

TALES OF THE REACHING MOON

The RuneQuest Fanzine

£1.00



Issue #1

Summer 89

ORIGINAL

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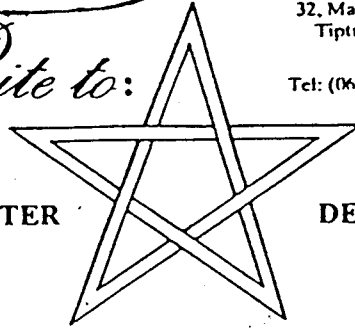
"NOT SO SMILEY NOW, EH
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TALES OF THE REACHING MOON

Kolund crept cautiously across the rubble strewn cavern floor, his eyes staring intently into the darkness ahead. Beyond the great tall pillar, inscribed with rows of obscure sigils and runes, crouched a short, muscular warrior, wearing heavy ringmail armour which clinked and strained as the warrior shifted his balance.

Kolund could see that the man's other possessions were laid next to him on the rocky floor: a bulging pack; a large, rectangular shield bearing the sign of the Red Moon; and a cold, unornamented lunar scimitar. Spread upon the ground, illuminated by the warrior's flickering lamp, was a tattered and yellowing scroll.

Kolund smiled as he lifted his knife, aiming it between the short man's tight shoulders. The warrior had led him a merry chase, but now at last there would be an end to it. It would be Kolund who returned to Dar-Thepps with the lost "Tales of the Reaching Moon" in his possession, and none other.....

Many moons in the planning, the product of an eternity of frantic writing and re-writing, you hold in your hands the first issue of a new RuneQuest fanzine.

A brief explanation. The inspiration for this fanzine comes from the world of Glorantha, Greg Stafford's land of myth and magic. However, we hope it will contain as broad a mixture of material as possible, perhaps not even exclusively for RuneQuest. We also follow Greg Stafford's advice that each referee's Glorantha is his own, to do with as he wishes. As a result, whilst we intend to stick as closely as possible to the 'official' line we anticipate that we will contradict or be contradicted by Chaosium. This is unavoidable. Just take the bits of the articles that you like and ignore the rest.

Unfortunately this zine won't write itself, as we've found to our cost, so we need you the reader, to contribute. Ideas, advice, criticism, art and articles are all welcome. With input from you, the fanzine will survive more than a couple of issues, and even appear more frequently!


Enough of the guff, hope you enjoy the zine.

Brian Duguid
David Hall
Matthew Tudor


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Readers should also note that in publishing a view it does not mean that David Hall either endorses or opposes the view.

EDITORIAL.....	3
Mmmmmmmmmmm.	
NOMAD CLAN.....	4
John Coates and the ins and outs.	
HAYWARD.....	7
Know one's onions.	
THE SPOKEN WORD.....	8
"Prepare the Purple Worm."	
QUACK.....	10
Jim Duck! Avianism at its worst.	
GLORANTHAN ART.....	12
By Pilaeus, our man on the spot.	
UNICORN'S HORN.....	15
"What Yelornans?"	
CAMEOS.....	16
"What Yelornans?"	
HEARTH WARMING SARTARITE CUSTOMS.....	18
"It's a twister, it's a twister!"	
FURNISHING FOR EFFECT.....	18
Troll interior decorators.	
RUMOURS.....	19
With a pinch of salt.	
DAFERGRICKERY.....	20
A tale of everyday folk.	
REVIEW OF 'GLORANTHA'.....	22
"Pete, calm down man, calm down."	
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & CO.....	23
Olla Podrida.	



The **COMPLETE**




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NOMAD CLAN

by John Coates

OVERVIEW

People care for the herd beasts to make their time upon the mortal plane trouble free. When the time comes for the herd beast to join Eiritha, the beasts gladly leave behind their bodies which the nomads find useful as reward for their care. All tribal nomads are lay members of Eiritha by virtue of remaining with the clan and are therefore obligated to care for the herd.

Eiritha taught people how to look after her beasts. She showed how to feed and water them, how to take care of their health and understand their wishes. Waha taught tribesmen how to use weapons to protect the herd and how to butcher them so their spirit passes quickly and painlessly to Eiritha. Legacy to the nomads is the redundant body. People will eat its flesh, drink its milk and blood, wear the skin and use the bone and sinew for tools. The only request the nomads make of a living beast is that they be allowed to ride upon their backs, which Eiritha allows.

In time gone, Eiritha was protected by her husband the Storm Bull. But when Storm Bull faced the greatest Chaos threat and defeated it, he retired to the Storm Hills to bellow his wrath across Prax. Waha assumed the protection of Eiritha's beasts and taught people his skills so that they may fulfil his role. As with their deity the Storm Bull worshippers found themselves called upon less and less by the tribe as the monsters of chaos were driven farther away from the herd. Within the clan their nature was hard to bare, for they were akin to the ways of their god, and they had little to match their powers against. Slowly the practice of the Hunting bands emerged; groups of Storm Bull cultists following their priest in search of chaos. Custom allows for such a band to request, of encountered clans or tribes, favours, shelter and companionship. From a clan point of view it is a small price to pay for the temporary intrusion of these seemingly mindless brutes. Thus the Storm Bullists can re-affirm their kinship with the nomads.

Although the nomads life is to care and protect the herd, because of their human nature they had a need for something else outside the requirements of the herd. The shamans provide this for them. Nomads revere their ancestors who



so often have rearranged the history of Prax. They also have a traditional interest with spirits, who before the coming of the Deceiving cults were their companions in the world of the desert. Nomads have always looked for the spirits when the night sent them to their crowded campfires. The shamans are the nomads' link to their ancestors and the spirits. Theirs' are the spheres of history, reassurance and prophecy.

CLAN HIERARCHY

Day to day decisions are made by the chieftain or Eiritha High Priestess, depending upon whether they involve the protection or the care of the herd. It is nomad custom that decisions regarding children are left to the elders of the tribe. It is believed that they have the experiences to see through the innocence of youth into what may lie beneath. The elders decide when a child is ready to become an adult and they advise on their development long before this. The nurturing of young talent is a serious and difficult business best left to those who can best appreciate the needs of the clan and the abilities of the child. Because they exercise such great wisdom with children, the opinion of an elder is highly valued on any subject by the adults as well.

When serious matters are to be considered eg moving to a new

grazing ground, the punishment of a nomad, journeying to a Nation Gathering, or similar weighty decision, then a Clan Council is called. Here, the chieftain sits with his kahns and priests, the Eiritha hierarchy, the clan elders, the High Shaman and head Storm Bull (if present). they argue the matter at hand and eventually vote upon the outcome. A tied decision must be resolved by the chieftain to the benefit of the clan.

Chieftain: he is socially the most important member of the clan. A male noble and priest of Waha. When a chieftain dies or leaves, then the other priests of his clan are made eligible for the position. The issue is decided by a Clan Council, headed by the Eiritha High Priestess. It is not unknown for the chieftains of the other clans to express a preference of candidates. If the Clan Council cannot reach a decision then they ask assistance from the tribal Kahn who asks Waha about the suitability of each candidate. If more than one is suitable then the Kahn himself, must appoint the new chieftain.

In rare circumstances the clan will not have anyone of priest status to be considered for chieftain, or (incredibly) the candidate(s) are found unsuitable by Waha. Then a temporary chieftain is chosen by the tribal Kahn from among the priests (not chieftains!) of the other clans. as soon as a clan member achieves priesthood and Waha accepts him, then they take the position and the retiring chieftain returns to his own clan with great honour. In such a situation the clan strives actively for one of their members to become a priest and then a chieftain; it is a matter of honour

Eiritha Priestesses: These have absolute authority over decisions concerning the herd, for they intimately know the beasts and their needs. They are closest to Eiritha and are the only ones who can bring her favour and powers to

bear upon the herd and therefore ensure its and the clans, health and prosperity. The High Priestess makes the important decisions eg. to move to new grazing, to shelter the young, to treat disease etc. and her priestesses work according to her wishes. She sees the herd as a whole, whereas her priestesses can attend to the individual needs of the beasts.

Waha Priests: Although the chieftain is leader of the clan, the other clan priests are under the leadership of the tribal kahn in spiritual matters. This means that they can function independently within the clan without conflicting with the chieftain. They will always obey their chieftain on clan matters but with religious concerns they are all equal under the tribal kahn. Nomads choose priests to be their leaders because of their faith in Waha and desire to strengthen their spiritual ties with him. The chieftain frequently finds that the position leaves little opportunity for him to actively pursue his religious desire much beyond the regular services, for the leading of a clan entails many duties. This also means that the other priests can accompany war or raiding parties without denying the clan the power of Waha's magic.

Waha Kahns: These are the highest braves of the clan. With them rests the security and protection of the herd and the tribe. They are responsible for arranging the defence of the herd, organising war or raiding parties, supervising the training of braves or herd beasts or overseeing the production of weapons and armour.

Herd Sisters: Normally their duties are similar to those of the priestesses, that is, caring for the herd. They are considered to have skills ideally suited to the task. However, they are also the only non-braves that the beast-kahns (Waha Runelords) will entrust with weapons in situations affecting the clan, either raiding or defending the herd. The beast-kahns will take into account the skills of the herd Sisters when considering the composition of a war band, and they will always include at least one in such a band, for not only can they be competent warriors but also their skills with the herd beasts are frequently needed.

Elders: Certain tribal positions are only filled by Rune levels. It is usual for those who hold such positions to eventually vacate them to allow younger blood opportunity, and thus ensure the continuation of the clan. In such cases they assume the title 'Elder' as a sign that they have relinquished power for the mutual benefit of all clan members. Their skills and powers are still needed by the clan, Elders are given the

responsibility of supervising the children's development. The children are mindful of the esteemed worth of their quiet watchers and frequently become very attached to them. The Elders also form an advisory body to the chieftain in the form of a council.

