

SKYREALMS of Jorune

Jorune – according to Sholari James

Jorune is a darker and crueller place than the world described by Skyrealms publishing. It is a world with its biological niches crammed with lifeforms so specialised and deadly that humanity has no real place among it. Most of the animals and plants of the world is inedible to humans and sometimes outright poisonous. The fauna would more resemble the cretaceous period of Earth, with a tooth and claws arms race between the predators and herbivores. Alien races compete for the living space and see humans mostly as competitors or even enemies. But not only the big lifeforms are dangerous on this world. Despite three and a half millennia of adaptation, humanity is still extremely susceptible to Jorune's parasites and bacteria.

On this dangerous and inhospitable world humans have no choice than to try and make a living – and they have succeeded. Destiny abandoned humanity on Jorune, which brought back its savage and aggressive nature in order to survive. But humans also learned to co-operate and depend on each other again, creating strong family and clan bonds that modern society had abandoned. After countless generations of human lives, countless cultures have risen and fallen. Religions, ideologies, cities and countries have been created, flourished and been destroyed. The sands of time have covered humanity's origins and made them part of Jorune.

TIMELINE

I have as far as possible followed the timeline set out by Skyrealms. The main deviations have been concerning the Great Wanderings of the iscin races and the lamorri occupation/conquest of Jorune. I have regarded the duration of the Great Wanderings as a far too short time for the iscin races to multiply and wander the Doben-al and Rose Crendor and then to set sail for Dobre and Sharden. Also the crugar wanderings seem strange and short, not to mention the speed with which they have multiplied. Therefore I have extended the time to approximately 300 years. During this time the crugar (being fast breeders) had become so many they could dominate the other races, which led to the Great Exodus of these and the Great Wanderings. The longer time period also seem to give a better explanation of how the crugar could spread so far as Temauntro and gives the bronth and tologra some time in Ros Crendor to found their own cultures.

In the timeline I have detailed the lamorri invasion further, especially the shantic revolt that enabled the shanta to free Sho-Caudal of the fiendish lamorri. Thus, the invasion lasts not only 100 years, but nearly 300 years.

Another smaller deviation from the timeline is the age of monsters and the coming of the muadra and boccord. Although it is not clear, I am of the opinion that many mutations among the different species not indigenous to Jorune, were created during a

rare alignment of the moons and some strange disruptions of isho. Most of these mutations were evolutionary failures and either died at childbirth, young, or never spread their bloodline further. However, over time these mutations stabilised, much as they had done in the iscin races that were created by Iscin. The muadra and boccord were the results of humanity first, but surely not last, adaptation to Jorune. Thivin are an adaptation of the ramian race and only the gods know what the cleash have gone through.

The details surrounding the survivor colony in Thantier has been slightly changed into the Golden Age referred to as the Empire by modern Thanterians. The history of the Empire and its death throes during the 100 Cleash Wars have been detailed.

Finally, slight additions have been made to the timeline to incorporate the history of the human cultures that started to evolve around Jorune. Also the ramian history has been added to the timeline and a great period during ca 2000 PC have impacted on all cultures as the ramian seriously started colonising the world.

SPREAD OF HUMANITY AND ITS HISTORY ON JORUNE

The human settlements surviving the destruction of the human-shantic war soon became separated and isolated from each other. The settlements of the Northern Hemisphere were naturally separated from the more intact southern colonies, as the thodicean mountain range and the see'iss desert were natural obstacles that could not be traversed. These northern survivors moved around for a long time in order to avoid the shantic warriors looking for them. Soon they found places that were easy to defend or where the shantas did not or could not go (Ardoth and parts of the Doben-al being among these). The main pockets of humans on the northern hemisphere settled along Ardis bay, the Sychill coast, the Gauss valley, the lands south of Lake Dau-Uh-Dey, the Jasa island of Jasp, central Temauntro, northern Hobeh and southern Doben-al. Some of these settlements multiplied and divided. Many times these off-shoots would be destroyed by plagues or even wild beasts or famine. By the time the greater civilisations that exist today stabilised and started to grow and spread, cultures such as the great Hobeh and Temauntro cultures, had failed and vanished. The old Korrin culture of southern Khodre had been incorporated in the colonising Thantierian culture and the cultures of Burdoth and Heridoth had multiplied and mixed so many times that a huge and untraceable variety of cultures now existed. The cultures of southern Doben-al had become the fierce and nomadic tribes wandering the Doben-al and Ros Crendor and incorporated into this great sprawling culture were the unwanted muadra and boccord that had been pushed out of the civilised lands. Iscins today speak of "the crescent moon of civilisation" when referring to the human civilisations of Jasp, Khodre, Burdoth and Heridoth. The strongest and most persistent of these civilisations have been the stable Jaspian culture and the realms of Sychill and Ardis.

