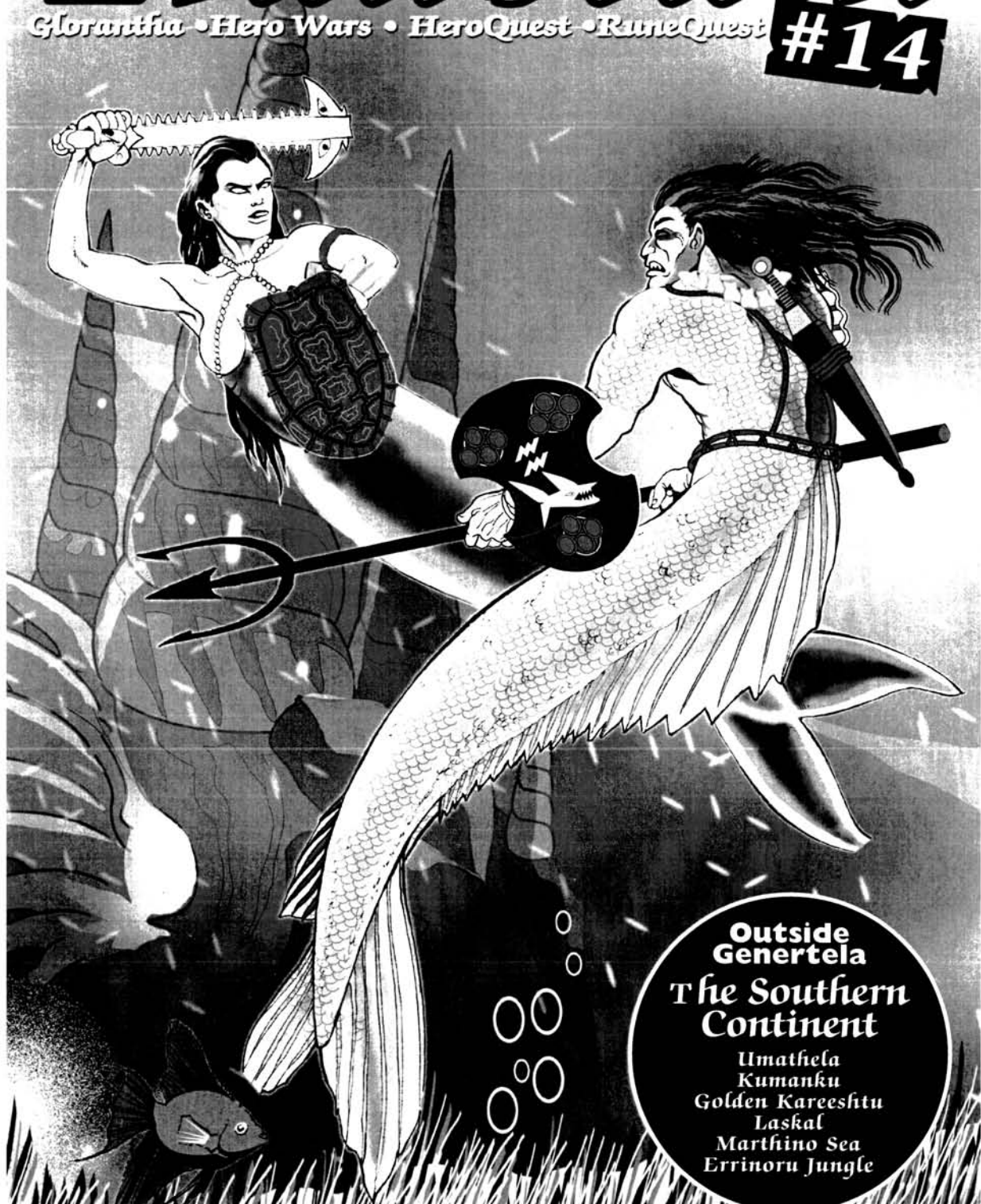


The Chaos Society Magazine

# Tradetalk

Glorantha • Hero Wars • HeroQuest • RuneQuest

#14



**Outside  
Genertela**  
**The Southern  
Continent**  
Umathela  
Kumanku  
Golden Kareeshtu  
Laskal  
Marthino Sea  
Errinoru Jungle



# Tradetalk

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# Editorial

## Hi Fellows

**W**ELCOME TO our **Pamaltela Special!** This "Outside Genertela – The Southern Continent" issue contains a variety of articles that describe the coastal regions of Pamaltela. Some of the articles in this issue are descriptive (David Dunham's Umathela, Martin Hawley's and Peter Metcalfe's Golden Kareeshtu, André Jarosch's Marthino Sea, and Martin Hawley's Laskal), while others are in Homeland style (Shannon Applecline's Errinoru Jungle) or include both styles (Simon Bray's Kumanku).

The Kumanku article is accompanied by a narrator character sheet. The Golden Kareeshtu article includes a "What my... told me" part, and the Umathela and Errinoru articles each are accompanied by a myth of that specific region.

Please have a look at our Tradetalk website, too: you are lucky, because some back issues of Tales of the Reaching Moon # 11 – Pamaltela (along with other issues) are available. Tales has concentrated its articles on the plains, and this TT concentrates on the coastal regions. Both magazines together contain a big bunch of Pamaltela information.

## Issaries News

**Masters of Luck and Death – Hero Bands for the Hero Wars** was published at the same time Tradetalk # 13 was. It describes 27 herobands out of Dragon Pass to be joined by the heroes, to be allies, friends, foes or adversaries.

**Gathering Thunder: Sartar Rising Volume 3** is planned for a Spring release.

As a summer release we will have **Under the Red Moon: Imperial Lunar Handbook Volume 2**.

**The World of Glorantha**, a new introductory booklet for the best gaming world ever, is planned for fall.

**Men of the Sea** and **Heirs of Malkion** are the next two books in line (along with Dragonrise: Sartar Rising 4 of course), but which one will be published first is not certain.

Two Work in Progress books are still in the pipeline: **Heroquests and Heroquesting** and **The Lunar Army**.

## The Chaos Society

Ian Thomson's **Shadows of Pavis**, the **Pavis & Big Rubble Companion Vol. 4**, was the final one, but we might publish another companion for a summer rerelease: **Beyond Pavis: Adventures along the valley of the Zola Fel River**.

Another Ye Booke of Tentacles is also in progress, but we haven't a publishing date yet.

Penelope Love's novel **The Widow's Tale** won two "Best of Glorantha 2003" awards. A good time to announce that **Eurhol's Vale & Other Tales** by the same author will be published this summer! This book includes four stories (two novels, and two shorts) about the same main characters that were in the previous award winning book. Stay tuned for more details to follow...

**Path of the Damned # 3** is ready and will be printed as cash flow allows it. Remember: back issues of # 1 and 2 are still available.

For Tradetalk our plan is to publish a two part First Age Special, but this approach is taking longer than anybody expected. Parallel to the First Age Special, we will start to collect articles for the next TWO Issues of Tradetalk. Which one will see print first depends on the contributions we get: Tradetalk # ? – The Uncivilized West will be about Fronela outside of Loskalm, Ralios

and Old Seshnela; depending on contributions. Tradetalk # ?? – Heroes and Herobands will contain unusual hero bands, as well as interesting narrator characters who dwell in Dragon Pass. At least one of them should be available by end of summer.

## The Unspoken Word

**Sons of Kargzant** should be available as you read this. A follow-up, **Secrets of the Char-Un**, will be out shortly later, but just as a pay-to-download PDF book. Imther will be the next full book. There will also be a new map set out this summer, which will include **Erigia**, **Pamaltela**, **The Wastes**, a city plan of **Mirins Cross** and more. There are plans for another **Paper Wars CD-ROM** as well.

## Moon Design Publication

The fourth and final Glorantha Classics Vol. IV - Borderlands and Others will be published somewhen in 2004. It will contain Borderlands, as well as Plunder, and more.

## Kalikos

The Finnish Glorantha association, Kalikos, will publish its second issue of The Zin Letters this summer, an "East and West Special". It will contain articles Kralorela, Daran and Loskalm, among others.

Please have a look at:  
[WWW.TRADEtalk.DE](http://WWW.TRADEtalk.DE)

André & Ingo







**LIFE IS HARD  
DEATH IS CERTAIN  
JOY AND SORROW COME TO US ALL**

• • •

**THE WIDOW'S TALE is set in Greg Stafford's world of Glorantha. It describes a desperate battle at the beginning of the Hero Wars, the epic struggle that will change the face of Glorantha forever**



## Issaries News

Greetings to the Tribe,

Hearken to the words of Issaries!

### MASTERS OF LUCK AND DEATH

We are pleased to announce that Masters of Luck and Death has been released! Here is 'something for every purpose' - 27 hero bands that might be encountered in Dragon Pass (and beyond), from Teshnan dancers to Orlanthe rebels, Lunar missionaries to Grazer warriors. Included are a few old favorites such as the Temple of the Wooden Sword and Geo's Inn, others that until now have just been given passing mention like the lofty Comet Seers, and many that are completely new. (Thanks to David Mitchell for making our quick turn-around of contributor and GTA copies possible.)

Masters of Luck and Death, Hero Bands for the Hero Wars  
Product Number ISS1303, ISBN 1-929052-17-0.  
72 pages, standard format, \$15.95.

<<http://www.HeroQuest-rpg.com/products/1303.html>>

### WEB SITE AND EMAIL PROBLEMS

At last, we seem to have our site migrated, our email switched over, and our business more or less back to usual. Thanks to everyone for their patience. For those who don't know, we had some problems with our web hosting company, and had to switch to a new host on relatively short notice. The process was a bit bumpy, and took longer than we had expected, but at last we are firmly and happily entrenched at lunarpages.com (at least for the next year).

If you emailed us in February or March and never received a response, please email us again, even if only to check that we got your message. Between email problems and an overactive spam filter, it is possible some messages got lost. So, if you email us and don't get a reply, and think there is a chance your email might have been marked as spam, try emailing us with a general query, or from a different email address, again even if only to make sure we got your message.

### PRODUCT UPDATES

Just a quick note to let everyone know that a number of factors (including the site migration, delays in text and artwork, and other things) have caused a delay to both Gathering Thunder, Sartar Rising volume 3 and Under the Red Moon, Imperial Lunar Handbook volume 2. We'll keep you updated once we have more exact information about the release dates.

However, the most excellent news is that the Spanish edition of HeroQuest should be at the printer as we speak. We are very excited about this development, and wish our licensee Edge Enterprises every success with this venture.

As if that was not enough, it seems that we will soon have a Japanese licensee once again! The situation in Japan seems to be settling out, and we expect to formalize a new contract in the next few weeks.

Cheers,

Stephen Martin  
April 2004

# Umathela

by David Dunham



## Mythology

Chaos lifted up the Sky Dome and oozed into the world in the north. Jantijo, the sun, was dislodged from his place, and went crashing down into the underworld.

For a while, the Darkness wasn't so bad. Storm gods conquered Umathela. Dorgalat showed people how to clear land so they could grow crops.

But things got worse. Most of the cropland had been cleared, and wasn't growing back. Only Dorgalat could still light a fire. So Tyloque and Ropotes set out with their bearer Cotoplan to restore the sun. On the journey they joined forces with Phausia, Rabilis, and Systella. In the underworld, they met Thyla, Neiropha, and Rondella, who were also trying to restore the world. After many trials the nine succeeded, and Jantijo returned to the sky in the first dawn.

## History

Humans first came to Umathela in the Second Age. The Middle Sea Empire brought in colonists, burned much of Vralos's forests, and drove the Aldryami deep into the woods. Jrusteli God Learners conducted foul experiments on the Umathelans, and practiced perverted worship, but this eventually backfired. All Glorantha rose against them, and the God Learners were crushed by many great disasters, which began as early as 901 with the False Gods Revolt. Part of their demise was the closing of the oceans to travel. The last God Learners were destroyed in 1020.

Many Umathelans survived the devastation, and became subject to the Aldryami, who reviewed their behavior every year in the Woodland Judgments.

In the 1100s and 1200s, the Cult of Silence

## An Umathelan Myth Cold Wind and Storm Wind

by David Dunham

[Based on several myths from South Puget Sound, translated by Arthur Ballard]

**S**now Leopard was wooed by Rain Wind, the son of the Old Lady of the Mountain, and Cold Wind, who was from the far north. She married Rain Wind. Cold Wind was furious. He and his clan attacked, killing Rain Wind and all the rain wind people. Snow Leopard fled up the river, and gave birth to her orphan son, Storm Wind. Her brother always told Storm Wind not to travel to the great mountain.

Cold Wind held the land under his power, and covered everything with ice and snow. He stretched a fish-weir of ice across the river. No fish could get up the river past his trap, so further up the valley the people starved. When Storm Wind became a grown young man, he set out to visit the great mountain. Cold Wind had set two of his slaves, ice demons, to guard it. Storm Wind sent them tumbling down the slope with a great gust, and continued up.

At the top was an old lady, making baskets. She made baskets of different kinds, coarsely woven and finely woven baskets: many, many! The old lady was his grandmother. She had no one to help her, because they had all been killed. For her fire she had only some tops of the cattail rush. When she laid these on the fire it would blaze up quickly, but then it would die down just as quickly so that she could not keep warm. She was crying for her dead son, but it was so cold even the tears froze on her face.

As Storm Wind approached, the ice began melting from her face. She sang, "I am growing warm, my young relative comes." She went to the door and Storm Wind was standing there. Storm Wind talked to her, and learned who she was. He pulled up big trees by the roots and laid them at her door for fuel. Then he asked how they should fight the cold people. She said, "Wait until I get my baskets all finished, then we shall settle that." Storm Wind went home to wait. Cold Wind's slaves returned to him and reported what had happened. Cold Wind was alarmed at Storm Wind's strength, and offered his daughter in marriage. All bedecked with beads and earrings of ice she set out. But before she arrived at the young man's house, the ornaments had melted.

The next day bedecked as before she set out again, and again her attire melted away and she had to return home. A third time she set out for Storm Wind's home, but as she drew near, her finery again melted. She returned home and never did become his wife. Storm Wind went back to the great mountain. His grandmother was ready. She had large, coarsely woven baskets to hold coarse raindrops. The next in size and weave were for the steady rain and the smallest were tightly woven, to hold the fine mist.

The two set out. Storm Wind blew. His grandmother began pouring out the rains: first the coarse drops, then the steady rain, and lastly the mist. He blew and uprooted the trees. The rain swelled the river behind the ice weir, and the trees crashed into it until it broke. Storm Wind melted the ice, and chased the snow away. Cold Wind fled. If Storm Wind had not been born, we would still have the ice here now.

\*\*\*

This is an old myth from Umathela, believed to be free of God Learner influence. There are many variants. Storm Wind is typically identified as an aspect of Tyloque. Cold Wind has sometimes been identified as Qualyorni, though he's usually considered to be Valind or one of the Vadrudi.



took over much of the land. They finally fell to the Clamorers when Little Morishdo liberated Emanus, origin of the cult's most militaristic missionaries.

Afadjann conquered much of the land in the 1300s, and the elves and their Umathelan allies began the eight Season Wars to throw them out. Afadjann lost ground with each war, until they were ejected entirely in 1458. The Season Wars proved that humans were equal allies with the elves.

In 1585, the first ships in over 600 years arrived at the coast. They were crewed by Red Vadeli, who claimed to be gods, and seized control of commerce and the coast. The Vadeli were revealed to be less than divine when they were defeated at the Battle of Oenriko Rock in 1594.

## Inhabitants

The many clans of Umathela share a common culture, though with regional differences. The regions are Huamaz, Kallima, Kormarkan, Orik, and Sulayz, each centered on a major river system. There's extensive river traffic within each region, but much less contact between them.

The Umathelans live by slash and burn farming, pig herding, and hunting. Pigs are very important, but are butchered only for ceremonies.

Households (a man, his wife, their children, and his married maternal nephews) live in rectangular buildings. These are usually grouped into

villages, which are moved to stay near the currently-planted fields. Permanent towns are found at river junctions.

Families, or lineages, are traced through the mother. Each has hereditary magic.

The clan is the most important social organization, owning all land. Clans frequently form into loose leagues to further common goals. They occasionally join into large, temporary kingdoms, usually to deal with an external threat. The clan chief is usually a hereditary position. Some people have no clan. They form the Nowatni, wandering experts who stay with a clan and then move on.

Marriage is a partnership between lineages, and is thus arranged by elders. The couple lives with the groom's uncle. Children belong to the mother's lineage. They're initiated into adulthood with various tests.

Men wear a short kilt and sleeveless vest; women wear a knee-length skirt and shirt. Each clan has its own design for body paint.

Disputes are settled by mediation, or by a court of three judges. Penalties include ridicule, fines, exile, and outlawry.

