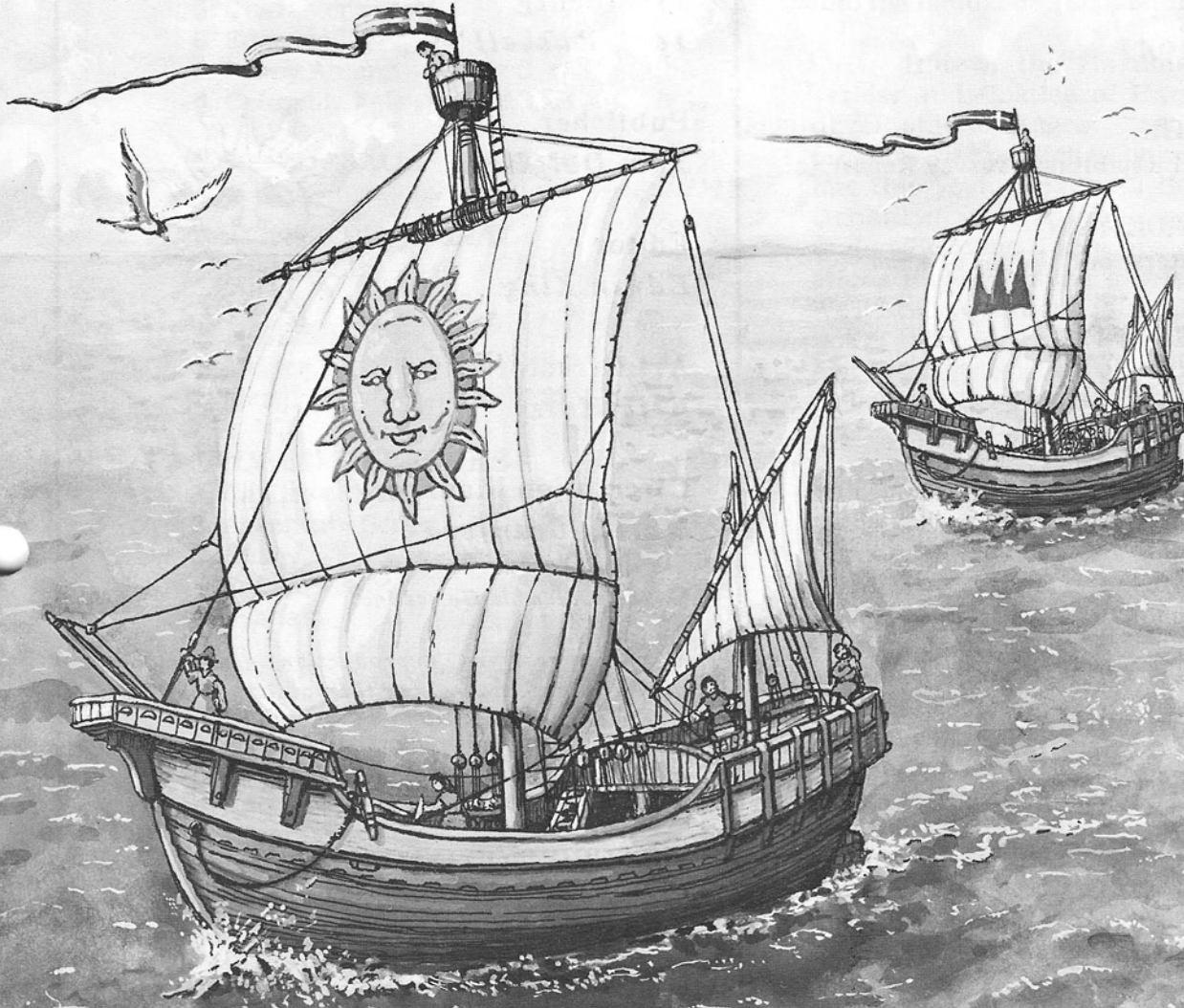


Harnlore

ISSUE 3
AUTUMN 1987



COLUMBIA GAMES INC.
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EHZ '87

Harnlore

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Hello again. The results of the feedback card for Harnlore 2 are given below, look them over and I'll be back to talk about them.

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Well, you liked Harnlore 2 more than the first issue, but it was close. Obviously you prefer more detailed plans like Escorsen's Hermitage, and we've provided some more in this issue. Most of you could care less about the personalities at Columbia Games, but I hope Columbia Folk made those of you who did care happy. You're still a bit unsure of whether you like the character sheet, and to give it another try, there's one in this issue.

The GM exchange is on hold, but we may test the idea again in the future. If you really are sold on the idea, write long persuasive letters.

We are pleased by the reaction to Melderyn. This is the highest rating we've had for any product. I guess binding ten dollar bills into the middle had something to do with it.

Ridow, the Harnmaster Adventure series, and Castles of Harn, are all in the development stages. Castles of Harn will probably be the first to be released, sometime late this year. We're still thinking about the Orbaal map, but your reaction is a bit underwhelming. There are a lot of considerations involved, such a price, marketing etc. We'll keep you informed. Yashain is dead. This is the third time we've tested the idea and it just keeps getting worse. You don't have to hit us over the head with a hammer.

In this issue we have Harn-by-Mail, an article on role playing on Harn through the use of the postal system. (And some people already think the Harnmaster combat system is too slow.) The article is by Richard Knight, an experienced GM who has been running a Harn-by-Mail campaign for several years. We also have a Solori tribal village done in similar form to Escorsen's Hermitage, a character sheet for the tribal chieftain, six new spells for the Harnmaster magic system, and the usual collection of letters, columns etc. You will note that there is no feedback card in this issue. We will be putting them in issues on an irregular basis in the future, when we particularly want to test an idea. Meanwhile feel free, as always, to let us know what you're thinking.