Elders are free to leave the clan to follow a Heroquest path and are preferred as emissaries to foreign places, although always with accompanying braves. In the view of the clan the Elders provide a quality of wisdom that is of great value.

RESPONSIBILITY

The herd is the centre of the clan. Although braves may die defending the herd, it is considered that the priestesses are more important, for they can truly care for the herd and know the feelings of the beasts - anyone can pick up a weapon and swing it around. The priestess can go beyond the physical, and are able to communicate the clan's love for the herd on the beasts themselves. Thus will the herd understand the nomad and remain with the clan.

Consequently, the clan views the presence of the priestesses with great import. It is rare for a priestess to wish to leave the clan. Should they desire to they are required to find a replacement of equal competence. They also need the permission of the High priestess. It must be ensured that the herd is equally cared for in their absence. If the High Priestess has need to leave the clan, to Heroquest or visit the Paps, then the clan becomes over-protective of the herd and may pay large tribute to the High Priestess of another clan to assist with the care of their beasts. During the High Priestesses absence, the nomads prefer to eat stored or raided food.

The Waha kahns and Eiritha herd sisters, although given free reign outside the herd, are conscious of not leaving for too long. This is one reason why the nomads have conquered vast tracts of land. Nomad raids are of the short variety, usually with only one aim.

THE CLAN AND THE HERD

The corpse of the herd beast is of much use. Apart from the edible parts there is the hide - used for the distinctive tents and clothing, and the bones and sinews - used for weapons, although most braves of warrior leader status and higher have bronze or iron weapons, looted from defeated enemies. (The same applies to armour, although bone armour is preferred in the heat of Prax.

The nomads set up their camp either on land unsuitable for

grazing or on land already grazed upon. The family orientated clans group their tents around a common campfire which is fuelled by the dried dung of the herd - collected by children or lucky slaves! (Normally slaves are not allowed to approach herd beasts.)

The herd is allowed to graze wherever it wants. They are however, constantly watched and guarded by braves and attendant Eiritha lay members. If the nomads feel that a beast is moving too far away for its own safety, they will respectfully persuade it to return to the main group. At all times the nomads are wary of the beasts welfare.

When it is time for the clan to kill some herd beasts (usually those raided from another clan) then the chosen animals are gathered together away from the main herd. There the Eiritha priestess consults with them and satisfies herself as to their willingness to go. Following this the animals are ritually slaughtered. The men skin the corpse and strip the meat off the carcass. The food which is to be eaten is taken immediately to the camp fires. What remains is removed for curing.

After such a ceremony the choicest cuts, ie heart, kidneys and liver are offered to the chieftain, kahns and priestesses. Afterwards the skins are scraped and greased, the long term food preserved in salt and stored, the bones are turned and sharpened. Lastly the skull is placed upon a pole so that the spirit may know where to find the herd if it decides to return for a while. Note; the brain is burnt so that old memories do not distress the spirit.



BLOODWORTH

Concept^of **bad blood**^o: These individuals have caused the clan great hardship or misfortune. They are dishonoured by the clan and live in a limbo, within the tribe. Other nomads give them a wide berth and they receive no part of the clans beasts. They must fend for themselves until they atone for their action. Serious offences can result in banishment or death.

Concept^of **first blood**^o: The immediate family members of the tribal kahn, parents, spouse, offspring. The position of tribal kahn is accorded with great honour and nomads believe that the kahn's lineage have closer ties with their gods and the herd.

'MILITARY' STATUS

War Leader: The beast-kahns occupy these positions. War-leaders organize the groups under the warrior leaders, deciding which braves go with which group. They organize which groups will guard the herd, who will train and who

will make and repair weapons. Usually a single war-leader is chosen by his peers to be spokesman for all war-leaders and has overall responsibility to the tribal kahn. He decides which war-leaders and warrior-leaders will make up the warbands. This head war-leader is called the War Chief.

Warrior-leader: These are Waha initiates who lead groups of lay members. They are the braves who compose war and raiding parties, for lay members are not deemed capable, but often make up the numbers if the clan cannot spare enough initiates.

Nomad Greeting:

First Nomad: "Hail desert dweller! Hail sand and rider! Hail kahn of the plain!" (dismounts and scoops handful of sand, offering this with a waterskin).

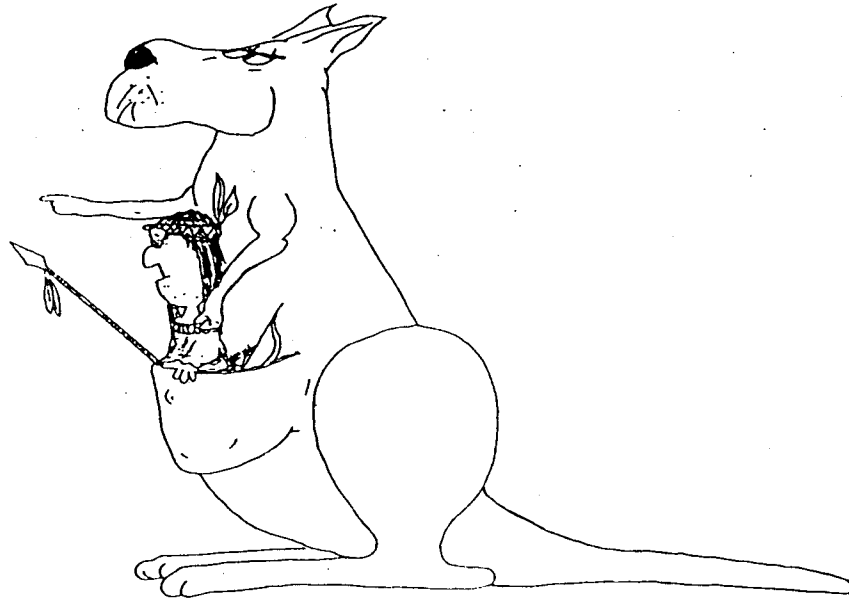
"I give you earth and water that you may feed your tribe and herd. Take all I can give if your need be great."

Second Nomad: (Repeats above)

Both: "We have shared water and earth. Our tribes shall prosper and out herds will be fat and pregnant. Our women shall bear strong children and our brother warriors win many trophies. Our camp fires will sing and women wear desert flowers in their hair. Then I shall raid your tribe and test my bronze against your shield. I shall raze your camp to the sands. I will steal a kiss from your women, and your herd from it's grass. I will leave you bested yet unbroken. For we are barbarian, nomad, and we shall arise. I respect your strength and will hear your words. We are brothers of Prax and its sands are our blood." (They now share bestowed or deed names and hear each others words).

LOST TRIBES OF PRAX

NO. 6



THE KANGAROO TRIBE

HAYWARD

THE PICKLED ONION

Few know the origin of this... thing! Some say it is a Chaos abomination, others that it was made by the legendary Dwarf of Dwarf Run as a joke. Those that are known of in the world can be counted on the fingers of one human hand. What is certain is that they are found in long forgotten caverns and ruins, and that they guard forgotten treasure - or things that are best left forgotten.

CHARACTERISTICS		Average
Strength	1D6+24	27 - 28
Constitution	1D6+33	36 - 37
Size	2D6+24	31
Intelligence	1	1
Power	2D6+6	13
Dexterity	1D6+2	5
Move	6	
Hit Point Avg	40 - 41	

HIT LOCATION TABLE		
First Skin	01-20	12/7
Second Skin	01-20	10/7
Third Skin	01-20	8/7
Fourth Skin	01-20	6/7
Body:		
R. leg	01-04	8/4
L. leg	05-08	8/4
Body/Mouth	09-20	8/8



"OH NO! WE'RE IN A PICKLE"

Weapon	Strike Rank	Attack	Damage
Squirt	6	40%	6 times per round with Acid Pot 6
Splash	1	95%	Roll POWx5 to avoid blinding for 1D6 melee rounds.
Bite	2	80%	1D8 + 2 + 2D6

This creature looks like a giant peeled onion, it bobbles around oozing and squirting a sizzling acidic liquid. It gives off an almost overpowering stench of vinegar (CONx5 rolls needed to avoid vomiting the last meal).

The onion will first of all bobble around in front of entrance it is guarding, it will Squirt acid randomly in the direction of any attackers. To kill it the attackers must cut away each skin. However as soon as the hit points on a skin are exceeded the skin will break away causing acid to Splash out in a radius of 10 meters.

When the fourth skin is cut away a smaller onion on two legs emerges from the cloud of acid. It has a massive mouth with two long rows of teeth. It will jump at a random attacker and attempt to kill him with its Bite, switching to another if successful.

The onion knows no spells and it is immune from fire. It might be killed by exposure to water, or at least the acid might be diluted. But... if one had an alkaline...!!

DH

The Emperor's Spoken Word

The Spoken Word functions as an internal security organization, essentially operating within the political and military spheres of the Lunar Empire. Inspired by the Emperor himself in around 3/17 (1372 ST), the Word's main aim is to protect the very base of Lunar control. To worm out those insurrectionists, progressives and subversives that may undermine the continued existence and development of the Empire, simultaneously converting patriotism, in all its guises, into loyalty and service.

ORIGINS AND STRUCTURE

The precise origins of the Spoken Word are unknown. Documentation insists that it formed from the very breath, ('The Word and The Wish,) of the Emperor and that its ranks were moulded from parts of two existing and distinct bodies, the Imperial Bodyguard, and the Emperor's own stable of messengers and couriers. Initially created to secure and police the Emperor's personal bodyguard, in a period of grim concern, the Spoken Word has since evolved into a semi-self regulating internal 'police' force, with duties and responsibilities far out reaching the Emperor's initial concerns.