Men are warriors as well as farmers. Oath-warriors are full-time fighters who serve chiefs. Umathelans are famous for their long bows, and also fight with sword and spear. They wear ornate armor of leather, wood, or bronze.

## Religion

The Umathelans believe in spirits and gods which are responsible for most events.

The major deities worshipped are:

**Tyloque:** Storm god, warrior king, Lightbringer.

**Aloral and Morlotes:** The Sow and Boar deities.

**Enklosa, Ernamorla, and Vrala:** Grain goddesses.

**Dorgalat:** Destroyer and Renewer, god of horticulture.

**Mayedra:** Mother Soil.

**Ropotes:** The Knowing God, conduit to the ancestors.

Other important deities include:

**Chortikan the hunter; Phausia,** goddess of swords and justice; **Neiropha** the healer; **Systella** the witch; **Heler,** god of rams and rain; **Issaries the trader; the Lightbringers** (as a group); the river goddesses.

Most clans worship their own heroes or local deities, and have shamans, who heal, and ally with wind spirits.

\*\*\*

See also:

"Introduction to Umathela" by Greg Stafford; originally published in *Breakout* #34, and Copyright © 1997 Chaosium, Inc.

<http://www.glorantha.com/library/world/umathela.html>

# Kumanku

## The Enslaved Islands

by Simon Bray

Sections of this work were inspired by "The Missing Lands", by Greg Stafford and Sandy Petersen, copyright 1998 by Issaries Inc.



### On names...

The natives of the Kumanku Islands call themselves the An, with Kumanku meaning Many Beloved Homes of the An. However the Kareesthans call them the Kumankans, a nonsense name in the eyes of the natives, but the Kareeshtans care little for their slave's feelings. This document uses the Kareeshtan name for the islanders for clarity only. It must be noted that the An call the Kareeshtans the Kar-Ishti which in the native language means Dung Tongues or they refer to their masters (known in Fonrit the native land of the Kareeshtans as Ras or Masarin) as the MaRasi which means Idle Hands. The Kareeshtans it seems are the brunt of this subtle joke and their arrogance does not allow them to realise it.



## The Monster Girl King of the Starless Night

*The identity of the leader of the Night-Placers is unknown to the Kareeshtans, but it is a secret they would dearly like to hold. Whilst the Night-placers have little actual strength, their ability to remain co-ordinated and hold their meetings whilst under the oppressive regime of Red Ravaal is a cause for consternation. It is thus ironic that the current Monster Girl King of the Starless Night is an unassuming looking and toothless old grandmother who works grinding millet flour in Red Ravaal's own slave farm. Taleesa Ulaki Big-Grin is old, but she is revered for her exceptional judgement and wisdom. To her followers she is the incarnation of GranAnKu, Soul of Kumanku. Taleesa is dying, but she has already trained three potential successors from amongst her lineage. When she dies her unstoppable spirit will lead them away, to the top of Yananakaloo Island, where one girl will discover the secrets of the GranAnKu and the others shall join the Dance of the An I An Ma. When the new Monster Girl King descends the mountain, she shall take back the Sea Eagle Crown and Kumanku shall be free!*

**T**HE KUMANKU ISLANDS is a group of eight temperate islands that sit off the north coast of the continent of Pamaltela. They are rocky places with only a few fertile valleys amongst their mountainous centres. The coastal regions of the island are great brackish marshes, which in the Second Age were tamed by the Sorcerers of the Middle Sea Empire who constructed great dams, drained the marshes and turned them into rich and fertile agricultural lands. But when the Closing came the people forgot how to maintain the dams and many reverted back into marsh. In the highlands graze herds of cattle imported by the God Learners, these small prized herds are gradually being replaced by goats from Fonrit.

The islands were not separated from each other during the Closing, but with the demise of the God Learners the people forgot most of the requirements of civilisation and so the small cities and forts of their former masters became vine covered ruins which the natives refused to enter due to self impose taboos. The shallow waters around the islands are rich with fish and sea animals, but few people fish the waters, either through religious belief, lack of boat building skills or a cultural preference for the food of the land. The islands are lightly wooded for the most part; bracken grows abundantly across the islands, as do many grasses which cover the highland pastures. Birds proliferate amongst the islands, from great mountain eagles, to shrieking parrots and graceful sea birds, all of which grace the Kumanku table for feasts. There are few large wild animals on the islands, most are small rodents, amphibians and reptiles (mainly venomous snakes of bright hues), however salt water crocodiles are encountered in the marshes and the shrill screams of Kumankan Mountain Vrat still haunt the highland pastures on some of the islands.

A few of the islands are home to teeming masses of Insect People or Timinits, ranging from lumbering beetlelike Lucans to the formidable and militaristic Myrmidons; small tribal groups of humans who hunt, worship or ignore their monstrous neighbours sparsely populate these islands. The Timinits were imported from Jrustela by the God Learners and have thrived. Amongst many of the clans there is a common belief that ghosts and wicked spirits haunt many locations on the islands, especially those associated with the God Learners. It is also well accounted that the God Learners left a number of monstrous guardians for their secrets, some of which roam the islands hunting natives; the Hanger Tree and the Throat Slitter Man are the most notorious of these. If this were not bad enough the Vadelii conquest of the region also left a legacy of their filthy magical constructs amongst the darker corners of the land. Now the Kareeshtans have brought with them their animals, black baboons, leopards, goats and hunting hawks, they are only pets and herd animals now, but it is never long before such animals escape and become feral.

## Places of Interest

### Einarish Vag

This islands plentiful woodlands and long relationship with the sea has lead it to develop a strong maritime and fishing ethos. The island is unusual in that the populace congregate into small towns, called Datchi, Na Vag and Rishi Town, they are little more that collections of houses around simple jetties, but each hosts a small fish market. Fisherman from the region follow the Singing Sulsea the Hull Tapper Practice, and are renowned for their skills with the net and harpoon, but their greatest secret lies in the use of magical potions which stun or kill fish making fishing easier. Red Ravaal demands fifteen baskets of dried fish from the islands three small towns every four weeks, a tax that is burdening them heavily, but the threats of his warsails is enough to keep them labouring for him.

### Ek

Each year the Night-Timers travel from all the islands to the Round Cliff and Black Star House which stands upon the summit of Ek's highest hill, Here on the longest night they perform their rituals of renewal. The inhabitants of Einarish Vag ferry the Night-Timers to the islands in return for blessings and traditional gifts of Lowpa berries and Vrat skulls. The Kareeshtans have sought to prevent these gatherings every year since their conquest, but each time they try some freak of nature or minor cataclysm has prevented them from having any effect. In response Ek has now got a permanent garrison of Fonrit troops stationed upon it to try and prevent the rituals taking place. So far the Night-Timers have found the right bribes and magic to keep these soldiers ineffective.

### Elestavoquan

The small population dwells only on the western point of the island in several small walled villages. To the west lie three God Learner ruins, shrouded in some of the best forest on the islands, but left untouched for fear of ghostly reprisals. The rivers of the islands sometimes wash strange items into the villages; the shamans and elders decide whether to keep, destroy or trade these items based on strict taboos. The Kareeshtan overlords demand a small tribute from the locals but other wise leave them alone, they did set about exploring the God Learner ruins but illness, a lack of bearers and monstrous nightly assaults halted any attempts. Allakim Tond-Owned-and-Happy, a wicked sorcerer of the Great Tond's noble court, has set himself up in business here purchasing artefacts from the locales and exporting them to the mainland at hugely inflated prices, he gives a substantial cut to Red Ravaal to be left alone in his stone tower.

### M'gokokchun

This densely forested island is home to a teeming mass of insect people. Several huge mounds rise in the south of the islands, alien constructions of the Timinits. The Kareeshtans have established several successful logging camps



in the north of the island employing the huge beetle like Lucans to fell trees on their behalf, the relationship has been successful as the Lucans are given rich vegetable fodder to eat and rotten logs in which to breed. Occasionally mantis-like Garantigs prey on Kareeshtan and Lucan alike so a large stockade has been constructed armed with large spear throwers. The native Kumankans dwell outside the stockade, serving as house slaves for the overlords, but living without fear from assault by the insect folk whom they seem to worship.

### Molakku

This small island bears no signs of former God Learner habitation. Every last dam, city and laboratory of the Justesti Empire has been destroyed by the occupants of the island, who then they cursed the land so that no buildings of stone can be constructed there. The natives live in carved hillside caves and animal hide huts. Their magic has restricted the Kareeshtans from gaining a foothold on the island; consequently Red Ravaal has had many of the occupants dragged to the other island to serve as his slaves. Yet it seems that their powers or curse are not limited to their home island, as many other Kumankans refuse to work alongside the 'City Crumblers' and a large number of accidents on Kareesthan construction sites has lead to the Molakkans labouring in fields or as herdsmen. In anger Red Ravaal has threatened to destroy the populace if they do not remove the magic within a year.

### Tenenu Island

This is the most densely populated of the Kumanku islands. It is dominated by the city-fort of Quarash that is home to Red Ravaal and centre

of his draconian state. Quarash was originally a Vadeli city, which the Kareeshtans fortified and expanded, adding a rich veneer of Kareeshtan culture to the city. Ravaal has constructed for himself a colossal harbour side fortress-palace, with high towers commanding an excellent view of the seas. The island is the largest in the chain, but under the yoke of the Kareeshtans it has lost most of its identity and become a miniature Kareeshtu, littered with that nations shrines, statues and philosophies. The woods of the island are gradually becoming Kareesthan Warsails, cattle have been replaced with goats and clan villages with slave camps. Under the guidance of Red Ravaal the great dams of the God Learners have been rebuilt and repaired and millet is being grown in the coastal lands. The north eastern part of the island remains wild, but for a purpose, here Red Ravaal trains his corsairs and marines to fight, pitting their skills against slave warriors, wild animals and the land itself, this is Ravaal's secret unknown to the Great Tond himself.

### Varanae

The ruins of Varanae are the most accessible in the Kumankan Islands and are only defended it seems by their lofty cliff top positions and mountain passes. Red Ravaal is noted to have sent several groups of foreign mercenaries into these ruins and surprisingly they have returned. However the natives have never ventured into them since their ancient master's disappeared, they instead dwell by the coasts, living off the marshes and water logged pastures. It seems to rain on Varanae more than any other island; a side effect of a forgotten God Learner experiment and the soggy existence has had a noted effect upon the motivation and morale of the people. They do

## A History of Occupation

*Kareeshtu is the third occupying force to control Kumanku in its history. Initially the islands were colonised by people from mythical Thinobotu. They were forced to become servants of the Middle Sea Empire of the God Learners in the Second Age, they were experimented upon to a lesser degree but were generally insulated from world affairs, so when their islands were sealed off from the world by the Closing and their masters disappeared they simply assumed it was another experiment of the masters. They lived in blissful ignorance, ignoring the cities and developing their own culture. In 1587 the second group of oppressors arrived on their shores, these were the Vadeli, foul inhuman sorcerers who lied to the natives and proclaimed that they were in fact the God Learners who had returned to rule them again. They then established ports and established a tyrannical government over the natives. Seven years later the Vadeli were involved in a bitter conflict against the Pamaltelan country of Fonrit, which they lost. Eventually Kareeshtan forces from the south drove out the Vadeli, but not until their ambassadors had broken the Vadeli lie and told the Kumankans that the God Learners has died out before the closing, the Kumankans rebelled against their overlords, only to be tricked and in turn vanquished by the Kareeshtan forces. Numerous rebellions and attempts at opposition were quashed by the Kareeshtans and most clans have reluctantly sworn allegiance to Kareeshtu ever since. The violence and slavery invoked by the Kareeshtans is one of the most formidable punishments the Kumankans have yet suffered*

## The Kareeshtans

The Kareeshtans come from the Pamaltelan land of Fonrit, theirs is a tyrannical sea empire that enslaves everyone that it encounters, following the belief that everyone is a slave to their god Ompalam. They serve His Holy Munificence Archimoidies the Heartless and Openhanded, Vessel of Tondiji and Ikadz, or the Great Tond as he is more commonly called. The Kareeshtan presence in Kumanku consist of a standing army of slave soldiers, an army of men who are all slaves. Be they normal guardsmen or high ranking officers, they are devoted and loyal to their owner Red Ravaal, the Governor of Kumanku. Along with the army have come opportunistic and greedy merchants, slave masters seeking new and exotic slaves from amongst the clans, lumber merchants seeking rare woods to furnish the palaces of their overlords and middlemen who seek to dupe the locals of their produce in return for gaudy beads and useless talismans.

Red Ravaal has brought with him an extensive array of officials, secretaries, servants, harem slaves and bodyguards to populate his palace in Quarash. Along with the governor members of the Kareeshtan Nobility have followed, some seeking to gain favour and new lands, others seeking position within the regional government and a fool hardy few who seek Red Ravaal's position for themselves. Quarash is a hot-bed of Fonritan backstabbing politics. One of Kareeshtu's main aims in its controll of the Kumanku islands is to establish and expand its naval power and Red Ravaal has been constructing a number of shipyards where his slaves can turn the local woods into swift Warsails. With the soldiers and nobles have travelled the petty and squabbling priesthoods of the many Kareeshtan Gods, they seek converts to the way of Ompalam, soliciting the worship of deities such as Tentacule the Slave God and Ikadz Lord of Torture. To follow such vile deities is a deadly trap, which results in the worshippers soul being forever sold into eternal slavery. The final group of Fonritans amongst the islands are scholars of arcane lore and forbidden magic who seek to crack the secrets of the God Learners from their ruins and take the power for themselves. These are the most dangerous of all the groups, their tactics and techniques being hit and miss at best, and their experiments always detrimental to their unwilling victims.

not make good slaves or at least they don't make slaves that the Kareeshtans want around them, their miserable demeanour hangs about them like a cloud. Instead the Kareeshtans have imposed a severe 'Gloom' Tax upon the populace, which the people grudgingly and miserably pay.

Several groups of Timinits dwell on the island, elegant and spider like Arachans spin their webs throughout the islands woods, through which lumber solitary Lucans. Around the marshes of the island dwell the tragically short-lived Ephemeræ who through bizarre irony believe the comparatively long-lived islanders to be akin to sombre gods.

**Yananakaloo**

A great pillar like plateau of an island that rises up from the reef-laden sea beneath, its walls are caked in the guano of a thousand generations of sea birds. There are no known inhabitants on the island, although there are signs of former human habitation in the form of carved steps half way up the eastern most wall of the isle. No one has accessed the islands plateau since the Second Age, rumours abound that it is still the dwelling place of God Learner secrets, hideous monsters, a wise race of godlings or sea bird people, depending on which clan you speak to. Red Ravaal knows the secret and brought back the Sea Eagle Crown from the plateau.

**Red Ravaal**

KAREESHTAN RAS, NOBLE SERVANT OF ARCHIMOIDIES, CORSAIR AND GOVERNOR OF KUMANKU. ADMIRAL OF THE CRIMSON FLEET OF EVER PATIENT DEATH. SLAVE OF OMPALAM AND RAJOR

**Background**

Red Ravaal is the youngest son of the Great Tond himself, a fact little known to any in the Kareeshtan courts but whispered often enough into his ear by Ravaal's own mother. It is common knowledge that the other twenty six sons of the Tond died a long time ago, unable to outlive the magical longevity of their father. Those that tried to extend their lives had them shortened very swiftly by the executioner's axe. Red Ravaal was removed by his mother from the harem as a teenager and entered into the Great Tond's naval school at Dindanko. Ravaal soon became a leading light in the navy, ascending to captain by the age of twenty-nine. His ship was influential in the destruction of the Vadeli at Oenriko Rock's and he quickly gained the favour of the Great Tond and the court of Kareeshtu. Ravaal had been trained to survive anything the sea could throw at him which put him in good stead for over coming the waves of assassins that tried to topple his political growth and the seas of scandal that tried to swamp his rise to power. As is the way of the court the Great Tond grew fearful of Ravaal's ascension and so returned him back to the sea, making him admiral of the Crimson Fleet and sending him far from Kareeshtu to destroy the Vadeli and capture Kumanku. It was believed to be a dangerous, almost suicidal mission, but Ravaal accomplished it with ease, quickly

**Sadaya-uki the Blue**

*Red Ravaal's Personal Bodyguard*

**Keywords:** Close Combat 7w2, Eunuch Body Guard 2w2.

**Significant Abilities:** Undying Loyalty 20w, Initiate of Tentacle 10w (Loyalty, Hard Work, Slavery)

**Equipment:** Lamellar Byrnie and Helm +5, Huge Scimitar +5

**Contest Synopsis**

**Close Combat** (Red Ravaal) 14w3 (+207 AP)

**Ranged Combat** (Jalapkhan) 17w2 (+51AP)

**Sea Combat** (Red Ravaal) 8w3 (+110 AP)

**Sailing** (Chadak the Reaver) 14w2 (+96 AP)

**Political Machinations** (Rast Al-Vayuk) 15w2

(+90 AP)

**Magic Defence** (Falassik) - 16w2 (+180 AP)

**Magic Attack** (Zadar) - 11w2 (+175 AP)

**Jalapkhan the Jaguar**

*The Head of Ravaal's Hunters*

**Keywords:** Kareeshtan Hunter 7w2, Initiate of Javakar the Jaguar 15w (Hunting, Death, Jaguar)

**Significant abilities:** Ranged Combat 2w2, Track Foe Over Land or Sea 20w.

**Equipment:** Lucan Beetle Armour +3, The Bow of Rajda +6.

**Rast Al-Vayuk**

*Ravaal's eyes and ears*

**Keywords:** Kareeshtan Courtier 20w, Devious Spy 10w.

**Significant Abilities:** Eloquence 5w2, Political Machinations 7w2.

**Falassik of the Abjuration**

*A slimy and unholy magician*

**Keywords:** Kareeshtan Sorcerer 2w2, Wizard of St. Al-Mazier of the Scream 12w.

**Significant Abilities:** Shield Against Magic 7w2, Curse of Clamouring Deafness 8w, Blessing to Shout Above the Crowds 15w, Blessing to Shatter Silence 10w, Curse of Uncontrollable Screams 15w.