The main pockets of humans in the Southern Hemisphere could be found in the southwest and central regions of what was to become Thantier, far western Thantier, northern Drail and south-eastern Drail. The humans of northern Drail simply vanished totally in a short period of time. The only thing they left behind were strange standing stones, simple monuments and attempts at carving faces on cliff sides. Their disappearance is a mystery to iscins. The humans of south-eastern Drail seem to have

met a similar fate. Many of these moved deeper into the jungles of Drail and changed into the strange human mutants referred to as “Trach” by ramians, who later came to the area. Only a few iscins accept the theories that these savages could be related to the rest of humanity. These theories suggest that the humans living in southern Drail were changed during the Age of Monster and continued to change due to the effects of the isho-rich and perplexing “burn stones” that still are a central part of trarch culture today.

The human settlements of southern and central Thantier never abandoned their earth-tec. During the first years of the human-shantic war it was used against the shanta. A network and several organised settlements arose, which were later to be diffusely remembered as The Empire or The First Empire. These settlements were however dependant on the terran food supplies, which were finally depleted 100 years after the abandonment of the colonists. As The Empire struggled to find new resources it turned upon the thriddle of the Mountain Crown. In a series of cataclysmic events the mighty earth-tec arsenal that still was intact, was destroyed in the attempt to take Tan-Iricid. The Empire slowly crumbled as the cleash unexpectedly invaded. The 1000 year Cleash Wars degenerated and isolated the human civilisation of eastern Thantier. Not until a few centuries after the cleash had mysteriously left Thantier, the coastal Erucian culture appeared in western Thantier. It was the first stable Empire with no traces to the terran colonies but more would follow in Thantier.

The many different cultures with their different dialects, languages, customs and religions provide colour and diversity to the humans living on Jorune. The human realms of Jorune are full of old temples and ruined cities belonging to now extinct and forgotten human cultures. Their identities can only be found on unreadable markings or in old scrolls collecting dust in libraries. Human history on Jorune is as full of surprises and treasures as the human history of Earth was when the colonists left it.
[See *Spread of Humanity on Jorune* and *Thantier* essays for more details]

LANGUAGES

When comparing with the languages of Earth, I find it hard, without having a degree in linguistics, to imagine that the human language would remain relatively unchanged for 3500 years. The Latin language of the Roman Empire managed to change into French, Spanish, Italian, Romany, Portuguese and maybe some other languages such as Rumanian (again I’m not a linguist), in less than 2000 years. Although these languages resemble each other and have many words in common, speakers would only understand the general subject of the conversations but not be able to follow it. On Jorune I find it unlikely that Colonial English would have survived 3500 years with only slight dialectal differences and some new words. It would require a sophisticated society with centralised language reforms on a regular basis to keep the language intact. Very few cultures on Earth, like the Jewish culture, managed to keep their language and customs relatively unchanged during ordeals that possibly could compare to those humanity suffered on Jorune. The concept of having many languages among humans is therefore explored in detail. Entren has become a language group for dialects used only in the Burdoth, Heridoth and Khodre regions (since these realms are historically related) and is based on Colonial English. Even in these realms, dialects often present a great problem in communication (hence the 4 language ranks for language skills, 4 representing someone capable of totally

understanding dialects and being able to mimic them). Entren has 12 different sub-dialects such as Gaussian, Sychillian, Ardisian etc. Even within these realms exist other language groups, such as Dow, Korrin, and Nama, that are based on Chinese, Russian etc. The languages of other realms that have historically been isolated from Burdoth, differ greatly from the Entren spoken there. The closest cousins to Entren are Nortren (spoken in Jasp and referred to by Jaspian as Jassian) and Than. All three of these languages have Colonial English as a base and origin, but have developed greatly, with their own pronunciations, spelling, grammar and incorporated new words unique to Jorune or their cultures. Simple communication between these languages is possible, although demanding a lot of patience and not really allowing detail. Other human cultures have developed their own languages. Some of these have their origins in other terran languages such as French, Spanish, Arabic and Chinese. The largest language group outside of the English-related languages is Fransei. This language has its origins in French but has changed rapidly, with the pronunciation being the only thing that remains intact. Few words are recognisable as French but the language does sound French. It is the tribes of Doben-al and Ros Crendor that speak Fransei, and a written form was developed very late, creating a written language that does not at all resemble original French. Although the Colonial Authorities required all colonists to be able to speak Colonial English, many colonists used their native tongue when communicating within the family group. These languages have either died out or evolved on Jorune. Erucian, Fransei and Dow are examples of this. [See the *Languages of Jorune* essay for further details]

