's own personal forces are a small but very loyal bunch of highly trained warriors. They have been known to hold off forces much larger than themselves. Any of them would gladly give his own life for his Prince. They have all vowed to reinstate him to the throne at all costs.

Small figurines in the shape of pegasus' and unicorns are found in most Darienth homes. They are symbols of luck, humility and fertility. Young women are given these on their wedding nights as a totem against strife in marriages.

DRAGONLANDS, THE

To the east, beyond the lands that Tomac, Dariant and Ghorax have conquered, lie the Dragonlands. This vast, unmapped, untamed wilderness rises quickly into a seemingly endless sea of rocky, broken and unworkable land.

As the name suggests, there are dragons here, and from what the reports of those parties that have ventured into the area say, there are a lot of them. On the edges, one can sometimes see the beasts off in the distance flying over uncharted mountain ranges.

The concept of an organized society of dragons is far to frightening to think about, and so most don't. The dragons do not generally enter into the lands of man so long as man does not enter into the lands of dragon. As expected, most everyone avoids the area these days, the exceptions being Ghorax and Kristophen.

Ghoraxian mages have been known to venture into the Dragonlands looking for some rare herb or mineral for magical practices - the vast majority of these expeditions are uneventful and non-intrusive. The Mages will very rarely venture more than a few miles into the territory and so the Dragons are not threatened and will not attack.

The dragons have been known, however, to attack Kristophen hunting parties. It seems that for the last thirty years or so, Kristophen Knights have been entering into the Dragonlands to capture young hatchlings (or steal eggs). These newborn dragons are then trained as mounts. Thus far, unsuccessfully trained.

Grand Wizard Wanda Nicorin James of Ghorax has been all but begging Kristophen to stop the practice for fear of enraging the most powerful earthly creatures known. She has even been known to threaten them if they do not end this practice. Despite the fact that the knights have lost countless lives in this quest, have been completely unsuccessful and threatened by a major neighboring power, this has had little effect on the knights of

Kristophen.

Legends of the Dragonlands abound. With the exception of the Badlands, no area has generated as many myths and stories as the Dragonlands. The myths range from it being the homeland of the Angels and Demons to it being the eventual gateway into the prison where Izha sleeps. Nothing is off limits when it comes to this region.

Some claim that the Dragonlands are held captive by strange magic (akin to the Badlands and the Realms of Madness) but none have been able to show any evidence of this sort of thing. However, there are some documents that come from fairly reliable sources that do make some rather extensive and elaborate claims as to the nature of the Dragonlands.

Some examples follow...

THE LEGEND OF Y'MOK'S PRIDE

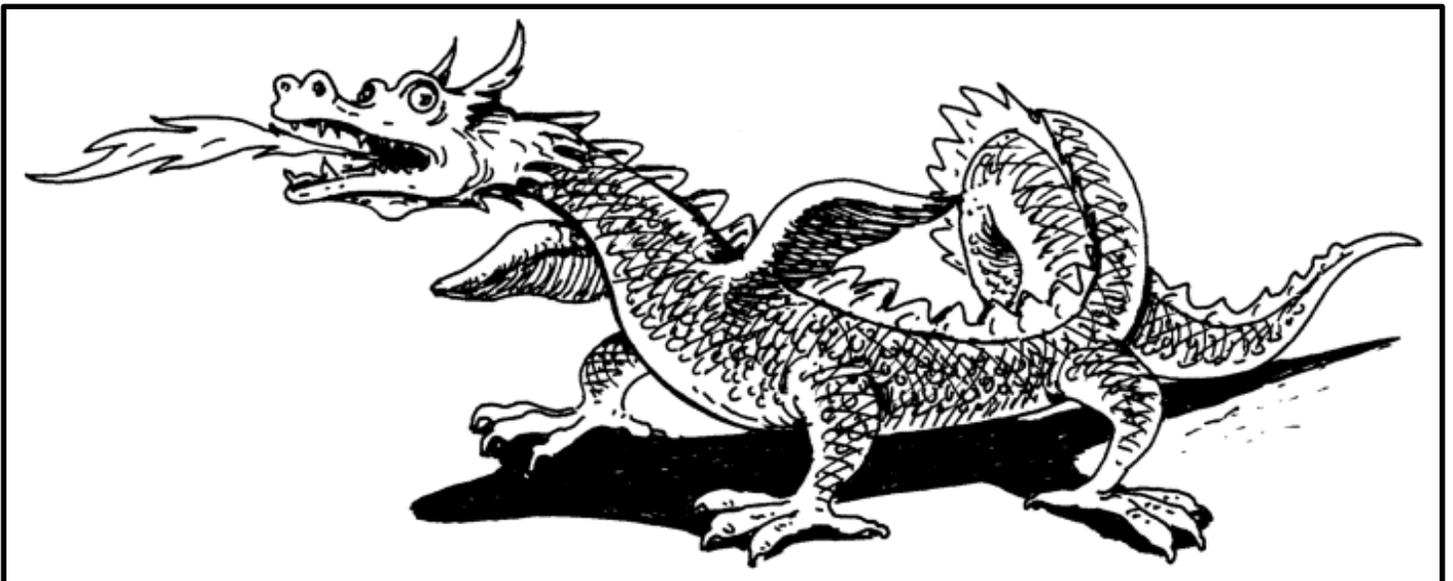
Within the Scrolls of Shenyar, for example, they state that in the ages of creation as the animals were populating the lands, the last created were the Dragons. They alone were given dominion over the sea, the air, the land and the underworld.

Evidently one of the Dragons, an ancient beast called Y'mok, took to arrogance unseen in any time. He claimed to be a deity after the fall of the gods and in so doing, angered the minions of Lavarisia and Shada.

He was eventually conquered and imprisoned within the heart of a Volcano called Y'moksia (*The Tomb of Y'mok*). Many have claimed that this volcano is within the Dragonlands. They claim that the dragons of the modern day will not allow any to enter for fear of his return and the repercussions of the remaining minions of the fallen gods.

THE DRAGON'S GRAVEYARD

The only races that have any real history within the area are the Daermin and the Xxyxx. However, all of the records that they have are of their underground dwellings. These, like the other tales and records, are riddled with myth and legend.



The Xxyxx, for example, have records that speak of huge Wyrms that burrow through the ground devouring whole cavernous cities in a day. The Daermin have long believed that the people's most beloved artifact, a massive stone calendar, was created by the Dragons and holds some secret about them. They just have yet to figure out just what that secret is. Both have tales of huge fields of dragon bones guarded over by massive black-scaled Shadow-Drakes that guard the remains of their fallen kin. The Dragon's Graveyard.

THE WYRM'ILKIN

But what the Xxyxx and Daermin accounts both agree on is that it is not just the dragons but a race of people known as the Wym'ilkin (*Children of the Beast* or *Lesser Dragon*). The records indicate that it is they that have dominance over the lands far to the east and it is they that control the dragons.

In fact, art of the period shows a race not unlike the Quina, and so the first meetings of these races with the Quina started to get rather bloody before they realized that this was not the Wym'ilkin they were fighting.

KRISTOPHEN AND LORD GARVIN'S MAP

But whatever lies within the reaches of the eastern lands, beyond Tamoc, Darienth and Ghorax, is untamed, wild and not a place for the weak. Dragons are beasts of massive, frightening beauty and not something to be trifled with. And that goes for dragons both in and out of the legendary Dragonlands.

For all of the legends, stories and folklore about the place, precious few maps have survived. It is rumored that the High Command of Kristophen is compiling a lot of information on the region. Some have even gone so far as to speculate that the whole dragon mount stories are just cover for some more fiendish plot. But Kristophen's information on the region has not been shared with anyone - in fact, it has been very closely guarded.

One only map that is somewhat commonly available is of the region just northeast of Darienth, Garvin's Map. This tiny map covers a small mountain range and a lake known as Garvin's Lake. An X is shown in the midst of the range along with a curved path running from the southern tip of the lake to the X.

Lord Garvin, an ancient Knight of Siamar from the days when that nation had stretched into these far regions, is said to have gone there after discovering some ancient texts in search of the final resting-place

of the prophet known as The Redeemer.

If he found it, and if the X on that map is, in fact, where the Redeemer lies is not known. Unfortunately, when Garvin returned from his quest, he was charred from head to toe, burned alive. He lived for no more than a few hours after returning with a team of clerics and mages tending to his ailments.

He was never able to speak, but his final legacy was a book detailing his voyage (96% destroyed by the flames that did him in) and the map he had drawn of the area (60% destroyed, but readable). A full score of expeditions followed. Fourteen never returned. Six returned empty handed or severely wounded.

Most concluded that Garvin had not found anything but a monstrous Firedrake and sealed his fate. The one opposing opinion came from His Graciousness Bishop Verihnoldo, the attending healer.

Verihnoldo stated that he had never seen any Firedrake be so complete in its burning of a victim. The burns extended to every square inch of the Lords skin. Even the regions that would have lied behind armor seemed no less charred than the burns on the Lord's exposed skin. The burns appeared to be coming from all directions - front, back and both sides. He felt that the wounds were caused magically, perhaps by some trap in the tomb of the Redeemer, not by a Firedrake at all.

But as the Prophet is said to have died more than 4000 years ago and Lord Garvin died some 800 years ago, this is a mystery unlikely to have a solution appear anytime soon.

THE FAR EAST

At least a hundred legends speak of nations of man and other strange races far beyond the Dragonlands. These alien cultures are sometimes given a cursory level of detail seemingly aimed at stirring fear in children, the most common being a nation of cannibals.

The most disturbing however comes from the last several hundred Scrolls of Shenyar that goes into some detail describing a nation of Blood-drinking undead that raise men as men raise cattle. Shenyar goes on for pages and pages describing details of their culture, history and faith. He goes into so much detail that many believe that he must have gone there. Or was, perhaps, from there.



GHORAX

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Control: | (-) |
| Loyalty: | (++) |
| Stability: | () |
| Wealth: | (+) |
| Capital: | Wellspring |
| Government: | Democratic Manocracy |
| Ruling Title: | Arch Magi, High Counsel of the Tower of Three |
| Current Ruler: | Wanda Nicorin James |
| Climate: | Cold, harsh winters. Short summers. Heavy snowfall. Hail storms during spring and fall. |
| Resources: | Magical Items (minor, major magical items are illegal to export), gemstones, precious metals (platinum and silver) |
| Religion: | None |
| Languages: | Ghora, Siamese, Kharis |
| Foreign Relations: | |
| • | Good <i>Kristophen</i> |
| • | Fair <i>Tamoc, Tiasham</i> |
| • | Mediocre <i>Al Hadim, Dariant, Nepalous, Quinara, Siamar, Vashnia</i> |
| • | Poor <i>Asgoth, Cheldor, Jianthor</i> |
| Population: | Approximately 12.5 million |
| Diversity: | Various Mages (5%), Various Freeman (45%), Elgarph Slaves (45%), Various Slaves (5%) |

Ghorax is **Umbragia's** only manocracy. Ghorax is situated in the southern regions of the continent, far to the east, just north of the Great Southern Ocean-Sea. It shares borders with the Dragonlands and the Badlands as well as the nations of Dariant, Kristophen, Quinara and Vashnia.

Ghorax is ruled with relatively few laws - in fact their entire legal doctrine occupies less than three dozen scrolls in the *Tower of Wellspring*. There are only four status levels in the social structure. They are Mages, Apprentices, Freeman and Slaves.

Mages comprise the entirety of the nobility, military and administrative branches of government. They meet (either in person or via crystal gazing) and decide each issue. Currently, the Arch Magi, High Council of the Tower of Three *Wanda Nicorin James* sits in the high seat of these meetings. Her actual title is of little real power as she hold only what power she can gather and control. However, few have dared to cross her as she has sat in that seat for the entire time that Ghorax has been a nation (at least this time).

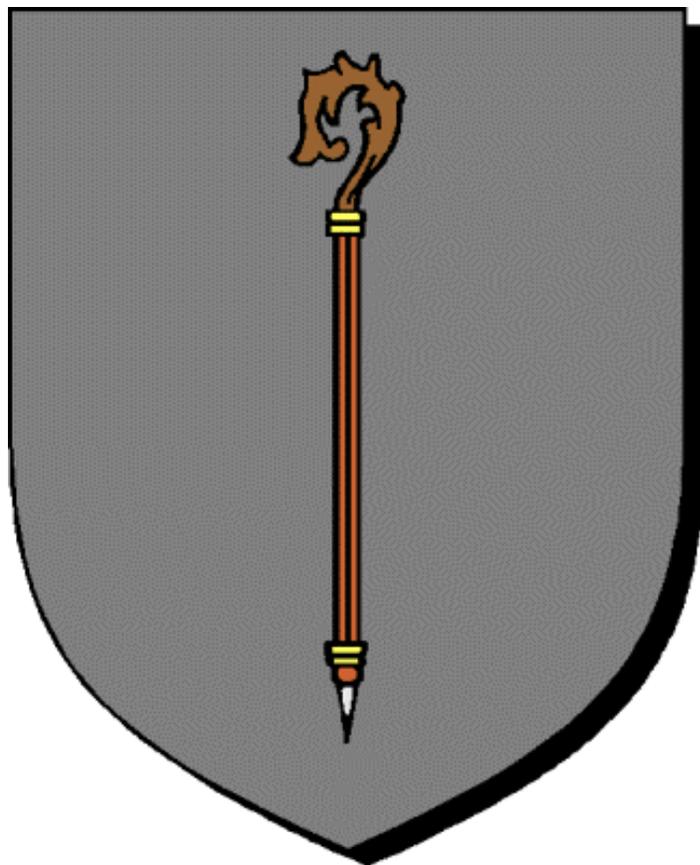
Apprentices are those that have the gifts for magic but have not mastered their practice. They hold near complete authority over

all freemen and slaves, but must answer for any and all actions to the master Magi they have been assigned to. A mage may take an apprentice's life without so much as a bat of an eye from the council.

Some things are just easier to do with skill rather than with sorcery. For these things, freemen are employed by the mages to accomplish tasks. These men are paid for their labors and may own slaves. They are not mages, however, and have little real say in the laws. Freeman include the many mercenaries and men-at-arms that the government employs.

Slaves make up the rest of the population (some 50% of Ghorax's population). In the ancient days, before the blight against magic, the mages of the old Ghorax Kingdom magically engineered slaves. The first few experiments failed, but eventually resulted in the creation of the Acota. When the Acota rebelled, the next stage was the Elgarph. These races remain in **Umbragia** today. In addition, some slaves in the nation of Ghorax include Quina and even some Gyor. Typically, any slave other than Acota or Elgarph will be those that were sentenced to their fate for some crime or another. A criminal's only other real option is the arena, doing battle for the amusement of the mages and the freemen.

Ghorax's major drawback is the fact that they have so relied on



The staff pictured on the shield of Ghorax is the one that was once carried by the Arch Mage Levian de'Ladrage. Levian was a rather even-handed (by Mage standards) ruler and perhaps the most powerful mage to have ever lived.

magic that they have fallen behind in technological development. This does not seem to worry them very much. They import such technology when they need it, but this seems to benefit only the upper crust of society - the mages. The typical freeman will never see such things.

They prize the artistic craftsmanship of the Cheldorian goods, but ever since Cheldor outlawed magic, the relationship between the two nations has slowly deteriorated.

Having the Badlands on one side of the nation and the Dragonlands on the other has made for keeping slave escapes relatively low. In addition, keeping the borders defended has been fairly easy with these two long borders being kept safe by popular opinion.

On the other hand, Ghorax has its own opinions and superstitions – to date, since the original blast that created the Badlands, no mage of Ghorax has entered that ever returned. These days, none would venture into the area. The Dragonlands, however, the mages of Ghorax avoid for other reasons – sheer respect for those that populate the region. The mages have a mutual understanding and trust of the creatures to maintain a “*you leave us alone, we’ll leave you alone*” policy that has endured for the better part of three centuries. Even with this ‘*treaty*’ of sorts, little to no communication exists between the two cultures. Most mages that have studied the actions of the dragons feel that a culture is definitely there but this poses such possible trouble as to warrant them keeping such feelings to themselves.

Recently, three mages in Wellspring discovered an interesting phenomenon. They discovered the existence of lines of magical energy that seem to crisscross the whole of **Umbragia**. These *Ley Lines* have not been fully mapped nor have they been studied to any degree needed for understanding, but in theory these three mages feel that they could revolutionize magical power.



Grand Wizard of Shadows, Arkhûn Blackweaver, was the most dangerous man alive for nearly one hundred years. He was the thorn in the side of Levian de’Ladrague for the entirety of both of their lives. They were, of course, twin brothers.

JANTHOR

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Control: | (????) |
| Loyalty: | (????) |
| Stability: | (????) |
| Wealth: | (????) |
| Capital: | Jia'monas |
| Government: | Feudal Confederacy |
| Ruling Title: | Jade Dragon, senior member of the Council of Kings |
| Current Ruler: | Vance de'Coddal III of Redhill |
| Climate: | Mixed Temperate with heavy winds in the Spring and Winter months |
| Resources: | Manufactured goods (swords and armor, tools), horses, cloth and tapestries |
| Religion: | Multiple Churches |
| Languages: | Siamese, Quinase, Dharian |
| Foreign Relations: | |
| • Good | <i>Al Hadim, Dariant</i> |
| • Fair | <i>Cheldor, Tamoc, Vashnia</i> |
| • Mediocre | <i>Nephalous, Quinara, Siamar, Tiasham</i> |
| • Poor | <i>Asgoth, Ghorax, Kristophen</i> |
| Population: | Approximately 9.5 million |
| Diversity: | Nathas (25%), Aesir (15%), Goumin (15%), Haitir (10%), Daermin (5%), Gyor (5%), Nimori (5%), Shadahs (5%) |

Where this but a few hundred years ago, the concept of Jianthor would be the punchline of a demented joke. But to those that live there, it is no joke – it's as real as the earth that they till.

Al Hadim, Asgoth, Cheldor, Dariant, Quinara, and Tamoc border Jianthor. In addition, the nation itself is currently divided into twenty-nine separate sub-states that each have their own government, culture and social structure. The only thing in common is the *Council of Kings*.

The Council of Kings meets at least once every four months to discuss matters of common law, air out any troubles and ensure no conflicts remain unresolved. Its power is decentralized to the point that the orders it gives are adhered to voluntarily (*officially*). Each state of Jianthor holds all internal power. If it concerns multiple states, or Jianthor's relationship with the other nations, then only the *Council of Kings* holds authority.

The member states are as varied as the nations of the **Realms of Shadow**. Some have strict laws and others have lax laws. But they all respect each other's laws. The *Foreign Relations* chart can vary by as much as +2 ranks from state to state.

Jianthor was formed in the year 1591 by a group of four smaller nations ruled over by Nathas brothers. They could see the strife

and turmoil that was sweeping nations away and formed a pact to ensure their survival. Over the next sixty years, more nations entered into the pact and eventually this evolved into the *Jianthor Confederacy*.

