INFINIVERSE ™

CONTENTS

Infiniverse revs up to high gear with this issue. We have compiled the responses from *Infiniverse #1* (the boxed set issue). If you responded to the dispatches in that issue, then this issues response sheet will tell you some of the consequences of the dispatch. If you have sent in adventure outcomes, you will probably hear of events in the realms in which your group has adventured.

If you have sent in responses to the rumors, then you know whether or not they are true for your campaign. If you haven't, we have the results below. The results are given a true or false, followed by a parenthetical number. That number represents the strength of the truth or falsehood throughout the infiniverse. For example a statement which is false (15) is false unless the gamemaster decides to test the statement; on a roll of 15 or better statement is actually true. Roll again on 10 and 20 when testing the truth or falsity of a reported rumor.

1. The healing spring/possibility collector in Ohio. False (14).

2. Major Hopten-Ra's expedition in the Land of the Dead. True (19)

3. Maletritius has taken over a cult of demon worshippers. True (21)

4. Blackpool and the Whisper in the Nile Empire. True (18)

5. Vikings ferrying transformed-human trolls into Ireland. True (19)

In general, the Stillworld has been avoided. True (46).

For the realms and the Possibility Wars overall, it is too early to tell. The High Lords began with a huge advantage which Storm Knight action is beginning to erode; the good guys have a long way to go. We will have a more detailed report next issue, once the dust has settled. We will be reporting on the progress of the Possibility Wars every third issue or so, depending on how things shape up in the responses. While in flux, the current situation is this:

Nippon Tech is having the easiest time of it. Their plans for expansion look almost unhindered, perhaps even aided by the misfortunes of another High Lord.

The other High Lords are just beginning to take notice of the actions of the Storm Knights. Most continue to press ahead with their plans for expansion, believing their gains can outpace any deeds the Storm Knights can perform; in the short term they are probably right. Only Mobius has taken a personal interest in stepping up activity against the Storm Knights within his borders. The High Lords are beginning to exchange information on Storm Knights, the better to gauge their threat potential.

Dispatches and Rumors

Dispatches

1

The wizard Amethyst is dead. Magical wards he had established in anticipation of his possible demise have brought him back to life, but only temporarily. He must accomplish a complex sorcerous ritual to ensure his survival.

First, he needs a secure, defensible stronghold where he can work the ritual uninterrupted. This fortress must be within six miles of a connected stelae.

Amethyst begins building this fortress high in the mountains of Sweden. To make the structure sound, he employs trolls and giants to quarry rock and supervise the physical construction. He also builds wards and magical traps into the foundations.

Amethyst sends the dwarf mage Kebben and a band of cutthroats to the Tower of London to steal the Star of India, a jewel which can act as a focus for his ritual. Things go smoothly for the thieves, until they attempt to make their escape with the help of a powerful air elemental. While evading Core Earth automatic fire, the elemental disconnects and promptly disappears, spilling the thieves on to the ground from high altitude. Some are killed, and the others go into hiding to heal.

All of London is aroused. The Storm Knights are contacted a short time after the theft by emissaries of Pella Ardinay who ask them to help recover the Star, preferably before the thieves escape from Core Earth.

Kebben: DEX 7, STR 8, TOU 8, PER 10, MIN 10, CHA 6, SPI 7

Skills: reality 7, lockpicking 8, maneuver 8, stealth 8, alteration magic 12, apportation magic 13, conjuration magic 11, trick 12, test 11.

Possibilities: 15

Arcane Knowledges: air 4, metal 4, folk 4.

Spells: *floater, open lock, stealth walk.*

Goals: To amass enough wealth (by taking a cut from each job) to eventually set himself up in his own kingdom, and not have to take orders from anyone ever again.

Vikings: DEX 10, STR 10, TOU 10, PER 6, MIN 6, CHA 7, SPI 7.

Skills: reality 8, maneuver 11, melee weapons 13, unarmed combat 12, lifting 11, climbing 11, water vehicles 8, survival 8.

Possibilities: 10

Equipment: Armor (fur) (TECH 3, value TOU+1), mace (TECH 8, damage value STR+4).

Goals: To plunder successfully, and thus have money for drink and women.

Critical Event: Recovering the Star of India and capturing Kebben is a *Good* result (6 or above. Kebben can inform them that he was working for Amethyst, but knows nothing more of that wizard's plan.) Recapturing the Star but letting Kebben escape is an *Average* result (3-5). Letting Kebben escape with the Star is a *Bad* result (1-2).

2

The Storm Knights have heard some strange and frightening rumors — rumors of secret research going on in the Cyberpapacy, stories regarding shipments of plutonium, kidnapped Core Earth physicists, and a doubling of the Home Guard abound.

At the same time, spies report a tightening of security at a research/ rocket testing base northwest of Avignon, almost to the point of martial law being declared. Could there be a connection?

Further investigation reveals that a number of high-ranking Cyberpapacy Air Force officers have vanished. The officers are rumored to be part of some bizarre experiment which requires special training.

The Storm Knights decide to investigate further — but first they must get past the increased security at the rocket base.

The Storm Knights infiltrate the rocket center (either by breaking in or by posing as scientists.) Once inside, they must avoid the Cyberpriests who act as base security to discover that the base is preparing to launch a space shuttle which will carry some sort of satellite as payload. The Knights also learn that the missing pilots are undergoing training as shuttle pilots. The training is broad and includes covert observation techniques (spy satellite technology) and space combat tactics.

Cyberpriests (base security): See page 36 of the *Torg World Book.*

Critical Event: The Storm Knights are fighting the clock to stop the launch (and if they are being pursued by Cyberpapal security.) The Knights must attempt to get close to the payload and plant an explosive that will detonate and destroy the shuttle at launch. If they succeed in getting to the payload to plant the explosive, they get a *Good* result (6 or above). If the shuttle is destroyed, or the launch site damaged, without seeing the payload, then the Storm Knights get an *Average* result (3-5). If the Knights are unable to sabotage the shuttle, and it launches on schedule, they get a *Bad* result (1-2). The payload is the prototype for a sophisticated communications satellite.

3

The Storm Knights are called to a special meeting of the Delphi Council, held in a border town near the Western Land. The Council members tell them there are reports of trouble within the Living Land: herds of bargons have gone on the rampage, destroying the villages of edeinos tribes sympathetic to Core Earth. A team of Spartans that had been sent in to investigate were torn to pieces by a flock of lakten. Rather than casual mayhem, these almost seem to be organized attacks. The Storm Knights are asked to go in and defuse the threat.