RACE RELATIONS

Humans have always feared the unknown and those things that differ from the norm. Many cruelties have been conducted upon those of minority groups within a culture, whether they are of another race, religion, sex or appearance. Some say that it is a survival trait, others that it is a sign of human ignorance. Only a highly developed society with strict moral codes and legal system offering protection to a minority group will effectively stop this darker side of human behaviour. The cultures of Jorune are no exception, being more primitive (possibly with the exception of the shantic culture – Ca-Desti excepted) than the civilisation that decided to colonise Jorune. A great distrust of other human cultures and especially other races is widespread. Races such as ramian and cleash would not even be considered to be approached by humans. Pogroms and persecutions are common and often incorporated into religious beliefs or cultural ideals. Although a surprising amount of kindness and understanding can be found on Jorune, it is still a dark and racist place. Because of this humans show great distrust towards muadra, boccord and the other races. The discrimination of the coloureds in the 1950's of America is nothing to what muadra of Burdoth have to endure. Boccord are somewhat more tolerated but not trusted or seen as peers. In Thantier the situation is much, much worse. The cities of Jorune are not bustling metropolises with a mixture of races like the Mos Eisley spaceport in Star Wars. Because of this the racial territories are more strict and confined. Races have however found safe havens or cultures that accept them outside their own lands. Populations of woffen (often sailors) can be found in quite a few cities of the Jasp, Khodre, Burdothth, Heridoth region. Bronth scholars often travel between universities of these realms and some larger cities even have a small population of bronth. Crugar are never found in human cities unless invited or

possibly trading. Relation is however cold between humans and crugar (with the exception of the cygrans and jaspian). Blount never leave their marshes and tolograns have just started to trade with humans after centuries of isolation. The salu frequent larger ports to serve as sailors, pilots or guides but mainly keep to themselves and very rarely live among other humans. Furthermore, many of the salu along the Dobenal, Hobeh and sillipus coasts are pirates and a nuisance to sailors. The salu of Sillipus and Hobeh are especially known for their savage ways. The acubon of the Khodre region lakes are fiercely territorial, but do not make a living as pirates. They simply try to keep to themselves and protect the way of life they see as the only correct one. It is unheard of for ramian to visit human towns as anything else than prisoners or carefully guarded emissaries. Ramian are feared by humans as much as they themselves expect a harsh welcome. For simple folk they are regarded as demons or cold-blooded murderers and raiders. Not surprisingly, ramian farmers, (zon), are even more afraid of humans if they would encounter them. The Silent Ramian of Jasp are an exception to the hate relation between the species and serve as a bridge over this gap of misunderstanding. [see *Ramian Caste System* essay and *Aylon Star* for more details] Needless to say, cleash would never be welcome in a human settlement. Scarmis are a rare sight outside of their hive communities. Although not hostile, these creatures are so alien that they mix poorly with humans. Their scatter-brained intelligence often pictures them as unintelligent creatures. Croid are a nuisance and often not seen by humans as anything more than a dangerous animal, or at best, as some kind of cunning primate. Thriddle are an exception. Their meek behaviour, their grasp of the human languages and their nice manners have made them accepted in most human realms. Thriddle present no threat to other races and do not seem to have any kind of aggressive political agenda, except for the hoarding and trading in lore. The thriddle shen, present in most larger cities or towns, have attracted many other races as a haven. A place to be relatively safe when times change and humans start looking for scape-goats to blame a famine or plague on. Where thriddle go, corastin are also found. Communities of corastin are found in other places of the wild as well, but are avoided by humans because of their territorial behaviour. In these smaller rural areas, it would not be wise for a corastin to enter a human settlement with his club. In some towns corastin have however found their great size and advantage and have been hired by humans as guards or labourers. Thivin are another race that has earned its acceptance among humans. Due to their mysterious origins the thivin do not seem to have a home and live like gypsies in roving tent colonies. They specialise in trade and entertainment and have become a permanent sight in many cities of Burdoth, Heridoth, Khodre, Jasp, Lunderere and Dobre. Over the last few hundred years the population of Thivin have spread like wildfire. Their large and tight-knit families extending even into Thantier and seriously infiltrating the klade system.