**Equipment:** Rich robes, veils and cloaks +1, A rich golden staff +2, A Gilded Stool.

**Zadar of Writhing Pain**

*Ravaal's torturer and closest friend*

**Keywords:** Kareeshtan Torturer 7w2, Devotee of Ikadz (Pain, Torture, Hell) 12w

**Significant Abilities:** Blinding Agony Feat 2w2, Remove Pain Feat 10w, Unceasing Torment Feat 20w, Excruciating Torture 20w.

**Equipment:** Torture Tools +2

**Chadak The Reaver**

*Red Ravaal's First Mate*

**Keywords:** Kareeshtan Corsair 7w2, Devotee of Rajor 15w (Sea, Storm, Piracy)

**Significant Abilities:** Captain Ship 20w, Know the Seas 2w2.

**Equipment:** A Shagreen waistcoat and girdle +2, An Iron Yataghan +5



**Red Ravaal**

**Image:** Tall, swarthy with penetrating blue eyes and a flashing smile. Wears crimson armour, a white silk turban over his leviathan shaped helm, wields a heavy yataghan in each hand whilst leaping from deck to deck

**Significant Abilities:** Close Combat (Twin Yataghans) 15w2, Kareeshtan Noble 20w, Governor of Kumanku 10w2, Dashing Corsair 20w, Admiral of the Fleet 2w2, Initiate of Ompalam 5w (Slavery, Centralisation, Control), Initiate of Rajor 20w (Sea, Storm, Piracy), Cunning Politician 15w, Machiavellian Tactician 10w2, Warfare at Sea 20w, Draconian Leadership 1w2.

**Special Items:** Crimson Armour +9, Iron Twin Swords +9, Sea Eagle Crown 5w2.

Initiate of Ompalam

Initiate of Rajor

Personal Time

Governor of Kareeshtu (including Admiral of the Fleet)

subjugating the locals and declaring himself Governor of Kumanku. This expansion of Kareeshtu's territories pleased the Great Tond, but what really pleased him was to have Ravaal, the glittering star of the Kareeshtan court, so far away in a backwater like Kumanku. The Great Tond placed his spies amongst Ravaal's entourage and then left him be, except to demand annual taxes and pledges of fealty and humility. Red Ravaal set about bringing civilisation to Kumanku, he overthrew several rebellions and began his bloody and violent oppression of the natives. He cared not for the islands of Kumanku, they were only a resource to be plundered, a step within his much greater plan. Red Ravaal began to build and increase the navy of Kareeshtu, constructing several shipyards throughout the islands. In the mountains, bays and wild lands he began to train his corsairs and marines to deadly efficiency. The corsairs were rapacious, their piracy knew no limits, even travelling into northern waters to get the richest plunder and of course the Great Tond received his share. Ravaal established political contacts within Kareeshtu's enemy nations and founded new trade routes, which he kept secret from his greedy master. Gradually Red Ravaal's personal power began to increase, not drastically, but subtly, so much so that as the years passed the Great Tond's spies hardly noticed the increase in power...it is nearly twenty years later, Red Ravaal has his navy, his base of operations, his allies and his magic. His own personal strength and skill is deadly, and he is surrounded by equally lethal followers, surely only one thing can be his aim, the Pearl and Coral Throne of Golden Kareeshtu, the legacy his mother whispered of, or is it?

### Adventure Hook A few suggestions...

#### The Kumanku Emancipation

The players are all Kumanku runaways seeking to overthrow Red Ravaal's regime. An interesting campaign could commence with their escape from a slavers compound in Quarash, followed by a cat and mouse chase through the foothills of Tenenku. They 'accidentally' meet with another runaway who tells them about a band of likewise individuals in the mountains. The players join the Hero Band and great fun is had as they disrupt Kareeshtan communications, free slaves, rob from wealthy landowners and avoid Ravaal's troops. Interesting encounters with God Learner ruins, Red Ravaal's elite troops on training missions and monstrous (or perhaps friendly) Insect people. Who knows, their actions could lead to the liberation of the islands.

#### All the Tond's Men

The Players are Kareeshtan courtiers who are sent to the island by the Great Tond to investigate exactly what Red Ravaal is up to. Red Ravaal expects this sort of things so leads the players on a merry chase. Perhaps he can sway them against the Tond and get them to join his cause, or instead he leads the players to his Marine training grounds and uses them as live targets.

#### Secrets of the God Learners

The players are foreign mercenaries (from anywhere) who are shipped to Kumanku and promised lavish luxury if they will go treasure hunting for Red Ravaal. They are consequently kitted out and sent into one of the God Learner ruins to return with as many artefacts as they can find – good dungeon hacking fare, with perhaps the promise of uncovering something that may aid their own personal causes and rebellions. Of course there will be all sorts of traps, monsters and 'Things man should not know!' situations.

#### Admiral of the Crimson Fleet of Patient Death

The Crimson Fleet number some one hundred sleek and fast Warsails, all loyal to Kareeshtu, or so the Kareeshtan's believe, in truth their loyalty lies with their master, Red Ravaal who through clever tactics has bought, enslaved, seduced or replaced every captain of the fleet to suit his own ends. While Red Ravaal is loyal so is his fleet, but should he be forced to play his hand, then that is another matter. The fleet are rapacious and deadly, they frequently scourge along northern Pamaltela preying upon any ships they can quickly destroy. A favoured tactic of the Crimson Fleet is to take hostages and demand large ransoms for their return; Umathelans are a favoured target for this practice and their treasure bolsters Red Ravaal's coffers nicely. Lately the Crimson Fleet have taken to attacking vessels travelling the trade route to Teleos, one of the ports of that island is ruled by refugee sailors from Kumanku and has become a particular target for the fleet.

#### Typical Corsair

Keywords:- Kareeshtan Corsair 10w.

Significant Abilities:- Daredevil Leap Feat 17w.

Equipment:- Cutlass +3

#### Crimson Fleet Warsail

These high-prowed and deep-keeled sailing vessels are some of the swiftest on all the seas. They are constructed in accordance with ancient Artmali secrets. Due to their small size the Warsails are typically surrounded a mob of bigger ships. Their crew are able marines and the magic of their gods allows them to leap aboard their prey and overcome the crew.

Keywords:- Kareeshtan Warsail 10w.

Significant Abilities:- Hull 5w, Sail Fast 20w, Manoeuvre Easily 10w, Ranged Combat (Arbalest) 5w, Close Combat (Prow Ram) 5w, Loyal Crew 10w.

## The Sea Eagle Crown

*This ancient artefact of feathers, gold and glass is a potent symbol to the people of Kumanku, it represents unity and control of the islands. It was made by GranAnKu and was brought to the islands from Thinobotu. It is Kumanku's most ancient treasure, which was thought lost in the first age, but was recovered from the roof of lofty Yananakaloo by Red Ravaal himself. Since he has worn it no Kumanku has dared oppose him and this has strengthened his grip over the populace.*

## Trade Goods

*The Kareeshtans export a wide range of items from the islands including...*

- Slaves
- Timber
- Exotic Woods
- Ancient Jrusteli Artefacts
- Guano
- Timit Products e.g. Lucan Carapaces for armour, Resins, Webbing, Eggs (a delicacy).



# Homeland: Kumanku

by Simon Bray

HOMELAND: KUMANKU

**T**he Kumanku Islands have a unique culture that has resisted three successive conquests by foreign powers. Each clan defines its personal loyalties and traces four generations of female ancestors, whom ever has the same matrilineal great-grandmother is in the same clan. Each clan is dominated by matriarchy and is matrilineal in nature. Clans are typically generous and egalitarian to one another, they have rituals of understanding, trade and mutual harmony, but they do not feel that this has to extend to outsiders, whom they have learned to mistrust over the centuries. Disagreements between the clans is settled not through conflict but through contest and competition, thus warriors are rare except those who seek to rebel. Such individuals are potentially dangerous to the clans, their actions can lead to clan extermination by the authorities and so they are usually driven out of the clan or handed over to the Kareeshtans for punishment.

Four moieties divide the clans, two are traditional, and two are recent and not widely accepted. The Day-Timers are very decentralised, they are only held together by clan officials and certain annual ceremonies. The Monster Girl King of the Starless Night on the other hand rules the Night-Placers; they hold Islands wide ceremonies and have a special ritual of renewal. In addition to these two are the Evening-Timers who urge reconciliation with foreigners and the Twilight-Beings who specifically solicit foreign members, both of these groups have arisen since the Kareeshtan conquest and accept slavery. With the influx of Kareeshtan practices and beliefs, the societal disruption of two invasions in twenty years and the emergence of the new moieties the Kumankans are having difficulty holding onto their cultural beliefs.

The majority of Kumankans that are not Kareeshtan slaves practice a simple, barbaric lifestyle, living in large communal huts, centred on a village totem. They hunt, herd and grow small vegetable plots using basic slash and burn agriculture. A rare few fish the seas and build simple boats to travel between the islands. Each clan develops a unique craft or skill, which they use to trade with neighbours for goods or know how. One legacy of the God Learner occupation that is still loved is the small dogs that the natives keep as pets, they keep down the islands rat populations and are used for hunting and herding in the high pastures.

The clans exerted no formal power over each other and there was never any formal over-structure of rule. They are now controlled as an occupied territory by the oppressive Kareeshtans under their tyrannical and draconian governor Red Ravaal. He uses his slave armies and the constant threat of Kareeshtan Naval might to intimidate the populace. He has placed taxes and restrictions on the populace, who have been forbidden the use of armour or the bearing of weapons longer than the forearm. Revolts have occurred, but failed due to poor leadership and co-ordination and the Kareeshtan's response to these have been bloody and violent. Red Ravaal has enslaved several communities, most notably the entire populace of Tenenku, which he has made his base. Such oppression is nothing new to the Kumankans. They were once the slaves of the Justeli God Learners and their Middle Sea Empire, but they saw them disappear. The Vadeli duped the islanders by claiming to be the God Learners; they saw them ousted by the Kareeshtans. The Kumankans know with almost divine assurances that the Kareeshtans will leave and they will find peace again, until then they labour under the lash, pay their taxes and suffer silently.

## Kumanku Homeland Keyword

*Look and Feel:* A simple and honest people who have lived for generations under oppressive overlords, they place great emphasis upon the clan and family. They are superstitious, their society being held together by their simple beliefs, and taboos. They possess an inward strength, and have learned that all Kumankans are brothers and sisters, no matter who rules them.

*Occupations Available:* Entertainer (Story Teller, Singer, Drummer), Farmer, Healer, Hunter, Merchant, Sailor, Warrior, Thief

*Note:* Treat Sailors as fisherman with an emphasis on coastal waters, Warriors are rare unless slave warriors in service of the Kareeshtans or rebels. Thieves rarely steal from their own kind, but instead do so as acts of secret rebellion against the overlords. Slaves retain their former occupations, but also have the skills Loyalty (Master), Humbled and Enslaved.

*Native Abilities:* Dance, Kumankan Customs, Geography of Kumanku, Know Local Area, Rural Survival Skills, Sing, Swimming, Wrestling.

*Typical Personality:* Optimistic, Egalitarian, Generous, Honest, Resilient, Secretive, Hate Vadeli, Hate Kareeshtans, Hate Overlords.

*Typical Relationships:* To Family, to Clan, to Village

*Magic:* Common Magic, An I An Ma Tradition.

*Common Names:* The names of the Kumankans are based upon a personal name, often chosen for its pleasant sound rather than any meaning, followed by the name of the matrilineal Great-Grandmother and hence clan name. There is also a common use of nicknames and epithets. So for example Hulutu Ganaba Pox-Tum and Jalesi Ganaba Three-Teeth are both sisters of the Ganaba Clan, neither renowned for their beauty.

Males: AdaKumay, BanuKu, Halasi, Janutumay, Kumasi, Ku-Anay, TuAnsi  
Females: Alessi, Balaway, Dimotu, Palanwa, ZeNessa  
Nicknames and epithets – Broadnose, Pot Boy, Clam Eater, Sing Singer, Limp Dancer, Fugly.

## Common Magic

### Amu Mahay Tam the Many Mini Magics

There are a huge range of local petty spirits practices, fellowships and moieties that provide common magic of all types. The Kumankans treat these all as charms, even if they are clearly not.

*Sample Common Magic:* Bless Slingstone, Slow Bird, Hold Breath Underwater, Sense God Learner Trickery, Drive Away Lucan, Make Friends, Mend Relationship, Please Mother, Run Over Hills, Call Cows, Unspill Milk, Scare Snake, Placate Overlords.

## Specialised Religion The An I An Ma Tradition

During the reign of the God Learners the Kumankans were forced to worship all manner of weird and perverse deities to please their overlords. This worship disappeared with the God Learners, and was replaced with a simple animist religion centred around the spirits of the Islands and Community, as well as the ancestors of the Kumankans. This magic is called the An I An Ma tradition, or Flesh People Spirit People Island Tradition in the native tongue. The premise is that it is the complete magical and natural ecology of the island that is worshipped, this Soul of the Islands is given female form and is called GranAnKu, she was the founder of the islands who came here from mythical Thinobotu before it was swallowed by the seas, bringing life to barren rocks and giving her children a home to cherish. The lesser spirits are divided into her children, such as the grumpy cattle spirits, sweet island breezes, hypnotic Yanga flower spirits and Mountain wraiths, her descendants who are the founding ancestors of all the clans or members of her own kind such as Yalamay the Sun Spirit, Little Dog Rutu and the Genti Mountain Sister Spirits. In part the tradition teaches wariness of the sea, for it was the jealous sea spirits that swallowed Thinobotu and more importantly it is from the seas that came the overlords who tested their faith, however the religion also teaches that these tests are vital to the soul of the island and only strengthen its resolve. The tradition covers a plethora of practices, some common others locally restricted but recognised as part of the local magical world. Most people are simple spiritists, although some become practitioners of shamans.

### An I An Ma Tradition Keyword

*Abilities:* An I An Ma Tradition, Worship GranAnKu

*Virtues:* Love Kumanku, Traditionalist, Resilient, Nurturing, Wary of the Sea

*Magic:* Tradition Spirits

*Island Spirits* – Know Way Home 10-5w, Peace at Home 8-20, Find Food 10-20, Calm Animals 10-5w.

*Sea Spirits* – Swim Ashore 10-5w, Lure Fish 8-20, Sense Reef 10-20, Drive Away Gulls 8-20.

*Air Spirits* – Breath Freely 8-20, Words on Winds 10-5w, Drying Wind 10-20.

*Ancestor Spirits* – Question Ghost 8-20, Comfort the Dead 10-5w, Mother's Wisdom 10-10w

*Community Spirits* – Settle Argument 8-10w, Call Clan 10-20, Defend Home 8-20, Welcome Warmly 10-20, Vex Foreigner 20-10w.

**Entertainer:** Daduki Practice, Spirit of Communal Songs, Dances and Ceremonies, more lately the source of Work Songs to make the suffering of slavery less harsh.

Song Spirits – Sing Together, Song of Peace, Work Less Tiring, Sing Away Sorrow.

**Farmer:** Hena Hana Hoy Practice, the spirit of the digging stick, the scythe and slash and burn agriculture.

Farm Spirits – Cow, Digging Stick, Kill Weeds, Yams, Slash and Burn, Drain Land.