The Storm Knights travel to a friendly edeinos village to get information. While there, the settlement is attacked by a crazed herd of kylots. The Knights notice that there are benthe attached to the beasts, and manage to fell a kylot to examine the amoeba-like creatures. An edeinos gotak informs them that the benthe has been driven insane.

The Knights retrace the steps of the kylots and discover a jungle fortress, guarded by edeinos and Jakatts. Within, gotaks are performing rituals on benthe to plunge them into madness. The benthe are then attached to beasts, who are driven wild by the dark emotions surging through the benthe.

Bargons, kylots, lakten, gotaks: See pages 22-24 of the *Torg World Book.*

Critical Event: The Storm Knights must mount an assault on the fortress and stop the rituals from being completed. If the assault succeeds, and they are able to capture a gotak, they get a *Good* result (6 or above). If the assault succeeds, but the gotaks performing the ritual escape, they get an *Average* result (3-5), and if the assault is repulsed, they get a *Bad* result (1-2).

4

The Storm Knights see a potential disaster in the making: respectable Victorian leaders in Jakarta have begun charging that native Javans are aiding and abetting the monsters which have invaded Earth. They have gone so far as to order a purge of all natives, and a frightened populace is supporting this insanity.

The Knights are told that a native village outside of Semarang has been targeted for destruction. Arriving barely in time, the Knights are able to convince the Victorian commanding officer, Colonel Hadley Jones, to call off the attack and try to convince his superiors that they are pursuing the wrong course. But an hour later, Jones reverses himself, leads a massacre of the village and orders the Knights arrested on charges of treason!

His men pursue the Knights into the jungle, where they are hard pressed to find sanctuary. As the Victorians close in, the Knights stumble upon a ghastly discovery: a corpse dressed in a Victorian colonel's uniform, but with a smooth, featureless face.

The Knights manage to escape the soldiers, and are able to take the dead body with them as proof that something unnatural is going on. But Victorian officials refuse to discuss the situation, saying it is a military matter, and recommend they speak to the High Command.

The Knights are invited to a meeting with the top brass, but upon arriving, discover it is all a trap. The Victorian military has been infiltrated by Faceless Ones, who have used their abilities to ignite a war between the soldiers and the Javans. Now they wish to take on the likenesses of the Storm Knights and discredit them with the native populations of Orrorsh, thus making it infinitely harder for them to battle against Thratchen.

Critical Event: The Knights must defeat the Faceless Ones, and expose their plot to Victorian government officials, who can call off the crusade against the Javans and see to it that the Storm Knights can continue to operate in Orrorsh. If the Knights wipe out all the Faceless Ones, they will easily be able to convince the government of the truth of the situation, and get a *Good* result (6 or above). If some of the creatures escape, the Knights get an *Average* result (3-5). If the Knights are defeated by the Faceless Ones, they get a *Bad* result (1-2).

Faceless Ones: See page 11 of *Infiniverse* #1.

Rumors

1

Reports are filtering in from the French coast near Carnac of an increasing number of cyberpriests discreetly searching the area. According to Underground sources, there is a resistance group operating in that area which has been throwing up obstacles to the spread of Malraux's church. The cyberpriests have had their difficulties, since Carnac is a Core Earth hardpoint and its profusion of stone megaliths speak of religions that predate Christianity.

Other sources reveal information even more shocking — the group acting against Malraux is the modern-day incarnation of the Knights Templar, the Crusaders of legend who fought for the Church in the Holy Land. Later, they were accused of heresy and many were killed or forced to flee France. Now, their descendants have returned, supposedly guarding a personage whose knowledge could destroy Malraux's church.

2

The return of the glories of ancient Egypt under the rule of Mobius has brought about the revival of Egyptian mysticism. Despite attempts by Ahkemeses, Mobius' High Priest, to keep a grip on the situation, individual shamans have sprung up in several small villages and have begun employing their magic in defiance of government orders.

Up to now, this has provoked only minor concern in the High Lord. But now there are reports that Rama Gatrun, a mathematician who lives in the vicinity of Luxor, has gained possession of the only complete copy extant of the *Book of the Dead*. This tome contains thousands of spells, incantations and prayers, the power of which can only be guessed.

Mobius has decreed that, should the ancient volume actually have been unearthed, it must be confiscated or

destroyed, before its power can be used against him. He has ordered Ahkemeses and a battalion of shocktroopers to search the area and find the book.

Ahkemeses: See page 15 of *The Nile Empire Sourcebook.*

Imperial Shocktrooper: See page 48 of the *Torg World Book.*

Rama Gatrun: DEX 8, STR 8, TOU 9, PER 10, MIN 10, CHA 10, SPI 9.

Skills: reality 10, dodge 9, alteration magic 12, divination magic 13, mathematics 12, survival 11, willpower 11, persuasion 11.

Possibilities: 4

Inclination: Good

Spells: commune with crickets, oasis.

Goals: To gain knowledge, to be used for the betterment of his people.

3

Residents of Shizuoka, Japan are reportedly in a panic. There are wild rumors that stone lions are running loose in the streets, mauling pedestrians and shrugging off the small-arms fire of Nippon security forces.

Where these stone creatures may have come from is still a mystery, although some resemblance has been noted between them and the karashishi, the stone lions that are often found in front of Buddhist temples. A number of these have been reported missing in recent weeks, with no clues as to the perpetrator.

It is possible that the karashishi were stolen and animated by a wizard as a means of disrupting Nippon. Orrorsh and Aysle would be the most likely realms for such sabotage to have originated in, and with Kanawa Co. supplying both sides in the Ayslish civil war, both Uthorion and Ardinay would have a motive for such action.

Karashishi: DEX 9, STR 18, TOU 18, PER 4, MIN 4, CHA 3, SPI 3.

Skills: dodge 10, maneuver 10, unarmed combat 12, trick (14), test (15), taunt (20), intimidation (19).

Possibility Potential: None

4

Core Earth vulcanologists have reported a number of sudden, devastating volcanic eruptions in southern California. At first it was feared that this might be the prelude to the transformation of that area, but now it is believed it may be the result of a Keta Kalles miracle.