Unlike most Lunar Government 'offices', the Spoken Word is relatively free from the strait-jacket of bureaucracy. The reason being that, essentially, the sole responsibility of organising the force is the Emperor's. However, it is often impossible or impractical for Him to oversee that closely. To facilitate the efficient and effective running of the force a skeleton administrative body of 'instigators' was formed. In effect this body acts as an intermediary between the day to day concerns of the organization and the wishes and requirements of the Emperor. The Emperor does, however, reserve the exclusive right to recruit and promote - it is essential that only the most loyal are allowed amongst the ranks. (In practical

terms the instigators select and vet prospective 'candidates' before seeking approval.)

The Spoken Word is therefore split into two main groups: the 'agents' (The Word) and the 'instigators' (The Wish). Both ultimately responsible to the Emperor.

It is important to recognize that the Spoken Word works within and without those departments responsible for provincial security. And also to note that whilst there is a degree of ill feeling towards the Word amongst the various aides to the Overseer of Provincial Security, the relationship with Appius Luxius, is a healthy, if not strictly, inviolable one! ¹

The relationship with Army Intelligence is the closest of all working links. Information is constantly being passed between the two offices, and cooperation is highly valued. It is not unknown for members of Army Intelligence to be Word agents also. Indeed, Dagius Furius, Chief of Intelligence is rumoured to be a Word member of considerable standing.

THE WORD AS CULT

In terms of operation and structure then, the Word appears to be essentially a secular body, it is more akin, in composition, to the army than the state cults. However, because of its origins, because of its divine sanction from the Emperor the Word enjoys some typical cult benefits.

The Word holds the Emperor and specifically His spoken word as their deity. Information and detail of the religious structure and privilege is scant, but it is noted that some members, usually instigators, are in full possession of peculiar and powerful magics. And it is rumoured that those responsible for policing the Bodyguard, although rarely noticed, are similarly possessed

of powers typical of Rune Lord status.

PROMOTION AND REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP

It is interesting to note that it is the quality of experience that most often determines selection. The Emperor insists that recruits are chosen for merit and overall suitability, rather than status or birth as is the case elsewhere in the government. This he believes gives him a stronger basis of trust.

However, only candidates of Lunar parentage are considered and even then a preference for those born and bred within the Lunar Heartland is expressed. This often makes the instigators task of training recruits suitable for work in the provinces more difficult.

Although not exclusively, the majority of candidates come from military background. Soldiers continuously prove their worth and dedication every single day of their service. However, agents are often promoted from other spheres. From civil office, the various ministries, from positions of responsibility within Lunar state cults and from the public sector. On these occasions recruits are typically considered for their ability to perform specialised tasks. Said recruits have previously demonstrated their loyalty to the state via religious conviction or membership of patriot clubs. (There are a few exceptions to this, most notably in the recruitment of prostitutes, security is usually taken out in some other form!)

The Spoken Word is no longer the preserve of men, the Lunars have never been slow in appreciating the value of women in all spheres, especially with regards to spying, where they are considered to be particularly advantaged. Therefore, it is not surprising to learn that women feature promin-

¹ Appius Luxius appears to enjoy much respect from the Emperor (there are those who believe him to be one of His sons). Appius is crucial to the successful and effective deployment of agents in the provinces. Because of his position he is able to pin point areas of concern and worry. He is not a member of the Word, although he has been approached on two separate occasions. His reasons for declining the offer have never been fully explained.

ently in those missions of the Word concerned with infiltration.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND AREAS OF OPERATION

In theory there are no boundaries within which the Spoken Word have to work. Representing the eyes and ears of the Emperor they are free to 'investigate' any area of public or private life within or without the Empire. (State Church is an exception. See below). In effect this can be anything from examining why certain individuals have not been attending temple meetings recently through to undermining government, and/or inciting civil unrest, in the neighbouring free-states.

As stated above, the initial aim of the Spoken Word was to enhance the personal security of the Emperor in exile. Primarily this centred on offering physical protection, working alongside the regular bodyguard, composed of elite members of the Imperial forces. The Emperor believed it prudent to be watched over by two separate and rival bodies. In addition, the Spoken Word are excellently positioned to police and screen the personal guard which may on occasion, be susceptible to heavy bribes. In effect this is still the most prestigious job within the force.

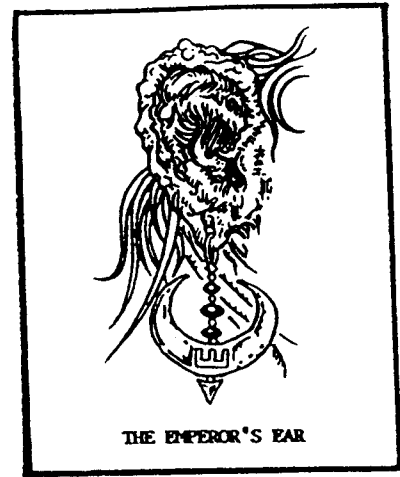
This screening of personnel is extended throughout the military concentrating primarily on provincial officers of long standing. There is perhaps a threat from such career soldiers. They are well trained, they command respect and love from their men and being constantly subject to alien views and opinions, they are perhaps more prone to seditious ways. Whilst realistically there is

little fear of such commanders actually rebelling, (the benefits of such an action could never outweigh the consequent retribution), their behaviour may encourage an inefficient or disabling attitude amongst the rank and file. The Spoken Word are required to keep such officers on their toes. They are regularly examined for strange and contradictory behaviour, ensuring prior warning of any possible weakness in the armed forces.

This vigil is not confined to the military, indeed, perhaps the greatest number of Spoken Word agents are working surreptitiously within the Lunar Government itself, both at home and in the provinces. Attention is especially paid to those administrators of tax and finance (Procurement and Disbursement), whilst taking the utmost care not to falsely accuse any honourable Tax Demons!

The most tedious tasks are those conducted in the public sector. Requiring agents to 'hang around' inns, brothels, meeting places etc. looking out for those of peculiar dispositions. In recent years more agents have been transferred to working in this area.

In practice there are two areas that are libel to cause minor difficulties. A respect for Dagius Furius and the functions of Army Intelligence, often make investigation and infiltration here awkward. Part of the delicacy of this problem derives from the frequent shared membership of the two 'offices'. At times it would mean that Word members were investigating other Word members, and whilst this is not totally unpalatable, it is for the most part felt to be unnecessary. Such



THE EMPEROR'S EAR

is the confidence in the Emperor's Wish.

The second 'problem area' is the State and Provincial Church. Freedom to act is severely curtailed and there is no room for initiative based investigations: the Emperor does not give reign to the Word here. This does not mean that the priesthood or other devotees are free, should they be tempted, to stray - the Word do investigate aspects of the Church, but it is *always* at the specific command of the Emperor.

The Emperor is so protective of the church that any Word member seeking spiritual guidance must gain permission from a priest, before even entering the temple.² This often causes problems for future investigations - if, for some reason, an investigation is ordered, it is often the case that agents have to be brought in from half way across the Empire because local agents are all known to the

² There is an amusing tale that Nassi Nasus, a provincial tax collector, tells that relates to this ruling.

"About five years ago in Ormsgone Valley, Tarsh, a pack of fierce wolves attacked the village I was working in. The wolves were seen in plenty of time and so everyone, including myself, made a dash for the temple, it being the only building in full possession of a door.

Staying in the village at that time was a soldier in the Army, an obnoxious sort with a predilection for spitting through the gaps between his teeth. He'd been granted leave on account of his father dying and was now on his way back to Dragon Pass to rejoin his unit. The soldier was the last one to get to the temple and started to fumble and fidget outside the doors.

As the first wolf entered the village compound the soldier blurted out that he was a Spoken Word agent and that he needed permission from the priest to enter. The priest, a good friend of mine, and a man of delectable wit and countenance, stroked his beard as he considered the request. All this time the Word member danced about like a child waiting for the pot to arrive. Eventually, as the first wolf came in sight the priest declared that he'd considered the options open to him and that in consideration of the way the soldier had behaved the last couple of days, had decided against granting him permission and the doors were quickly shut. Racing to the second level I was just in time to see the agent climb, minus his breeches, into a tree.

It was a peculiar time. The wolves stayed in the village for three days and all that time the agent sat in the tree. We would move onto the roof of the temple and eat our dinners in full view of him. And having learnt that he hated olives threw him nothing but.

Eventually the wolves left and nobody was harmed, but the priest later payed for his wit when the Word intercepted and confiscated a wagon bringing Heartland wine to the village. Wine that the priest had payed for out of his own purse."

priesthood. There is one more privilege that the temple holds over the Word. A priest may ask of a Word agent protection, for himself and/or the temple. An agent must oblige even if it means revealing his station!

SPOKEN WORD 1621 AND AFTER

At a time of great flux it is not surprising to see the Word abroad. Activity is intensified as the Emperor prepares for any and all occasions.

Yet even here corruption, partiality and bought interest eat away at the foundations. Already the Fine House - a fierce conservative

lobby - wins influence over instigators and in turn the investigation moves in a predetermined way. Significantly, Fazzur Wideread, General of the Provincial Army, once irreproachable, finds the 'Finger of Sedition', pointing his way, as the right demand more incisive action in Esrolia. Tatius the Bright, champion of the right and rumoured member of the Word, initially succeeds as Fazzur's replacement.

The grip over the provinces is weakened as suspicion spreads amongst government and army staff. Replacement at low level breeds contempt in officers and allies of higher standing. The systems of

provincial government are altered at a time many would deem imprudent if not disastrous. And all the time the Emperor, fuelled with poisonous lies and fabricat grief, gives rein to instigators' wish in the Word's pursuit of those (false) insurrectionists amongst the office of the Empire.

Created to secure the Emperor in a time of personal crisis, by the end of the decade the Word has come full circle. It is ironic that it's role in future years contributes, unwittingly, to many downfalls.

MT

³ The phrase 'Finger of Sedition' is a metaphor and sometimes, title used to indicate persons and/or institutions that are detrimental to the whole. Lunar's are wont to compare the Empire with the human body. A part of the body that becomes diseased must be cut off before it has chance to spread. The 'Finger of Sedition' is said to 'point your way' when you are thought to be corrupt.

