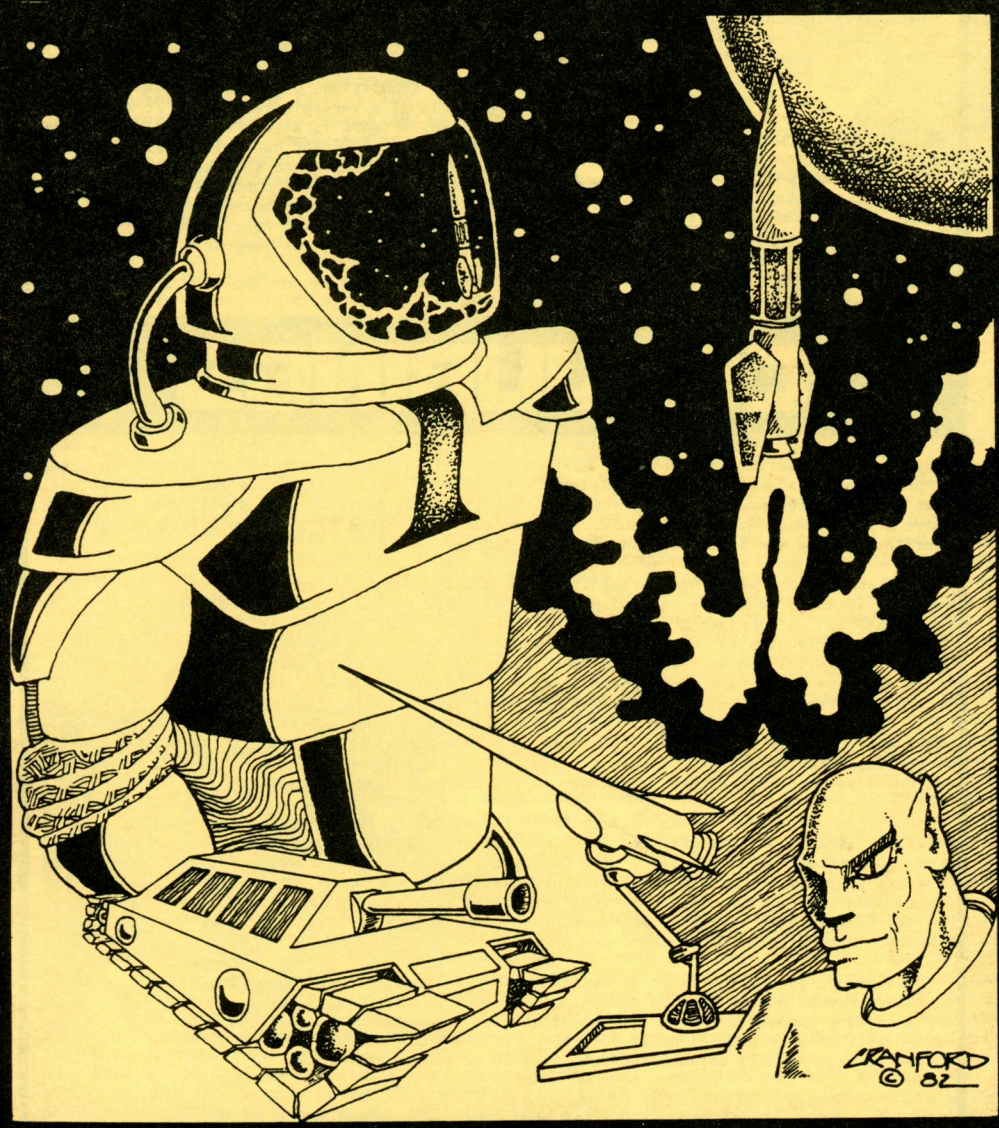


\$1.50

# ABYSS 24

V5, N3

MAY/JUNE 1983



**Beall, Davies, Nalle, Olson,  
Pehr, Schuller & Others**

# INSIDE

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## ART IN THIS ISSUE

Alf Klosterman(5,25), Nequi Dharsee(2), Mike Cranford(FC). All other art is taken from out-of-copy-right works, primarily original texts on witchcraft and several illustrated travelogues on Central Asia and the Middle East.

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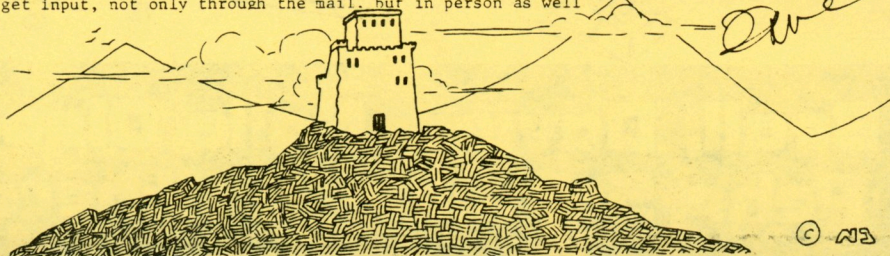
# CONJURINGS

As you have no doubt noticed by now this issue is even later than the last one. The difficulties of producing ABYSS on schedule while attending graduate school and working on other RE products sometimes pushes the schedule back, just as other obligations and situations may push the schedule forward. Thus, you will find that your next two issues will come to you at least a little earlier than scheduled. Expect your July issue to actually arrive in the early part of July and you September issue in late August.

You should find some interesting articles in this issue, an issue which by no design of our own, seems to have come out concentrating on magic in the fantasy world, running from the historical in Jon Schuller's "Witch Hunt", to the practical in Ron Pehr's "D&D Magic" and John Davies' "Studies in Sorcery". Also added this issue is a new feature, "Echoes in the Abyss", which will run at least every two issues and will feature letters on any interesting topic you care to write on. I hope that we'll be hearing from some of you and that it will become an interesting and controversial forum for gaming ideas. Another new idea in this issue is "Summer at Sounds End", our first mini-adventure not set up for a traditional fantasy background, and the longest one since "Circle of the Sun" in #5/6. Call of Cthulhu seems to be growing astonishingly in popularity, and we hope that TCT will catch on as well, so SASE is set up to be used with either. Comments on its usefulness are welcome.

Coming up in future issues will be lots of good stuff, including the continuation of Lew Bryson's "Mission of Intemperance" humor series, more of our regular features, new articles from Ken Rolston, David Hargrave, John Davies and Jon Schuller, as well as more mini-adventures and possibly a mini-game. We also have waiting on deck some new fiction by some of the outstanding new fantasy writers hitting the market today, including Ardath Mayhar, author of How the Gods Wove in Kyrannon, and Janet Fox, author of the popular 'Jaquerel' series. Both should be seeing these pages soon.

Things are pretty busy here at Ragnarok as we prepare for the convention season. After this issue comes out we will be attending both DALLCON and EASTCON before another issue is released, and running a number of demonstrations, lectures and tournaments. I hope that some of you will stop by and see us at our booths at these and other conventions, as we always like to get input, not only through the mail, but in person as well.



# Witch Hunt!

## Jon Schuller

The great European witch craze of the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries is a fascinating period of social anxiety and conflict. The entire idea of this type of situation suggests interesting possibilities for role-playing adventures. Witch hunts have taken any number of incarnations throughout history, from the Roman persecution of Christians, to the conversion of Scandinavia, to the persecution of the Cathars, to the great hunts of early modern Europe, to the Holocaust, to the McCarthy hearings. In times of crisis anxiety and uncertainty societies tend to focus on a disliked and easily recognized minority to assume the entire burden of guilt for that given situation. The reasons for vilifying a particular group can be many. In the case of witches it was usually communal guilt over their low status in society, but similar accusations have been prompted by envy over great wealth, a perceived threat to the established order, or mere non-conformity. Such periods of accusation and purging in a society help relieve social pressure. Situations of conflicts, pressures and persecution are ideal for many types of role-playing adventure.

The witch hunts of early modern Europe provide good examples to illustrate the possibilities of accusation and systematic persecution. The era after the end of the Renaissance and before the true beginning of the modern period was troubled by the economic and social problems which always accompany great changes in the world view and social hierarchy. The standard targets of a witchcraft accusation were older, reclusive, unmarried or widowed women. These women were usually poor and without families, and many of them begged for a living. Communal guilt over the neglected status of these women is often cited as an irrational cause for malicious accusations of witchcraft against them. Such accusations would be followed by an interrogation of the suspected witch to obtain a confession and hopefully accusations of other witches. In this period there was a belief that witches met in large groups to worship the devil, practice ritual magic, and often do such things as conduct a black mass and sacrifice children. There is no actual evidence other than questionable confessions to support this popular belief. There are some variations in this pattern by region and specific situation. For example, in many cases the hunts were initiated by individual, professional witch-hunters or even by the inquisition, often in response to popular urgings. Most cases involved at least some degree of torture to obtain the confession, and even more importantly, further names of people to try. Witch hunts were often spontaneously developed from popular agitation, but in some cases they were encouraged by governmental authorities, such as James VI of Scotland, or by church authorities, or by a charismatic individual like Matthew Hopkins in England. In almost all cases strong popular interest and support was the mainstay of the witch craze.

In some interesting cases the criteria and stereotypes of the witch hunt were different, especially in some unusual situations or in individual, isolated occurrences. In such cases new motivations emerge, including jealousy of those in high positions or unusually gifted. One such case is that of the Wurzburg trials in the 1620s, in which accusations were prompted by almost anything, and clerics, notaries, public officials, and even nobles were accused, as well as children and a beautiful young maiden of unparalleled virtue. In this case the fervor for accusation went wild, spurred on by resentment and opportunities for gain or revenge. In isolated cases accusations could spread out to include more than the traditional types as well. There were two sorts of magic practiced in Europe, high and low magic. High magic was the magic of the elite and educated, while low magic was practiced by the masses. The typical elderly, impoverished witch-woman practiced low magic. High magic was practiced by doctors and philosophers, and included all sorts of divination and necromancy, as well as alchemy. While low magic was thought to be practiced in groups, high magic was almost always done in private or with a small audience. There are a number of famous sorcerers of this sort, including Dr. Fian,



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who was burned at Edinburgh in 1591 for an attempt on James VI's life and the far more famous John Dee who acted in many ways as an unofficial court sorcerer to Elizabeth I. Although most witches accused were convicted on forced confessions or circumstantial evidence, it is clear that there were at least some who actually believed that they had magical powers. This is especially true of high magicians who tended to be brought to trial less often because of their status and the fact that they usually lived in cities where witch hunts were rarer.

In a fantasy world the witch hunt can be just as useful and interesting and offers even more possibilities, inspite of some apparant stumbling blocks. Most perceived problems with witch hunts in a fantasy world is that magic definatly is real and in most campaigns it is outrageously powerful, upsetting the traditional balance of church and state by making it a triangle of church, state and mages. In a more advanced society this becomes church, merchants, state and mages. In some cases the military forms an additional faction, and the common people are always an additional massive factor. Witch hunt type situations arise when one segment of the society turns against another or against a small sub-group. In most fantasy worlds attacks on the magic using segment of society are uniquely unprofitable and are rarely even considered as a possibility by GMs. The main exception to this type of world can be seen in *Chivalry and Sorcery*, where magic is extremely limited and is persecuted, although it does work. However, in most worlds magic is legitimate and practiced in the open like any other trade, and often fills the role of science and technology in our modern society.

There are three main types of witch hunts which can take place in a fantasy society. The first and most common type is the persecution of 'hedge-witches', parallel to the stereotypical accusation in our world. These are the cases which involve the common rural witch/midwife/healer type who is the main support of magic in rural communities. These witches or sorcerers live in isolated circumstances and perform magical and medical services for a fee, but nonetheless, they are usually looked on as outsiders and viewed suspiciously, so when hard times come they are often picked as the target of accusations.

The second type is prompted by a power struggle between factions either in an advanced nation or in an urban area. In this case other factions attempt to eliminate magic using factions to solidify their control over the community, or an attempt by a ruling group to eliminate or curtail random factors within an area by clamping down. This would lead to a systematic and deliberate elimination or deportation of magic users, and their eventual migration into an underground community working against the establishment.

The last type is really not a witch hunt as such, but has most of the same characteristics. This is the case in which a dominant religious group or even a government attempts to eliminate followers of an undesirable faith. This parallels Margaret Murray's thesis that the European witch hunts were actually persecutions of surviving pagans. While this theory is questionable in the case of Europe, it is not unrealistic in a general sense, and parallels the early Christian conversions and persecutions of Aryans, pagans and other groups. There are many reasons why a religion might be viewed as undesirable, either because of specific practices or a general desire to eliminate competition. It is particularly likely in regions where there is a newly established state religion or a lot of conversion to a growing faith. The followers of the persecuted religion would be termed witches and their religion considered magic. They would be hunted down, forced to deny their faith, killed, or deported, and once the process started it would tend to continue vigorously and quite thoroughly for a number of years. This might also result in an underground cult and might lead to a long term problem.



