

The Excellent Names

of

The Almighty Gods

of

Yán Kór

and

The Lands of the North

by

Ksamandúish the Traveller

That there is a single Pantheon of Gods is proved by the absence of other pantheons, groupings, or constellations of Deities from earlier ages. That this Pantheon is that which all creatures, noble and sapient, hold true today is proved by the names of these puissant Deities, which span both Empires and Ages. None changes, none is ever lost, no further Deities are added, nor are any subtracted. The argument of Dijjákish of Pagús is rejected: he would claim ten Deities because humans have ten fingers, and ten Cohorts because humans likewise enjoy the use of ten toes! That this is nonsense is shown by the presence of other races of creatures, some of whom have four, six, or other numbers of digits. Were this "ten-ness" to be an innate quality of humankind,

thus, might be so if other species had four, six, etc. deities to match their own digits. This is not the case; the Pé Chói, for example, have only two great Gods; the Tinalíya have but one (about whom they care little, it seems). Hence, human digits do not form the foundation of our theology but are only a fortuitous coincidence. Dijjákish is refuted and must stand mute while other scholars proceed with their debates and discourses. Woe upon those who see too much in the interlocking structures and orbits of the natural world!

Yea, the Gods exist. Any child can prove this by reciting the first verses of the Scrolls of Pavár, and those who doubt are blasted with fire, ice, winds, and floods by any pious servitor of

the Gods who confronts them. Thus are the heretics refuted and denied passage to the Paradises of Those they malign! There is no other reply. Deny the Gods and perish! Obey the Gods and prosper!

What of the Gods who dwell in the sealed temples of Livyánu? Are they but the sick imaginings of degenerate humans? Do they exist on distinct Planes from those inhabited by Pavár's deities? Are they but mysterious combinations of Pavár's Pantheon, as is said to be the case with Salarvyá's Lady Shiringgáyi, a blend of Lady Avánthe and Lady Dlamélish -- and perhaps their two Cohorts as well? All that be said is that these questions will be answered at the far end of Time itself and not sooner by a single breath!

Another important and crucial question, thus, is the position of our own beauteous and ever-illuminated Lord Hrsh, the Master of Time, Space, and Being. What of Him, then, Who stands outside Pavár's Pantheon? It is the contention of Fékmish Dighér that Lord Hrsh occupies a position above and to the *Grél* (to use the four-dimensional direction-name given to a direction in Other-Space that cannot be found on the compasses of limited three-dimensional beings) of Pavár's Pantheon. Mezgánish Viggásh refutes this, claiming that Pavár's deities exist only as poor reflections of Lord Hrsh' Eternal Splendour: they are but Aspects of our divine Master. Other scholars hold differing theories: that of Ssa'átis being most rational, to the effect that Lord Hrsh is our name and title for the Deity the Tsolyáni call Lord

Vimúhla. They see only a distorted vision of the Flame Master, however, due to their being farther to the East and South, where the comings and goings of the Two Moons are different from those in our luminous Mu'ugalavyáni skies. Seeing Him thus causes the southerners to miss the perfection of His Being, and so those benighted peoples name him "Hnálla," a soubriquet not sanctioned in our own ancient Scriptures.

It is the wise decision of my own philosophical faction that much of this is naught but speculation and fiddle-faddle. Let the Almighty Gods know Their secrets and act as They inevitably will; it is not for us to question, nor carp, nor delve into Their Beings as a Drí-ant excavates a nest! Let us accept Lord Hrsh as Omnipotent and Omniscient; whether the Pantheon of Pavár exists, whether it is part of Him, subordinate to Him, the same or different -- such recondite matters are known to the Gods Themselves alone and are not vouchsafed to such as we. My colleagues in our academy, the Flowers of Flame, agree that all of these Deities exist and have Their individualities and potencies. Here we abandon the matter.