**Healer:** Ulhay the Soother, Spirit of the poultice, herb and splint.

Healing Spirits – Preserve Herbs, Strengthen Poultice, Mend Broken Bone, Stick Cut

**Hunter:** Tuleshay Stick Come Back, Spirit of the Sling, Dart and Throwing Stick, Small Dog Rutu is her eternal companion. She is the younger sister of Kulatashay the Atlatl Woman, but since the Kareeshtan occupation javelins have been prohibited.

Hunting Spirits – Call Dogs, Return Throwing Stick, Slow Animal, Bird Killing Dart.

**Merchant:** Many-Beads ManuChu, the haggling spirit who barter for everything from beads and spare yams to grooms and hunting rights.

Barter Spirits – Shout Down Competition, Haggle Harder, Seal Price, Deal Binding Spit.

**Sailor:** Singing Sulsea the Hull Tapper, is the boat builder and fisher, who lures fish with song and rhythm as well as net and harpoon, he carried GranAnKu across the jealous seas to Kumanku.

Fishing Spirits – Lure Fish, Stun Fish, Scare Away Shark, Quick Gut, Dry Boat.

**Warrior:** Halalanku is the burning spirit of anti-oppression and rebellion that dwells in the hearts of all Kumankans, but whose very worship can evoke the most terrible of Kareeshtan retributions.

Rebellion Spirits – Hate Oppressor, Drive Away Foreigner, Strike Down Enemy, Cutting Insult, Incite Rebellion.

**Thief:** Itiki the Sticky Fingers, a little worshipped spirit who steals from the mouths of the oppressors to feed his children and thinks nothing of the danger in which it places his clan.

Taking Spirits – Hide Food, Quick Hands, Lurk in Dark, Seize Chance.

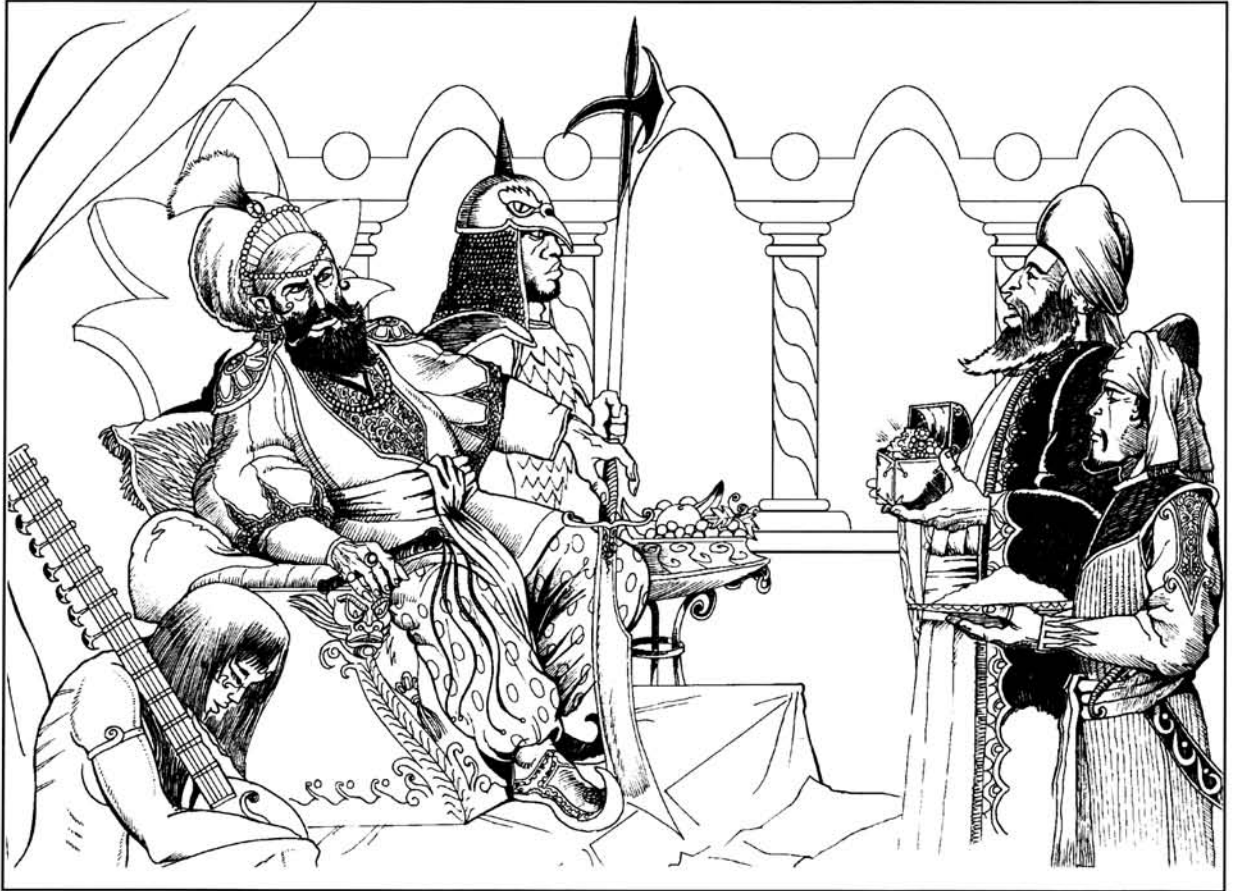
### Why Leave Home? Or More Precisely Why Stay?

Adventurously spirited Kumankans are in extremely short supply, however there are those that seek to escape the beatings of their overlords and find a new destiny for themselves. They immediately become escaped slaves and will be hunted down by their vicious and grasping masters, their names will be recorded in the ledgers of the slave hunters and their families will be beaten or worse for their treachery. Runaway slaves have two options, either hide within the islands and risk being caught or leave the island by sea. There are small pockets of resistance in the high valleys of Kumanku formed from bands of runaways, but they are mercilessly hunted down or used for sport by the Kareeshtans, however this is not to say that a group of Player Character runaways wouldn't change the face of Kumanku. The option of escape by sea is accomplished in one of two ways, stow away on a trading vessel bound for somewhere else, these are usually controlled by Fonritans who don't take kindly to runaways, or alternatively steal or make a boat and sail away. Surprisingly this latter option has been successful on more than one occasion and groups of Kumankans are found in Umathelan, Jrustelan and Teleos ports. In fact such escapes have been so successful that on Teleos a group of Kumankans control a whole port, although it is constantly persecuted by Kareeshtan warsails.



# Golden Kareeshtu

by Martin Hawley and Peter Metcalfe



## Introduction

GLORIOUS LAND AT THE WORLD'S HEART

Golden Kareeshtu is a land of verdant coastal plains, rolling hills and a diverse archipelago. It contains over three million people in various city-states and communities, that are collectively known as the "five cities and three isles". Kareeshtu is made one nation by the might of the imperious Tonds, a brotherhood of slave magicians that few like and many fear. Under their leadership, Kareeshtu's fleets dominates the Marthino Coasts and the Kumanku Isles while the rest of Fonrit trembles at its shadow.

Kareeshtu is Golden to distinguish it from the Iron Empires that were forged out of war, the Silver Empires that were glued with money and the Brass Regimes that were made through trickery and deceit. Kareeshtu is Golden because it, like so few others in history, is governed according to Ompalam's pure laws of cosmic slavery.

## Description

Kareeshtu proper refers to the mainland and the Guyan Isles. The mainland is mostly broad and flat with two large rivers flowing placidly through it. The western river, the Nigrates, springs from a wounded mountain statue in the Marana highlands while the eastern river, the Tasheem, has its origins in a lake of unknown depth in the same highlands. Both these rivers are navigable inside Kareeshtu.

East of the Tasheem river are the Anamu hills that extend from the Marana Highlands to the sea near Njenaguya Isle. Deep wadis cleave these rocky hills

The exact number of the Guyan Isles depends on mapmaker to mapmaker although most authorities agree that there are three large isles – Murdjaguya, Dsunguya and Njenaguya, six minor isles and an unknown number of islets and coral lagoons.

**Tondiji**

GREAT CRYSTAL EYE. SLAVE OF THE ALL

Tondiji is the sacred heart of Golden Kareeshtu because its god commands every other god within the Unity. His worshippers, the Tonds, are the spiritual and political elite of Kareeshtu. Within the City's Great Temple lie the Great Crystal Eye and the shrines of the Owned Gods, the patron deities of the other cities within the Unity.

Only a small minority of Tondiji's inhabitants worship Tond, as the rest are either slaves or close relatives of the rulers and important peoples of the Owned Cities. As well as providing the Owned Gods with the necessary worship, they act as hostages for the good behaviour of Owned Cities.

**Dindanko – the Blue Capital**

OCEAN BULWARK. SMITER OF WAVES

First among the Owned Cities is Dindanko on the Isle of Dsunguya. Most people consider it to be the capital for the Blue Empire is governed from here. The riches of the city is staggering, resulting from its industrious shipyards, the sea-borne trade and plunder from its fleets and, above all else, the tribute from the Blue Empire.

Governing Dindanko is the Admiralty, a Vadeli institution that the Kareeshti have made their own. The Admirals even meet in the famous Admiral Yacht under the watchful eye of the mummified Birekumlu, the Vadeli Admiral that opened the Oceans in Fonrit. Despite the importance of the sea to their city's wealth, the inhabitants hate the sea with a violent passion for they fought at great cost to prevent it from devouring their isle during the Closing. Now armed with stolen Vadeli magics, they have taken their war to the sea.

Standing proud over the rooftops of the city are the Seventeen Minarets. Garangordos and his brothers originally raised these huge towers all over Fonrit but the God Learners brought them here to prove their rule over Fonrit. The locals keep clean the Minarets from friendly cities and befoul the Minarets from hostile cities.

**Katele – the Pure City**

DRY THROAT CITY. NO TEARS SHED HERE

The newest of the Owned Cities, Katele is an impressive array of tents and palanquins. Where other Cities are proud of their ancient foundations, Katele's residents view it as a temporary camp to be abandoned when the time comes. This and many other strange customs are attributed to the beliefs of its Founders, the Pure Ones.

The Pure Ones practice the traditions of the wandering tribes of the southern veldt but condemn those tribes as well as their own ancestors for having given up their immortality to have children. The Pure Ones seek to reverse this error through severe spiritual practices, involving in part the expulsion of all water from their bodies, which takes decades to complete. To assist their pursuits, the Pure Ones use potent weather magics to make the land and air around the city so dry that only the river keeps it inhabitable for other humans.

**Tulbulus – the City of Pain**

LAUGHTER IS DEAD. ONLY PAIN STAYS

The Tonds favour Tulbulus above other Owned Cities for it was the first to submit to them. The residents practice harsh forms of purgation from flagellation to crucifixion, all under the watchful

eye of the infamous Torturers. Laughter is forbidden here to help others purge themselves although the locals circumvent the prohibition with a fondness for atrocious puns.

People avoid visiting the city on the Dashomo shores because the Torturers maintain numerous toll-shrines in and around the city that must be paid in suffering. Indulgences exempting visitors from the punishment may be purchased but these are expensive, cover only one form of suffering (an indulgence against the bastinado is ineffective against the lash), may only be purchased at the Temple of Ikadz and the bureaucracy is awful.

**Kyrem – the Burning City**

HOT BRIGHT CITY. SOAKING SUN'S RAYS

Kyrem lies within the Anamu hills in the Wadi of the Flaming Sands. Its buildings are fused rock inlaid with brass fittings. No humans live here only the Holari, fearsome creatures with bodies of smoke and flame. Originally they lived in fiery Sakum but Seseko enslaved many to destroy Kalabar. When Seseko died peacefully many years later, the Holari were freed but unable to return home because of the pollution they had incurred during their captivity. So the Holari settled here, vowing to burn all humanity until their conquest by the Tonds. Now they are meek and flattering to their masters but cruel and bullying to every other Kareeshti.

**Shirahan – the Cloud City**

FLYING IN CLOUDS. RAINS DOWN BELOW

Geographers are hard-pressed to place the wondrous city of Shirahan anywhere on their maps because it floats above Kareeshtu upon clouds. The residents can command their city to rain, hail and thunder upon their terrestrial enemies but dare not do this too much or else the foundations of their city will be weakened and it will plummet to earth. Select inhabitants can also use clouds to travel between their city and Kareeshtu.

**Njenaguya – the Strict Isle**

GREAT FOREST ISLE. WITH ONE MASTER

The Law School of Njenaguya is so renowned for its wisdom that the Tonds have proclaimed that only its graduates can preach in public. Everything on the Isle, whether land, residents or visitors, belongs to the Shakh of Njenaguya, the school's wisest scholar. The income from legal fees alone has made the Shakh the richest man in Kareeshtu, although he gives much of this to charity and more to supporting the school. To aid Kareeshtu's jihad against the sea, the Shakh has ordered many farms in the Isle's harsh, rugged interior to be abandoned to make way for forests of cedars and pines. The resulting wood is destined for Kareeshtu's rapidly expanding navy.

**Murdjaguya – the Isle of the Dead**

DEAD WALK AND TALK. LIVING QUIET

As a result of God Learner meddling, Murdjaguya is notorious for its necropolises, vast cities of moving dead. During the Closing, the living and the dead fought each other – the living won but the dead were unable to be killed. Now living Necromancers act as the gaolers of the necropolises to ensure that the dead will not threaten the living. The dreadful memories of the war and the foreknowledge of their likely end have cursed the living Murdjaguyans with a propensity to murderous rages. Unusually for Kareeshtu, the

Murdjaguyans are cremated, as they prefer oblivion to death.

## Amahama

GRIM SHADOWS WAIT. LIVING TREMBLE

This once small city is now a peaceful and mildly prosperous large town at the junction of the Nigrates River and its slave, the Velmand River. However the atmosphere is tense and taut with anxiety. Almost thirty years ago, the local blues revolted against the Tonds and killed two – the first blue uprising in over three centuries. Fearing the return of the Yranian Leapers, the Tonds mustered in force and retook the city after much terrible fighting. Much of Amahama was literally trampled flat while roughly ten thousand people lost their lives in the following purge. The Tonds maintain a major garrison in Amahama as well as a network of informers. Many evildoers and dissidents have been discovered and executed but the Tonds are no closer to finding the Yranians instigators.

## Abesh

NO STONE WALLS HERE. BUT WALL OF FEAR

Unwalled Abesh dominates the border between Kareeshtu and Afadjann. It is not part of the Unity and never will be for both the Tonds and the Jann fear the frightening Death Affliction that the Pasha can summon against foreigners that have visited his city. The land is thick with intrigue as spies from both empires seek to discover all they can about each other here.

## The Dark Rock

EGG OF DARKNESS. FROM DEEP OCEAN

An isolated huge rock in the highlands of eastern Kareeshtu washed here during the Violence of the Seas. Its foreboding form towers over the surrounding countryside. Any closer inspection reveals a contorted surface covered by worm casts and numerous holes. Locals fear the rock as the egg of an evil sea demon and have set up a shrine to keep the egg sealed.

## The Blue Empire

ISLANDS, CITIES. COUNTRIES; ALL SLAVES

The Unity dominates the affairs of many other places in Thinokos, Tarahorn, Kumanku and Banamban Coast. Since their patron gods are not Tond's slaves, the Kareeshti brand these places as the Blue Empire.

Thinokos is a land of wicked Idolaters with only one city of any worth, Bulili. The Idolaters tell the tale of how their ancestors came from the east after the Flood drowned the fabulous city of Thinobutu. They are notoriously stupid for not being able to see the connection between their error and their loss, which is confirmed by their friendship towards the blues. The Tonds would have made Thinokos part of Kareeshtu if it weren't for their fear that the sea would soon drown the Idolaters.

The Kumanku Isles are full of Idolaters and Insect Folk. Although the Idolaters here also came from Thinobutu, they hate the blues and have warred with them in the past. The Tonds are more interested in adding the resident Insect Folk to their unity. Seeking their God, they have discovered a vast and frightening insect deity, ancestral to all Insect Folk, and are busy making plans to

enslave it.

Tarahorn's rocky coast ensures that it has few cities of any worth. Chief among them is the Gleaming City of Banbara Maunde, which is carved out of a massive piece of red coral. The red coral is so prized that Kareeshtu monopolises its trade.

The Banamban Coast is a thin strip of civilisation beyond which lies a vast stretch of savage-infested jungle. The main cities here are the Floating City of Dumanaba and ancient Goan, from which traders travel on the legendary Kolar Road to reach the southern veldt.

## Fonrit Minor

NO PYRAMIDS. UNWORTHY LANDS

Fonrit Minor describes the Fonritan lands of Afadjann, Mondoro and Marana. Chief among these unfortunate lands is the Empire of Afadjann, which includes the Isle of Kanem Dar and the surrounding coasts. The depraved Jann controls a magic noose that strangles anybody that dares to think an evil thought about him. Many cities groan under the weight of this impious tyrant.