The problem with these cases in the fantasy world arises from the fact that magic works, and mages could fight back quite well. However, the advantages of magic can be negated by two elements, surprise and holy power. Priestly power can be as great as magical power and could be used to negate it, and surprise by more conventional attacks can remove the advantage of magic, as it should take longer to cast a spell than to swing a sword. A related problem shows up in trials, as magic can be used to influence testimony, or in interrogation. Priests should be able to shield trials from magic, and magic would normally not be acceptable in a court convened to stamp it out. This opens opportunities for the use of torture and other interrogation methods.

There are many more aspects and possibilities to these situations, not all of which can be explored here. The whole realm of torture and popular beliefs about witches is fascinating, as are some of the non-judicial trials such as 'swimming' witches. Magical theory of the Middle Ages and Renaissance is also interesting,

but also quite complex in its development, so it will have to wait for another article. The closest representation of traditional divisions of magic is in the divisions of magic in Ysgarth, which includes the traditional high and low magics. Of special note are the Sorcerer, Necromancer, Divine and Alchemist classes, which are close representations of historical magical arts.

The value of these ideas for fantasy role-playing GMs should be quite clear by now. Any time of tension and conflict is ideal for heated and challenging adventure, and witch hunts certainly meet these criteria. It would also be quite easy to involve characters, as targets or as part of an inquisition or merely as hapless visitors.

**SUGGESTED SOURCES FOR FURTHER IDEAS**

- The Witch-Cult in Western Europe*, Margaret Murray
- Salem Possessed*, P. Boyer and S. Nissenbaum
- The Devils of Loudun*, Aldous Huxley
- European Witchcraft*, E. William Monter
- The Romance of Sorcery*, Sax Rohmer
- Witchcraft in Europe*, A. C. Kors and E. Peters
- Discovery of Witchcraft*, Reginald Scot
- The Magician, the Witch and the Law*, Edward Peters



**AN ADVANCE LOOK AT...**

# TO CHALLENGE TOMORROW

There are plenty of SF role-playing games already. Why design and publish yet another? If you've played any of the offerings out at this time you may already know the answer. Each has its problems and limitations, none is a coherent and comprehensive system flexible enough to handle all sorts of SF gaming.

To Challenge Tomorrow was conceived to answer this need and to provide a universal system of mechanics for use in any sort of SF context. TCT has been in the works for about 9 months now and is scheduled for release at ORIGINS '83 in Detroit this July. Right now it has completed most of the playtesting.



To Challenge Tomorrow will be broken down into three books. The first book will contain all of the rules and mechanics of play, including character creation, combat and a detailed skill system. Book #2 will give a selection of suggested backgrounds for play, including 17th century France, 19th century England, America in the 1930s, the collapse of American civilization in the megalopolis of the 2020s, first contact and early space exploration, interstellar empire and other possibilities. Each of these periods will be described in detail with lots of specific information and special rule modifications and additions, including Robot, Android and Alien character types, plus space ships and a system for interstellar travel and combat. Book #3 will include at least 4 detailed scenarios each set in a different period.

As you can see TCT is designed primarily to be flexible and playable in any possible modern or future situation. It will even include rules for time travel and paratemporal adventures. Anything will be possible, from swashbuckling with the three musketeers to battles for interstellar conquest

Everything about TCT is new, but some of the systems and ideas are particularly interesting. The skill system will be particularly well-developed, with hundreds of skills, plus specific rules for adding new skills. In addition, there will be skills for psychic abilities and powers. One of the greatest innovations of the system is the combat mechanics, which require a single roll both to hit and to locate, which takes into account attacker ability with his weapon, the nature of the weapon, the size and agility of the defender and any armor involved. A second roll determined specific damage. The whole process runs amazingly fast and is dazzlingly believable while you are playing. Also interesting is the section on prosthetics and cybernetics in book #2, and the paratemporal section in that same book. There are also extensive bibliographies included for each section in book #2.



To Challenge Tomorrow will be available both in zip-loc and in a boxed format. All told it should be 80-100 pages of dense type with illustrations by Alf Klosterman, Mike Cranford, Negui Dharsee, Rob Heinsoo, and others. Keep your eyes open. The future is coming!

# IN THE SPECULUM

## BOOKS

### THE PRISONER OF ZHAMMANAK

L. SPRAGUE DE CAMP  
Phantasia Press (HB)/Ace (PB) \$2.50

This is a new novel from de Camp in the ongoing group set on the world of Krishna. I believe that it is the 5th in the series, which includes The Tower of Zanid, The Hostage of Zir, and The Hand of Zei. While it is set in the same world, it features a more or less new set of characters in unfamiliar regions of the world.

The world and series are quite interesting for the ideas they give of an alien world which is logically consistent, as well as an interesting look at what terrestrial foreign policy might be like. Unlike many SF stories these partake heavily of the Heroic Fantasy tradition as well, and are rollicking good fun. The characters are well developed and the plots are intricate and interesting.

The Prisoner of Zhammanak partakes of most of the good qualities of the series as it follows Percy Mjipa and Alicia Dyckman through a series of misadventures. It is somewhat less action-oriented than the other books in the set, but this is balanced off rather well by an added depth of characterization and intellectual content. On the whole it is an excellent book, showing an understanding of cultural dynamics as good as that of Jack Vance, with a depth of character which Vance often falls short of. What's more, a lot of it is pretty funny.

This is a particularly good book, especially for gamers interested in understanding how a fantasy or SF society rather different from our own works, including some logical parallels in development. I'd recommend it highly. (Dave Nalle)



### THE UNBEHEADED KING

L. SPRAGUE DE CAMP  
Del Rey (HB) \$9.95

This is another new offering from de Camp, as yet only available in hardback. It is a sequel to another series which has been developing slowly. The other two books are The Goblin Tower and The Clocks of Iraz. It continues the adventures of our dubious heroes Jorian and Karadur, plus some interesting new characters.

This series has been continually witty and amusing and this new book, written some dozen years after the last is as good, though the feel is somewhat different. De Camp is not a young man, and they say that it is hard for the old to learn, but I can't help feeling that he is becoming a better writer. While the content of this novel is not extremely deep, though there are some good ideas about love and ambition, the writing style is much livelier than in its two predecessors. I found the first two books enjoyable but a bit hard to read through. The Unbeheaded King is paced much better and reads more quickly. It is definitely a step forward for de Camp. The only complaint I have is that the character of Jorian seems to have changed considerably from the previous books. Perhaps there has been a progression and development, but I get the feeling that this new Jorian is chronologically older, but less mature in many other ways, though he still persists in telling his ludicrous historical tales. He seems now to be both more cynical and more naive at the same time. I know this is a curious observation, but it struck me that way, perhaps because he is in a different context, with different goals and responsibility.

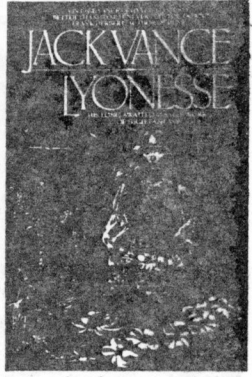
I continue to be impressed by the way that de Camp is able to examine complex emotional and psychological ideas in what is essentially a light, humorous sword and sorcery novel. Again, I think it is his skill at character development which makes this possible. I recommend this book as well, perhaps even more highly than The Prisoner of Zhammanak. (Dave Nalle)

### LYONESSE

JACK VANCE  
Berkeley (PB) \$6.95

With this new novel Jack Vance has launched into a whole new area. He has written fantasy before, though not recently, but with this novel, rather than returning to previous forms, he has launched out into a whole new style and period, with a fascinating novel written in the style of romantic myths and legends.

Lyonesse is a tale of princes and nations in conflict. It is set on a mythical island south of England and west of France, drawn from Arthurian legend and greatly elaborated on by Vance. The main character of the first part of the book is the Princess Suldrun, and she is replaced later in the book by her husband Aillas and her son Dhrun. In the first segment the background of the waring kingdoms is given and the main action is the love and secret marriage of Suldrun and Aillas. The second part of the book consists of Aillas' search for Dhrun against a background of growing war and intrigue. The action of the novel demonstrates how well some of Vance's skills translate to a traditional fantasy setting. The characters are well developed and the background is elaborate and incredibly believable, but the most impressive aspect is his exploration of the machineries of intrigue in a medieval-type state. Once curious part of the book is Vance's use of traditional and original place names in a mixture which makes the geography both familiar and novel. A valid criticism of the book might be that it involves too many characters and plot lines and becomes a bit confusing at times because of this. However, the ideas are excellent and there are genealogies and maps to help keep track of things. If you like Machiavellian intrigue with a bit of quirky magic mixed in, you will probably enjoy Lyonesse. For the insatiable, I should point out that it seems like a good start for a series in Vance's way.



On the whole, I would recommend Lyonesse without qualification. While it is not light and frivolous reading (with a few exceptions), it is fascinating and puts a whole new complexion on what seems at first to be traditional heroic fantasy fiction. (Jon Schuller)

**THE FIRST BOOK OF SWORDS**  
 FRED SABERHAGEN  
 Tor (PB), \$6.95

Most of Fred Saberhagen's work has been at least satisfactory, and enough of it has been really good to keep me buying new things as they come out. His Berserker and Dracula books are classics of their genres, but as he continues to write fantasy his limitations become clear. Perhaps he should stick to SF and horror.

The First Book of Swords is set in the same historical sequence as Empire of the East, The Black Mountains, and The Broken Lands. None of these books was particularly good, and this one is, if anything, worse. While it is readable and has a pleasing flow of action, it is an incredibly amateurish and imitative work to find from such a writer, echoing almost every major sword and sorcery epic of the past, especially the original Conan novels.



The story is about a set of swords and the men they wield. The idea of man-controlling swords is nothing new, but it is rather nicely realized here, with a whole set of specially designed theme weapons floating around in a vast land ruled by an assortment of corrupt, noble and demented men. The characters are flat, particularly Mark, the central character, and the villains are certainly much more interesting than the heroes. This is the first in a series, and the plot can't really be judged, as it hardly develops in this volume, which consists mostly of brief encounters and set-ups for later plot developments.

The book is not unqualifiedly bad. There are some nice little scenes and original ideas, but the weaknesses of plot and character tend to make these look like flashy dressing in a mire of uninspiring muck. This book reminds me not so much of Saberhagen's work, but of that of Lin Carter who seems to have made an art of studious mediocrity jazzed up with bizarre twists.

I can't really recommend this novel. If you want to see Saberhagen at his best, read one of his horror or SF works where his knowledge of history and unique ideas can shine. (Jon Schuller)

**MAGAZINES**

**WYRMFIRE**  
 Blake Ferris, 21587 Rambla Vista, Malibu, CA 90265

Appearance: 2, Content: 4, Value: 5, Personal: 6, Overall: 4

Wyrmfire is a relatively new APA for adventure gaming. It is 44 pages of reduced text type, with each section typed by the contributor and assembled into a single volume by the editor. It contains varied material, including magic items, monsters, reviews, commentary and the rest of the typical fare of an APA.



Wyrmfire is offset and features remarkably bad art, but is fairly well put together. Some of the names may be familiar from other APAs, including Quentin Long, David Jacobson, and Jeff Hudelson. Unfortunately there are not that many contributors, so the exchange of ideas is somewhat limited.

Wyrmfire is done by xerox in an 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ x5 $\frac{1}{2}$  format with a heavy-stock cover. It is published more or less bi-monthly and costs \$2 per copy and \$6.50 for 6 issues. Write for contributor information.

One of the good points about Wyrmfire is that it has an unusually high level of usable material for an APA, although there is not enough of the conversational attitude which is one of the best aspects of the larger APAs. Although the material is good, there are the usual lapses typical in zines which are compiled rather than edited, such as the inclusion of a lengthy boardgame which cannot nearly be realized in this format and just takes up space.

Wyrmfire is only in its second issue, so there is still time for development. An increase in the number of contributors and restriction of topics and unnecessary space use. The good stuff here is very good, but it is cushioned in less helpful material. Plus, the fact that all of the material is written by only eight people, the exchange of ideas which is the trademark of a good APA is rather limited.