Still more pitiable is the plight of those who dwell in the vast northern lands named "The Lost Provinces" by the latter-day Engsvanyáli. Woe to the Yán Koryáni and the wretched tribesmen of the north, for their cold winds drive away clear-sightedness and even reason itself! They cannot conceive of our fiery, all-consuming Lord Hrsh, and even their perceptions of the Pantheon of Pavár are as though dimmed and made

small by their frigid rime-crested seas. They claim Engsvanyáli ancestry and Imperial dignity, yet their language is garbled, spoiled as though by maggots of the tongue and brain, and uttered as though through a blanket of hated ice! The loss of Yán Kór and the North was no loss, if only the Engsvanyáli had known it; the exploration and settlement of farther Salarvyá was more urgent and profitable, had they but seen it -- but this is yet another sad Skein from the loom of the Weaver! None can say what the result might have been if the Priestkings had eliminated the hairy, greasy Salarvyáni or driven them into the farther oceans beyond Jækánta!

The Deities of Yán Kór are those of Tsolyánu and of our own victorious Mu'ugalavyá (under the Ascendancy of Lord Hrsh, of course; this can never be forgotten nor gainsaid). The natives of those lonely coasts and dismal forests name the Pantheon of Pavár by their own savage titles, however, caring naught for scholarly caution, decency, and nobility. One can see some of the resemblances to our own speech, but it is as though the Yán Koryáni clenched their teeth to speak them, or perhaps stood shivering and chattering in their furs and leathers, unable to utter the Gods' sacred names in their proper fashions.

I mean no offence to my readers when I tell the sounds and forms of the Yán Koryáni names of our Gods. That some may take umbrage at such insulting language is understood; I can only plead for pardon in the name of scholarly completeness. To serve Knowledge for the Expansion of the Flame is the mission of

Giugémish, the 21st Aspect of Lord Hrsh, and so I obey. I accept whatever opprobrium and contumely my readers may hold for me. Those who would be too filled with disgust and horror need not read on, of course.

Lord Hnálla, called Hnéluish by us Mu'ugalavyáni, is named Ghól or Ghúl by the barbarians of Yán Kór. His Cohort in our land is Lord Trekhúish, who is not the weak and helpless hymn-singer, Drá, worshipped by the ridiculous Tsolyáni, but rather a stern Servitor who bears a Rod of Light wherewith to smite His Master's foes! Him, the Yán Koryáni do not know at all but instead claim that Lord Ghól is supreme and solitary upon the mysterious and mythological Peak of the Egg of the World, where the Gods descend first when visiting our world. Poor Lord Drá! He is forgotten and nameless in the wilds of the North!

Lord Thúmis of Mighty Memory do they name Dhárm in their glutinous, guttural tongue! We call Him Tu'úmesh, of course, since our knowledge is greater. He rules knowledge and science, as all must know. His Cohort, whom we name Kténish, is Kútkæn to the tongue-tied Yán Koryáni. That He is allowed to exist at all is a blessing, for the savages have little knowledge or interest in His healing arts but make much use of amulets, mumbo-jumbo, shamanistic tricks, and nonsense instead.

Shall I say what the creatures have done to lovely, delicate Lady Avánthe, whom we name Awédha? Dare I put the garbled sounds upon this

page? They name her Gaghnát, and her orgies are even more licentious than those of Lady Dlamélish, to whom they rightfully pertain. The Lady's lovely, sweetly virginal Cohort, named by us Di'ila, is called Dilinála by the sponge-mouthed Tsolyáni, and the dog-eating Yán Koryáni name her Dínel. She is there considered to be more of a warrior queen, rather than a virgin girl of aloof mien and gentle nature. Dínel is wild and as barbaric as the Lorún and the Yán Koryáni matriarchs who dance naked with swords before her bloody altars! What greater perversion can be imagined? One trembles with wrath to think of it!