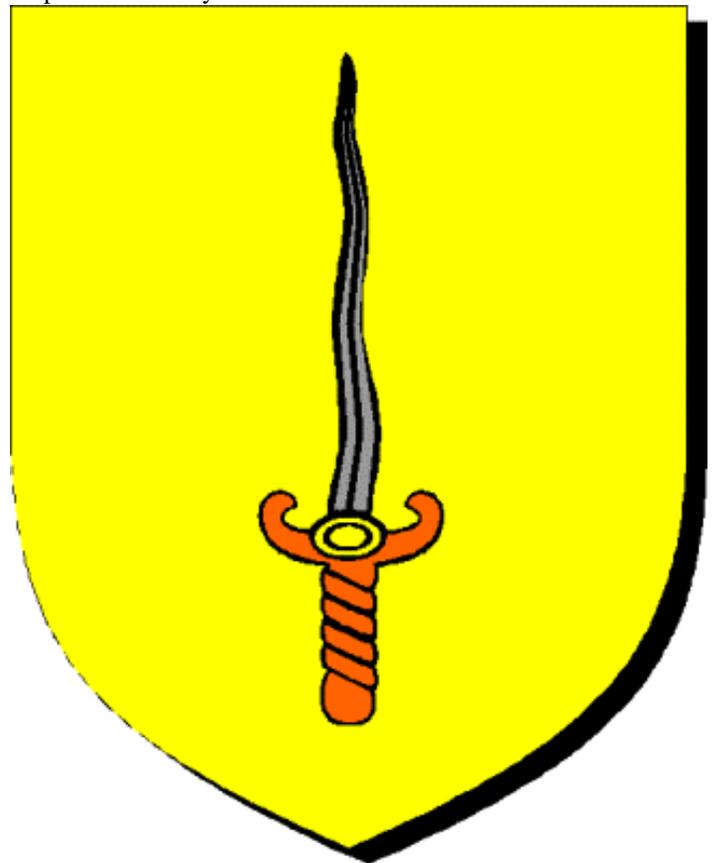
Jianthor has had its share of internal conflict. Small states fight and eventually split into multiple states. Some states have merged into single entities.

THE PALPRINE REGION

Located in the northwest corner of Jianthor, Palprine is the most populous of the states (8% of Jianthor's total population). His Graciousness Lord High King of Palprine Faxine el'Quan IV of Urtamine currently rules.

Palprine is a Feudal Monarchy with the crown passing from eldest son to eldest son. In 1672, King Carsis el'Dura III of Hearthro, also known as *Carsis the Mad*, issued proclamation outlawing cattle. This proclamation followed an incident where his precession was halted while a herd of cattle crossed the road.

Over the next two weeks, all cattle in the state were slaughtered or sold. Interestingly, even though it was overturned less than a year later under the rule of Thenek el'Dague VI, there no cattle in Palprine to this day.



The curved blade of the assassin's dagger has been a symbol of Jianthor for its entire history. The origin is a little cloudy, but most point to the number of assassinations in the first dozen or so years that the nation existed as cause enough.

THE CHAERLI REGION

Centered within Jianthor, Chaerli is one of the original four kingdoms to form the Confederacy. Chaerli is ruled over by a King, but only for purposes of the Council of Kings. It also holds Jianthor's official capital.

Chaerli is actually administered by a council of governors, the senior governor is chosen to represent the others in the Council of Kings – it is a micro-scale version of Jianthor itself. This form of self government originated in 1633 after Emperor Chan Morningsun died. Oddly, rather than a struggle to gain the throne, the regional governors organized a council mimicking the Jianthor government and have maintained this arrangement ever since.

THE OVESTTRIB REGION

Ovestrib is the most fertile region of Jianthor. Situated along the Asgothian border, this region accounts for 15% of Jianthor's food production. This has led to it being in an interesting position (bargaining power, political maneuvering) as far as the regions go. In 1704, it was attacked by Asgoth and nearly annexed. The Council of Kings dispatched knights from all of the other regions to defend this vital area. To this date, Ovestrib maintains the most diverse garrison in Jianthor; fighting men from all of the member states are present. However, these are treated as mercenary forces, and thus have no legal authority. There have even been some that have been ejected from the region for their behavior. They are there to defend, not govern.

Ovestrib is the region that High Lord and Protector Vance de'Coddal III of Redhill, the current Jade Dragon, rules over. He has presided here for twenty-seven years.

The last of the real Jade Dragons (at least as far as anyone knows) died some 1,500 years ago. The title of Jade Dragon was chosen as a symbol of power and uniqueness – there is, after all, only one Jade Dragon remaining.

KRISTOPHEN

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Control: | (++) |
| Loyalty: | (++++) |
| Stability: | (++) |
| Wealth: | (---) |
| Capital: | Krist'orrik |
| Government: | Militaristic Bureaucracy |
| Ruling Title: | Grand Marshal |
| Current Ruler: | Jameson de'la Dhomaris |
| Climate: | Harsh winters, very short summers. Central desert has high winds, very hot days, very cold nights. Very low rainfall across entire region |
| Resources: | Steel, beasts of burden, horses |
| Religion: | None |
| Languages: | Kharis |
| Foreign Relations: | |
| • | Great <i>Asgoth</i> |
| • | Good <i>Ghorax</i> |
| • | Fair <i>Tiasham</i> |
| • | Mediocre <i>Nephalous</i> |
| • | Poor <i>Cheldor, Dariant, Jianthor, Siamar, Tamoc</i> |
| • | Terrible <i>Al Hadim, Quinara, Vashnia</i> |
| Population: | Approximately 22 million |
| Diversity: | Vanir (75%), Aesir (5%), Daermin (5%), Haitir (5%), Vasyl (5%) |

land to return to and no fear of death by the time they arrived.

Modern Kristophen is a mixture of military rule and bureaucratic administration reporting to military leaders. They have begun using some feudal titles (knight and lord) but these are only given to honored officers of the military. Kristophen has endured three civil wars (The War of Northpoint 1655-1658, The War of the Five Houses 1671-1677 and Marshal Dhomaris' War 1689-1700). This last war placed Marshal Jameson de'la Dhomaris and the House of Dhomaris into power.

Kristophen social structure is organized into families (*Houses*). The House of Dhomaris is currently the most powerful. Other powerful houses include Avalon, Morriss, Pedriky and Thaxdem.

The military structure that rules over the nation is divided into ground and sea forces, officer and enlisted ranks. The officer ranks for the ground-forces are Marshal of the Army, Field Marshal, Marshal, Commander, Captain and Lieutenant. The enlisted ranks for the ground-forces are Master Sergeant, Sergeant, Corporal, Private and Soldier. The officer ranks for the sea-forces are Marshal of the Navy, Fleet Marshal, Marshal, Commander, Captain and Lieutenant. The enlisted ranks for the sea-forces are Master Chief, Chief, Ableman, Seaman and Mate.

This is the most complex and advanced military structure known. Rank is based upon capability and time in service and so it would seem that anyone wanting to achieve greatness could do so. An officer is given his rank after being able to complete the intensive schooling. This is the only time a candidate's family has any influence. Candidates from less prominent houses find it hard to

In 1584 a fleet from a distant nation, commanded by Marshal Victor de'la Kristophen, landed at *Varthis Point* and began sending war parties westward. Shortly afterward, they had conquered a region that is the largest single nation in **Umbagia**. Twenty-five years later, Marshal Xavier de'la Kristophen, declared the entire continent to be the *Nation of Therios*. Immediately following this, Ghoraxian and Vashnian forces attacked. Vashnian warriors were able to pacify their own border in short order and began a long march southward towards the capital of this new nation. Ghorax was relentless.

Reeling from this blow, Xavier was killed by his own brother. After begging for peace, the new leader of the people was granted his wish in 1622. For the next thirty years, the nation of Kristophen licked its wounds. On his death, this leader's name was removed from all Kristophen records. Ghoraxian records say it was Grand Marshal Sean de'la Kristophen.

The truth would not be known about these people until 1641. In their homeland, all of these people had been condemned to die – criminals of the highest order. It is not known by what power they were able to escape and survive the voyage, but they had no



The origins of the “Shield of Kristophen” are shrouded in mystery. It is known that the design was put forth in the second century of the nations history, but the symbology was unique to the point of having a lack of history.

gain admittance to the four academies. The Army Academies are in Northgate and the capital. The Naval Academies are in East Run (former Varthis Point) and Rocky Point.

Kristophen has a regressed technological base. Far too much tradition, restriction and control to allow for true progress. However, due to a rather extensive educational system, trade apprenticeship and journeyman system, as well as the academies, the nation enjoys a high standard of living. The most amazing things to come from here are the bureaucracy and the network for rapid communication.

The bureaucracy is the administrative network that maintains the civilian affairs of the nation. Many jests have been made dealing with who really runs the nation. Although funny, they do pose some interesting questions. Could the military run a war – even a civil war – without the support of the bureaucracy? The answer is not entirely obvious.

The rapid communications network, despite its name, is not the fastest method of communication in **Umbragia** – that distinction belongs to the Crystal Network maintained by Ghoraxian Mages. But it is impressive. Utilizing a network of horsemen, messages can be run from Southgate to East Run in just a few days. The message moves from station to station; horses and riders are changed, moving the message as fast as a fresh horse can carry it. Of all of the ways to get into trouble, interfering with the flow of this traffic is the surest. Even slowing a runner carries with it stiff penalties. Stopping one is cause for a punishment that is far too painful, lengthy and gruesome to be detailed here.



The rules of heraldry are obviously different in the lands where the Vanir originated. This is an example of Lord Kristophen's original shield device. The colors of the design were different depending upon the object it was on.

NEPHALOUS

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Control: | () |
| Loyalty: | () |
| Stability: | () |
| Wealth: | (-) |
| Capital: | Nakhruta |
| Government: | Feudal Monarchy |
| Ruling Title: | King or Queen |
| Current Ruler: | Alexis Muradhia |
| Climate: | Sub-tropical, very humid. Heavy rainfall year round. |
| Resources: | Fishing and whaling based economy (food, oils, candles, etc) |
| Religion: | Church of the Word |
| Languages: | Nephara, Siamese, Tamoor |
| Foreign Relations: | |
| • | Good <i>Quinara</i> |
| • | Fair <i>Al Hadim, Cheldor, Siamar, Vashmia</i> |
| • | Mediocre <i>Asgoth, Ghorax, Jianthor, Kristophen</i> |
| • | Poor <i>Darienth, Tamoc</i> |
| • | Terrible <i>Tiasham</i> |
| Population: | Approximately 6.5 million |
| Diversity: | Aesir (60%), Nathas (10%), Polymarie (10%), Haitir (5%), Lukar'r (5%), Zynar (5%) |

Nephalous is a city that has borrowed its heritage from nearly every ancient civilization. To this, it has added a culture of raiders and hearty, sea-going men with a sense of personal identity and self-worth unlike that of any nation. Nephalous is situated in the northernmost portions of **Umbragia**, bordering their most hated and feared nation, Tiasham. Otherwise, they only have the warm waters of the Sea of Astenmoore containing them. At least from the south...

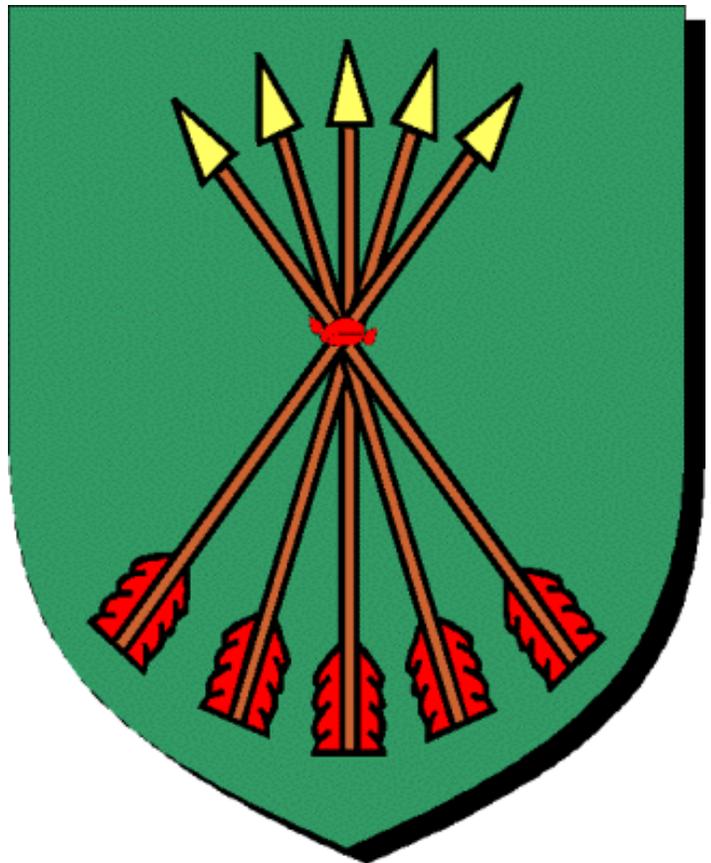
To the north they have the Realms of Madness and a true respect and fear of that region (see the **Realms of Madness** in this section). Nephalous has its entire economy based upon the fishing industry. Granted, they make other things (as man cannot live on fish alone), but fishing is what keeps them alive. In addition to the normal fish of the day, the Nephalous fishermen are known to go after whales and other large sea creatures. The meat from these is edible (although not as good to the local palate) and the bones are useful in alchemy, the fats are good for making candles, the skin can be used for waterproofing shelters, etc. If anything, the Nephalous people are not wasteful.

Nephalous has fought in many wars, but in its entire history, it has never had a civil war. The people of Nephalous are strong-hearted and love good drink and adventure. The feasts thrown

before a long fishing voyage could rival the Vashnian Coronations. To a Nephalite the idea of not being generous with ones bounty is not just rude, it is hateful. If no other nation upholds the Aesir ideal of romanticism, Nephalous certainly does. This stems from the strong oral traditions of the culture. They tell stories – grand epic tales – to one another just about any chance that they get. They love stories and will relish anytime they find one that they have never heard before. Old sea-dog sailors are very fond of retelling the tales of previous voyages. These Sea-Stories are usually very entertaining, and even though the scurvy ridden lot of them will tell you that every word is true (swearing on the grave of his dear old mum), how accurate these stories really are, is left as an exercise for the listener.

Nephalous has an army, but it is mainly situated along the Tiasham border. The army is strong in pride and will, if not in numbers. Nephalous' defense, however, is primarily naval. And it is a good one. They have the best sailors in **Umbragia** as well as the best ships. Nephalous built ships are faster, more sea-worthy and generally better armed than any other ships in the Realms.

Nephalous also has a great relationship with the Polymarie peoples. Even though nearly every body of salt water in the



Unique in the history of Umbragia, Nephalous' shield is the family device for one of its own heroes – a rather obscure young nobleman. Legend states that Thedrick McConnel was a commoner that gave his coat to a common woman.

Realms has a large population of Polymarie, the nation of Nephalous is the only one to recognize them as having full rights under law. The Polymarie may enter the royal court and they do have some nobility in their ranks. They are considered full citizens and have proven very helpful in times of need. Due to this arrangement, Nephalous makes claim to all waters in the Sea of Astenmoore up to five miles distant from the shores of Siamar and Cheldor. The ranking Polymarie is Shem'cha Coldwater, Fourteenth Earl of the Gulf of Aniak.

Unlike the other nations, Nephalous does not have its capital located on its own mainland. The capital is situated on a small island just south of the city of Nakher. A navy of 30-40 ships is normally in the area of this city.

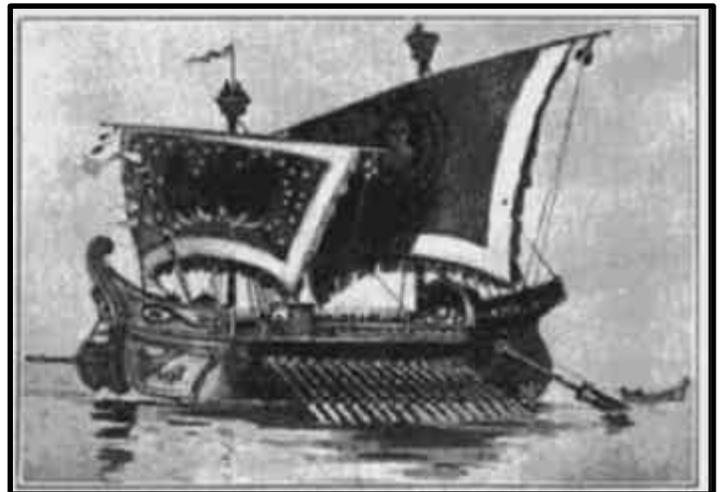
Nephalous has some odd, yet longstanding, relationships with the other nations. The national hatred of Tiasham is so engrained as to be near insanity. The last time the two nations ever spoke rationally with each other is so long ago as to have been forgotten by both nations.

They have a strange love of the culture and people of Quinara (perhaps the mutual fondness of stories?) even though they never really have much dealing with them. They will tell of epic tales and adventures of the Quinara people with every bit of fervor they tell of their own deeds. And the same goes for Quinara the other way.

All of the other relatively close neighbors (Cheldor, Siamar, etc.) it gets along with fine. They maintain a sort of 'you leave us alone and we will leave you alone' philosophy.

Everyone else it either has had run-ins with that it will never forgive or it simply ignores them. In fact, most international affairs Nephalous remains out of. Most feel that this is due to a fear that if they let their guard down, Tiasham will attempt an invasion. This is probably true.

Nephalous is the birthplace of the Church of the Word, and the faith spread quickly. The oldest Cathedral of the faith is located in the city of Khuung. Outside this church is a headless statue of the Redeemer entitled 'The Faceless Prophet of the Word.'



As a seagoing culture, Nephalous has many sorts of ships in its arsenal. This is an older ship from before the rebirth of magic. This is evident by the lack of central Mana-arm Mast and Weather Orb. Expense keeps the numbers of such ships low.

QUINARA

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Control: | (+) |
| Loyalty: | (++) |
| Stability: | () |
| Wealth: | (+) |
| Capital: | Q'Eldar |
| Government: | Feudal Monarchy |
| Ruling Title: | King or Queen |
| Current Ruler: | Darvan the Wise |
| Climate: | Temperate and dry. |
| Resources: | Precious metals (gold and silver), iron, steel, marble |
| Religion: | Various |
| Languages: | Quinase, Siamese |
| Foreign Relations: | |
| • | Good <i>Nephalous, Siamar, Vashnia</i> |
| • | Fair <i>Al Hadim, Darienth, Tamoc</i> |
| • | Mediocre <i>Cheldor, Ghorax, Jianthor</i> |
| • | Poor <i>Asgoth, Tiasham</i> |
| • | Terrible <i>Kristophen</i> |
| Population: | Approximately 12.5 million |
| Diversity: | Daermin (25%), Goumin (25%), Gyor (15%), Haitir (15%), Nathas (10%), Quina (5%) |

Snuggly situated in the central regions of **Umbragia**, Quinara has a rich history. The region has known fourteen different nations and governments – originally ruled by the Quina people. Now, sadly, they amount to about 5% of the population.

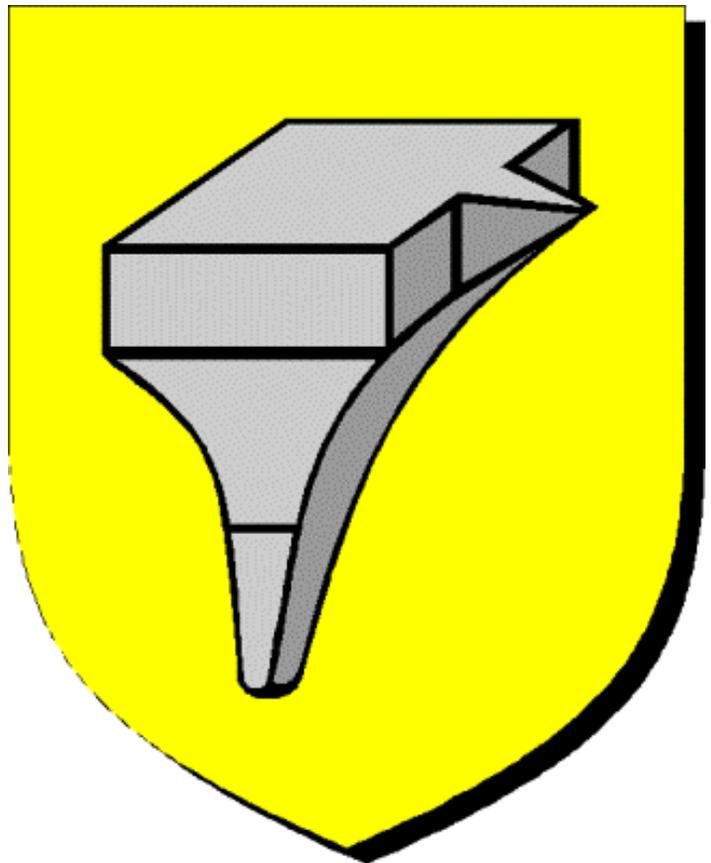
Quinara is a totalitarian Monarchy – the king has near absolute control and is revered as a God on earth. But fortunately for the people, the last seven monarchs of the lands have all been benevolent. Noble titles are passed from generation to generation and follow a slightly different naming convention. They are (in order from the king down): King or Queen, Prince or Princess, Grand Marquis, Marquis, Count or Countess, Viscount or Viscountess, Lord or Lady, Knight or Knights.