Accordingly, as races try to keep to themselves, they cannot be found in equal proportion over Jorune. I have therefore put one or more main population centres in certain areas. Members of a race found elsewhere always have a story to tell. (The mysterious shanta are an exception and seem to live everywhere and nowhere).

[See *Race Charts* for more details]

RELIGIONS

The original Skyrealms of Jorune game and many other role-playing games lack the cultural impact a religion normally has on a primitive human culture. Religions often

determined who would rule and what people were allowed to think or do. Religion strongly influenced customs, ceremonies, holidays, moral values and most importantly philosophical ideas about the meaning of life, man's part in the world, the limits of reality and the definition of right and wrong. It is very hard finding a culture less advanced than our own, without any kind of strong belief.

It took less than 2000 years for Christianity to be born, evolve, divide and in some cases flounder on Earth. One of Earth's greatest religions and the source for much happiness, strife and sense of belonging evolved under a biologically very short time. Why should not great cultures and strong religions have evolved on Jorune? Well, they have. Empires and religions so strong and strange, that they resemble nothing seen before. Earth and its religions were forgotten in a surprisingly short period of time.

Many Jorune religions are based on old terran religions brought by the colonists to Jorune. Only the Holy Pluran Church of Thantier somewhat resembles the old Christian religion of Earth, by using the same names for its priests (pope, bishops etc) and the fact that it calls its temples "churches". However, there is not much else that resembles the old Christian faith, as the Holy Pluran Church has adapted to a harsh environment and is very intolerant to non-humans or human mutations. Most religions will be very harsh or intolerant towards heathens and non-believers. Animal sacrifices are common, but even human sacrifices are often heard of. Most religions spend a lot of time (especially in big cities) defaming each other. Wars fought on religious grounds are common. Religion gives the people and races of Jorune a sense of belonging and an identity, but it is also responsible for many cruelties and is often an instrument used by the rulers or by power lusting priests.

[See *Religions of Jorune* for more details.]

EARTH TECH

Here, is where my view of Jorune differs greatly from that of Skyrealm's. In my version of Jorune, earth-tec is something mystical and forbidden for the general populace. It is referred to as Dharsage Silver by commoners (after Dharsage Khodre Allonkarb, who reputedly discovered it) and is believed to be holy artefacts created by god(s), or at the best, by humans of a long lost glorious past. Only the shanta, the thriddle High Librarians and some human rulers know the true secret of earth-tec and the fact that humans are not native to the world they all call home. Many humans of less developed civilisation than Thantier and Burdoth have never even heard of Dharsage Silver. As the first ET cache was found, network charts and recorded transmission gave clues to where other caches remained hidden as well. In less than 20 years another five caches were discovered. Suddenly Thantier and Jasp had fearsome arsenals of their own and were now dangerous rivals to Burdoth technological supremacy. It is unknown how many additional caches or preserved research stations have been discovered during the latter years.

Dharsage Silver means power and is only to be handled by the privileged, such Drenns, keshts, dakrani (thanterian nobility), priests etc. Unlawful usage or ownership of Dharsage Silver is harshly punished. Even so, a black market of more mundane Dharsage Silver can be found (remember, not all ET devices are blasters, lasers and power armours. Most of it is actually work equipment and everyday equipment). As

the artefacts are destroyed or depleted more quickly than the few privileged iscins who have studied them can repair them or recharge them, the rulers now try to gather up what remains from the Energy Weapons War. A great hoarding has begun. The years of study has also born fruit. Thantier and Burdoth have learnt how to repair some artefacts and rumours state that Burdothian iscin have started to create totally new artefacts. The scientific lore of Dharsage Silver is filled with logical gaps and is highly unpredictable, as most of it has evolved around reverse engineering. Some effects may be reached, but iscins have no idea why they occur. Most parts can never be created again, as the knowledge how to build the factories necessary for the process does not exist on Jorune. Earth-tech science and experimentation is a scary and very secretive business. As a GM, I only rarely allow players to fiddle with Energy Weapons (as their destructive power is much greater in my system than in the original game. It's logical that they should be. Otherwise they could just have brought sub-machine guns and grenades to Jorune, and which warrior would survive an encounter with them anyway?)