Great Lord Belkhánu is termed Bo'olkón in our Scriptures. In Yán Kór he is Búlkh, the Carrier Away of Souls, the Host as the Feast of Tr_nné, as the aborigines name Teretané. He is the Lord of Funerals and Mourning and the Sounding of Threnodies. His Cohort, Lord Aqónish, whom the Tsolyáni name Qón, is called Ækón by the benighted northerners; they see Him as the Guide of the Blessed Dead, the One Who Repels Demons and the Minions of the Dark. His charge is thus not so different from his rôle in Tsolyánu. We, however, see Him as the Penetrator Through the Veils, the Stalker of the Wastes Beyond the Pylons, and the Holder of the Globe of Power. But we know better, of course.

We Mu'ugalavyáni hold Lord Karkánish, whom the Tsolyáni mispronounce as Karakán, to be less mighty in war than our Lord Hrsh or his Aspect, Lord Vimúhla, but still do His temples dot our land, and the swathes

cut by His Sword are famed amongst our soldiers. The wild men of Yán Kór title him Krékku. His warlike nature is revered and praised in the hovels of the North. Swords and other weapons are dedicated to Him, and young children are anointed with blood and inducted into the warrior societies. The folk of Vánu and Krél hold Him in special reverence, and many rites are performed there that are unknown elsewhere. The Yán Koryáni know of Lord Karkánish' noble Cohort, Lord Kigársh, whom the Tsolyáni call Chegárra; they call him Chkár, but they do not offer Him much worship. To them, He is the Lord of Fortresses, the Defender of Sieges, and the Ruler of Peaceful Cities. Perhaps He is almost unknown because Yán Kór has had so little peace over the centuries.

To speak of the Lords of Change, Lord Hróü is given little worship in our land. We call Him Hre'ésh, but he is popular only among clans of Tsolyáni origin, and His temples are found only in our larger cities. He is the Supreme Principle of Change, we agree, but who can worship an abstract principle that bears so little relation to human life and human needs? If He wishes us to worship Him and make offerings, then He must tell us more of His nature that we want to hear. The Yán Koryáni seem to feel the same, as much as such simple creatures can; they name Him Grúóth and claim that He balances Ghól on the Scales of the Universe. This is practically His only task there. He does have temples, one at Ke'éer, another in Rüllá, a largish one in Yán Kór City, and a small and secret one somewhere near Lake Parunál. His Cohort, Lord Urúish, whom the Tsolyáni title Wurú, is called Orwá by the savage inhabitants

of Yán Kór. He is feared, and statues and amulets of Him are erected in many households to ward off His unkind visitations. He is the Master of Demons, the Bringer of Calamities, the Waster of Crops, the One Who Ruins, and the Striker of Anvils (?). He is widely worshipped amongst those who love Change. In Yán Kór He has a wife, a local Goddess named Fyörg, who makes women barren, causes female diseases, and engenders offspring that are not fathered by one's proper husband. Thus, if a Yán Koryáni woman has a babe who looks suspiciously like an uncle, brother, or some fellow in the market, she can always say, "Fyörg did it!" If she swears to this and immerses her left hand in boiling water to the wrist without crying out, then she is absolved. Should she cry out, she is found out and slain.

Lord Ksáru, as named by the Tsolyáni, we call Ksoruélis. Many of us Mu'ugalavyáni favour Him because it was He who graciously awarded our Lord Hrsh the Right of the First Blow on Dórmoron Plain. Thus it is in the Epic of Ielúnish the Bard of Ch'óchi, which the Tsolyáni stupidly assert to be a later, false epic! Such blustery lies are hardly set to paper! At any rate, the porridge-eating Yán Koryáni name Him Kshór and tell the events of Tórvæn Plain in such garbled and primitive fashion that the main points are lost or distorted. He is the Mighty Knower and the Lord of Power with them, as He is with us. His Cohort, Lord Kru'ugáish, whom the Tsolyáni call Grugánu, is named Krúgh in Yán Kór. He is powerful in the making of spells, enchantments, and demon pacts, and His talismans and amulets are seen

everywhere, even amongst folk who do not take Him as their primary God.