Noble title and the concepts of Noble Blood are very strong in Quinara. Even though the Nobility has strong legal authority, Sheriffs, Constables and local city guards enforced most laws. The Nobility, on the other hand, spends their time dealing with the bigger picture exercising military and legislative authority.

The Quinara military is unique in that it is the only military in **Umbragia** that completely segregates the races. This holds true all the way up the chain of command. The reasons for this are ancient and traditional and so far there has been no reason to change it. The Quinara military is one of the larger standing forces in the Realms.

King Darvan the Wise, a Daermin, has sat atop the throne now for nearly thirty years. His mother, the former Queen Allegros the Charitable, had six sons and three daughters. The royal family, at least on the surface, seems to get along well. The Grand Marquis has been getting more and more obstinate as the years pass and so King Darvan keeps him on a tight leash these days. Other members of the Royal Court (from the Knights to the various Marquis) have become discontented in recent years. The court, some say, is slowly cooking and will soon begin to boil over. The power wielded by the various members of court is, in theory, quite limited. In reality, it is quite extensive – the King cannot, after all, be everywhere seeing everything. Thus, six years ago, unknown to the court (save some of the Kings siblings), King Darvan found one of the most talented information brokers in all of **Umbragia**. He reports to the King each full moon on the status of the court. The King has managed to sidestep at least two assassination attempts even before the deals were completed. Darvan's youngest sister, Mirram, has indicated her fears for the Kings life at the hands of this informant several times.

Darvan's eldest sister has been spending the majority of the last few years trying to get him married. But, to be honest, Darvan is not a handsome man; he is outright ugly, the direct result of



Quina has a rough and tumble history. Thus, it sometimes seems ironic that its symbol is that of an anvil. Many have noted that this is not so ironic, as the anvil can be viewed as a symbol of change – controlled, determined and calculated change.

complications at birth. Darvan's face is too large for his head, it is not quite symmetrical and his body is wildly out of proportion. Average size for Daermin males is 5'0" and 175 pounds of solid box-like frame. Darvan is 5'8" and 130 pounds of weakly, almost twig-like flesh.

Given some of his misshapen parts, it is not entirely sure that he could even sire a child. Although none of the court would dare to agree to such statements, most know that were it not for the power and riches of the crown, few would even be willing to entertain the idea of matrimony. Add to this the Kings open contempt for most religions, and you get an even greater understanding of the problems associated with this issue.

Despite all of this, the people of Quinara love their king and view him as a wise and very just ruler. In fact, even amongst his enemies he is greatly respected for his heart and his mind. A common complement in the whole of the Realms is to state that someone has the Heart and Soul of King Darvan. Darvan does not want his marriage to be one of convenience, but prudence and wisdom may dictate otherwise. If he does not marry, Prince Seemion will take the crown. King Darvan is a wise and patient man, however, and so he will likely take his time and wait this one out.

Quinara borders many nations, but has no coastline. It shares borders with Asgoth, Cheldor, Dariant, Ghorax, Jianthor and The Badlands. Dariant has been the most volatile border in recent years. Over the period of Dariant's civil war, as leaders would emerge only to be taken down again, fear of Quinara's involvement (due perhaps to some closeness with Al Hadim) has led to the granting of lands along Quinara's eastern border. Quinara has thus far graciously accepted each land grant and has not involved itself in the war at all. In fact, most in Quinara's Court believe that Darvan would never have been willing to commit troops to that endeavor. For some, this was stated with obvious contempt.

King Darvan's predecessor was a much beloved king without an heir as well. Many statues of him can be found dotting the landscape of Quinara. The largest of these statues is the one at Q'Eldar which towers some 160 feet over the city square.

REALMS OF MADNESS

THE REPORT OF ALZANE THE MAD

“IT WAS ORDERED THAT I, BARON ALZANE OF UMBERLAND, SHOULD TAKE SUCH MEN AS I DEEMED REQUIRED TO UNDERTAKE OUR TASK AND HEAD NORTHWARD LOOKING FOR THE THIEVES THAT HAD STOLEN THE *SWORD OF ALTRUINCE*. THE FIFTY CHOSEN AND MYSELF UNDERSTOOD FULL WELL THE ANCIENT LEGENDS OF THE LANDS TO THE NORTH AND, BEING MEN OF STRONG HEART AND SOUL UNDERTOOK THIS VENTURE WITH LITTLE FEAR.

“WHEN FIRST WE ENTERED INTO THE ACCURSED LANDS IT WAS NOT EVIDENT THAT ANYTHING WAS AMISS. IN FACT, IT RATHER SEEMED A PLEASANT PLACE. THE TRACKS OF THE THIEVES WERE NOT DIFFICULT TO FOLLOW. IN FACT, SIR CASSIOUS HAD BROUGHT A FAVORED ZYNAR SCOUT, AND HE INDICATED THAT THE MEN WE TRACKED WERE AS CARELESS AS CHILDREN ARE. I WAS TELLING MY MEN THAT WHEN WE RETURNED, I WOULD REPORT TO THE KING OF THIS NEW LAND AND HOW THE LEGENDS WERE BUNK. I SPOKE HALF IN JEST THAT WE COULD ALL TAKE ON LARGE FIEFS AND GOVERN AS ONLY TRUE MEN OF NEPHALOUS CAN. THIS TALK AND LAUGHTER PUT THE MEN’S HEARTS AT EASE AND, TO BE HONEST, WE WERE ALL IN A RATHER JOVIAL MOOD.

“BY THE THIRD NIGHT, THE TRACKS WE FOLLOWED BECAME ERRATIC. THEY WOULD JUT OFF IN SEEMINGLY RANDOM DIRECTIONS. THE ZYNAR, WHOSE NAME I CANNOT RECALL, SPOKE AS IF THE TRACKS SHOWED SOME FORM OF FIGHTING AMONGST THEMSELVES. SIR REGINALD SAID SOMETHING ABOUT THERE BEING NO HONOR AMOUNGST THIEVES, AND SO WE CARRIED ON FEELING THAT THIS BICKERING PARTY COULD NO LONGER CONTINUE TO COVER THE DISTANCES WE TRAINED MEN OF WAR COULD. ONCE AGAIN, WE FELT AS THOUGH THINGS WERE GOING WELL. AND THE WEATHER SEEMED TO BE FAVORABLE.

“ON THE FIFTH NIGHT HOWEVER, STRANGE THINGS BEGAN TO HAPPEN. NOT LIKE THE THINGS IN THE BADLANDS AS HAVE BEEN TOLD TO US ALL SINCE OUR CHILDHOOD, BUT ODD THINGS IN THE MINDS OF THE MEN. ARGUMENTS WOULD BREAK OUT WITH LITTLE PROVOCATION SHORTLY AFTER WE WOULD ALL BE LAUGHING AND ENJOYING EACH OTHER’S COMPANY. MORAL WAS STARTING TO SLIP EVEN THOUGH WE MADE EXCELLENT TIME AND SAW NO IMMEDIATE OR PERCEIVED DANGERS. TO BE HONEST, I COULD NOT UNDERSTAND IT AT ALL, AND THIS ALONE MADE ME FEEL A LITTLE UNEASY

“BY THE TIME THE SEVENTH NIGHT HAD COME, I HAD THE UNEASY FEELING THAT THE MEN WERE PLOTTING TO KILL ME AND RETURN HOME. IN MY MIND, I COULD HEAR THE STORIES THEY WOULD TELL; LIES OF AMBUSH AND MY DEATH - OR WORSE, MY BETRAYAL OF THE CROWN. IT WAS ALL I COULD DO TO STOP MYSELF FROM LASHING OUT AT MY MEN AND TELLING THEM TO STOP SUCH NONSENSE OR FACE THE BUSINESS END OF MY BROADSWORD. TO BE LOCKED IN SUCH THOUGHTS IS A HELL I CANNOT EVEN BEGIN TO EXPLAIN TO YOU.

“ON THE TENTH NIGHT, A FIGHT BROKE OUT OVER THE TRAILS WE FOLLOWED. SIR CASSIOUS WAS ACCUSING THE ZYNAR OF BEING A

FOOL AND INSISTED THAT WE HAD TRAVELED IN THE WRONG DIRECTION FOR THE LAST TWO DAYS. I WAS UNABLE TO STOP THIS ARGUMENT, FOR IN MY OWN HEAD ALL I COULD HEAR WAS A CONSTANT BUZZING, MUCH LIKE THE SOUND OF BEES. SOMEWHERE, IN THE DARKEST RECESSES OF MY, I WAS SURE THAT WHATEVER MADNESS WAS TAKING OVER MY MEN WAS CREEPING ITS WAY INTO MY HEAD AS WELL. THIS FIGHT UNFORTUNATELY COST US THE LIVES OF BOTH CASSIOUS AND THE ZYNAR.

“CONTINUING ON WITHOUT THE SCOUT, SEVERAL MEN ATTEMPTED TO FOLLOW THE TRAIL THE ZYNAR SAW AND THIS PROVED FRUITLESS. AFTER TWENTY DAYS OF TRAVEL, WE WERE QUITE CERTAIN THAT WE WERE LOST. NONE OF US COULD REMEMBER WHAT DIRECTION WAS THE SUNRISE, THE SUNSET. WE WERE LOOSING OUR ABILITIES TO THINK STRAIGHT AND CLEARLY. THEN, THE BATTLE BROKE OUT.

“MY MEN WERE SLAUGHTERING EACH OTHER. SWORDS SHONE AND CLASHED AGAINST ONE ANOTHER. IN DEFENDING MYSELF, I WAS FORCED TO SLAY THE KING’S SON, FERILLUM. THREE OF OUR PARTY OF FIFTY-ONE SURVIVED. WE JUMPED UPON OUR HORSES AND RODE HARD, STOPPING NEITHER TO SLEEP NOR TO REST UNTIL WE HAD SEEN SOMETHING THAT LOOKED AT LEAST SOMEWHAT FAMILIAR. I FIRMLY BELIEVE TO THIS DAY THAT IT WAS OUR HORSES, NOT US, THAT MANAGED TO FIND THE WAY OUT OF THAT ACCURSED PLACE. WHEN WE WERE FOUND, JUST OUTSIDE OF ONE OF THE NORTHERN FORTS, I AM TOLD THAT WE WERE COMPLETELY MINDLESS. WE COULD NOT SPEAK, NOR COMPREHEND EVEN THE MOST BASIC OF CONCEPTS. MY MEMORIES, UNFORTUNATELY (OR FORTUNATELY, DEPENDING ON YOUR PERSPECTIVE) ENDED SHORTLY AFTER THE SLAYING OF MY GOOD FRIEND.

“IT WAS MORE THAN SEVEN MONTHS BEFORE I COULD THINK AGAIN. ANOTHER SEVEN BEFORE I COULD THINK STRAIGHT AND CLEAR. ASIDE FROM THE EVENTS I HAVE RELATED TO YOU, NOTHING OF THAT TRIP REMAINS IN MY MEMORY. IT TOOK THE THREE OF US TOGETHER NEARLY A WEEK BEFORE WE COULD PIECE TOGETHER THIS SHORT SYNOPSIS OF THE TALE.

“WE ARE NOT SURE OF MUCH, YOUR MAJESTY, BUT WE DO KNOW THESE TWO THINGS. THE SWORD OF ALTRUINCE IS A LOSS THAT SHALL NEVER BE RECOVERED. AND ANY THAT ENTER THOSE ACCURSED REALMS SHALL SURELY DIE, OR WISH THAT THEY HAD.

“MY SURVIVAL WAS PURE CHANCE AND FATE. AND YES, I PRAY EACH DAY TO LET ME DIE SO THAT THE THINGS I REMEMBER NOW WOULD LEAVE MY HEAD. BUT MOSTLY I JUST PRAY THAT THE THINGS I HAVE FORGOTTEN NEVER RETURN TO ME AND HAUNT MY DREAMS.”

– Alzane of UMBERLAND (a.k.a. Alzane the Mad)

REALMS OF MADNESS: MECHANICS

The story of how the Badlands formed is a tale told to children from the time that they first understand the simplest phrases. The stories and legends of the Dragonlands and what lies within and beyond them also abound. But even the most adventurous of bards do not speak of the Madlands, more commonly referred to as the Realms of Madness.

This region lies north of Nephalous and Tiasham as well as out across the ocean northwest of the Gulf of Aniak. Ships sailing into these waters report mutinies, suicides and pure havoc. Men travelling in the accursed lands report much of the same. They report these things, that is, when someone survives to report it.

From a game perspective, the mechanics of the region are quite simple. For each day that a person is within the region, roll three Will saves (DC 20). On each save, a failure will cause the person to acquire an 'insanity' point that is applied to one of the three mental abilities. In other words, the first Will save is to see if a point is acquired on the "INT" track, the second on the "WIS" track the last on the "CHA" track.

If the number of insanity points for any of the abilities is equal to the root ability score, then two things start to happen. First, serious mental psychosis begins to set in. Paranoia, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, delusions, and visions are all possible. As a general rule of thumb, each insanity track that is effected doubles the effective level of psychosis. The Dungeon Master should be cruel here.

Second, the once one track is maxed out (equals the level of the ability score it is tracking) then the number of Save rolls increases to four. Two saves against each of the remaining abilities are applied each day. When two are maxed out, then all four of these rolls are then applied to the single remaining ability score.

While an abilities insanity track has maxed out, the modifier for that attribute becomes -5! Once all three ability scores reach this level, the person has lost all mental capability and the mind shuts down. Within a few days, they will be more than likely dead from starvation or dehydration as the mind has lost the ability to access even the most basic instinctual information. By this time, most cannot even walk.

Keep in mind that this is supposed to start out being a subtle loss. It is certainly not easily noticed – so do not treat this as a loss of Intelligence, Wisdom and Charisma. In other words, it isn't as if the individuals are actually becoming *stupid*. Quite contrary, they have all of their mental faculties, they are just finding it harder and harder to access them as their minds become clouded and their judgement is impaired. Think of this as being similar to the effects of becoming severely intoxicated.

Should someone be removed from the regions, the process fortunately does work in reverse: make Will saves (DC 20) each day for each track; a success will remove a single insanity point. When the tracks reach zero, then the effects of having been maxed out begin to fade. Unfortunately, there is no point in the recovery process when the effects begin to speed up.

There is a slight chance that some of the effects will become permanent, however (this is up to the DM, but permanence on a single failed Will save at the end of the road at DC 8 is about right).

Memories of any time spent with more than one ability score below zero will be gone forever. Other memories will be foggy and unclear filled with false echoes of events and missing many others. The poor soul might even develop additional emotional scars. This can include any of those that are associated with the experience itself or even physical manifestations such as stuttering, muscle spasms, nightmares or severe drooling. One could even lose the use of a limb or two. Depending on the severity of the trip into the region, the DM is free to invent any number of effects (short and long term).

REALMS OF MADNESS: A HISTORY

The Realms of Madness are spoken of in ancient texts, but only a very few individuals have ever read these texts. The origin of the region and its maddening effects is completely unknown - this is not to say that there are no theories. Quite the contrary, there are far too many theories. These range from:

LANDS OF THE ANCIENT GODS

In this theory, the Madlands are a gateway into the realms where the ancient gods once lived. Most scholarly types scoff at this and point to the texts that indicate that this is but a shadow of a primary realm.

THE FINAL RESTING PLACE OF IZHA

The eternal sleep placed Izha here, this theory claims. Scholars scoff at this one as well. Besides, they point out that the same is said of the Dragonlands.

A RIP IN THE FABRICS OF REALITY

Of all of the claims, this is the one that most scholars have tended to side with. When mages cast spells, they mold reality. So, the Madlands is a region of constantly pliable reality, warping the minds of all those that enter.

SIAMAR

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Control: | (+) |
| Loyalty: | (+) |
| Stability: | (-) |
| Wealth: | (-) |
| Capital: | Siam |
| Government: | Imperial Republic |
| Ruling Title: | Emperor or Empress |
| Current Ruler: | Goldenna of the Highlands |
| Climate: | Warm and humid. Heavy rainfall, common sea-storms. |
| Resources: | Food (shellfish), Glass, fabrics, wool, livestock |
| Religion: | Church of the Eternal Flame |
| Languages: | Siamese, Quinase |
| Foreign Relations: | |
| • | Good <i>Al Hadim, Dariant, Quinara</i> |
| • | Fair <i>Nephalous, Vashnia</i> |
| • | Mediocre <i>Cheldor, Ghorax, Jianthor, Tamoc</i> |
| • | Poor <i>Asgoth, Kristophen</i> |
| • | Terrible <i>Tiasham</i> |
| Population: | Approximately 8 million |
| Diversity: | Haitir (25%), Shadahs (25%), Vasyl (20%), Nimori (10%), Aesir (5%), Nathas (5%), Quina (5%) |

If one were to look at a dried out, somewhat broken, detached human skull, one would have a very good idea of what it is to look at Siamar in the modern day. Old, dying (if not already dead) with a hint of greatness in ages past. Those hints of a greatness that once ripped and ebbed through the lands do remain within the eyes of its people and within the traditions of its government. Pompous ceremonies remain that may have been more appropriate in the glorious days of yesteryear. Today, they are but a reminder of how far Siamar has slipped.

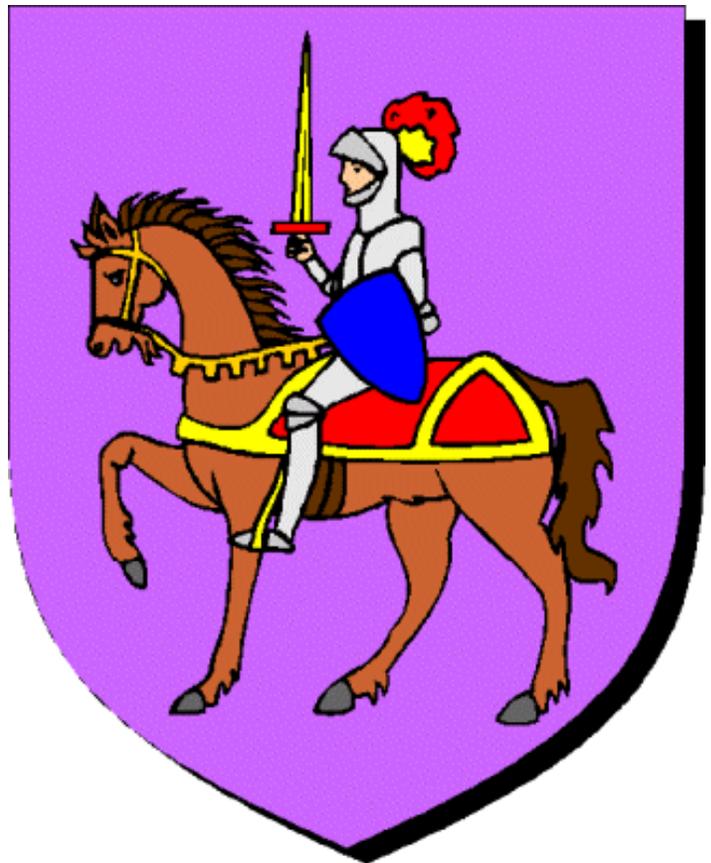
Today, Siamar sits on a lone peninsula, sandwiched between two oceans (the Sea of Astemoor and the Sea of the Moon's Eye), sharing a common border with Cheldor and Asgoth. But once Siamar stretched through the regions currently controlled by Al Hadim, Asgoth, Dariant, Jianthor, Quinara, Tamoc and even (well before the backfire) the Badlands. It was a strong empire that has slowly been eaten away with civil war, political strife, corruption and decay. Despite all of this, Siamar maintains a strong political force. Even Tiasham and Asgoth take them very seriously.