QUACK!

Let's face it. You've been born a duck. With a beak: webbed feet: feathers: you can't even fly! The object of ridicule for all other intelligent races. Fun, huh?

This WAS going to be a serious article about ducks when I first decided to write it. WAS. You know the kind of thing: "Come on people, isn't it about time we got away from stereotypes - the master of Quack-Fu, the one legged duck bandits. Surely there's more to these guys than just ridicule?"

But, I thought, hang on a minute. Look at RuneQuest and Glorantha. Strange place, no? It sometimes looks like a game that isn't really sure what it's trying to do. On the one hand we have the serious bits; the dwarves and trolls, the complex mythology and history. On the other we have trollball, talking baboons and ducks.

The reasons seem pretty obvious. Glorantha as we know it is a compromise between the needs of a coherent, 'realistic', intelligent creative entity, and the needs of a role-playing game. Sure the serious stuff is all very impressive, but we need to have a bit of fun in their too. This is a game after all.

Now, different people view RuneQuest in different ways. Some tend to one extreme or the other. And so I think it's almost impossible to discuss ducks without offending roughly half of our readers. That's why this isn't an article setting out to tell us all about ducks in the same way that Wynn's Footnotes did dragonewts, Different Worlds the dwarfs or Trollpack the trolls.

This article is a question rather than an answer. I want to know what other people think about ducks. Has anyone actually had the guts to use them as an important feature of a campaign, rather than just as occasional NPCs or PCs?

Duck political organization is a surprisingly democratic system. Local districts hold regular pondmeets at which all ducks and drakes attend, regardless of age. Votes are decided by whichever side is able to quack the loudest. Local pondmeets send representatives to the quackmeet held seasonally in the town of Duckpoint, and the quackmeet is traditionally entitled to be represented on the highest councils of the Kingdom of Sartar.



I think the Gloranthan duck would probably be ridiculed by their human neighbours. They're short, weak, silly looking: the kind of people who spend their lives being kicked, bullied, spat upon and cursed. They live in ghetto communities where they retain their own culture, nurture their particular skills, and avoid the intolerance of others. From that basic outline you could build up any amount of characterisation for this poor, ostrichized race.

Fair enough, and anyone who knows Glorantha reasonably well is easily capable of working out for themselves how the ducks fit into the cultures of that world. Perhaps someone might be interested in doing so for a future issue of "Tales..."? But while it's all perfectly interesting, it leaves all those who just play RuneQuest for a bit of fun out in the cold.

BD



Ducks do not like the word 'cheerio' because it sounds too much like 'cherry sauce'. As in the phrase, 'the only good duck is a dead duck, served with cherry sauce.'

In Pelorian culinary circles, Duckpoint is known as the 'a l'orangefree state'.

THE DUCKGLIDER: Although unable to fly, the ducks made use of special hang-gliders made from mats of interwoven pond plants. A few of these are launched from catapults or rocket launchers, and they allow trained duck commandos to drop bombs upon enemy encampments. During the Sartarite wars, this tactic was used extensively by the notorious rebel leader Blackfeather.

QUIRK!

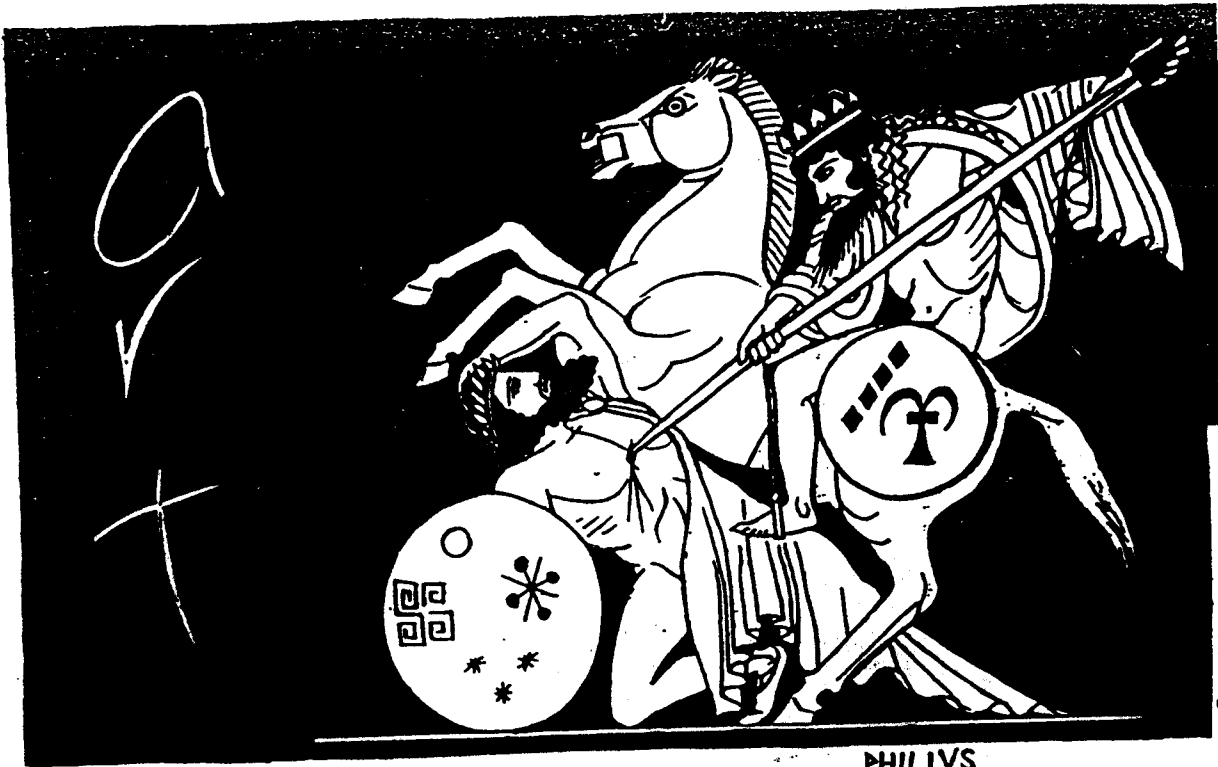
I can't resist sticking my oar in. I disagree in part with Brian. I don't think ducks are included to satisfy the needs of a role-playing game - to satisfy the needs of something else maybe, but not a role-playing game. Similarly perhaps it is too simplistic to say that they are included because we need to have a bit of fun, although no doubt for many they are the sole providers of just that. And I'd say that **DESPITE** ducks this is still a game.

To understand why ducks have been included in RuneQuest, I think we might do well to take a brief look at the designer(s) and the context of the game. It would appear that ducks are representative of a certain penchant the American market has for cuddly little toys, cutey little dogs, impish and squeaky voiced children - I think this is most apparent in many of their TV series, particularly the cartoons - from He-Man to (sadly now) Scooby-Doo - but also in some of the 'humorous' sitcoms, (a 'sophisticated' example might be Different Strokes).

I presume this obsession with 'cutey things' stems from the need, middle class America has, to recognize and cherish innocence. It appears to me that this trend is not too recent a phenomena as to have had no influence on Greg Stafford et al. But whether the inclusion of ducks then, was (is) a shrewd business decision aimed at adding extra appeal to that part of the market brought up in the shadow of the Muppets, or whether it was a result of penetrative socialization, or whether it was, perhaps, a conscious attempt at being humorous - misguided or not, I could not say, although I do know where I'd bet my bottom dollar.

Because ducks adhere to this 'tradition' I don't think it is fair to lump them with talking baboons, trollball, mer-men and the Crimson Bat. With the exception of the Crimson Bat, these are, in various guises, bread and butter fantasy, fillers, embellishments call them what you will. They don't really come from the same stable as ducks. I don't know if ducks deserve or demand to be viewed with such scrutiny - surely not in game terms terms at least - but as an exercise in sociology with perhaps particular reference to the power elite, they are good for at least half an hour.

MT



"The Death of Salmag"

PHILIVS

May the light of the Red Moon and the purity of knowledge bless this scroll and lend it their divine protectance.

I am Pilaeus of Raikan, High Historian of the Arts, of the temple to Irrippi Ontor in Glamour. I speak to you concerning the various art of our continent of Genertela, and especially concerning the art of those not Illumined by the light of the Reaching Moon, and those not of the race of Man.

What we know as art in the lands of Peloria includes all works of musical, visual or intellectual beauty created by Man, or by other sapient creatures. Thus do we refer to painting, sculpture, music dance and poetry, for these are truly the five most artistic disciplines. We find delight in the craftsmanship inherent in the masterpieces created by such artistic geniuses as Laro, Emaelus Phrygistes and the sculptor Heraditi of Panal.

However, it must truly be said that those peoples of other lands might perhaps appreciate Laro far less than we do. And certainly nonhuman races would find his great masterpieces totally incomprehensible, perhaps even repellent, much as we find little to stimulate our emotions in their strange creations.

Nonetheless, there exists an artistic soul in all these races (possibly excepting the cold dwarfs, the offspring of the Machine God) which is readily apparent to the intelligent observer. There exist common elements even in art as disparate

as the primitive troll cave paintings and the abstract sculptures popular in Glamour and its environs. It is clear that it is the commonality of the essence of Man that results in these connecting elements, and that where Runic affinity is present, we naturally feel more attracted to a particular type of artistry.

However, the all-encompassing nature of Art is for the theologians and philosophers to speculate upon. Pilaeus of Raikan is a Historian, and it is with more worldly facts that I wish to concern my essay.

Firstly, the art of the race of Man himself.

It is perhaps unsurprising that of all the races in Glorantha, our own shows evidence of the greatest artistic diversity and variety, and since mankind is unencumbered by the straitjacket divine heritages possessed by such as the Aldryami, trolls or beastmen. We have been free to extend our imaginations in all directions, not just those vouchsafed us by our ancestors from before time.