Wyrmfire is worth watching, and as it develops an involved following, it might become quite good. In a few issues it might be fairly impressive. We'll try to do another review in a few issues. (Carl Jones)

### THE PHANTASY NETWORK NEWSLETTER

Ted Shelton, 3076 Mercedes Ave., Davis, CA 95616

Appearance: 8, Content: 4, Value: 5, Personal: 5, Overall: 5

Phantasy Network Newsletter is published quarterly at a cost of \$2 per issue or \$7 for a year. Each issue is 42 pages with typeset text run either on a good xerox or a cheap printing press. It uses a four color cover which looks fairly nice. The artwork and layout are particularly nice, and the overall appearance is outstanding. There is rather much white space and the type is too large, but the result is pleasing to the eye.

The issue at hand features some familiar writers, including Ron Pehr, Mason Jones, and Michael Johnson. Articles cover a range of game systems and topics, from reviews to modules to game variants. All of the articles are well written and fairly well presented. Generally articles seem to be surprisingly trivial and rather padded out. There was little in this issue which really grabbed my eye except the art. An autobiographical essay by Michael Johnson is mainly hype for his forthcoming game from PN. A selection of ships to use with Traveller (I think, though it never says so) is too long and pretty standard fare. The section of reviews is nice, but the reviewer says more about the art of the items reviewed than about the content. There is a contentless piece on developing a RPing system, a really sketchy Traveller scenario, a superficial article on character types for Taste my Steel, a nice little piece on RuneQuest familiars which could be developed more and perhaps be based less on D&D, an endless list of NPCs for TFT, and an article which glimpses at the SCA. On the whole, there are a lot of little articles which say nothing and a few longer ones which say very little. With the style of the magazine, its good appearance, and impressive cast, I had expected rather more content. PNN is a very flashy package with too little inside it. 42 pages of text with content which could be fitted into three or four pages of condensed, useful material.

PNN is fairly new, so it might improve with time, but the editors are going to have to do some work and encourage their writers to produce articles which are a good bit more developed. With smaller type and less wasted space they would be able to feature a few longer articles with the depth that I know some of these writers can generate. Pick up a copy of PNN and look it over, if only for the art, but I can't honestly recommend subscribing until it gets less superficial and has some serious and useful content. (John Davies)





## NETHERWORLD CONTINUUM

Cataphract Games, POB 14630, Minneapolis, MN 55414-0630

Appearance:6, Content:6, Value:3, Personal:6, Overall:5

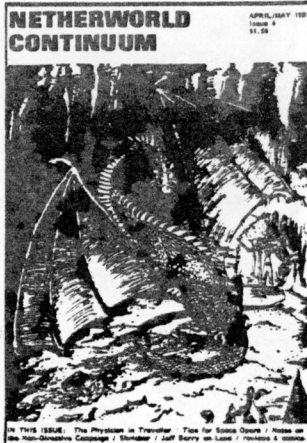
Netherworld Continuum has been going for about a year now, but #6 is the first one I've seen. It is published in a 8 1/2 x 11 format with 28 pages, nice large print, a few ads and some artwork. A single copy is \$1.50 and a subscription is \$8 for six issues.

NC has some nice interesting (short) articles by seemingly intelligent writers, with a fair balance between SF and Fantasy topics. Writers include Victor Raymond and Doug Jorenby among others. Most of the articles are theoretically oriented without being limited exclusively to a single game system. On the whole it is a pleasant and interesting read, if not totally riveting.

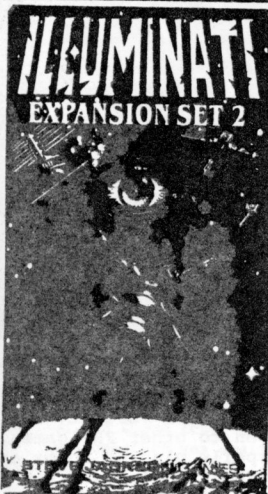
There is a lot of white space in NC and material is not particularly dense, so after finishing this issue I felt sort of dissatisfied at having not really gotten as much as I had expected. The inside rear cover is completely blank, and could have been filled with the little ads which clutter up the interior contents.

NC #6 includes articles on Traveller, Space Opera, Miniatures, and FRPing in general. There are also some short reviews and a fairly sloppy comic strip. The cover art is okay but not very original, and most of the interior art is pretty bad, but the layout is quite nice.

On the whole this was a fairly nice magazine with a bit less in it than I had expected. It seems to be undergoing some editorial and administrative changes, so there may be some interesting developments, and it might become quite good, especially with the clear effort and ability of the contributors and some additional editorial energy. Pick up a copy and you can judge for yourself. (David Nalle)



## GAMES & AIDS



### ILLUMINATI EXPANSION SETS 1 & 2

Steve Jackson Games, Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760 (\$5.95)

Illuminati has been reviewed in these pages before and has been one of SJG's most successful games of the last few years. Now SJG has released two expansion sets presumably to correct the tendency which the original game had towards predictability.

Expansion Set #1 contains 16 new cards for different groups, including the 'Trilateral Commission', 'Fast Food Chains', and the 'Flat Earthers'. It also includes one new illuminati, the 'Society of Assassins'. In addition there are four new special cards like 'Murphy's Law', plus suggestions for play. There is also a large selection of MBs.

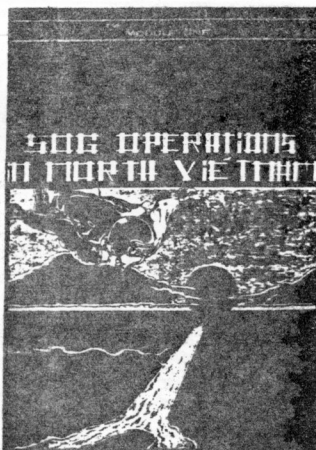
Expansion Set #2 has in it still more cards, a total of 22 plus the 'Network', a new illuminati, and four special cards. These follow along the same twisted model set in the original game and in the first expansion set.

Both of these expansions come in the (in)famous 'pocket box', guaranteed to let megabucks and cards fall out at every opportunity, but they now give out zip-loc bags to keep them under control. Another nice option now available with the

pocket boxes is to split the game up between the three, putting cards in one, MBs in another, and the rules in the third. Also included in the expansions are a silly button and a silly identification card.

These expansions are definitely needed and make Illuminati a much more playable game, so if you enjoy Illuminati they are definitely worth considering. However, I have to gripe about the price. They are outrageously overpriced. By no stretch of the imagination are the contents worth the \$6 price-tag, and it seems pretty clear that you are paying for the only marginally useful or desirable 'pocket-box' more than anything actually necessary to the game. Thus, I would consider carefully how much you will actually be playing Illuminati and how you feel about paying more for packaging than content. (David Nalle)





### HAIPHONG H.A.L.O.

RPGI, Box 485, Lincoln, AR 72744 (\$3.50)

This is the first 'module' for use with Recon, the modern era RPG published by RPGI about a year ago. It could also be used with other similar games after a bit of adjustment. It is done in the same newspaper format as San Succi, their most recent release. It is laid out as 4 22x34 sides, 2½ of which are used for maps in detail for 20mm hex movement with miniatures.

The scenario sets up covert military operations in North Vietnam and gives a good bit of information, including tables for encounters, events, and contacts in the course of the variety of possible missions which are briefly described.

More than anything else, this aid is a background resource, and it puts the ball in the GMs court to set up the specifics of the mission, leaving lots of room for inventiveness, while providing the necessary supporting tools.

The large maps are very well done but a little hard to work with, and the text is also too bulky to handle easily, though it is well organized.

Haiphong H.A.L.O. is quite well priced for the material presented, which is roughly equivalent to 32 8½x11 pages. Although Vietnam is not the most popular role playing period, this aid is of higher quality than similar products designed for more popular topics, and if you play modern RPGs, I would certainly recommend it. (David Nalle)

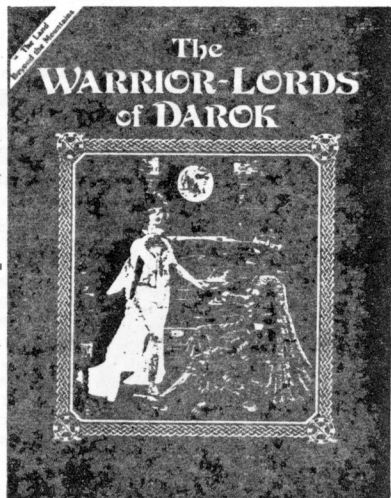
### THE WARRIOR LORDS OF DAROK

GameLords, 18616 Grosbeak Ter., Gaithersburg, MD 20879

This is the second in GameLords' series of TFT adventures, something we should be seeing more of from them with the collapse of Metagaming and the rumors of GL's assumption of their line of products. This scenario is 32 pages plus a nice general area map. It is in an 8½x11 format.

This is a well-developed and detailed adventure, perhaps over detailed for the possibilities of TFT, but much better than standard TFT fare. The encounters and places are interesting, fully described, and nicely mapped. It could be broken down into several sub-scenarios, but it has the potential to be run repeatedly. There are a few flaws to the design, and the only really weak area is the section of random encounters and random foe generation, which is somewhat arbitrary and could have used some more thought.

Warrior Lords of Darok is a good aid for TFT players who are fed up with the usual mechanical TFT fare and want to do some more challenging role-playing. (John Davies)



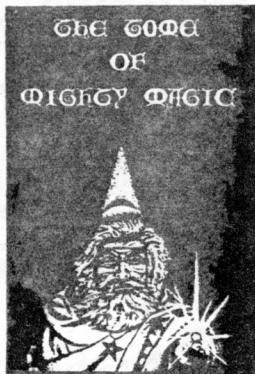
### THE TOME OF MIGHTY MAGIC

North Pole Publications, POB 8009, Mobile, AL 36689-0009 (\$9.95)

This is a 100 page 8½x5½ booklet stuffed full of spells generally intended for use with D&D or a D&D variant, but containing ideas capable of conversion to other FRP games. All told there are several hundred spells plus an index and a list of credits. Spells are described in standard D&D format and run up to 20th level.

There is a lot of material in small type in this booklet, but the usefulness of most of it is questionable. Although the selection of spells is large, much of it duplicates or parallels material published in the dozens of similar publications put out in the early years of D&D and the spells already available in AD&D rules. Some spells, such as "Create Plane" are also of questionable usefulness and playability. Some of the spell names follow in the T&T tradition, such as "To Whom it May Concern".

This type of publication has fallen off in popularity considerably as gamers have begun to rely more on their own imaginations, but for those who need new magical ideas desperately, The Tome of Mighty Magic might have some value, although the usefulness of the contents to anyone is rather low for the price. I'd say that this is one to be bought only with caution and after considering its value to you. (Carl Jones)

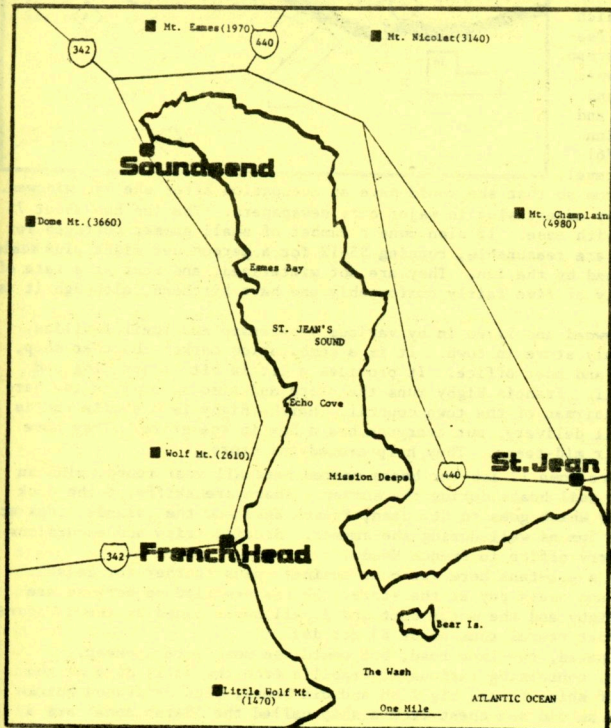


# SUMMER AT SOUNDSSEND

An Adventure for  
**CALL OF CTHULHU or  
TO CHALLENGE TOMORROW**  
by Anne Beall

## GENERAL NOTE

This scenario is designed to be run with either Call of Cthulhu (Chaosium), or To Challenge Tomorrow (Ragnarok). These are both modern-period role-playing games, but of rather different sorts, although both have unique merits. This adventure is set-up in the terms for both games for a high level of versatility for players of different games. Enough material is given for these two games and probably several others as well. (Note that TCT is not scheduled for actual release until July of '83).