Finally, to end on a personal note, I want to say good-bye. I'm leaving Columbia Games after an association of several years to write full time. I'll be appearing as a freelance writer in occasional future releases by Columbia, so I won't entirely disappear, but I will no longer be editing. I've made many friends, both here and among the fans of Harn, and it has been a lot of fun. I've enjoyed the input and enthusiasm of thousands of correspondents. I'll miss you. Take care.

Edwin King

LETTERDEMAIN

Dear Sirs,

I just received your Melderyn Kingdom Module. Have all of the modules contained puns as bad as those in Melderyn? I mean, "Sir Jerge Smeley" of the secret service? And "This event became known as the Rape of Thay, even though the city itself was never entered by the Ivinians"; a penetratingly good pun, I mean bad pun, or whatever.

Edward G. Bryant, Nevada

Dear Edward,

What is this? First we had Fred Faulkner commenting on puns in Harnlore 2, and now you. I suspect a conspiracy.

Dear Sirs,

The use of the term reef on the regional maps disturbs me. If "reef" refers to a biological "biostrom" then some, perhaps many, of the latitudes at which these reefs occur are inappropriate. If "reef" refers to non-biological obstructions such as rock shoals, or submerged geologic features, a different term might be appropriate. Without digressing too far into marine biology or carbonate petrology and paleontology, While cold water corals do exist, it is the symbiotic relationship with warm, water micro-organisms which facilitates the growth of coral reefs in tropical regions.

Edward G. Bryant, Nevada

Dear Edward,

You again? I suppose you think we'll print every letter you write? Seriously, on the regional maps reef applies to any marine geologic obstruction. On the kingdom atlas maps we have used the terms reefs, shoals, and rocks somewhat interchangeably; this was done to add "colour" to the maps.

Dear Editor,

There is a matter I hope you can clear up. In "Reports to Council", (Harnlore 2) Eriela Kaphin overheard the Earl of Balim remark, "Daelda might also object...". My question is this; how can Daelda object to anything? Isn't it true that good King Daelda was mortally wounded at the Battle of Sorrows as a result of the intrigues of a band of Navehan priests? What happened to Aranath Halirien? Questing minds want to know.

I want to address the "creeping Donatism" that has entered the theological framework of Harn since the publication of Harnlore. I refer to the letter

of Garry Hamlin in Harnlore 1 I call his position Donatism because he seems to state that the "Church...must remain 'holy' and the sacraments conferred by the 'traiditores' [are] invalid." (Eds. note: Quotation is from The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church by F.L. Cross) While certain gods require strict morality from the faithful, this does not mean that the morality of the priest has anything to do with the effect of a ritual.

The ritual is a communication, through the priest, to the faithful. It uses words and actions to convey divine truths. The driving force behind the ritual is not the faith or morality of the priest, but the will of the god who uses the priest as a vessel of divine intent. To say that the ritual involved is dependent upon the morality of the priest, is to say the god is dependent upon a mortal agent. Theologically, this is an absurd notion.

A god by definition is a self sufficient entity which requires no outside help from mortals. As St. AuGustine of Hyppa wrote; "the unworthiness of the minister did not affect the validity of the sacraments, since their true minister was God."

How then should one handle relations between a god and a corrupt priest? I suggest that a suitable penalty be levied against miscreant clerics on their personal invocations, while leaving their public ritual performances untouched. This would allow the ritual skill to be used as it appears in Harnmaster as a symbolic form of divine grace bestowed.

Mr. Hamlin's comments about the education of the clerics are valid, and I agree completely. I hope you examine my arguments and reverse the tide of Donatism on Harn.

Ric Knight, Ontario

Dear Ric,

About your first point; choose one of the following; (i) the Earl of Balim doesn't know about the change in government in Erael that occurred fourteen hundred years ago, (ii) the Earl was testing the intelligence of Maldan Harabor, without success, (iii) ooops.

Your comments about Donatism are very interesting, and we agree with your view. A corrupt priest or two in any church is unavoidable, and in FRP even desirable. Encountering a principled Morgathian or an unscrupulous Laranian (both are corrupt) will keep the players guessing. Your suggestion to handle this must be divine inspiration.

LETTERDEMAIN

Columbia Games,

Your religious rules are great, but your cosmology makes me uncomfortable. Kelestia is a great background for a megagame but I am concerned with the religious aspects. You have generated one pantheon of gods who are "real" and treat other religions, specifically the *tribal animistic* religions, as myths which are not given the same recognition in the rules. No one culture's religious cosmology should be defined by the game system as absolute truth. Every religion should be presented on an equal basis. The sophistication or primitivism of a given religion has no bearing on its effectiveness to meet the needs of its people.

Steve Marquis, California

Dear Steve,

We hold the view that the ten gods are universal on Lythia, and that the tribal totemistic and animistic deities are aspects of one or more of the "civilized" pantheon. As such they are every bit as "real" as Agrik, Halea, etc. The fact that the tribal gods are aspects of the civilized pantheon is generally not understood, either by tribesmen or by civilized persons.

Dear Editor,

Would a character believe in only one god or all of the gods? If they believe in all of the gods, wouldn't it be likely for the character to have their favourite but also pay respect to other gods where applicable (eg. would a Laranian thank Save-K'nor upon finding a rare tome)?

Jim Sanderson, British Columbia

Dear Jim,

Most Harnians believe in the existence of all ten deities although they worship only one. Some fanatics deny the existence of other gods than their own, although this is less common. The practice of worship varies according to the piety of the individual adherent. As is common in the real world, the devotion of worshippers varies. Things are not much different on Harn.

Dear Sirs,

On page 18 of Harndex, under the heading Food, it says "potatoes, onions, carrots, turnips, and other root crops do not exist on Harn". I assume that nobody has travelled far enough to discover them and bring them back. Now then, what is to be seen on the cover of the Tharda module as being sold in the markets of Coranan? Carrots??!!