Visual art, in whatever form, is common throughout the lands of Genertela, regardless of culture. Paintings, carvings, embroidery, ornamentation and sculpture provide a dominant media through which to represent our memories and imaginings. They are common to us all, but is in how they differ that the interest lies.

Painting is composed of two elements - that which it depicts, and the means of depiction - as for any visual art. Different lands paint with differently

constituted inks and pigments, with different types of sticks, brushes and spatas, and in different styles, each yielding an entirely different result. In addition, not all lands paint predominantly on ceramics, as we do, but others use paper, canvas, wood bronze glass or other materials to provide a base for their work.

Our own art consists mostly of painting upon ceramic tablets and other clayware, although very occasionally also glass, by use of paints and inks made mostly from vegetable substances, applied by brush to create elegant and refined contrasting areas of colour and linework.

The paintings of the Malkioni peoples are more often upon canvas and paper, and utilize a variety of tools to apply their thick oily pigments. The style also differs, with less use of lineation in favour of a veritable cascade of colours. Their figure are often distorted and all rather similar to each other, perhaps a sign of the dull and pedantic Malkioni character. There also appears to be less use of runic and literal inscriptions to complement the images.

The minor countries of the south, Sartar, the Holy Country and their neighbours, provide a varied and eclectic mixture of painting, a fascinating area for further study, which we as scholars might hope could be facilitated by their new found friendship with the Empire, and the influx of our settlers into their midst. Signs are that these people welcome the hand of friendship we have extended, and I can hope that the

Red Emperor's generosity will be of great benefit to scholars from both our country and their own.

The people of the Holy Country are said to paint predominantly upon stone, both separate tablets and also the walls, floors and ceilings of their buildings. The style is often oddly similar to that of the malkioni, but is used often to depict abstract images and patterns as well as more representational topics. It is also worth noting that the practice, common both here and westwards along their coast, of painting their own bodies with elaborate designs, using special inks and pigments. Unlike the savage and uncouth beastmen tribes, they limit this to their faces and arms, and do not cover their nudity with grotesquery.

The hill tribes of Sartar, deprived of good material resources, paint upon any item they feel suitable, including their buildings, furnishings, tools and implements. The style is virtually barbaric and never achieves any level of sophistication, despite their use of many different types of brush. This applies also to the art of similar lands such as Balazar and also the other hill tribes upon the borders of Peloria. All create art of much raw power but little sensitivity or refinement.

Very little painting has come to us from the east, but what has, has been painted upon glass and bronze using peculiar inks derived from some unknown animals. The images are highly stylised and distorted, featuring strange linework, and a variety of images that simply do not appeal to the educated Lunar eye. There is a visible tension between complexity and simplicity present, with many representational pieces reduced only to symbols, and many (apparently) abstract works ripe with intricate detail.

The northernmost tribes of Glorántha use painting rarely, although few scholars would care to define their use of the medium as art.

It is possible to consider carving in a similar way, although the medium's innate nature means that less variety of style is possible. Nonetheless, a fascinat

-ing array of different types of carving are to be found.

We in the Lunar Empire use little carving, except to decorate objects or in the form of engraving upon ceramics or metal. That which is done however, is performed to a high standard indeed, with intricate but elegant lines used to depict places and scenes. engraving is undergoing rapid development at this time, and it may be hoped that the future will see still greater artistry lavished upon the medium.

In contrast, the carvings of other lands, particularly those revering some sort of Earth goddess, show a far greater awareness of heritage and historical development. Those of Kethaela in particular have a much more important place in their region's artistic history than might be expected. Carvings on wood and stone are everywhere, walls decorated with beautiful bas-reliefs, objects ornamented with simple yet attractive motifs. The wall-carvings are often epic in scope, depicting various scenes from human life, with accurate and pleasant depictions of human figures. The temples of the Holy Country are particularly rich in such art, but it is common along much of the southern coast. The inland countries, such as the Grazelands, tend to favour wooden carvings in general.

The carvings of the Malkioni are similar in content to their paintings, they are usually painted in the typical Malkioni style in an attempt to enhance their appearance. Most Lunar art scholars view this material as tawdry and uncreative, and as a result it is rarely accorded a mention in the many so-called "art histories".

The lands of the far east, Kralorela, appear to have little interest in carving (though much in engraving metal). They do however, create many interesting scenes by deforming thin sheets of highly ductile metals to create a sort of relief image viewable from either side. Those few examples I myself possess are without any doubt utterly beautiful, displaying the same Kralorelan character as to do their glass and metal paintings.

Related to carving are the arts of sculpture and ornamentation. Representational sculpture is highly popular in our lands, using a variety of stones and styles. Elegant busts are common as rich men's delights, and I feel that it must be said that these busts can no longer be considered art. A work of art is a unique object infused with the creative magic of the artist, not just the latest in a procession of dull fripperies. Only sculpture such as Earynus and Sephistocele Mude are keeping the art alive today through their abstract works.

Sculpture is also common in the south and southwest of Genertela, amongst the followers of Malkion and the Pharaoh. Like other Malkioni carvings their sculptures, occasionally showing good workmanship, are debased by gaudy painting, a fault thankfully not shared by the Esrolians, who have created a few wonderful tableaux of fine figures. The Malkioni also make many statuettes and figurines, something which is strangely not duplicated elsewhere in Genertela, except to create religious idols. I am sure that were our Lunar sculptors to take up the practice the results would be well worth seeing.

Ornamentation I consider separate from carving and sculpture, for I feel the decoration of everyday items to be an art of special significance, even if certain of my 'learned' colleagues might disagree. For is it not in this way that art enters the home of every man, not just the wealthy or the highly-ranked?

The people of Ralios, Seshmela, Peloria and Kethaela are remarkably similar in their ornamentation. Items are decorated both for artistic and religious reasons, particularly tableware and similar items. Decorative ornamentation is everywhere: jewellery is commonplace. Yet it is saddening that some earnest scholars ignore its presence, and that I feel forced to rectify the situation myself. The place for such a lengthy dissertation is not here however.

It should be noted that the ornamentation of Kralorela, while similar in aim to our own, differs markedly in execution. Jewellery includes intricate shapes made of



Detail from "Anchoritenus and the Grand Flagellation"

fine wire, many beads, and thin scales of metal, carefully polished and engraved. The use of such materials, as well as glass and even stranger substances, gives the art a wholly alien air, intriguing yet somehow distant and cold.

Embroidery is another much-neglected visual art, except again in Kralorela, where clothing, curtains, sheets, all textiles receive much care and attention, with elegant patterns and trim. In our own lands, and the west, clothing is embroidered, but not for very artistic reasons. All lands however, except the more barbaric regions, share use of tapestry as an apparent substitute for painting. This art, neglected in central Genertela is much used in Seshnela, albeit somewhat limited in its results, owing to the small range of effects and textures possible. The Malkioni tapestry includes some of the better art to come out of the southwest, with some pieces up to thirty pela [about 100m²] in area, yet still full of detail.....

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

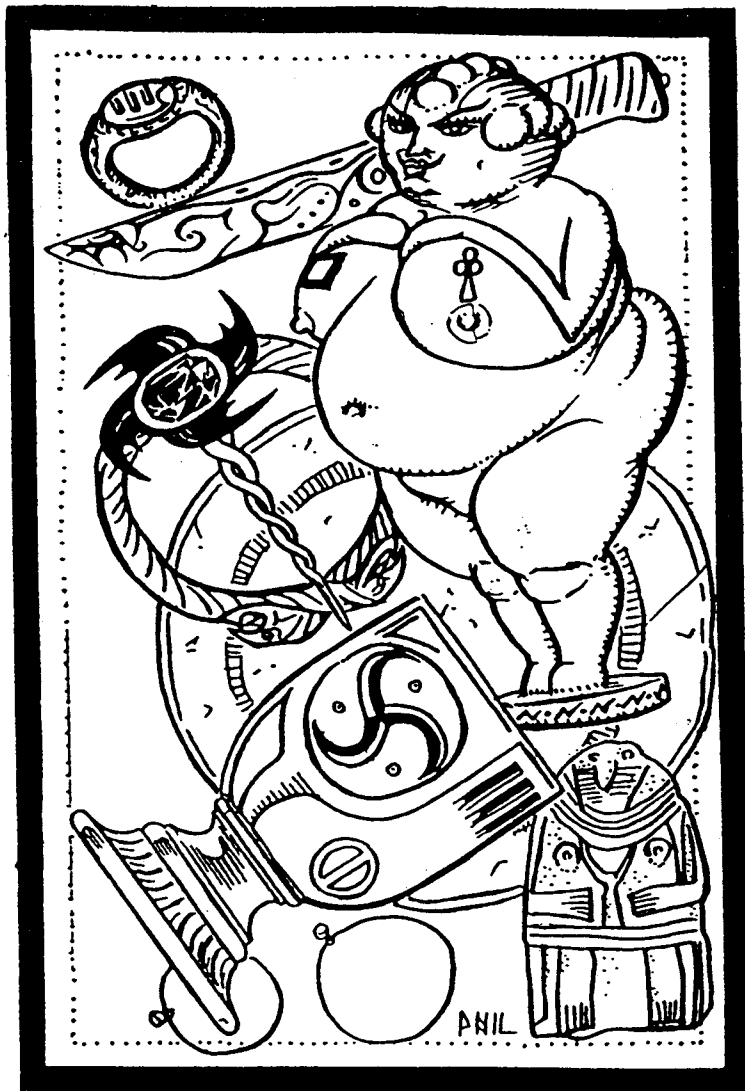
Although the essay bears the name of Pilaeus of Raikan, it is unlikely that he figured in the completed writing. More probably it was composed by one of Pilaeus' understudies, possibly Methodius Kasuesser, whereabouts now unknown.