## BACKGROUND

It is early June 1932, and the big cities of the East Coast are rapidly emptying as the affluent flock to resorts in various states. One popular resort is the area of St. Jean's Sound on the coast of Maine, a little known area where many wealthy families maintain regular summer retreats in the three small towns, St. Jean, Soundsend, and French Head. Each town is distinguished by the origins of its summer residents. St. Jean is preferred by Philadelphians, Soundsend by Bostonians, and French Head by New Yorkers. In addition to the many summer houses there are many rental cottages and several summer hotels. The main attractions of the area are boating on the sound, one of the few natural fjords on the East Coast of North America, and mountain climbing on the small mountains around the sound. The whole area is un-developed, and the year-round population is small, made up mostly of lobstermen.

The sound was first noted in 1534 by the explorer Jacques Cartier, but the official landing and discovery was by Samuel de Champlain in 1605. The first settlement was a group of Benedictine missionaries landed among the Aremaco indians at French Head by Jean Nicolet in 1634. They established the Abbey of St. John the Good on the headland above Echo Cove on the sound. While all of the details are not known, it is assumed that the monastery was destroyed in 1341 in an Indian uprising, as a supply ship which arrived late that year found the monastery empty and the tribe gone. No attempt was made to re-establish the monastery, but a new settlement was made by Englishmen from the Virginia Colony in 1666 and they established the original town at Soundsend, which was chartered by the New England Company in 1669. The other two towns were started around the turn of the century as the fishing and lobster industries expanded.

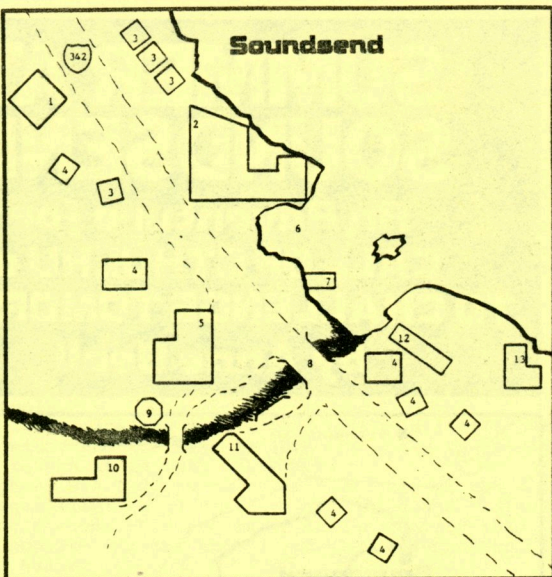
## INTRODUCTION

The party for this scenario should have some reason for vacationing together. The ideal selection would be a family, including a mother and father with 2-6 children of various ages, but with no more than 3 older than 15. Perhaps a couple of family friends or older relatives would also be possible. If the family worked out has more members than there are players, you might have one player take all of the younger children to play. A less acceptable alternative is for the party to be made up of a group of vacationing business or academic associates (no more than 4 or 5), who are hunting in the Maine woods for a few weeks. The family set-up, with no more than 2 family guests would be a more enjoyable approach to the adventure.

In any case, the party has rented the Soames house in Soundsend (see map of Soundsend). They drive up (probably from Boston) in the second week of June, and settle in. From there, specific events are up to the players actions and the GM's judgement as outlined in the following sections.

## THE TOWN OF SOUNDSEND

Soundsend, as shown to the right is a small village running along Maine Rt. 342 at the head of St. Jean's Sound. The town has a total year-round population of only 75 persons, including those in the outlying areas not shown on the map. In the summer this increases to around 300 people at the peak of the season. There is no mayor and no town council per-se. Administrative decisions are made by a full meeting of the town's year-round population. There is one regular meeting a year, in March, at which a chairman is elected. Any other business is done at meetings which are specially called by the chairman. There really isn't much business to do and things go on the same way from year to year. The major points of the town are detailed below.



1/This is the Peabody house, which is occupied year-round. By Jeremiah Peabody and his family. He is a lobsterman.

2/This is the Glencovey Inn, owned by Sarah McKarrick, whose late husband was a major land-holder in the area and had a fleet of lobster boats. The inn has stood in the same place since 1761 when it was built for hunters who traveled up from Boston. She bought it from so that she would have an occupation after she was widowed. She has made a going concern of it by advertising in major city newspapers. The inn has about 75 rooms and can hold some 150 people with ease. It also owns a number of small summer cottages for use by vacationing families. Rates are reasonable, running \$5-12 for a person per night plus meals.

3/These summer cottages are owned by the inn. They are not winterized, and rent at a rate of \$250 a month. They can hold a family of five fairly comfortably and have kitchens, although it is possible to eat at the inn.

4/These are year-round houses owned and lived in by various lobstermen and their families.

5/This is Higby's store, the only store in town. It is a combination market, butcher shop, grocery, dime-store, hardware store and post office. It provides a little bit of anything and will also order special items by mail. Francis Higby runs the store and also supervises the harbor. He is traditionally elected chairman of the town council. Martha Higby is his wife and is also post-mistress. There is no mail delivery, but everyone has a box in the store. They have two sons and a daughter, all in their mid-teens. They help around the store.

6/This is the harbor. There are some 12 lobster boats moored here all year round, plus an additional 10 motor launches and 16 sail boats during the summer. There are skiffs at the dock to get out to the moorings. A ferry which goes to St. Jean, French Head and the islands stops at the wharf every day at noon, and at 5pm as well during the summer. Special trips and excursions can also be arranged through the ferry office in French Head.

7/This is the wharf. There is a gas-tank here for boat engines, plus another for deisel. Francis Higby is in charge of them and users pay at the store. Skiffs are tied up here as are the two motor boats rented out by Higby and the motor boat and 3 sail boats owned by the Glencovey Inn for rental to their patrons. Boat rental runs about \$3 per day.

8/This is Route 342. It is a paved, two-lane road, but could use some more up-keep.

9/This is the Soundsend Museum, containing various memorabilia from the early days of the town. There are lots of pictures of ship-wrecks, big fish and old boats, plus driftwood knick-knacks and assorted 'treasures'. In an old sea chest from a ship called the 'Sarah Anne' are a collection of ancient books taken from the old monastery. They are all hand-written manuscripts, all in either Latin or French. They include copies of: St. Augustine's Confessions, the Maleus Maleficarum, the Liber Monstrorum, the Codex Sancti Guinfordus, the De Daemonia of Bodin, and the De Magicum of Weyer. Of these all seem to be reasonable scholarly and clerical works to those who can read them, except for the third and fourth ones. The Liber Monstrorum seems to contain several charms for conjuring up nature spirits, specifically minor Genius Loci type entities, the spirits who exist in and protect specific places and have powers appropriate to that area. Those who read and understand should lose either ID20 SAN(COC) or ID2 RAI(TCT). However, they will be able to summon Genius Loci, at least to communicate, although they can only compel them to aid or answer questions by performing a service of some sort. The Codex Sancti Guinfordus seems to be a spurious work about a dog who performed miracles and was a Saint.

10/This is the Higby house. It is a large old captains house, with a look-out on top and a rather fanciful design. It is also the only house in the village which has a tennis court, but the Higbys will generally not lend it out.

11/Demarin's Motor-Shop. This is an old carriage house and sail-maker's shop which has been bought recently by Paul Demarin, a Canadian mechanic from Quebec. He will fix wheels for wagons, shoe horses and do other blacksmithing, but his main interest is engines, and he loves to work on both boat and automobile engines. He is tolerated by the town but looked on as a little odd, because of his foreignness and progressive interests. He keeps storage tanks of Kerosene, Gasoline, Motor Oil and Deisel on hand, and will sell any of them to those who ask. His tanks are refilled by a distributor once a week. He tends to run out on Wednesdays or Thursdays and gets refilled on Fridays.

12/This is the boathouse where the boats are drawn up to be repaired. There is a winch for lifting engines here as well as equipment for repairing sails and hulls. There are runners from the shore to the interior of the building.

13/This is the Soames house. It rents for \$200/month during the summer, and the rent includes a sailing skiff which is kept at the dock. The house has 5 bedrooms and can sleep 12 if pushed. It has indoor plumbing, running water, and all the amenities. It is furnished as a summer house, with little of the owner's property, and is handled by a Boston real estate firm. The owner is a bit of a mystery. All that is known about him is that his name is Carlton Soames, and he is abroad in Europe and has been for some time. This is the house that the party will be renting.

In the house there is a closet which is locked. Only the real-estate company has a key to it. It is the 'owner's closet', and holds a few personal possessions of the owner. Such a closet is standard practice in rental properties. However, in this closet is an ancient ebony box. It contains a scroll written on parchment so old that it has had to be attached to a more recent backing paper to keep it intact. It is in cuneiform script, and should be obscure to almost anyone. Should it be deciphered, the reader will find that it contains excerpts from something called the Black Book of Kishkamu. It details the instructions for summoning Kishkamu, an entity which is partially described, and seems to be some sort of plant. Should the summoning be performed (it may only be done at the dark of the moon and requires a virgin sacrifice), a black crystal will appear. It is a seed, and if planted and watered, it will grow into Kishkamu in a period of 108 hours. See the appendix for information on Kishkamu.

There is a maid who is paid by the realtor who comes in once a week from French Head. There is an office of the real estate agency in French Head. The firm is called Joiner and Morrison. There is no key to the closet there, but they have the key to the house for the renters to pick up on their arrival.

## EVENTS & OCCURENCES

These are some noteworthy occurrences which form the body of the adventures which take place for our party during the summer. They are described in detail below, and maps are given where needed.

### CALL OF THE KRAKEN

One night soon after arriving at Soundsend, the character with the highest PSI/POW has a strange dream. He seems to feel a coldness settle around him and a great pressure building up on top of him, pressing him to the bed. All around him it is dark and there seem to be little flecks of light moving around him. He has a RATx3% chance of realizing that he is dreaming that he is under water and a RAT% chance of knowing that it is the waters of the sound (For COC use INT instead of RAT). He gets a strange feeling of doom, but nothing more comes of it that night and the dream fades.

The next night, the dream comes again, but this time he gets a feeling of rending pain in his side and a feeling of depression and doom, and wakes up sweating.

The third night his dream becomes more vivid still, and he gets a feeling that someone is calling for help, though he can't perceive it as verbal communication. All of the rest of the previous nights dream is repeated.

The fourth night he seems to be reliving some past event, and is inhabiting the body of some huge creature that is caught in rough waters under a hurricane and because he is too near the surface he is injured and cast roughly against some rocks. This knocks him unconscious in the dream, and he floats up the gulf stream and then is drawn into what the dreamer assumes to be the sound, where he regains consciousness, but is badly wounded and too weak to make it out past the rough waters of the Wash.

The fifth night a weak communication is set up with the mind of the being lying in the sound, who he identifies as the Kraken. The Kraken indicates that it needs help desperately and will die within a week if not aided. It needs a special plaster made of cement and kelp and some other chemicals which it describes. Most of them can be obtained on order through Higby's or by a trip into French Head. The Kraken says that it has enough strength to surface once and no more, but if the plaster were applied when it surfaced it would be able to rest and recover and perhaps get out of the sound in a week or two. If it is healed it promises that it will try to reward the person who helps it by finding one of the many wrecks in the area and bringing it to the surface for them. It suggests that the healing be done at night, when it will surface to meet the healers who should come out with the plaster in a boat.

Should they aid it, the application of the plaster will take 103+2 hours, and the plaster itself should cost about \$30 for ingredients, plus some time to gather kelp and other natural substances. For stats on the Kraken see the appendix. He will perform one service as soon as he is well. He suggests bringing up the wreck, but other things arising from the other events are possible, as some of them may occur before he is ready to resume activity.

If the party is smart about their reward they will go to the museum in town and check on the cargos of some of the unretrieved wrecks in the area. If they do they will find that in 1832, the French cutter "La Demoiselle" went down around Bear Island, and was carrying a cargo of gold boulders worth about \$100,000 at modern prices. It has never been recovered because of the treacherous waters in the area and the great depth to which it has sunk.

If the Kraken brings the ship and its cargo up, it must be done at night, because there is a Coast Guard station on Bear Island and a lighthouse, so caution must be taken. After the gold is removed, the Kraken will return the ship to the depths and depart. Fencing the gold may be difficult as it bears French Government imprints. Also, in retrieving it there is some danger as they must navigate the Wash to get there and it can easily capsize a small boat at night. They have to be at the raising of the ship in order to remove the gold. There should also be a small chance the Coast Guard will catch them.