Lady Dlóma, whom the Tsolyáni call Dlamélis, is another Deity sadly misconstrued by the Yán Koryáni. We are not as lubricious in our worship of Her as the soft and degenerate Tsolyáni, but the Yán Koryáni are even more crude: they turn Her into a fecund Goddess who fertilises fish and guides schools of minnows into the nets of the fisherfolk! She is indeed worshipped as a Goddess of Pleasure and Sensuous Joy in the brothels and secret houses of such places as Yán Kór City, Dháru, Khárcha Sárk, and Ke'ér, but her joys are curtailed and made mundane by the lumpish Yán Koryáni. They have not enough feelings to enjoy pleasure in any case, and are thus limited in the knowledge of such a Goddess as Tlóm, as they designate her. Some of our folk worship her also under the name of Gariyáldi Ssá; she is said to command all forms of sexual pleasures and the secret delights of wines and liqueurs. She is not a separate Goddess, however, but a local form of Lady Dlóma. The Goddess' Cohort, the lascivious Hréla, named Hriháyal by the Tsolyáni, is known as Rélth in Yán Kór. She is little worshipped, although her temples are found at Yán Kór City, Mákhish, Sné Kokór, and other sites. She is largely a Goddess of cruelties and is invoked by executioners, prison wardens, and the like. Her pleasurable, sexual side is thus obscured. Phallic amulets are indeed sold with her name imprinted upon them, but her true rôle in the Pantheon is largely forgotten.

The Lord of Flame, mighty Vemélísh, called Vimúhla by the Tsolyáni, we know as an Aspect or Subordinate of Lord Hrsh, although some say He is an alternate name for the Flame Master. The Yán Koryáni name Him Vumél and hold Him to be the cause of fires, deaths by violence, destruction, earthquakes, storms, and rage. He is thus similar to our concept and to that of the Tsolyáni, but there are subtle differences. He also is the patron of certain Legions (named Gurék by the natives), particularly of the Isle of Vrídu: the Fishers of the Flame, generalled admirably by Lady Déq Dimáni. His powers are vast, and His revenge is mighty; folk fear to speak of Him when they wish something good to happen, and the amulet-makers keep busy selling clay discs inscribed with His name and titles to ward off catastrophes. Lord Vumél is one of the most puissant of the Gods. His Cohort, Lord Kténgish, called Chiténg by the Tsolyáni and Khtæn by the Yán Koryáni, is less known. He is invoked when one is enraged and wishes to cause agony to one's foes, when an army advances into battle, and when one seeks fiery light to illuminate an Underworld, or burns a city. He it is who blesses lamps and torches, as well as funeral pyres for His Master and fire-pits for sacrifice.

The last of the pantheon of Gods is Lord Gyu'úmish (western: Gu'umúish), also called Su'urkánish by our savants. He maintains the Lékkish (which the Tsolyáni term the Hlákme, the Ego or Mind) and considers existence ever after to be the ultimate goal of being. He is the Lord of Tombs, the Master of the Undead, the One of Worms, and the Returner by Night. So do the

Yán Koryáni see Him, but more in the rôle of a protector of graveyards and charnel-houses, a guardian of corpses and one who prevents decay. His coming is announced by the stench of death, and his minions are the inhabitants of the sepulchres. The Yán Koryáni name Him Su'úrkh, which in the lands farther east becomes Su'úr or just Súr. His Cohort in Tsolyánu is Lord Durritlámish, whom we know as Tórmuish. He is particularly unpleasant, being devoted to the processes of decay and the changes wrought by Death. He is the Knower of the Underworlds, the master of the Servants of the Dark, and the Corpse-Lord. The Yán Koryáni hardly know of this Deity and name Him instead Kéreshm, which otherwise denotes one of Lord Gyu'úmish' great demons, called Kershmu'ish by us and Gereshmá'a by the Tsolyáni. This Deity is said to prowl tombs and graveyards, leading hosts of Undead and monsters from the unimaginable dark. His purpose in Yán Kór seems to be to harass those who violate tombs and rob the bodies of the dead. He is used to frighten children into obedience, and his powers extend to the governance of morasses, swamps, lonely wastelands, and the ruins of dead cities.

