

SKYREALMS of Jorune

Spread of Humanity on Jorune

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Contents

Humanity's fall from grace	2
Humans of the Northern Hemisphere	3
Humans of Northern Temauntro	4
<i>Jaspian Culture</i>	5
<i>The Temauntro Culture</i>	5
Humans of Khodre	6
<i>Korrin Culture</i>	5
<i>Khodren Culture</i>	7
Humans in the Doben-al	7
<i>Fransei Cultures (Fransei Tribes)</i>	7
<i>Ros Crendor Culture</i>	8
<i>Lunghoth Culture</i>	8
<i>Vucian Culture</i>	9
Humans in Burdoth and Heridoth	10
<i>Delmeran Culture</i>	10
<i>Sychillian Culture (Sychillian Kingdoms, Sychillian Sagedom)</i> ..	10
<i>Gauss Culture</i>	12
<i>Essanja Culture</i>	12
<i>Gloundan Culture</i>	13
<i>Ardis Culture</i>	13
<i>Sobayid Culture</i>	16
<i>Nama Culture</i>	17
<i>Sobayid Coronians</i>	17
<i>Mash-ala Culture</i>	18
<i>Sholian Culture (Sholian Sagedom)</i>	18
<i>Dow Culture (The Dow People)</i>	19
<i>Ellcor Culture</i>	21
<i>Kan Lenkha Culture</i>	21
<i>Yorkni Culture</i>	22
Humans in Dobre	23
<i>Nuris Culture (Children of Nuris)</i>	23
<i>Hobeh Culture</i>	23
Humans around the Kymay Sea	24
<i>Sillipean Culture</i>	24
<i>Reigos Culture</i>	25

<i>Anasani Culture</i>	25
Humans of the Southern Hemisphere	26
Humans in Thantier	26
<i>The Empire</i>	26
<i>Sky Culture</i>	27
<i>Erucian Culture (Erucian Empire)</i>	28
<i>Horse Culture (The Horse People, The Beasters)</i>	29
<i>Coronian Culture (Holy Coronian Empire)</i>	30
<i>Sutturash Culture</i>	33
<i>Thodicean Culture (Thodicean Tribes)</i>	34
<i>Skamaan Culture</i>	35
<i>Krang Culture (The Krang)</i>	36
Humans in Southern Temauntro	37
<i>Varak Culture</i>	37
Humans in Drail	38
<i>Stone People</i>	38
<i>Colonial Cultures</i>	38
The Mutant Cultures	38
<i>Boccord and Muadra</i>	38
<i>Trarch Culture</i>	39
<i>Salu and Acubon Cultures</i>	39

[See the *Revised TIMELINE* for an overview of the exact dates]

[NOTE: All cultural maps show main or current area (red) and historical area or area of political influence (striped).]

Humanity's fall from grace

Shortly after the colonies were destroyed, humans tried to scavenge what was left and rallied around the research stations and minor installations that still were intact. Some groups, however, became isolated forever. Among these were Iscin himself (whether he was a single man or a surviving research team is unknown). The remaining survivors tried to find each other and travelled across the hostile world with their remaining intact craft or by foot. The main human settlements of survivors soon found themselves attacked by shantic survivors. Groups travelling from a distance to the surviving installations found that they had been reasonably safe when not using or being in the proximity of high-tec devices. Members of the surviving Ithaca Research Project also saw the relation between isho and high-tec interference and prepared to shut down and hide earth-tec devices until shielding devices, safe havens or safer ways to use them had been discovered. A message sent from one of the northern colony research stations, detailing how earth-tec could be stored for later use, was sent out to all surviving pockets of humanity who could receive it. This message came to be referred to as Jason's Will by the Thanterian iscins that uncovered a garbled recording of it in 3489 PC. The message would come to be the main reason humanity were able to re-discover its origins.

Humans abruptly returned to a simple existence, devoid of all the high-tec commodities that existed during the colonisation. New ways of life slowly created

new cultures, new languages and, in time, religions. Some human survivors tried to stand their ground against the shanta and rebuild the old way of life, by retaining their earth-tec and creating a network for the survivors to keep in contact. Most notable and successful among these was the Newfield Research station in what was to become Thantier. Finally even this attempt of preserving the old ways was abandoned as new enemies appeared and the scarce terran supplies were depleted. Humanity's fall from grace was complete.

Humans of the Northern Hemisphere

The humans of the northern hemisphere were separated from the more intact southern colonies. The main reason for this was the separating Thodic mountain range and the See'iss desert, which were natural obstacles that could not easily be traversed. Another reason why the colony survivors weren't intact was the fact that the northern colony sites had been spread out over a greater area than those of the southern hemisphere. As they we spread out over a large area the colonists had great problems reaching each other.

Many of the survivor communities of the northern hemisphere of Jorune had followed the advice of the scientists to store or leave their high-tec equipment unused and the attacks subsided. However, this was only for a while and soon the shanta came back in force and human refugees had to scatter and flee – leaving their high-tec equipment behind. Only the equipment hidden by the scientists and abandoned in military bunkers were safe. The rest of the equipment was destroyed by the shanta, wear and tear or by the elements. The surviving colonists were forced to live off the lands again.

These groups of northern colony 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 shanta would not or could not go (Ardoth and the Doben-al being among these). After the first 600 years of strife and flight, the main pockets of humans on the northern hemisphere had settled along Ardis bay, the Sychill coast, the Heridothian coasts, the Gauss valley, the lands south of Lake Dau-Uh-Dey, the Jasa island of Jasp, central Temauntro, central Hobeh and southern Doben-al. After the shantic attacks had ceased, humans fought a long battle against its new enemy: bacteria and parasites, which would sweep through a settlement like wildfire. Some of the settlements multiplied and divided, although, plagues, famine or even wild beasts would often destroy these offshoot colonies. Surprisingly fast, however, the human immune system incorporated these new threats and adapted. A great isho surge additionally created many mutations among humans (the Age of Monsters). Some of these survived and stabilised to become the muadra or boccord.

By 1000 PC, the greater civilisations emerged. They had stabilised and had started to grow and spread. Iscins today speak of “the Crescent Moon of Mivilisation” when referring to the northern human civilisations of Jasp, Khodre, Burdoth and Heridoth. The strongest and most persistent of these civilisations have been the stable Jaspian culture, the cultures within Burdoth and Heridoth and the peaceful fishing culture of southern Dobre. The cultures that disappeared through war, natural disasters or by being swallowed by other cultures (such as the Temauntro Culture, the Hobeh Culture

and the Vucian Culture) are often lost in the mists of history and remembered vaguely through legends or barely understood scrolls in forgotten libraries.

Humans in Northern Temauntro

The *Jaspian Culture* has always been very stable and revolved around the remains of the colony sites of Nordburg 1-5. These colony sites were attacked by the shanta but not all destroyed. However, its inhabitants had to abandon these cities on the north-eastern shores of the Jasa island as they were vulnerable to the elements and the cold after the reactor failure following the shantic attack. The colonists built towns for themselves in the sheltered inland regions of Jasa or along the southern coast, which had milder weather thanks



to the warm sea currents of the isho anomaly that is the Jaspian Sea. Before abandoning their old Terran dwellings, the survivors hid much of their most powerful earth-tec outside the colony city, in accordance with the advice given by the scientists of Northfield Research Station. The survivors spent many centuries battling the shanta, the new diseases and the severe elements of their northern lands. At first the humans had to surrender their coastal dwellings rich in fish for safer ground inland or in the mountains. Some chose to remain and fortify their dwellings however, and one such place was the settlement of Jasp that would come to dominate the region.

The shanta soon withdrew from the skirmishes and even negotiated with the humans of Jasa for a truce in return for the humans not entering their abandoned cities in the Leesh gorge. A peace and some understanding between the races led to the founding of the well-known Jaspian Tolerance that later allowed them become trading partners with cygra, ramian and human neighbours.

The Jaspian Culture came out strong and united after its great ordeal on Jasa and managed to spread over to the mainland and creating the vast realm of Jasp. Further strengthened by migrating boccord tribes from the south in 1100 PC, their culture stabilised and started searching outward for partners in lore and trade.

In 900 PC the salu approached the Jaspians who were trying to chart the dangerous Jaspian Sea. The salu and the Jaspians entered a partnership where salu helped constructing a great armada of swift and reliable ships in return for the Jaspian lore of mapping and harnessing the isho anomalies of the Jaspian Sea. Already by 1000 PC the Jaspian trading fleet of ships and crystal schooners started exploring the eastern Temauntro coast southward.

By 1500 PC the Jaspian Trading Houses had firmly established themselves along the east coast of Temauntro, in Khodre and in Ros Crendor. They constructed safe ports for their ships that would later be fortified and grow into cities. The Jaspians brought civilisation and sophistication to the Korrin and Fransei tribes of northern Khodre and Ros Crendor and established many protectorates in Temauntro, Khodre and Ros Crendor. Finally, in 2392 PC the Coronian conquerors of Khodre (Then Carissey) had

taken over and muscled the Jaspian out of Khodre and the great crystal mines there. While loosing much of their political power the Jaspian maintained much of their monetary power and trading network. With their sea-worthy fleet and their remarkable crystal schooners, the Jaspian influence can today be felt all over the world.

In 2500 PC the Jaspian culture became stagnant and the ruling upper class of wealthy families (the Trading Houses) did everything to remain in power. Jasp ceased to explore and expand. Knowledge was hoarded and guarded instead of hunted and examined. Not until the popular revolt of sage Khanat in 3077 did the Jaspian re-instate their council and return to their liberal ways. Today, the Jaspian culture is strong politically and monetarily. The realm remains neutral to all conflicts but hoards knowledge and the new inventions and artefacts of this age. They are worthy political opponents of Burdoth and Thantier and the potential of the Crystal Fleet remains the stuff of legends.

Jaspian are as tolerant towards most religions as they are towards other cultures. Some muadra and boccord have adopted the Ishara religion and some sects originating from the ramian religions. However, most people conduct the quiet and solemn worship of Auris, the enigmatic and holy flame. Jaspian humbly meditate in front of their ornate oil lamps representing the northern light sometimes seen in winter. This flame is the All-Creator and the force behind everything. This raw force cannot be asked for favours, but the knowledge that a greater purpose exists brings a strange kind of calm to the Jaspian. Strong believers in fate and interpreting the signs of the future (and thus Auris will), the Jaspian produce many seers and oracles. It is an everlasting, creative and destructive flame which ends life and clears way for new life. Its enigmatic ripples and movements hold the universal secrets for those that are patient enough to see it.

[See *Aylon Star* for more details on the Jaspian Culture.]

The ***Temauntro Culture*** appeared around 400 PC, as the descendants of the survivors of a dozen colony cities, were drawn together along the rivers of western Temauntro that provided them with fertile fields, fish and simple transportation. The centres of this culture were these great rivers and it was known for its great raft houses and palaces that moved up and down the rivers. The Temauntro Culture was split in two by the arriving crugar clans from the east in 700 PC. As the Temauntro Culture was

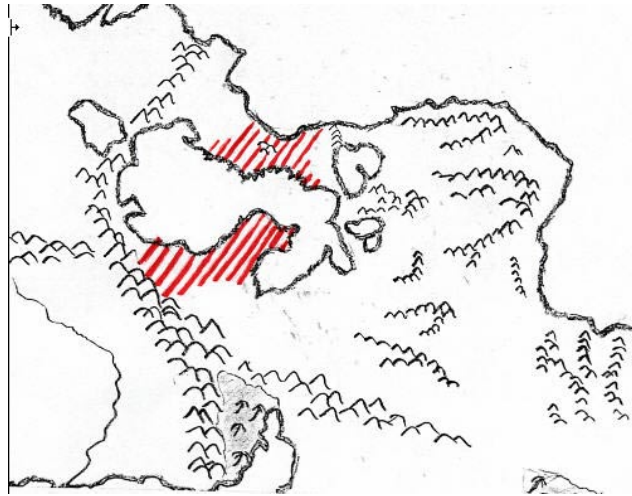


conquered and destroyed by the crugar, survivors fled to the southern and northern coasts of Temauntro. The people to the south were soon under attack again from the crugar and were finally destroyed in 900 PC. The northern survivors survived mainly due to choosing a colder climate to settle in. Plague and failing crops of hariss (a wheat-tasting fungus, humans relied on) destroyed the colony during a series of harsh winters in 1202-1204 PC. Still today, their ruins among the foothills of the Hauwgahr mountains can be seen. Only recently have the iscin of Jasp been taken by the cygra to see these old and mysterious ruins on Temauntro's north-western coast.

Humans in Khodre

The old *Korrin Culture* of Khodre constituted of the survivors from two colony cities who had managed to survive the most vicious attacks by the shanta by fleeing up into the Downtrough Mountains. After the shantic attacks subsided the Korrin moved down to the lowlands and encountered a surviving colony of Homo Aquatus humans.

By the time the first Thantierian conquerors came up through the Thodic Mountain passes in 2200 PC, the Korrin had their own very



distinct Korrin dialect, based on the Chinese language. (Although the Korrin culture did not resemble the Chinese otherwise) The Korrin Culture was dependant upon the fertile northern foothills of the

Downtrough Mountains for their crops (rogue varieties of surviving milli-rice from the colony) and the fish of the rivers and the lake. The Korrin worshipped the Sa-Ying pantheon. These gods had strong and varying personalities. They were of two hosts. The Water Gods and the Mountain Gods. The Water Gods lived in all waters and were in charge of the lakes, rivers, rain, snow, the fish of the lakes and streams as well as the protection of boats. The Mountain Gods lived among the high Downtrough Mountain peaks and were in charge of the winds, the lands, the growing of crops and animals of the forests. Together they had created man and hidden inside them the secret of the stars. The two hosts were constantly contesting with each other's powers and playing tricks on each other's realms. This friendly and mischievous competition was reflected in the Korrin culture as well. Offerings were placed in Spirit Houses along the shores of lakes, rivers and on cliffs on in special small temples among the mountains.

The Korrin and the Homo Aquatus had battled many plagues and famines after establishing their cultures. The Homo Aquatus had suffered greatly during this time and were not seen and believed extinct for nearly three centuries. When the Homo Aquatus returned they had changed greatly and had become the secretive and more alien acubon. However, the two people lived alongside each other, respecting each other's territories and occasionally trading.