## THE RETURN OF CARLTON SOAMES

It rarely storms in the sound, but when it does, it is a grim sight. One night a strong gale comes up the sound, and everyone is inside their houses behind closed shutters gathering at the fire. Just after dinner, while our party is sitting around their fire in the downstairs living room, reading or doing whatever they enjoy most (drinking?), there is a knock on the front door. Naturally, they wonder who could be out on such a forbidding night. The knock comes again and again, until they answer it. If they don't answer it it will get weaker and eventually stop and they will find nothing but a watered down bloodstain on the steps the next morning.

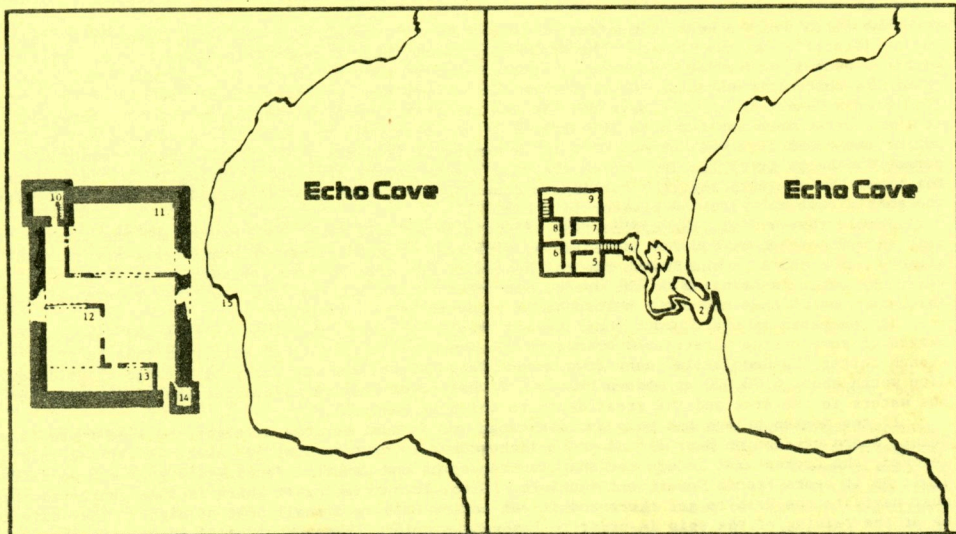
If they open the door they will find a frightened looking older man dressed in ragged clothes of European cut. He is propped up against the door and seems to have been wounded in several places, perhaps from a fall. He is virtually incoherent, and totally exhausted, but begs to be let in. Either before being admitted or when he has gotten his wind back, he identifies himself as Carlton Soames, the owner of the house, and insists on being let into the Owner's Closet. He has no identification and no keys to the closet. Note that he is actually Soames, but there is little reason for the vacationers to believe that. If they don't get him into the closet he will try to break in on his own, though he is too weak. If they break in for him he will go right for the scroll in the box and summon the Kishkamu, which he will pitch out of the door as soon as it arrives, so that it will grow in the rain in the front yard. See appendix for Kishkamu stats.

If pressed he will tell a strange tale. It seems that he is an archaeologist and was working at an excavation at the ancient Babylonian city of Carzal, when he and two colleagues discovered an ancient tomb, which they immediately opened and emptied of valuables. They escaped the area on a ship out of Baghdad and made their way to Paris to sell the items they had collected, when things began to go wrong. Three large female mummies had been buried with the king whose tomb they had robbed (his name was something like Halevarsar). One of his associates, an Englishman named Jack Wolstay claimed to have spotted one of the mummies in a dark alley, and the next day he was found ripped to shreds in his Paris apartment. The two survivors planned to leave for London immediately, but when he boarded the boat, Soames was alone. He went straight from London to Boston, but in Boston he spotted one of the mummies, who he calls Galla, and was chased by it and somewhat wounded. He realized that only the scroll he had found on an earlier expedition in the middle-east might save him, so he stole a car and drove up to Soundsend, only to wreck his car when he thought he saw a Galla running along parallel to it at almost 70mph in the rain. He was somewhat injured in the crash, but managed to run the rest of the way.

The Kishkamu will stop the Galla, but it will take some time to grow, during which time they will have to hold off the Galla somehow. The Galla will want to take vengeance on all within the house, even if they give them Soames. The Kishkamu will dispell the Galla with its power over darkness, and eventually it will lose its power and become a somewhat stunted maple tree. There are stats on the Galla in the appendix.

## A VISIT TO ECHO COVE

One popular spot on the sound is Echo Cove, where vacationers like to go to picnic. The particular points of interest are the cliffs around the cove, which make great echos and are good for climbing, and the ruined mission which is on the top of the cliffs. There are several possible occurrences at the cove and they are described below by the numbers keyed to the old mission and the caves below it. There is a fair chance that if they go climbing the party will spot the caves, and if they explore the mission they are liable to find the stairs down into the caves. If they don't find them or even think of going to the mission you might have to find some logical way to get there if you want to use this section.



1/A bit of a climb up the cliff face there is a small cave entrance behind a screen of rocks and scrub growth.

2/This is a cavern which is used by rum-runners to store crates of liquor which they smuggle into the country from the Bahamas as part of a covert little New England enterprise. There are 24 crates of rum here which they are going to pick up. They will arrive sometime while the characters are exploring the caves and begin to load their rum onto a large motorized fishing boat in the cove. There are 12 of them all told, and they don't take kindly to visitors in their storage area. They are dangerous and ruthless, associated with several crime syndicates. The statistics for the rum-runners are in the appendix. In addition to the 12 loading the boat there are three more guarding the boat itself. They will probably want to silence anyone who knows of their operation, either on the spot if they catch them, or at a later date if they find out about them.

3/This smaller cavern is used to store a reserve stock of 20 cases of rum in case they are unable to make a run and still have to make their deliveries.

4/These stairs lead up into the basement of the mission. There are two old skeletons here jumbled together wearing the remains of monks robes.

5/This is a monk's cell. It is full of rubbish which has been dragged into it from the other rooms and collapsed areas.

6/This is another cell. It is sealed up and full of the skeletons of a number of indians and monks, all jumbled together. They seem to have been sealed in after they were dead.

7/This cell has had all of the cots from the other cells placed in it (a total of 8). Lain out on each one is a monk. Each wears a black robe, and painted on the chest of each robe is a seven pointed star with strange symbols painted at each point. These 8 monks are in a surprisingly good state of preservation, and can be animated on command by the abbot, who has arranged this undead existence for them. They are described in the appendix. Little of their intellect is left, and animating them takes much of the abbot's power. They may animate spontaneously if disturbed, but the abbot will be immediately aware of it.

8/This room has a heavy oak door. Stored in chests in it are all the valuables of the abbey, including altar cloths, gold candlesticks and other trappings, totalling a value of about \$25,000 if sold.

9/This was once used as a dormitory, but now it has a few chairs and a large table. Pere Theophile, the last abbot lays on the table, surrounded by black candles and his grimoires. He is conscious but in a suspended state, waiting for his chance for vengeance. The candles are lit and will stay so forever, or at least as long as his power lasts. He has straightened up and organized the basement. He enters periods of activity lasting a few days every year or so. He is in the process of building up his magical power slowly before he emerges. He can feed on the life force of any living thing if necessary.

He has three grimoires, his own compendium of occult knowledge. They are all written in a mixture of Latin and French, and contain some extremely useful knowledge, covering most aspects of raising the dead and summoning demons. They also include the spell which he has used on himself and his monks, which grants eternal life through suspended animation, stretching the lifespan into a few days every year. The time has twisted his perspective and he will assume that any who come into the abbey are thieves and murderers, even indians, out to get him and his brothers.

10/This is a lookout tower which is more or less intact, except for a segment of roof which has fallen in and blocked the stairs down with rubble which will take about 3 hours for three people to dig out. The abbot has deliberately placed much of the rubble.

11/This was once the chapel of the monastery, but all the trappings have been taken down to room #8 and the benches are set up around the walls of room #9.

12/This was originally the scriptorium of the monastery, but all the books have been taken to the museum at Soundsend.

13/This was originally the stable and workshop of the monastery.

14/This was once a tower and storage room.

15/There is a steep path down here to the cave mouth. Characters going down should have a base 25% chance of falling modified for characteristics and climbing skills.

## CREATURES AND CHARACTERS

Described below are the major characters and monsters found in this adventure as well as some general examples of types of person or creatures. They are given in terms of To Challenge Tomorrow and Call of Cthulhu. Suggestions for running these characters in this adventure are given at the end.

### CARLTON SOAMES

TCT	COC
AV:40 AP:100 ATT:9mm Pistol(1D12)	STR:15 INT:17 CHA:10 ATT:9mm Pistol(60%/1D6)
DV:50 HP:35 or Knife(1D6)	CON:17 POW:22 EDU:23 or Knife(60%/1D4)
MV:48 FP:70	SIZ:8 DEX:19 MOV:11

Carlton Soames is an archaeologist attached to the faculty of Boston College. His immediate situation is related in the body of the adventure. Suffice it to say that he is running from the Galla and needs the Kishkamu. The house in Soundsend has been in his family as a summer home for years. He has spent most of his life abroad however, except for time in study and some vacations at the house, where he did some magical and occult research.

## THE KRAKEN

TCT

AV:150 AP:180 ATT:8 Tentacles(3D12)  
 DV:30 HP:300  
 MV:200 FP:100

COC

STR:80 INT:35 CHA:33 ATT:8 Tentacles(90%/3D6)  
 CON:160 POW:30 EDU:NA  
 SIZ:200 DEX:20 MOV:56

The Kraken is an ancient and intelligent being, but he is seriously wounded from encountering a hurricane off the Florida Keys, and suffering from reduced capacity due to the coldness of the waters of the Sound, where he is trapped. He is essentially a giant, sentient squid, some 150ft in total length. He habitually lives in warm parts along the Gulf Stream, and has been dragged into the sound by currents while he was floating unconscious. He is capable of full telepathy, but has only limited strength and energy remaining, barely enough to surface, and not enough to get through the Wash which has a strong cross-current and is quite rocky. He has a really bad cut on his underbelly which will be fatal in a few days if not treated by the application of a plaster of sand and kelp, a concoction of which the Kraken is aware. He will try to contact the most receptive character telepathically and convince him to help. He will reward that character in any way he can, one example might be in the location of underwater wrecks or such for salvage. Once patched up he will have to rest for two weeks, after which he will be at full capacity, with 360AP(TCT) and an ATT of 180(COC).

## PERE THEOPHILE, ABBE DU MONASTERE DE STE. JEAN LE BON

TCT

AV:58 AP:80 ATT:Pyrokinesis(2D12)  
 DV:33 HP:100 or Cutlass(2D8)  
 MV:27 FP:200

COC

STR:30 INT:10 CHA:6 ATT:Pyrokinesis(60%/1D12)  
 CON:45 POW:40 EDU:24 or Cutlass(60%/1D8)  
 SIZ:12 DEX:20 MOV:7

Pere Theophile is an unknown inhabitant of the ruined Abbey Mission of St. Jean of the cliffs above Echo Cove. The mission was founded in 1634 by a group of 15 Benedictine brothers landed by the explorer Jean Nicolet. In 1641 the local tribe of Aremaco Indians who had helped build the mission grew tired of the proselytizing presence of monks, and destroyed the mission. Exactly what became of them is unknown, but when a group of English settlers explored the area no bodies were found in the mission. Father Theophile headed the mission, and he and several of his brothers escaped the attack by hiding in the cellars below the mission. Knowing that the monks were there, the Indians sealed up the entrance from the top and attempted to smoke them out with fires at the cliff-side entrance. Naturally, the brothers died of suffocation. However, the outraged spirit of the good Prior lives on, and while time has sapped the psychic forces which animate his remains, his driving desire for revenge will move him to action if any invade his sanctuary. He has some ability to project flame, and has a sword of Spanish make. He also keeps some personal items and relics with him.

## KISHKAMU

TCT

AV:80 AP:120 ATT:10 Leaves(1D10)  
 DV:20 HP:200 or 3 Branches(3D12)  
 MV:5 FP:150

COC

STR:35 INT:25 CHA:16 ATT:10 Leaves(70%/1D6)  
 CON:85 POW:50 EDU:12 or 3 Branches(70%/3D6)  
 SIZ:100 DEX:20 MOV:1

This tree is intelligent and mobile, and roots and grows quickly. It is highly magical in nature, and quite powerful. It is a tree made entirely of what seems to be black crystal, although it can move and is anything but rigid. It has great power to ward off evil, including the Galla, which it will drive away effectively. Its powers include the ability to create large areas of darkness and to summon up gale-force wind and rain storms. In addition, the screeching as its branches and leaves rub together causes insanity in those who hear, though only temporary. It can attack with its branches or leaves, doing cutting damage with the sharp crystals. The leaves can be thrown towards a target ten at a time for cutting damage, and when they strike a roll against unconsciousness should be made. It has little regard for human life, but will stay if summoned for a period of no more than 6 hours, after which it will shift into an alternate reality and disappear. It can communicate telepathically, but probably won't be interested.