Do not believe that the corruption and decay are over, however. The Siamese courts are perhaps the most volatile and active of any in **Umbagia**. The power and authority of the throne have

eroded to the point that it is a figurehead position. The nation is actually administered by the Imperial Senate.

The Senate is made up of the Nobles that hold traditional titles granting them votes and a voice within the body. Currently there are 127 members representing 2167 possible votes. Sir Francis el'Drake, the senior member of court, holds 102 votes alone. He also has another 250 or so votes in his proverbial pocket. For all of its authority and power, the Senate rarely gets anything done – at least not the things that would have a direct and positive impact on the lives of the Siamarians. Were it not for the near autonomy that the Senate affords the local governors and regional lords, Siamar would have completely collapsed long ago.

These local governors and regional lords tend to see themselves as separate entities, woven together through a necessity of taxes and trade. But even they will admit that it is not them that hold Siamar together in functional order. That distinction belongs to the merchants and the wealth that they control. Usually, the wealthier merchants will also be a lord or governor. These so-called Merchant-Princes can (and usually do) hold the ears of more than a dozen of the Noble Senators. Most minor Nobles will not cross the Merchant-Princes. Neither the merchants nor



The royal splendor of Siamar lends itself to the symbology of its shield. The nation is drenched in traditions and old-world thinking. The courts of this great land are the most treacherous in the whole of the Realms of Shadow.

the lords nor the governors are pleased when word reaches them of a visit from one of the senatorial bigwigs. They are less pleased, however, when one shows up without prior word. Civil wars have been born of less obvious slights in Siamar.

The feelings of lost grandeur pervade the entirety of common life in Siamar as well. Smaller merchants and tradesmen see whole sections of towns that once housed massive trading companies and shipping industries that reached the four corners of the world, now riddled with smaller businesses and trading shops that offer local (or at most, regional) goods. Where once the riches of nearly the entire world could be found in even the smallest hamlet, now one has to travel to the major cities in hopes of the possibly finding the item sought after. Most often than not, it is not available even there.

The navy of Siamar, once over 500 ships strong, is a skeleton today. They have enough ships to patrol the coastal waters of their own nation with some success, but nothing to spare. Recent treaties with Nephalous have led to an agreement over the waters – Nephalous patrols them. To many in the Senate (including Sir El'Drake) this was a blow to the face of Siamar's pride that shall not pass easily or soon.

On a positive note, the relationship with Cheldor has improved over the last few years. As Cheldor was the last region to declare itself independent of Siamar (over beliefs dealing with sorcery) there was some very bad blood. They are not friendly, to be sure, but the talk between the two has at least settled into a rational and polite tone. Rumors persist over possible trade with Cheldor, but this is completely unsubstantiated.

Despite Siamar's recent decline, it is still a dangerous nation to trifle with. It maintains a very strong military. When not fighting itself, it can be very swift to react to perceived threats. Several times in Siamar's history, it has managed to produce a strong leader just when things looked their worst. However, once the outside threat was contained, the courts of Siamar invariably return to their natural state of bickering and decay.

The crown and tiara of the first rulers of Siamar are still handed down to each ruler upon coronation. While a king rules, the tiara is locked into the tower of Siam (and vice versa). According to legend, they each have many powerful magical properties.

TAMOC

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Control: | (+) |
| Loyalty: | (+) |
| Stability: | (+) |
| Wealth: | (-) |
| Capital: | Tamoc |
| Government: | Imperial Monarchy |
| Ruling Title: | King or Queen |
| Current Ruler: | Lorene Clearwater |
| Climate: | Hot and humid with a very long rainy season. Floods and hurricanes relatively common along the coastline. |
| Resources: | Food (rice, grains, beans, fish), heavy metals (iron, lead), rare earths |
| Religion: | Church of the Eternal Flame |
| Languages: | Siamese |
| Foreign Relations: | |
| • Good | <i>Vashnia</i> |
| • Fair | <i>Cheldor, Dariant, Ghorax, Jianthor, Quinara</i> |
| • Mediocre | <i>Al Hadim, Asgoth, Siamar</i> |
| • Poor | <i>Kristophen, Nepalous</i> |
| • Terrible | <i>Tiasham</i> |
| Population: | Approximately 11 million |
| Diversity: | Haitir (25%), Nathas (25%), Aesir (20%), Gyor (10%), Goumin (10%), Daermin (5%) |

Located in the northeastern edges of the known lands, Tamoc is an old nation with a rich history. It was the first nation to break from the military might that was Old Siamar. Tamoc, sadly, in recent days has become the very thing it revolted against in the old days.

Historical records state that in the early days of the Mighty Empire of Siamar, Lord Tamoc, champion of the people, began a revolution to fight against what he called “the tyrannical rule of the Emperor.” He was the catalyst that pushed for lessening the power of the Emperor and granting those powers to the Senate – a body that should be a representation of the needs of the people.

His revolution gained popularity but not with the Noble families and so he was brought up on charges. He was tried and executed by Emperor Leon the Stonehearted for treason against the crown. Legend states that his death came from nearly seven days of public magical torture. Each day he was asked to rescind his statements for a swift death – he refused. By the seventh day he was so malnourished and dehydrated that he could no longer speak, and so was slain.

This turned Tamoc into a martyr and resulted in a fifty-year civil war and the eventual establishment of the nation of Tamoc. Over

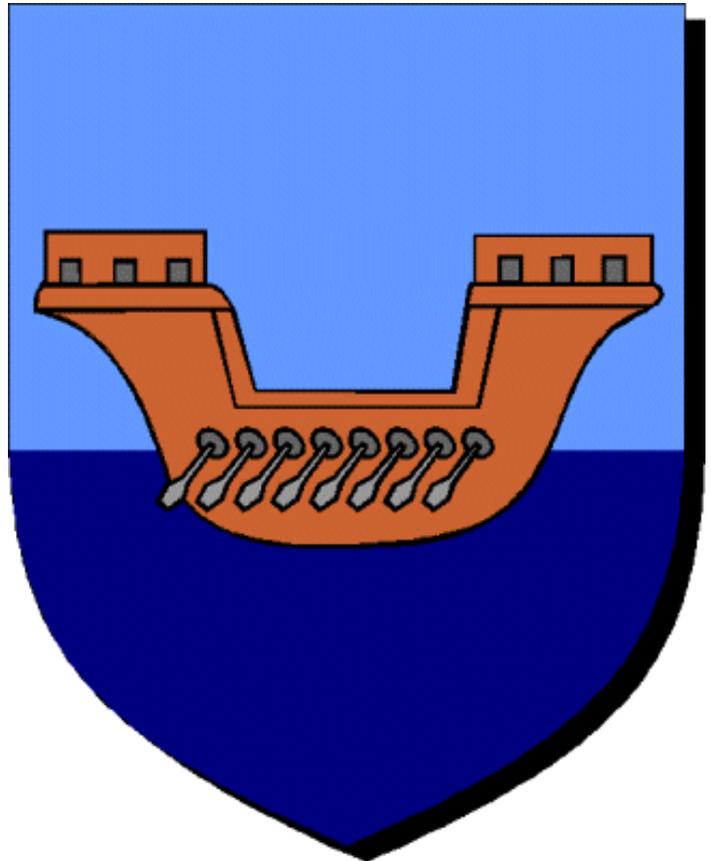
Born, live and die by the sea. That is the life in Tamoc. Given that, it is no wonder that all imagery dealing with the nation is oceangoing. Most heraldry in the realm has fish, whales or other creatures of the sea. Only the national emblems have ships.

the next two hundred years, Tamoc managed to carve out the borders it enjoys today.

Since that time, the promise of a fair government, one where none were above another was spoken of and even attempted. But in the end, it would be a coup of those that had descended from the Knights and Nobility of the old days and the re-establishment of an Emperor. This coup caused a violent upheaval in the common men of the region that was swiftly put down. This was without a doubt Tamoc's bloodiest hour.

After three decades, Emperor el'Ghorn the Swift would declare that the title would no longer be Emperor (which he felt resonated with the people as tyrant) but would instead be King – and so the new reign of His Gracious Majesty, King el'Ghorn the Swift was recorded. Shortly after all of these events, the shifts in power in Siamar began and the government closest to what Tamoc had envisioned is currently being practiced there. Some have pointed out the obvious irony – but never in the presence of a Tamoc Noble-born.

Where Siamar has their Emperor, Tamoc has its King. Where Siamar has its Senate, Tamoc has the House of Lords. The House of Lords functions much like the Senate of Siamar, only the power it wields is far less extensive. The Emperor has the



authority to overturn nearly anything that the House does. In practice, this is rare (as the Monarchs have generally not been such fools as to believe that the Lords do not have the ability to destroy their power). But in the few times it has been done to date, it has caused some bloodshed.

Tamoc has an army, but to look at the distribution of funds for military pursuits might make one think that it is non-existent. When placed against the Navy, the army of Tamoc is rather lacking. What is there is dedicated. They have to be if they are to survive on their wages.

Tamoc has the largest Navy of all the nations on the mainland. With a culture that borrows much from Nephalous, the naval traditions in Tamoc are strong and run very deep. This has been somewhat confusing for many, seeing that the nations do not get along very well. It is a rare month that does not see some scuffle between Nephalous and Tamoc ships. Tamoc may have more ships than the other mainland nations, but Nephalous still has them in numbers and quality, and they never let Tamoc forget that.

Although Tamoc has a good relationship with Darienth, it is with a few of the families – not the entire nation. So far, Tamoc has remained neutral (overall) in the struggles that Darienth is experiencing, any that have watched closely feel that soon, Tamoc may be forced to make a move one way or another. The reputation that Queen Lorene Clearwater has developed would tend to indicate that any involvement would be rather direct and to the point.

Not commonly known is the fact that just north of most maps of Tamoc lies the eastern portion of the Realms of Madness. When this was discovered, three northern cities were completely abandoned.

Seascape paintings form the largest mural of the Realms within the main hall of the Castle of Viyaen at the capital city of Tamoc. The artist that did the work died shortly after completing it. His family has since been wards of the state. The painting is 25 years old now.

TIASHAM

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Control: | (++) |
| Loyalty: | (++) |
| Stability: | (+) |
| Wealth: | (+++) |
| Capital: | Tia'shem |
| Government: | Religious Dictatorship |
| Ruling Title: | She'lishmahs (Grand Priest) |
| Current Ruler: | Sylmonish |
| Climate: | Near tropical. |
| Resources: | Gemstones, slaves |
| Religion: | Church of the Living Atonement |
| Languages: | Khutai |
| Foreign Relations: | |
| • | Good <i>Asgoth</i> |
| • | Fair <i>Ghorax, Kristophen</i> |
| • | Mediocre <i>Jianthor, Vashnia</i> |
| • | Poor <i>Al Hadim, Cheldor, Darienth, Quinara</i> |
| • | Terrible <i>Nephalous, Siamar, Tamoc</i> |
| Population: | Approximately 7.5 million |
| Diversity: | Khutai (75%), Various Slaves (20%) |

Tiasham is Khutai society. Nearly every Khutai in the **Realms of Shadow** lives here. Further north into the tropical lands is not possible due to the *Realms of Madness* and any further south is not optimal for their physiology. This is where they are. This is where they (for the most part) stay.

Khutai do live in other places, just not in any great numbers, and nowhere that it gets very cold or very dry. But do not make the mistake of thinking that their relative containment makes them easy to deal with. They are the master manipulators, pulling the strings on people, wars, policy and events from thousands of miles away. And this is what they do before magic is thrown into the mix. Backroom deals and double meanings are the price of doing business with these wealthy long-distance crime lords.

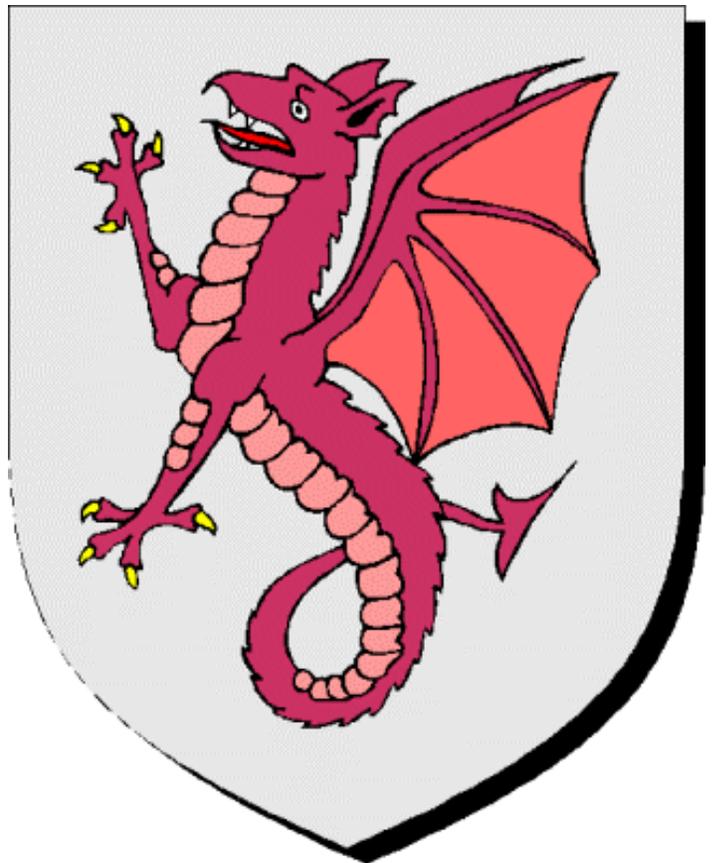
Tiasham is a religious dictatorship. The *Grand Priest of the Church of the Living Atonement* acts as the head of state and has nearly unlimited political power. The Grand Priest is usually the most accomplished of the manipulators.

Non-magically, the Khutai are very accomplished thugs. Like Mafioso, they keep control over the events that surround them. They pull the strings on nearly every event that might have an impact – no matter how indirect – on their lives. The web of control that they maintain is always solid and continuous. Some see it as rather confusing. Some events seem not to relate to anything. But then again, if the average individual could see these relationships, then they would be in charge.

Although the Feudal concept is not lost on the Khutai, its application seems archaic. To the Khutai, the idea that greatness can be passed from life to life is obvious. The idea that it passes from parent to child is a little odd. One's position in society should always be earned, no matter what the family. Prove that you are destined for greatness and many will follow. Say that you are destined for greatness and few will listen. This is the basis for the caste system.

“War,” say the great Khutai philosophers, “*has little real value unless it is two others fighting. Once you have entered into war yourself, you have already failed.*” This forms the backbone of the Tiasham defense protocol. Do not fight a war – get others to fight it for you. In this, they have been supremely successful. The rest is summed up with the **Paradigm of the Enemy**. “*When your ally wars, make sure it is against an enemy of yours. When your enemy wars, make sure it is against another of your enemies. When you have no enemies, watch your back, for you have surely missed something.*”

What those few that have made war with Tiasham have noted is that they have a complete lack of horse cavalry. The Khutai body shape does not lend itself mounted warfare, but they do have some rather ingenious war machines. They use Elephants (with



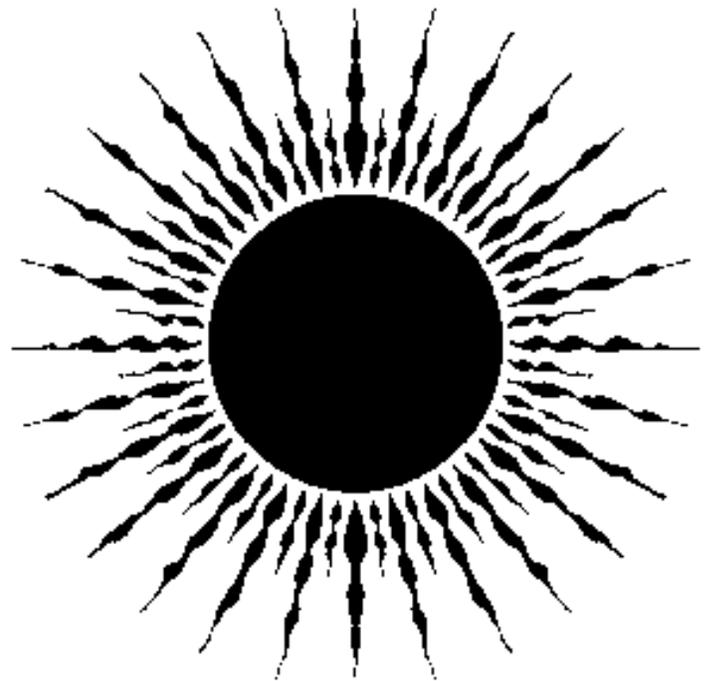
It is unknown what the origin of the creature depicted on the Shield of Tiasham is. Although none have ever encountered its like, it has been the symbol of the Tiasham people for nearly four centuries.

small fortresses atop them) for mainline cavalry and do have a sort of chariot-like warrior called an '*Insak*.' Insak warriors ride a platform that is suspended between two fast animals (perhaps horses or serpentes) with a third guide animal in front. In ancient times, when the animals and creatures of legend were more common, there is record of some Insak using Griffins or even Dragons. For the most part they have a military geared for jungle warfare and warfare on very rough terrain. They also have a lot of archers. Despite this, the bulk of the Tiasham military is hired mercenaries. Once again having others do the fighting.

The laws in Tiasham are very simple: whoever is the strongest makes the rules. But strength can be a very subtle thing. And so Tiasham operates without incident. There is a fairly well understood pecking order, and it is rarely violated. On a more local level, there is a constant dynamic within the structure. One Khutai might be making manipulations and political maneuvers for power and benefit in one area, while being manipulated by another in other areas. The Khutai are natural politicians.

For all of their shadowy nature, Khutai are actually very organized and mostly polite. The *Living Atonement* dictates that every Khutai must add something of real value to the whole of Khutai society. This has led to them being one of the cleanest, most educated, organized and harmonious societies in the **Umbragia**.

The Church is important. But, unlike other religions, it is not a solid structure or defined concept of dogma or theological pretense. It is a lifestyle shared by all Khutai. If you ask a Khutai who the local clergyman is, he will point you to the individual he sees as the wisest of the Khutai in his village. If you ask this person, they might point you elsewhere. To the Khutai, this is perfectly acceptable. Religion should be a shared experience. The only dedicated priest in Tiasham is the singular Grand Priest of the nation.



Circles and patterns with circles are very common in Tiashamese artwork. Complex geometric patterns are also common. Sages have speculated that this is symbolism for the 'wheels within wheels' thinking of the Khutai.