POWER FACTORS AND WORLD CONSPIRACIES

Among the humans of Jorune there are sages, dharsages, princes, dukes, chieftains, bishops, kladesmen and colmons who all have their own agenda and their own obscure goals. Some follow blindly the good of their people, their Gods or their organisation. Most have incorporated their own goals into their life work. Even if individuals or whole realms sometimes seem to have a certain goal or belief, history has shown that most of them will make little impact in the long run. Humans are too chaotic and spend far too much time doing what they do best – competing and fighting against each other.

However, there are larger power factors on Jorune, whose actions effect many lives and the history of Jorune.

The dharsage of Burdoth is one of the few humans who have received education about the time before the Terran Colony on Jorune. He has tried to change the society and social structure of his realm to better match what he believes to be an utopian world. Some efforts are even put into uniting humanity and spreading knowledge and education. Nevertheless, the dharsage rules a medieval realm. Harsh laws and strong rulers seem to be necessary and cannot be replaced easily. Modern philosophies and rules cannot enter the realm of Burdoth without selection, adaptation and quite often misinterpretation. The famous “Dharsage Letters” have been sent to all corners of the world and to all kinds of people and creatures in an attempt to create a dialogue. Iscin, rulers, a ramian priests, bronth philosophers and two shantic sholari are some of the personalities, with whom the dharsage corresponds in order to gain more insight and understanding.

The Holy Pluran Church of Thantier is the strongest unifying factor in Thantier. It seeks total domination in its part of the world and beyond. By controlling the faith, the church seeks to control the worldly leaders and creating a righteous and prosperous world for the faithful and pure. The pluran pope claims to truly understand the threat to humanity that the alien races represent. Its spies have glimpsed their plans and seen the larger picture. Its priests spread out and its spies among the dakrani make way for

one faith and a strong religious leadership. The Pluran Church is a storm brewing and waiting to be unleashed. The recent incursions into Anasan are but the beginning.
[See *Thantier essay* for more details]

The Berella is a secret organisation that so far has kept itself hidden in the shadows. Compromised of exiled and disenfranchised ismins and visionaries, it struggles to unite humans against the threat of aliens and especially shantas. Named after the thodicean ghost of murdered kings heralding bad times, its leaders are believed to reside somewhere in the Drail colonies. It spreads its messages through its spies and unknowing subjects, the Doom Priest Cult. The Berella seeks all earth-tech it can find and seems disturbingly apt at using and modifying it. Force is the most common means to subdue or convert unbelievers in its cause. The target is always worldly human leaders or influencers of human cultures. Its leaders believe humanity is too chaotic, selfish and stupid to understand its situation and needs to be forced into unity in order to survive. A truly intelligent but insane leader controls the steadily growing force of the Berella and its agent that spread over the world like a purpose spider weaving its web. The time to reveal itself to the world is drawing closer.

The larger klades have over the years formed a network in most of the human realms. Their influence has thus spread far across the seas and land. The main purpose for this is practicality and ensuring safety for traders, uniformity and monetary co-operation. Since their emergence as both a trading fraction, child rearing and educational institution the various klades have been able to apply leverage to rulers of especially the towns where they are active. They are much like the guilds of medieval Europe. Recently the klades have started to organise themselves more efficiently. Most larger cities will have a Klade Court that will take care of disputes between the klades. They also appoint a DharKlademaster to speak for them in councils etc if they have been given the chance. This organisation and co-operation between the klades have started to worry many rulers. Despite its monetary influence, the klades are subject to a tremendous amount of infighting and scheming among themselves and within the every klade.

The Jaspian Trading Houses have enormous power that stretches throughout many human and non-human realms. Their neutrality and openness have allowed them to trade also with ramian and crugar. Goods unheard of by the klades, flow through the Jaspian Trade Lord's hands. These Trading Houses are competitors and often enemies of the klades. Eight major Trading Houses exist and each house is ruled by a Main Director in Jasp. Due to a good network of ships, crystal schooners, messenger thyrins and stranger devices of both crystal and earth-tech, the Jaspian Trading Houses are known for their swift global decisions and actions. Although suspected, it is not commonly known that the Trading Houses co-operate with the Jaspian Council of Servants and often transport spies or emissaries.