Evidence for this is manifold. Above all Pilaeus of Raikan is thought to have been one of the few casualties of the Starbrow rebellion of 1613. It is known for certain that Pilaeus left for Dragon Pass in early 1612, opting for self exile after charges of 'inciting disrest' were brought against him. With the aid of the Divine, the scroll can be dated to 1616 and no earlier!

It is understood, however, that prior to his exile, Pilaeus of Raikan had intended a work of epic proportion, detailing the development of art in the continent of Genertela. It is likely therefore, that the composer drew most, if not all, of his material from the notes of Pilaeus' which escaped confiscation in the Lunar purges of 1612.

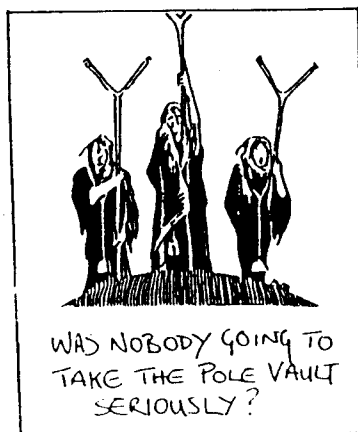
There is little disagreement as to the similarities of certain theories detailed in this essay, and those expressed in Pilaeus' surviving works. And it is now considered opinion, that whilst the style is alien, the intent is too similar to be dismissed as being unrelated.

As to why the essay was written, one may speculate. As an authoritative discussion of art, it falters in many areas. The essay suffers gross oversights, too numerous to detail at this



junction. However, the obviously conscious omission of the temples of the Red Goddess, mention of which is encouraged in all sanctioned Lunar works, seems to indicate the essay's real intentions to be political. As such it is excused any criticism of incompleteness and is testament to the virtues of that section of the Pelorian people opposed to the subjugating, expansionist policies of the Lunar Empire.

BD



UNICORNS HORN - A Unique Horn?

DESCRIPTION

Appears to be a long tapering horn.

CULTS

ENEMY - Yelorna; Unicorn Tribe
HOSTILE - Yelmalio; Hykim & Mikyh
ASSOCIATED - Llankor Mhy

KNOWLEDGE

Automatic; Few

HISTORY

The powers of the Unicorns horn have been known since before Time (See *RuneQuest Companion*). However the process of preserving these powers after a Unicorn's death was only discovered as recently as the Second Age. This was by a certain Johnas Surescroll, during research into ancient Praxian tribal customs and taboo's. Sadly Johnas was not around long enough to profit from his discovery, soon after his body was found gored and mutilated.

PROCEDURE

First find and kill a Unicorn. Just before it dies cut away its horn, cast Healing 2 on the base and sacrifice one point of permanent Power.

Note: The Unicorn must be killed violently as no Unicorn has yet died a natural death since Time. This is a major cause of the violent hostility to this practise by Yelornans and Unicorn riders.

POWERS

Half of the Power of the dead Unicorn is now available in the horn for healing as per the Healing spell. This ability is reusable but the power for each point of Healing is regained at half the normal rate.

The Power may also be used to heal characteristic points lost by poison or disease on a one-for-one basis. Power used for this purpose is permanently lost from the horn.

VALUE

10,000 Lunars or higher. Yelornans and Unicorn riders would never buy one and would probably take it by force. They believe the Unicorn's soul is trapped within the horn and must receive the ritual burial that custom dictates.

DH

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CAMEOS

and by cameos we mean...

THE WAR OF JARRIC'S EAR

Adari is an ancient city lucratively placed between Shadows Dance, Sartar and Prax. As such it has not escaped Lunar attentions, three times since 1610 Lunar troops have been dispatched from Pavis to conquer the city and on all three occasions they have been persuaded to return by large payments of tribute. The effect on Adari has been to sap the wealth of the city as well as confidence in its ruling council.

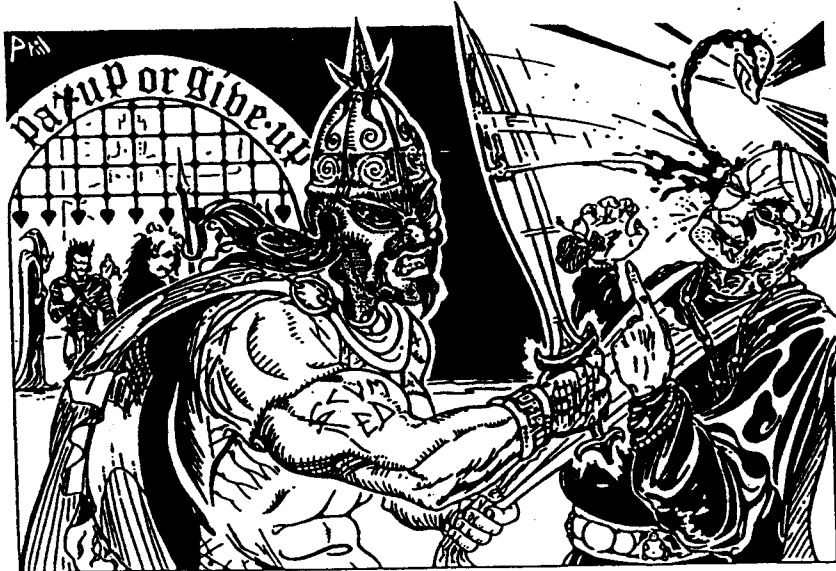
Recently a Lunar Trade mission has been set up in Adari to further Lunar trade and interests. It has proved rather unpopular and is accused by some of secretly fomenting riots and sedition.

The Plot

The players are approached in Pavis by an Etyries merchant. He wishes to negotiate with them to take on a contract to guard the Lunar Trade mission in Adari for one season, renewable if they prove competent. He will offer up to 25 lunars per day for initiates and 15 lunars for others, with all food and boarding free and first pick of any loot. The contract is to commence on reporting to the Warden of the mission, an Antelope lancer officer. If asked why he chose the players he explains that Lunar troops would be too conspicuous and liable to invite attack.

On arrival in Adari the players view an altercation between the gate commander and an Etyries priest who is trying to leave (events happen too fast for the players to intervene). The priest seems to be complaining about the level of toll he is having to pay and the argument gets very heated (as a result of the financial difficulties the city council has sub-contracted the collection of tolls and operation of the gates to the local commanders who set an economic rate and take a cut). The priest says something offensive at which the gate commander draws his sword and attacks the priest slicing off his ear! Before any further damage can be done two Companions of Adari arrive and break up the fight. The gate commander is hustled away and the priest healed, apologised to and escorted from the city. He looks none too pleased!

Note: The Companions are a paramilitary force made up of initiates of the cult of Adari. They report directly to the City



Council. Their functions are to police the city and in time of war supervise its defenses. Their commander is the "Champion of Adari". They number around fifty, far fewer than in the past.

When the players report to the Warden they are shown around the Trade Mission and their duties are assigned. The local mercenaries they replace are then released from their contracts. For the next couple of days the players settle in and can visit the sites of Adari including the notorious "Ruptured Skunk" Inn.

The evening of the second day after their arrival news is received that the Lunars have sent a force of troops to Adari to "punish the barbaric mutilators of the innocent Etyries priest Jarric Bosskey".

The city militia are called out and chaos ensues. Anti-lunar agitators incite the population and mobs hunt down any Lunars and their sympathisers outside the Trade Mission. Where possible the Companions try and enforce order and rescue the mobs quarry, but rarely with success. The City Council prevaricates, pontificates and gathers money for tribute.

Outside the Trade mission the mob gathers shouting and waving torches, they launch one ill-conceived attack and then begin to build barriers and battering rams. The Storm Bull temple takes over

command and their berserkers taunt the defenders.

Inside the Mission the situation is desperate, refugees are packed in and few of them can bear arms. They may hold off one attack but soon the defenders small numbers will be whittled down. The Warden calls the players together and says that they have one chance, Lunar troops must enter the city before the mission falls, then the Council will be forced to surrender. At present only the Antelope Lancers are outside (the infantry won't arrive until morning) and they have not got the men or the equipment to assault the walls. Therefore a gate must be opened for them. The players are the best men he can spare for this. They can get out via the drains, before he floods and blocks them. He will also send along his servant to signal to the Lancers pickets.

This will no doubt create a dilemma for the players, they would probably much rather be among the besiegers attacking the mission! They could use the opportunity to go over to the mob, even lead them in through the drains! However the problem remains that if the Mission falls all inside will be massacred. The Lunars outside the city will then be honour bound to take Adari by storm, leading to an even greater massacre.

If they follow the Wardens plan then they must take a gatehouse.

In this they will have surprise. Then the servant will give the signal and 300 Antelope lancers will ride in, secure the gate and raid into the city towards the Mission. By morning the city will have surrendered and the Mission will be saved.

AFTERMATH

When the Lunars take the city they will restore order, arrest ringleaders and place on the council their own sympathisers. They then negotiate with the Council a yearly payment of tribute and the provision of facilities for visiting cavalry patrols. They replace the mercenaries at the Mission with one hundred men of Sir Holborn's Axe Brothers and then pull all their troops back to Pavis leaving the council in control.

The players are dismissed with a months pay and any other rewards the referee desires. Alternatively if the players joined the mob then they must survive the storming of Adari and evade capture by vengeful Lunars. They can never return to a Lunar Pavis. Finally, they might ask themselves if this was a set-up from the very start.

DH

Meanwhile...

BOLDGATE

Daring adventurers required for a job involving great risk and reward! They must be relatively new to Boldome, not obvious Lunar sympathisers, and not averse to breaking the law. They must also have sufficient reputation that they would actually be contracted for such a job. Of course, the employer will not tell them that these are the qualities he was looking for.