VASHNIA

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Control: | (+) |
| Loyalty: | (+++) |
| Stability: | (+++) |
| Wealth: | (-) |
| Capital: | Vel'Orish |
| Government: | Feudal Monarchy |
| Ruling Title: | Noximari (King or Queen) |
| Current Ruler: | Asenvole Nightbane |
| Climate: | Cool to very cold. Winters can be extremely harsh with snowfalls in excess of two feet in the lower elevations. |
| Resources: | None at true export levels |
| Religion: | Various |
| Languages: | Siamese, G'harn |
| Foreign Relations: | |
| • | Good <i>Quinara, Tamoc</i> |
| • | Fair <i>Jianthor, Nepalous, Siamar</i> |
| • | Mediocre <i>Asgoth, Cheldor, Darienth, Ghorax, Tiasham</i> |
| • | Poor <i>Al Hadim</i> |
| • | Terrible <i>Kristophen</i> |
| Population: | Approximately 10 million |
| Diversity: | Vasyl (65%), Lukar'r (10%), Nathas (10%), Aesir (5%), Haitir (5%), Zynar (5%) |

When anyone has entered the Kingdom of Vashnia, the first thing they have noted is how the cities look like ghost towns in the middle of the day. After the sunset, it would appear that the entire nation comes to life.

Sitting south of the Badlands along the Sea of the Moon's Eye, Vashnia shares borders with only Ghorax and Kristophen. Unfortunately, neither of these nations is particularly fond of the Vashnian people. The animosity with Al Hadim is a little more complex...

Vashnia is a Feudal Monarchy that has titles much like most other monarchies. The titles of the nation, however, follow the traditions of the Vasylian people. Sitting atop the Noble tower is the Noximari (King or Queen). The term (like all Vasylian titles) is gender neutral. The Noximari has a cadre of senior leaders known as Arse'Quine – these function much like senior Dukes in other cultures. Vashnia currently has a dozen Arse'Quine. Quine, the next level, function as combination Dukes, Governors and local administrators. Thus, the Quine are a political, noble and military distinction. In order to handle the number of tasks usually given them, Quine will normally have a staff of advisors. Below the Quine are two relatively equal titles. The Shiesem – a sort of Governor and Sheriff position common in smaller

townships – is the non-military title. The Whiesem – Knights and full-time warriors – is the military title. At this level and lower, there are no Nobility or job titles that are combinations of political/military authority.

Unlike other nations, offspring and siblings of the monarch are not given noble title. The eldest of the Noximari is heir to the throne, but holds no official title or authority in the meantime. Others may eventually be made Whiesem (in other words, knighted) but this would require the consent of not only the monarch, but at least five of the Arse'Quine.

The state of the Vashnian court is one of controlled tension. The Vasylian people are extremely loyal to their Noximari but they grow weary of the constant struggle to keep their heads above water, so to speak. Although Vashnia has never known civil war, some believe that the day is coming soon that it will.

The population of Vashnia was once pure Vasyl. However, given the recent history of losing ground (mostly to Ghorax) in both land area and political stature, they have come to the realization that they need the diversity they currently enjoy for survival. To this end they began to structure their laws in such a way as to encourage immigration. So far, these policies have proven successful. This, and the nocturnal nature of the Vasyl, has lead



The wreath and nature are prominent in Vashnian heraldry. This is odd considering that they are mainly a nocturnal society. Stranger still is the complete absence of lunar and heavenly references within their devices.

to a large pilgrimage of Lukar'r to the region. Although there was some tension at first, the two peoples have proven very compatible. They get along very well. Granted, the Lukar'r and their odd belief structure has been known to cause some tensions, much is being done on both sides to smooth this over. As a testament, in Vashnia, the Lukar'r do not live isolated from society.

The small remaining navy that Vashnia maintains is ran mostly by Aesir (with a few Haitir and Zynar sailors in the mix). There are some Vasyl, but the temperament of the race is not well suited for sea travel. Thus, sailors are given some leniency not enjoyed by most citizens. The navy is small and the ships are small, swift, lightly armed and armored. But the crews are capable and willing.

Despite the diversity, none but Vasyl can hold Noble title. The one and only exception to this is Whiesem Al'vrin Deepwater – a Lukar'r warrior of unparalleled skill that acts as the Noximari's personal bodyguard. Al'vrin is a bit of a local legend; it is said he wields two bastard swords in battle and rarely wears armor. These same tales put him at over seven feet tall and with the ability to shoot fire from his eyes, so they are given very little credence. When he was chosen, there was a lot of grumbling in the court, but few could question the choice of the monarch's Champion. Al'vrin is a tireless servant and is quite fanatical when it comes to his job and its responsibilities. To this end, he has earned the respect (if not the admiration) of the entire Vashnian court.

Asenvole Nightbane has sat in the throne of Vashnia for the last 115 years. His wife died recently – the cause was never determined. He has seven offspring (3 daughters, 4 sons) and the eldest is Ghena Moonbeam. She is a woman of uncanny skill with a sword and crossbow, uncommon intellect and limitless wisdom. Since her coming of age, Nightbane has been comfortable with the state of his legacy. With Asenvole's health as it is, she will most likely be assuming her duties in the next couple of years.



This sort of rather busy design is common in all forms of Vashnian cultural icons – from watermarking within armor to the intricate designs used in quilting and pottery. Color, when present, is usually reserved for the focal point of the piece.

AN ANIMALS AND MONSTERS SAMPLER

COMBAT

As could be expected, the **Realms of Shadow** are filled with its own unique flora and fauna. In the supplement **Umbragia: Animals and Monsters**, over two hundred such creatures will be detailed. However, for your enjoyment *now*, we have a sampling of creatures that should whet your appetite! (all of these creatures will also be appear in the **Animals and Monsters** book)

ANG'IL (SWORD SENTINEL)

Medium-sized Outsider (Good)

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Hit Dice: | 5d8+20 (40) |
| Initiative: | +1 (+1 Dex) |
| Speed: | 30 ft., fly 120 ft. (good) |
| Armor Class: | 22 (+1 Dex, +11 Celestial Armor) |
| Attacks: | Ang'il Sword of Light +11 |
| Damage: | Ang'il Sword of Light 2d6+8 (+2d6 vs. Evil) |
| Face/Reach: | 5 ft. by 5 ft. / 10 ft. |
| Spec. Attacks: | None |
| Spec. Qualities: | Ang'lic Traits, Equipment, Flight |
| Saves: | Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +9 |
| Abilities: | Str 18, Dex 15, Con 20, Int 14, Wis 20, Cha 16 |
| Skills: | Animal Empathy +6, Concentration +4, Diplomacy +5, Gather Information +5, Handle Animal +6, Heal +5, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (Religion) +4, Listen +6, Move Silently +4, Search +6, Sense Motive +6, Spot +4 |
| Feats: | Blind Fight, Combat Reflexes, Power Attack |
| Climate/Terrain: | Any land and underground |
| Organization: | Solitary, Pair or Task Force (3-8) |
| Challenge: | 6 |
| Treasure: | No coins, standard items and goods |
| Alignment: | Always good (any), usually Lawful |
| Advancement: | 6-9 HD (Medium-size), 10-15 HD (Large) |

DESCRIPTION

Ang'il appear as stunningly beautiful creatures. Although most appear as humanoids, Ang'il come in all shapes and sizes imaginable. Oddly, it would seem that Ang'il females outnumber males 5-to-1.

Ang'il origin is rooted in the cosmology of the **Realms of Shadow**. Since the dawn of their existence, they have been locked in an eternal struggle against their evil analogs, the Deu'il.

Sword Sentinels are among the most common of the Ang'il, making up some 15% of their numbers. They are powerful winged humanoids normally seen with flowing robes of celestial light and wielding a huge flaming sword.

Under their robes, they wear shimmering armor of obvious otherworldly origin. They have no eyes, but instead have hollow sockets that radiate with a dim blue light. This has no effect on their senses. They also have no body hair, rounded soft facial features and thin, dexterous fingers.

When the Ang'il Sentinel Lords send in the Sword Sentinels it is on a very specific mission with well-defined goals. These goals are usually martial in nature – the Sword Sentinels are not sent in to negotiate. When those goals are completed, the Sentinel(s) will quickly return to the outer planes.

In combat they are fearless and cunning. They will coordinate attacks and use every advantage they can gain. Chivalry, although not lost on the Sword Sentinels, is something they reserve for other Ang'il, not the mundane races of **Umbragia**.

TRAITS AND QUALITIES

Ang'lic Traits (Ex): Sword Sentinels share many traits with all of the Ang'il. They gain the benefits of the following racial traits:

- **Spell Resistance:** Ang'il have natural Spell Resistance equal to [5+Hit Dice]. Thus most Sword Sentinels have SR 10.
- **Improved Darkvision:** Ang'il have an improved form of Darkvision that allows perfect vision no matter what the local conditions. This will not allow them to see through opaque solids, but anything shy of that is completely ignored.
- **Aural Sight:** Ang'il have the ability to see auras. Knowing a subjects deepest desires grants them a +2 racial bonus on the skills Animal Empathy, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Handle Animal and Sense Motive.
- **Planeshifting:** Ang'il can shift their current plane of existence once per day. This counts as an action, and will generate an attack opportunity (similar to loading a crossbow). This ability will allow them to enter any non-evil plane of existence flawlessly. To enter an evil-aligned plane of existence requires a successful Will save (DC 25). Failure results in 2d12 damage to the Ang'il.

Flight (Ex): Multi-hued, feathery wings allow them to fly as fast as 120 ft each round. These wings are large (wingspans of 21-28 feet are common) and so cannot be used in closed spaces. Unless the Sentinel has 30 feet of clearance on all sides, flight is difficult at best. They cannot hover.

Equipment: Sword Sentinels have rather standard equipment.

- **Celestial Armor:** this is the equivalent of set of Full Plate, +3 with Invulnerability. It is virtually weightless and has no Armor Check Penalty. Total armor bonus is +11 with Damage Reduction 5/+1.
- **Sword of Light:** this is the equivalent of a Great Sword, +3 with Holy (+2d6 damage to evil creatures).

BUXION

Large Beast

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Hit Dice: | 4d10+16 (38) |
| Initiative: | +0 |
| Speed: | 40 ft. |
| Armor Class: | 15 (-1 Size, +6 natural) |
| Attacks: | Butt +6 melee, 2 hooves +1 melee |
| Damage: | Butt 2d8+9, Hoof 1d6+9 |
| Face/Reach: | 10 ft. by 15 ft. / 5 ft. |
| Spec. Attacks: | Stampede |
| Spec. Qualities: | Magical Horn, Scent |
| Saves: | Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +2 |
| Abilities: | Str 20, Dex 10, Con 18, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 5 |
| Skills: | Listen +8, Spot +5 |
| Feats: | None |
| Climate/Terrain: | Temperate and arctic plains |
| Organization: | Solitary, Pair or herd (5-30) |
| Challenge: | 3 |
| Treasure: | None |
| Alignment: | Always Neutral |
| Advancement: | 5-8 HD (Large), 9-12 HD (Huge) |

DESCRIPTION

Buxion are huge herd animals/beasts. They roam over the southern reaches (primarily in the Kristophen area) and are hunted for their tender meat, tough hides and sharp horns. They are quite aggressive, both in and out of mating season, and will fight against even impossible odds if they feel threatened.

Buxion stand 8 feet tall at the shoulder, are from 12-15 feet long and weigh anywhere from 2000 to 3000 pounds. They have white-gray fur and long smooth curved horns of striking ivory-white that twist in on themselves into a spiral pattern. The horns alone have attracted many poachers, as they are highly prized in many areas. The selling of Buxion (meat, hide or horns) in Cheldor is highly illegal.

Tales are told of the ancient Quina domesticating Buxion and using them as pack animals or even mounts. The truth of these tales is not known, but no modern Buxion has ever been domesticated or tamed.

COMBAT

Magical Horn (*Sp*): The horns of the Buxion are powerful ingredients to many potions. Use of the horn can have any number of magnifying effects for a potion including raising the DC of a save against the effects by 1d4, doubling the effect or the duration and so on. Other uses have been attempted, few have been documented.

Stampede (*Ex*): When they feel threatened, a herd of Buxion will charge after the source of the threat. As long as that threat is made up of creatures of large or smaller size, they will literally run over the defending group dealing 1d12 damage for each four Buxion in the herd. A successful Reflex save (DC 16) will halve this damage.

CHAMELEON DRAKE

Dragon (Earth)

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Climate/Terrain: | Any mountain, forest or jungle |
| Organization: | Young Adult or younger: solitary or clutch (2-12). Adult or older: solitary, pair or family (1-2 Adults and 2-12 offspring). |
| Treasure: | Standard |
| Alignment: | Always True Neutral |

CHAMELEON DRAKES BY AGE

The two tables at the bottom of this page provides the Size, Hit Dice, Hit Points, Armor Class, Attack Bonus, Saving Throws, Breath Weapon, Fear Aura, Spell Resistance, Challenge Rating, Speed, Ability scores, Special Abilities and spell caster levels of the Chameleon Drake at its various age brackets. See the **Core Rulebook III**, page 61 for more information on the various ages of dragons.

DESCRIPTION

Chameleon Drakes are a breed of very small dragons that are fairly common in **Umbragia**. They are magical creatures that are highly prized for their many uses in alchemy.

The eggs of the Chameleon Drake are semi-translucent. This is the first hint as to the nature of these creatures. When hatched, they have soft, smooth skin and nothing but the smallest of nubs for their wings. On average, a newly hatched wyrmling is about 7 inches long.

As they age, the Chameleon Drake does not grow very much (or very fast). The wings will develop slowly, and will be usable about the time they are adults. Unlike most dragons, the speed of flight on a Chameleon Drake is relatively slow at first. However, these small dragons fly much like hummingbirds – they can hover in the air, fly backwards, and so on. Chameleon Drakes, at this stage of their lives, stop relying on their legs so much as they begin to fly most everywhere. This results in a steady increase in flying speeds, while the ground speed never improves.

Also at the adult stages, the skin on the Chameleon Drake begins to harden. Every hundred years or so, the Drake will shed its skin. During these times, the natural AC bonus is taken away. It takes a Chameleon Drake approximately ten years to re-grow the new skin. Each growth of skin for the Drake is a different color than the last one.

Chameleon Drakes have long, thin claws that they use in combat. This is not normally much a threat until they can fly; at which time it becomes very difficult to avoid getting attacked in the face. Once the blur, invisibility and phase shifting abilities of these creatures mature, combat against even a single specimen is a dreaded event in the life of even the most hardened or warriors. Once fully grown, the Great Wurm Chameleon Drake is still only 4 ft. in length with a weight of perhaps 35 or 40 pounds. Still, they are strong, extremely tough and very graceful. Combined with their natural abilities, these creatures are more than capable of defending themselves.

They are found in great numbers along the borders to the Dragonlands and the badlands. The phase shifting capabilities

have left many sages wondering if they have something to do with the odd events in the Badlands.

COMBAT

Chameleon Drakes are fearsome opponents – when you can find them. They are masters of hiding and stealth. Starting at the young stage, they are treated as Mage's, gaining a level every age bracket or so until adulthood, when they truly begin to study the arts and advance a little more quickly. All Chameleon Drakes are Earth Sphere mages.

As far as skills go, Chameleon Drakes always have at least a Hide +8, Listen +8, Move Silently +8, Search +6 and Spot +8. Other skills (as well as the exact rating of these skills) vary from individual to individual.

Rumor states that many of the Chameleon Drakes have other Drakes as henchmen (assuming they have the Leadership feat). This, if true, would only happen when the Drake is at least Adult. Other common feats include Flyby Attack and Combat Reflexes.

Blur (Sp): Once a mature adult, the Drake can create a blurring effect making it hard to target the drake, even while moving (see *Chameleon*, below). A number of times equal to the Constitution bonus per day, the drake can blur itself for 3d6+2 combat rounds. While blurred, the drake gains an AC and attack bonus equal to its Wisdom bonus.

Breath Weapon (Su): The Chameleon Drake may spew forth a cone-shaped cloud of organic corrosive. Fortunately, the size of these drakes prohibits the gas from eating away at anything for very long, and so the damage is not too great.

Chameleon (Ex): When the drake is in an earthy or wooded area,

it can alter its skin colors to match. This can include extremely complex patterns. So long as the drake remains motionless, it becomes very difficult to see. The parenthetical number indicates the DC of spot or search checks to actually see the drake.

Fear (Sp): As per the normal Dragon capability, Chameleon Drakes have a natural Fear aura. This aura is not nearly as developed as it is in some other breeds of dragon.

Invisibility (Sp): Very old and older Chameleon Drakes can become completely invisible for short periods of time. Once per day (2x per day at Wyrms and 3x per day at Great Wyrms) the drake can become completely invisible for 3d6+2 combat rounds. See **Core Rulebook I**, page 133 for more information on combating invisible creatures.

Phase Shift (Sp): Wyrms and Great Wyrms have the deadly ability to phase out of this dimension completely, being treated as incorporeal beings for short periods. Strangely, the breath-weapon of these creatures can still effect the physical world, and so they are incredibly dangerous at this stage of their lives. Once per day the drake can phase out of reality for 3d6+2 combat rounds. See **Core Rulebook III**, page 6 for more information on incorporeal creatures.

Spell Casting (Sp): These creatures are natural Mages (with the *Dragon Touched* and *Sphere: Earth* feats). They peak out at about 10th level, however. No known Chameleon Drakes have ever advanced past this.

| Age | Size | Hit Dice (HP) | AC | Attack Bonus | Fort Save | Ref Save | Will Save | Breath Weapon (DC) | Fear DC | SR | CR |
|--------------|------|----------------|----------------------------------|--------------|-----------|----------|-----------|--------------------|---------|----|----|
| Wyrmling | D | ½d12 (3) | 14 (+4 Size) | +4 | +2 | +0 | +0 | 1d4 (10) | — | 10 | ½ |
| Very Young | D | 1d12 (6) | 14 (+4 Size) | +5 | +2 | +0 | +0 | 1d4 (11) | — | 10 | 1 |
| Young | D | 1 ½d12+1 (11) | 14 (+4 Size) | +5 | +3 | +1 | +1 | 2d4 (11) | — | 10 | 2 |
| Juvenile | D | 2d12+2 (15) | 14 (+4 Size) | +6 | +3 | +1 | +1 | 2d4 (12) | — | 11 | 3 |
| Young Adult | D | 2 ½d12+5 (21) | 15 (+4 Size, +1 Dex) | +6 | +4 | +2 | +2 | 3d4 (12) | 10 | 11 | 4 |
| Adult | D | 3d12+6 (25) | 16 (+4 Size, +1 Dex, +1 Natural) | +7 | +4 | +2 | +2 | 3d4 (13) | 10 | 11 | 5 |
| Mature Adult | T | 3 ½d12+11 (34) | 16 (+2 Size, +2 Dex, +2 Natural) | +7 | +5 | +3 | +3 | 4d4 (13) | 10 | 12 | 6 |
| Old | T | 4d12+12 (38) | 17 (+2 Size, +2 Dex, +3 Natural) | +8 | +5 | +3 | +3 | 4d4 (14) | 10 | 12 | 8 |
| Very Old | T | 4 ½d12+18 (47) | 19 (+2 Size, +3 Dex, +4 Natural) | +8 | +6 | +4 | +4 | 5d4 (14) | 11 | 12 | 10 |
| Ancient | S | 5d12+20 (52) | 19 (+1 Size, +3 Dex, +5 Natural) | +9 | +6 | +4 | +4 | 5d4 (15) | 11 | 13 | 12 |
| Wyrms | S | 5 ½d12+28 (64) | 21 (+1 Size, +4 Dex, +6 Natural) | +9 | +7 | +5 | +5 | 6d4 (15) | 11 | 14 | 14 |
| Great Wyrms | S | 6d12+30 (69) | 22 (+1 Size, +4 Dex, +7 Natural) | +10 | +7 | +5 | +5 | 6d4 (16) | 11 | 15 | 16 |

| Age | Speed | Str | Dex | Con | Int | Wis | Cha | Special Abilities | Caster Level |
|--------------|-------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------------------------------|--------------|
| Wyrmling | 10 ft. | 1 | 10 | 10 | 5 | 10 | 10 | Chameleon (15) | — |
| Very Young | 15 ft. | 2 | 10 | 11 | 5 | 10 | 10 | Chameleon (16) | — |
| Young | 20 ft. | 3 | 10 | 12 | 5 | 11 | 11 | Chameleon (17) | 1 |
| Juvenile | 25 ft. | 4 | 11 | 13 | 6 | 12 | 12 | Chameleon (18) | 2 |
| Young Adult | 30 ft. | 5 | 12 | 14 | 7 | 13 | 13 | Chameleon (19) | 3 |
| Adult | 30 ft., fly 10 ft. (average) | 6 | 13 | 15 | 8 | 14 | 14 | Chameleon (20) | 4 |
| Mature Adult | 30 ft., fly 20 ft. (average) | 7 | 14 | 16 | 10 | 15 | 15 | Chameleon (22), Blur | 6 |
| Old | 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (good) | 8 | 15 | 17 | 12 | 16 | 16 | Chameleon (24) | 8 |
| Very Old | 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (good) | 9 | 16 | 18 | 14 | 17 | 17 | Chameleon (26), Invisibility | 10 |
| Ancient | 30 ft., fly 70 ft. (perfect) | 10 | 17 | 19 | 16 | 18 | 18 | Chameleon (28) | 10 |
| Wyrms | 30 ft., fly 90 ft. (perfect) | 11 | 18 | 20 | 18 | 19 | 19 | Chameleon (30), Phase Shift | 10 |
| Great Wyrms | 30 ft., fly 120 ft. (perfect) | 12 | 19 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | Chameleon (35) | 10 |

CRYSTAL MOTH

Tiny Fey

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Hit Dice: | ½d6-1 (2) |
| Initiative: | +3 (+3 Dex) |
| Speed: | fly 45 ft. |
| Armor Class: | 15 (+2 Size, +3 Dex) |
| Attacks: | Crystal Shards +5 ranged |
| Damage: | Crystal Shards 1d8-5 |
| Face/Reach: | 1 ft. by 1 ft. / 0 ft. |
| Spec. Attacks: | None |
| Spec. Qualities: | Natural Spell Caster |
| Saves: | Fort +0, Ref +4, Will +2 |
| Abilities: | Str 1, Dex 14, Con 8, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 6 |
| Skills: | Listen +8, Search +8, Spot +8, Spell craft +6 |
| Feats: | Flyby Attack |
| Climate/Terrain: | Any wooded |
| Organization: | Solitary, Pair, Band (3-12), Clan (20-40) |
| Challenge: | 1/4 |
| Treasure: | Standard |
| Alignment: | Always chaotic |
| Advancement: | 1-3 HD (Tiny) or see below |

DESCRIPTION

They are not moths and despise the name given them. Some still call them Cheantis. Cheantis is an ancient word meaning 'children of the stars' or 'tiny lights.'