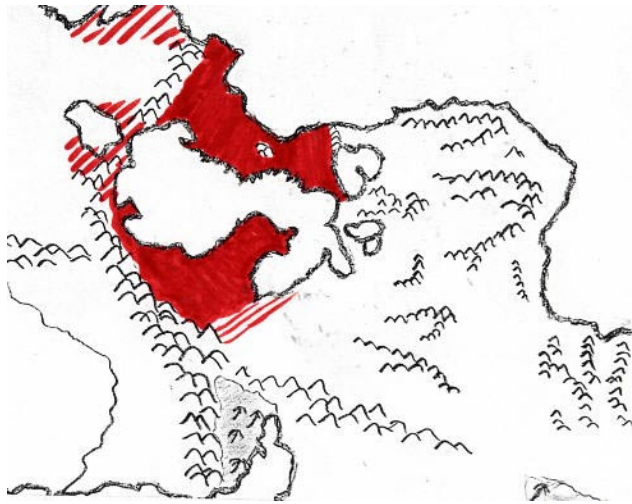
[See *Acubon Secrets* essay for more details about the acubon.]

The Thanterians (Coronians) that conquered the Korrin in 2200 PC did not care for the acubon and soon skirmishes started. Acubon became fiercer and withdrew to the islands and eastern coasts of the great lake. Not until 2220 PC was a treaty signed that would make it safer for humans to travel the lakes. The Korrin culture was slowly incorporated into the colonising Coronian Culture and many of the Korrin moved north across the lake to join their kin there who enjoyed more freedom. But the Korrin could not avoid other cultures forever. Soon they had been swallowed by the great human and boccord migrations and simply became rough, tall, northern Kodrens with

a distinct Korrin dialect and some surviving Korrin words incorporated into the modern Entren that replaced the old tongue.

[See the *Khodre* essay for more information about the Korrin]

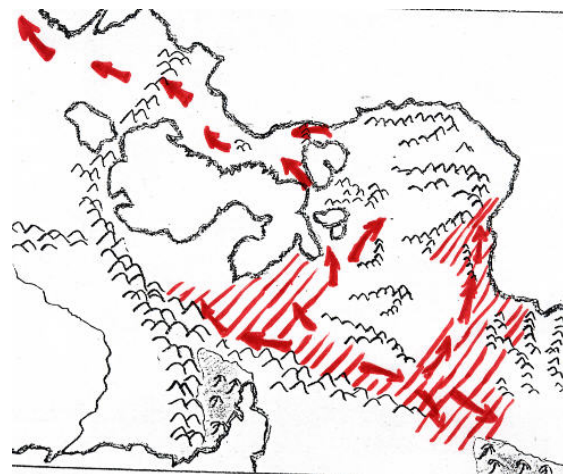
The people living throughout the great realm of Khodre can be referred to as the **Khodren Culture**. It is a mix of Coronian, Ardisian and Sychillian cultures with influences in the north from the original Korrin Culture and the strong Jaspian Trading Houses. The language used in Khodre is a khodren dialect of Entren. It contains some Korrin words (especially in northern Khodre) as well as some Than words and pronunciations. While the society at large has ordered itself after the



Burdothian model (the drenn system, the gemlink currency etc), strong, original thantierian ruling families have remained in the area and assumed the titles of sage and keshts. The mix of religions in Khodre mirrors the mix of cultures that settled there. Like most provinces of Burdoth, all religions are allowed, as long as they do not break the laws of the sage or sacrifice humans. Spirit houses devoted to the Sa-Ying gods can still be found in northern Khodre, while the Holy Pluran Church has established five temples throughout the realm. Ettons, Kerell, and Terrameer followers are common in the countryside (Terrameer in the north-east), while Tolamuun and Dow astrologers throw insults at each other from their towers in the cities. The caji brought the Ishara religion with them, the Jaspian the Auris flame and the acubon traders bring statues of Sekitl, God of the deep. Rumours suggest that a secret Hajja cult exists in Kirlan and that humans are slaughtered upon its altars.

Humans in the Doben-al

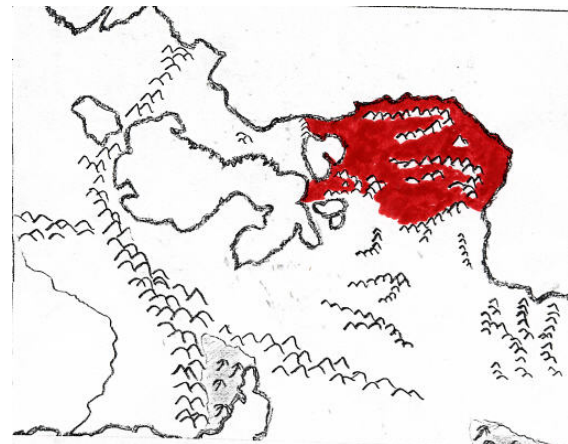
The cultures of southern Doben-al are commonly known as the **Fransei Cultures** or the Fransei Tribes, as most of them share the same language, society and beliefs. The Fransei tribes are descendants from the survivors of six colony cities on the outskirts of the Doben-al (unwanted by shantas). Four of the cities had a great population of French speaking colonists of Arabic, Canadian and European descent. The human-shantic wars shattered these people and quickly brought them back to simple, tribal



nations. They lived mainly in the northern foothills of eastern part of the Thodic Mountains, but branching tribes were soon pushed out into the northern and eastern parts of Doben-al and into Ros Crendor. These were harsh lands and the people became the fierce and nomadic Fransei tribes wandering the Doben-al and Ros Crendor still today. The language, Fransei, is derived from the colony French. Incorporated into this great sprawling culture were the unwanted muadra and boccord that had been pushed out of the civilised lands. The history of the tribes are mostly unwritten and therefore lost in myths and legends. Many tribes and sub-tribes live in the Doben-al. Some in permanent dwellings, others nomadic. Entire tribes of muadra and boccord are common, but mixed tribes of humans, boccord and muadra are not uncommon. Clan feuds and wars are unfortunately just as common as inter-tribal weddings and celebrations. It is a hard life and the fransei tribes are known to most realms as fierce, uncivilised tribesfolk, which cannot be trusted. The muadra tribes are mainly found in the south-eastern parts of Doben-al, while the boccord tribes are most common in north-western Doben-al and Ros Crendor. Religion among the human and boccord tribes centre around nature spirits and often a divine Goddess that brings life to everything. The boccord tribes of Ros Crendor have a very defined Goddess worship, governed by a strict caste of priestesses. The muadra, on the other hand, have often incorporated the sho-sen and other isho phenomena that they can fell or are effected by into their religion based on nature spirits. The Ishara religion and other watered down versions of shantic religion has over the last centuries spread through the muadra tribes together with the Way of Gends or the Teachings of Seyat.

[See *Ros Crendor* essay for further details].

The ***Ros Crendor Culture*** is actually a part of the Fransei Culture but has over the last centuries started to develop into a distinct and different culture. Five large tribes settled in Ros Crendor and a religion worshipping The Earth Mother spread among them. The society of these boccord tribes was matriarchal and social status was determined by kree (worthiness). The strong ruling caste of priestesses created a



defined territory that the tribes had a holy duty to protect from outsiders. Because the borders of this realm have

been determined and the Ros Crendorian have taken a step away from the rest of the Fransei tribes, they in fact have their own culture. To outsiders there seems to be little difference.

[See *Ros Crendor* essay for more details]

The ***Lunghoth Culture*** or Lunghoth tribes are actually a Fransei tribe, although their dialect often is confused to be a separate language from Fransei. However, the religion and nomadic ways of the lunghoth puts them apart from the rest of the Fransei tribes. They believe their home among the Gods to be a certain star, which happens to be Earth's Sun. This they follow, while it moves in a complex cycle among the stars. Their cyclic wanderings take 500 years to complete, so in reality they are only semi-nomadic. Their own history is only remembered through the eternal

Song of Creation. This eerie, sad song is sung every dusk by the children and women of the lunghoth tribes to remember their past. It becomes longer every year and after each important occurrence. Currently it takes 30 minutes to sing. According to other cultures chronicles (Vucian being the most reliable), the Lunghoth have been known for 1500 years. According to themselves, their search for their ancient home started when they were abandoned in the dawn of time.



A people of mixed origins and with their own separate language had survived among the western foothills of the Kuggin Mountains. Their culture and language became known as the **Vucian Culture** [Vookian] and their influence spread among the Fransei tribes settling in the north-eastern parts of the Doben-al in 1443 PC. By force they took the religion and holy sites of the people that originally lived in the area and made it their own. This marked the creation of their powerful priest caste and is regarded as year 0 in the Vucian



Calendar. The secret of the areas high level of sophistication and farming was the teachings of several Sleeping Gods who spread their divine wisdom every time they were awakened. The Vucian Culture was extremely well organised and soon dominated the fransei tribes. The Vucian Empire was founded in 1501 PC, using ancient magic to keep the Empire in tight control. Iscin of later ages have discovered that the Vucian Culture used earth-tec lore and communication devices from three of the original Ithaca research stations to keep their Empire together. The Vucian Culture culminated in 1906 PC and its main sources of wealth was its slave trading routes between Lake Dau-Uh-Dey and Burdoth, its exploitation of the Fransei tribes, its lamcra mines and the coastal trade with the Jaspian Trading Houses. The Empire encompassed most of the land between the Kuggin Mountains and the deeper Doben-al deserts and all the way up the coast to Ros Crendor. The Vucian Culture started to become stagnant after this time and degenerated soon afterwards. The Vucians had made themselves superior as a race to their Fransei underlings and made the gap between themselves and their enemies greater and more hated. Among these were the Lunghoth tribes, whose cyclic wanderings took them into Vucian lands. The first encounter with the large group of Lunghoth people, combined with the pressure from the Ros Crendorian tribes that had started to establish themselves in the Empire's northern regions, resulted in the destruction of the Vucian Empires capitol Curavion and two other large cities in 2462-65 PC. After this the Vucian Empire divided into warring city-states and the priest caste was divided into two distinct sects. The last remains of the great Vucian Empire was finally crushed between 2982-2993 PC after a

series of cataclysmic earthquakes, the return of the Lunghoth and the reign of a dark High-Priestess in Ros Crendor. All its central cities were deserted and lost among the wastelands of Doben-al and refugees fled to the last remaining city, Shatur. Traces of the northern stretches of this culture can be found among the Coastal Kingdoms of Doben-al's northern coast. The languages spoken in these cities that were once Vucian, are today predominately Entren or Fransei. The city of Shatur, a strongly fortified mining town in the western foothills of the central Kuggin Mountains, is now the last outpost of the pure bred Vucian Culture that exists today. The city and its priest have long guarded their God of Wisdom, The Sleeper, forever hibernating in his indestructible metal sarcophagus until his people need him again.

Humans in Burdoth and Heridoth

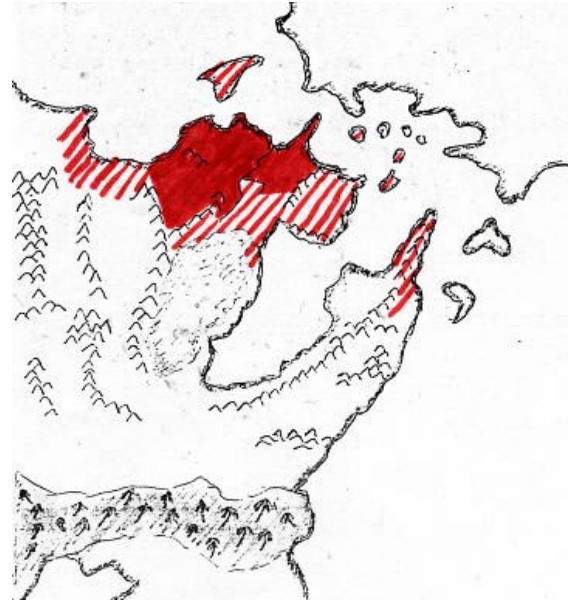
The *Delmeran Culture* was created by human survivors who fortified themselves against shantas among the cliffs and hills along what was to become Burdoth's northern coast around 200 PC. Thanks to their numbers and the terrain, the Delmeran Culture survived until the shantic attacks ceased. The Delmerans were known for their worship of the Cross, as a symbol for the suns radiance and their tradition to emerge their young in water as a blessing. They were the first people to refer to their lands as Lusail. The cities of Delmre, Phalmre and Salam'arine are best known for their delmre foundations. Branches



of the Delmeran Culture spread inland to the Gauss Valley and slowly changed into a culture of its own. Delmerans lived off the products of the sea and nearby swamps and were the first to produce cushindel silk. Initially, the peaceful Delmeran culture were slowly incorporated and swallowed by the emerging Sychillian Culture. The secrets of the cushindel silk trade and the secrets of the many meirsh, enabled the Delmerans to maintain their cultural status and uniqueness among the Sychillians. In 1332 PC a great religious clash ensued between the Worshippers of the Cross and the practitioners of Tolamuun. A great pogrom resulted and the only surviving Worshippers of the Cross, fled deep into the Suh Larvan swamps or to Reet. Still today the Cross symbol is banned, but it survives among the riverboat delmeran homes of the Suh Larvan swamp.