None of the ismin races seem to be centrally organised enough to have a complicated world spanning agenda. The crugar and woffen live off their lands and only rally under greater leaders on a few occasions. They are mostly content on living and following the flow of nature itself. The blount keep to themselves and seldom leave their marshes or swamps. Their impact on the world is minimal. Tolograns have yet to show their goals or purposes, however, they seem to follow the pattern of the other ismin races and do not yet bother about politics. Their role first as allies of the ramian

and then as allies of Burdoth, does however point toward a pattern or goal created by their leaders. The bronth of Dobre produce most or all of the philosophers, thinkers and politicians of the iscin races. Their voices are the strongest of all the iscin races in the Council and woffen often rally under or support Dobren leaders. Humans sometimes joke that woffen are the lap dogs of the bronth.

Thriddle are often accused by Thanterians to be schemers and conspirators. Their society seems to be bent on gathering information and this effort is directed and controlled from the Mountain Crown. Thriddle often serve as advisors to rulers of many species, even ramian, or as teachers. Although genetically pacifistic the thriddle have been known to use their information to black-mail rulers of other realms, however, this is always done in order to gain some insight in a matter, force involvement or to gather delicate information. Even if some people might be paranoid about thriddle querrids, none knows the true extent of their lore and what great secrets they hold in the deep vaults of the Mountain Crown.

Ramian are very different from humans in the way they co-operate within their species. This is based on their semi-telepathic (empathic) biology and their strict caste system. Fighting amongst themselves is unheard of. Killing or harming one of their own kind is a unthinkable as to cut off ones own hand. Therefore, ramian may scheme, but never war against each other, although some more ruthless individuals have sometimes had members of other species do the dirty work for them. When their shantic jailers disappeared, the ramian slowly started to explore the seas around Voligire. Directed by their ruling caste, explores soon made their way to the old lands, which they once had ruled together with their lamorri masters. The ancient and holy lands with its old temples and cities called and beckoned them to lands more suitable to live in. The cold and humid lands of Voligire meant slow death to the race. The dry, warm deserts suited them better. The ramian came silently and in small numbers at first. Slowly they crept into the dusty, haunted ruins of Ponteer and Drail. Then they started to come in great armadas over the sea. The first clashes with expanding human realms soon took place and many great wars were fought in Drail and on the Ceridis sea when ramian established their colonies in Drail and Ponteer. Most ramian believe the words of their priests and see humans as an encroaching disease that tries to stop the freedom loving ramians to roam freely over land and sea. Humans are slowly taking ancient lands that are ramian by birthright and preventing them from harvesting the shirm-eh that is vital for them. Within 500 years, four major colonies outside Voligire had been created in western Temauntro, in Silipus, in Ponteer and in Drail. Although ruled by independent colony lords, these realms blindly obey the tirtive of Voligire and listen to the words of their priests. Because of their caste system, wars, larger raids and colonisation are centralised efforts, planned by the cunning rulers of Voligire and the scary ramian priests. Recently great efforts have been made to explore the ancient ruins of their lamorri masters by the priests. Many strange artefacts and beasts have been awoken from their age long sleep. Strange voices from the past speak to the priests and direct them. The ramian priests are the only ones capable of breaking the caste system and there are indications that this may be what the future holds. Especially the colonies of southern Drail have started to be more and more autonomous. This province with its unlimited supply of inferior, domesticated shirm-eh, is but a rumour to humans, as it is situated on the uncharted south-east coast of Drail. It is these colony lords that most strongly prepare for war against the humans and plan the founding of a great ramian empire.

[See *Ramian Caste System* and *Lamorri* essays for more details]

The secretive and monstrous cleash are genetically bound as a race. Although cleash have serious infighting among their genetic ranks, they would not turn against their leaders or primary breeders if not directed by another of that rank. Cleash are also bound by their linked genetic memory and strive as a race to escape Jorune to their homeworld and free themselves from the genetic degeneration caused by Jorune. The lower ranks of the cleash do not understand the broken memories that they have, except for memories of pain and betrayal. The higher ranking cleash remember very many details back to the time when they ruled their ancestral home under its dim red star. The unseen rulers of their species never leave the Ice Fields of Gilthaw, but direct the species from there. Slowly and stealthily the cleash have spread to the unseen parts of the world such as swamps and jungles. Although the lower ranks of the cleash are cunning at best, the higher ranks are highly intelligent and dangerous. It is well-known among jers that cleash seek out shantas to kill them. Their hatred for everything seems to be only surpassed by their hatred of the shanta. Destroying and conquering shantic temples seem to be the goal of the cleash. However, the thriddle know that the cleash are one of the most organised fraction on Jorune and claim that they are systematically taking control over the cashiln network and charting the warps so that they can get to the Mountain Crown. What the cleash would do there is unknown. Only the shanta suspects what truly is hidden under the Ice Fields of Gilthaw and only they have records of the dreaded rulers of the cleash that have not been seen for millennia.