## RUM RUNNERS

TCT

AV:45 AP:85 ATT:Tommy Gun(8xD12)  
 DV:30 HP:52 or Shotgun(5D6)  
 MV:35 FP:90 or Knife(1D6)

COC

STR:16 INT:10 CHA:11 ATT:Tommy Gun(55%/8xD6)  
 CON:15 POW:10 EDU:12 or Shotgun(65%/2D8)  
 SIZ:12 DEX:14 MOV:9 or Knife(50%/1D4)

These desperate men are lobstermen who have failed at their craft and have taken to bringing liquor into the country illegally. They meet boats from the Caribbean in the open ocean, pick up a cargo, run it in to be stored in the caves, and then later move it out by truck to Boston, Portland, or even New York, as well as some local outlets. They are well-armed, paranoically secretive, and trigger-happy. Some are also a bit drunk.



MONKS OF STE. JEAN LE BON

TCT				COC			
AV:45	AP:80	ATT:Club(3D6)		STR:22	INT:5	CHA:3	ATT:Club(55%/1D10)
DV:40	HP:70			CON:33	POW:15	EDU:14	
MV:33	FP:100			SIZ:11	DEX:12	MOV:8	

These monks are dead and mummified in their robes and habits. They are kept in a state of suspended animation by the abbot and may awake or can be awakened as detailed in #7 of the abbey map. They use large spiked clubs in combat, and like to feed on blood. They are faster than the abbot, as they are less worn down. While they are resistant to PSI attacks they have none.

THE GALLA

TCT				COC			
AV:50	AP:150	ATT:2 Claws(1D20)		STR:25	INT:20	CHA:2	ATT:2 Claws(70%/1D12)
DV:60	HP:120	1 Bite(3D6)		CON:30	POW:50	EDU:6	1 Bite(70%/1D10)
MV:500	FP:100			SIZ:25	DEX:40	MOV:120	

The Galla are fearsome undead guardian spirits. They appear as large, fast, female mummies, with enlarged claws and fangs. They feed on human blood, like to eat babies and live for vengeance. They can call up storms of wind only, move at incredible speed and inspire fear in all who see them. Only three of a total of seven of them are needed on this adventure. They are after Carlton Soames who is a grave robber in their eyes, and won't stop until they get him, at which point they will rip him apart and feast on him. They cannot be slain, and must be incapacitated or destroyed utterly. Chopping off their head won't stop one, although severing a leg will force them to crawl. Missile weapons do half damage and projectiles and points of all sorts do the same, tending to pass through their flesh. They are intelligent, but not to be reasoned with. They are highly resistant to all forms of magical attack.

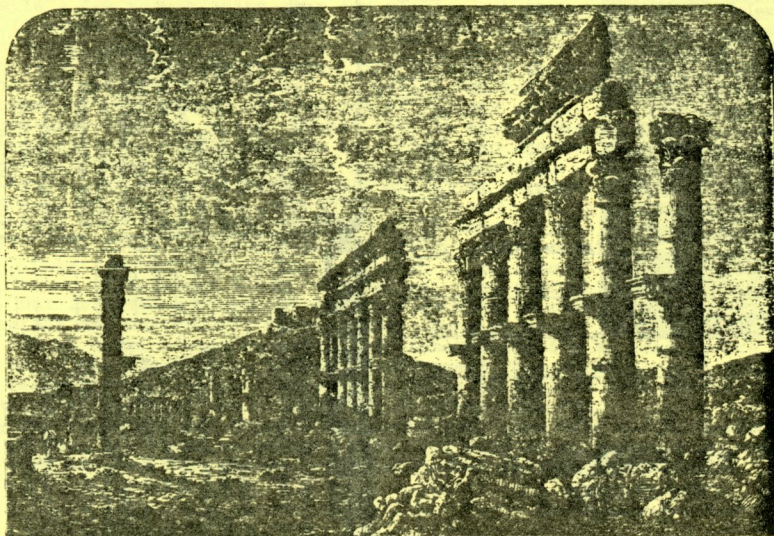
NOTES TO THE GM

The creatures and characters above are described in terms of both TCT and COC, but some adjustment and manipulation may be necessary on the part of the GM to keep things running smoothly.

For To Challenge Tomorrow standard derived characteristics are given. If you need more, borrow POW from COC to use as PSI in resisting PSI attacks. The other characteristics are roughly parallel and can also be used if needed. Most creatures or characters should take their first attack at full AV and the next at as high as they can until they run out of AP.

For Call of Cthulhu you have to determine HP by averaging STR and SIZ. For the attacks, use the percentages given as the percent to hit. Otherwise everything should be fairly straight-forward.

In general, treat the various undead described as follows. In combat they get to use their full abilities, but none except the Abbot need to subtract FP. In addition, all take half damage from pointed weapons of all sorts, and cannot be killed, only destroyed or incapacitated, although the monks can be incapacitated by losing their heads.



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YRS is still available in the regular basic set, the supplements are still available with more in works, but right now we want to recommend our ed set, well really, our new box. We've replaced box used in the old boxed set with a new, heavy y one, with which we are quite pleased. The set ludes the YRS(all 6 books), character sheets, GM ets, and two supplements. All of this is at only .95 plus \$2 for postage, a savings of \$3 over the t of the components if they were bought separatly.

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## ADVENTURES FROM THE ABYSS

This is a new booklet featuring 8 mini-adventures taken from ABYSS issues through #22, with some of the finest adventures we have published, like Taking the Waters, Lovers of the Grave, The Trial of Ptah, and Jortaksholt. The 32 page book is for \$3.95 plus 50¢ postage.

## TO CHALLENGE TOMORROW

TCT will be released for ORIGINS '83 in July. All of the faithful who have taken advance orders will recieve it before then. It will be in three books about 80-100 pages, featuring simple rules for SF or modern role-playing, plus scenarios and background ideas. It will be a step beyond what is currently available for SF gamers. On advance order TCT is \$5.95 plus \$1 for postage and handling.

# FEEDBACK!

### QUESTIONS ON THIS ISSUE

Rate items 1 (awful) to 100 (great)

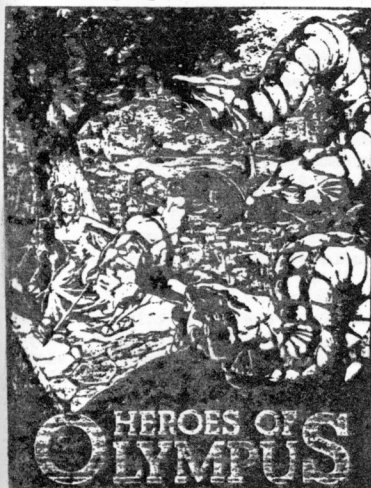
RESULTS #23	RATING	CHANGE
Conjurings	75	-9
Witch Hunt	81	-
An Advance Look at TCT	70	-4
In the Speculum	88	+1
Summer at Soundsend	79	-6
Echoes from the Abyss	73	-
D&D Magic	83	-
Studies in Sorcery	93	-
Mysteries of the Magi	94	+1
Mike Klosterman(5,25)	95	-2
Nequi Dharsee(2)	86	-1
Mike Cranford(FC)	78	+28
Other Art		
Cover	84	-5
Titles/Graphics		

Cover  
Titles/Graphics

### HEROES OF OLYMPUS

Task Force Games, 1110 N. Fillmore, Amarillo, TX 79107(\$17.95)

Heroes of Olympus is a boxed 'role-playing' game. I put 'role-playing' in quotes because the main problem of this game is its attempt to define itself in this category with no real, natural qualifications.



Heroes of Olympus contains a 54 page rule book in 8 1/2x11 format, character sheets, maps, and little miniatures as well as counters to serve the same function. The rules include character generation, combat, religion, and magic systems, and are fairly completely organized. The maps are suited to the 'Jason and the Argonauts' material around which the game is centered.

The mechanics are not particularly inspiring. There is an interesting character generation system which is heavily dependant on die-rolls and denies the concept of role-playing character development, but which has some nice details and ideas. The combat system is unnecessarily complicated and avoids some necessary realism in the process. The magic is really irrelevant as it is very difficult to get, and the system is really a clone of some of the other systems. Some of the more interesting aspects include a nice sea movement system and some good background material. The main central fault of the mechanics is their extreme reliance of die rolls for everything, taking control away from the player and limiting role-playing as much as possible. For example, if you want to learn a skill, you can't just study and learn it, but a roll is required.

If you fail that roll you just can't learn that skill. Another flaw is in the emphasis placed on a 'Jason and the Argonauts' background. They even go so far as to suggest that players merely use one of the pre-created Argonauts they list in the rules. This seems to be a conscious denial of originality and imagination, and they certainly could have worked with a more general background. Another problem is the extreme tactical emphasis of the game, with counters and hex-maps for all of the encounters in their 'Argonaut' scenario, making movement and tactics more important than character personality.

Heroes of Olympus is nicely produced and has some interesting ideas, but as a role-playing game it is undeniably a failure. The background information can be adapted to other, better developed role-playing systems and if you have the money to throw away you might look into it, but I cannot recommend it highly. (John Davies)

### DROIDS

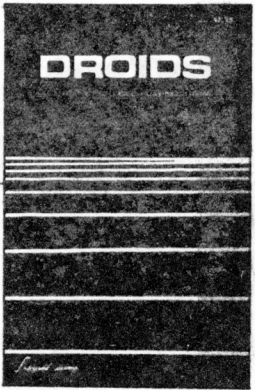
Integral Games, POB 13562, Arlington, TX 76013(\$7.95)

Droids is a new role-playing game for playing robots or 'Droids'. It comes in a single booklet of 80 pages, nicely bound (a la Traveller).

Droids is a very complicated game. The object is to become as mean and powerful as you can. In Droids you take the role of a robot. You construct a droid out of various parts, suited to movement, vision, power, combat and the like. These follow modular design concepts and can be fitted onto a unit freely. They all have costs, bulk, and power consumption. There is a large list of parts with a good guideline for developing new parts.

Droids is a well thought out game, though in a very limited context. The rules are consistent and cover most possibilities. Combat is the best aspect, although it is almost impossible to try to remember all of the tables. The system works well, but is quite arbitrary. A second problem is the limited interest and variability of the game. Running about scavenging off of other robots can only stay interesting for so long before it becomes at least a bit repetitive, though I understand that expansions of the game background are planned. Integral Games also plans to publish some scenarios soon. I have looked over parts of one of them and it looks like fun.

Droids is an unusual and enjoyable role-playing game with a few weaknesses and a bit high priced, but I can recommend it easily, both as an interesting and coherent game system and as a fun change from traditional gaming. (Howard Alt)



# III ECHOES FROM THE ABYSS

## Comments

Dear ABYSS,

I'm returning my feedback a little late this month, but it comes with a check for The Ysgarth Rule System which I am eagerly awaiting.

It also comes with a few suggestions. First of all, I suggest that a letter page would be of more value than the feedback. The numbers may have been thrown together and mailed in, but a letter is usually carefully thought out. Also, after two months, the numbers have no meaning, while the letters can easily be compared to articles.

Lastly, you might consider giving more space to advertisements and product reviews. I like to search magazines for useful additions to my game.

Michael Samalin  
Bronx, NY

This letter and others like it always make us happy, and as you can see in this issue some of these suggestions have been taken to heart. We are keeping our feedback section, but adding this letter page to cover both types of feedback. We have also expanded "In the Speculum" and are actively seeking more advertisements.

Dear Sirs,

I am a new subscriber to your magazine ABYSS. Over all it is a fairly good magazine, yet some parts really bother me. For instance, the "You Asked For It" section in issue #23. The review of Dungeon Module B-3 was stupid and Mr. Munchkin's new idea for dungeon designing seemed a lot like filler. What I would really like to see is articles on new monsters, spells, character types, and tips on playing the most popular role-playing games. Reviews on new 'findings' are nice, but they are only good if you plan on buying them or if the review is strongly in favor of the item. It would be very good if you had some sections answering peoples questions on certain games. Thank you.