Crystal Moths are small humanoid-shaped creatures with thin, powdery moth-like wings that have a translucent appearance that catches light in strange ways. This makes them appear as clouds of glitter floating in the air from a distance. This and their preferred weapons are what eventually lead to the name they hate so much.

Crystal Moths are in danger of going extinct soon if their numbers do not rebound. Constant encroachment into their homelands has taken its toll. Combine this with the fact that they average less than 16 inches in height, and one can see how these poor creatures are losing the race for survival.

COMBAT

In combat, Crystal Moths use long shards of crystal that they throw at their opponents. These weapons are very sharp and deal 1d8-5 damage (range 10 ft., critical 19-20).

Crystal Moths can advance as per a class type. They are limited to Cleric, Rogue and Warrior. Perhaps one Crystal Moth in 100,000 ever shows such talent. Most never advance past 3rd level. The most famous was Shaghise of Normak, however, who lived two thousand years ago. She was a Warrior/3, Rogue/4, Cleric/3 and the subject of nearly every Crystal moth legend.

Natural Spell Caster (Sp): All Crystal Moths are treated as though they were *Touched* (see **Religion & Sorcery**) of a level equal to their hit dice (minimum 1st level).

ERMIN

Small Beast

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Hit Dice: | 2d10-2 (9) |
| Initiative: | -2 (-2 Dex) |
| Speed: | 15 ft. |
| Armor Class: | 12 (+1 Size, -2 Dex, +3 Natural) |
| Attacks: | Bite +4 melee, Four Claws -2 melee |
| Damage: | Bite 1d4+2, Claw 1d6+2 |
| Face/Reach: | 5 ft. by 5 ft. / 5 ft. |
| Spec. Attacks: | None |
| Spec. Qualities: | Spell Immunities |
| Saves: | +0 Fort, -2 Ref, +0 Will |
| Abilities: | Str 14, Dex 7, Con 9, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 6 |
| Skills: | Listen +3, Spot +5 |
| Feats: | Weapon Focus (Bite) |
| Climate/Terrain: | Any land and underground |
| Organization: | Solitary, pair, nest (3-9) |
| Challenge: | ¼ (one-quarter) |
| Treasure: | None |
| Alignment: | Always true Neutral |
| Advancement: | 3-5 HD (Small) |

DESCRIPTION

Ermine appear to be some sort of cross between a large rat and a badger. They are found all over the northern reaches of **Umbragia** living in burrowed tunnels just under the surface of the ground, coming out at night to hunt for food. They will eat just about anything as long as it has rotted for a while. Due to this, most of the communities of the northern areas tend to keep garbage covered so as not to attract the vermin.

When encountered below ground, they seek out dark corners to form large nests. The nest will smell as foul as the worst garbage ever encountered; some can be detected for a quarter mile by scent alone once unearthed.

Although they typically have no treasure, every now and then the Ermine will have grabbed something to use in the nest that could be of value. Give this a 2% chance per Ermine in the nest.

COMBAT

They have large mouths with sharp teeth, but will usually flee instead of fight unless cornered. Due to the odd body shape (the forelegs are set somewhat far back on the creatures body) the claws are not generally used in combat. When they are, it is a sure sign of desperation by the creature, as the posture it must enter into to use the claws (on its back) lowers the armor class of the beast by 2 points (AC 10). The creature cannot move while like this, but can attack with all four claws and its bite in the same round.

Spell Immunities (Su): The Ermine are immune to any effect of control (charm animal, etc). The creature simply does not have enough brain to control.

GAUNT HORROR

Undead Template

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Armor Class: | Bonus +3 |
| Attacks: | None |
| Damage: | None |
| Spec. Attacks: | Soul Reave |
| Spec. Qualities: | Insubstantial, Undead Qualities |
| Saves: | Bonus +3 to all saves |
| Abilities: | Str *, Dex ±0, Con *, Int ±0, Wis ±0, Cha ±0 |
| Skills: | Racial bonus +2 to Spot, Listen and Search |
| Climate/Terrain: | Graveyards, battlegrounds, sites of violent deaths and tragedies, tombs and ruins |
| Organization: | Solitary |
| Challenge: | Bonus +2 |
| Treasure: | None |
| Alignment: | As in life |
| Advancement: | None |

* An insubstantial creature, a Gaunt Horror has no Strength score; as an undead creature, a Gaunt Horror has no Constitution score

HAUNT

Undead Template

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Armor Class: | Bonus +3 |
| Attacks: | As in life |
| Damage: | As in life |
| Spec. Attacks: | As in life |
| Spec. Qualities: | As in life; Spell Immunities, Turn Resistance, Undead Qualities |
| Saves: | Bonus Fort +5 |
| Abilities: | Str -2, Dex -2, Con *, Int -2, Wis -4, Cha -4 |
| Skills: | Bonus +4 on Spot, Listen and Search |
| Climate/Terrain: | Any land and underground |
| Organization: | Solitary, Pair, Squad (3-8) |
| Challenge: | Bonus +2 |
| Treasure: | None (generally) |
| Alignment: | Neutral |
| Advancement: | None |

* An undead creature, a Haunt has no Constitution score

DESCRIPTION

Gaunt Horrors appear as translucent ghostly images. The form is much like it was in life, had the body been starved. It is as if an ethereal cloak were placed about the skeleton and stretched tight.

The Gaunt Horror is the remaining life force of a dead humanoid that dies from a violent death steeped in tragedy such as someone that dies at the hands of a loved one, or in defense of a noble, but doomed cause. All Gaunt Horrors died without last rites.

These ghostly forms haunt the sites of their former life – but within 1000 feet of their bodily remains. If the body physical remains of a Gaunt Horror are destroyed, this will free the Gaunt Horror to haunt anywhere it likes.

The Gaunt Horror feeds on the misery of those that destroyed it in life. Barring the existence of those responsible, it will feed on relatives, descendents and the like.

COMBAT

Soul Reave (Sp): A successful touch (treat as a melee attack that ignores armor) from a Gaunt Horror will drain 1d4 permanent (non-healing) hit points from the victim. As a result, the Gaunt Horror heals the same number of hit points. If this places the Gaunt Horror above the starting value, then it will gain temporary hit points from the drain that lasts for 24 hours. A successful Fort save (DC15) negates this.

Undead Qualities (Ex): As undead, the gaunt horror possesses all qualities of an undead creature.

DESCRIPTION

The Haunt appears as corporeal, rotting piles of flesh. They are not particularly motivated, but will follow the instructions given to them by their creator.

They maintain all skills and abilities that they had in life. Whatever personality and memories they may have had are gone, however. When raised, they will have a number of hit dice equal to the number they had in life, but the dice are rolled again (d12s this time).

Once created they are completely subservient to the Necromancer that created them. Control of a Haunt cannot be given to another. If the Necromantic Master should die, then all of the Haunts that they control will collapse into dead flesh. The former undead can be raised again, however...

COMBAT

Spell Immunities (Ex): Haunts are completely immune to all Divine spells. Additionally, they are immune to all mind-affecting spells and spell-like abilities.

Turn Resistance (Ex): Haunts are very difficult to turn. If the Master is within 100 feet, they cannot be turned. If the Master is beyond 100 feet, the Haunt receives +10 Turn Resistance. This bonus is reduced by one point for every doubling of this distance. This equates to +9 up to 200 feet, +8 up to 400 feet, +7 up to 800 feet, +6 up to 1/4-mile, +5 up to 1/2-mile, +4 up to 1 mile, +3 up to 2 miles, +2 up to 4 miles, +1 up to 8 miles and no Turn Resistance bonus beyond 8 miles.

Undead Qualities (Ex): As undead, the haunt possesses all qualities of an undead creature.

ICE DEVIL

Medium-size Magical Beast (Ice, Water)

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Hit Dice: | 6d10+36 (70) |
| Initiative: | +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative) |
| Speed: | 60 ft., fly 90 ft. (good) |
| Armor Class: | 20 (+4 Dex, +6 Natural) |
| Attacks: | 2 Claws +9 melee, Bite +3 melee |
| Damage: | Claws 1d8+2, Bite 1d6+2 |
| Face/Reach: | 5 ft. by 5 ft. / 5 ft. |
| Spec. Attacks: | Frostbite |
| Spec. Qualities: | Ice-walk, Immunities, Spell Immunities |
| Saves: | +11 Fort, +9 Ref, +5 Will |
| Abilities: | Str 14, Dex 19, Con 22, Int 7, Wis 16, Cha 14 |
| Skills: | Listen +8, Search +8, Spot +8 |
| Feats: | Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (Claws) |
| Climate/Terrain: | Any cold |
| Organization: | Solitary, Pair |
| Challenge: | 6 |
| Treasure: | Standard |
| Alignment: | Chaotic Neutral |
| Advancement: | 7-10 HD (medium-size), 11-15 HD (Large) |

DESCRIPTION

The creatures name notwithstanding, these are not devils (Deu'il) nor are they extraplanar in origin. They are magical constructs left over from the age of Wizards. Few of these creatures remain, and those few that do are highly coveted after prizes in Ghorax.

Ice Devils are approximately 7 feet tall, weigh 300 pounds and have large leather-like wings that spread to a wingspan of over 18 feet. They appear as though they were albinos (pure white in color with pink eyes).

COMBAT

They have sharp metallic talons extending from their powerful hands and generally attack with both claws in combat. Fearless, they will always fight to the death.

They are solitary creatures for the most part, but when a pair is seen, it is generally mating season. Female Ice Devils can only bare young once every ten years or so, thus meeting a pair is rather deadly.

Frostbite (Ex): If both claw attacks strike true, the Ice Devil can make a third attack with the bite. A successful bite from one of these creatures causes an additional 1d12 cold damage.

Ice-walk (Sp): Ice Devils can pass through ice, snow and the like as though it were not there.

Immunities (Ex): Ice devils are completely immune to all cold, ice and water based attacks and effects.

Spell Immunities (Ex): Ice devils are completely immune to all cold, ice and water based spells and spell like abilities.

J'NIQUA

Huge Construct (Unique)

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Hit Dice: | 8d10 (55 hit points) |
| Initiative: | -1 (Dex) |
| Speed: | 40 ft. (multiple legs) |
| Armor Class: | 22 (-2 Size, -1 Dex, +15 natural) |
| Attacks: | Slam +9 melee, Weapon +5 (by type) melee |
| Damage: | Slam 2d6+7, Weapon (by type) |
| Face/Reach: | 10 ft. by 10 ft. / 15 ft. (tall) |
| Spec. Attacks: | Trample |
| Spec. Qualities: | Construct, Hardness 15, SR 20, Stored Spells |
| Saves: | Fort +2, Ref +1, Will -3 |
| Abilities: | Str 20, Dex 8, Con -, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1 |
| Skills: | none (see below) |
| Feats: | none (see below) |
| Climate/Terrain: | Any land and underground |
| Organization: | Solitary (unique) |
| Challenge: | 12 |
| Treasure: | Guards the J'Iniqua hoard (see below) |
| Alignment: | Neutral (variable – see below) |
| Advancement: | none |

DESCRIPTION

In the old days, back when the Great Crystal City of Nephara still stood, there lived the Wizard/Druid by the name of J'Iniqua who sought the secrets of eternal life. He was not evil, so the idea of becoming a Lich or some other *mockery* of life was distasteful. Still, his fear of death was great. His ambition was to be a champion of the people. He wanted to create an ever-lasting body that he could live forever within.

So he built a machine. It was a construct standing some 20 feet tall with six tentacle-like arms and four powerful legs. When he set forth to transfer his soul and his essence into the machine, something went terribly wrong. What resulted was an insanity with the smallest essence of J'Iniqua the man and an animated construct of untold power.

Over the next century it was encountered many times. Some legends tell of it loosing a leg or a couple of arms... Attempts to destroy it with magic have only made it resistant to spells.

When the fall of the Great Crystal City came, the construct J'Iniqua returned to gather the treasure of the city. If this is true, it is untold what treasures it might have hidden. Most legends refer to this as the J'Iniqua Hoard.

Some legends state that the soul of J'Iniqua occasionally wrestles control and can rise to the surface of the great machine. In these times, the Int, Wis and Cha scores can be as high as 20 each (add 2d10 to each ability score to simulate this). This is not a blessing, as the legends state clearly that the old sage's mind has been rendered mad from centuries of darkened existence.

Some of the legends speak of possible minor constructs J'Iniqua made before settling on the final design that would be his undoing. If they were completed and have survived to the modern era, they would be considered as small to large *Animated Objects* (**Core Rulebook III**, page 17). Most legends settle on about a dozen or so minor constructs. The worst of the legends (from the various records of the Crystal City) list a total of 100 such machines – this seems unlikely given the nature of the man.

It might be possible to take control of the machine. Given the current level of Spell Resistance that the Mithral construct has, this seems unlikely.

COMBAT

If encountered, depending on the state of madness, alignment possibilities range from N, NE, CN and CE.

Trample (Ex): as a construct of at least large size and hardness 10, J’Iniqua can trample an opponent (as per *Animate Object* from the **Core Rulebook III** page 18).

Construct (Ex): as a construct, J’Iniqua has all of the characteristics of a construct (**Core Rulebook III**, page 5). As far as the mind-effect immunities are concerned, J’Iniqua is immune even when the old mage has surfaced due to the extent of his madness.

Hardness (Ex): J’Iniqua is made of enchanted Mithral, and thus has a hardness of 15. For more information on hardness and its effects, see *Attacking an Object* in the **Core Rulebook I**, page 135.

Spell Resistance (Ex): J’Iniqua has a natural SR of 20.

Stored Spells (Sp): When it was created, the machine was built to act much like a massive ring of spell storing. If the old mage has surfaced, and his Int is at least 10, then all spells that he was able to cast in life (that can be cast given the limits of the current Int level) are available to him. Consider him an 13th level Wizard/7th level Druid. If not, the construct has stored currently between 2-24 spells (2d12) of various levels...determine randomly. The rudimentary driving ‘*intellect*’ of the construct is aware of these spells and will use them if it feels that they are useful.

Skills and Feats: If the old mage has managed to gather some control, it is possible that his skills and feats could also be used. In life J’Iniqua had many feats and skills, and so the Game Master is free to come up with a list determined by the current state of his control over the machine.

The Hoard: treat this as 2d6 times standard treasure.

KEAHKINE

Large Beast

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Hit Dice: | 3d10+3 (19) |
| Initiative: | +0 (Dex) |
| Speed: | 50 ft. |
| Armor Class: | 11 (+0 Dex, +1 Natural) |
| Attacks: | Beak +3 melee, 2 Claws -2 melee |
| Damage: | Beak 1d8+2, Claws 1d4+2 |
| Face/Reach: | 5 ft. by 10 ft. / 10 ft. |
| Spec. Attacks: | Wing Beat |
| Spec. Qualities: | Slowfall, Sprint |
| Saves: | Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +1 |
| Abilities: | Str 15, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 3, Wis 11, Cha 4 |
| Skills: | Listen +2, Spot +5 |
| Feats: | Power Attack |
| Climate/Terrain: | Jungles, grasslands, prairie |
| Organization: | Solitary, Pair, Nest (2 adult, 1-8 young), Flock (10-100) |
| Challenge: | 2 |
| Treasure: | None (nests could have 1-8 eggs) |
| Alignment: | Always Neutral |
| Advancement: | 4-7 HD (Large) |

DESCRIPTION

These large flightless birds can be found all around the **Realms of Shadow**. They were once hunted nearly to extinction, but have managed to rebound in the modern era. They have large, tough, multi-colored feathers and powerful legs. They have a nearly universal digestive system allowing them to eat just about anything – they are the stereotypical omnivore. Slain Keahkine have been known to have rocks, coins, gemstones, small knives, and even pieces of plate armor in their multiple stomachs.

In the old days, the Lukar’r would use these as mounts. Generally speaking, the mounts they choose were of the larger specimens (perhaps 6+ HD). Today, few still use them (they have become a rather rare bird). Those that do are the more affluent of the race. A set of full riding gear for one of these birds is definitely neither cheap nor easily found.

COMBAT

In combat, an untrained bird is rather timid. They will flee if possible, unless they are defending a nest. If this is the case, nothing shy of death will stop them.

Wing Beat (Ex): In open spaces, a Keahkine can beat its wings creating a lot of wind. In dusty or sandy areas this could even blind an opponent. Treat this attack as a Wind Wall spell had just been cast.

Slowfall (Ex): Although unable to fly, a Keahkine can slow its fall when jumping from a great height. Treat this as though a Feather Fall spell were in effect.

Sprint (Ex): 3x per day, a Keahkine can move very quickly as though under the spell *Expeditious Retreat*.