The Sychillian Kingdoms took over from where the more peaceful and rural Delmeran Culture ended. Also called the *Sychillian Culture*, the first three kingdoms were founded around 1150 PC and soon became the rival of the Ardis Culture to the south and the Essanja Culture to the east. The Sychill Culture was ruled from Sychill but still referred to the land as Lusail. It spread westward and eastward, founding the great cities of Sydra, Scolia, Trosoe(Lelligire) and Sychill. The delmeran cities of Salam'arine, Delmre and Phalmre retained much of its original delmeran touch, although their rulers were Sychillians. The secrets of the cushindel silk trade enabled

the delmerans to maintain their cultural status and uniqueness among the Sychillians. The Sychillian Culture finally united under one king in 1820 PC and conquered its old rival the Essanja Culture, overtaking their old cities in Essanja and in northern Heridoth. The Sychillian king now took the title Sage of Lusail. The south was, however, always barred by the hardy Ardis Culture, whose people were many and used to warring, as they were caught between fierce neighbours. The Sychillian Culture shared many things with the Ardis Culture, such as language and many cultural ceremonies. However, a separate religion had evolved in Sychill known as Tolamuun. Tolamuun priest were mainly astrologers and spent all



their time predicting the future, determining peoples destinies, creating detailed horoscopes and hoarding secrets about the movement and influences of the moons, stars and the sun. This had led in a great religious clash ensued between the Worshippers of the Cross and the practitioners of Tolamuun. The result of this religious turmoil was a great pogrom in 1332 PC after which the only surviving Worshippers of the Cross fled deep into the Suh Larvan swamps or to Reet. The Sychill culture stayed strong for many centuries, but could no longer compete for the fertile hills of eastern Burdoth when the ramian started pillaging their coasts around 2000 PC. The ramian menace proved to be Lusail's main nemesis until Burdoth was united under one dharsage in 3160 PC. The countless ramian attacks enabled northern Heridoth to slip out of the grasp of the Sychillian sage in 2240. The ramian threat also sapped a lot of the Sychillian fleet's strength and other actors on the trading arena gained access to Burdoth's northern coast and the coastal towns of Dobre and beyond. The sage of Lusail remained strong until roughly 3000 PC, when the Ardis started to seriously encroach upon its borders from the south. The poorer Essanja province was slowly assimilated with Ardis between 3060 and 3090 PC after only a few skirmishes. The final blow came in 3113 when the greatest ramian invasion in history left most of Lusail's coastal towns in the hands of the ramian. Refugees fled into the Gauss Valley, into Ardis and into the eerie Glounda forest. Ardis finally managed to free northern Burdoth from the ramian with the aid of the Sychillians in 3160 PC. The terrible battles that took place on land and sea during this time left Lusail without a navy and with a crippled army. The sage of Ardis therefore made his bid for power and marched into the newly liberated Sychillian towns. He declared himself Dharsage of Burdoth, but in reality had his forces spread out too thin to maintain this claim. Lusail summoned all its strength and in 3181 PC revolted against the Ardisian control of their region. As the Ardisian forces fell upon those faithful to the sage of Lusail the countryside was set on fire. The muadra of Lusail suffered from a great pogrom during this time, as Ardisians feared that that their powers could be used against them. The muadra massacre at Lus'ikai was the gruesome finale to these dark times. The Ardis navy struck against all ports and two great armies met west of the Accaptas

Mountains. This great battle was prevented by the shantas, who for unknown reasons interfered.

Lusail kept its independence from Ardis until the Energy Weapons War, when a mighty Dharsage Khodre Allonkarb marched into Sychill after having defeated the crugar. He declared himself the supreme ruler of Lusail and nobody could withstand his Ardisian army equipped with the ancient artefacts. In accordance to the Klein-Khodre accord, all the Burdothian provinces were given autonomy to rule their own internal affairs, although the Dharsage would lead them militarily and the Council of Ten oversee all Burdoth's external affairs. Later co-operation with Dharsage Khodre Dhardrenn changed the bonds between Ardis and Lusail into one of friendship and alliance. Today Lusail is part of the great realm Burdoth, but the sage is free to govern all internal affairs of the region. Of all Burdoth's provinces, Lusail remains the most proud and autonomous.

The **Gauss Culture** is an offshoot of the Delmeran Culture and its people migrated into the Gauss Valley after the terrible draught of 312 PC had driven the last of the iscin races from the main valley. The people who spread deep into the southern parts of the valley soon became separated from the rest of the Delmeran Culture. They changed from being fishermen, dependant upon the sea to farmers, toiling the earth. It was they who first discovered the secret of durlig among the ruins of iscin's lab and spread it to the rest of the world. Their main enemy was the crugar who still lived in the Gauss and Kuggin mountains and many fierce skirmishes took place over the centuries to pass.



The Gauss Culture never grew to great proportions, as the people remained simple folk, tending to their crops and villages. The towns of Guass and Khaun Gauss only grew in size and importance after the trade with the Ardis Culture started after Mayatrish's arrival in 586 PC. In 624 the crugar of the mountains started striking at human settlements. Already weakened by the multitude of plagues that have swept the valley, the humans flee northward and southward out of Gauss. Not until between 1100 PC and 1200 PC do the Gaussians start resettling the valley again. All that is left of the restored wisdom found in Iscin's lab is the cultivation of durlig, which the Gaussians had managed to spread to Ardisians during their exile from the Gauss Valley. After several more plagues sweeping through the valley, the Gaussian culture survived thanks only to large waves of immigrants from Ardis and Sobayid during 2000 PC. These immigrations also changed the Gaussians somewhat, but their distinct dialect and the love for their farmlands remained.

The **Essanja Culture** created a sturdy folk of seafarers and talmaron riders in 1100 PC. Their culture also shared their language with the Ardis and Sychillian cultures, but developed a very unique religion called Sajja. It was the belief in the great SkyBird Sajjanis (depicted as a terrible duradon) and required offerings. The Essajean dialect differed greatly from the Ardis and Sychill varieties of Entren and the

traditions and clothing of the Essanja Culture was very distinct. The Essanja Culture spread to the northern tip of Heridoth, conquering the Dow people and became the rival of the rapidly growing Sychillian Culture in 1340 PC. In 1800 PC the Essanja culture had degenerated and its priest-kings relished in human sacrifices to Sajjanis. The priests had taken control of the realm in 1746 PC after countless internal struggles for power and slave rebellions. A common hatred for the Essajeian priest-kings led to a war on two fronts against Sychill and Ardis in 1818 PC. Combined with the rebellion of their slaves in 1819-1820 PC the Essanja Culture was overrun by the Sychillian Culture. The dreaded Sajja worship was banned forever and the priests routed or killed. Still today Essajeians are very different from Ardisians and Sychillians. Secret covens of the forbidden Sajja cult still exist today in the inland regions of the land. The mysterious “porters faint” disease has sometimes been associated with the dreaded hypnotic priests of Sajjanis.



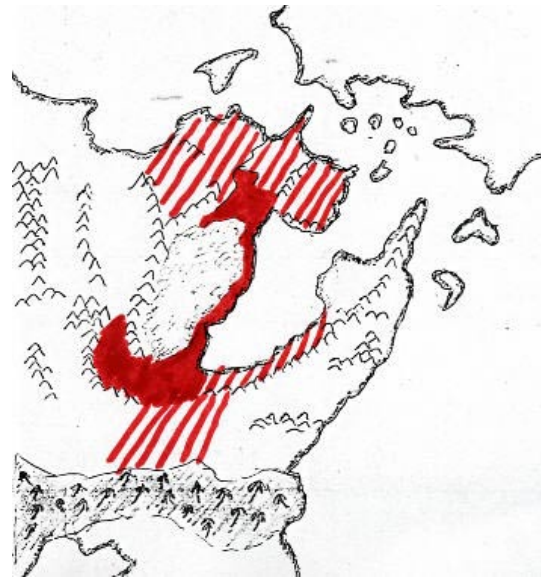
The strange **Gloundan Culture** was discovered by Sydran refugees in 3115 PC. Forced into the dangerous Gloundan forest, the refugees found that people were already living along the shores of lake Elgry. These people were of Essajeian origin and had migrated into the inner reaches of the forest around 1700 PC. The Gloundan Culture revered the forbidden god Sajjanis but not to the extent of the Essanjans at the end of 1800 PC. A strange cult of hypnotic priests ruled Glounda, and still do today.



A mystical order of warriors, known as the Shadow Warriors defend their small realm from beasts and people alike. The sinister priests of Sajjanis, the black painted warriors with their skills in unarmed combat and the strange inbred people of Glounda have created many stories among the Burdothians. With the arrival of the Sydrans, the stagnant Gloundan Culture was revitalised and even strengthened. Even though the Sydrans quickly adopted the thick Gloundan dialect of Entren and many of the customs of their hosts, they kept their Tolamuun faith. Today the Gloundans have two faiths and a religious power struggle is growing. At the present, the dharsage has ordered the construction of a road between Ardoth and Glounda, and the Sajja priests fear a great change that will destroy their way of life forever.

The **Ardis Culture** proved to be the most stable and persistent of the Burdothian cultures. Although briefly conquered on a few occasions by its neighbours, the Ardis Culture grew to be the dominating culture in Burdoth and Heridoth. Its origin lies

with the founding of Ardoth as a fishing village in 250 PC. The location was not a coincidence. The human survivors had seen how the shantic warrior avoided the place as a plague and chose to settle there. More and more survivors gathered around Ardoth and the village grew into a city that would soon become Jorune's largest. Attempts at having a council failed as the population grew. The title chell, was given to the city's appointed ruler. Soon a sage was also appointed to lead the military for a certain amount of years. This system worked amazingly well for several centuries as the two power factors kept each other in place.



As the city is the backbone and the true reason for Ardis power, the chell always remained an important, opposing power factor to the more militant sage and a guarantee that the power wasn't usurped and stability maintained. The title "chell" originated from the Ardis Culture along with most military ranks and the famous drenn system that now exists throughout Burdoth today. Many consider Ardisian to be the proper and true form of Entren and it is regarded as a court dialect in Burdoth.

Between 1600-3000 PC, the Ardis Culture found itself situated between expansionistic cultures to the north (Sychill), north-east (Essanja), south (Sobayid) and east (Sholia). This environment cultivated a strong army and a powerful walled city that would be besieged on many occasions during its history. From a very early stage the Ardis culture declared a freedom of religion, which attracted a larger population and thus more defenders to the city. As the power of Ardis grew, the sage became the supreme ruler over all land in Ardis, except the city of Ardoth itself, which was still ruled by the Chell.

The Sychillian and Essanjan cultures were the only obstacle preventing the Ardothian trading fleet to leave the confines of the Ardoth Bay. However, after the slow breaking of the Sychillians during the ramian pillaging of the northern coasts in 2000-2200 PC, Ardis, and especially Ardoth, established itself as traders across the civilised lands in 2250 PC.

The Gaussians had early co-operated with the Ardisians after the legendary allegiance of Mayatrish and Paul Gauss, and the valley never faltered in its allegiance to the sage of Ardis. Both the lucrative trade in durlig, as well as trade routes from the Doben-al provided the Gaussians and Ardisians with wealth.

After Lusail had conquered Essanja in 1820 PC, only one main power factor threatened the Ardisians in the north. However, the power of Lusail would start to wane in 2500 PC and only minor border skirmishes took place thereafter. The conflict with Sobayid and Sholia, however, escalated over the centuries as all three realms gained more power and influence.

In 2450 PC, a great conflict over land around the south tip of the Ardoth Bight begins between Ardis, Sobayid and Sholia. It ends with the terrible battle of DharKesh in 2512, which puts a lid on the conflict and leaves Sobayid without any claim to the coast. However, the conflict would start within 80 years again between Ardis and Sholia and would last for many centuries. This rivalry can still be felt today.

In 2596 PC, the Sage of Ardis and his Gaussian allies had heeded the calling of the Sage of Sobayid and managed to free the lands from the Thanterian invaders. The northern parts of Sobayid, along the Krayll road, were given to Ardis and the Sage of Sobayid had to swear allegiance to the Sage of Burdoth. This was the end of the rivalry between Burdoth and Sobayid and a strengthening factor in the south towards the troublesome Sholians. The conflict with the Sholians would last for another four centuries. During this time battles were frequent in both Burdoth and Heridoth. In 3000 PC Ardis was heavily pressured by the Sholian victories in battle over the last decades and the crugar invasion from the Doben-al that picked up momentum. Ironically, it was the Sholians that came to the aid of the besieged and crippled city of Ardoth through Sage Shandane of Sholia. Shandane did not declare himself lord of the Ardis province after he had liberated Ardoth, but did claim the city of Ardoth as part of the Sholian Sagedom by appointing himself as Chell of the city. Shandane was very charismatic and did actually have grand and peaceful plans for the two realms. However, the klades and keshts of Ardoth managed to expel Shandane and his troops from Ardoth. Shandane left with few skirmishes, always seeking a peaceful solution. His reward was to be attacked by the combined forces of Ardis, Gauss and Sobayid. Shandane was pushed back all the way to Sholia where he died at the battle of Sholia, already weakened by the dreaded bochigon dung disease. It was the end of the great line of Sages in Sholia and from that day the Sholian Sagedom would wane and its threat to Ardis would diminish.

Between 3060 and 3090 the poorer province of Essanja was wrested from the weak sage of Lusail, as Ardothian traders had most of the power in the cities. With only minimal bloodshed the Sychillian garrisons were replaced by Ardisian.

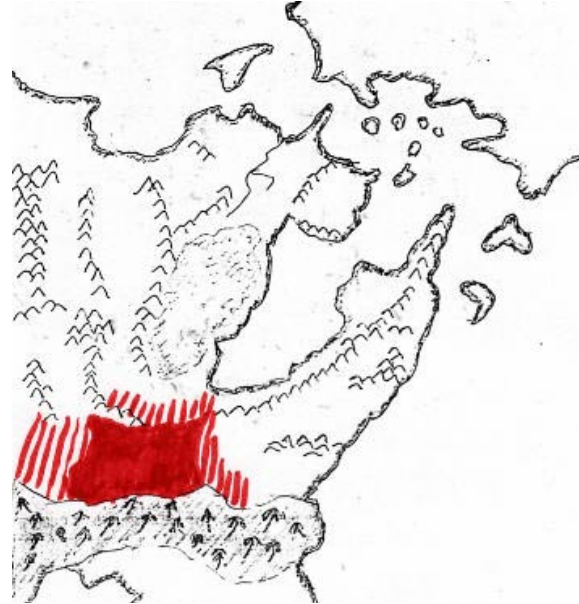
At the end of 3100 PC, Ardis had grown so powerful that it could make its first attempt at uniting Burdoth to one realm by conquering Lusail. This was done after the area had been liberated from ramian in 3160 PC. Prematurely the sage of Ardis declared himself Dharsage of Burdoth, but could not hold onto the vast area of land.

In 3305 PC dharsage Khodre Attios died. His son, Khodre Hattoreos usurped the title with popular support, as he considered his father's successor, chosen by the kim, to be incompetent. After this the dharsage title became hereditary. Great turmoil ravaged the cities of Ardis as the chell and the klades opposed this change to the balance of power. Ardis came dangerously close to a civil strife, but it was the dharsage that came out victorious as he had the Whitehand drenns on his side. The status of chell became more symbolic and restricted to simple city governing affairs.