[See *Cleash Genetic Hierarchy* for more details]

The elusive shanta are just as secretive and mysterious as the cleash. Humans believe shantas to be a dying or nearly extinct race of wise isho masters. It is true that the shantic culture fought a long struggle to regain somewhat of its ancestral glory, but for the last centuries shantas have gathered the eelshons once again and started to monitor the humans more closely. With the emergence of earth-tec, some of the shantic sects are very concerned about their future. The Ca-Desti have long claimed that it is time to strike and destroy the humans before they grow strong enough to pose a threat to shantas again. The leesh-eebeeca has not been forgotten. In an attempt to revive The Way of Life, great ellishondu of the past were awoken. Among those chosen, was one of the greatest among the Ca-Desti. Simply referred to as The Red or the Red Shanta, he was one of the most important shantas that managed to banish the lamorri. Now, his rage is uncontrollable, as he sees his homeworld once again ravaged by Outsiders. Now The Red Shanta tries to rally the sects against the humans. Recent transgressions committed by humans wielding earth-tec and the hostility from something called the Berella, has forced the shanta to act. The White Legion, led by Ca-Tra priests and shantic agents of other races was founded by the eastern eelshon. They had 12 cycles of Tra to prove to shantas that humans could be taught to respect sho-caudal and that they could live alongside shantas. This was 30 years ago and time is now running out. Time to decide the fate of the humans is drawing closer. The Ca-Desti have tried to oppose the White Legions in as many ways as possible, and have even placed agents of their own among the humans.

The majority of the shanta do, however, avoid humans and only protect their villages and old temples. Human interference is seen as annoying and quite disturbing. Their understanding of the isho of the planet have enabled them to create items and machinery that rival earth-tec. The sholari can with their devices travel extensively

over the planet and communicate over great distances. Many of the sholari monitor the interference caused by earth-tec try to investigate the disturbing recent emergence of lamorri tec. The overview and knowledge the shanta have of the dealings of all realms and races on sho-caudal would be truly staggering if it was not for the general lack of understanding that shanta have for alien minds, especially the chaotic humans. This difficulty in understanding and accepting something new might be the advent of a new war between shanta and humans, as the shanta try to step out of the shadows and reclaim their world. The peaceful shanta and their well established (and recently revitalised) moral ethics do not normally have any problems in their sect relations (the Ca-Desti being the exception), and they meet regularly in the eelshons.

In the shadows, in the deeper and darker places of the world, the Realm of Darkness is forming. It is a dread and secret stronghold of evil fallen priestesses and willess slaves of Ros Crendor. They have one goal, the resurrection of lamorri power. They strive to reactivate as many lamorri artefacts as possible and to “awaken” lamorri presences that lie dormant. The Realm of Darkness is lead and nurtured by an awakened lamorri presence that currently possesses a lamorri priestess and the priestesses of Ros Crendor have started to feel its terrible power. The rest of the world is however still ignorant of the terror that lurks underground in the deep forgotten places of Ros Crendor and the Doben-al.

[See *The Lamorri* essay for more details]