The eruptions seem to be following a pattern, tracing an almost straight line from the southern border of the Living Land to the region known as "Silicon Valley." This Core Earth hardpoint, which was instrumental in Baruk Kaah's first major defeat, may be the target of these systematic disasters.

5

Members of the Rauru Block claim that Kanawa Co. now has a computer file on the Potala, the famed "golden palace" in Lhasa, Tibet that once housed the Dalai Lamas. Now a museum, the Potala has a labyrinth of rooms, and is filled with over 200,000 works of art.

Kanawa believes that the Potala may house an eternity shard, possibly more than one. Whether the High Lord wants these shards for himself or plans to sell them to other realms is not known. Four agents, led by one Koriochi, have reportedly been dispatched to discover the secrets of the fortress.

Little is known of Koriochi, but he is believed to be an expert on the Dalai Lamas and Buddhism. The Nippon agents will have to disguise themselves as pilgrims to successfully make the journey, as the area is under the control of China, which has had decidedly cool relations with Japan in recent months. Expecting an attempt to raid the Potala, either by operatives of a High Lord or Storm Knights, the Chinese military has moved in force into Lhasa.

If the Nippon agents do succeed in plundering the Potala, they must be stopped before they can reach Japan and turn any artifacts over to Kanawa. But any Storm Knights who investigate this rumor must be circumspect, so as not to worsen relations the Chi-

nese government and the rest of Core Earth.

Koriochi: DEX 9, STR 9, TOU 10, PER 10, MIN 10, CHA 9, SPI 9.

Skills: reality 10, dodge 10, fire combat 11, stealth 11, climbing 10, find 11, language (Chinese) 11, scholar (Buddhist lore) 13, trick 11, survival 11, persuasion 11.

Possibilities: 5

Equipment: 13mm Chunyokai, Tech 24, damage value 18, ammo 9, range 3-10/40/50.

Goals: To unlock the secrets of the Potala, and reap the financial rewards Kanawa bestows for success.

Ninjas: DEX 13, STR 8, TOU 10, PER 9, MIN 10, CHA 9, SPI 9.

Skills: reality 10, martial arts 16, melee weapons 15, stealth 14, tracking 10, trick 11, survival 10, willpower 10, intimidation 10.

Possibilities: 3

Equipment: shimsi sword, Tech 15, damage value 13.

6

Confusing messages have been coming from Denmark in recent days. Despite having the advantage of operating under Core Earth axioms and the aid of the German military, Viking landings in the vicinity of Arhus have met with success. The better-equipped Danish and German soldiers have been forced into retreat by Viking warriors who are seemingly impervious to pain.

The Viking troops have penetrated five kilometers inland, and are holding their position, mysteriously not taking advantage of their opportunity to crush the peninsula's defenders.

It is rumored that the true source of the Viking victories may lie further to the north, in the area of Denmark dominated by Aysle axioms. Many Danish military leaders have speculated that Uthorion may have discovered a way to invoke the dreaded "berserker fury" in his Viking forces, sending them into battle virtually blind to danger and numb to pain. If this is true, it represents a highly dangerous tactical advantage for the Dark High Lord, one which, given time, could allow him to sweep over Denmark and launch a successful invasion of the areas of Aysle under Ardinay's rule.

Viking (berserker): See page 30 of the *Torg World Book*.

Note: When in a berserker fury, Vikings will continue to fight until unconscious or killed, and though they suffer shock damage, do not feel pain. They cannot be affected by "Villain Fatigue" cards. A berserker fury has a duration of 12 rounds, at which point the Viking automatically becomes fatigued.

7

A new weapon has apparently been added to the arsenal of Orrorsh, and it is being tested on the people of Celebes. Witnesses report hearing the beating of leathern wings and then the screams of innocents as an army of bizarre creatures swooped down from the sky and began rending the residents of a small fishing village. The creatures were identified by one survivor as "rakshasas," the demon guardians of Hell in Hindu mythology. They departed as suddenly as they appeared, leaving a scene of devastation behind them.

The rakshasas are reputed to have sharp claws, vicious fangs, and the ability to shoot fiery beams from their eyes. But whether the things that attacked Celebes are genuine rakshasas, or simply demons in the service of Thratchen who are somehow simulating their powers for unknown reasons has not been determined.

Genuine or not, they must be stopped before they can do more damage to an already weakened Indonesia.

8

Realm runners have reported a strange sighting in the Living Land pure zone that encompasses Manhattan. Along with the edeinos and Jakatts that have overrun the city, agents of the Nile Empire have been spotted combing through the blocks surrounding the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

It seems as though the agents are not there with the blessing of Baruk Kaah. A number of edeinos detailed to guard the museum against looters have been found stabbed to death, and an Egyptian weapon was found near one of the corpses. The Jakatts in the area have been roused, making it much harder for the runners to get supplies in and out of Manhattan.

Exactly what the Nile agents are looking for is unknown, but there is speculation it may be connected with an Egyptian temple which was disassembled and rebuilt as an exhibit for the museum some years ago. Many of the artifacts in the temple were looted in the early days of the invasion, but some still remain and could be the targets of the squad.

It is also possible that Mobius' people are after one or more of the items stolen from the temple, and are attempting to track down their whereabouts. Any one of the missing artifacts could be an eternity shard, or possess an Egyptian spell that Mobius would covet. It is imperative that the intentions of the agents be discovered, and their mission stopped.
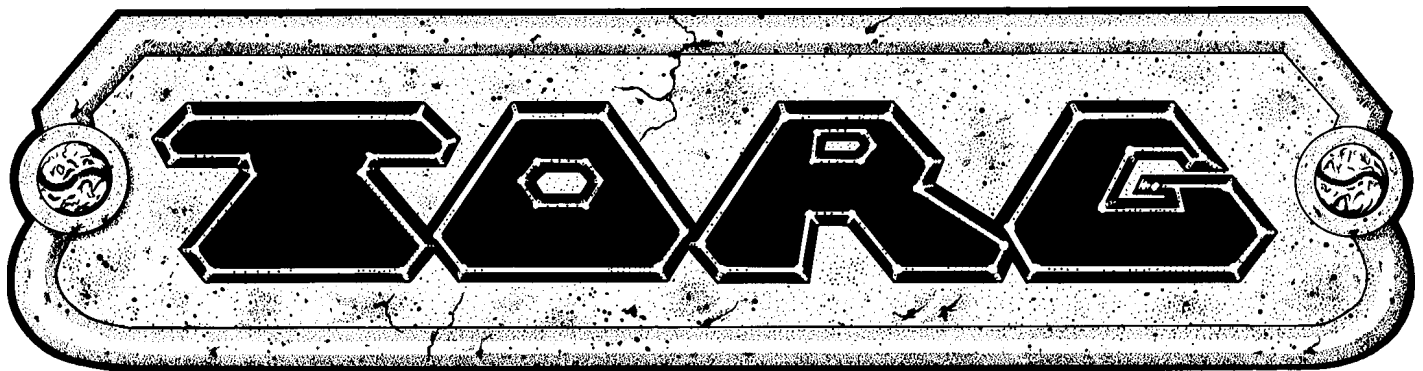
Cyberpapal Axioms and Laws