With the rediscovery of earth-tec the Ardisians found themselves wielding great weapons of tremendous power. After having driven the crugar out of Burdoth, Dharsage Khodre Allonkarb demonstrated his power to the other Burdothian provinces and forced them to swear allegiance again. For the second time in history Burdoth was truly united under one leader. Dharsage Khodre Allonkarb also laid claim to most of Heridoth, Khodre (then Carissey) and large parts of the Dobe-al. This would not last however, as the Dobren League, the thriddle, the Maustin Caji and other internal factions turned against the dharsage who had become too powerful too fast. Autonomy in internal rulership was granted the provinces of Burdoth, while all other claims to land was given back to those conquered. This still left Ardis and the dharsage in charge of external affairs and the military in a united Burdoth. Khodre Allonkarb's son, Dharsage Khodre Dhardrenn has since then restructured the realm and forged great and strong alliances between the provincial sages and cemented the unity of Burdoth.

Today, the power of the Ardis Culture lies in its acceptance of different religions, and races. Iscin have often said that the true Ardis Culture died centuries ago and that the great boiling mix of cultures, religions, dialects and races now make up the unstable but volatile Ardis Culture.

The *Sobayid Culture* is very different from the Ardis and Sychill cultures. Although sages centuries ago established Entren as the main language of the area, pockets of Fransei-speaking populations still exist along its western borders. The Sobayan dialect is very strong and the culture is one of a proud and colourful people. The human inhabitants of the Sobayid were originally tight knit tribes that were dependent upon unity to survive in the harsh Sobayid environment. But beyond the dry barren wastes and the desert, the tribes found the Trinnu Jungle lands. Safe from the fiercer Ardis culture the people started the massive jungle slashing process and managed to claim



the fertile Cavran Plateau. Some of the first towns, established around 700 PC, were abandoned for the more fertile lands as the desert crept closer in 1000 PC. Even today one stumbles upon these ruins buried in the sand. In 1555 PC the tribes allied under a sage and the capitol of Miedrinth was founded. The sage was the divine spokesman of the various star-gods that the tribes worshipped and claimed ancestry and family name from. Only he and his cadre of star-gazer priests knew the true wishes and intentions of the multitude of star-gods. The Shining Star of Sobayid became a religious - as well as a worldly - symbol of the sage's power. Whether the reasons were religious or worldly unity, the sage's power grew immensely as more lands along the fringes of the Trinnu Jungle lands were tamed and cultivated.

The deep desert tribes that came out of the Doben-al deserts in 1600 PC influenced and changed the culture greatly. They had fled from the persecutions of the Vucians and many of these were muadra who worshipped isho and the sho-sen. This belief filtered down to the worshippers of the star-gods peacefully. Since then, the muadra populace has always been strong in Sobayid and most of the time it has been accepted.

Inevitably, the growing power of the Sobayid sages led to conflict with both Ardis and Sholia between 2450 and 2500 PC. Allegiances and borders shifted and the lands around the DharKesh swamp were reddened with blood. The Battle of DharKesh in 2512 PC left Sobayid with no land in the area. It also put an end to Sobayid's part in the bloody conflict that would continue between Ardis and Sholia for more than four centuries until Shandane the Great.

Between 2551 and 2596 Sobayid was occupied by the Thanterians that had come across the See'iss Desert in one of history's most daring campaigns. Miedrinth was besieged and conquered and the sage killed. Many of the muadra were persecuted during this time and were banned from the cities by the Thanterians. Only with the combined efforts of their new Ardis and Gauss allies was Sobayid freed from the

Thanterians, who had big problems getting reinforcements from Thantier. The new sage of Sobayid had to relinquish the northern parts of Sobayid and swear allegiance to the sage of Ardis in return for his help.

After the way of Gends started spreading at the end of 2900, the Ishara religion blossomed and was embraced by the great muadra populace of Sobayid.

Today, the tribes of Sobayid still maintain their distinct culture. Their clothes, ways and cities are adapted to the drier and warmer climate in the Sobayid and their acceptance of muadra is higher due to the higher percentage of these people. People of Sobayid are much like the Sychillians in the way they revel in fine clothing, jewels and exotic palaces. The sage of Miedrinth rules the Sobayid province autonomously, but has sworn fealty to the Dharsage. The military of the province is called "Burdothian" and no difference in uniform is seen, except for the Miedrinth Guard. The sage tends to delve deeply into religious matters and the mysteries of isho. He still controls the Ishara priests and thus the tribes strictly.

[See *Sobayid Atlas* for more info]

The ***Nama Culture***, or the Nama people are widely unknown, but their name is still whispered among the old women of Sobayid. Merely a large cult devoted to N'Marr, God of the Underworld, the Nama at their greatest period consisted of roughly 8000 individuals. A great city was built upon N'Marr's tomb in the cliff side of the great dried out river canyons of central Sobayid. Vast subterranean tunnels extended far



around the city. The Nama were a strange people that did not mix with strangers and preferred to only walk the surface at night when their god could watch over them and protect them. Legends say that the Nama abducted children from the surrounding tribes at night to sacrifice them to their dark god. Whether this was true or just fear of the strange people, the effect was their doom. Sage Hajjilla IV of Sobayid scoured the canyons for the city and finally destroyed it and its inhabitants in 1634 PC. Legends tell that the sage's soul was captured in his own nightmares three nights later and is forever tormented for his deeds. Tribes of the deep desert claim that the Nama survived and still exist, but very seldom leave their great subterranean world. When they do so they have blackened skin or are painted black and can freeze a man with their soul-piercing stare. Many adventurers have sought the lost and ruined city of N'ar among the great dusty canyons of Sobayid without finding it.

After the occupancy of Sobayid by the thanerians, some coronian dakrani stayed behind in Sobayid. They had been given the newly occupied lands by their Emperor and would not, or could not leave, as they had no assets in Thantier. These came to be referred to as ***Sobayid Coronians*** and maintained much of their coronian customs, language and religion within their strongholds. Still today, the



Sobayid Coronians rule the western part of the Cavran plateau and help Thanterian caravans crossing the See'iss desert by patrolling the northern parts of the Dobe Road free of bandits. Officially they have sworn allegiance to the dharsage of Burdoth, but their loyalty is doubted. After the Energy Weapons war many allegations have been made that the Sobayid Coronians aided Fire Lance knights in destroying the crugar instead of aiding Khodre Allonkarb's tropps to do so. Suspicions of aiding thanterian spies and treason are always heard about these dakrani that do not heed the drenn system.

The *Mash-ala Culture* of southern Heridoth flourished between 600 PC to 1100 PC. It is mentioned frequently by the scribes of Sobayid and the Sholian kings and sages. According to legend it was a beautiful and peaceful realm on the edges of the Trinnu Jungle lands in what was to become Heridoth. Two great cities filled with peace joy and bountiful food housed a culture that became known for its shantic influences. Shantic architecture and Ca-Tra temples have been found by iscin among the ruins of the cities and scrolls speak of the wise shantic seers aiding the rulers in their decisions. The Mash-ala Culture is an enigma as it ceased to exist over night. Over-extensive slashing and burning of the jungle led to one of the greatest ecological disasters of the area as the whole area was consumed in a raging forest fire that lasted for a full year. After this the land was laid bare to the elements and slowly turned to dusty plains. The Mash-ala survivors must simply have been swallowed by the Sholian, Yorkni or Sobayid cultures after their downfall. The Mash-ala ruins have been pillaged for countless centuries in search for treasure or building material. Close by, the eerie Mash-ala gap, a great canyon holds haunted shantic ruins that often have been associated with the Mash-ala Culture.



The *Sholian Culture* has always been one of Ardis great rivals. Human survivors settled along the fertile west coast of Ardoth Bight and founded the city of Sholis in 935 PC. The population grew rapidly, especially after the downfall of the Mash-ala culture in the south. In 1280 PC the Sholian kingdom was declared and lived peacefully alongside the Dow people of the north, with whom it traded. Sholians had a pantheon of Gods with different properties and who ruled or influenced the world according to when their realm(moon) was strongest in the sky. This religion called Coralli was shared



by the Yorkni. Between 1500-1800 many wars were fought between Essanja and Sholia. The Essanjan fleet had already conquered the Dow people in northern Heridoth and constantly assailed the Sholian coast. During these attacks the city of Sholia was destroyed more than once. Finally, in 1759 PC the seat of power shifted to the more easily defended Koistra. Although the king ruled from Koistra, Sholia always rose from the ashes of its destruction. After the Essajeans came the Sychillians, but these were not as aggressive. When the ramian started attacking the Sychill coast, the Dow rose and declared themselves independent. Hardened by war Sholia immediately tried to conquer the Dow and northern Heridoth. Also the Yorknin tried to push northward into Dow territory. The years between 2240-2350 were known as the Blood Years as wars between the Dow, Sholia and Yorkni tore the countryside apart. Although borders shifted every year, the Dow held on to their territories in the end.

In 2450 to 2500, Sholia found itself also fighting Ardis and Sobayid along the southern parts of its borders (close to the DharKesh marshes). The great battle of DharKesh in 2512 PC, where the three armies clashed, put a lid on the conflict for over 80 years. However, after this the age-long conflict and rivalry between Sholia and Ardis began. This conflict would last more than 400 years and the prejudice and rivalry from this time can still be felt today.

In 2595 the sholian king Harkin Matteredton declared himself Sage of Heridoth and founded the Sholian Sagedom. He had managed to take advantage of the Thanterian invasion of Sobayid and snatched land from Ardis along the Krayll road. The Sholian Sagedom is at this time at its greatest, spread between the coasts of central Heridoth and encompassing most the south-western parts of Heridoth, as well as southern Ardis. At the end of 2900 PC, the great Sholian Sagedom was threatened by greedy keshts, lusting for power. The aging Sage Niis Matteredton left the Sagedom in the hands of his son Mishane. Fate would however put the Sagedom in the hands of Mishane's younger brother Shandane, after Mishane and his family had been assassinated. Shandane was a brilliant scholar and unwilling ruler. But under him the Sholian Sagedom would flourish once again. His charisma, brilliant diplomacy and mastery of politics would enlarge the Sagedom to its old and greatest borders. Through alliances, social changes and brilliant military tactics, the Sagedom once again united. The Sholian Sagedom had a brief moment of pride and glory parallel to that of the old days, before it plummeted into chaos and disunity. Shandane's undoing was his liberation of Ardoth from the crugar invasion in 3007 PC. He left Ardis to the dharsage of Burdoth, but peacefully claimed the title of Chell of Ardoth. His grand plans for unity and two united strong realms in the Ardoth Bight was spoiled when Ardisian and Sholian keshts and klades turned against him. The great dynasty of Sholian sages died with Shandane in 3017, when the combined forces of Ardis, Gauss and Sobayid pushed the Sholians back all the way to Sholis.

After this several ruling families held the throne through marriages and pacts. It was during this time that the royal families of Ardis and Sholia started to marry to establish alliances. The final blow to the Sholians was the civil war between Sholia and Koistra that started in 3431 and led to the Burdothian occupation and the Energy Weapons war. Since this day, the Sholian Culture has been in decline and is threatened by the Dow and Yorkni cultures.

The ***Dow Culture***, or Dow people, of northern Heridoth are descendants from two colony sites with large Asian populations. The Asian features are still today visible among the Dow people and their language, Dow, is derived from Chinese. The Dow were

a peaceful people who worked hard to build their great terraces upon the Dantrella Mountains. Their culture was homogenous and effective and scribes of the Sacred Order of Preservers first started to record their history in 866 PC when the Holy City of Dow-Sen was built upon the ruins of the colony blast site. This was regarded as year 0 of the Dow Horoscope Calendar that was to become famous all over Heridoth and Burdoth. The Dow soon found themselves under attack from the fleets of the Essajeans. Around 1340 PC, Essanja had conquered the Dow and fortified the city they referred to as Dowsen. At the end of 1800, the



Essanjans and their cruel god Sajjanis had become symbols of hate and oppression, as the number of human sacrifices increased. When the greatest slave rebellion in history took place in Essanja as a result, it quickly spread to Dowsen and Fallidan in Heridoth in 1819. The Dow fought for their freedom, but found new masters taking over from where the degenerated Essajeans had left off. The Sychillians arrived and made themselves the new masters of the Dow in 1820 PC.

The Sychillians treated the Dow much better than the Essajeans had ever done. Neither did they take any slaves among the Dow. Their Tolamuun religion of star-gazers was heartily embraced by the Dow as it coincided with their beliefs in the divinity of the moons. The Dow perfected and enhanced the Tolamuun religion. It was blended with the Dow belief in incarnation of the soul through the eight cycles, or realms, of life among each of the moons and the living world (the planet/Jorune). A great caste of seers and star-gazers started to grow among the Dow and under the supervision of Sychillian high priests in Dowsen. At the end of 2100 the Dow seers and astrologers were considered the most accurate predictors of human future and the state of the world. The envy of the Sychillian astrologers grew steadily.

In 2240 PC (1374, according to the Dow Horoscope Calendar) the Dow people managed to break free from the Sychillians, as ramian attacks had turned their attention and main fleet elsewhere. The Sychillians were cast out and the harbours of Dowsen closed. During the Blood Years that followed the Dow became hardened and found great use for the reinforcements of their cities that had been made by the Essanjans and Sychillians.

After the Dow had cemented their borders they established trade with the Anasani the Dobrens. Most of the populace remained humble and simple folk, following the predictions and horoscopes given to them by their monks. The Dow Culture became very stable and defined during the centuries after the Blood Years and many great works of literature and art were created in the realm.

After the death of Shandane in 3017 the Sholian Sagedom dove into chaos and the Dow people pushed southward along the east coast of Heridoth. They conquered the Sommint valley and all lands east of the Ellcor mountains as far south as the Kyis River.