NIGHTSHADE FOX

Small Beast

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Hit Dice: | 1d8+1 (5) |
| Initiative: | +2 (Dex) |
| Speed: | 60 ft. |
| Armor Class: | 15 (+1 Size, +2 Dex, +2 Natural) |
| Attacks: | 2 Claws +4 melee, Bite -1 melee |
| Damage: | Claw 1d4+2, Bite 1d4+2 |
| Face/Reach: | 5 ft. by 5 ft. / 5 ft. |
| Spec. Attacks: | Howl |
| Spec. Qualities: | Blink, Blur |
| Saves: | +3 Fort, +2 Ref, +0 Will |
| Abilities: | Str 12, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 3, Wis 13, Cha 12 |
| Skills: | Hide +8, Listen +4, Move Silently +11, Spot +6 |
| Feats: | Track |
| Climate/Terrain: | Temperate to Arctic forest, hills and mountains |
| Organization: | Solitary, pair, pack (3-18) |
| Challenge: | 2 |
| Treasure: | None |
| Alignment: | Always Neutral |
| Advancement: | 2-3 HD (small) |

DESCRIPTION

Nightshade Foxes are small fox-like creatures, but they have no real relationship with true foxes. They have a dull black coat with a light streak of red/white in the tail (which eventually lead to the misconception).

They are powerfully built creatures that thrive in the colder climates. Most any mountain range will be teeming with them. At night, they can be heard howling to the night sky with a low, rumbling growl that has been known (or rumored) to have a deep psychological impact on those that listen too closely. Nightshade Foxes are strictly nocturnal creatures.

COMBAT

When encountered, Nightshade Foxes use a modified pack-tactic. They will over-run and concentrate on a single foe to the exclusion of all others before moving to the next victim. The ability to inspire fear, as well as avoid being hit during the new and full moons make this a dreaded creature indeed.

Howl (Sp): The howl of the Nightshade Fox should be treated as a *Cause Fear* spell to all who hear it for more than 5 combat rounds. The Will save is at DC 10 + the number of Nightshade Foxes howling in the pack.

Blink (Sp): Once per night during a full moon, the Nightshade Fox can blink as per the spell *Blink*. Treat this as though the creature were a 10th level caster.

Blur (Sp): Twice per night during a new moon, the Nightshade Fox can blur as per the spell *Blur*. Treat this as though the creature were a 10th level caster.

SHADOW LICH

Undead Template

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Armor Class: | Bonus +5 |
| Attacks: | Shadow Touch <i>melee</i> |
| Damage: | Shadow Touch 1d12+HD |
| Spec. Attacks: | None |
| Spec. Qualities: | Aura of Death, Cloak of Shadows, Immunities, Steal Life, Turn Resistance, Undead Qualities |
| Saves: | Bonus +4 to Will saves |
| Abilities: | Str +2, Dex ±0, Con *, Int ±0, Wis ±0, Cha +6 |
| Skills: | Racial bonus of +5 to Listen, Search and Spot |
| Climate/Terrain: | Any land or underground |
| Organization: | Solitary, Cabal (1 shadow lich, 2-4 shades, 5-10 fades and 11-30 miscellaneous minor undead) |
| Challenge: | Bonus +3 |
| Treasure: | Triple standard |
| Alignment: | Any evil |
| Advancement: | By character class |

* As an undead creature, a Shadow Lich has no Constitution score

DESCRIPTION

In the days after the death of magic, there were those desperate and evil souls that tried desperately to contact the Due'il to grant them power, but these attempts at communication were either ignored or never reached the dark souls of the underworld.

When magic was again reborn, the Deu'il sent forth agents of evil to tempt and to teach a new generation of dark Mages. When they begin to show some real promise, some are offered a path of darkness and power unlike any other. In exchange for the life essence that they have, they are granted a walking death of immortality. What they gain is self-evident. What they loose is all mortality, their immortal soul, and a great deal of freewill.

A Shadow Lich is a powerful Mage that has traded his soul for the power of eternal life (if you can call it that) and ever-growing magical strength. Shadow Lich is a template that can be added to any humanoid creature that has completed the steps needed to become one of the vile creatures (see *Becoming a Shadow Lich*, below). The character maintains all abilities s/he had in life, and gains the traits of the table above.

COMBAT

The Shadow Lich are powerful and frightening in combat. Even without weapons, they are (by definition) powerful Mages and so have a large repertoire of spells to choose from. In addition, they have mysterious dark energies that swirl about their decaying flesh granting them a bonus of +5 to their armor class (this is in addition to any armor they might be wearing).

The touch of a Shadow Lich is extremely painful. Before any other unarmed damage it taken into effect, the damage is 1d12 + HD (thus a 17 Hit Die Lich will do from 18-29 points of damage with a simple touch).

Aura of Death (Su): The Shadow Lich radiate a powerful aura of evil and death that causes continuous damage to all living things within 30 feet of the creature. Each round a living being is in the radius, unless a successful Fort save is made, they will take 1d4

damage. This will cause plants to wither and die, while most animals will flee in terror.

Cloak of Shadows (*Sp*): Dark and mystical energies surround the lich. In addition to the +5 AC bonus this grants, it also allows the Lich to summon up to five *Shadows* (see **Core Rulebook III**, page 161). The summoned Shadow will remain active for one hour per HD of the lich. Each time this ability is used and for the duration of the summoning, the Lich suffers a -1 penalty to AC. No more than five *Shadows* can be active at any given time.

Immunities (*Su*): The shadow lich is immune to all Death spells and spell-like effects.

Steal Life (*Sp*): Each new moon, the shadow lich loses 1d12 hit points. This is not treated as damage. The only way to stave off this loss is to drain the life energies from another. This being must be a sentient creature with a soul (thus, not undead, plant or animal, etc.). Stealing the life of the creature requires a dark rite performed during the new moon and the slaying of the victim.

Turn Resistance (*Su*): A shadow lich can be turned by a good cleric. However, given the amount of power they wield, they are turned at a -6 penalty.

Undead Qualities (*Su*): As undead, the shadow lich possesses all qualities of an undead creature.

BECOMING A LICH

There are many steps required for becoming a Shadow Lich. Most are exactly as per the standard Lich from the **Core Rulebook III**, page 217. However, the Shadow Lich is a particularly dark individual (and considering the standard lich, this is saying something).

All Shadow Liches are servants of the Due'il, and this is the source of their additional power. Details of becoming a Lich and a Shadow Lich can be found in the upcoming book **Animals and Monsters**.

ARTIFACTS, AND MAGIC ITEMS SAMPLER

As unique as the flora and fauna are the items of powerful magic that linger from the ages of the Wizards – before the creation of the Badlands.

Although the supplement **Umbragia: Religion and Sorcery** will have a large selection of new items of power to throw at your adventuring parties, below is a sampling of items to tempt and taunt until then...

ARENWIK'S GLOBE

ARTIFACT, MAJOR

This crystal sphere is some thirty-six inches in diameter and completely flawless. A minor Deity named Arenwik enchanted it in the days of the Heaven's Wars. Legend states that Arenwik, gazing into his crystal, was able to see the eventual death of the Gods.

He became one of the war's earliest casualties before he could warn the gods, however. The crystal survived and is sometimes seen in the **Realms of Shadow**. It is never a good omen.

The sphere is nearly indestructible. It has a hardness of 75 (!) and can take 250 points of damage before it begins to crack. No magic works in a radius of 50 feet of the sphere (treat this as a field of SR50) and is tricky for an additional 50 feet or so past that (reduce the SR rating by 1 for each additional foot of distance).

Those that gaze into the sphere and concentrate on a subject for five minutes suffer 2d4 damage and must pay 2d4 x500 experience points. They will, however, have gained 1d8 skill points. These skill points will go into the skill that most closely maps to the subject (DM's call). If no skill fits, then it becomes a Knowledge (*subject*) skill.

CAULDRON OF SNOW

ARTIFACT, MINOR

The Cauldron of snow is a strange and obscure item of unknown origin. The earliest record of the item is from an ancient poem (see below). However, the poem seems to have no known origin either. Who made the Cauldrons is not known...but they exist and many have found them of use over the years.

The Wind, Like a whisper, blows gently past my skin
And Leaves, Like faded memories, rustle in my mind
Rain stings my skin and distracts my mind...
You are a witch,
and your cauldron brews the snows that freeze my heart

The Wind, Like a lion, rips through my fur to my skin
And Leaves, Like razors whip quietly past my head
They're flies with deadly wings...
You are my lover,
and your cauldron brews the snows that freeze my heart

To use the cauldron requires no talent in magic. Simply pour cold water into the cauldron over an item owned by the person that you are targeting. Two things will happen afterwards...

The first is a sever shift in the local weather. Cold spells, summer snows, lightning snow storms and the like will take place for the next 1d20 days in a range of 2d10 miles. For this time the person that activated the cauldron will be in a sleep-like trance.

The second is that once the storms subside, the activating person wakes and makes a Will roll (DC 15) then the target has their heart freeze – not in a physical way, they simply cannot feel love in any way. The target gets a Will save each full moon (DC 20) to break the effects. Each time they succeed in the Will save, the spell is either broken or the activating individual loses one point of Wisdom (50/50 chance of either). If the effects last for more than one year and one day, then they become permanent.

FENRISK'S BLADES

ARTIFACTS, MINOR

Nine daggers did the renowned assassin Fenrisk make. And nine lives did he live. If anyone were to carry more than one of these blades at the same time, they would have no effect.

Each dagger matches one of the nine-alignments. Each one of the blades radiates a mystic aura that masks the soul of the bearer. To all spells, effect and abilities, the bearer is treated as if they were the alignment of the dagger itself.

These items have never all surfaced at once. Every few years one of them is found and used (or causes some rather embarrassing confusions).

JADE THRONE

ARTIFACT, MAJOR

This throne sits still in the main hall of the Castle of Jianthor's Jade Dragon. In all of the history of **Umbragia**, it is doubtful that any other item of this power exists anywhere. Unfortunately, nobody alive today knows how to activate the thing.

According to the legends and scrolls that describe the throne, those that sit in it gain perfect clarity of thought. It has the effect of raising all of the mental abilities (Int, Wis and Cha) by 1d12 each. Spells cast by someone sitting in the throne require no components at all and are cast as though the caster were 10 levels higher than they actually are.

Additionally, the person sitting in the throne can cast spells they do not even know! Each spell cast like this requires an expenditure of hit points equal to the spells level. This will not allow the caster to cast a spell that they would not be eligible to cast (meaning that if they are not a spell caster, they are limited to the spells that a 10th level caster – 0-level +10 – could cast).

LANCE OF THE SEA KING

ARTIFACT, MINOR

This rather unusual item was created in the days of the Shurque. When being held by a warrior on a horse, it allows the pair to

travel underwater as easily as on the ground. While under water, the horse can effectively fly, changing altitudes, etc.

This Lance was last seen being carried by a Nephalous trireme. The ship was lost after an attack by the Tiasham Navy. A storm moved through the area, and so no recovery of the item was possible. Some believe that the Polymarie are holding the item, although they deny this.

SWORD OF ALTRUINCE

ARTIFACT, MINOR

This seemingly innocent blade is one of great power. Not, perhaps the most powerful blade, it is certainly the one with the most colorful history in **Umbragia**.

Once wielded by Lord Charles Altruince, this sword has been lost and found at least a dozen times since his death in 1163. None that have ever owned the sword after him have lived for more than a month after acquiring it.

When the legendary Warrior wielded the sword, it was known to be a +2 Brilliant Energy Longsword. Additionally, on critical hits, the sword had some rather odd 'critical stacking' capabilities. When a critical is scored, make note of how much the second 'check' to-hit roll succeeded by. This is the additional multiple for damage. For example, a warrior swinging the sword hits with an unmodified roll of 20, threatening a critical. On the check roll, the total roll (after all modifiers) hits and thus a critical is scored – double damage! However, as this is the Sword of Altruince, we check to see how well the check roll succeeded by. The AC of the creature being attacked is 17, the modified roll is 24! This is a success by +7, meaning that the sword does an additional x7 damage!

Since his death, the sword is cursed. As stated above, no individual that has carried the sword as her/his own has lived more than a month afterwards. The nature of this curse is not known. It was last seen in the vault of Nephalous where it was stolen. Lord Alzane of Umberland (Alzane the Mad) was sent after the weapon and lost his mind in the process. If his account of the journey is true, the sword is still in the Madlands.

APPENDICES

GLOSSARY

A people of the Realms of Shadow. See **RACES**.

A people of the Realms of Shadow. The Aesir are one of the three human races. See **RACES**.

A period of 1728 years on the *Vasylian Star Calendar*.

A nation of Umbragia. See **NATIONS**.

The top dog in a pack of Zynar.

A child or sibling of the Monarch of Al Hadim. The word translates literally to *Of the Royal House*. They are the Princes and Princesses of the nation of Al Hadim.

The Monarch of Al Hadim. The title translates literally to *Grand Marshal*. May be related to the term **KHA**.

The father of the Monarch of Al Hadim. The word translates literally to Lord-father. He is a seat of authority within the Holy Church of the One True Path.

The mother of the Monarch of Al Hadim. The word translates literally to Lord-mother. She is a seat of authority within the Holy Church of the One True Path.

The wife of the Monarch of Al Hadim (see **ALKHA**). She holds no real political authority, but as the wife of the monarch and head of the Church of Al Hadim, she holds some real power.

A hero that nearly lost his mind in the Realms of Madness on a quest to regain the legendary Sword of Altruince. See **REALMS OF MADNESS**.

ANCIENT ONES
Ancient Ones is the collective name for the original Gods that awoke in the dawn of time and created all of the foundations for reality. All of these Gods are believed to be dead.

ANDIMIE
One of the original kingdoms forming Jianthor.

ANG'IL
A celestial guardian. The Ang'il (usually called Angels or Sentinels) are the youngest of the celestial beings and the current keepers of the flames of faith. They are the bright cousins of the **DEU'IL**.

ARCANE BLAST!
A type of Magical Backfire.

ARCANE CURSE!
A type of Magical Backfire.

ARCANE MARK!
A type of Magical Backfire.

AROMUNDI
Ancient Nathasian sage that predicted the fall of the Shadahs Rooks.

ARSE'QUINE
A high level noble of Vashnia. Only twelve individuals hold title at this level at any given time.

ASGOTH
A nation of Umbragia. See **NATIONS**.

AWAKEN
Awaken refers to one of two things depending on the subject. If the subject is a God or Primal Entity, it speaks of the universe creating that entity (such as the Awakening of the Ancient Gods in the year -36,000). If it refers to a mortal race, then it speaks to the act of becoming a sentient species and evolving to the point of overcoming racial instincts (such as the Awakening of the mortal races in the year -7,000)

BADLANDS, THE
A region of Umbragia. See **NATIONS**.

BLANKET OF ETERNAL NIGHT
Ancient legend about the origin of the night sky. Created by Izha in an attempt to destroy his enemy Shada, this victory eventually cost Izha the war. Shada was destroyed utterly in his creation of the sun to battle the blanket of night - his sacrifice resulted in the eternal struggle of day and night for supremacy.

BRUJA

A Bruja is a mage (usually female) that practices, and has most of her spells in the colleges of the Water Sphere. However, see SHADOW MAGE.

BULL

A male Acota. See RACES.

CAUSAL BREAKDOWN

A type of Magical Backfire.

CHAERLI

One of the original kingdoms forming Jianthor.

CHAINDRUUL

Legendary ancient one. Generally associated with combat and valor; patron of warriors.

CHELDOR

A nation of Umbragia. See NATIONS.

CHEN'HALGE

The most celebrated Vasylian sage in history. His texts are not as cryptic as other ancient texts. Chen'halge had a talent for saying exactly what he meant.

CHURCH OF THE ETERNAL FLAME

A major church of the Realms of Shadow.

CHURCH OF THE LIGHT

A minor church of the Realms of Shadow.

CHURCH OF THE LIVING ATONEMENT

A major church of the Realms of Shadow.

CHURCH OF THE ONE TRUE PATH

A major church of the Realms of Shadow.

CHURCH OF THE SLEEPING GOD

A major church of the Realms of Shadow.

CHURCH OF THE WORD

A major church of the Realms of Shadow.

COMMON

A generic term used to indicate the default (or most common) language in a region. See LANGUAGES.

CONTI

A clan of the Izhan. A conti is an extended family arrangement of between 5-75 members scattered all over the Asgothian countryside that make up the Asgoth Super-Conti. Some smallish conti can be found in remote locations all over Umbragia.

COUNCIL OF KINGS

The administrative body of the nation of Jianthor. The body is made up of the kings of each of the twenty-nine separate member-states of Jianthor and each king is given a single vote. The 'chairing' member of the body is known as the Jade Dragon.

CRYSTAL NETWORK

A network of Seers that maintain communication channels for Ghorax.

CULT OF CZIADONIMO

A minor church of the Realms of Shadow.

DAERMIN

A people of the Realms of Shadow. See RACES. Also, the slang term for *Dharian*, the native tongue of the Daermin people.

DARIENTH

A nation of Umbragia. See NATIONS.

DAY

A period of 24 hours marked by the movements of the sun.

DEU'IL

A celestial banished. The Deu'il (usually called Demons or Devils) are the youngest of the celestial beings and the current keepers of the secrets of men's hearts. They are the darker cousins of the ANG'IL.

DEUMASTIQUE

Ancient god of old. Usually considered a false god, his name is used for the Devils and Demons that infest the celestial underworld.

DHARIAN

A language of Umbragia. Dharian originated in ancient times as a dialect of the Daermin people. Today, it is the preferred language of the nation of Darienth.

DHARKUN

The Spiritual head of an Izhan CONTI. The word translates literally to Seer of Darkness. This is a priest, shaman, counselor and judge within an Izhan CONTI.

DRAGONLANDS, THE

A region of Umbragia. See NATIONS.

EIDOLON

An Eidolon is a mage that practices, and has most of his/her spells in the colleges of the Spirit Sphere. However, see SHADOW MAGE.

ELGARPH

A people of the Realms of Shadow. See RACES.

FACELESS GOD, THE

A Mythical entity of the Holy Church of the One True Path. The Church believes that a single god created the whole of the universe and all of the laws of reality.

FIA'NAR

The evening star.

FAI'SHAN

A period of 12 years. This is marked by the star Fia'nar as it places itself squarely atop the moon while the moon is full and at its highest point in the sky.

FATHER OF ALL, THE

Legendary and most ancient of the ancient ones. He is credited with the original creation. According to the Followers of the Word, he is the one and only and true god.

FHARG

An Izhan slave master. The word translates literally as pain master. This, as part of the CONTI organization, will usually be the most favored VALO of the CONTI.

FOLLOWERS OF THE WORD

A major church of the Realms of Shadow.

GARVIN, LORD

A Lord of Siamar that lead an expedition into the DRAGONLANDS. Died of severe burns, but there are some doubts as to the origin of those burns. He as on a quest to find the Redeemers final resting-place.

GHAILEN

Ancient name of the continent in which these events chronicled takes place. The name is not in common use as most simply refer to *Umbragia: Realms of Shadow*.

G'HARN

A language of Umbragia. G'harn originated in ancient times as a dialect of the Goumin people.

GHORA

A language of Umbragia. Ghora originated as a dialect of Siamese. Over the centuries it has diverged into its own complete language. Today is the preferred language of the nation of Ghorax.

GHORAX

A nation of Umbragia. See NATIONS.

GHURMA

The political and military head of a CONTI. The word literally translates to Grandfather.

GOUMIN

A people of the Realms of Shadow. See RACES. Also, the slang term for *G'harn*, the native tongue of the Goumin people.

GRAND MARSHAL

The ruling member of the military in Kristophen.

GRAY WEAVER

A Gray (or Grey) Weaver is another name for a Shadow Mage. See SHADOW MAGE.

GYOR

A people of the Realms of Shadow. See RACES.

HADAMAS

A language of Umbragia. Hadamas originated as a dialect of the early Haitir nations. Today it is the preferred language of the Nation of Al Hadim.

HAITIR

A people of the Realms of Shadow. The Haitir are one of, and the most prolific of, the three human races. See RACES.

HEIFER

A female Acota. See RACES.

HERIMES

One of the original kingdoms forming Jianthor.

HEW'ARS

Legendary master of beasts. Hew'ars is the attributed catalyst towards the creation of the Lukar'r people.