ISHO, TRA-SENSE AND SHANTIC TECHNOLOGY

Isho is not magic or spells often found in other role-playing games. It is a form of multi-polaric energy that is bound to the planet and its moons through various crystal layers. The isho energy creates the sho-sen (isho wind) that flows between the moons and the planet affecting everything in its way. It is strongest at the planet’s surface, where it reacts with the oxygen, heat and common electric discharges such as lightning (creating isho storms). Most organisms that have been “born” on Jorune have attuned to the sho-sen, so that they leave a permanent and distinct energy pattern or trace around them while moving through it. It can be likened to the rings that form on the surface of a pond when disturbed by an object. These energy patterns or “signatures” can be noticed/felt/perceived by creatures with isho sensitive sensory organs at varying distances depending on the density/charge/strength of the sho-sen in the surrounding area. The direction of the sho-sen’s “flow” also determines in what direction the copra will be easier to perceive, much like a dog is dependant upon the wind when following a scent trail. In this way, many creatures indigenous to Jorune cannot “see” with optic organs, but “perceive” their surroundings. The isho sense (tra-sense) of a highly developed creature can not only perceive all objects around it as, trees, rocks, animals but also “scent” traces of signatures from a long distance away that have been brought, fragmented, by the sho-sen. The more objects in the way of the object sought, the more signatures will distort and disrupt the signature sought. Much in the same way as trees of a forest would block the view of someone trying to locate a cottage or town in the distance. While eyesight can be easily blocked, tra-sense can perceive signatures through other objects as walls, trees, blindfolds etc. However, living objects (animals and plants) have stronger signatures than inanimate objects and therefore “obstruct” tra-sense more than normal sight. (signatures are referred to as copras when they emanate from intelligent creatures.)

Since the world of a shanta and the world of a human are so different, many metaphors and phenomena cannot be clearly described or understood by both races. Colours of a tree, building etc, would mean little to a shanta as an art form. They would perceive the difference between a red coloured cloak and a blue coloured cloak by the way the isho signature feels. However shantas have great problems linking two-dimensional pictures to real objects, i.e. a portrait to a person. Therefore shantic art will be three-dimensional and created out of stone, isho, wood etc. Neither have shantas grasped high clouds and do not seem to be able to perceive stars in the night sky. Similarly humans cannot understand how shantas can sense people, animals or certain objects to be nearby, when they cannot see them. That a persons emotions and health also can be examined or even manipulated with isho is equally hard to understand. One of the hardest cultural barriers between shantas and humans is the complex shantic language that is enhanced by variations in the copra of the speaker and manipulating of the surrounding isho (often small and subtle) or a naull orb (on formal occasions). Shantas and humans may be found on the same planet, but still live in two completely different worlds.

Muadra and boccord can train themselves to “perceive” great energy ripples around isho technology devices or phenomena such as isho storms, dyshas and crystals (muadra), or “feel” the signatures of creatures (boccord). Muadra are closest to having tra-sense, but are extremely short-sighted and often miss smaller (less dense isho formations) and subtler details such as signatures. They simply see the details of great isho disturbances at a close distance. Boccord have learnt to “feel” the proximity of signatures and may be able to recognise them. This ability is linked to the natural defence boccord and humans have developed by naturally interfering (interference) with larger sources of isho, such as dyshas. Like some indigenous life forms the boccord can be trained to match the sho-sen passing through their bodies so that no signature is created. In this way they become “invisible” to life forms that rely on less refined tra-sense. Some great hishtin may even manipulate the sho-sen passing through them in order to create false signatures. A shanta or a predator that has specialised its tra-sense for small details would however not be fooled.

Shantas have not only learnt how to manipulate their signatures, but have also learnt how to weave the isho within their bodies and draw more into themselves from their surrounding. In some cases they can even manipulate the sho-sen around them and the copras of other creatures. However, shantas also found more powerful and complex ways to manipulate and even transmute the isho. The various ways to cut crystals were probably the first and were later followed by combining crystals and various materials such as rare stones, bones and certain metals. In this way powerful isho technology devices were created, capable of creating warps, stabilising sho-sen of an area, communicating over great distances and even creating evids.

Only muadra can use and understand isho tec, as it requires tra-sense and an ability to manipulate isho. Skills such as weaving, expending isho of a certain amount and colour and using colour points are required. In this way, usage of shantic technology becomes more scientific and needs more dice rolls and decisions by the muadra. The feeling that isho is manipulated is stronger.

Isho in Jorune is used in more subtle ways than simple “fireball spell casting. The composition and way to weave a dysha is taught from one caji to another. It is extremely hard, if not impossible to simply “invent” a new dysha. Caji travel from sholari to sholari to learn their distinct dyshas. There is also a limit to what kinds of dyshas can be woven by humans, as they do not possess truly isho harmonic bodies, as do shantas. To make the dyshas available more interesting the bundling rules are used frequently and weave tricks have been introduced in order to use dyshas differently and more practically. Many are directed towards the more detailed unweaving procedure such as false colours, hard woven dyshas etc. Other enable dyshas to be delayed, stabilised to be used by anyone passing by and touching them (traps) or even merged with other dyshas.

[See *Isho Technology* and *Weaving the Isho* essays for more details]