During the Energy Weapons War the Dobren League broke the Dow and invaded them in 3440 PC after several tactical manoeuvres isolating the Dow cities from each

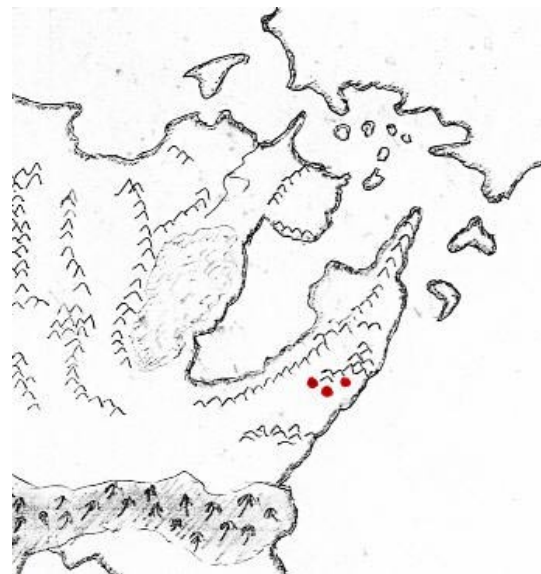
other. The Dow people suffered greatly during the energy weapons war when their armies were forced to fight for the Dobren League against darsage Khodre Allonkarb's troops armed with the new found earth-tec artefacts. At the disastrous battle of Elcrellia in 3441 PC, the Dow lost 2/3 of their army to the Burdothians. After the Dobrens had left, many Dow cities had been devastated by energy weapons or, Heridothian neighbours taking advantage of the resultant destruction. Many of these Dow refugees relocated to Sillipus when the island opened up after the Dobren League had cleansed it of ramian.

Among the Ellcor mountains can be found the mysterious ruins and old terraces of the *Ellcor Culture*. Villages and towns have been cut into the mountainside in high valley overlooking the Sommint valley. Iscin believe these towns were built by the Dow around 500 PC, but the Dow have no knowledge about them. Its inhabitants seem to have vanished or abandoned their dwellings around 1000 PC. The architecture seems to be of early Dow origin, but legends among the Sholians speak of Thunder Gods



living there and overseeing mortals. Sacrifices of food and live animals were made on the slopes of the mountains by the early Sholians. Only the Dow herders that sometimes seek shelter in the ominous ruins have seen the strangely accurate depictions of energy weapons carved upon the walls. They could have made a connection to the discovery of earth-tec if they had not been simple folk without any deeper knowledge of this. The ruins harbour an ancient secret.

The *Kan Lenkha Culture* ("Children of Lenkha") consists of two city-states of mutated survivors from the Age of Monsters. Most of these people only suffer random mutations every third or fourth generation, but have constantly been hounded and used as scapegoats. Accused of being freaks by most humans these people drifted around what was to become central Heridoth, much like gypsies of old Earth. By unknown means they accumulated great wealth and finally managed to settle in two towns in the barren eastern parts of the Elcrellia valley in 2383 PC. To these town the Kan Lenkha priests

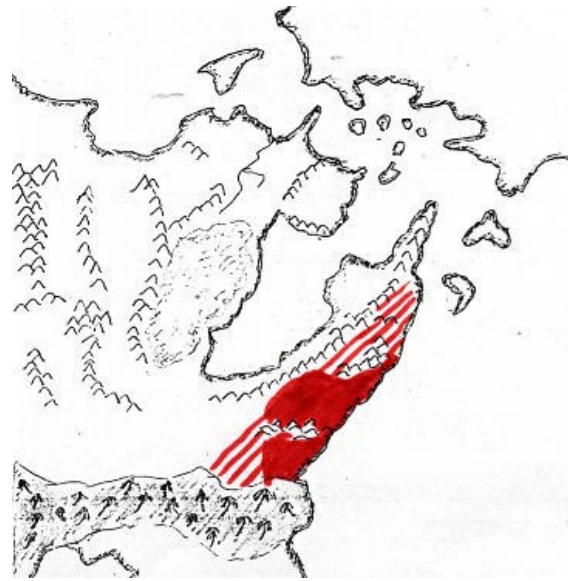


brought their most holy and secret relic, the Soul of Lenkha. This artefact is in reality a Lih-Shyee holding the copra of a mutant called Lenkha, who had managed to rally the mutants in 683 PC. Lenkha was supposedly a multi-limbed mutant of tremendous power. At this time his isho mastery was mostly unknown among humans. Evidently

he must have roused the interest of the shanta to have his naull captured. Either this or, he taught himself how to use the ancient shantic artefacts. Legends among the Kan Lenkha mention mighty shantic priests in Mash-ala that trained Lenkha himself and sent him out to save his people. The Lih-Shyee now holds his memories and his followers can tap into his well of knowledge and in a way converse with him during sacred communions.

The towns of the Kan Lenkhas attracted more unwanted humans and soon grew into cities. Because of their fear of persecutions the Kan Lenkhas fortified their cities and always tried to remain neutral traders between the Dow, the yorkni and the sholians. Their control over the great Western Road, its protection and taxation placed more money in their coffers.

The *Yorkni Culture* of south-eastern Heridoth started out as villages of simple fishermen along Heridoth's eastern coast. The population probably exploded as refugees from the Mash-ala Culture sought refuge there. The Yorkni were simple folk that did not organise themselves under chieftains until Essajeans ships started raiding their coast between 1350 to 1450 PC. The yorkni towns of York, Simbi, Meard, Kymay and Vambrey were fortified and the yorkni held out against the Essajeans. In 1674 PC a sage was appointed to rule the yorkni. The old town of York, with its distinct skyrealm hovering over it, became the seat of power. In 2000 PC,



the Yorkni Culture started spreading far inland. The Yorknian expansion westward and south-westward soon created a conflict with the powerful Sholian Kingdom and later the Sholian Sagedom. Except for a few small skirmishes a truce and an alliance kept the yorknin out of Sholian interests. Trade started between the Sychillians, Sholians and the woffen mariners of Anasan. The yorkni pantheon of gods resembled those of the Sholians, and soon priests of the various deities had spread among both of these cultures with only minor religious problems.

After the Sychillians lost their hold on the Dow, the yorknin tried to take the southern parts of Dow territory for themselves. The time known as the Blood Years (2240-2350 PC) turned sholians, Dow and Yorknin against each other in a series of cruel wars. The sholians came out victorious while the Dow managed to keep their territories. The Sholian Sagedom had conquered the Sommint and Elcrellia valley along with the city of York and its coastline between the Ellcor and Yucid mountains in 2348 PC. The Yorkni Sage was beheaded but a new line of sages appeared among the Yorkni. They ruled from Meard until York was liberated in 2798 PC.

In 2500 PC, ramian started to raid Heridoth's east coast from their new colonies in Sillipus and their holdings in eastern Anasan. The yorknin were again forced to defend their coastal cities fiercely. The final resolution to the problem came with the organised military power of combined Sholian, Dow and Yorkni trading fleet that helped the Anasani to liberate their eastern coast.

After the fall of the Sholian dynasty of sages in 3017, the Yorknin Culture has once again expanded to its old boundaries. Today, Yorkni, along with the Dow, wrestle with the remains of Sholia for control over Heridoth. After the Energy Weapons war battles between these fractions take place yearly in war-torn Heridoth.

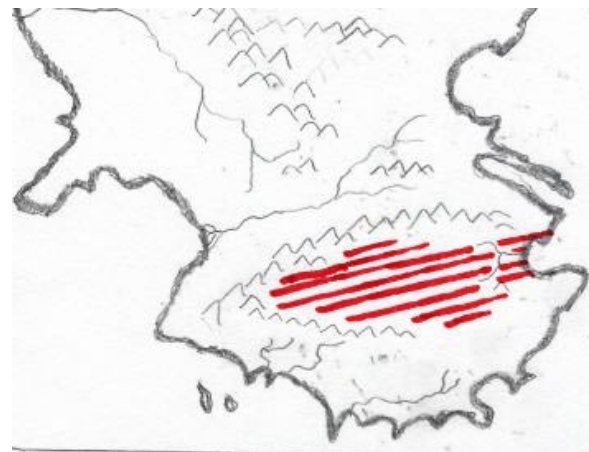
Humans in Dobre

The *Nuris Culture*, or as they are more commonly known, the fishermen of Dobre, was one of the only two pockets of humans that survived the shantic assaults in Dobre and Lundere. Not many humans had been allowed to settle on the continent, as it harboured many of the shantas most important cities. For centuries humans have known that death lurks in the inland of this mighty continent. The Nuris people were descendants from the New Madrid colony and maintained their mixture of Latin languages as they fled out into the wilderness. After decades of flight they managed to stay away from the shantic warriors along what was to become Dobre's west coast.



They refer to themselves as Nuris' Children after their Goddess of life and were created out of the waters of the birthing ocean beyond the horizon. They were simple fishermen with a strong religious belief in ocean deities that had to be pleased in order to survive. No written documents exist within the culture, but bronth historians believe that the Nuris have been a stable but small culture for over two millenia. When the bronth started arriving the Nuris were slowly pushed southward. No real hostility really took place, but the bronth of Crendor firmly relocated the Nuris from the secret lands of Crendor. The bronth however protect the Nuris from the frequent ramian attacks and see them as part of their realm, sometimes referring to them as the "Hosts" [of the bronth in Dobre]. Today the fishermen of Dobre continue their uncomplicated and unchanged lifestyle just south of Crendor. Their beautifully painted boats, depicting various sea-deities, are well-known to sailors. Sometimes they will venture across to the island of Reet or even to Burdoth to trade, if the bronth of Teputa do not have what they want. History just seems to pass these peaceful but resourceful humans by, without affecting them much.

The *Hobeh Culture* reached or maintained a high level of sophistication and kept thorough records of their origins long after their technology failed. Survivors from Neuwald, Millicom North and the Scarapta Research Station banded together and tried to preserve the knowledge of the old world through a Sajantist caste. This knowledge was later falter at the end of 700 PC as the people had no use of their sacred knowledge.



Great stone temples and at least two larger cities were constructed close to old colony blast sites, before the culture suddenly met its doom in 802 PC.

The Hobeh Culture was centred in the Kauwtha valley of Hobeh and was isolated from the remaining small human colonies of the Dobre/Lundere continent by the towering Red Mountains encircling the valley and the vast Hobeh jungles. The culture was not sea bound and could not use their open east coast for anything apart from coastal fishing. As the culture had no contact with other survivors its destiny and doom are still unknown. The sands of the growing Kauwtha Desert soon covered the old ruins as effectively as the sands of time. Unknown to other humans is the reason for the Hobeh Cultures destruction. The time of its doom coincides with the return of the Ca-Desti to their ancestral lands of the Red Mountains north of the valley, which they had abandoned after the Leesh- Ebeeca. Their wrath upon the humans invading their sacred lands was terrible. Recently, human and woffen explorers have found the ancient ruins among the sand dunes of the Kauwtha desert, and rumours of its discovery abound in the civilised lands. Little do they know that they are dangerously close to humanities most dangerous enemies and infuriate them by just travelling so close to their lands.

[See *The Ruins of Hobeh* adventure for more details.]

Humans around the Kymay Sea

After the Energy Weapons war, many refugees moved between the towns in Burdoth and Heridoth. The answer to this problem was a semi-forced relocation of these to Sillipus. The Dobren League had practically thrown the ramian out of Sillipus during the end of the war and the island needed to be populated by humans. Large numbers of mainly Dow, Yorkni and Sholian refugees assimilated to create the unique **Sillipean Culture**. As this culture is a mix of other cultures it is not uniform and many pockets of the original cultures exist. The populace of Sillipus soon proved to be



unruly and did not harbour much love towards the realms that had relocated them. When the ramian returned and no intervention came from the human realms, the dislike for Burdoth and Heridoth grew into hatred. Both ramian gire and human pirates started to infest the Kymay sea. Less than 50 years after the Energy Weapons War, the Sillipean dialect (a mix between Dow and various Entren dialects) has been established and many ramian words and ceremonies have been incorporated into everyday life and ceremony. This new-found sense of belonging has created a nation that preys on the surrounding realms through piracy and smuggling of illicit goods. Its religions are legion.

Humans can also be found in the small isolated realm of Anasan. The first humans in Anasan were originally few and all descendants from survivors of the Vostok 1-3 colony sites. They are referred to as the Reigosi or the **Reigos Culture**. Some attempts at restoring their civilisation had been made in 350 PC. Small towns were built close

to the ruins of the original colony sites, which were regarded as holy. Some artefacts and information about the colony was recovered and attempts at cataloguing this were made. The return of the shantic warriors and countless diseases brought the humans to their

knees only a hundred years later. The woffen that had been filtering down through the East Trinnu Jungle Lands found only pitiful remnants of human civilisation along Anasan's western coast. The large village of Reigos was the centre of this broken culture. The original language of the Reigosi seems to have been based on a mix of Colonial English and Slavic languages such as Polish and Russian. After the arrival of the woffen the humans started using Thowtis. However, old, untranslatable scripts on stone tablets can be found in the ancient catacombs of Reigos.



The **Anasani Culture** is a perfect example of how woffen and humans can live together. In no other part of Jorune do these two species regard themselves as equal. The Anasan language, called Anasani is a dialect of Thowtis that was isolated for centuries from the woffen colonies of Lundere. It has incorporated many words from the now extinct Reigos language and is sometimes hard to understand for the woffen of Lundere. Humans were in reality incorporated into woffen culture when the woffen arrived in Anasan. Woffen culture did however receive some contributions from the Reigos Culture. The



Anasani Culture shares the Anasani language and the belief in Iscin creation myth, as well as the woffen deities of Houwrah's Halls.

Around 1850 PC, Lundere sailors were reunited with their long lost Anasan brethren. Many ports were built along Anasans eastern coast. However, around 2000 PC, the ramian started to seriously plague the Sillipean seas and the coasts of Anasan, making life hard for many of the woffen sailors travelling between Lundere and Anasan. When the ramian built seasonal and later, in 2401 PC permanent camps for shirm-eh collection along Anasan's east coast, the Anasan Culture retreated to the central and western parts of the realm. The ramian hold on Anasan's east coast was not broken until 2623 PC when a combined Sholian, Yorkni and Dow trading fleet attacked their ports. Trade with Heridoth and Burdoth had taken place along dangerous routes taken by jers through the Trinnu Jungle Lands. Now, the humans and woffen of Anasan aided the Heridothian trading fleet, as they had been informed of the attack. After the ramian had retreated to Sillipus, many Heridothians settled along Anasan's eastern

and southern coasts and fortified the towns there heavily. The new immigrants brought with them their human cultures and a great cultural and religious mix was soon a fact. Even Dobrens, Burdothians and Jaspian Trading Houses came to settle on the east coast of Anasan. The unique Anasani Culture was soon confined to the inland regions of Anasan, as many humans were drawn to the immigrating human cultures that seem to suit them better.