The axioms of the Cyberpapacy define the levels of its magic, social structures, spiritual beliefs, and technical achievements. These natural laws set the limits of what is possible within the Cyberpapacy and the accompanying cosm of Magna Verita.

When the Possibility Raiders invaded Earth, they brought about dramatic changes. From the city of Avignon in southern France, the axioms of a medieval world swept across France, into southern Spain and western Belgium. Then upon reaching the limits of the stelae, planted by the Possibility Raiders, they swept back over France.

In the process, France suffered a technological collapse of huge proportions. The Collapse, as it was called, was followed a month later by an equally dramatic technological surge. After the Surge settled down, France had changed dramatically. It had been transformed into a bizarre mix of medieval beliefs and hi-tech. The Cyberpapacy had arrived.

Axioms of the Cyberpapacy

People in the Cyberpapacy live under a strange mix of axioms. Magic has increased allowing highly magical entities to exist side by side with technology. Social systems have collapsed; democracy has been almost entirely eradicated to be replaced with the theocratic technocracy unlike the world has ever known. Spiritual faith has risen to an extent to where miracles are common events. But it is technology which has had the most dramatic impact. The tech axiom had been suppressed and then boosted decades into the future. Cyberware and the direct neural interfacing of humans to machines are not only possible, but part of everyday reality.

The Magic Axiom

Magic has increased by 3 points making the alteration of living beings possible, and minor conjurations feasible. Sustained by the magical energy that imbues the realm, entities in the forms of demons and gargoyles now exist freely, The GodNet, a matrix of telecommunications and commuters, is more than just a collection of circuitry and wires: it is also affected by magic. Demons exist within it, as do Angels, self-aware beings who were once human, but who now serve the Cyberpope inside the GodNet.

But magic in the Cyberpapacy is considered to be the work of the Devil. Any one suspected of practicing any form of magic is branded as a witch or sorcerer. They are ruthlessly hunted down by the Inquisition and burnt. Only spiritual power is considered to be holy and good.

The Social Axiom

This is the only axiom to have been permanently decreased by the advent of the Cyberpapacy. The democracy of France has been swept away by a bureaucratic government that views all life as subservient to the needs of the Papacy. Freedom of thought and expression are in the process of being eradicated. The Social axiom allows the state to dominate all walks of life. The reach of the Church is long, and unforgiving of those who seek to weaken its power. If the doctrine of the church were ever to catch up to the technology, the Cyberpapacy would become a totalitarian state so complete, so intrusive and pervasive that individual freedom would be extinct and the capacity for individual thought threatened.

But the doctrine has remained the same for years, and within the bureaucracy administering Magna Veritas, a breed of cynical and often corrupt official has evolved. The power of the church is abused for private gain; Malraux has usually overlooked (and occasionally encouraged) these transgressions. These officials are used to thinking of themselves as above the teachings of the Church, which they view as means to keep the peasant and laborer working faithfully and fearfully for the servants of God, who are, of course, themselves. These officials believe in God, but as firmly believe that Jean Malraux is the Vicar of Christ; whatever Pope Malraux condones must be right with God as well. Any sins they are committing must be permissible because they are permitted. Fortunately for France, a corrupt bureaucrat with a medieval mind set is not the most efficient overseer for a technocracy such as the Cyberpapacy. There are cracks in the system which can be exploited by the brave, the clever, and one willing to match the fervent beliefs of the Cyberpapacy with a faith of her own.

The Spiritual Axiom

France is experiencing a increase in spiritual beliefs and powers. The Cyberpapacy is founded upon its power to perform miracles. Its religious items are filled with spiritual power that allow the clergy to work miracles more easily.

Across the nation, people have witnessed the cyberpriests' and the Cyberpope's spiritual power. They can feel the increased Spiritual axiom in the air. With so much widespread evidence that the powers of the Cyberpapacy are real, many have ac-

cepted its teachings totally. They conform to the new reality around them and look to the Church to save them from the powers of darkness.

The Cyberpope and his followers are also affected by the Spiritual axiom. They believe that God is actually guiding their work and they see His hand in everything. According to the Papacy's beliefs, the Tech Surge was not an accident, but proof of the will of God.

The Tech Axiom

The Tech axiom has dramatically affected France. First came the Collapse, followed by the Surge. Possibility energy seared through the area bounded by the stelae, killing many of those who had been previously transformed in the Collapse.

The Tech Surge was not a premeditated move by Pope Jean-Malraux. When Jean-Malraux made his crossing into Earth, the cyber reality he had drawn into his Darkness Device was released. Using on the Cyber Axiom contained within it, the Darkness Device created a perverted reality where medieval dogma coexists with futuristic technology. It molded people to its will, expending large amounts of Possibilities in the progress. Deckers, cyberleggers, hardware punks and others were created from people who had previously led comparable lifestyles. Cyberpriests came into existence as France was transformed a second time.

The Tech axiom is not uniform. Technological development has so far been restricted to the GodNet, with cyberware and weapons production lagging behind them. The Cyberpope's newly transformed TechPriests work to develop more powerful programs, while expanding the reach and power of the GodNet.

In backstreet workshops and laboratories, people experiment with the new technology. Cyberware and designer drugs are produced in hidden factories and sold on the streets to those looking for thrills, or a way to fight back at the Cyberpapacy. Developments are uneven, and not always safe. But anyone with the money can find a cyberlegger who'll do them a quick chop and fit.

Weapons production remains, after the GodNet and cyberware, the Cyberpope's main interest. The new technology has made weaponry available that the Cyberpope thought only belonged to God. The names of the new weapons strongly reflect this belief: GodMeeter, GodLight and GodsFire, are just some of them.