HOUSE

One of the many families of Kristophen. The various houses are large family groups, indicated by the suffix de'la (meaning of the house of) and the name of the house. For example, the current Grand Marshal of Kristophen is Jameson de'la Dhomaris (Jameson of the house of Dhomaris).

HUMAN

Any of the three races of humanity. They are the AESIR, HAITIR and VANIR.

IZHA

The Sleeping God. Izha is the lord of darkness and is seen as the master of night, slayer of light and the Ancient Ones. His chosen people were banished from Umbragia and returned (the Izhan). He was eventually defeated by Shada who sent him into an eternal sleep (or an eternal deep, depending on the translation).

IZHA'KORIN

A language of Umbragia. Izha'korin originated back in the days when the Izhan were banished from the Realms of Shadow. Today is the preferred language of the Izhan people and the

nation of Asgoth. This is the only place where the language is commonly encountered.

IZHAN

A people of the Realms of Shadow. See **RACES**. Also, a slang term for *Izha'korin*, the native tongue of the Izhan people.

IZHAN-EM

The green-skinned, tougher sub-species of the Izhan race. See **RACES**.

IZHAN-OR

The black-skinned, silent sub-species of the Izhan race. See **RACES**.

IZHAN-RU

The red-skinned, hard-to-kill sub-species of the Izhan race. See **RACES**.

J'UDIS

A fallen member of Khutai society that has born the wrath of the ancestors. They are marked with the Living Echo.

JADE DRAGON

The senior member of the Council of Kings. The Jade Dragon simply dictates who has the floor, and casts the tie breaking vote in any council meeting of the Monarchs. The current Jade Dragon is Vance de'Coddal III of Redhill.

JIA'NOCT

A clan or family of Gyor.

JIANKAR

One of the original kingdoms forming Jianthor.

JIANTHOR

A nation of Umbragia. See **NATIONS**.

KHARIS

A language of Umbragia. Native tongue to the Vanir that landed in the Realms of Shadow and principle language of the nation of Kristophen.

K'HARN

A clan or tribe of Goumin.

KHA

A Knight of Al Hadim. They come in five ranks: Kha'man, Kha'shem, Kha'lor, Kha'ren and Kha'vex. There are also the Kha'prine, but these are simply Kha'vex married to the Royal House. Each Kha'vex will command between 2-5 Kha'ren. Each Kha'ren will command 2-5 Kha'lor, and so on. Each Kha'man will command between 5-25 men-at-arms. A Kha'vex will generally command between 1,000 and 2,000 men-at-arms, but as you can see, in theory, it could be as high as 15,625! Kha'prine

Haqueem al'Cuarine of Norland was Al Hadim's most legendary and powerful Kha'vex, commanding as many as 14,900 fighting men at the height of the Tiasham War. Each major city of Al Hadim will have at least one Kha'vex governing it. Minor cities and townships may be governed by a Kha'ren or Kha'lor and will report to the nearest Kha'vex. A Kha'vex may promote his own warriors through the ranks, and may knight man-at-arms making them Kha'man. Only the Alkha (the King) can make a Kha'vex, however.

KHINTARRIA

Ancient name of Umbragia. The name is not commonly in use these days. Most simply refer to *Umbragia: Realms of Shadow*.

KHUTAI

A people of the Realms of Shadow. See **RACES**. Also the language native to the Khutai people.

KRISTOPHEN

A nation of Umbragia. See **NATIONS**.

LANGUAGES

See **DHARIAN**, **G'HORA**, **HADAMAS**, **IZHA'KORIN**, **KHARIS**, **NATHAS**, **NEPHARA**, **NIMOSERRI**, **POLYMARIE**, **QUINASE**, **SHADAPTORAS**, **SIAMESE**, **TAMOOD** and **XXYXX**.

LAVAHIDAS

The name given the moon that appears in the night sky. Legend states that the moon is actually Lavarisia, the legendary ancient one, helping her husband to conquer the night.

LAVARISIA

Legendary ancient one of the earliest ages. Wife (sister?) to Shada, she is credited with the formation of the moon in aid of her beloved in his efforts to vanquish darkness.

LIBRARY OF THE AGES, THE

A large collection of literature and knowledge from the ages compiled in the year 73. This marked the start of recorded history.

LIVING ATONEMENT

A concept of Khutai ancestor worship. The idea is that all Khutai will atone for the wrongs that they do in this life and then continue to pay for them in subsequent lives. This serves as a constant reminder of the fact that all actions have to be weighed carefully for the long-term results.

LIVING ECHO

The wrath of the ancestors of a Khutai. The living echo comprises the final three stages of the punishments across the lives of a Khutai. See **FAULTS**.

LUQUINE
 Legendary ancient one. Generally associated with animals (wolves, foxes), the moon and the twilight; patron of mages.

LUKAR'R
 A people of the Realms of Shadow. See RACES.

LYCAN
 A somewhat rare name given to the moon. See LAVAHIDAS.

MAGE
 A Mage is a practitioner of the magical arts. It can also refer to anyone that possesses the Mage advantage, no matter if the spells are known.

MAGUS
 A Magus is either: [1] A Shadow Mage or [2] A Master of the magical arts. It is usually both.

MANA BACKLASH
 A type of Magical Backfire.

MANA SCAR
 A type of Magical Backfire.

MANA SHOWER
 A type of Magical Backfire.

MANA SICKNESS
 A type of Magical Backfire.

MANA SURGE
 A type of Magical Backfire.

MARI'NAR
 A tiny red star seen on very dark nights.

MARI'SHAN
 A period of 1728 years. This is marked by the star Mari'nar as it places itself squarely atop the moon in a perfect triangle with Fia'nar and Noxi'nar while the moon is full and at its highest point in the sky. See also: AGE.

MARSHAL
 Highest rank of normal officer in the nation of Kristophen. Senior marshals are called Field Marshals (or Fleet Marshals). A single individual (the most senior marshal of that branch of service) is called the Marshal of the Army (or of the Navy). The ruling title of Kristophen is the Grand Marshal, indicating the ruler's military authority as well.

MARSHAL DHOMARIS' WAR
 The civil war fought in Kristophen in the years 1689-1700. The war was fought over arguments in the military structure over

leadership, honor and accountability. The House of Dhomaris seized control of the government following this war.

MASTERS OF THE NEW AGE
 A minor church of Umbragia.

MONTH
 A period of 4 weeks. This is also marked by one complete cycle of lunar stages. The first of the month is always on the full moon.

MULE
 A sterile Izhan-or that results from crossbreeding the sub-species. See RACES.

MURAHVIE
 Ancient name for the Shadahs. Translates to First Ones.

NAMIGRE
 Ancient name for the Izhan. Translates to children of darkness.

NATHAS
 A people of the Realms of Shadow. See RACES. Also, the native tongue of the Nathasian people.

NEPHALOUS
 A nation of Umbragia. See NATIONS.

NEPHARA
 [1] A language of Umbragia. Nephara originated in the ancient days of the city of Nephara and the Nepharan Empire. Today it is the preferred language of the nation of Nephalous. [2] An ancient city of a dead empire. Nephara was a grand city and the center of the Nepharan Empire. Where this ancient city once lay is a complete mystery.

NIGHTMARES
 A type of Magical Backfire.

NIMORI
 A people of the Realms of Shadow. See RACES. Also, a slang term for *Nimoserri*, the native tongue of the Nimori people.

NIMOSERRI
 A language of Umbragia. Nimoserri originated in ancient times as a dialect of the Nimori people.

NOXI'NAR
 The morning star.

NOXI'SHAN
 A period of 144 years. This is marked by the star Noxi'nar as it places itself squarely atop the moon aside Fia'nar while the moon is full and at its highest point in the sky.

ONE TRUE PATH

The Laws of the Faceless God. The One True Path is a belief of the Holy Church of the One True Path that all things must act in accordance to the laws of the Faceless God. These laws are not entirely understood (in fact, no definite recording of those laws exists) but the Priests of the faith spend much of their time trying to divine these laws from the whole of the world, as they believe that they were woven into the fabrics of reality itself.

OVERSTRIB

A region of Jianthor. Overstrib is noted for producing the vast majority of Jianthor's food supply. Heavily guarded and protected by all of Jianthor, it is also the home of the current ruling Jade Dragon.

PALPRINE

A region of Jianthor. Palprine is noted for being the most populous region of Jianthor.

POLYMARIE

A people of the Realms of Shadow. See **RACES**. Also the native tongue of the Polymarie people. This language cannot be spoken out of water, so non-Polymarie that learn it are assumed to be learning the written portions only.

PRIEST

A Priest is a member of an organized religion, and thus has the advantage Clerical Investment.

PRIME REALM

A Prime Realm is a mythical reality (or dimension or plane of existence) where the physical laws are so strict, that magic can no longer function. According to some ancient texts, these are the only realities that the Ancient Ones created directly. These texts tend to suggest that perhaps a dozen Prime Realities were created and that all other realities are the shadows cast by the Primes (see **SHADOW REALM**). However, no mage or cleric has ever claimed to direct knowledge of these realms. See "**REALM OF POSSIBILITY, THE**" for more information.

PSYCHOSIS

A type of Magical Backfire.

QUINA

A people of the Realms of Shadow. See **RACES**.

QUINARA

A nation of Umbragia. See **NATIONS**.

QUINASE

A language of Umbragia. Quinase originated as a mixture of the language of the Quina and several dialects of the Daermin people. Today it is the preferred language of the nation of Quinara.

QUINE

A middle-level Noble of Vashnia. This is the lowest ranking noble in Vashnia that holds both political and military authority.

REALITIES

See **PRIME REALM** and **SHADOW REALM**.

REALM OF POSSIBILITY, THE

The Realm of Possibility (or The Realm) is a mythical concept taught to the upper echelon of a few churches and known by a few very powerful mages dealing with the creation of all. It contains all of reality and all possible realities. According to these myths, Umbragia is but one of many realities (dimensions) that make up the Realms of Shadow.

REALMS OF MADNESS

A region of Umbragia. See **NATIONS**.

REDEEMER, THE

Legendary prophet that predicted the return of the Izhan. His scrolls are regarded as relics. His work has also spawned at least two major religions.

ROOK

The ancient term for the once great towering cities or the kingdoms of the Shadahs. The rooks began to fall shortly before the legendary War of Tears.

RULE OF ONE

The highest law of a Gyor clan. It is the foundation of Gyor society, telling that a clan can only have one leader. One leads, all others follow. Strangely, a clan of Gyor is ran by an Elder Pair - not a single individual.

S'IRA

A form of negative karma that can haunt a Khutai. As a soul accumulates S'ira, it will be born into a lower and lower caste.

SCROLLS OF SHENYAR, THE

A legendary record and account of the history of the Realms of Shadow written by the Great Sage Shenyar. Although Shenyar's life is shrouded in mystery, it is known that he has given the most objective account of the history of Umbragia to date. Most churches consider what remains of his works as near-holy relics.

SEER

A Seer is a mage (usually female) that practices, and has most of her spells in the colleges of the Air Sphere. However, see **SHADOW MAGE**.

SHAD

The name given the sun that appears in the daytime sky. Legend states that the sun is actually Shada, the legendary ancient one, in his eternal struggle to defeat the Blanket of Night.

SHADA

One of the fallen Gods. Shada is the legendary ancient one and God of Light, the destroyer of the eternal night, and the vanquisher of Izha. He was destroyed in his attempt to conquer the Blanket of Night.

SHADAHS

A people of the Realms of Shadow. See **RACES**. Also, the slang term for *Shadaptors*, the native tongue of the Shadahs people.

SHADIROP'TERAHS

The name of the Shadahs in the Old Tongues.

SHADAPTORAS

A language of Umbragia. Shadaptors originated as the native language of the Shadahs. Some believe that this is the oldest language in the Realms of Shadow. Seeing as how most other languages can trace their roots to this one, this is not too far-fetched.

SHADOW MAGE

A Shadow Mage is a mage that practices and has any spells in the colleges of the Shadow Sphere. This title will take precedence over any other.

SHADOW REALM

A Shadow Realm is a mythical reality (or dimension or plane of existence) where the physical laws are mutable enough to allow magical to function. According to some ancient texts, these are the realities that were created by the shadows cast by the original dozen Prime Realities and Umbragia is but one of these. These texts tend to suggest that the further one moves from the Prime Realities, the more mutable reality becomes, however the physical laws also begin to break down into near chaos. Ironically, although magic does not function in the Prime Realms, they are the source of all mana in the Shadow Realms. See "REALM OF POSSIBILITY, THE" for more information.

SHEMYA

A Holy Knight of Al Hadim. The Shemya are Al Hadim's highest ranking law enforcement officers. They are given rank within the Nobility and the Church, granting them great leverage for making decisions without fear of retribution. They are the only knights that outrank the dreaded Kha-vex and Kha'prine. Once ordained and knighted, they cannot be removed from office.

SHENYAR THE GREAT

A sage of the ancient days. Shenyar produced the legendary Scrolls of Shenyar (see above). His life is a complete mystery; none know where he was from, what race he was or even when he lived. But he seems to have produced the definitive history of **Umbragia**.

SHIESEM

Low ranking political noble in Vashnia.

SIAMAR

A nation of Umbragia. See **NATIONS**.

SIAMESE

A language of the Realms of Shadow. Siamese originated as a mixture of dialects merged with the formation of the nation of Siamar. Today this is the most widely spoken language in Umbragia and is the preferred language of Cheldor, Siamar and Tamoc.

SOUL PATH

The lineage of lives that a Khutai has gone through. Mapping the soul path of a Khutai is a deep-rooted insult and invasion that is nearly unforgivable.

SPELL BREECH

A type of Magical Backfire.

STAR CALENDAR

The standard time keeping instrument and system of Umbragia. Created by the Vasyl, it tracks movements of three moving stars in the heavens.

SWORD OF ALTRUINCE

Legendary sword once used by the great Lord Altruince.

TAINT

A type of Magical Backfire.

TAMOC

A nation of Umbragia. See **NATIONS**.

TAMOOR

A language of Umbragia. Tamoor originated as the preferred language of Tamoc. When Siamar conquered Tamoc in the Age of Wizards, the language was shifted to Siamese. Once Tamoc once again broke from Siamar, they were never able to revert to Tamoor, but the language has never quite died. Sometimes used by thieves and assassins to hide their conversations.

TEMPLE OF THE LIVING EARTH

A minor Druidic church of Umbragia.

TERAPINE

Literally: *outsider*. A term used by the Goumin to describe Goumin that have left the clans, non-Goumin or generally untrustworthy folk.

TERRENE

A Terrene is a mage (usually male) that practices, and has most of his spells in the colleges of the Earth Sphere. However, see **SHADOW MAGE**.

TAHN

An unfavored warrior within an Izhan CONTI. The Tahn are the equivalent to basic soldiers within the Izhan culture, being given in service to a VALO.

TIAR

Legendary ancient one. Generally associated with treachery, lies and mistrust; patron of thieves and assassins.

TIASHAM

A nation of Umbragia. See NATIONS.

TI'MORID

Literally: *Elder Pair*. The heads of a Gyor clan.

TIME SPIKE

A type of Magical Backfire.

TORIC NA'KTU

Literally: *Soul Blinded*. A sub-race of the VasyL without the ability to see auras and the like. See VASYL.

TOWER OF TRUTH

A minor church of Umbragia.

UMBRAGIA

Collective term for all of the realms and the shadows that they cast. The first in a line of role-playing books written by K. David Ladage for Jagged Edge Games.

VALARIAN OF ASTENMOORE, PRINCE

The legendary 'man of a thousand titles.' Prince Valerian of Astenmoore was the prime example of Cheldorian pride run amuck. The sheer volume of titles that the man had been given by the crown was unprecedented. It is said that he once entered the court of the King and his introduction was about to enter the second hour before the King asked that the rest of his honorific titles not be read allowed but simply entered into the court record. This alone, it is said, filled over fifteen pages of the court record with such titles as Lord protector of the Sea of Astenmoore, Fifteenth Earl of the Isle of Dreams and Holder of the sacred hearth of the Light of the Moon.

VALLEY OF TEARS

Ancient name for the Badlands.

VALO

A favored warrior within an Izhan CONTI. Valo are the equivalent of knights within the Izhan culture, leading troops that number in direct proportion to the level of favored status they hold.

VANIR

A people of the Realms of Shadow. The Vanir are one of the three human races. See RACES.

VARHGILE

Legendary ancient one. Generally associated with generosity and acts of pure selflessness; patron of the clergy and fathers.

VASHNIA

A nation of Umbragia. See NATIONS.

VASYL

A people of the Realms of Shadow. See RACES.

VIXIRII

Legendary ancient one of the earliest ages. Vixirii is credited with the formulation of the law of duality which states that all of creation is in a state of balance - whenever anything is created, in its wake a second opposing creation will occur (e.g.: light/dark, good/evil).

WAR OF NORTHPOINT

The civil war fought in Kristophen in the years 1655-1658. The war was instigated for purely political reasons and resulted in the destruction of the House of Howanard.

WAR OF THE FIVE HOUSES

The civil war fought in Kristophen in the years 1671-1677. The war was instigated when a feud between two rival families erupted into an all out war in the regions near Rocky Point. As each family called in favors, it was eventually the majority of five full houses at war. The war ended in late 1677 after the heads of the families were able to calm their respective relatives down and begin rational talks.

WAR OF THE OCEANS

Legendary war of the ancient days that nearly destroyed the Polymarie people. According to these legends, the Polymarie were once attacked by another underwater race that came very close to destroying the entire people. This race is depicted as being shark-like with arms ending in massive talons. The war would have coincided with the war that ravaged the early gods Shada and Izha.

WAR OF TEARS

The war fought between the Shadahs and the Nathas over the loss of the Shadahs rooks. The only war that the Shadahs had ever lost.

WARLOCK

A Warlock is a mage (usually male) that practices, and has most of his spells in the colleges of the Fire Sphere. However, see SHADOW MAGE.

WEEK

A period of 8 days. Sometimes also used to indicate a period of 8 other cycles - for example a week of weeks would indicate 8 periods of 8 days, or 64 days.

WHIESEM

A low ranking military noble in Vashnia. A Vashnian Knight.

WYRM'ILKIN

Mythical people that control dragons. Said to live far beyond the borders of the DRAGONLANDS, the Wyrml'inkin are rumored to be a race of dragon controlling neo-reptiles.

XEH'DHARKUN

The High Priest of the nation of Asgoth. The word translated literally to Blood Mystic or All Priest. In the view of most, this is the true ruler of the nation.

XEH'GHURMA

The Monarch of the nation of Asgoth. The word translated literally to Blood King or All Father. In the view of most, he has little real authority over Asgoth, but in recent times this assumption has been challenged.

XXYXX

A people of the Realms of Shadow. See **RACES**. Also, the native language of the Xxyxx people.

YEAR

A period of 12 months or 48 weeks or 384 days. This marks the start of a new cycle of seasons. The first of the year is also the first day of spring.

YEAR OF THE DRAGON

The year of the completion of an entire cycle of the Vasylian Star Calendar. The year of the dragon comes every 1728 years.

Y'MOK

Legendary dragon smitten by his own pride. Y'mok claimed to be a god was destroyed for angering the minions of the old gods.

ZYNAR

A people of the Realms of Shadow. See **RACES**.

ZY'NERIX JAGGED TOOTH

Legendary Warrior of the Izhan people. During the ancient war between the Izhan and the Shadahs, Zy'nerix was cursed by Shada for destroying a thousand rooks of Shadahs. The curse was for Zy'nerix to bleed for a thousand nights. The legend goes on to say that when Izha created the Blanket of Night Zy'nerix continued to bleed, with his tally of nights never increasing. When Izha realized that his most favored warrior was bleeding for all of eternity, according to Izhan texts, Izha became distracted and thus Shada was able to overcome him.

JAGGED EDGE GAMES

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