Eric Phillips  
Fairport, NY

To clarify for those who missed it, the Munchkin article in #23 was satirical, lampooning the specific materials we have chosen to cut down on in ABYSS, specifically the 'Monsters and Modules' syndrome which is so common in small magazines. Negative reviews do serve a purpose as warnings to the wise. The question section idea is good, but might take up a lot of space with material useful only to a part of the readership.

## Defending TSR

Dear ABYSS,

This is not a criticism of #19, nor of Ragnarok Enterprises. I do not mean to offend Mr. Schuller in the least bit. Whether or not this gets printed I feel that I must respond to Jon Schuller's article in "Berserkerang" in #19. Heland I've noticed a little of this throughout the magazine seems to picture TSR as the big bully of the gaming industry, much as the USA appears to many third-world nations. I feel that this attitude is a wholly unwarranted response which may have its source in nothing more than resentment.

TSR started their FRP game from a supplement in the back of the Chainmail rules. From this Arneson and Gygax constructed D&D to satisfy their needs for a fantasy simulation. Out of these skeletal guidelines grew AD&D. The elements of those first D&D rule books can still be found in AD&D amidst a barrage of expansions.

TSR started out like any small gaming company (RE included?), and D&D was not created to make money but to succor the need of fantasy enthusiasts all over America. You seem to forget that TSR did not jump on the fantasy bandwagon—the started it rolling. To condemn TSR for becoming successful is wrong. This attitude seems similar to a son rebelling from his father. To expect TSR to remain an obscure company is to condemn FRP into oblivion.

Now, I can sympathize with some of the worry regarding the mass marketing of FRP products. Many people are afraid that the time will come when a player will say 'I play fantasy role-playing games' and will get the reply, 'Big deal, so do I!' Yet, to make FRPING an exclusive privilege to a lucky few is very wrong.

The TSR takeover of SPI and AMAZING/FANTASTIC is not such a bad thing either. SPI's president is resigning, but the staff will remain the same. TSR has stated in the DRAGON that they are assuming the financial responsibilities only, leaving the creative tasks to the staff of SPI.

AMAZING/FANTASTIC hasn't been hurt by the takeover either. Only TSR has the influence to line up Robert Silverberg, Lisa Tuttle, and Robert Adams. They are putting some class into an already classic publication.

As far as the needlework company goes, your guess is as good as mine (needlepoint dragons?). In closing, I'd just like to say that I think TSR is doing a commendable and professional job of it. It is unfair to condemn a respectable corporation on the sole basis of their triumph. Let's put away the pangs of jealousy and look at a company based on its product.

Mark Cutler  
Anaheim, CA

## Schuller Responds

Dear Mark and ABYSS readers,

While you have a valid criticism of an attitude which pervades many of the small presses in our hobby, you seem to have missed the point of my article and to have developed a somewhat twisted perception of the quality of TSR products.

The purpose of my article was to lament the entrance of corporate adventurism into the FRP market place, not so much by TSR as by companies which care even less about anything but making a buck. As far as TSR, if you feel that they didn't plan to make money with D&D you are sadly confused. They would be far more foolish than they have demonstrated were that their intention.


As far as the specific take overs, things have changed a bit since you wrote. All of SPI's staff quit and formed Victory Games, and while AMAZING/FANTASTIC has improved, it is nowhere near its 1970s level when Ted White was editor. Schmidt has never been a very good or greatly respected editor, and A/F is turning into a clone of ISAAC ASIMOV'S SFM.

Finally, the quality of TSR products is far below that of any other serious professional company in the marketplace, with the exception of Judges Guild. In the survey published in ABYSS #20 TSR had 3 of the four worst product nominations and 50% of the total nominations for worst gaming product, and this has been born out by surveys in SPACEGAMER and other magazines.

My aim with that "Berserker gang" was to take a look at a threat to quality, not to small or large production scales. Certainly a company the size of TSR bears greater responsibility because of their size and should exercise good judgement to produce the highest possible quality, goals which they currently fall far short of.

Jon Schuller  
Dallas, TX

# D&D MAGIC RON PEHR



One of the major problems with the magic system in Dungeons & Dragons (D&D—here meant to include AD&D, Basic D&D, or any other variation or permutation of the game) is that there is no standard method of deciding how powerful a spell should be, what level it should be, and how it compares to other spells. Ad hoc compilation of the spell lists has resulted in there being only a few spells which most D&D characters find useful, particularly at beginning levels.

To some extent this is a function of the D&D experience system which rewards only looting and killing, so players tend to favor spells which help kill adversaries. Hopefully, anyone reading this has progressed past that stage in their gaming and takes pleasure in living your character not merely killing other

characters. But, even so, the spell lists in D&D are lopsided so that only a few powerful low level spells are any use to most characters. Since D&D rules strictly limit the number of spells beginning characters can use in the game, this is of prime importance to the beginner as he surveys the spell list.

The modifications to the rules and sample spell lists presented in this article were designed to be used with my variant system in which magic-users have a number of 'stamina points' allowing them to use more spells. However, these are far more limited in ability to dish out direct damage. My mages are flexible and capable, but they don't have the raw power to dominate encounters which is so common in D&D. Nevertheless, everything here is quite suitable to any form of D&D.

**Level:** This shows hit dice of the caster and the power of the spell. 'LoC will hereafter refer to level of caster, 'LoS' will be level of the spell.

**Type:** This classifies spells into 5 types, each of which has a standard range, duration and area of effect. This not only standardizes the regular spell lists and makes spells of equal level comparable in power, it also allows a fair evaluation of new spells prior to



research. There are some spells which simply do not fit into any category, or by their nature cannot have standard ranges, durations or effects. I'm afraid that they must be left alone, as magic is not an exact science. The types of spells are: PHYSICAL (Manipulating matter, usually inanimate), MENTAL (affecting thoughts or perceptions), DETECTION (locating, explaining and analyzing), CREATION (Summoning or creating beings or objects of tangible matter), ENHANCEMENT (Improving the sensitivity or ability of the caster or another subject).

**Range:** This breaks down as follows, PHYSICAL-20", MENTAL-10", DETECTION-5", CREATION-1" ENHANCEMENT-Self or touch. Where a spell would, by its nature, require a greater range multiply the given figure by 10 times LoC.

**Duration:** This is measured in turns. Spells have a duration of one turn multiplied by the LoC for Detection and Enhancement or by LoS for Physical and Mental. Creations are in rounds multiplied by LoC. In games with frequent combat encounters these durations will make magic-users extremely vulnerable. That's what I prefer as a) they should expect to depend on the protection of the warriors, and b) magic is a dangerous profession. If these durations are too short however, use LoC for all spells and allow Creations to be measured in turns.

Some spells have a duration only long enough to produce the desired effect, for example a Fireball which lasts only for its effect. However, if the effect lingers the duration is in rounds multiplied by LoS. This type of instant spell can be labelled a 'Combat' spell.

In order to describe duration in LoS, spells must occur at higher levels of a basic spell. Thus if a Sleep Spell lasts one turn but we want the target to sleep two turns, we would use a Sleep Spell II which would be a second level spell. Note that not all spells which have higher level versions are first level spells. It is quite likely that a powerful spell could be, say level three, then the next higher version would be 'II' at level four then 'III' at level five, and so on. Higher level versions of a spell can be considered automatically learned when the magic-user achieves enough stature to use higher level spells. If he knows the basic spell—by whatever means you have mages learn spells—then he will know the higher level version.

**Casting:** Measured in D&D segments, this is a segment per LoS. A more interesting rule might be to require a round per LoS, forcing mages to think ahead.

**Area:** Where applicable, spells have an area of effect with a  $\frac{1}{2}$ " radius times either LoS or LoC, depending on the type of spell.

**Effects:** Physical or Mental spells, and any Enhancement spells adding a 'plus' will increase in effect each LoS (one more die damage, another plus, another target, etc.). Basic power of a spell will be, when applicable, one die per LoS.

In the case of Detection spells, there will be a basic  $50 + (5 \times (\text{LoC} - \text{LoS}))$  chance of success. Use this same formula for Enhancements which don't just add plusses.

Spells which affect targets of a given level or less will be considered to affect characters of a level up to the LoS.

All effects either take place or don't when directed against a target. A save against magic indicates that the target's force of will or ego is such that the spell simply doesn't manifest against him. Thus, it is quite possible for one character to be unscathed by a fireball which incinerates someone next to him.

In the following list of first level spells, when there is more than one type listed for a spell, that indicates that the spell has some of the qualities of both types. The first type controls if there is a difference in how the spell would be effective depending on which type was used.

SPELL	TYPE	DESCRIPTION
Sharp sense	DET	Boosts secondard sense 50%(anything other than eyesight)
Read Languages	ENH	Allows comprehension of any readable text.
Sleep	MEN	One target/LoS. Targets over casters level allowed save vs. magic. Higher level versions possible.
Soothe	MEN	Makes target peaceful, but does not control his actions. It will not stop him from defending himself.
Jangle	MEN	Causes a muscle spasm, with pain, dropped weapons, etc. There can be higher level versions.
Shield	ENH	Acts as an invisible shield, giving AC6 in melee or AC4 againt missiles. Higher level versions possible.
Circle	ENH	Adds +1 to AC and saves. User must remain within circle he draws around his feet. Keeps out enchanted monsters 50%+ 5%/LoC. Higher level versions are possible.
Suresight	ENH	Boosts primary sense. Generally eyesight.
Ventriloquism	PHY	Didn't you always admire Shari Lewis?
Hold Portal	PHY	For dramatic effect, I require the mage to lay hands on the door, window or lid to be sealed.
Floating	ENH	Target or caster can become nearly weightless, allowing him to float atop quicksand or be easily carried, etc.
Flash	PHY	A bright flash of light, temporarily blinding anyone who looks at it. There are higher level versions.
Torch	ENH	This creates a flickering, non-combustible light from the caster's hand or an object.
Reflected Image	CRE	A picture in any reflecting surface. It will move as directed
Magic Missile	PHY	Targets as if the caster was using a bow and arrow, at +1 to hit, doing 1D6+1 damage. Higher level versions are possible.
Blade of Power	ENH	This makes an ordinary sword or knife act as +1.

Some of these spells have higher level equivalents which not only increase the basic effect, but have different, more useful results. For example, the progression from Floating would be Levitation, Flying, Dimension Door. This is in accord with the idea that mages not only get more powerful at what they do as they increase in level, but they become more able to understand different, advanced, magical principles too complex for even the brightest novice.

# STUDIES IN SORCERY

## John Rudd Davies

The Sorcerer is one of the most interesting mage classes in Ysgarth. The ideas behind a demon summoning sorcerer are well grounded in history and magical practice, and this makes the class feel particularly authentic. However, there are a few problems with the class in actual play which tend to make sorcerers have life a little too easy in some ways. I'd like to make some suggestions of modifications for the class and add some new ideas on demons and their powers.

### PUTTING SOME CHALLENGE BACK INTO SUMMONINGS

As the rules in Ysgarth stand it is awfully easy for a sorcerer to summon fairly powerful demons with little risk to himself. This is because of the process of straight addition and subtraction used in determining his chance of controlling a demon based on a comparison of their Will Ratings.

The first modification is to use a new formula for finding the chance of controlling a demon. To make this comparison use the table given below. SWR is Summoner Will Rating, including the value of any pentacle involved. DWR is Demon Will Rating.

The value found on the chart is the percentage chance of the sorcerer controlling the demon, taking most major factors into account. If he rolls within the number he succeeds. If he does not make the roll, the demon will tend to attack or attempt to possess him, reversing the table to find his chance of success in possessing a given human. Note in addition, that every ten minutes a demons WR should increase by an effective 20% of its original value. This increase should also apply with each subsequent summoning, and should be cumulative, so that by the fifth summoning the demon's WR should be more than double its original value.



DWR	4	16	36	64	100	144	196	256	324	400	484	576	676	784	900
WR	43	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1	53	31	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6	61	43	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
15	68	53	31	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
16	74	61	43	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
19	79	68	53	31	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
14	83	74	61	43	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
11	86	79	68	53	31	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
100	88	83	74	61	43	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
121	90	86	79	68	53	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
144	91	88	83	74	61	31	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
169	92	90	86	79	68	43	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
196	93	91	88	83	74	53	31	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
225	94	92	90	86	79	61	43	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
256	95	93	91	88	83	68	53	31	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
189	95	94	92	90	86	74	61	43	17	0	0	0	0	0	0
124	95	95	93	91	88	79	68	53	31	0	0	0	0	0	0
161	95	95	94	92	90	83	74	61	43	17	0	0	0	0	0
100	95	95	95	93	91	86	79	68	53	31	0	0	0	0	0
141	95	95	95	94	92	88	83	74	61	43	17	0	0	0	0
184	95	95	95	95	93	90	86	79	68	53	31	0	0	0	0
129	95	95	95	95	94	91	88	83	74	61	43	17	0	0	0
176	95	95	95	95	95	92	90	86	79	68	53	31	0	0	0
125	95	95	95	95	95	93	91	88	83	74	61	43	17	0	0
176	95	95	95	95	95	94	92	90	86	79	68	53	31	0	0
129	95	95	95	95	95	95	93	91	88	83	74	61	43	17	0
184	95	95	95	95	95	95	94	92	90	86	79	68	53	31	0
141	95	95	95	95	95	95	95	93	91	88	83	74	61	43	17
100	95	95	95	95	95	95	95	94	92	90	86	79	68	53	31

As you can see by looking at the table, it is now not only possible to summon beings with WRs greater than the summoner, but there is never a 100% chance of success, and there are always at least some risks involved.