Gunsmiths working from small workshops have been turning out these weapons using computer controlled lathes. Corrupt officials fatten bank account by letting plans and prototypes slip from the Cyberpope's own factories. Equipment is often available for sale on the streets a few weeks after it has been issued to the Pope's own forces. Almost everyone not under the control of the Church now carries a gun and knows how to use it.

Other areas of technology remain unaffected. Teleportation remains no more advanced than it did under the axiom of Core Earth. Robotics is confined to controlling peripheral devices rather than the creation of self-aware robots. Cyberware has not yet reached the stage where it can be used to boost mental functions, so psionic powers remain a mystery.

In the Cosm of Magna Verita, the Tech axiom did not cause a Tech Surge. The increase in the Tech axiom made the existence of tech level 26 items possible. People in Magna Verita continue to live as they have always done. Oppressed peasants labor for their rich masters in the Church using tools that have remained unchanged since the Sixteenth Century.

The Cyberpope is not one to turn his nose up at what he believes are the gifts of God. He has begun to transfer cyberware into Magna Verita, and construction of a cyberware factory has already begun near Avignon. The Cyberpope sees cyberware as a means of control; its benefits are (officially at least) restricted to the Church.

Dominated Tasks

The realm of the Cyberpapacy is a dominant reality. The axioms of Core Earth still exist suppressed beneath those of the Cyberpapacy, but few tasks in the realm are really dominated, as only the Social axiom has

decreased. Magical and spiritual powers are now easier to use. A situation that many view as an improvement.

Technology is also never dominated. The Tech Surge was such a dramatic event that no one was left unaffected by it. Over 20% of the population were transformed to conform to the new distorted reality. Even Possibility rated characters did not escape entirely; they too were dragged into the future world of the Cyberpope. The Tech Surge partially transformed some of them into characters from a Cyber Tech reality. This freak occurrence drained them of Possibilities, but not for long. The changes in realities was too fast. The Darkness Device, already pulsating with the energy it had gathered during the Collapse, could not absorb all the Possibilities released when the Tech Surge transformed so many people at once. Instead, the stelae literally radiated possibility energy; some of it transformed the land, some of it poured into empty reality-rated characters, refilling the Storm Knights.

The ordinary people of France were not so lucky. Thousands died as the Surge ripped across the land, transforming them a second time. Millions of others have been transformed into loyal subjects of the Cyberpapacy.

Outside of the Cyberpapacy, characters who experienced the Tech Surge can still operate their hi-tech items. They will be subject to contradiction checks if the Tech axiom of the land is too low, but this will always be a One-Case contradiction, never a Four-Case. They are part of the Tech axiom of the Cyberpapacy.

World Laws

The Cyberpapacy is subject to four lesser laws that define reality within the boundaries of the stelae. These laws are in addition to the axioms of the Cyberpapacy.

The Law of the One True God

The Cyberpapacy worships the one true god. As a result only members of the Cyberpapacy are able to perform

miracles normally. Members of other religions have their difficulty levels increased when attempting to perform miracles. The following table shows the amount that the difficulty number is increased by:

Character's Faith Modifier

Catholic or Greek Orthodox	+1
Protestant	+2
Muslim or Jew	+3
Rasta	+4
Hindu	+5
Shintoist/Buddhist/Taoist	+6
Haitian/Shaman/Animist	+7

For example, a Catholic priest attempting to perform a bless has his difficulty number increased from 10 to 11.

The Law of Heretical Magic

The study or practice of magic is condemned by the Cyberpapacy. This makes magic more difficult to cast, but also increases its power when used successfully. Specific game effects include:

1. Any character attempting to perform magic suffers a +3 increase in the spell's difficulty number, and a +3 increase in the backlash number.

2. Any character who suffers a wound from a backlash, may have a demon appear and attempt to possess him. To determine whether a demon appears, the mage uses his Spirit to beat a difficulty number of 3. The difficulty number is increased by the result points of backlash. Therefore a mage who suffers a backlash of 10 result points, must overcome a difficulty number of 13 (3+10) with his Spirit.

Whether a demon appears or not, the success, or otherwise, of the spell is not affected.

3. Any spell which is cast successfully has a bonus modifier of +5 when determining effect. It's harder to cast spells within the Cyberpapacy, but they are more powerful than normal once cast.

The Law of Ordeal

The "judgement of God" in the form of trial by ordeal is open to all members of the Cyberpapacy accused of performing criminal acts, with the exception of heresy. Trial by ordeal is a common way of determining guilt in the Cyberpapacy for all crimes except heresy, which is judged by Inquisitors using whatever methods they deem appropriate.

There are four types of trial by ordeal practiced in the Cyberpapacy (although Infiniverse space restrictions limit us to printing two; the other two are ordeal by boiling water and ordeal by fire). Prior to the actual ordeal, the accused is ordered to spend three days fasting and in prayer. The ordeal is then carried out under the watchful eyes of the cyberpriests.

Ordeal by Cold Water: The pure element of water, being divinely influenced, must necessarily reject the body of anyone guilty of a crime or a sin. This ordeal is used primarily for those accused of witchcraft. The accused is bound hand and foot and lowered into the water on the end of a rope, in which a knot has been made at a distance of a long hair's breath to half a yard long. If the accused sinks, and pulls the knot down with him so that it breaks the surface of the water, he is cleared; but if the accused and the knot float, he is found guilty. Game rules are described below:

1. A practicer of magic must generate a *Spirit* or *faith* total of . There is no way that this can be avoided.

2. Other characters float only if they generate a *Spirit* or *faith* total of less than 8. This total is modified by -5 if the character is actually guilty, and +5 if innocent.

Trial by Combat: This form of ordeal involves single combat between the accused and a champion of justice chosen by the Cyberpapacy. It is to the death. Non-powered melee weapons are always used. During the trial by combat, the following rules apply:

1. Guilty characters suffer a -5 penalty to *dodge* and all weapons skills.

2. Innocent characters gain a +5 bonus to dodge and all weapons skills.

3. The skills of the church's champion are unaltered.

The Law of Suspicion

This law states that individuals within the Cyberpapacy are suspicious of anyone they do not know. In game terms this includes:

1. A character's *willpower* or *Mind* is increased by three when resisting a *charm* or *persuasion* attempt.

2. Proof of identity (real or otherwise) of the character attempting the *charm* or the *persuasion* reduces the above increase to +1.