The contact calls herself Padre Vedhure. The job is a simple one - breaking into a secure, well guarded residence and stealing a small, ornamental chest, to be returned to Padra. It must also be done tonight. (The characters should have at least the afternoon to case the joint). Reward is full looters' rights plus 150 pennies (adjust according to campaign). If pushed Padra will say only that the chest contains documents of importance to her employer, who she will probably hint, is one of the dispossessed tribal clan lords of Sartar.

The papers are in fact old Lankhor Mhy temple records that went missing when Irrippi Ontor usurped the Temple, of Knowledge. They detail much of what happened when Sartar was invaded, including information as to what became of certain survivors.

Padra, real name Phyneia Hydaraeus, is a Lunar agitator. She wants the papers, and also wants to stir up trouble between Sartarite factions. She has planted enough rumours recently to make it plausible that the theft is the act of a rival clan lord. The house belongs to Dresan Pink-eye, a friend of the exiled than Maharvis of the Iron Thigh.

The house is well-guarded and locked. Although at some points the roof may be leapt onto from neighbouring buildings, this would be very noisy. Placing a ladder across the gap would be the smartest means of entry.

The players should be encouraged to plan their entry carefully, and to minimise the violence involved. The authorities view murder with rather more severity than they view burglary. The characters will also need to search the house to find the chest. The number of guard should be such that in a straight fight they would defeat the adventurers. The secret of success is thus to take out the guards one-by-one.

This plot could lead to any number of events. If the players fail and are captured it will almost certainly be believed that they were employed by a rival thane. They would be released, or perhaps even re-employed by Dresan. If they escaped, Dresan would certainly hunt them down instead.

If they succeed, the grapevine would come alive with rumours of the split between the clan lords. It will eventually come to pass that somebody realises that these are only rumours, and not all the truth, in which case the adventurers and/or Dresan might like to track down 'Padra', to uncover her true employer.

Whatever happens, the characters should exploit the opportunity to become familiar with the city and to make potentially valuable contacts with some of the factions that exist therein.

BD



Hearth warming

The people of the Sartarite hill clans live for the most part in small villages, composed of small buildings generally of dry stone construction, roofed with a strong mat of timber and turf. Each new house is built with care, and to last. They are projects of special reverence, and their construction is surrounded with ritual prayers and the seeking of propitious omens. The door lintel is carved with the clan name and family name, and is rarely replaced, as homes rarely change hands.

The hearthstone is also often carved with family tales or with religious stories. Sometimes it acts as a storeplace for other family

possessions of sentimental rather than material value, including often the birthstones given to each child upon his hilltop baptism amidst the winds.

It is customary never to close all the openings in such a house, out of respect for the wind spirits. If the door is left wide open it is also a sign that all are welcome to come within, although if it is but ajar then only friends are expected to enter. As well as allowing free passage of the winds and of visitors, most also hope that this practice may one day lead to the fortunate omen of being visited by a strange cat, an event which indicates great divine favour and

blessing. No one would interfere with such a beast, and regardless of how much a nuisance it may be, they are always treated reverently.

Respect for the winds permeates Sartarite life. Every village has its own vane, whether it be a carved ornate pointer or just a bundle of feathers tied to a stick. The direction of the wind is important to several religious ceremonies, and is often taken as ominous. When villagers desire to know a direction eg. for safe travel, it is usual to "see which way the wind blows".

BD

FURNISHING FOR EFFECT

Chragn moved slowly through the chamber. His darksenses grew inflamed, deciphering the odours and sounds which buffeted him. To his left was the smell of Grimwort root, made innocuous by the pulsing of a dancemoth performing its ritual suicide flight. He imagined the moth impaling itself on the spiked Grimwort, not knowing that it would never enjoy mating before its ultimate dive, because the poison on the thorn would not allow it time. Oh, the irony!

He spoke, "It is good Karnag."

To his right was the stink of Aldryami. He moved closer only to meet the fall of a mace passing a hands length from his nose. A waft of burnt wood tingled his senses and then he chuckled. He addressed the air about him. "They don't always fall after the first blow, Karnag. But then you're an artist and don't understand the intimacies of war!"

From behind came a recriminating grunt.

"What next? Mostali blood and an axe? Humans with iron-cursed swords? All Chragn could smell was trollkin. Slavery...? More steps, more trollkin. It smelled as if the room was full of trollkin bratlings. What would he hear? He could hear nothing now so he quickened his pace. Maybe the Trollkin meant food? Still no sound, so Chragn moved to a jog. This new cavern was said to be large so the origin of this pastiche must be at one end. Then his legs buckled beneath him and Chragn fell to the ground.

After a few dazed seconds he jumped up and felt behind him. The stone was warm and he smelled limestone. A loving couch, the limestone would eventually mould itself to the shape of its owners if their love was long lasting and their sweat plentiful. Chragn laughed. The trollkin weren't

there as food or slaves but as offspring. The artist had beaten him.

Slowly he arose and went to where Karnag stood. His senses were fully pleased so he gave him more than the full bag of bolgs he had promised. On the way out he spoke into the darkness, "What inspires you Karnag, to such skill and beauty?"

"The knowledge that only uz can fully appreciate my art. To know that your work will never be owned or enjoyed by one incapable of loving it, is the highest reward for the pain of creation....When will you occupy the chamber?"

Chragn laughed. "You decorators are all the same. Once the jobs done all you're worried about is getting paid!"

John Coates

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EARTHQUAKE, STORM, FAMINE OR FLOOD

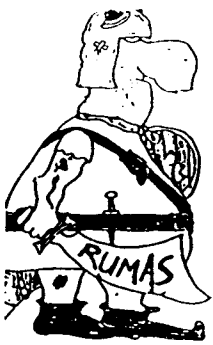
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HOME
INSURANCE**

ESTIMATES WITH A SMILE

BRANCHES ALL OVER PELORIA



RUMOURS



RUMOUR INDICATORS

- T - This indicates that the rumour is true.
- F - This indicates that the rumour is false.
- T/F - This indicates that the rumour is "a bit beyond the realm of logic".
- M - This indicates that the rumour is so general as to be meaningless.
- R - This indicates that the rumour may or may not be true at the referee's option.
- B - This indicates that the rumour is generally true but that it also has a substantial false component. For example, Rumour 16 is true - but use of the solarium is not free.

- 1) The Red Goddess is in fact subject to the great Compromise. T/F
- 2) Chaosium had trouble making the maps for the boxed Glorantha supplement. T
- 3) Chaosium have a carefully laid out "advance time line" for Glorantha, that stretches to 2525. F
- 4) The Pharoah enjoys reading thrillers. B
- 5) Greg Stafford does not know if She Who Waits is the White Moon or a troll spirit, and doesn't really give a damn. T/F
- 6) The use of Ducks in Glorantha is a really really good idea. T
- 7) Many citizens of the Lunar Empire are dead set against the use of chaos, even (or perhaps especially) though it is available. T
- 8) Sor-eel is awaiting the chance to further his family's cause, and is now snuggled amongst the bosoms of the said family. T
- 9) The Empire has primitive printing methods. F
- 10) Greg Stafford is working on a Gloranthan novel called Arkat's Saga. T
- 11) A new supplement from Avalon Hill deals with little pixies and goblins, and is called 'Little Pixies and Goblins in RuneQuest.' R
- 12) An einherjar is a dead warrior who lives forever at Humakt's Hall in the Land of the Dead, and is not very good at maths. B
- 13) Avalon Hill are bringing out the game Nomad Gods. F
- 14) Greg Stafford is friendly. M
- 15) Long Bows are native ONLY to the Rathori of Fronela. T
- 16) There is a fully heated, split level swimming pool and free solarium in the back room of every Storm Bull temple. B
- 17) The portrayal of the Lunar Empire as a Nysalor seduced by the Dark Side is partially correct. T
- 18) The character of Lord Death on a Horse was based on the popsinger Tanita Tikaram. R
- 19) A whole battlefield-scale war game may be included in HeroQuest. T
- 20) It is not possible to buy old copies of "Wyms Footnotes" from Chaosium. T
- 21) Sandy Petersen has left Chaosium. T
- 22) Garrath Sharpword is Argrath. T
- 23) The wizard of Zzabur is cutting a new single on the Neleomi label for his comeback, it's called "Hey Mr Postman, where have you been for the last 700 years?"
- 24) Elves have wooden bones and the same sexual organs as flowers. T

DAFERGRICKERY

I was out by Snippers Hill, 'bout a month back, taking care to 'void Kyter's Lunars, they'd bin on my trail some weeks then. Sneaked a look at me when a cut that marshal in Boldohm. Anyway, held up in Snippers Hill, all comfy like - got food to last me about a week and anyhow there's this troll there already - Daft I calls him, real names summat like Dafergrickery or summat. Figures I'm trouble at first sight cos he wants us to leave him alone. But I talks him round.

Bin in a bit of trouble himself like. Taken a cut a day ago - rustlin he said.. but I figured it more. Kept twitching and looking up and round like summat would swoop down and carry 'im off.

Anyways I's with this troll an he don't eat much you see on account of the month. I couldn't work it out either. Anyway so he doesn't eat out but he's got this half a mutton with him that he says he'd let me have for not much more than a beer in this 'ole..

So's I was a'right for grub an' that. Just wait, I thought. Lets the trail go cold. Let's old Kyter do is nut, an' then I'd go back Sartar way. But didn't work out like that, cos I wouldn't be sat here drinking with you if it had. No offence like.

No it didn't turn out right as I'd planned. That night me and Daft are playing flakers this game he knows - like a card game only you don't own no cards - when he makes like he's heard summat outside. He gets up and looks nervous, muscles ticking in his face. And all the time he's burnin' up.

I start getting a bit jitty miself. Perhaps there's this thing out there that's after 'im.

"What is it?" I say. "What's out there?" but he do'n't hear, or he do'n't answer anyhow.