The ramian would, however, briefly return in 3113 PC and occupied most of the east coast of Anasan for 30 years.

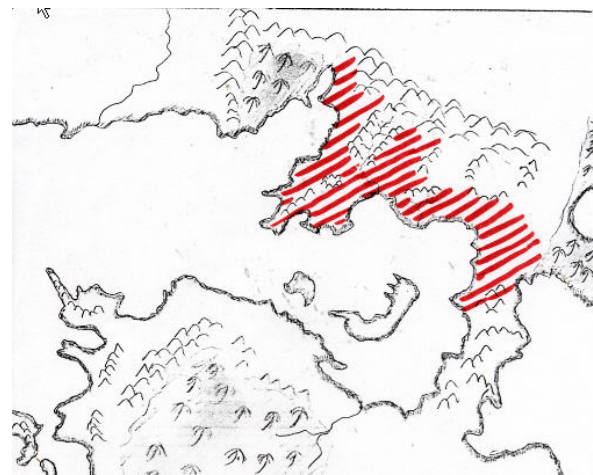
Today the east coast is heavily fortified and most humans live there, in Rhodu or in Reigos. Many woffen live inland and along the rivers. Skilled jers travel the secret and dangerous paths of the East and West Trinnu Jungle Lands.

Humans of the Southern Hemisphere

The main pockets of human survivors in the southern hemisphere were located in a belt across the south-west and central regions of what was to become Thantier, far western Thantier, south-eastern Temauntro and in northern Drail, south-eastern Drail. The human cultures of Temauntro and northern Drail were either destroyed by other humans or simply vanished. 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.

Humans in Thantier

The human settlements of southern and central Thantier never abandoned their earth-tec. During the first years it was used in the war against the shanta. A network and several organised settlements arose, which were later to be diffusely remembered in legends as *The Empire* or The First Empire. This time is often referred to by the Pluran Church as a Golden Age, when the son of the God (the Emperor) and his mighty sons in turn (the Emperor’s sons) walked among humans. Legends confuse the few facts that still can be found documented from



this time. 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 earth-tec arsenal that still was intact, was destroyed in the attempt to take Tan-Iricid. Learning from this legend, the Pluran Church is careful to remind pure-strain humans of the dangers of trusting thones and their potential treachery. The Empire slowly crumbled and the invasion of the cleash

and the beginning of the 1000-year Cleash Wars degenerated and isolated the survivor civilisation of Thantier. Although a cult known as the Advisors tried to keep the network of survivors intact by placing themselves in cryosleep and reviving human civilisation every 100 years, human civilisation continued spiralling downward. The Cleash Wars forced humans to fortify and organise themselves into an effective military. Humans also became isolated by the cleash and many fled up into the more secure valleys of the Thodic Mountains. During the end of the Cleash Wars, humans had even started warring between each other over resources, as they again came in contact with other groups or cultures.

[See *Thantier* essay for more details]

Among the highest mountains of the Per’Kulai valley of western Thantier can be found lofty temples and villages high above the tree line. These belong to the Sky People. The *Sky Culture* once stretched among all the mountains of the Per’Kulai valley and three large towns and numerous villages and monasteries could be found in high inaccessible places. The Sky people had retreated into the valley from the great onslaught of the cleash coming out of the Sharras jungle lands in 95 PC. In 220 PC they had become the Sky People, a culture adapted to mountain survival, and started



building their villages and towns in easily defended places high up in the mountains. They often expanded abandoned shantic dwellings. Two of the larger Sky towns were cut into the sides of the mountains and had meadows for livestock on small, high, inaccessible mountain plateau’s. The three major towns, whose names are lost to history, were built upon the mountains: Hallivo, Torinuu and Hus’ika. As the cleash established towns and forts in the valley in 450 PC, the Sky people soon found themselves constantly under siege and cut off from the rest of the shattered Empire. One of the legendary Thanterian Advisors slept within the walls of a Sky monastery and she awoke in 483 PC to help the Sky people when they were under the worst siege of the cleash. Among the devices invented by the Advisor to buy respite from the cleash, were hot-air balloons and airships filled with Tepinna gas. These served as lookout platforms and means of transportation and communication among the towns. They also allowed the Sky people to bombard advancing cleash armies. In this way the Sky people developed a culture among the clouds and often moved their villages by airships to inaccessible parts of the mountains whenever cleash were advancing.

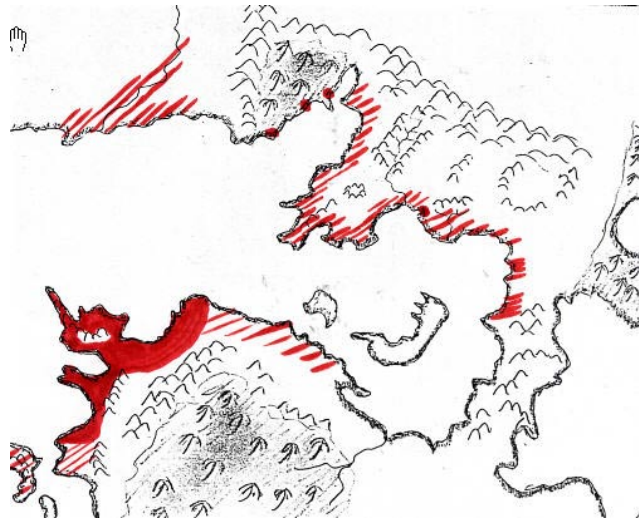
The Advisor fell terminally ill in 492 PC and placed herself in cryogenic sleep again. Her location became a secret carefully guarded by the Sky monks.

The cleash and their scarmis hordes finally managed to destroy the three towns of the Sky people in a great cataclysmic war known as the Sky Weeping War in 790-810 PC. One by one, the villages also succumbed until only a few remotely hidden monasteries remained. Slowly the Sky people declined until there were only the monks of the monasteries and small villages left. When humans returned to the Lus’ikai valley after the cleash had disappeared, they did not notice the hidden monasteries among the mountains. The mysterious ruins and their old unreadable

scriptures remain a mystery for most Thodiceans. However, a rare few people have discovered or been allowed to enter the secret monasteries of the dying Sky people that remain. These monasteries and their small villages still wield their ancient airships, unseen in the clouds among the misty mountains of Lus'ikai. Their religion reveres the stars and sun as holy places or realms, which can be astrally visited by their monks in order to gain guidance and insight. Their language, Sky Tongue, is related to Than.

[See *Thantier* essay for more details on the Sky people.]

A century after the cleash had mysteriously left Thantier, the coastal **Erucian Culture** appeared in what was to become western Thantier. It was the first stable culture for a long time in the area, but contained no traces to the old terran colony cultures. The Erucians had their own language and a pantheon of cruel gods. The Erucians had always been fishermen and mariners, used to long and dangerous journeys along the Temauntro and Thantier coasts. At the end of 1600 PC, they



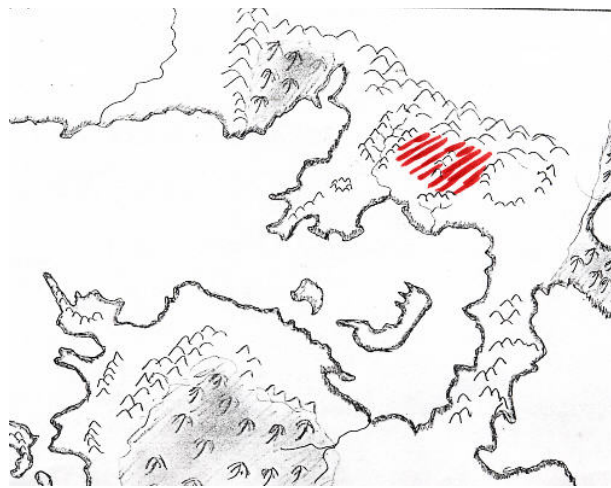
suddenly developed ships that could sail without wind or faster than the winds. Great ship fortresses, clearly not capable of sailing the open seas, would appear out of nowhere and raid the coasts. The secret of these ships was intimately linked to the first Erucian High Lord and his sword-artefact. His name was Benhu and his ceremonial sword-tool, Benhuial, would always wander to the next worthy ruler. The Erucians mercilessly conquered and destroyed the neighbouring Varak culture on the other side of the Sharras Jungle Lands, in south-eastern Temauntro. Most other coastal areas in western Thantier also suffered this fate. In 1722 PC, Barhannu, son of Benhu, declared himself Emperor of Erucia. After quickly having established colonies along the coast of south-eastern Temauntro and the coasts of western Thantier, the eyes of the Erucian lords turned to the untamed continent to the south; Drail. While the resistance was fierce among the people living in the eastern part of Thantier, no people seemed to live in Drail and colonies along the north coast and upper west coast of Drail were founded around 1780 PC. These colonies were to become Erucia's greatest asset. At the beginning of 1900 PC, Erucia is at its height of power and its mariners travel all around the Sharharras and Cerridus Seas, past the south tip of Drail and around the great continent, and up along the Temauntro coast to Jasp. Over the centuries the Erucian Empire became stagnant, cruel and degenerated. Countless slave rebellions, wars with the emerging Coronian nations and the arrival of the ramians pressured the Ruling Families. In 2440 PC, right in the middle of the Ramian Wars (2342 - 2586 PC), the sacred sword Benhuial was stolen and the Emperor killed after a coup and a slave rebellion. The Erucians lost the power to control their mighty ships and no new emperor was elected, instead, a High Lord ruled Erucia again. The ramian decimated the now vulnerable and mundane Erucian fleet and all the other enemies of Erucia seemed to attack at once. The Erucian Empire crumbled and was poorly equipped to defend itself without its unearthly fleet. For a brief while the Erucian Empire allied

with the powerful Holy Coronian Empire in the war against the ramian. Soon, however, the Coronians had taken much of the Drail colonies from the ramian and pushed the remaining Erucians eastwards. On the mainland, the Coronian armies marched steadily eastward toward Erucia.

In 2560 PC the Holy Coronian Empire had taken all Erucian land in Thantier as far as Erucia. This capitol of the Erucian Culture was allowed to remain autonomous in return for Erucian allegiance to the Coronian Emperor. The colonies of Drail's northern coast were slowly wrested from the Erucians, but the colonies of Drail's west coast remained Erucian. It was these colonies that would ensure that royal blood always ruled Erucia and keep the old ways alive. Today Erucia exists only as city in central Thantier's south coast. Its neighbouring cities remember nothing of their Erucian heritage and are mainly inhabited by Thodiceans. However, Erucia still controls a few colony towns in the Sharras jungle lands and vast areas of land in western Drail. It is in Drail that the main bulk of Erucians can be found as well as their strongest fleet.

Erucian customs of burying their dead in stone tombs effected the Coronians who embraced this custom, although their tombs were never as big and elaborate as the Erucians. The Erucian Tomb God, Vojecis, has a cult in Lanna, Thantis and Toronia. [See *Thantier* essay for more details about the Erucians]

Horse breeding began at end of the first century PC along the shores of what was to become central Thantier. The domestication of horses and thombos continued throughout the cleash wars and a people known as the Sevait or the **Horse Culture** of Sevait had been established in 700 PC. These people rode the Sevait plains and were always too swift for the cleash to destroy. They understood the difficulties of breeding and keeping horses on Jorune and



perfected the skill of horse breeding. The Sevait lived in seasonal camps and often set their summer camps among the Thodic mountain vales. The Thodicean tribes have many legends mentioning these Horse People of the plains. Although they were neighbours, the Erucians left the majority of the Horse Culture alone, as its Empire mainly stretched along the coastal regions of Thantier. The Coronians however pushed into the Sevait plains in 2460 PC and conquered the Sevait. Considered skilful beasters, the Sevait were relocated to various parts of the Holy Coronian Empire and the horses were brought with them. In 2550 PC, horses, and the art of riding these, was established throughout the Holy Coronian Empire. The Horse Culture was however slowly absorbed and swallowed by the stronger Coronian Culture until it no longer existed. It left no traces behind except for the near religious ceremonies surrounding horse breeding and training that still are used today by beasters in Thantier. Today, the Savati horse breeding klade claims ancestry to this lost and noble people and accept no outsiders to their family-bound klade.

Between 1800 and 2000 PC, the **Coronian Culture** started spreading in the eastern parts of what was to become Thantier. It would become the most stable culture of Thantier and one with which all outsiders link the realm. The Coronians were the descendants of the people that lived in The Empire, which had splintered down into smaller realms during the Cleash Wars. Two distinct people mingled to become the Coronians. A bulk of people descendant from the Germanic



colony sites in central Thantier and the much darker Sutturash people of southern Thantier. The latter groups of people were descendants from a very large group of Indian colony survivors. Although the Sutturash had their own Colonial English dialect with many Indian words incorporated, the Than variety of Colonial English with many Germanic words spread more successfully throughout the lands. Both of these cultures referred to the lands as Thantier. In 2100 PC the Coronian Culture was reasonably uniform and linked through trade and the use of the Than language. As the two populations had mixed, Coronians were now dark skinned or swarthy in appearance, retaining most of the Indian features. Some more traditionalistic fractions of the Sutturash Culture refused to be incorporated into the emerging Coronian Culture and were slowly pushed out into the barren wastes of north-eastern Thantier to become the desert nomads of the See'iss Desert. The Coronian culture spread mainly inland as the Erucian Empire controlled the seas and the large ports of Tercia (Terc), Jarçissa (Thantis) and Obocia (Obothin). Many battles were fought to keep the Erucians away from the inland regions of Thantier. With experience from the Cleash Wars the Coronians always had a strong and heavily armed infantry and were experts at siege warfare. As their power grew, the main Erucian ports in eastern Thantier fell to the Coronians, between 2283 and 2295 PC, and were renamed and heavily fortified against assaults from the sea.

Two religions had always existed among the Coronians. The Pluran Church followed by the northern Coronians and the Sura Scripture of the southern Coronians. In 2449 PC a great schism pitted the followers of these two religions against each other. Bloody battles ensued between various lords and pogroms swept through the cities. The Pluran Church with its politically stronger clergy came out victorious and the followers of the Sura Scripture were destroyed or converted by force. The Pluran Church with its strong call to fulfil mankind's destiny and its anti-thone teachings started spreading like wildfire.