Graham Dombkins, Australia

Dear Graham,

The items shown on the Tharda cover are either carrots imported at great cost from the Lythian continent and sold as a luxury item in Coranan, or the Harnic carrotfruit, a rare and little known tree fruit that grows in the Hefiosa highlands. [If you buy those explanations we have a first class bridge over the Thard River you might be interested in.]

Dear Sirs,

Weapons break too much in Harnmaster. Although it may be realistic for a short sword to shatter on a round shield, it is not much fun. I have thought of a different system for weapon damage and I enclose a copy below.

When a weapon blocks another weapon, 3d6 are rolled against the weapon with the lower quality. If the total exceeds the quality, the weapon loses one point from its quality. With two weapons of equal quality both weapons are checked. If one of the weapons is enchanted, 3d6 are rolled against the unenchanted weapons quality. If the total exceeds the quality the weapon breaks. Two enchanted weapons are treated as if they both had the same quality. When a weapon reaches one half of its quality, any additional quality point loss will break it.

Bryan J. Sager, Illinois

Dear Bryan,

Your concern about weapon damage is shared by a number of people. We're printing your suggestion as an alternate system for those readers who are dissatisfied with the "official" rule. Ironically, what you sent us is very similar to a system for weapon damage that appeared in one of the playtest versions of Harnmaster. It was removed from the final product because it required players and GMs to keep track of declining weapon quality, and the majority of playtesters found this too burdensome.

Dear Columbia Games,

I am having difficulty deciding how fluently characters should be able to converse with barbarians they encounter. In addition, where the language is a dialect, I would like some idea of the degree of similarity between that dialect and the root language. Are they as similar as British English and American English, or would it be more like Old English compared to "Valley Girl"?

Ron Kanwischer, Arizona

LETTERDEMAIN

Dear Ron,

There is no easy answer to your difficulty. Most Harnic barbarians speak a dialect of Harnic, often with a sampling of words from their original language.

In a society uninfluenced by such "equalizers" of language as electronic media, mobile populace, etc., there is a tendency for regional dialects to appear. A trader from Golotha and a Kaldoric knight would both speak Harnic, but might find understanding each other difficult due to accents, idiom, slang, etc.

In Terran terms, it is easy to point out the diversity of accents and dialects that exist in England or the United States, sometimes within a very compact region. In most cases, the individuals involved will have little difficulty in understanding each other and will merely consider the new dialect "quaint", but there are exceptions. An outpost fisherman from Fogo, Newfoundland might be incapable of understanding the most simple sentences spoken by a Louisiana Cajun.

Handling this in game terms depends on the "style" of roleplaying used. If GMs and players are in the habit of speaking each conversation, the GM can allow the player to speak normally, while using pidgin English to represent the tribal speech. "Come you up trail of wheels from woods of horsefolk?" might be a Tulwyn tribesman's way of asking if the wayfarers have travelled from the east on the Salt Route, passing through the Chelni tribal range. More remote tribes like the Equani or the Kamaki might be harder to understand. In general, a degree of GM discretion is called for.

Dear Sir,

I would like to compliment you on creating the best FRP world ever. Harn, along with Harnmaster, blows every other FRPG away.

I find your combat system lacking in just one area: non-humanoid creatures. All the combat tables deal with humanoids, and no time is spent on other things. For instance, if one used the Injury Table for a Vlasta, which is only 18" tall, it would result in this diminutive creature being able to sustain as much damage as a human, which is hardly believable. What are the combat skills of the Umbathri? Somebody must have forgotten to put them in the Bestiary.

Erik Kjerland, Washington

Harnlore 6

Dear Erik

There is an admitted bias towards humanoids in our combat system, but you seem to be missing something. As noted in the Bestiary, the Vlasta has very poor "armour" and its Endurance is not very high. Also keep in mind that the GM should allow easier head strikes on this creature because of its height as noted in Aiming Modifier (Combat 5). If you manage to hit one of these suckers (a big if) it will almost certainly go down. As to the Umbathri, we omitted combat stats because they never fight; they terrify and then run.

Dear Sirs,

Under the food entry in Harndex you give a breakdown of what the average commoner eats as well as the nobility. You further explain that an average person eats at least two bowls of soup and a bowl of oatmeal a day. However, the prices of oatmeal are in pounds, not in bowls. How many servings in a pound of oatmeal? How many vegetables does one need in order to make a bowl of soup?

Couldn't cookery be considered an automatic skill? Any person can make a fire, slap a side of beef on the flames, and cook it. Whether or not it will be cooked properly or be nutritional is a matter of successful roll against the skill.

If a PC gains a tactical advantage by grappling an opponent and exploits a hold by squeezing and does damage to his opponent, does he gain another tactical advantage? Does the prevailing rule in Harnmaster for only one tactical advantage per engaged combatant still apply, or is it overridden by this type of attack.

Greg Johnston, California

Dear Greg,

The best answer regarding food is to check any reasonably thorough modern cookbook. Recipe measurements haven't changed much in the last several centuries.

Whether cookery, or any other skill, is treated as an automatic, is up to GM discretion. Bear in mind that according to the Harnmaster rules cookery can be opened and developed "by any tenacious individual with a strong stomach". I would allow characters to open cookery the first time they attempt to use it.

In answer to your third question, the one TA per engaged combatant rule applies.

LETTERS CONTINUE PAGE 8

Imagine that you have just returned from the store with the latest Harn module. As a game aid, it is a work of art. You now have one or two monumental problems; you either don't have the time to run a campaign, or there are no players in your area to participate in a fantasy role playing adventure.

As a consequence, you now have two choices; you put your campaign on a shelf until time is available, or you try something new. How about running your Harn campaign by mail? It does not take much time, and there are legions of players out there who would jump at the chance to join.