South of Kareeshtu lie the highlands of Marana. Unlike Afadjann, nobody rules it all but both the Jann and the Tonds are reluctant to invade it for fear of provoking the return of the Yranian Leapers. The Yranian Capital, Faladje, still stands but its inhabitants pretend not to know anything about the Leapers. Strange signs and cryptic events convince visitors otherwise. South of Faladje are the ruins of ancient Kalabar, a city which ruled all

Fonrit for many centuries until their destruction at the hands of a motley army, which still occupies the ruins.

South beyond Marana is the wild land of Mondoro. The land here is utterly wild shifting hills and forests around as though they were wind.

Only five cities are to be found in this forsaken land, each of them evil and not to be trusted. First among them is Jotoku, home of the accursed assassins, while blues rule the city of Barueli and women are forbidden in Fanjosi.

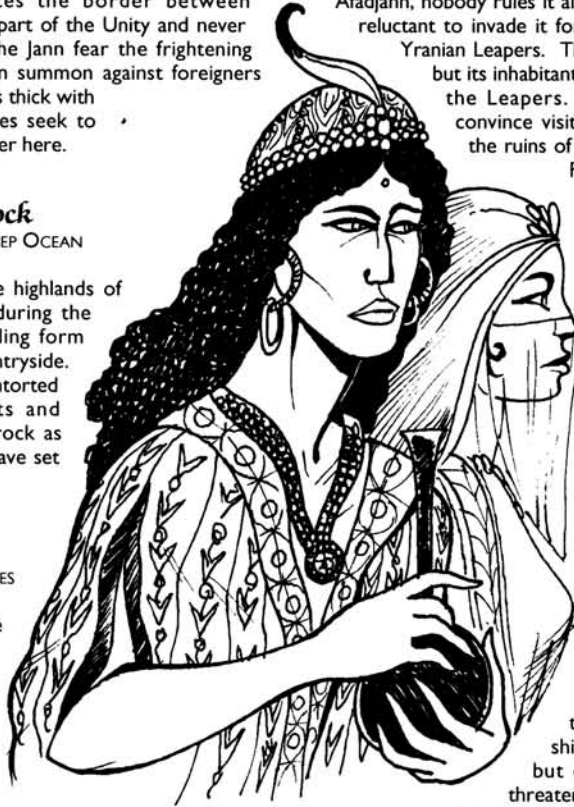
## The World

BAD INFIDELS. WICKED DEMONS

West of Kareeshtu is the Dashomo Sea. Recently the sea demons there have had the audacity to demand that surface shipping pay tribute. They harass merchant shipping and threaten weak coastal areas but do not dare confront our navy or threaten our cities.

West beyond the Afadjann are the Elf Forests of Valos and Enkoso infested with primitive savages while infidel sorcerers pollute its coasts. God Learner ruins dot the land, each concealing some terrible magic secret. Everybody avoids those ruins but the elves have unleashed already two secrets to harm Fonrit.

East of Kareeshtu lies the Marthino Sea. Like the Dashomo, it is infested with sea demons but they are too spineless to oppose us. Jutting out into this sea is the massive peninsula of Kimos, where tribes of Idolaters wage eternal war against their demon relatives. Some Idolaters seek our help but contact is difficult because there are no long-term ports as the natives change the very shape of the land in attempts to destroy each other. Beyond the Marthino are the Maslo Coasts that border the festering Errinoru jungle. Two



tribes of Idolaters live here, the Flanchi that war with the Elves and the Elamli that copulate with them. Hoom Jhis, an old naval enemy, lives in Flanch.

West beyond Kumanku lie the Jrusteli isles, the shattered tip of the legendary Land of Sorcery. Our merchants meet here with infidel sorcerers, insect folk and demons of night, stone and wood while our leaders make preparations for its future conquest.

North of Kareeshtu is Jotimam's Whirlpool where the sea demons plot the destruction of our land. Anything devoured by the Whirlpool is destroyed utterly. Beyond the Whirlpool is the mysterious Cold Land, full of infidels, demons and Yranians.

Northeast of our land lie the three archipelagos. The first is Loral, now home to many monsters, the second is Teleos, full of humans of many colours and the third is Vithela, where golden infidels dwell in languid ignorance.

South beyond the Banamban Coast is Laskal, the westernmost extremity of the festering Errinoru Jungle. Further south are the remains of the massive Fensi that evildoers raised to sever us from the south. Beyond the Fensi is the great Southern Veldt, south of which lies the Holy Land of Sakum.

### Weather

Kareeshtu's climate is warm and dry with wet winters. Temperatures range between twenty to thirty degrees Celsius. Kareeshti mark the New Year with the sighting of the Clearburst, the rapid expansion of the Doldrums that puts the clouds to flight. The flight of the clouds before the clear sky is one of the most unusual sights there.

During Sea Season, the Doldrums gradually move over Kareeshtu, making the air stagnant, humid and still. The sunshine at this time increases until it becomes capable of baking at the season's end.

In Fire season, mainland Kareeshti sees a change in the winds, which now blow northward from fiery Sakum. The winds are dry as the desert, bringing a temporary relief from the previous season's dankness. As the season drags on, its hot, blowing winds are a cause for much grumbling with the odd shower snatched from the forests of Laskal and the Koraru bay bringing some cheer. The Guyan Isles are still becalmed by the doldrums and not until later do they escape it.

During Earth Season, the winds gradually shift eastwards until they blow straight from the Marthino Sea. Everybody can tell when that happens for the Marthino winds are the winds of the Monsoon, laden warm rain-bearing clouds.

The rains become cooler during Storm Season, but the Kareeshti dread the terrible sea storms that blow shoveltuskers as though they were leaves. The storms can be stopped by the commands of their holy men, but only if the community has been pious.

## The Material World

### Inhabitants

BLACK SKIN, BLUE EYES, RED FLESH INSIDE

The most striking feature of Kareeshtu's inhabitants is the colour of their skins, which range from dark brown to pale blue. Most are either dark brown or slate blue but more than a few mixed features such as brown skin with blue eyes.

Although dark skins are highly prized, the Kareeshti are not concerned with the presence of one or two blue traits – some find them appealing – but the preponderance of such traits. If a Kareeshti has more blue traits than not, he is a blue and one of the most wretched people alive. Most Kareeshti consider the average blue to be little better than intelligent vermin. It is not a crime to kill a blue although Kareeshti would be upset by the affront to decency if the murder were particularly gruesome.

The miserable status of the blues is commonly attributed to a great curse that Garangordos sent against them. Yet that was over a

thousand years ago while many immigrants cursed since then have become respectable residents in Kareeshtu. The real reason for their misery is that the blues inherit psychic scars from their ancestors' sufferings during the Great Darkness.

As a rule, the blues are naturally lazy, callous and untrustworthy. Left alone, the blues prefer to beg or steal rather than work for their daily bread. Their hovels are so notorious for their squalor that it scarcely seems possible to imagine humans living there. Yet the blues live that way and resist attempts to improve them. When made to perform work, they shirk or attempt to escape. Sadly the only way of getting most blues to work productively has been the lash.

Many people over the years have tried to redeem the blues with only partial success at best. Humane lawgivers have striven valiantly down through the ages to impress on them the need for righteous conduct. The God Learners and the Yranian Leapers tried magical methods that woke few but had no effect on others. Eugenical solutions are unfeasible since there are too many blues.

## Culture

### Slaves and authorities

RAIN FALLS, WIND BLOWS, SUN SHINES, SLAVES LIVE

In Kareeshtu, slavery is good. As a powerful affirmation of a cosmic truth, the relationship between Ompalam and mortals infuses the very being of Kareeshti society. Those that are aware of their bondage are Toravs ("slaves"). As there is no shame in this awareness, the Kareeshti customarily address each other as slaves when no other title is appropriate.

Some slaves have the power to command others. As there are many different ways in which this power can be acquired, the Kareeshti call these slaves Alami ("authority").

### Lawgivers

ETERNAL LAWS. SWEEPING, STRICT, STARK

As everybody is Ompalam's slave, it becomes a matter of great importance to know Ompalam's will. Therefore pious Kareeshti seek guidance from the Lawgivers. These religious authorities are also known as Greater Divines because they divine Ompalam's will and enforce it. Every Lawgiver has a community of followers that is known as an Omma or Unity.

Each Lawgiver promulgates his own interpretation of Ompalam's will and makes it available to his unity for a tithe. These

### Examples of controversial topics

*Collaboration with the Tonds: Many lawgivers distrust the Tonds with good reason while others are proud to be their enthusiastic supporters. Since to oppose the Tonds is tantamount to suicide (and hence abhorrent to Ompalam), the question is how much support should one give to them?*

### Usage of intoxicants

*Since people should always be aware that they are slaves, lawgivers condemn the use of intoxicants. Debate rages over whether any use is permissible, which has caused some lawgivers to condone drinking establishments and others to incite mobs to raze them.*

### Depiction of Living Creatures

*Kareeshti consider Life to be the interaction between Ompalam and a material body. A statue or picture thus mocks Ompalam for it has no life. Although Lawgivers unanimously condemn the use of Idols, they are split about how lifelike a statue or picture can be. Many permit stylised representations while a few demand no representations at all.*



take the form of injunctions to be obeyed at all times. Although each unity obeys different strictures, most differences are tolerated as Ompalam can clearly will that different people behave differently. The Lawgiver enforces his strictures with ritual blessings for those that follow them and ritual curses upon those that break them. Even if a stricture has been broken in secret, the evildoer will still be punished for Ompalam is all knowing.

Unities with harsh lawgivers will have fewer followers than other unities. However even the most austere lawgiver has enough followers to live modestly. Rather than prohibit wicked practices outright, many lawgivers find it easier to limit the circumstances in which they can be performed. For example, most lawgivers do not prohibit the drinking of wine outright but restrict its consumption in many ways, such as buying or selling wine.

The true test of a Lawgiver's strictures comes in the sectarian conflicts between the unities. Although most differences in strictures are tolerated, a few are so controversial that rival lawgivers feel they cannot reflect Ompalam's Will. Since each Lawgiver has a solemn duty to denounce outsiders for being unfaithful to Ompalam, they regularly send curses against their rivals. Normally these curses will fail – in which case the clashing unities will then have a street battle – but if the strictures are too lax or the Lawgiver has not been true to his strictures then the Lawgiver perishes and his followers suffer.

## The Pyramids of Ompalam

MASTER ON HIGH. OWNEDS AT BOTTOM

Kareeshti society is centered on the Tentacule ("pyramid"), a social grouping very much like the stone edifices that their ancestors built. At the head of every pyramid is an authority known as the Ras ("Master"), while serving him are select slaves known as Yads ("Owneds"). The smallest pyramids may have several Owneds while the Shakh of Njenaguya boasts a hundred thousand Owneds in his pyramid. Over the years many unique customs and signs have developed to distinguish these pyramids from each other. Examples of such signs range from the design of ceremonial daggers worn hanging from the waist, the way a man's turban is decorated or the different colours of a woman's chadour.

Becoming an Owned is a voluntary act although a Master's acceptance is necessary. Often the Masters delegate authority to trusted Owneds, making them the Owners of other Owneds within the pyramid. An Owner can likewise delegate authority to his Owneds, with three or four tiers of authority commonplace in large pyramids. Most new Owneds begin at the lowest tier of the pyramid and work their way up. As a mark of their status, the Owned takes the surname of [Owner's name]-Owned.

As creatures of their owners, the Owneds do what they are told, look after their owner's interest and are even willing to die for their owner. This attitude is acquired through the ritual of bondage that transmutes the normal instincts of self-preservation into instincts of owner-preservation. However the sacril nature of their bondage to a mortal exalts both the mortal and Ompalam. As a result, the Lawgivers consider Owneds to be holy folk worthy of their guidance and protection. They require the Master to be a person of exemplary conduct and monitor his treatment of his Owneds, handing out commendations and admonitions whenever necessary. An Owned has the right to choose his own Lawgiver and may never be ordered to break the strictures of his unity. As a result, Owneds are among the best-treated people in Kareeshtu.

A grave flaw in the pyramid hierarchy is that Owned only has an obligation to his immediate superior and no obligation to anybody else. Hence an Owned may freely plot and scheme against others within the pyramid. The only limits are that his superior comes to no harm if the plot fails. Superiors usually demand knowledge of what their Owneds are planning but, by longstanding custom, the Owneds only give away enough information to allow their superiors to plausibly deny any knowledge of the plots if and

when they are exposed.

Many Masters use Eunuchs to curb internal plotting. These Owneds have dual loyalties – the traditional loyalty to their Owner while their Master has a magical loyalty obtained through possession of their severed organs. Eunuchs should to be used sparingly as any major conflict between the interests of their Master and Owner could cause them to develop a rapacious lust for power beneath a façade of normality. Tragically such cases are more common than they should be.

## Family affairs

MASTER AND SLAVE. HUSBAND AND WIFE

Kareeshti society is strongly patriarchal although the numerous peace treaties signed after the Women's Revolt allows women some measure of equality. In particular, the Lawgivers recognise marriage as Owned slavery for the wife, requiring their husbands to be Masters or Owneds. Since the wife is an Owned, the husband's conduct during the marriage is subject to supervision by the wife's Lawgiver.

Since the price of becoming a Master is beyond the reach of most men, joining a Pyramid is the only way for them to become married in Kareeshtu. Even then, their wife is someone chosen by their owner. Likewise a woman's first marriage is to a Master. After a couple of years in his harem, the woman is then handed down to an Owned within the pyramid to provide both with a good home. If the husband is wealthy then the wife is usually gifted with a handmaiden or other domestic servant.

Permissive lawgivers have sanctioned matriarchal and homosexual marriages. These relationships are never admitted to in public for fear of angering conservative lawgivers although their existence is widely known through gossip.

## Divine slavery

SLAVE OF A SLAVE. DIVINE SERVANTS

As the slaves of Ompalam, the Gods are also permitted to own slaves. Many Kareeshti follow a god with the guidance of a lesser divine. Like the lawgivers, the lesser divines may reward or punish their followers to aid them in following their God's will, but they are forbidden to contradict a lawgiver.

A few Kareeshti are so devoted to their god that they are literally holy slaves. Such people are known as God-Owned and like other Owneds, they take the name of their God as their Owned name. Each God-Owned belongs to an order or brotherhood, the most powerful being the ruling Tonds of Kareeshtu. All God-Owned must obey the Lawgivers in the same way that their God obeys Ompalam while the God-Owned of the Owned Gods also obey the Tonds without question. However the God-Owned are freely able to conspire against their rivals with sectarian feuding being an unwelcome diversion from unity street-battles.

## Self-Owneds

GIVE SELF TO ALL. NO LIFE WITHOUT

The last class of Owneds is known as the Self-Owneds for they have dedicated their very selves to Ompalam. They have no possessions or slaves for Ompalam owes everything. They can command anyone (except the blues) to do anything but they must uphold the divine bonds of slavery in doing so, hence they cannot interfere with the Lawgiver's authority over his Unity or an Owned's subservience to his owner. The Self-Owneds are feared for their command over the physical world for they can unleash plagues, famines, floods and locust swarms if they so wish. Even the great catastrophes of past ages – the Closing and the Sun Stop – are attributed to the Self-Owneds.



## Blues

LIFE WITHOUT ALL. ONLY FOR BLUES

The blues differ from other Kareeshti in their inability to obey Ompalam. Most blues are blue-skinned but the Lawgivers may also condemn criminals, madmen and outsiders to be blue. As blues are perpetual violators of Ompalam's will, they are outsiders beyond the social order of Kareeshtu. Literally the Lawgivers do not think the blues are slaves, a legal subtlety that brings them little comfort. Blues can escape their wretched status by becoming a God-Owned but only a few gods will accept them.

Since blues are outsiders, anyone can own them regardless of ethical merit. All that is needed is to simply obtain a blue and keep him captive. At the same time, if the blue escapes from custody then the ownership lapses.

As outsiders, the blues live outside the walls of Kareeshti cities in vast slums. Press-gangs often traverse these slums looking for blues to work on the slave-farms in the countryside. Because conditions are so bad, the blues are very good at escaping and returning to the slums.

Despite their low status, spousal relations are common between blues and Kareeshti. The major causes of this are Kareeshtu's strict marriage laws – which prevent many men from marrying – and stricter injunctions against fornication. But because the blues are outsiders, the lawgivers cannot punish such relations. The relationships do suffer from the psychic woes of the blue partner and the resentment from other blues.