In 2459 PC, Jan Hakiron managed to unify the entire Coronian Culture with the help of the Pluran Church. He became the first Emperor of the Holy Coronian Empire and started to overrun the Erucians on the mainland, as their power suddenly had dwindled. The mighty Empire soon stretched across all of Thantier and made Thantis its capitol. With no land left to conquer, the Holy Coronian Empire took to the sea. Here the Erucians were still strong but had fought a long and costly war against the ramians, who now controlled much of the northern Drail coast. (The Ramian Wars

2342-2586 PC) Ramians had silently been colonising the desolate and haunted realm of Ponteer. They had wanted to secure this colony along with north-eastern Drail, which contained many ruins of their ancient overlords. The Holy Coronian Empire allied with the Erucian colony lords and officially joined the ramian conflict in 2468. During the initial years, the Coronian Empire, unaccustomed to fighting ramian, lost many battles at sea. However, once again the Coronian Infantry would prove its worth as it pounded the ramian time after time on land. As soon as the Holy Coronian Empire got a secure foothold on Drail's northern coast, its strong infantry started to push the ramian eastward. The Coronians also turned against their allies and pushed the Erucians westward.

After the battle of Erucia in 2560 PC, the Coronian Empire controlled northern Drail and all of Thantier, as the Erucian High Lord had been forced to swear fealty to the Coronian Emperor. The thriddle of Tan-Iricid were becoming worried about the power of these humans and the Pluran Church that was so hostile towards non-humans. The thriddle had reason to suspect that their island realm was seriously threatened. But in 2562 PC two great ramian fleets arrived from the west. They had sailed around Temauntro to secure their claim on Ponteer and north-eastern Drail. The battles were fierce and most of the coasts of the Ceridis sea was pillaged by the ramian. The Coronians managed to hold most of their fortified towns and forts but the future for both races looked grim. Some Thanterian scholars say that thriddle helped the ramian during these final years of the Ramian Wars in order to gain their protection against the Holy Coronian Empire.

A truce was negotiated in 2586 PC with the help of the thriddle. It created a no-mans land between the Coronian colonies in Drail and the ramian colonies in Vareech. The thriddle were allowed to settle in this no-mans land, but none other of the warring factions. Later, Burdothians, through their alliance with the Mountain Crown, would step in and take control of this strip of no-mans land and the land beyond it.

After having wasted its resources fighting the ramian, the Coronian Empire started to falter as fierce tribes of humans came down from the Thodic Mountains in 2602 PC. These were the Thodiceans and the following Thodicean Wars broke the Coronian army's firm hold over western Thantier and allowed the Thodiceans to settle these lands.

The eastern parts of Thantier remained firmly in the grasp of the Coronian Culture for many centuries and the Pluran Church steeped the realm and the dakrani rulers in tradition and proud history. However, this would change as history's greatest warrior people, the Skamaan entered Thantier from the north in 2800 PC. The Skamaan were a migratory people fleeing from ancient slavery and the barren wastes of the Dobenal. They entered Thantier from the north-east and made their way into the lush plateau of Huragach. The Skamaan quickly adapted to the new land and learnt siege warfare from the Coronians. Along with their well-organised troop movements and tactics, they took the civilised Holy Coronian Empire by surprise. All Skamaan men were enrolled in the army from 16 to 45, so they knew all too well how to fight. Even their women were fierce. After nearly three decades of war (the Skamaan Wars 2822- 2849 PC) the Skamaan had proven that they were in Thantier to stay and they quickly fortified the entire Huragach Plateau. The conflict ended when the Skamaan's greatest enemies, the crugar, started pushing into Thantier from the same direction as the Skamaan. As the crugar were the Skamaans ancient nemesis the Coronians found it very suiting that the newly founded Skamaan realm lay between them and the troublesome crugar. The Coronians allied with the Skamaan and aided them in routing the crugar. The Crugar were no match for the strong joint forces of the Skamaan and

the Coronians who fought out in the open. The Crugar War only lasted between 2849 to 2852 PC, as the main bulk of crugar turned their attention north and eastward against Burdoth.

After the final battle against the crugar among the foothills of easternmost part of Thodic Mountains, Emperor Haans Koriz and his sons were slain by a crugar ambush on the returning troops. The other royal dakrani families soon started fighting for the throne. This was the advent of the Succession Wars 2852-2993 PC that would tear the Holy Coronian Empire apart. All the heads of the major dakrani families would declare themselves kings, emperors and sages and Thantiers reputation for civil wars begins, as petty warring states struggled for power. Soon even the Thodiceans, Erucians and Skamaan would join the conflict and make their bids for the throne. It was a grim and unsafe time, when allies could turn into enemies over night and treason was the most common virtue among the dakrani. The colonies also felt this conflict as the different sages grabbed pieces of northern Drail for themselves. Some colonies even declared their independence from the troubled mainland. The brief naval battles during the South Ceridis War 2945-2946 PC eventually gave small colonies even to the Thodicean princes of Eastern Thantier.

Finally, in 2993 PC the Holy Pluran Church and the Cult of Guardians in Lanna managed to gather all of Thantier's sages in Lanna to solve the conflict. The realm was in need of a strong leader than could protect the great realm against ramians and barbarians (among them the more unruly cousins of the Thodiceans) and bring order to the colonies. As none of the sages, emperors, kings and princes could agree on one ruler, the Church and the dakrani managed to create the title of the Thankrani - High Guardian of Thantier. The thankrani would oversee commerce, the minting and maintenance of the Lomin currency, and set up the Dakrani Court that would resolve disputes between sages and dakrani. Most importantly, the thankrani would coordinate the external affairs of the realm and gather the Thanterian Council when it was needed. Only dakrani could be appointed as thankrani and only for 10 years. A member of the royal family Turitz was chosen as the first thankrani and the church maintained a strong influence over the thankrani for many centuries. It was further decided that no person in Thantier may declare himself King, Emperor or Dharsage. The sages should instead use titles such as prince, duke, count or sage, depending on background, tradition and relation between the families. Ancient Lanna, original seat of power from the First Empire was the natural choice as neutral city to be ruled over by the thankrani. No sage was allowed to bring his armies within 100 marz (50 km) of the city.

Later the thankrani title's role of controlling commerce would strengthen. The thankrani's office came to oversee the klades and kept them on a short leash. It also controlled the value of the Lomin and collected the Thancletch from the sages of the realm. The era under thankrani rule is referred to as Annua Thankrani, but were far from free from trouble. Intrigues, plots and treason were still common. In 3290 the thankrani was assassinated (the 11th thankrani to suffer this fate) and the popular sages Helia Kemper of Toronia usurped the throne in an attempt to reinstate the Empire. This led to the Usurper War (3290-3300) which would last for ten years before the self-proclaimed empress was dethroned and a new thankrani reinstated.

Except for minor clashes between the various sages and the ramian, the realm known now only as Thantier prospered and grew.

It was not until 3438 that the crugar invasions and the Energy Weapons War toppled the long relative peace of the realm. Although the Energy Weapons War didn't really affect the Thanterians militarily, it made a strong impact upon their culture and the

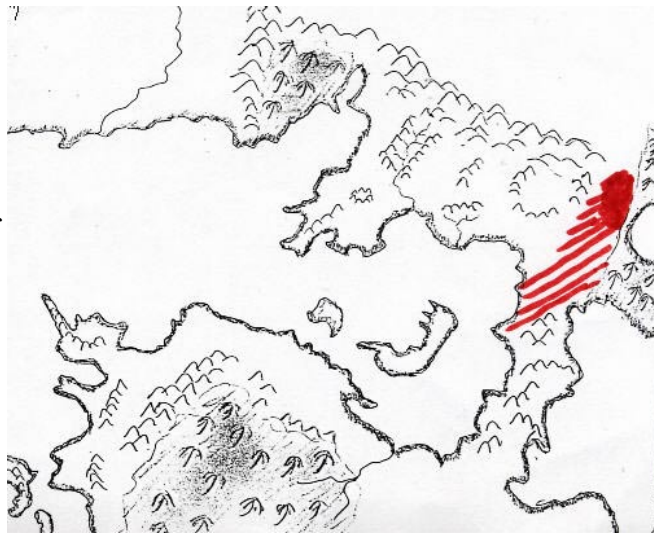
future foreign politics. Thanterians had made a lot of research into the days of the First Empire and managed to secure a fair deal of earth-tec through spy networks detailing two of the catches the thriddle had found. These were secured under the nose of the Burdothians and Thantier became a serious competitor for world power. The thanterians proved their power by aligning some of their more unruly colonies and taking the thriddle colonies in Drail in 3468 PC, despite the record amount of corastin that had settled there.

As an answer to this the ramian made a brief offensive into the Drail colonies in 3469 PC. The ramian could not hold onto any of their winnings more than a year, as the Thanterians would use their new-found energy weapons against them. The thriddle were however returned their colony by the ramian. The thriddle moved quickly and opened a stable warp to Burdoth and allowed the dharsage to settle 2/3rds of their colony in exchange for protection. Some minor skirmishes ensued between the Thanterians and the Burdothians, but no borders changed. The battle during the ramian offensive and the establishment of the Drailoth colony is commonly referred to as the Second South Ceridis War. After this, a cold war of sorts has been fought between the two most powerful human realms of Jorune.

A brief offensive of the skamaan in 3490, called the Second Skamaan War, by King Korligan seriously broke the internal peace of the realm and its repercussions can still be felt today.

[See *Thantier* essay for more details on the Coronians]

The ***Sutturash Culture*** was primarily descendant from large masses of Indian colony survivors in southern Thantier. The first survivors had joined the Empire and tried to maintain the communication network of survivors. It was the Sutturash who first encountered the cleash coming out of the Trinnu jungle lands. The Sutturash were the first to succumb to the chaos of the crumbling Empire and the destruction of the Cleash Wars. Some of the Sutturash people fled

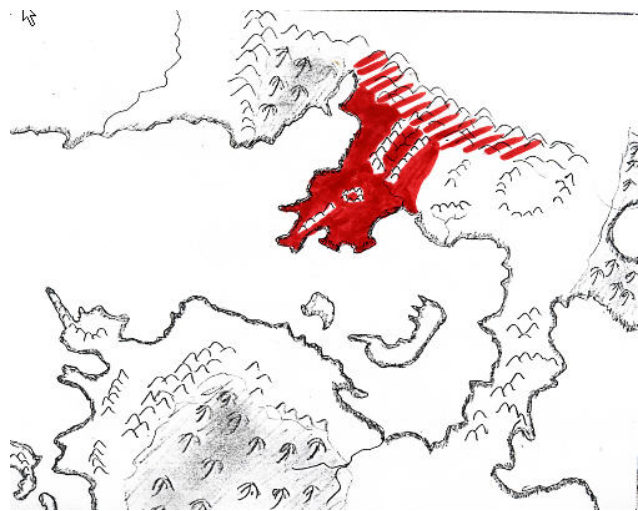


into the See'iss desert to escape the cleash. After the cleash had left the lands of the Sutturash Culture, the people started mixing with the northern inhabitants of Thantier, creating the Coronian Culture. The early Sutturash dialect, also based on Colonial English, succumbed to the stronger and more structured Than. Even after the two cultures had merged to become the Coronian Culture, the old Sutturash religion based on the Sura Scripture was still common in the southern parts of Thantier. A holy man called Nayvitta, presumably one of the original colony survivors, created the Scripture. It was an attempt at keeping the Hindu faith alive but underwent many changes as Suran priests interpreted the texts to their own liking. It contained a pantheon of gods, the belief in karma and incarnations as well as many moral rules of conduct, essential for a society to function. The pantheon of gods along with the message of understanding and treatment of men as equals did not align with the stronger Pluran faith growing in the north. In 2450 PC the religious schism had escalated into open

conflict and terrible pogroms that swept through the cities of the southern Coronian kingdoms. Many of the most faithful Sutturash priests fled to their cousins in the See'iss Desert, who still kept the faith. Hidden in the desert is said to be a temple guarded carefully by the Sutturash, as it holds the original copy of the scripture that was rescued by the priests fleeing Thantier. Today the Sutturash still have their faith, as well as their original heavy Sutturash dialect. Their customs and lifestyle is very different from the Coronian and they are often taken as slaves. The Sutturash know the desert better than anybody else and their dwellings are hard to find. The raids of these swarthy and grim desert people into Thantier, is a constant problem for the local rulers.

[See *Thantier* essay for more details on the Sutturash]

The more primitive people streaming down into the Holy Coronian Empire from the Thodic Mountains were referred to as the **Thodicean Culture**. They consisted of several tribes that were the descendant of the people that had fled into the mountain vales to escape the cleash during the Cleash Wars. They were fairer in complexion and Mundell worshippers who believed in the universe being divided into shades of good and evil that had to be balanced and pleased in order get



through in life. In 2602 their priests spurred them on to create realms for themselves in the weaker and less populated western parts of the Holy Coronian Empire. Conflicts started as simple raids that became more and more daring. Soon, large numbers of Thodiceans would occupy whole towns and provinces and the Thodicean Wars was a fact. Within 100 years, whole tribes had relocated to what was to become western Thantier. Attempts at unifying the tribes were made in 2650 PC. The Black Kings (dark skinned tribesmen descending from large African families, which had holy status among the Thodiceans) managed to rule the other tribes as High-Chiefs. This rule did not last long and after the Thodiceans had established themselves in Thantier the internal feuds and wars began. Thodiceans are still today of fairer complexion than Coronians. They speak their own language, Thodicean, which is derived from Colonial English and related to Than. The Thodicean Culture is very different from the Coronian Culture as its language, Mundell religion, tribal social structure and customs have been developed after years of isolation among the Thodic Mountains. Belonging to a ruling tribe or a tribe with high social status is important. A tribe watches out for you and helps you in need. Without your tribe you are helpless and alone. The worst penalty for a Thodicean is to be exiled and outlawed. The oral tradition is strong among Thodiceans and “singhas”, or “loorm” as they are sometimes called, are revered for their ability to memorise and recount laws, history, messages and legends through song or other theatrical performances. Needless to say, the use of Ambreh is very high among Loorm. Today two main groups of Thodiceans exist. The more civilised lowland Thodiceans that have created for themselves permanent sagedoms and participate in the affairs of Thantier through the Thanterian Council in Lanna.