To start a Harn-by-Mail campaign you require all the basics that you would need if you were running a face to face campaign. You need a well developed plot line, a suitable collection of NPCs to aid or hinder your players, and a willingness to play your campaign over a very extended time period.

Gaming by mail is radically different from gaming face to face. Its major drawback is that "game" time progresses slowly. In a face to face situation several weeks of game time could pass by in the space of a few hours; in PBM, the reverse holds true. This may appear to be an disadvantage, yet it is not. The GM will find that he, or she, will have enough time available to create an extremely detailed situation for the player, with options that are subtle and varied. This is generally not possible in a face to face setting because the flow of time is rapid. A PBM campaign makes up for its lack of speed by the sheer quality and depth that it can achieve.

The success or failure of a Harn PBM campaign rests solely upon the organizational skills of the GM. If players are presented with "silly" situations, and by this I mean routine encounters with gods and dragons on Andasin Avenue in Aleath, they will quickly lose interest in the campaign. Players join PBM campaigns because they believe that they will get an experience of high quality. If a campaign degenerates into a MONTY-HAUL monster, then it will quickly die. A PBM campaign that is not a rewarding experience to a player, is not worth that player's time, and he or she will drop out of it very quickly.

The mechanics of a Harn-by-Mail campaign are very simple, and I will discuss them from the point of view of a GM using Harnmaster rules. (I started my campaign using another set of rules that were based on "experience points". I do not recommend such systems for PBM because character development takes an extremely long time in "real" time, and players can become bored.)

Harnmaster is well suited to PBM gaming because it is a skill based system. Each time a character scores a critical success or failure in the use of a skill, I allow that character to make a development roll to attempt to increase the skill level. With magic, I allow a development roll every time the spell is used. By using this system, character development proceeds at a sensible pace - not too fast, but fast enough to make it worth a player's while.

The method of communication between GM and players is by means of written instruction. The player is started with a character pack, which contains all the information a player needs to conduct the "Pregame". Such information should consist of a family background and history outlining the character's activities until the age of fourteen.

The player should then be given at least four choices of occupation; (i) work in the family trade, (ii) become an apprentice in some randomly generated trade, (iii) join a suitable religious order, or (iv) wander off to find some other type of employment. I generally allow players choosing the fourth option to indicate what they would like their characters to do, and then I base my final decision on what I think is proper for the campaign. In all cases, however, players choosing the fourth option surrender their choice to the GM.

Once a player has indicated his or her choice, the GM replies with a further short history of the character's activities while as an apprentice, plus an account of the character's present situation. The game now begins in earnest and the players can send the GM the turn instructions for their characters.

Instructions form the basis for all actions taken by a character. They take the form of the same type of instructions a player would give

HARN-by-MAIL

to a GM in a face to face campaign, except that they are written. If a player wishes to travel to Coranan, then such an action will be indicated in the turn instructions. Instructions may be as simple or as complex as desired. Ideally a player should plan instructions taking into consideration a large number of possibilities. For example, if a character was instructed to go to a port and take a ship to Golotha, what happens if there are no ships available? What if there are ships, but the port is closed? It speeds play if players indicate as many secondary actions as they think reasonable

The GM's role is to interpret the player's instructions, carry out actions, and inform the player of the results. This should take the form of a short narrative, including conversation, description, and any other literary device the GM can think of. The more involved the GM's response to the players' instructions is, the more willing they will be to continue playing.

By use of the instruction/response method a satisfying Harn campaign can be run through the mail. Instructions can be made to cover long range actions or only the actions or only the actions of a ten second combat round. In both cases it is up to the GM to interpret and apply the players' desires and wishes.

There is one last consideration on the part of the GM, cost and ethics. Naturally, a Harn-by-Mail campaign is going to cost postage, and if a large number of players are involved, stamps will be expensive. Also PBM campaigns involve a lot of photo-copying, and there is a tendency to make the players share the burden. I caution against this practice because unless your campaign is based entirely upon your own rules system, you will unavoidably infringe on somebody's copyright. This is unethical at best, and in most cases illegal. I suggest keeping the number of players small and charging nothing at all.

I hope that this article has provided some helpful hints to GMs wondering what to do with their unused campaigns. Harn-by-Mail can be rewarding with very little effort. If you desire to run a Harn-by-Mail campaign, create a small notice and ask to have it posted in the store where you buy your games. I guarantee a good response within a week or two.

•

LETTERDEMAIN

(Continued)

Dear Columbia Games,

I enjoyed Melderyn, and I have found it, as with all Columbia Games products, excellent. I have a few questions, however. Each kingdom module contains a table of government, listing the salaries of various office holders. On what basis are these salaries paid?

Why are there always four waste pages in the center of each module? I already have a blank copy of the Harn map as well as the full colour sketch. The other pages describing Harn and the product line could be better used.

John Woughter, New York

Dear John,

The salaries are paid monthly. The "waste" pages are in the eye of beholder. While you may have several of the kingdom modules, many have only one or two. Since we want people to have the blank maps and the keys, they must go into virtually every module. The catalogue is intended to let newcomers to Harn know what's available.

•
Dear Columbia Games,

There is a reference in the Harnmaster rules about higher clergy denying entry to Circles of Command to clerics. Why stop there? Given the tendency for younger offspring of the nobility to make a career in the church, there should be room for incompetent clerics; Bishops whose Ritual Skills barely exceed those of a peasant for example. While not the norm, there should be the possibility of these types; the Middle Ages had its share of corrupt idiots. Besides, its great for role-playing; the devout cleric of Larani is denied office by the gambling, wenching Bishop who is the brother of the local Baron, who doesn't care about the church.

Which religion uses the Stealth Invocation described on Religion 10, at what circle and for how many piety points?