## Funerary rites

LIFE IS FLEETING. DEATH IS ENDLESS

The Kareeshti do not believe in the immortality of the soul for "life is a slave to the body as without the body, there is no life". Thus when Kareeshti die, a lawgiver then reviews their conduct in life before pronouncing judgement (the Halebi ritual). Most are sentenced to serve Ompalam in death as they had served him in life. Such Kareeshti are then embalmed at one of the necropolises outside each city whereupon they will be taken to the vast Dead Cities in the underworld. Impious Kareeshti are destroyed by a variety of methods (burning and being fed to wild dogs being the most common) while Sainly Kareeshti are permitted to remain within the land of the living for a few more years.

Guilt-ridden Kareeshti can avoid the Halebi ritual by having their corpses sent to Murdjaguya. "Entombed at Murdjaguya" is synonymous in Kareeshtu with a wasted life wasted in villainy.

## Agriculture

### Farming

Since the Pyramids own virtually all the arable land in Kareeshtu, the local farming practices are dedicated to fulfilling their needs and wants. Centuries of agricultural experimentation and



development have led to the standardisation of two types of farms – Black and Blue.

The Blue Farms are vast plantations dedicated to growing a single crop of millet, cotton or, more rarely, sugar cane. The labourers, sullen blue captives, are forced to work under the most brutal regimes of discipline ever devised in Glorantha. Yet this works so well that, despite the various deaths and escapes at the farms, the harvests are enough to feed all Kareeshtu. When the harvest is over, the blues still toil at other tasks for their pyramid's benefit if they haven't escaped.

The Black Farms are dedicated to growing various herds and luxury crops for the jaded palates of the Authorities. The luxury crops include fruits, exotic grains (which don't grow well in Pamaltelan soil), spices, and qat while the herds include goats, chickens, shoveltuskers and, rarely, horses.

Coffee is becoming a popular crop as it does not arouse the indignation of the Lawgivers as qat and other narcotics do. The labourers are itinerants that drift from farm to farm in search of work. Such labourers are rewarded with a small plot of land to grow whatever they

want, usually legumes, onions and tomatoes. After the harvest is over, a fortunate few will be offered the chance to join a pyramid while the rest are forced to take up begging, fishing or banditry.

The primary beast of burden is the pygmy shoveltusker, a strange creature native to the Guyan Isles. Larger elephants of various types – the results of a God Learner experiment – are known but not used. The Tonds use all the larger Shoveltuskers for their own purposes while they exterminate any other type of elephant they see out of fanatical loyalty to Ernamol.

### Fishing

Fishing is mainly carried out using nets cast from small pyramid-owned dhows and smaller fishing boats. The dhows catch the most fish but the catch is destined for the pyramid with only a small amount left for the fishers. The pyramids view the smaller fishing boats as poachers and often hire corsairs to sink them. A profitable pastime for many fishermen is pearl diving.

### Hunting

Vast stretches of land are hunting preserves for the Authorities. Some places are dry savannah full of teeming game while others are full of dense twisted trees in which lurk dazzling coloured birds, clambering monkeys and stalking panthers. Grim wardens patrol these preserves to mete out dire injuries on any poachers that they catch.

## Food and Drink

Millet is the staple food in Kareeshtu. The blues supplement it with grub while others eat rats and cavies, either roasting or stewing them. Coastal inhabitants consider themselves fortunate to dine on fish and shrimps. The Owners grow fat on a diet of choicest goat meat and chicken with side dishes of bread, boiled legumes and mashed bananas. Since the subjugation of Banamban coast, the Owners have acquired a taste for sauces made using the hottest peppers from Laskal. Deserts have traditionally been candied fruits and other sweets, all of which confers the most visible blessing of Ompalam – Authority's belly.

Intoxicants are severely condemned although much surreptitious drinking and drug consumption occurs in secret. Many enterprising blues make a living plying the Kareeshti with forbidden substances. The most common practice is the chewing of the qat leaf, which creates a sensation of mild euphoria. This is traditionally performed in the mid-afternoon when it is too hot to do anything else. The Authorities drink wine while everybody else drinks firewater, a potent brew made as a by-product of Admiralty anti-marine magics.

## Crafts

CARPETS, GLASS, POTS, SWORDS, WOOD AND CLOTH

Kareeshtu's artisans are renowned for their skill in five crafts such that even their slave wares fetch good prices in distant markets. The pyramids produce most of the wares and do so effectively that independent artisans are only found in the remote areas. Their wares are graded according to the intended recipient – Authority, Slave or Blue. Authority wares are top-class work made by the pyramid's Owned artisans. Slave wares are the result of causal labourers employed in the pyramid craftworks, and they are destined for retail in the bazaars and souks. Blue wares are shoddy pieces of work that are given to the blues as charity.

Most craftworks are dedicated to weaving, producing items such as clothing, blankets, mosquito nets, carpets, wall hangings and even the tent-buildings of Katele. Two fabrics are used; cotton, which is usually woven as muslin, and wool. A smaller number of craftworks make pots, dishes and vases of all shapes and sizes.

In their wars against the sea, the Kareeshti discovered many strange wonders and put them to use. Chief among these was the discovery of glass, making Kareeshtu's windows, wine glasses and vases sights that amaze outsiders. But the most marvellous contraptions undoubtedly are the globes that can trap sunlight to slowly release them in a darkened room.

Kareeshtu's smiths are adept at working all metals ranging from bronze and pewter to iron and gold. Slave grade wares are usually unadorned while Authority wares have inlaid inscriptions or embossed detail.

## Architecture, Towns and Villages

KAREESHTI CITIES ARE EXERCISES IN CONTRASTS

### City Layout

Each City has its own Fensi, a large stone wall that also marks out the sacred border between the City and the Outside. Since the rise of the Tonds, the old city gates have been demolished and replaced with massive portals that are large enough to admit a Tond sitting enthroned upon a shoveltusker. Wide avenues, known as Tond Roads, enable the shoveltuskers to move quickly from the gates to the city centre. When not in use, the avenues clog up with beggars and struggling street vendors hawking everything from hot foods to their own children.

At the centre of the city is the Divine Abode, the physical residence of the City's patron divinity. The Tond Roads meet each other here, forming a plaza around the Divine Abode.

Every seven days, the city residents gather at the plaza to pay homage to their divine protector. At other times, the City Authorities use the plaza to conduct public business.

Near the Divine Abode yet discreetly shrouded by large whitewashed walls lies the Tond Legation, a vast palace containing temples, shoveltusker stables and magical laboratories. The palace is forbidden to everyone save the Tonds and their personal slaves.

Surrounding the city centre are large gently sloping pyramidal mounds of earth and stone, covered over with perfumed gardens and ornate residences. At the top of each mound is the Master's abode while the lesser abodes on the slopes belong to his Owned.

Broad streets link these pyramids with other important places in the city.

Further out, the city is reckoned by its landmarks – such as houses of important lawgivers, temples to the minor gods, bazaars and souks. Around these landmarks lie dust-blanketed adobe housing bordering narrow alleys, the poorer places often dissected by stinking open sewers.

### Abodes of the Authorities

The Authorities dwell in shining domed marble palaces amidst well-tended gardens of exotic blooms. Entry into their abodes is through a highly decorated gate, often adorned by silver, gold and brilliant read coral. The abodes are considered incomplete if they do not have tall, slender minarets of various shapes and sizes, each with a balcony at the top.

At the centre of the Abode is an enormous central space complete with an enclosing dome, high-arched entrances and a tiled floor.

The furnishings of these abodes are no less elaborate. The walls are either stuccoed with intricate geometrical patterns or draped with exquisite wall hangings. Wherever wood is used, such as furniture, doors and shutters, no opportunity is missed to have them carved with intricate designs.

### Other dwellings

Most people live in tall narrow adobe housing with small, unglazed windows. Respectable households whitewash their walls while more modest folks are known for their home's red walls. The roofs are flat so that people can find sleep there on hot nights.

## Trade and Transport

Much of the Tonds' wealth comes from a toll on trade. Although Tond partisans describe this toll as modest, much smuggling and bribery occurs to avoid it that is harshly dealt with when discovered. Despite this, Kareeshtu thrives as an entrepot of nations attracting merchants from Umathela, Flanch, Jrustela and even Sees Bananjarb in the southern Veldt.

Keeled xebecs and dhows travel among the Guyan archipelago, the Blue Empire and even reach up the rivers to Faladje and Lake Mnan. Kareeshtu's roads are modest unpaved tracks – this bothers the Kareeshti little as most baggage is carried abroad the backs of pygmy shoveltuskers.

Sea trade is risky outside the confines of the Blue Empire. The Dashomo Sea is hazardous to shipping, troll corsairs patrol the Jrusteli Isles and even the Maslo coasts are becoming a danger.

**Exports:** Carpets, muslin fabrics, glassware, and metal goods.

**Imports:** Exotic woods, spice, wooden carvings, and feathers.

## Dress and Decoration

Sumptuary customs govern the Kareeshti dress. Cotton garments are the norm although the Authorities favour long flowing silken robes, either tied around the waist or shoulders. Most males dress in shirt and breeches with the traditional turban or fezzes while women wear chadors in public although some lawgivers insist on the veil as well. Blues wear little more than loincloths and badly wrapped turbans, even in cities and cooler weather.

The Owned are required to display some mark of their slavery – most proudly display the insignia of their pyramid as a badge or a tattoo. The God-Owned are more exotic in their marks – the Tonds display the Great Crystal Eye on their forehead, the Necromancers wear black skullcaps while the Slaves of Pain go bare-chested, even in the coldest weather to show they have no heart.

## The Mental World

### Intellectual Life

Law is the most pre-eminent body of knowledge in Kareeshtu as its theory and practice consists of discerning Ompalam's Will. Every city has its own School of Law, although the Tonds insist that their public teachings be compatible with the Njenaguyan School (almost certainly because that School sees nothing wrong with the Tonds). Private teachings incompatible with the Njenaguyan School are illegal although the Tonds do not concern themselves with enforcing such matters.

The Tonds amplify the common aphorism "Knowledge is Slavery" by proclaiming "The World you shall know and the World-Soul shall know you". Worldly knowledge is virtuous as it enhances submission to Ompalam. Guided by this philosophy, the Tonds sponsor much study into diverse topics such as astrology, natural philosophy and history. They also make this knowledge available to all in schools of learning that also teach the basics of reading, calligraphy and arithmetic – however only Owned and better actually see any value in attending these schools.

A darker side to the Tonds' attitude to learning is that they must also study forbidden topics such as demonology, evil sorcery and heretical philosophies. These researches are conducted in secret to avoid upsetting the Lawgivers but everybody knows they exist and even where to join.

### Music and Literature

Music is an integral part in Kareeshti society, with lutes, flutes, tambourines and rattles all used for entertainment. But in religious ceremonies, such as the mass homage to Ompalam, only one instrument is used – the "chorus of the Kareeshti Slaves".

The major form of literature in Kareeshtu is poetry, ranging from the succinct Satoi epigrams (two lines of four syllables apiece) to sprawling compositions on numerous topics that can easily fill several codices. Prose is excoriated for ignoring the natural rhythms of the World.

### Visual Arts

Due to the Lawgiver condemnation of lifelike pictures and statuary, such pieces are only found as furtive erotica. Mainstream artworks are either geometrical patterns or heavily stylised images, some of which are so flat and abstract to be mistaken for symbolic art. The frame of the art pieces are either woven wall hangings, illustrated codices, mosaics, ivory carvings, wood work, glass windows, vases or simply painted walls. Treatments of gardens are especially popular, with care taken to detail its trees, rosebushes and fishponds. In such depictions, the artists follow the convention of depicting the plants with winding stems and geometrical leaves to hint at some hidden secret.



## Language

THE MASTER SPEAKS. THE SLAVE LISTENS

The language of Kareeshtu is based upon the Holy Words that Garangordos bore when he returned to the Centre of the World. Furthermore the Kareeshti know that the Holy Words are the same words that the Kareeshti spoke in the Golden Age.

Kareeshti speech has two modes, Authoritative and Subservient. Most people speak in the subservient mode, trying to outdo each other in humility while only the Authorities are allowed to speak authoritatively. Unlawful authoritative speakers are stoned to death whenever they are caught. The effect of these modes is so strong that when an Authority issues a command, inferior listeners feel compelled to perform it unless they have good reasons not to (such as being contrary to the interests of their Lawgiver or Owner). Likewise careful use of subservient speech can manipulate a flattered Authority in performing a requested action (indirectly hinted at) although the Authority can refuse if he has good reasons.

The Yranian Leapers introduced a secondary dialect, which relies on a subtle pattern of rising and falling inflections to give the speech a powerful singsong effect and more importantly partial immunity to the authoritative mode. Known as Moonspeech, the Lawgivers whip anybody they catch using it but it remains entrenched among the blues. Scholars refer that Moonspeech has a hidden purpose that waiting to reveal itself at the worst possible time.

The Kareeshti script is long, flowing and elegant. Only some of language is usually written down but the script's power is so potent that they compel the reader to fill in the missing portions. Actual commands can be spelled out in their entirety to compel their reader to obey them (although this depends largely on the calligraphic skill of the writer).

This application finds widespread use in the public display of commands to the people at large. These commands are kept simple so that even they can act upon the illiterate.

## Government

### The Tonds

UNITY'S OWNEDS. BRUTALLY FAIR

The Tonds are a magical order of slaves that serve their god as the spiritual and political elite of Kareeshtu. They are noticeable for their diverse magical servants and their cosmopolitan outlook, being able to understand the diverse views of their subjects. They have their origin as a band of occult magicians based on the city of Tondiji while their enemies denounce them as minions of vanquished Kalabar, a city of evil memory.

Originally only a citizen of Tondiji could become a Tond but the Tonds now accept any worshipper of the Owned Gods. All that is necessary to become a Tond is summon up a godling sacred to their god and enslave it. This act makes them a first rank Tond but thereafter their



erstwhile friends condemn them as a renegade.

There are currently eight ranks of Tond, one for each city or isle within their Unity. Tonds of lower ranks are obliged to obey higher ranking Tonds at all times but the standing orders of the Great Tond prevents most abuses. To win promotion to a higher rank, a Tond must enslave a godling from a different city. Hence an eighth rank Tond controls godlings from the five cities and three isles.

The seventh and eighth rank Tonds govern the order and each is entrusted with an important political office. The most powerful Tond is automatically the Great Tond while currently the other eighth rank Tonds are the Divine Consort and the Chief Censor.

The politics of the Order are turbulent considering that seventh rank Tonds are utterly servile to the Great Tond while other eighth rank Tonds are proud of their independence. If the Lord Mahout (currently seventh rank) were to be promoted, then the Great Tond would lose direct control over the Tonds' military. Reshuffling offices, bribes and the occasional assassinations have all been used to help the Order govern Kareeshtu.

### Unity Government

Kareeshtu is a diverse collection of city-states made a unity by the magics of the Tonds. Through their god, they are able to command the Gods of five cities and three isles forcing their worshippers to submit to the Tonds. As a result, the Tonds have been able to impose an effective but uneasy peace in a land historically known for fratricidal bickering.

Despite the importance of the Unity to the Tonds, the highest ranks shun government duties in favour of order politics and esoteric studies. Hence for at least a century, Unity government has effectively been the personal hobby of Archidomides, the Overseer of the Owned Cities. He supervises the Owned Cities with the assistance of his Legates and resident Tond garrisons. Archidomides takes care not to appoint a Tond to his native city to avoid rebellions against the renegade.

A weakness in the Unity is that while the Owned Gods support the Unity, their cities are under no obligation to support other cities. Unity government is thus a festering web of plots and intrigue kept in check by loyalty to the Tonds.

### Owned City Government

Leading the government of each city is its patron God. Since they have more important duties elsewhere, they delegate authority over public affairs to their Owned and divines, who collectively make up the City Authorities. To ensure they govern the city rightly, wisely and well, the City Authorities gladly receive advice from the Pyramids, the Lawgivers and, above all others, the Tond Legate. Their public duties include the collection of tolls and levies, the construction of public works, the maintenance of the City's army (or in Dindanko's case, its navy) and the provision of justice.

All the Lawgivers within a city meet as that city's Sanhedrin to pass learned judgements on the righteousness of the actions of both the City Authorities and the Pyramids. The City Authorities also pay stipends to selected Lawgivers to assist the public in obeying Ompalam. While these lawgivers usually give free advice or reconcile quarrelling families, neighbours or pyramids, they also have the power to order severe punishments such as flogging, bastinado, stoning and beheading. Jail sentences are avoided, as Lawgivers believe it wrong to deprive an Owner of his property.

### Slave Cities and Blue Cities

Cities and Towns within Kareeshtu that do not have the status of Owned Cities are known as Slave Cities. They are usually heavily in debt to one or more pyramids from the Owned Cities. To ensure their obedience, the creditor pyramids maintain a garrison and small enclave within the Slave City.