3. Attempts to taunt or intimidate have their bonus increased by +3. Characters may be suspicious, but they have a healthy fear for anyone who stands up to them.

Attitudes in the Cyberpapacy

The change in the Social axiom has made the rigid theocracy acceptable to most of the transformed population. They look to the Cyberpope as their saviour. The apocalyptical events which heralded his coming have been accepted totally. The transformed Ords fear the power of the Antichrist, witches and sorcerers. The reality which has invaded western Europe has shocked many people into accepting that the Cyberpope is their protector and only hope against the forces of darkness.

Viewed from an outside perspective, the Cyberpope and his followers are evil. But from their own medieval viewpoint, they are merely upholding the values of their society. If anyone opposes the Church, they threaten the well-being of society. Eradicating heretics and others who threaten to destroy the Church are therefore justifiable acts. As most of the population sees things this way, life in the Cyberpapacy is hard for those who don't conform. But the reality of the Cyberpapacy has been distorted.

The cyber reality, that formed the basis of the Tech Surge, was home to some very tough-minded and callous individuals. Cyberpunks who would cheerfully slice and dice any who got in their way. Cyberleggers who made their living from selling and fitting cyberware ripped out of unsuspecting donors. Fixers who could lay their

hands on anything your required, providing you asked no questions and had the readies to pay for it. And console cowboys who ran the data matrix looking for a score. These characters all exist, and most of their morales are very suspect. They live in the cracks of the Cyberpapacy, coming out at night to ply their trade. Most live in urban areas, in cities such as Paris, Marseilles, Lyons, or Bordeaux. They live in fear of the Inquisition, but they are also skilled at avoiding it.

The people who have suffered the most are those Ords who were not transformed. They have watched in shock as apocalyptical events rocked first the world and then France. They have experienced the hardship of the Collapse, and watched in stunned amazement the effects of the Tech Surge. Fearing for their lives many have turned to the Cyberpope, but there are those who refuse to accept the fate that lies in store for them. They have begun to resist. The flag of Free France flies above Paris, Marseilles, the Massif Central and the Les Vosges hills. The Resistance has risen again. Only this time the enemy is the Cyberpope, not the Nazis.

Entering and Leaving the Cyberpapacy

Crossing the Maelstrom Bridge from Magna Verita or passing through the Reality Storms are currently the only ways to enter or leave the Cyberpapacy.

The Maelstrom Bridge links Core Earth Avignon with Avignon in Magna Verita. Any beings who cross the Bridge to Core Earth for the first time, are prepared for the realm that awaits them. Unless the Darkness Device is otherwise engaged, it invokes a reality storm against a Storm Knight or stormer when she crosses the bridge. When it wins, the stormers are physically transformed to the reality of the Cyberpapacy. They all receive a neural jack in their necks or temples, and another one to three items of cyberware (roll the action die: 1-12 = 1 item; 13-19 = 2 items; 20+ = 3 items). The gamemaster chooses the items of cyberware as he deems appropriate.

The Reality Storms

The Cyberpapacy is surrounded by howling winds that rush at over a two hundred miles per hour. Great bolts and flashes of lightning rage through the storms, blasting the tops from mountains and setting fire to large tracts of forest. According to the Cyberpope, the storms are the work of the Antichrist who is punishing the Earth for falling from the path of righteousness. Many believe this to be so, but the Cyberpope is the one responsible for the storms. Fed by Possibilities from the Cyberpope's Darkness Device, the Reality Storms show no signs of dying down.

The Reality Storms effectively isolate the Cyberpapacy from the rest of Earth. The storm has a value of 20 against individual characters; Ords are attacked with a damage value of 20, while stormers and Storm Knights must use their reality skill (see below). The most fierce storms are over the English Channel. There the realities of Core Earth, Aysle and the Cyberpapacy clash together. Bolts of lightning sear the cloud filled skies as plumes of water soar up from the boiling waters of the Channel. Over the English Channel the reality storm has a value of 23.

Elsewhere the reality storms occasionally blow away, leaving clear blue skies behind. It is during these times that a safe entry into the Cyberpapacy is possible. But people making the crossing run the risk of being caught in a storm as it rolls back in. Depending on the gamemaster's wishes and sense of drama, the gap in storm can last long enough for characters to get though or merely be a brief lull.

Passing through the storms is taxing, but not impossible. The character attempts to beat the storm's value with her reality skill. If the character is successful, she passes through the storm with no ill effects. In the more likely event that she fails, the amount she failed by is read from the Storm Results table. Storm multipliers and maelstrom results are ignored, only the loss of Possibilities and transform results are important. A character who is transformed loses all her Possibilities, but gains a neural jack and cyberware on a roll of the die as mentioned above: 1-12 = 1 item; 13-19 = 2 items; 20+ = 3 items

For example, Marie Clare enters the reality storm on the German border. She pits her reality against the storm's value of 20, and fails by 5 points. Checking the table, "-3 Storm X2" is the result; Marie loses 3 Possibilities. When passing back through the storm to Core Earth, a similar procedure is followed.
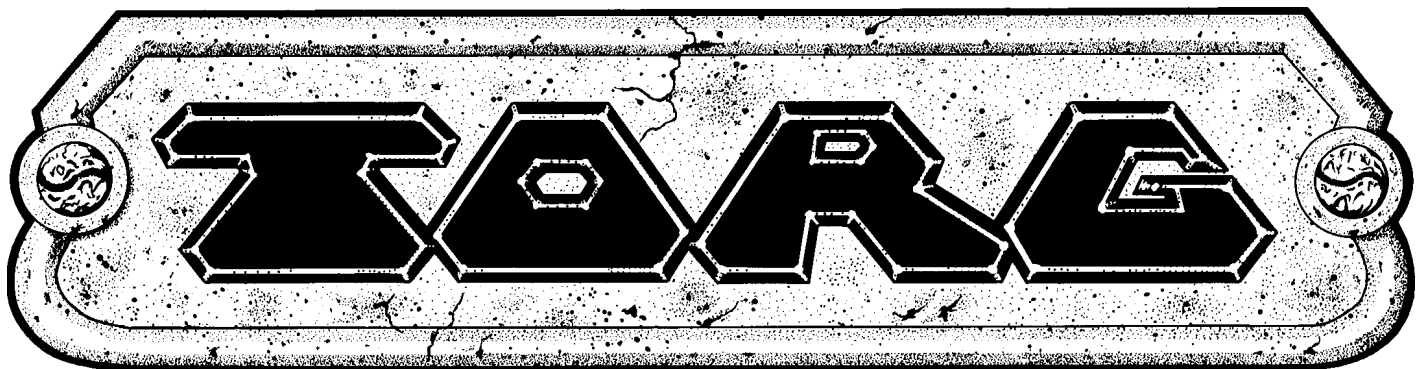
Creatures

Llawereint

Llawereint is a powerful entity who resides in the depths of St. George's Channel, which separates Wales and Ireland. In ancient times, he was revered as a sea god by the Celts under the name "Ludd," and Ludgate Hill in London was named for him.