Alex Oldenburger, Holland

Dear Alex,

We seem to be fielding a lot of letters on Religion these days. Hopefully this is because Harnmaster does not treat the subject as a simplistic notion of good and evil, and you all find this unusual and refreshing. As to your first comment; it sounds like fun to me, and is certainly within the realm of possibility as long as its not run into the ground. Stealth is an invocation of Naveh, third circle, ten piety points; and Siem, fourth circle, twenty piety points. Add these to the table on Religion 7.

GM NOTE:

This tiny Solori village is located on the eastern edge of the tribal range. (For those of you who own **MELDERYN**, Surint-Alwa is the village located just above the "R" in SOLORA on the tribal range map in the Solori article.)

THE VILLAGE OF SURINT-ALWA

The inhabitants of Surint-Alwa are the survivors of a particularly brutal Laranian attack made in the summer of 718. The tribe was originally about sixteen families, instead of the present five, and its village was located about three miles to the northwest.

The village has a higher than normal ratio of males to females than is common to Solori settlements. This is due primarily to the fact that many of the men were away on an extended hunting expedition when the Laranians attacked. Since then, several men have left the village, usually because of disagreements with the present headman.

The leader of the tribe is Tosech-Alwa, a twenty-four year old warrior. Tosech's father was the former village headman, but was slain in the attack on the village. Tosech's wife and infant daughter were captured and later



murdered, and the young chief is consumed by grief and hatred of the Laranians. He has vowed revenge on the order, and particularly

Sir Selic Orgone, the knight commander of Fosumo, and the leader of the attack who ordered the massacre.

The stress of these events has resulted in Tosech developing hypnophobia and alcoholism. He fears to sleep, for his dreams are haunted by the death of his family, with the result that he tries to drown himself in the crude but potent brews of his people. He is subject to frequent hangovers, and his moods swing from surly in the morning to maudlin and melancholic in the evening.

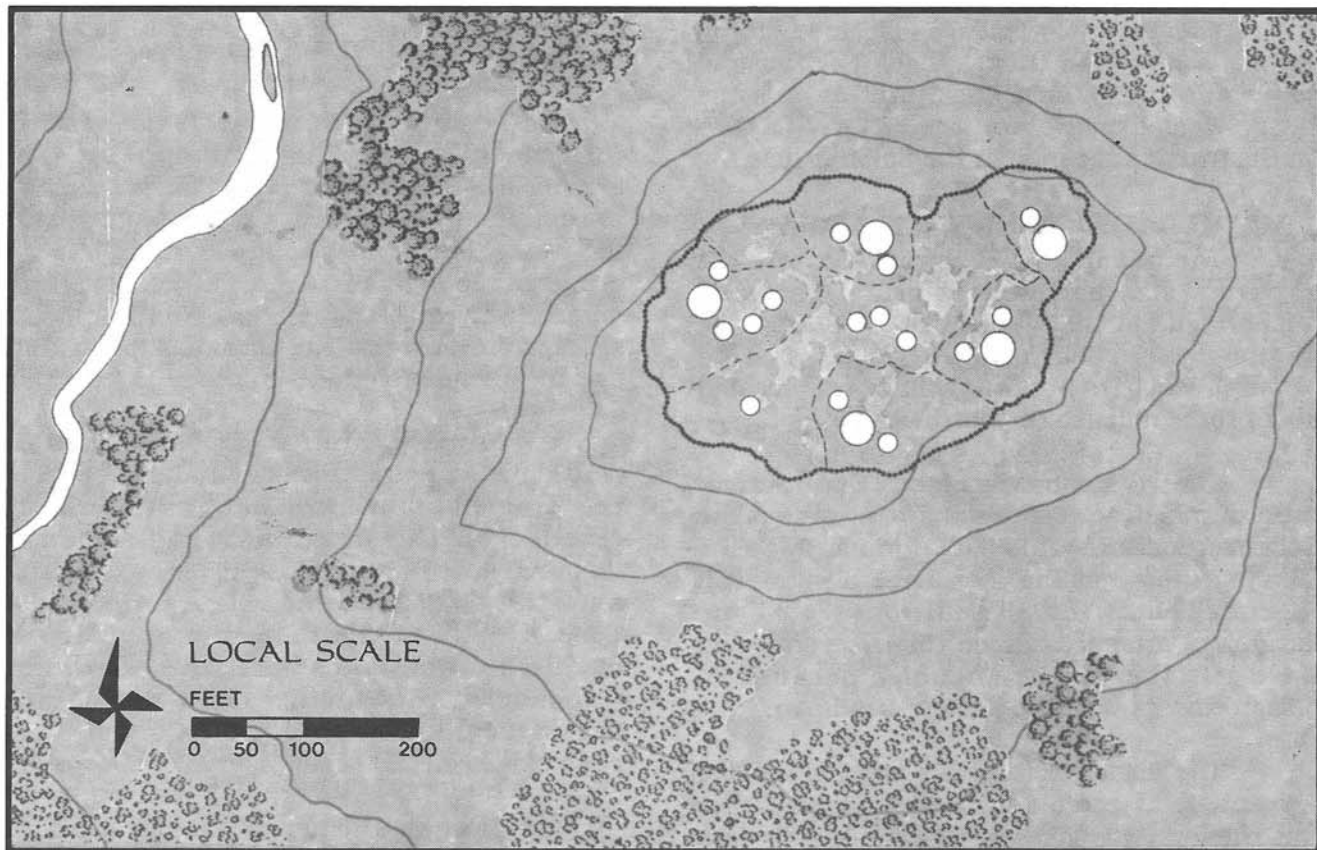
Tosech's ability as a leader is considerable, but somewhat handicapped by the problems outlined above. His lust for revenge on the Laranians has seriously impaired his judgement, and he has resisted any attempt to move the village further west. Tosech has led the men of the village in frequent ambushes on the Laranian "crusaders". His tactics show daring and imagination, and a reward of 100 pence has been placed on his head.