Blue Cities are similar to Slave Cities save they are outside Kareeshtu and hence treated much more poorly. Most Blue Cities are indebted to Dindanko due to the high concentration of naval power there.

### Military

WEAPONS CLASHING. RAGING BATTLE

The Tonds are potent warriors on the battlefield with the assistance of their magical slaves. They however believe that military force should only be used defend their territories, as expansion should only come about through the subjugation of gods. This doctrine, more than anything else, has ensured an uneasy peace between Kareeshtu and Afadjann.

Although the Tonds see no current need for military expeditions, they have no problem with their Owned cities pursuing wars and battles so long as the Shakh of Njenaguya agrees. Currently he has only permitted war against the Sea and refuses to consider petitions to declare war against Faladje or Afadjann. As a result, the Owned Cities and their Pyramids have acquired a vast maritime hegemony, which they call the Blue Empire.

Traditionally the City Authorities have fielded their own armies but the Tonds have forbidden this practice, fearing that a major

defeat will erode the foundations of their Unity.

The prohibition does not apply to the Pyramids, which have their own corps of dervishes for guard duty, patrols and military expeditions. The calibre of the pyramid corps depends on the wealth of the pyramids. However the average dervish considers it a mark of shame if he does not at least have "a sharp scimitar, a stout shield, a fine mail coat, a plumed helmet and a mailed veil".

Lastly, under God Learner tuition, each city raised its own Tolaqi legion, an exotic formation of red-robed blues armed with thundersticks, under the command of the Lawgivers. Although many worry about the principle of armed blues – let alone bloodthirsty Tolaqi – their loyalty to the Lawgivers was unshaken during the time of the Yranian Leapers. However because of the Amahama revolt, the Tonds have forbidden the Tolaqi to be used for anything other than police duties.

### Navy

Kareeshtu's navy is primarily a creation of the Dindanko Admiralty. It has an overwhelming presence along the coast and the isles where it collects custom dues and sacks miscreant cities. The ships are mostly warsails, small sailing vessels that are faster than any other vessel when traveling upwind. They are very numerous and relatively delicate. The favourite tactic is to close and board, using a variety of methods including ladders, grapples, magical leaps and teleportation.

The warsails have an evil reputation for the Admiralty plundered their designs from ancient Artmali nautical secrets in a calculated blasphemy against the sea. Superstitious sailors refuse to set foot in them, knowing that the God Learners suffered for building a similar fleet. As a result, the Kareeshti navy is filled to a man with rabid seamen and pious dervishes pursuing the holy war

## Fighting Slaves of the Tonds

The magical slaves of the Tonds are varied, reflecting the diverse nature of the Owned Cities. Many Tonds prepare their slaves for battle and the following have been seen:

**Gigantic Shoveltuskers:** These creatures are so large they carry a large howdah capable of carrying the Tond, his retainers and other magical slaves. The shoveltusker tusks are usually tipped in iron and the howdah warded against arrowfire and enemy spells.

**Walking Dead:** These mummified slaves are taken from the Murdjaguyan Necropolises. They are feared for their skill in weapons or long dead sorceries, although the rumour that they cannot be killed is probably false.

**Holari of burning Kyrem:** These fiery destroyers are not as powerful as they were when they smote Kalabar but that comes as little comfort to the pile of ashes they have left in their wake.

**Desert Winds of the Nargan:** Hot, dry winds that can kill a man in an hour. Some winds are worse, being full of vile vapours, acrid smoke or stinging dust.

**Plague, Famine, Cloud of Darkness or Swarm of Locusts.** The Tonds know how to harness the Curses of Ompalam against the Infidel, a knowledge that causes Lawgivers great disquiet.

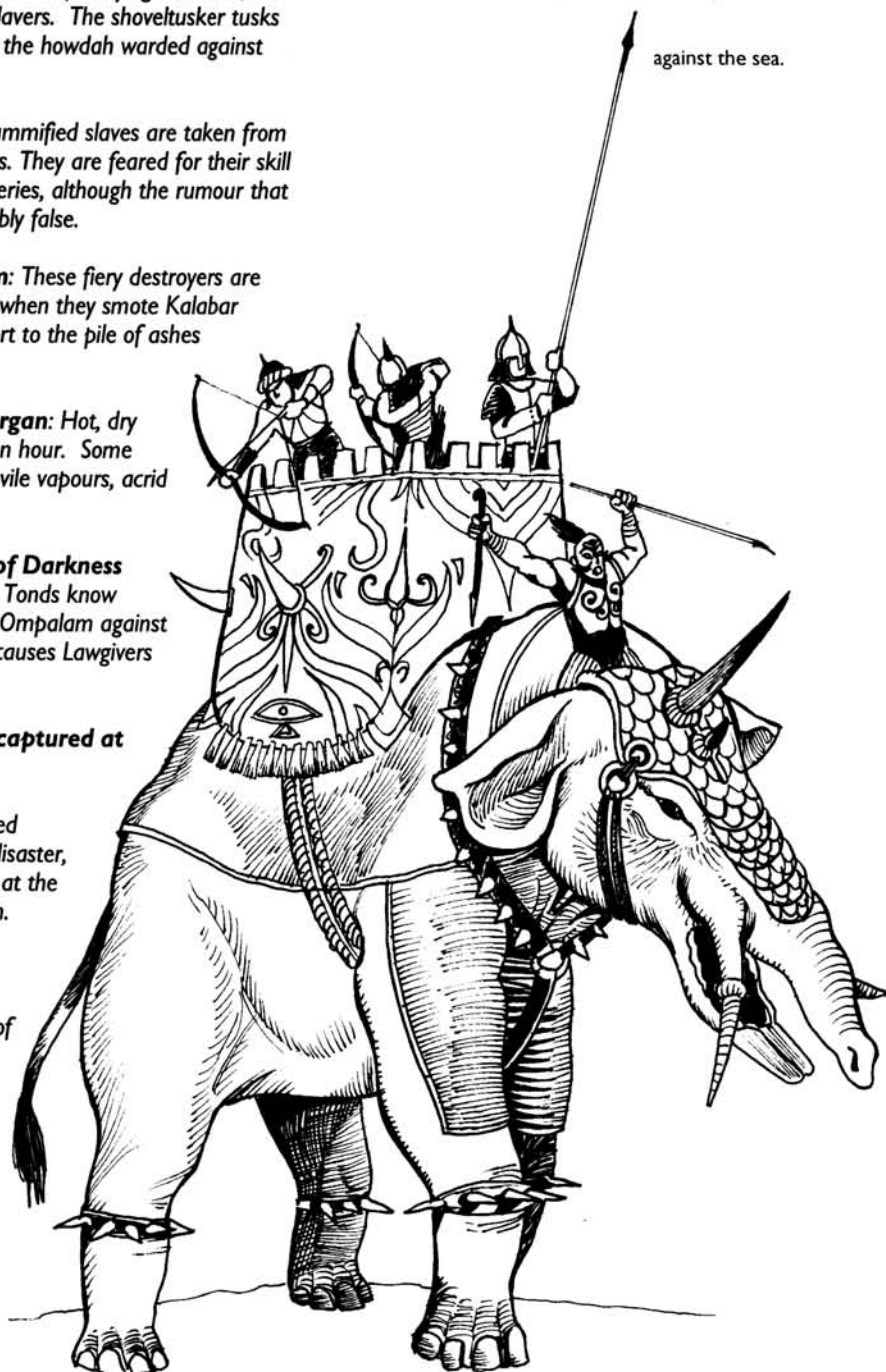
**Thunder and Lightning captured at Shirahan.**

**Angels of Torment:** Cursed survivors of some prehistoric disaster, these suffering creatures leap at the opportunity to share their pain.

**Colossal Elemental:** summoned forth from some distant plane to obey the will of the Tonds.

### Aims of the Tonds

1. Enslavement of the Insect Folk Deity
2. Resolving the Riddle of Yran
3. Confounding the Jann
4. Defeating Jotimam
5. Establishing the Cosmic Pyramid



against the sea.



Scale: 1 hex = 200 km

Plains



Hills



Mountains



Elf  
Jungle



Elf  
Tribe



Forest



Uninhabitable  
desert



Swamp



River



Seasonal  
river



Oasis/  
Tribal centre



Small city



Large city



Metropolis



Kresh route

**Utu**  
THE UNIFORM WORD



Dario Corallo  
© 2004

# P A M



## JORKAR'S SEA

## DASHOMO SEA



## WORD SEA



# Umathela

# TARICEN

# NARG

Yngortu  
Kafam  
Garguna  
Isten  
Eridus R.  
Jokotu  
Barul  
Tortica  
Nikosdros  
CERNGOTH  
Varburch  
Newfroswal  
Fengwal  
Yatanswal  
Epanes  
Bazach R.  
Lath Eskan  
Orskalikos  
Batudu R.  
Moroskol

# A L T E L A

MEWARD OCEAN



LUKU ISLANDS



LORAL ISLANDS  
LORAL SEA



SSHORG SEA

MURDJABGUYA  
GOLDEN KAKESHTU



MARTINO SEA



EDRENLIN ARCH.



ODASIO



TORTUGAX ARCH.



KORARU BAY

KIDOS

MIRELOS

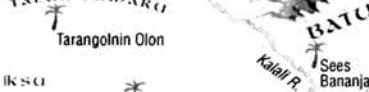
PALARKRI JUNGLE

PALARKRI OTS

ATADURO

TALEK TADARANG

TANOLEA



DESERT

ZAMOKIL

TOGAR OCEAN

# What the Lawgiver made me say

## Where did the World come from?

The world existed because Ompalam willed it so. Without his will, there can be no life. Without life, there can be no world.

## Where do we come from?

Ompalam made the Ancient Slaves to serve him. The Ancient Slaves served perfectly. To exalt Ompalam further, they made the Divine Slaves to assist them. But because the Ancient Slaves had not Ompalam's power, their creations were imperfect and served imperfectly. When the Divine Slaves made the Elder Slaves, their creations were flawed. Some served while others denied Ompalam and became Infidels. With each generation, servitude fell until the Infidels outnumbered the Slaves.

## Why do we die?

Infidelity to Ompalam is denial of his will. Without his will, there can be no life. Soon the Infidels died like flies and blamed us for their misfortune. Seeking a cure, wicked Infidels devised an evil magic that stole our life. In doing this, they became Demons that even stole from the Ancient Slaves. Long and hard were the Wars until the Demons were destroyed or driven away. We die because of the Demons.

## What happens after we die?

We do not die totally for we served Ompalam. It is abhorrent to Ompalam that his slaves perish through the actions of a demon or infidel. It is then our duty to preserve our corpses so that they may continue to serve Ompalam in the land of the dead.

## Why are we here?

We are here to serve Ompalam and our authorities, both mortal and divine.

## How do we do magic?

Magic is the result of servitude to Ompalam and the Divine Slaves. In serving them, we resist the demonic assault and draw closer to perfect servitude.

## Who are Our Gods?

**Ompalam**, the All-Powerful, is the Supreme Being. He is so great that few gods and fewer mortals can even begin to comprehend his nature. As the World Soul, all life obeys his will. The only way that he can be understood is through absolute servitude.

**Garangordos**, the First Lawgiver, revealed to us the will of Ompalam. He and his brothers and sisters showed us the paths of righteous living, such as the farmer, the dervish, the merchant and the artisan.

In the Old Days, every Slave served Ompalam through Tentacule, the Cosmic Pyramid. Its destruction at the hands of the Demons paved the way for the deaths of countless

others. Although the Cosmic Pyramid is ruined now, we strive to rebuild it. Other lands claim they need no pyramids but their folly is its own curse.

Although the creation of the Divine Slaves led to the ruin of the world, the surviving Divine Slaves are still obedient to Ompalam and therefore rightful for us to serve.

## Religious Policy of the Tonds

*To buttress their authority, the Tonds encourage the worship of Owned Gods in all cities even to the extent of displacing local cults. For example, the Zoraqi Necromancers have become keepers of all Necropolises in Kareeshtu while solar prayers are offered to Holaralam, a divinity scarcely known anywhere else in Fonrit. Old style rites are still performed in secret although the worshippers receive grisly punished if discovered.*

The **Great Crystal Eye** is the Master of the Divine Pyramid because he is the most subservient to Ompalam. It is through this favour that the Great Crystal Eye is superior to the Sun, the Stars and the Winds. His slaves, the Tonds, assist our great Unity in serving Ompalam.

**Ernamola** is the patron of Kareeshtu and graces us with millet and shovel-tuskers.

**Worlath** the Wind Father is the Patron of Shirahan. At first he was a Greater Demon but the God Learners captured him and sold him to us as a slave.

**Holaralam**, the great and shining sun, is the Lord of Heaven. The Holari brought his worship forth from Holy Sakum to burning Kyrem and the Tonds spread his worship from there to all Kareeshtu.

When the **Divine Slave Ikadz** saw the first infidels, he declared "Pain is the great teacher". He chastised the infidels that he met so severely that they were purged of their error. His slaves carry out his work of purgation through suffering.

**Pamalt** is the Lord of Sakum and patron of Katele. He teaches his worshippers how to join the Agi, his unity of Elder Slaves that dwell in Holy Sakum. His teachings take decades to complete, involving abstinence from water and other severe practices.

**Makan** is the God of Sorcery and the patron of Dindanko. He has many slaves serving him, including Dormal the Violator, Tanian the Sea Burner and Humct the vivisecter.

**Zoraq of Murdjaguya** is the God of the Dead. His priests, the Necromancers, enslave the dead to prevent them from overwhelming the living.

The Dervishes worship the **Battling Brothers of Kareeshtu** – Orjet the Silent and Hanjet the Furious. They hate each other with a passion and only in Yngortu in Afadjann are their slaves able to meet peacefully. They also

trouble the Tonds for Orjet loathes Ikadz and Hanjet despises Zoraq. Yet the slaves of the Battling Brothers are too numerous for the Tonds to suppress their worship.

Ever since the blues betrayed their patrons during the Great Darkness, few Elder Slaves would have blue slaves. Those that do include the Coborandans that the God Learners imported from a distant isle and the obscure Zamokili spirits that the Katele brought from their pilgrimages. Chief among these Elder Slaves are Tolaq the finder of beauty in gore, Ofeda the prophetess and dashing Emilla.

### **I have heard of other divinities. What can you tell me about them?**

All Divine Slaves obey Ompalam even if their Infidel slaves deny this. It is wrong to worship a Divine Slave in the manner of the Infidels for denying Ompalam's supremacy results in a miserable death.

The number of Divine Slaves worshipped by the Infidels is numerous. Even Pamalt, Makan and Worlath have hordes of Infidels in the outside world. Infidels are to be pitied for their ignorance, shown the way to righteousness and beaten about the head if they do not recant.

**Demons** are evil because they totally deny Ompalam. Yet they live and a few are as strong as the Divine Slaves are. They survive because they steal life from others to sustain their wicked existence. To permit a demon to live is worse than carnage.

**Aldrya** is the Demon of the Jungle. She believes she can grow anywhere she wishes. She seeks to smother Kareeshtu with her vile foliage and degenerate wood demons but our armies have her woods cannot grow here.

**Jotimam** is the Demon of the Oceans. He seeks to drown our land but our lawgivers have halted him while our navy seeks to destroy him.

**Jraktal** is the Demon of Life. He seduced the blues into sacrificing their Divine Slaves to him. Then he compelled them to sacrifice parts of themselves to him, an act that has scarred them ever since. He sought our life too but Garangordos made him devour himself.

**Yran** is the Demon of the Sky. Her worshippers once swarmed over our lands with strange powers and disturbing words. But their words were lies and when their power vanished, they fled into secret places.

### **History of Kareeshtu**

Our Unity has its origins in the Great Return [500 ST]. Led by Garangordos, our forefathers slew all the jungle demons and enslaved the blues. We cleared the hellish jungles away and tore down the abominable temples of evil Jraktal. Our forefathers did all this and more to prepare for the rebuilding of the Cosmic Pyramid. But their plans were wrecked when Garangordos was foully murdered. Without his leadership, only our forefathers remained true to the ideals of the Great Return while everybody else fought each other and us. To protect themselves, our forefathers proclaimed the Unity of Kareeshtu. Then, as it is not now, the Guyan archipelago was part of the mainland.

Although the rebuilding of the Cosmic Pyramid had been greatly slowed, its founding reverberated throughout the world. Many infidels and demons entertained evil



schemes to usurp control of the pyramid so they could rule the world themselves. But their schemes are doomed to fail for the Cosmic Pyramid is impossible without servitude to Ompalam.