#### WHAT A DEMON WILL DO FOR YOU

This is another area which needs clarification. Just what can and will a demon do for a summoner?

First off, there is a general encouragement to the demon to cooperate, as his very presence in the plane of human existence causes him pain. However, this pain is not unendurable, and while it will make him angry, he won't knuckle under. The only way for him to get out of this pain is either to take possession of a human body or to leave the plain for his natural habitat.

However, before a demon will do anything for the summoner a serious payment of some sort is required, usually something appropriate to the interests of the particular demon.

All demons will take freely sold human souls in payment, and this is the ideal form of payment, and the common currency used to measure other things among demons. The value of a soul is greater if it is less tainted by evil already, and the more positive Karma Points a soul has the more desirable it is, and thus the better the payment. However, many demons, especially the less powerful ones, will take far lesser payment. Many demons like to eat tender, raw human flesh, for example. Some will accept babies as sacrifices, some a set amount of blood, some will take specific sorts of animals. These should generally be cast into the pentacle, where the demon will rip them apart and feast on them. Generally payment should be made after a service is performed, as demons are not particularly trustworthy, and if you feed them first they will tend to renege on a deal. Note that controlling a demon in will battle does not allow any real control or compulsion of the demon. It merely limits his movements and keeps him from taking action against the sorcerer. Most demons don't like being summoned whatever the terms, thus the increase in WR with subsequent summonings, but some few are a bit different and become addicted to human blood or flesh or other substances. In general they will come and obey more eagerly, but they will want increasingly huge payments to meet their insatiable needs. Note that those who throw babies to demons and the like should get significant negative Karma.

The actual services performed by a demon can vary wildly as indicated in various descriptions given in Ysgarth and elsewhere. What needs to be defined more is just how much a demon can do and for what payment. The amount a demon can do is limited by his power. Imps should be limited to powers the equivalent of 3rd level or lower spells, Prime Demons should be limited to 9th level or lower spell equivalents, and there really isn't any specific limit for Greater Demons. Powers granted should be equivalent to or parallel to spells described in the rules, but only in the area of specialty of the demon. In addition, while no Skill Points are expended to learn these powers when they are granted by the demon, and they are usually known for a set period of no more than a year and a day, the powers still have to be cast by the sorcerer as if they were normal spells of that level, with a set cost in Fatigue Points and Mana Points. How generous a demon will be depends on just what the demon is given. For example, about the most Frashok, imp of fire, can do is grant a Fireball-type power (3rd level), and to do this he would want his top sacrifice, probably a baby human. Imps usually aren't ambitious enough to ask for much more than that. Virgin princesses and selling souls are reserved for the more powerful demons. A high price will also be exacted for direct service by a demon. For example, using a demon of winds as a flying vehicle would require at least a human sacrifice. How long powers last should depend on the quality of the sacrifice, and for a token offering only a token period should be granted. Remember that demons will always try to get out of deals by taking advantage of loopholes and unspecific instructions.



### SOME ADDITIONAL DEMONS

These are some more demons from the nobility of Hell. All must be called with a Greater Summoning. They are described here in detail. Additional demons can be found in YRS Book #3, ABYSS #11, ABYSS #12, ABYSS #13, and ABYSS #15.

#### BELIAL

AR:48	LV:32	Attacks:Rain of Fire 1D6x1D12 to all in area
DR:26	HP:350	Greatsword (2D8)
DC:20	ST:-3	
AV:2/2/2	WR:675	

Belial is the lord of hostility, destruction and guilt. He is called 'The Wick ed One'. His powers are quite significant, and include earthquakes, volcanoes, tidal waves, and the movement of the sun and the moon. He can also make the dead walk, and can be of aid to necromancers. He appears as a normal human with black skin and flaming eyes, but can expand in size up to 30ft in height. His main combative power is to call down a rain of fire from the sky.

When summoned he can grant a full range of destructive geomancer, necromancer and wizard spells. He will exact a high price for his services. For example, he can destroy a town completely for the willing sale of the souls of 3 virgins with a total of +100KP between them.

#### MEPHISTOPHILES

AR:22	LV:27	Attacks:Rapier for 1D10
DR:65	HP:280	
DC:15	ST:-12	
AV:0	WR:500	

Mephistophiles is a somewhat questionable member of the demon heirarchy. He is a demon of illusion, deceit and self-delusion. He appears as a young, handsome man of dark complexion in 17th century dress. He is soft spoken, eloquent, and quite charismatic. He has complete and total control over illusion, perception and hallucinations, and loves to mislead people into horrible deeds which they will regret forever. He also acts as a messenger of hell.

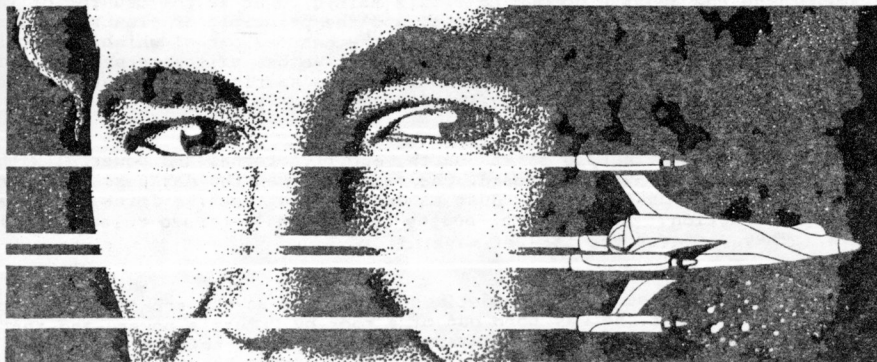
When summoned he can grant a full range of typical stuff like earthly wealth and the like, but he can also give powers of illusion, usually on a single specific illusion basis. He is rather selective, and will rarely do anything for less than a full human sacrifice, and is particularly interested in the acquisition of souls either that of the sorcerer or any others he can get as Mephistophiles' agent.

#### LILITH

AR:42	LV:35	Attacks:2 Claws for 1D10
DR:57	HP:300	1 Bite for 1D12 plus drain 1 point CON and STR
DC:15	ST:-10	
AV:1/1/1	WR:700	

Lilith is a demon of lust and horror. She is called the 'Terror by Night', and likes to go about stealing and eating children at night. She is the queen of all demons. She takes the form either of a beautiful woman or as a humanoid feline. She is served and followed by a legion of Succubi/Incubbi, and has the power herself to change sex, seduce just about anyone, and feeds on human blood and life energy.

If Lilith is summoned, she wants at least a baby as sacrifice. Her main area of power concerns lust and vanity, and she can grant appropriate powers, but only if fed. She will be fairly resistant to persuasion, and while she may promise anything, she is quite treacherous.



2/28/84/6/83

# MYSTERIES OF THE ANCIENT MAGI

## DAVID NALLE



ORMUZD (AHURA MAZDA/ORMAZES)

Ormuzd is the good (though not unqualifiedly) principle of this dualism. He is a deity of the sun and the good mind (Spenta Mainyu). He is the creator of the universe. He represents good, truth, light, and the principle of cleansing fire in all of its implications. He is the fire in the heavens out of which the world was born and the fire of truth which sustains life. He has existed eternally and is not really physically represented, being more of a spirit than an anthropomorphic deity. He is utterly opposed to evil and darkness.

AHRIMAN (ANGRA MAINYU/DRUJ)

Ahriman is the principle of the earth, equally eternal and powerful with Ormuzd, to whom he is by nature opposed. He represents earth, darkness, evil and more than anything else, destruction. Just as Ormuzd is a creative force, Ahriman is a force of destruction. He rules the bodies of men, while Ormuzd rules over their spirits. They war over the fate of mankind.

MITHRAS (MITRA/VAYU)

Mithras is a lesser being, sometimes thought of as the son of Ormuzd, or as his creation. However, he was born out of a rock by Ormuzd's power, and therefore shares part of the nature of both primary powers. He is, however, the lord of the middle air, the winds, and the storm. He is the emissary of Ormuzd against the power of Ahriman and the leader of the armies of heaven. His significance varies, being somewhat greater among the Roman legions and somewhat less among modern Zoroastrians. Aside from his religious significance, he remains very popular.

While we all know about Islam, the dominant religion of central Asia, we are often less aware of other faiths which are native to that region. Especially interesting is Zoroastrianism a dualistic religion developed from ancient Persian beliefs by the prophet Zoroaster. Of particular interest to role-players and fantasy enthusiasts are some of the older myths and ideas of this religion which are sometimes different from those held by modern followers of Zoroaster. Much of interest can be found in the Zend Avesta and other texts.

The beliefs of ancient Persia as they were expressed at their height in the eighth & ninth centuries b.c., are similar in many ways to beliefs held in far eastern areas, especially India. They are also particularly important because of their influence on Western religion through the religious cross-culturalization of the Roman Empire.

These beliefs were widely held and propagated by a group of priests called Magi, who supported and administered this somewhat gnostic sect. Many of the beliefs were modified and trimmed by Zoroaster when he reformed the religion, but the basic ideas remain more or less the same.

Essentially, this ancient religion is dualistic and there are two main deities, plus a number of secondary deities of varying levels of importance and with a large range of powers and roles. Of these several individuals and groups are important and will be examined after the two principles.

## ISKANDER (ALEXANDER THE GREAT)

A later belief among the Persians was that, just as Mithras was the champion of Ormuzd, Alexander the Great was the champion and embodiment of the powers of darkness. Naturally, after his death, these claims to divinity for the conquerer fell into disfavor. There is some suspicion that Alexander may have promoted these beliefs deliberately, and actually practiced some form of Ahrimanism.

## THE AMSHASPENDS

These are the angels of Ormuzd, representing virtuous principles. They are Light, Religion, Order, Sovereignty, Piety, Excellence and Immortality. They are the top rank of the forces of heaven. There are other lesser spirits as well.

## THE DAEVAS

These entities are Ahriman's anti-angels. They are many, but some include Jahi (menstruation), Ako-mano (evil), Sauru (anarchy), Naonhaithya (pride), Taurvi and Zairisha (degradation), Aeshma (rage), and others. They are equivalent in power and rank to the Amshaspendas.

## THE YAZATAS

These entities are spirits of the earth, equivalent in power to the Daevas or Amshaspendas. Mithras is often considered to be only the first among these. Some include Anahita (waters), Atar (fire), Verethraghna (victory), Sraosha (obedience), Rashnu (justice), Arshat (rectitude), Ashi-Vanuhi (riches), Parendi (abundance). The Yazatas are often thought to follow Mithras, and there is some crossover with the Amshaspendas. In many ways they are oriented to support Ormuzd, but unlike other entities of this rank, they are worshipped as independent deities of nature.

## OTHER GROUPS AND POWERS

There are other significant spirits, including a number of lesser demons, such as the Druj (deceivers) and the Parikas (elementals). Also significant are the Yatus, sorcerer priests of Ahriman and the powers of darkness, the Magousaioi, who are the philosopher-priests of Ormuzd, and Pyrethes, who are the flame bearer-priests of Ormuzd, and make up a lesser order. Another interesting spirit is the Gao-kerena, a tree with the power to raise the dead and make people immortal. There are a number of other holy and magical creatures, including magical fish, lizards, and Oxen.

## GENERAL NOTES

This is a very philosophically oriented myth structure in which most of the entities are non-physical in nature, more like abstractions of principles. They are worshiped for aid and use, and placed as ideals of qualities pursued or fought against. Although this is a dualistic faith, most of the open worship is of Ormuzd, and what worship there is of Ahriman is for magical or propitiatory purposes. For more information I would recommend: Occidental Mythology (J. Campbell), The Ancient Gods (E. James), Oriental Religions in Roman Paganism (F. Cumont), plus such primary texts as the Bunġahish and the Zend Avesta.

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