Tosech is attempting to draw attention to himself. After capturing a Laranian footman in a raid last fall, he blinded and mutilated the man and released him near Fosumo after giving him the following message for Sir Selic: "The true hunter casts his own spear". Tosech hopes to goad the knight commander into a rash attack that might allow him his revenge; he can think of no finer pleasure than capturing Sir Selic.

Other captives taken by Tosech have been shown the same mercy that was shown his family. The heads of these unfortunates, together with what remains of their bodies, are often found by patrolling Laranians.

Sir Selic is determined to rid himself of the irritation posed by Tosech. He has recently employed two Hodiri tribesmen as scouts in the hope of finding and exterminating the village of Surint-Alwa. So far, the Hodiri have had no success, but it seems likely that the village will eventually be discovered. If this happens, another massacre is certain, unless Tosech moves the village. However, his stubbornness and fanaticism probably means that he will try to fight it out.

SURINT-ALWA

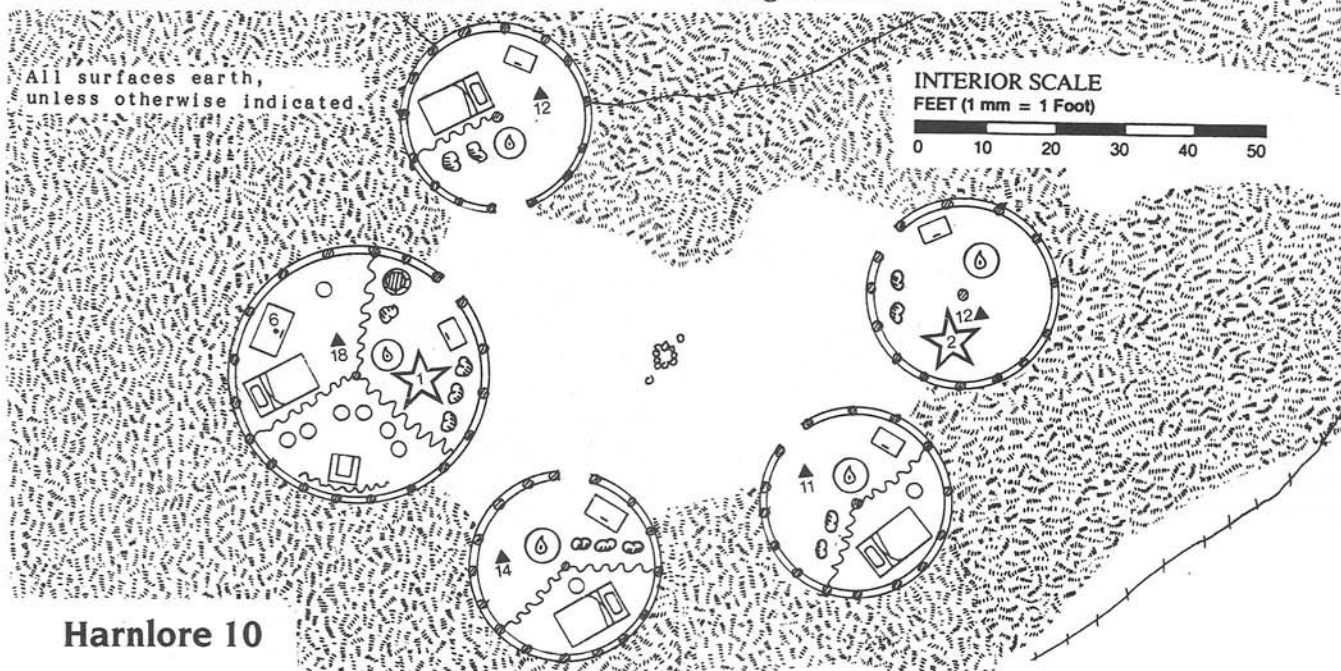


1. HOUSE OF TOSECH-ALWA

Plans of Tosech's complex are given below. The hut indicated by the starred "1" is used by the chief. He holds meetings with other leading males of the tribe in the small council room. This is dominated by an ancient carved wooden chair that has been in the possession of chieftains for generations. Tosech keeps a few other treasures in the locked chest.

The hut marked with a starred "2" serves as the "meditation hut", where Tosech seeks guidance from the tribal gods. Since he seems to be using large quantities of alcohol to facilitate this, any revelations he gains are likely to be of dubious value.

Other huts are occupied by families and single males.





PAPER TIGER

Of late we have received many letters crying the browns about our recent change to white paper. So where were you when I needed you? Over the past three years we have received a steady diet of complaints about the buff paper/brown ink combo, and not **one** letter supporting it. At least one reviewer accused us of using "cheap paper". Since the old format actually cost 10-15% more to print we were really "browned-off" by this criticism and concluded we should change to a more traditional format. Now we find that many of you actually preferred the old combo---too late bucko!

NASTY, BRUTISH, & SHORT

Great title for this column (wish I'd thought of this name) but this is the name Ed has purloined from Hobbes for an upcoming module. The product is a series of adventures which stress political intrigue, assassination, and treachery. Now that we have the kingdom modules finished, we thought you'd like to give your players a chance to experience the kind of adventures that inspired the complex political background of Harn.

The module will contain seven or eight adventures, all set in western Harn, starring the movers and shakers of Rethem, Kanday, and the Thardic Republic. This will be *intriguing stuff*, especially for those fed up with *Dungeon* 346. The planned release date is January/88.