When the old religions fell, Llawereint retreated to a cavern in the channel and went into a centuries-long sleep. He was roused by the axiom wash, and now enjoys the worship of many Welsh fishermen, who respect his power and invoke his name to survive storms and bring in greater catches.

Llawereint's name means "silver-handed," for in his youth he lost his left hand in a battle with an aquatic dragon, and now has a silver one in its place. His powerful *weather control* spell is focused into his artificial hand.

Llawereint stands 10 meters tall. He is humanoid in shape, with webbed hands and feet, and though amphibious, far prefers the water to the land. He can be both benevolent and merciless to mariners, depending on his mood and whether or not they have shown their regard for him through prayers or sacrifices prior to beginning their journey.

Llawereint is worshipped by the Uvwe, who hold a yearly festival in his honor at which his battle with the dragon is symbolically reenacted.

Llawereint: DEX 7, STR 25, TOU 20, PER 10, MIN 9, CHA 8, SPI 9.

Skills: reality 10, swimming 12, unarmed combat 10, alteration magic 12, scholar (sea lore) 11, test 10, taunt 9, intimidation 11.

Possibilities: 3

Arcane Knowledges: *air* 8, *water* 6.

Spells: weather control, water spray.

Equipment: silver hand, damage value STR+2/27.

Goals: To promote the interests of those who worship him, and obliterate those who do not.

Mimir

Mimir is a giant who resides at the top of Mount Kebnekaise in Sweden. He is renowned in Norse mythology as the uncle of Odin, king of the gods, but he will neither confirm nor deny the truth of that story.

Mimir is the guardian of Odhrerir, a cauldron which is believed to have divinatory abilities. In truth, it is Mimir who has the power, but he has found it useful to let his enemies believe the legend, thus decoying them into trying to destroy the cauldron rather than himself.

Despite his vast age, Mimir is still a fierce warrior, and is most famous for battling three Frost Giants to a standstill, using his battle-axe, Rahlnung. He prefers to avoid violence whenever possible, and will use his magic for anyone who climbs the mount and asks, provided they are willing to grant him a boon in return. Mimir's requests have ranged from the gathering of an herb from the mountainside to the sacrifice of an eye.

Mimir: DEX 9, STR 12, TOU 12, PER 14, MIN 9, CHA 9, SPI 7.

Skills: reality 8, melee weapons 11, divination magic 17, evidence analysis 15, test 10, persuasion 10, taunt 11, intimidation 9.

Possibilities: 5

Arcane Knowledges: *folk 6, mixed forces* 5.

Spells: possibility shadows, water scry.

Equipment: battle-axe (Rahlnung), damage value STR+3.

Goals: To provide the curious with the information they ask for, and see just how great a sacrifice they are willing to make in exchange.

Leanhaun Shee

Leanhaun Shee is a beautiful, but malevolent faerie who seeks the love of mortal men. She lives in a solitary glen on the Isle of Man in the Irish Sea, and there she tempts visitors with her wiles.

Her power is such that, if a man is able to refuse her, she will become his slave. But if he should love, he will be in thrall until he can find another to take his place. It is believed that the kidnappings of a number of young, strong men from Irish coastal villages are the work of Leanhaun Shee's slaves, seeking replacements so they can regain their freedom.

Leanhaun Shee leeches the strength from her victims, and they eventually wither and die.

Leanhaun Shee: DEX 13, STR 4, TOU 5, PER 11, MIN 11, CHA 10, SPI 6.

Skills: reality 7, dodge 14, flight 15, stealth 14, alteration magic 13, trick 12, conjuration magic 14, willpower 13, charm 12, persuasion 12, intimidation 9.

Possibilities: 4

Arcane Knowledges: *living forces 6, folk 3, fire 3.*

Spells: charm person, increase charisma, conjured fireball.

Note: Leanhaun Shee will attempt to charm a male into kissing her. Her first kiss alters the target character's attitude to *loyal*; each succeeding kiss reduces the target character's *Dexterity* and *Strength*-based skills by one. The target can break free of her influence by making a successful *Mind* or *willpower* roll, with Leahaun Shee's *willpower* acting as the difficulty number, or by procuring another victim for her. If the target frees himself by mentally overcoming her influence, his skills will return to normal as soon as he is off the island. If he provides her with a victim, his skills will remain at their reduced level.

Your Letters

Here again, your questions and comments, and our marginalia in response. Letters are edited for abbreviations, length, and the occasional typo.

On the response form, I did not know whether to use the number (of Possibilities) before or after they spent them on skills. I used the "before" number.
> **—Dax Sapien,**
> **Aurora, CO**

We want you to fill in the number of Possibilities earned prior to your players spending them on skills. So you done right, Dax.

Do I have to respond every month, and what happens if I don't?
> **—Alexis Diaz**
> **APO Miami, FL**

Sending us a response form each month is optional. If you do not send us a form, your personalized response page will be pretty generic, but other than that there is no effect. Send it in when you have the chance. This is a game, not a homework assignment.

1. How can you use a machine-gun to shoot at multiple targets?
2. Will you ever give us more information on the Horror Tech cosm? I believe that one would particularly appeal to my players.
> **—Jeff Cambell**
> **Corvallis, OR**

Machine-guns fire at full automatic (page 77 of the *Torg Rulebook*), giving them a +3 bonus number. If you are firing at, say, 10 people you use the One on many chart, (page 45 of the *Torg Rulebook*). Assume a firer has a fire combat skill of 13 using a Maremont M60 (damage value 23). If she rolls a 15, she has a bonus of +5 (including the +3) for a skill total of 18. If firing at 10 shocktroopers (DEX 9), the gunner needs a total of 19 to hit them all, a total of 15 to hit 5-6 of them. So six are hit; the One on Many table gives 6 targets +4 TOU; the shocktroopers effective Toughness is 13. The damage total of the Maremont is 28. The six shocktroopers keel over dead. Four shocktroopers are still standing, having been missed.