There is one more Deity worshipped by some Yán Koryáni, and it is anathema to persons of civilised lands. This is the horrendous being named the One Other by those who know. There is no true identification of Its shrines since the Engsvanyáli and the early Seal Emperors of Tsolyánu did so much to extirpate all traces of the monster wherever they were found. The Emperor Trákonel I, "The Blazing Light, is famed

for his zeal in this matter. Thousands of followers of the One Other met their doom, as well as many who were servitors of one who is yet worse: those of the sect of She Who Is Not Named -- and the less said here the better! The Yán Koryáni were never as determined as their southern neighbours to see that the One Other is eliminated. Hence, the worship of this creature lived on in several places for centuries, and it prospers today in Hlíkku, the City of the Mad Ones. These benighted persons wear only desert cloaks and carry bone-tipped spears according to the tenets of their secret god. This would never be tolerated in our noble land, nor would it even in the

Tsolyáni Empire, where nobility and propriety are still observed to some extent; but the Milumanayáni and the Yán Koryáni are so weak and depraved that the worship of this monstrous being is tolerated. Woe to those who are touched by the breath of destruction, and woe to those who allow such evil to fester! The Yán Koryáni name this ugly deity Nmédz, and they avoid Hlíkku completely. They cannot enter the walls since the natives permit no outsiders within. The aborigines deal with outsiders in open-air markets outside the city walls. They also provide a legion of mad fanatics to fight in the army of Yán Kór.

One of the inner symbols of Lord Srúkarúmish' sect is depicted below. Some say that this is the first symbol in the complex hieroglyphic writing of the Worm Lord's sect. Others say it is but a religious emblem, similar to others used by these persons.



Appendix: The Deities of the Pecháni:

The Seven Deities of the Rising Peaks are briefly described in *Kízhaga Dlittlúmri*, "The Book of Five Fingers," in Pecháni.

1. Thúmis: Tsómeq. Lord of Writing, Books, and Knowledge. His House is in the Valleys.
2. Karakán-Vimúhla: Vihár. Lord of Swords and War, Lord of Fires and Iron. His House stands in the Stony Heights.
3. Avánthe-Dlamélish: Séhta. Mother of Children, Scatterer of Seeds, Bringer of Rain and Harvests. Singer and Dancer of the Festivals. Her House is in the Hearth.
4. Ksáru! Kazhéh. Master of Secrets, Lord of Luck, Leader of Journeys, Commander of the Creatures of the Night. His House is in the Darkest Forest.
5. Sárku-Belkhánu: Su'úrkha. Lord of Death and Passing Forth, Guardian of Tombs and Lost Places, Regulator

of Decay. His House is in the Tomb.

6. Quóth, the Many-Eyed: He Who Sees the World, Dweller upon the Rising Peak, Knower of the Mysteries, King of the Gods, Though None may Seek Him. His House stands high upon the Peak.
7. Nyéssset, the Hero. Mighty One of Victories, Slayer of the Deadly Ssú, Conqueror of Cities, Companion of Viyár, Far-Wanderer. His House is within the Forest, wherever He sets foot.

The Pecháni have legends describing the adventures of the Gods, particularly Nyéssset, who sought the maiden Éris, daughter of Séhta by the Stone Demon, Béhdeq. He found her, but the monster had turned her into a pillar of granite. Nyéssset grieved, and his tears melted the rock, revealing her face and form, but they were not sufficient to free her. This rock can still be seen to this day in the hills north of Ogréjja.