This module, and others to follow, heralds a slight change in emphasis for us. We have always operated on the premise that we do the background and you do the adventures. However, it is becoming apparent to us that many of you don't have the time to develop adventures that take full advantage of the complex skein of events and detailed cultural background of Harn. Hence, over the next twelve months you will be seeing several adventure modules published which bring the economics and politics of Harn to life. Coming soon will be a module called "*100 Bushels of Rye*", a complex single adventure set in Kaldor with lots of detail on manorial economics and village life. We will also continue to give you brief adventure scenarios in *Harnlore*.

PLAYER'S GUIDE

Another product we are looking at is a player's guide to Harn. As conceived, this would be an overview of Harn and its cultures, full of facts relevant to players and the odd lie! We are seeking input as to what YOU would like to see in such a publication.

AUTO-REF

This is Robin's pet project, something he seems to spend more time on than most anything else. *Auto-Ref* is a computer software program designed to save GMs lots of time and streamline some of the drudgery of running a campaign. The program includes the following features, all based on the *Harnmaster* system:

1. Detailed character generation and the ability to store characters on disk for recall when required.
2. Automatically generates encounters and times them for the pre-set environ.
3. Weather generation for all latitudes, altitudes, and climate zones, providing a detailed weather report for the watch.
4. Maintains a written Journal of background events and the comings and goings of players, and stores miscellaneous data for a specific adventure group.
5. Random rolls up to 1000d1000. If you need it, an obscure roll such as 7d39 is easy. The program would also make up to fifty consecutive random skill rolls in less than one second.

The program is written in Bolland International's *Turbo Basic* for the IBM PC (and compatibles). It requires at least 128K ram of memory, Dos 2.0 or better, and will run on a single disk drive, although double disk drives or hard drive are preferred. Robin uses the program (almost exclusively) when game mastering, and now says he can't live without it. I'm not certain yet if we should release this goodie, so if you think the program is just what you need let us know. The price would be somewhere around \$100.

Bye for now.

We often receive requests to give higher level spells for the **HARNMASTER** magic system. The following are six spells of the sixth level of complexity, one for each convocation of the Shek Pvar.

LYAHVI

THE WIND OF DERKILIN (Lyahvi/VI)

This spell causes a directed, howling wind to emanate in an expanding cone from the caster's hand or focus. The wind is not particularly strong and does no physical damage (although it may move light objects) but rather creates a powerful and distinct fear in all who hear and feel it. Victims must make a 3 x Will roll to escape effects if caster achieves **MS**; 1 x Will if **CS** is achieved. **CF** will direct the effect on the caster. The effects of failing a Will roll are left to GM discretion; animals and superstitious people may flee, others may continue to act with a substantial penalty on all skills, etc. Victims will see the caster as the object or being they most fear.

BONUS EFFECTS

ML76+ The caster can generate the wind in a 360 degree circle rather than in one direction.

FATIGUE: 22-index
TIME: 120-ML seconds
RANGE: 100 x index feet
DURATION: 1 x index minutes

PELEAHN

THE DANCE OF KURU-KESHTI (Peleahn/VI)

A spell to summon a salamander or fire elemental. The spell requires a lengthy ritual and a reasonably large fire. On successful completion of the spellcast an elemental will appear in the fire and will act according to the success of the caster. Once the elemental has been successfully summoned, the caster must make a 5 x Will roll to control the entity.

MS: The caster may command the elemental to perform relatively simple tasks

CS will allow for more complex tasks, but bear in mind that elementals are very literal minded and have almost nothing in the way of a creative intelligence. They will perform *exactly* as told.

CF: an elemental will materialize which it is impossible for the caster to control, and which may indulge a rather violent sense of humor at the expense of the caster. Elementals may be controlled for the duration of time listed below. At the end of such time they must be dismissed by the caster or they will no longer be subject to his control and may become extremely dangerous. In any case, elementals may only remain on the material plane as long as they have a supply of of combustible materials. When this is exhausted, they will return to their normal plane of existence.

Theoretically, the powers of an elemental are unlimited within the nature of its element. Some of these powers are listed in the Bestiary section of the **HARNMASTER** rules.

FATIGUE: 22-index
TIME: 15-index hours (minimum 1)
RANGE: n/a
DURATION: **MS** 2 x index minutes
CS index hours

JMORVI

ESTAI'S WORD (Jmorvi/VI)

This spell will cause any tempered metal to shatter. The basic spell will have no effect on untempered metals. The caster must touch the target object, either with his hand or focus. Effects of shattering vary; **MS** will result in one or two clean breaks, **CS** will cause splintering (and the possibility of shrapnel). The spell distills the power of the mage into a single word which is not released until spoken. Enchanted objects are immune to the spell.

BONUS EFFECTS

ML31+ Touch no longer required. Range possible is 2 x index yards.

ML66+ Spell may affect untempered metals.

ML96+ With **CS**, spell affects enchanted metals.

FATIGUE: 22-index
TIME: 120-ML Seconds
RANGE: Touch required (until **ML36+**)
DURATION: Instantaneous

SET A SPELL

FYVRIA

THE PASSAGE OF CHABAR (Fyvria/VI)

This spell allows the caster to transmogrify his physical form to travel through stone, earth or wood, but not forged metal, enchanted objects, or living material. The caster may only use the basic spell on himself. His movement rate through such materials is 25% of normal. Being in the middle of a stone wall when the spell wears off is fatal.

BONUS EFFECTS

ML61+ Spell may be cast on any living being touched by the caster. Persons experiencing the Passage of Chabar for the first time are often unnerved by the experience. Touch must be maintained for the duration of the spell.

ML81+ Spell may be cast on any living being within index yards of the caster, and will remain in force while they are within range.

FATIGUE: 22-index
TIME: 15-index minutes (minimum 1)
RANGE: n/a
DURATION: **MS** 2 x index seconds
CS index minutes.