We have a few possible plans for Tharkold, the horror-tech realm. We must first firmly establish the six realms discussed in the boxed set, so it will be a while.

How can a character convert over to a new reality and still remain a possibility-rated character?
> **—Stephen G. Dycus**
> **Evansville, IN**

A character who has been drained of Possibilities, but still retains reality skill adds (mentioned on page 106 of the *Torg Rulebook)*, can later absorb possibilities from his new cosm. In effect he has switched cosms at the cost of all his Possibilities at the time of transformation. Even if stripped to 0 adds, a character who was reality-rated stays reality-rated (page 105 of the rulebook). One such character is Dr. Etienne Balczesak on page four of *Infiniverse* #1. Character templates which have "switched cosms" are assumed to have be reality-rated prior to their transformation to their new cosm, and have had time to regain their starting Possibilities.

What is the correct form to use in submitting a new template? How do you destroy a stelae? How or in what form do you define a new cosm?
> **—Chris Volcheck**
> **Westchester, PA**

Submit templates in typewritten form, giving us their attributes, possible skills, and tag skill. Include their cosm, background, personality, equipment, a quote and any skill notes; just as in the published game.

Destroying a stelae is just a matter of bashing them a bit once they have been removed from the boundary through the *reality* skill (page 104 of the *Torg Rulebook*). Until they are removed, stelae may only be attacked through an invoked reality storm (with a reality skill equal to the difficulty of removing the stelae). If the stelae loses, it cracks and crumbles, becoming useless. In the *Nile Empire* and *Living Land sourcebooks* we did not give the *Toughness* of stelae. Living Land stelae have a TOU 9, while Nile Empire stelae generally have a TOU of 18. The TOU of the stelae of other realms will be mentioned in the relevant sourcebooks (or in Infiniverse if space continues to be tight in the books).

At its most basic level, a cosm is defined by its axiom levels and its world laws. These define and constrain a cosm, and highlight how one cosm differs from another.

Where are the pure and dominant zones of Core Earth? How can they be determined?
> **—Daniel Pagoda**
> **Brooklyn, NY**

Unless otherwise specified, all of Core Earth is dominant. This stems from page 85 of the *Torg Rulebook*. We still have an area or two open for definition, but we plan to have Core Earth

pure zones only around hardpoints. This can change, pending the results of the Possibility Wars.

What happens if a rival cosm puts a stelae in another cosm's boundaries? For example, if the Cyberpapacy placed a new stelae in the middle of England?
—Brian Reeves
Spokane, WA

If stelae-bounded areas overlap, the area of overlap is a mixed reality. The mixed reality yields very little Possibility energy for either High Lord. Such a move would only be made by an aggressive High Lord more interested in undermining a rival…or perhaps an ambitious group of Storm Knights trying to cause serious discord between the High Lords.

In combat, do you do 1 fatigue if you hit but do not overcome Toughness? What does the "S" mean on the combat chart?
— Brett Hackett
Oakland, CA

An "S" stands for a minimal success, when your damage total exactly equals your opponent's armor value (or *Toughness* if no armor). So no, you do not do any shock damage to a target unless you overcome, or at least equal, its *Toughness*.

Are characters tied to their home cosm's World Laws while in another cosm? If not, can Nile Empire characters shift away from their strict good or evil tendencies? Can Nippon Tech use their stealth and deception bonuses outside of Nippon Tech?
—Tim Martin
Altamante Springs, FL

World Laws, like axioms , are part of a character's realities. To use a World Law in another reality requires a contradiction check; a Nippon Tech character who is using the deception bonus make a contradiction check when using *persuasion*, even though persuasion is allowed in every realm. If a Nile Empire character is using any ability or power from the Nile cosm, she must also use the World Laws. If

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☙ **H**erald Messages

Keep a calm hand on your gun, Storm Knight. Look for edeinos with tech goodies. The could prove to be allies.
—Matt Johnson
Fullerton, CA

Having consolidated their hold on the Japanese Islands, the Kanawa Corporation is looking to expand into the territory of its competitors. The target is unknown look for more friction between the High Lords as Kanawa makes its move.
—Scott Shafer
Delaware, OH

The Storm Knights of the Renwick Agency have made a terrifying discovery— the Gaunt Man lives!
—Paul B. Hyson
Alloway, NJ

The "Stillworld" is no more! It turns on its axis once again due to the valiant efforts of a group of Storm Knights.
—Scott. R. Mitchell
Chicago, IL

We have sparked Giza with two Stories and Tokyo with one. There is an eternity shard sunk in Tokyo Bay from Nile Empire. Nippon Tech is stealing eternity shards to sell to highest bidder.
—Seth Rutledge
Charlotte, NC

Lord Cheltenham, Orrorsh, seems to be working for agents other than his ostensible master, Lord Salisbury. Storm Knights yet to return from the hideous Oguthan city of lost knowledge. Remains of James-Whitehead expedition not yet found.
—Greg Gorden
Carbondale, PA

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she chooses to forego all of the abilities (including the other World Laws) then she may ignore the Law of Morality. Players who enjoy roleplaying their characters should know that their character see their World Laws as part of the way the world works. Operating under different World Laws would seem quite alien to them.

How about a system for axiom levels of technology similar to that for impressed spells, i.e. a certain axiom level needed to make an item, and a lower one for it to function. I mean, how does plate mail stop working? Awesome game though.
—Bradley Heinrichs
Surrey, B.C., Canada

Gosh, looks like we are all out of room for letters in this issue of *Infiniverse*…seriously, answering your question would require more space than we have in a letter column. In brief, according to the logic which forms the basis of Torg, plate mail can indeed stop working in areas which have a low enough tech axiom. This is a counter-intuitive answer for many people, part of the weird metaphysics of Torg. So, we were wondering, how many others of you also have questions about Torg metaphysics? Enough of you to devote a few pages to *Intermediate Torg Metaphysics* in future issues? Infiniverse only has so many pages, so let us know what you want to see.