They are counted among the 10 sages of Thantier and have adapted towards the more civilised Coronian ways, even implementing some changes to their Thodicean accent. Some members of the tribes do not like the “coronization” of the Thodiceans that is taking place. The Highland Thodiceans are the tribes that still remain among the Thodic Mountains. They live the same way as their ancestors have done for the last 2000 years. Most see their lowland cousins as having become weak and soft and do not hesitate to raid their lands.

[See *Thantier* essay for more details on the Thodiceans]

The militaristic **Skamaan Culture** originated from the north-eastern foothills of the Thodic Mountains, but migrated into Thantier in 2800 PC. The written history of the Skamaan does not begin until this time, but their old stories and legends speak of a time when Cauwgar (Crugar) enslaved them. This would explain why their language, Skamaani, seems to have a Chaun-tse base. Pronouncing Skamaani is hard for the unaccustomed speaker. Many have

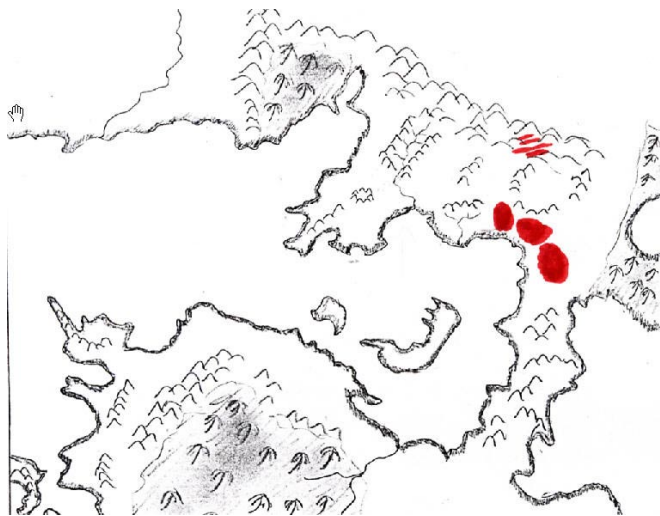


likened the sound of it to the harsh Rorch-ko of the Ramian with its many hard syllables and throat-tearing sounds. Even if the Skamaan had been enslaved by Crugar in the past, they must have lived freely for at least two centuries in the northern foothills of the Thodic Mountains, where they honed their martial culture, before migrating into Thantier. When the Skamaan people migrated into Thantier in they met hard opposition. It is referred to by iscins as the Skamaan Wars but the Skamaan call this The Founding Days. As the Skamaan Wars raged, the hardened and highly organised Skamaan soldiers soon proved the better of the two cultures and cut a piece of the Holy Coronian Empire for themselves. The Huragach plateau in north-eastern Thantier was scarcely populated and easily occupied by the Skamaan. As the Skamaan settled on the plateau, they quickly fortified its borders. As other people referred to their lands as Huragach the Skamaan kept this name. The Skamaan Wars ended when the expanding crugar nations started pouring into Huragach in 2849 PC. The Coronians allied with the Skamaan and drove off the crugar, who turned their attention northward, towards Burdoth. This common enemy and the Skamaan prowess in battle gave them a permanent place in the realm of Thantier.

According to Skamaan belief (simply called The Calling), Huragach is not considered their homelands. Tyrakaar, the chief Skamaan War-God, declared their original homelands lost forever after their rebellion against their former masters in the dawn of time. From that time the Skamaan were destined to wander and spread, until the world lay at their feet. This was prophesised and promised by Tyrakaar and by all the war gods of Tanrekka (The War-Place/Hell). Not only do the Skamaan believe in their superiority over other races and their destiny to rule the world, they also believe in The Great Muster. This is held in the Underworld of Wars, Tanrekka. Here, all who die at the hand of the sword will await the great muster, when they will be pitted against Evil as the champions of the Gods. They are thus promised bountiful opportunities of war and great worldly treasures for their sacrifices. All Skamaan

serve their army from age 16 to 45. This is mandatory and a holy servitude to their war-gods, which even their nobles, have to abide to. Because of this, old people within the culture have more important and prominent roles as teachers, child rearers and craftsmen. Women take on harder toils and more responsibility. They are often trained in the use of at least one weapon. Slaves are used for heavy labour and it is not uncommon for women to take slave lovers while their men are stationed too far from home (creating many disputes, but also funny and sometimes amorous tales). Devoting ones life to the War Gods is considered a great honour. Any profession related to war, such as being an armourer, blacksmith or martial instructor, are considered noble duties. A Skamaan will seek to master both martial arts and two or three weapons. They are fierce in combat and are reputed to be utterly fearless. The Skamaan rely on their great military prowess, advanced tactics, superior armours and frightening image (all officers use carapace skulls adorning their helmets and cruel, evil looking weapons) in combat. Although the Skamaan are not many enough to threaten the rest of Thantier, the Skamaan ruler has been accepted as one of the 10 sages of Thantier and has a seat in the Thanterian Council in Lanna. Only on few occasions does he participate, when issues concern his people. Fearing the powerful Skamaan, the Pluran Church sent many missionaries to Huragach to subdue their blood-lust. To some extent they succeeded. The Pluran sense of superiority has made many Skamaan regard the Coronians as their equals. Many Coronian customs and the social rank of Dakrani, have been implemented to Skamaan Culture. [See *Thantier* essay for more details on the Skamaan people.]

The ***Krang Culture*** of central Thantier has a very special history. The Krang are actually a Thodicean tribe that remained among the Thodic Mountains when the main bulk of the Thodicean tribes migrated into Thantier. Their distinct language is a dialect of Highland Thodicean and they are all Mundell worshippers. They lived in the large and fertile Krang valley. For centuries shantic warriors came on brief visits to their abandoned temples in the western part of the valleys. If encountering humans



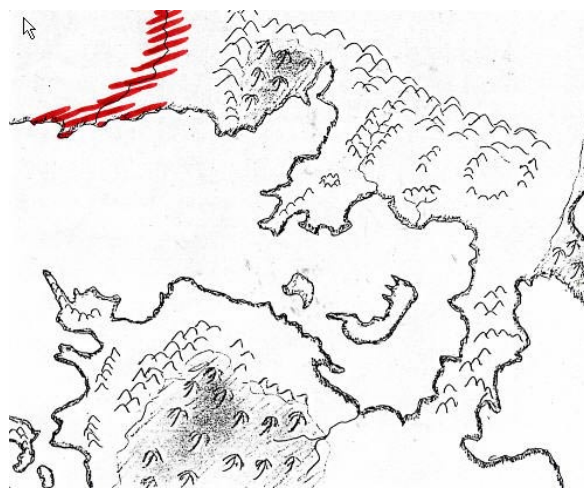
these would be attacked and often killed. The Krang therefore memorised the complex cycles of the shantas and fled to mountain refuges when the warriors were due to arrive. To remember the cyclic pattern the Krang paint their faces with semi-permanent dyes in various patterns depending on the period of the cycle that they are currently in. Chieftains would have more complex face paintings than common people. In 3421 PC a strange curse hit the valley as livestock and humans became very ill. Only by leaving the valley could the Krang survive this terrible fate. The Krang entered Thantier and were made the servants of the Coronians. Today they work the Sholoza fields and are treated only slightly better than slaves. The Krang people build their dwellings among the Sholoza fields, which were often carved out of the massive older plants. The Krang became masters at adapting the fields to organic

towns with outer walls of plants that had grown together. The small Krang towns or reservations would attract gamblers, black marketers, prostitutes and the general scum of Thantier to their seedy night markets. Rumour abounds that their ancestral valley is now free of the invisible curse or plague that drove the Krang out. The older members of the Krang, who still remember the valley they fled from as children have started to prepare their people for their return and escape from poverty. However, the younger generation of Krang have made lives for themselves among the Thantierians, as suppliers of illicit goods and services, and do not want to return. This has created a great chasm between the conservative Krang and the younger generation who have even abandoned their face paintings.

[See *Thantier* essay for more details on the Krang people.]

Humans in Southern Temauntro

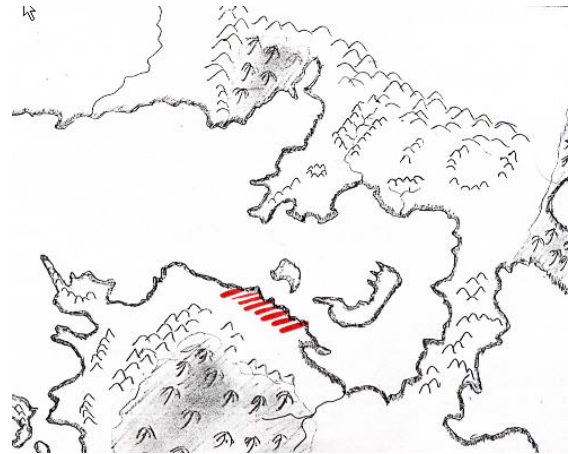
The *Varak Culture* centred along the lower vales of the Shaygra river in south-east Temauntro and along the nearby coasts. It was not a strong marine culture and was only capable of creating smaller fishing boats and boats travelling up the river. It is assumed that the Varak people had lived in these lands since 700 PC. Little is known about the culture as the Erucians crushed it entirely between 1700-1800 PC and crugar



today live along the Shaygra river. Old Erucian scripts gives some clues. The Varak people lived in tall timber houses with ornate carvings of forest animals. The villages and towns were often protected by an encircling mound and a wooden palisade with open access to the mighty river that was the life nerve of the society and its regular supply of fish. The Varakians spoke their own language, based on Arabic or Persian, which seemed to have some resemblance to Erucian. They worshipped the river as deity or Serpent of Life to whom they threw sacrifices of food and precious stones. Strange boat festivals were held in honour to the River Serpent, when beautiful miniature boats with lanterns, sacrifices and beautifully woven covers were released along the river during night. The Erucians noticed that the Varakians grew a kind of half animal, half seaweed that hung from great poles into the river. These Green Curtains supplied the Varakians with many of the dietary needs they required. The cultivating of the Green Curtains is the only existing legacy of the Varakians that exists today. The Varakians were taken as slaves and slowly incorporated into the Erucian colonies in Temauntro. The Varakian language was banned and all worship of the Serpent of Life reverted to the Erucian god of waters, Cyracu. When the crugar tribes came down along the Shaygra river in 2620 PC to conquer the Erucian colony towns, the Varak Culture had long ceased to exist. The culture that succumbed to the crugar was Erucian, even if their ancestors had once been Varakians. The only evidence of the Varakian Culture can be found in old Erucian scrolls or in a few caves inland from the river, holding depictions and carvings made by Varakian worshippers of the Serpent of Life.

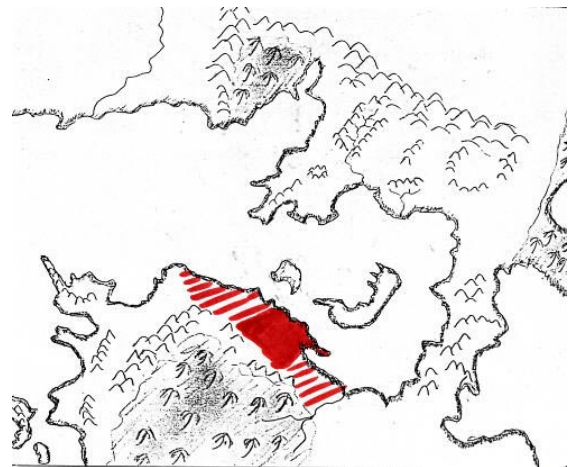
Humans in Drail

The *Stone People*. The humans of northern Drail simply vanished in a short period of time. They must have been surviving colonists that settled along the central parts of Drail's northern coast. The only thing they left behind were strange standing stones, simple monuments and attempts at carving faces in cliff sides. Their disappearance is a mystery to iscins, but most of them agree that this must have happened before 1400



PC, as the Erucian colonists reported the monuments to be at least three centuries old. Not a single town has been found, but some evidence of villages close to the Pekelia and Shatis rivers. No scripts or artefacts give any clue to the level of sophistication of their culture or the language that was spoken. Many humans of the Drail colonies regard the standing stones of the stone people with suspicion or supernatural awe. Many legends and stories surrounding them have been created over the centuries. These suggest that the stones are actually the people who have been cursed or moved to another plane of existence. Others speak of the stone people emerging out of the stones to steal newborn babies at night. In Shatis the stones actually bring good luck and serve as protectors of their villages or fields. Defiling a standing stone brings bad luck. If any of these stories have any true source is unknown. [See *Thantier* essay for more details on the Stone people.]

The *Colonial Cultures* of Drail are identical with the mainland cultures that colonised the area. In some instances land has shifted ownership and cultures have mixed among themselves. Although a form of pidgin Than, called Colonial Coronian, exists, the cultures and religions are often segregated and the reason for many conflicts. It is too early to talk about separate cultures yet, but the colonies are far from the mainland and change is inevitable.



The Mutant Cultures

Several mutant strains of humans exist on Jorune. Very few accept them as humans, although genetically there is little difference.

Boccord and Muadra are regarded as humans by most cultures although often of lower social class. If they have a culture of their own, it is often within a larger human culture, such as the great Fransei Tribes or the cultures of Burdoth and Heridoth. (The boccord of Jasp are Fransei tribesmen that migrated northward.)

Trach Culture 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. These strange and changed humans spread into the central parts of Drail. From approximately 2000 PC their coastal communities came under attack from ramian who made them their slaves or servants. Many trarch can now be found in ramian colonies.

[See *Trarch Tribes* essay for more information about these human mutations.]

Salu and Acubon Cultures exist along the coasts of the central continent, in Lake Dau-Uh-Dey and along the bays of Lundere and Hobeh. They tend to be simple and of a more tribal nature with no historic links to their terran ancestry. The salu are descendants of the Homo Aquatus (humans modified on Earth to work and live in the deep-sea mining, research and farming stations) researchers and colony staff that were exploring the seas of Jorune. That they and their acubon cousins survived is a biological miracle that few normal humans appreciate. Salu still retain much of their humanity, while acubon underwent a great psychological and cultural change that forever set them apart from humans.

[See *Acubon Secrets* and *Salu Sailors* essays for more information.]