ODIVSHE

STOROK'S HAND (Odivshe/VI)

Dehydrates water in an item touched by the caster. The effect depends on how long touch is maintained, and the item's size and water content. The basic spell requires continuous touch and dehydrates 1/2 pint of water per spellcasting. The number of spell-castings must be determined in advance, and total fatigue and time to cast worked out. If two or more castings are specified, all but the first may be aborted by the caster, but total fatigue costs will apply. Casters may attempt as many "linked" spells as they have fatigue for, but all must be on the same object, and if any attempt fails, it ends the string.

This spell can be painful or fatal to living organisms. Organisms that survive the spell will eventually recover water, although permanent damage may result. The water dehydrated from the target item will evaporate into the atmosphere. Combining this spell with Kalsor's Trap (see **HARNMASTER**) will allow water to be collected in a bowl.

BONUS EFFECTS

ML76+ increase rate of dehydration to 1 pint of water per casting.

ML91+ touch not required but caster must remain within 2 x index feet for the duration of the casting(s).

FATIGUE: 22-index
TIME: 20-index seconds
RANGE: Touch required
DURATION: As above

SAVORYA

THE ARROW OF UTERN (Savorya/VI)

This inflicts a powerful psionic shock on the victim. With **MS** the victim acquires 3d6 fatigue points and makes an E3 Shock Roll. With **CS** the victim accumulates 5d6 FPs and makes an E5 Shock Roll. The basic spell requires touch.

This spell is similar to the psionic talent called mental bolt. The spell and the talent may be linked by persons who have both; when this is done, the effect is to inflict 4d6 FPs and an E4 Shock Roll with **MS**, and 6d6 FPs and an E6 Shock Roll with **CS**. When linkage is attempted, the EML of both the spell and the talent are checked; failure in one means neither may succeed. Restrictions on linkage are always those least favorable to the caster. For example, if a Savoryan with a spell ML of 36 attempts to link with his talent of 53, touch is still required.

BONUS EFFECTS

ML61+ Touch not required.
Range = index x 5 yards.

ML96+ At a cost of triple normal fatigue, caster may "broadcast". All entities within range will be affected. The caster may not exclude any beings within range. This may not be linked with psionic talent and effects are less than single target attacks; **MS** 2d6 FPs E2 Shock Roll, **CS** 4d6 FPs E4 Shock Roll.

FATIGUE: 22-index
TIME: 20-index seconds
RANGE: Touch, or as above.
DURATION: Instantaneous.

Getting there is half the fun.

Kelestia is the cosmic all. Within Kelestia lies the *Kethrian Family* of worlds which, although they are in different universes, are linked through the ethereal plane(s) by lines of familiarity. It is relatively easy to move between worlds of the Kethrian family by esoteric means such as the *godstones* and the spell *Gate of Kemdal*. Each of these methods has drawbacks which I will explain.

Godstones

Godstones were covered in their own article in EH6. However, there is one change I would like to suggest. It states in the Godstone article that persons with an Aura of 15 or more may bring auraless items through. It is better to make a roll against five times Aura for each such item or group. Hence, anyone has a chance of bringing their sword (Weapons might be useful on the the other side.) This rule change eliminates the certainty for high-aura characters and makes it possible for others to occasionally get inorganic possessions through. One can also envision anti-magical items which would require Critical Success to make it through. All the other godstone rules hold.

Gate of Kemdal

This is one of my favourite spells. It is also a dangerous procedure, especially in the hands of PCs who are irresponsible. Some clarifications are in order:

Do not let a PC casting this spell roll his own dice. The caster will never know how many stops are left on the route although they will *know* when they are home.

The other day someone made nearly thirty stops on over a dozen worlds and p-worlds, visiting such places as the lions' den under the coliseum in Imperial Rome, the Blasted Plain on a p-variant of Yashain before Ilvir moved in, an Earthmaster dome on an airless asteroid, the Gap of Rohan sometime in the second age, Orford castle in Norfolk, Lakeshore Drive in Chicago c.1987, The Shire, free space near Losenor (luckily they were transformed), Mordor (they left there quickly), and a sinking ship on Sherem-Prime. Once they made it to their actual destination (Olokand) on a p-world of Kethira where the flag flying over the castle did not look right (nor

did the castle). A couple of her companions got off the merry-go-round in Faya on Yashain-prime; they say it was out of piety, but I think they were getting seasick.

A small revision: It says in **Harnmaster** that Gate of Kemdal *may* transform lifeforms, and gives the chances. It should be noted, however, that the spell will not dump the caster in an unsurvivable environment, except (possibly) with critical failure.

Gate of Kemdal avoids crowds, and will never materialize people where their appearance will be witnessed, but any number of nasty creatures could wander by within seconds. Gate of Kemdal seems perfect, it is even possible to get inorganic items through. So where's the catch?

Time! I didn't mention this in **Harnmaster** (oops), but using the Gate of Kemdal can take a long time, apart from adventures along the way. It usually seems to users of Kemdal that the transition is instantaneous. The characters do not age, and are unaware of the passage of time. However, there is no free lunch. The little jaunt mentioned above took over four years of objective time. They left in 721 and arrived back in 725, and they wasted as little time as possible.

So, how long does a typical trip last? Several players have been demanding a formula for working this out, some kind of table so they can know what to expect. Forget it. For the caster there is no way to know in advance how long the trip will take. The caster's ML, and the success achieved will have bearing, but sheer luck may be far more important. For a caster whose ML is between thirty and seventy, we could be talking days or months. With a few critical failures thrown in we might be into years... maybe, maybe not.

Megagame Blues

Interworld travel can be a *lot* of fun, especially for the GM. I must admit that a few anti-social PCs have voiced complaints (horror actually) when they found themselves on a magic-weak world (such as Terra in the lions' den) with their ML reduced by 75%. But then players are never satisfied.

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