I keep an ear but nout. That's the worst time. When you can hear something funny you got a good idea where it is. Now it was quiet it could be anywhere,

"Well... Daft stood up - he was bigan. You know these Trolls like. That's why I never say about his talk being bad. He stands up and feels for his club..."

"Fancies you does he?"



Go get a drink an' slammie your snip... 'Fancies you does he..' I tell you h'd burst me. No, gets his macer out and takes a look 'round. But he's troublin' to hold it up right, he's obvy going through a crapper. I gets up an follows 'im. Got me sword out just in case."

Daft says nowt but points for me to split up an' look for it. Well I don't wanna tell you I was scared, and I certainly don't wanna tell Daft am scared, so I do

what he says and I moves off. Well it'd be daft not to, him fairing a stronger mace.

I moves down the hill a way, stum'led about cos of rocks an holes and things until I comes to these bushes. This is when I gets scared really proper 'cos I thinks I saw summat moving. I stood back a bit, gave Daft a whistle and started to see for tracks and foot marks but there was nowt but you'd expect. Then I hear it for the time. Like something in real pain.

Which makes it a bit kinder on the nerve. Although they say that some of those things are worse when they's in pain. But I figure that if something's in pain you know it cuts.

"I'll tell that it wasn't no man howling a noise, or a troll or broo or out. It was deep in the stomach, really deep noise. I thought it could have been a Jack but I'd only seen one of those before, down Snakepipe and that was when I was running with Dispent and those guys, when I was just a todder. But that was what was in my head you know. I thought it was a buggarin' big Jack.

I tell you it's time's like that you wish you'd spent your pennies best and got your sel' an enemy spell. Every time I'd got the chance I would find some cards or beer or some big staffer Stormbull or summat.

Then I hear it again. Comin' from up the hill. This time followed by a roar like one of those Rockwood's you get. Well I was rooted. Stood like a buggarin daisy I was. Then I hears Daft callin', shoutin' in pain like. So this shakes me out of the maze an' I starts running up the hill. It's scary times when you don't bother looking out for yourself'.

Well I runs up this hill like a priest out a brothel, but too slippy and late. When I gets up top everything's quiet. Not a sign of Daft who I reckoned got it really bad. Looks round for blood and sees nothing. No sign of bodies not even any state, like after spells been set. Nothing! No drag marks 'cos I figured that if Daft had been tumbled by a Jack or

what, he'd have been dragged away to be ate or summat.

So's now I get's quiet and nervy all over again. By now I thinks it's a Jack for certain and I smart when remembering what Dispent said, that when you meet a Jack the best thing to do is to gather your house and run like a buggar, an' old Dispent was no flower white I'll mind you.

Well I got no horse. That died of mange about a week out of Boldown. So I wasn't riding nowhere fast. And all me belongings, including pennies I'd been collecting, were smuggled in me purse back in the hill. Being a brave sort, or rather one who likes her drink, I decides to go and get the purse and then clear out.

I could see the gap of the cave and the fire that we'd let die. An' I thought that there was no Jack between me and the purse so I'd best be getting in there to get it. Takes the sword and points it in front of me, height of mi chest so's that if out comes charging an' takes me by a shocker I've got a chance of running it.

Takes a step toward the gap.

Takes another step towards the gap, and another. And all the time the Red Moon and her cousin are up there smiling at me, saying go on, go and get yourself kilt.

Getting closer and nothing. No sound nothing.

Then shock, this thing the size of two rears up from out the gap. I didn't see much of it, just this wolf head bigger than a horse has, all grin and sharp and keen.

I 'as one swish at the buggar which misses hopeless like cos my belly is shifting mi liver out the way, mi legs are running all wild and mi mouth is chewing and screaming like a boy's.

This thing, the size of a Barracky, hits me with a claw outspan this table. Lucky I got this plate slated proper in Alda - Chur or I wouldn't be talking to you now, I'd probably be out on Snippers Hill looking for me bladder! As it is I got misel' a scar.

I goes bouncing down the hill like a goose egg on Asin Day, collecting a few blinders for mi memories. I gets to mi feet, head together, and does what any sensible, ale loving studdy would do. I ran away as fast as I could.

I can't work out what happened but it don't come after me. I suppose it was kind of happy with eating old Daft. Anyway all I can say is never say out about trolls being buggars cos this one troll saved my life, lucky they grow them big to fill a belly.

About two days later I borrowed a horse from this farmer, Bagnot way, swopped it for a smack round his head. And before I did him he says that they'd been having trouble with sheep and stuff gone missing. And that one night about three days past, him and a few others had taken to scaring this Demon or summat. That one of them winged it good with a spell arrer.

He didn't have the time of day to hear what I seen, but there's no mistakin' the same thing is there?

MT

Yelmy Hipwort presents....

All this week in the
WASTELANDS

Ben Guzarin
&
his miraculous....
'cattle'
(no hawkers)

KNOCKOUT!

only
The magazine
for
STORMBÜLLERS

PUBLISHED BY AVALON HILL, DESIGNED BY CHAOSIUM, REVIEWED BY PETER ERICKSON.

Here we are then, the early phases of the Hero Wars, (1621). "A cataclysmic magical conflict, destined to involve mighty magicians, heroes, and even demigods." Mmmm.

'Glorantha' is composed of three paperback A4 books, and a large map of Genertela. Book One deals with Glorantha itself, a 36 page affair introducing the reader to a view of the world in general. Within are descriptions of language, calenders, culture, a 'definitive' account of Glorantha's temperamental history and a breakdown of the six worlds. A revelation to newcomers and healthy synopsis for old hands.

It is Book Two, on Genertela, that constitutes the heart of the package. Some 92 pages of facts and figures detailing the ten broad areas of this the largest continent. Scattered amongst the various histories, explanations and descriptions, come the prophecies of the looming Wars. Generally soporific and always gloomy, they're a constant reminder that characters are not here to have fun. And that the purpose of this supplement is to encourage players and GMs into, 'campaigns in which powerful characters are prepared for eventual participation in the Hero Wars.' Mmmm

The Players Book offers 34 pages of perfect assimilation, encouraging the easy creation and development of characters from four 'broad cultural backgrounds', from primitive hunter to medieval soldier! Accompanying this detail is a narrative, a kind of idiot question and answer section, "What my father told me" - one presumes mother has little if anything to contribute! Still, this is a novel and stylish approach and although fanciful on occasion, rewards those who persevere with a more immediate grounding in the art of what's what. The second half of the book concerns itself with a broader appreciation of many human lots and is informative and essentially faultless.

The histories, the political geography and cultural relationships between 'states', the descriptions of the towns and cities are as involved as you'd expect from Chaosium. In addition many useful maps and interesting population stats are provided and essentially, it is this that overcomes some of the more sentimental and uninspiring pieces. The 'opening greetings' that one is encouraged to use are perhaps a little embarrassing. I can't bring myself to include an example.

There are no scenarios as such in the package, but literally hund



reds of leads and ideas are scattered, which can easily be developed. There are, for instance, several 'activity tables' listing common, uncommon and rare events in each of the various kingdoms, states, principalities etc. Whilst many of the events are mundane....(read 'interesting'), a few are either grandiose or funny/ridiculous - see the Fat Boy's Eating contest, and more.

There is no doubt that Glorantha is a must for Runequest players, whether experienced or underprivileged. The ground that this supplement covers is enormous, the effort, if misdirected on occasion, is amazing and at times disturbing. Information is accessible - a great relief with something this size, and is also authoritative whilst not totally exclusive, there is still some scope for wizened GMs to tinker.

What I do worry about here is the possibility of many people being alienated, many campaigns being undermined as much of players interpretation is contradicted. This is the major problem with campaign worlds. It is sad, but it almost discourages GMs from tackling politics or major events,

because of this fear of being contradicted at a later date.

There will be those disappointed with the odd snippet of lacklustre, perhaps the art, the traditional jokey almost flippant side of Runequest that creeps in from time to time, but I suppose you can't expect anything else, sometimes Greg Stafford finds it necessary to remind us (and himself) that this is not real.

If you play your Runequest in Glorantha then you can't really afford to be without this. Personally I don't relish the concept of the Hero Wars - a micro gamer through and through - but that's where we are heading and this is where it starts.

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Contributing Artists. Ralph Horsley (pg 17); Jim Turner (pg 6, 19)

Special thanks go to;

John Coates, Phil Murphy, and Phil Neilson - who took time off working on 'Jackie' and was totally dependable. Cheers. Also to Greg Stafford who helped with yon rumours.

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Next Issue: HeroQuest, Simon Phipp offers his observations. "Wolfhead's Story" - fiction by Oliver Dickinson. "Art" part II, Pilaeus strikes back and "The Lunar Battle Manual" for would be Wideread's. Letters page, and more. See you later.

Stop Press: If anybody can help make the zine cheaper to produce and therefore reduce the cover price and/or increase the pages, we'd be only too pleased to hear from you.

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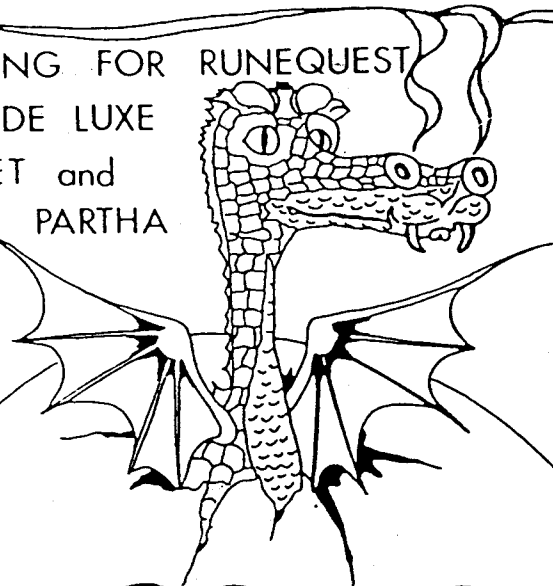
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