The first wave of the infidels were the God Learners. From the north they came and they established themselves in Oabil, the site of their former empire [654 ST]. From there, they sent traders and spies to learn our secrets. We were strong then so they dared not make open war against us.

The second wave of infidels came from the South. These were evil sorcerers that had spoken to Garangordos in the Land of the Dead and learned from him the secrets of the Pyramid. They burrowed their way to the surface in the Marana Highlands and founded wicked Kalabar [690 ST]. There they united the Maranans through bonds of fear and warred against us when we would not submit.

From the east, came an invasion of Jungle Demons upon floating rafts [734 ST]. Led by the Elf Admiral, Errinoru, they attempted to re-establish the Jungle within Fonrit. We fought long and hard before Errinoru was driven away in defeat. But the worst of our fears was that the God Learners and Kalabar would strike when we were weak.

The God Learner threat eased when they fell victim to their own cleverness. Seeking to learn everything, they unwittingly witnessed the glory of Ompalam. They became entranced with our ways and sought to become like us. Even their faraway king sent ships of scholars to our land to learn from us [770 ST].

The threat from Kalabar did not ease. Having united all Marana through fear, they now set about making their gods their slaves. In doing this, they revealed their blasphemous intentions to build the Demon Pyramid. We were shocked and so were the God Learners. Together we made common cause to destroy Kalabar [846 ST]. But Kalabar was too cunning and resisted our armies with great guile and evil sorceries for many years.

A great blow came when Kalabar cursed the God Learners with civil war [901 ST]. They would not send any more ships after that leaving us to face Kalabar alone. Our authorities consulted each other and decided to defend Kareeshtu rather than destroy Kalabar. Soon our seers revealed that Kalabar had ensnared Jotimam within their



Pyramid [921 ST]. A Great Wave was brewing in the far north that was preparing to assail our lands.

When the Great Wave struck [942 ST], the carnage was terrible. The northern lowlands were flooded, creating the Guyan archipelago. Huge Pillars of Water formed in the straits preventing the Islanders from contacting each other or the mainland [943 ST]. River waves washed far upstream, flooding villages, crumbling banks and vomiting sea demons [944 ST]. But our long preparations enable us to turn back the Sea and thwart a merciless invasion from Kalabar. Soon both foes retreated exhausted [955 ST] but the seas were now closed. Every year we mourn the loss of the Drowned Cities and reaffirm our vow that the Seas should pay for their perfidy.

Seeking further allies to harm us, Kalabar sent their demonic slavers further afield. They could not enslave our gods because of our subservience to Ompalam but they did destroy the Great Eastern Jungle in a botched attempt [975 ST] while the God Learners of Oabil [1020 ST] and the Banamban Coast [1077 ST] fell victim to their curses. A renewed assault by Jotimam's hordes in the Week of Squid caused much havoc [1112 ST]. But our opposition of Kalabar soon took its toll. Many cities were sacked and burned because we could no longer defend them. Others paid heavy tribute or even submitted. After the destruction of the Armed Unity, Kareeshtu lay exposed to Kalabar's hordes.

But at the height of their power, Kalabar fell because it had enslaved so many gods that they could not keep track of their victims. Seseko the Fire Lord raised a motley army of pygmies, veldt savages, jelmre, exigers and other folk we know little about and care even less. While Kalabar's hordes were besieging our cities, Seseko razed that evil city to the ground and his army occupied the ruins [1136 ST].

Kalabar's destruction caused much contemplation amidst the debris. The Old Unity had been washed away by the Great Wave or destroyed in battle. The work on the Cosmic Pyramid had been wasted. Worse, it could not begin anew for the Pyramid secrets had been lost. Many among us sought inspiration and renewal elsewhere. Chief among these were Pure Ones that had visited Holy Sakum. They founded Katele [1202 ST] and tried to convert others. But most of us rejected their teachings for they involved renouncing women and water. Enraged the Pure Ones tried to impose their doctrines on us by force. This sparked the Women's Revolt that caused much suffering. Although the Pure Ones were never defeated in battle, the conflict took a great toll on their numbers, zeal, and passion for war. Eventually they offered peace to their neighbours and returned to servitude to Ompalam. But the restoration of the Unity and the reconstruction of the Cosmic Pyramid remained an elusive dream.

While the Wars against Silence raged in distant Vralos, we remained at peace. While forbidden Yran rose into the Heavens [1247], the first Great Demon to appear since the Demon Time, alarmed many, the land remained at peace for we all knew Yran was far away. Our illusion of security was

rudely shattered when the red-robed Yranian Leapers swept out of the Mountains of Marana to menace Kareeshtu [1320 ST]. Many cities offered tribute after the blues revolted and the Leapers leapt onto the walls with ease. But no sooner than this was done, the Leapers vanished as if they had never been [1331].

As evil as the Leapers were, their wake brought one blessing – the restoration of the Unity. Having offended the Leapers, Archidomides of Tulbulus was forced to take refuge with the Tonds, a mysterious band of fugitive magicians. In their magics, he recognised the lost Pyramid Secrets although they did not know it. Archidomides made the painful decision to foreswear his old servitude to become a Tond so he could convert them to the duty of rebuilding the Cosmic Pyramid.

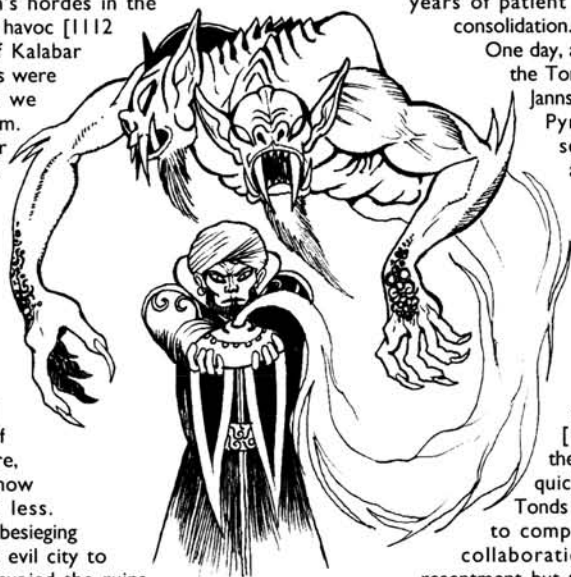
The re-establishment of Unity was long and slow. It took many years before the Tonds built the capstone, the Great Crystal Eye, at their new city of Tondiji and longer before they made the first addition, Ernampala, to their Pyramid. Further additions to the Pyramid involved many years of patient diplomacy, subterfuge and consolidation.

One day, a new enemy rose to confront the Tonds, Afadjann [1518 ST]. The Janns cared nothing for the Cosmic Pyramid but had their own secrets. Unfortunately they abused these secrets for pleasure. This is only to be expected as the forefathers of the Janns had danced with the Yranians and grovelled before Kalabar. It was no surprise to us that they would copulate with the Vadeli – wicked sorcerers that had recently appeared on the high seas [1585 ST]. With the help of the Vadeli, the armies of the Jann quickly overran our lands.

The Tonds refused to resist, not wishing to compromise their pyramid. The collaboration of the Tonds aroused resentment but their foresight was vindicated when the Vadeli savagely crushed a revolt against their greed [1589 ST] and when the Vadeli stranglehold over Kareeshtu vanished in a series of drastic defeats that even now seem unbelievable [1594 ST].

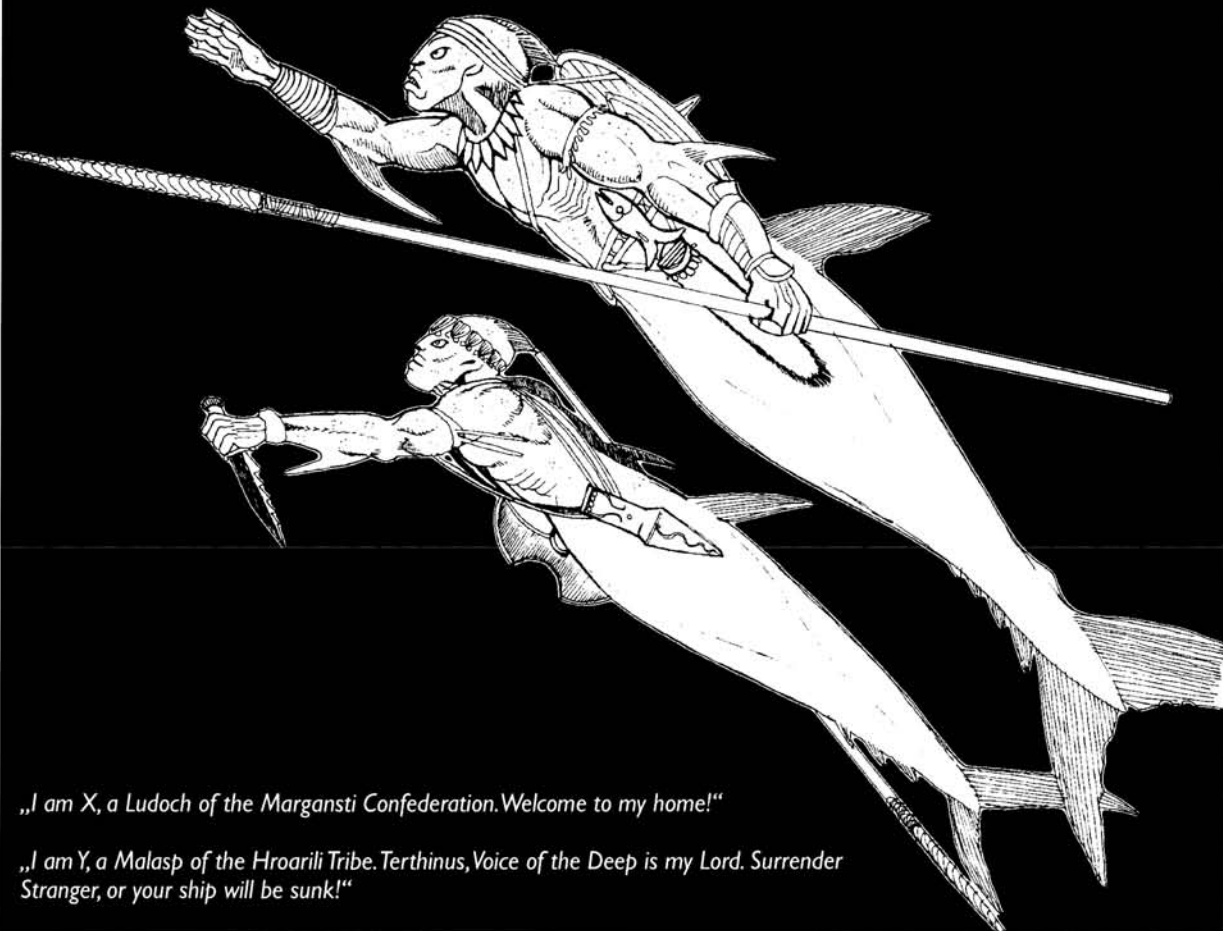
Once the Vadeli had retreated, the Tonds quietly resumed their preparation for the next addition to the Pyramid. Dindanko was not quiet as it built a huge fleet of ships to subjugate the surrounding coasts. Thinokos, Tarahorn and the Banamban Coast all fell quickly to their fleets while their last conquest, the Kumanku Isles, took a lot longer in face of Vadeli and then native opposition [1602 ST]. An attempt to incorporate Afadjann into the Blue Empire failed dismally when the new Jann reneged on his promises [1613 ST]. The Admiralty lost its appetite for coastal adventures after that and is now concentrating its might on punishing the sea.

Our Unity has seen of many invaders that sought us harm – the God Learners, the Jungle, the Sea, Kalabar, the Yranians and the Vadeli. All have been repelled and many have suffered for it. Now at the cusp of great things, our Unity, under the leadership of the Tonds, is invincible by land or by sea. We look forward to the establishment of the Cosmic Pyramid and the return of the whole world to Ompalam's Will.



# WAR BENEATH THE WAVES The Marthino Sea

by André Jarosch



„I am X, a Ludoch of the Margansti Confederation. Welcome to my home!“

„I am Y, a Malasp of the Hroarili Tribe. Terthinus, Voice of the Deep is my Lord. Surrender Stranger, or your ship will be sunk!“

## Description

The Marthino Sea is a mermen inhabitat area at the northern coast of Pamaltela.

It is in average 1.200 kilometers broad and the the same amount in length.

It is bordered in the west by Kareeshtu, Thinokos and Tarahorn (the eastern parts of Fonrit), in the south by Banamba, Kimos and Mirelos, and in the east by Elamle (the western part of Maslo) and the Edrenlin Islands.

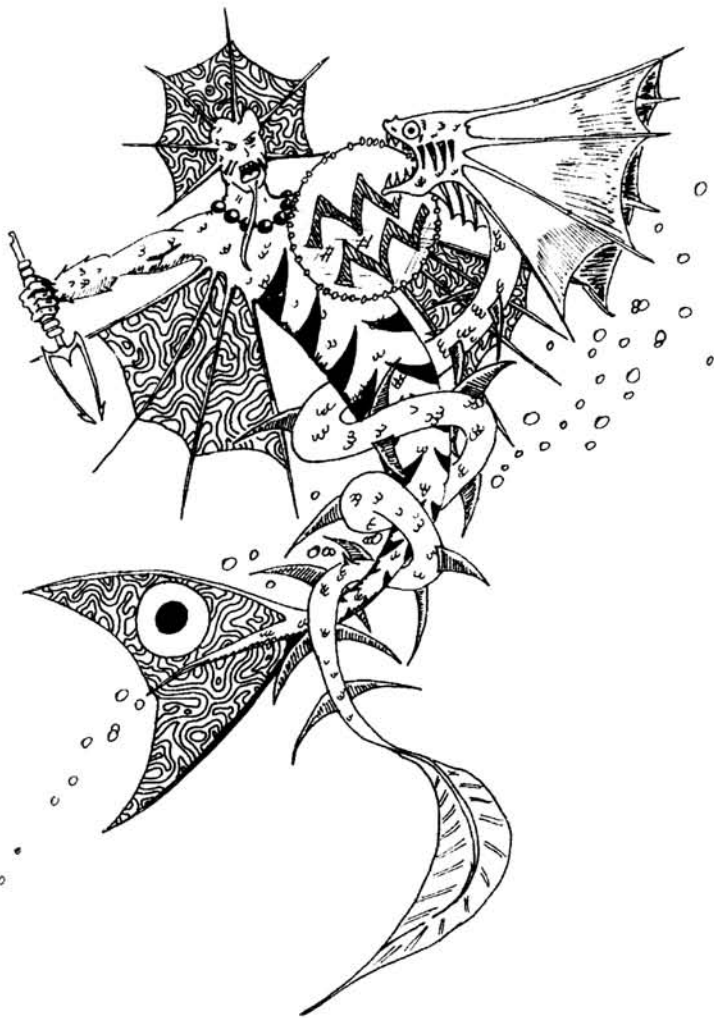
The western half of the Marthino sea is mostly populated by the native Ludoch mermen, but they are forced by invasion attacks of the invading Malasp to retreat more and more into the east.

In the eastern half of the Marthino Sea, in the Mirelos and Elamle area, live the Ludoch a peaceful and fertile life, only on and off disturbed by Malasp forces. Once a year these eastern Ludoch have to fight off the swimming spawn of the Mother of Monsters that come in from the north of Elamle.

Nowadays the Ludoch are still in control of most the Marthino sea, but the farer you go to the west the stronger the Malasp influence will be, in the northeasternmost area the Malasps have taken over almost completely.

The coast near areas in the whole Marthino Sea are inhabitat by Blue Elves. They are common at the coasts of Banamba, Mirelos and Elamle, and are found in lesser numbers in Fonrit, and rarely

*Compiled from the files of the Godlearner University of Newfroswal, the city archives of Ebbeshal, and the Cronicles of Wetness of Thinobutu. Additional material by Tenceron Fishsmell, a Ludoch trader of Maslo.*



«This pleasant tropical sea teems with life. Colorful fish swarm over tropical reefs».

«The native Ludoch mermen would lead a lazy and pleasant life, except that they continually war with the baleful Malasp mermen from the Dashomo Sea».

#### MISSING LANDS

at Kimos.

The Martino Sea is connected in the west with the Dashomo Sea and in the east with the Dinisso Sea.

Up to onehundred kilometers before the coasts of Pamaltela the Sea is only up to onehundred to twohundred meters deep (High Sea), from then on, up to the end of the Marthino sea, it is „only“ up to 1000 Meters deep (Middle sea). Deeps or Chasms are nonexistent in the Marthino.

In average twohundred kilometers before the coasts of Bululi, Bambara Maunde, Mirelos, and northwestern Kimos are big reefs. This reefs have plenty of corrals, as have most of the coasts that lack a sand beach.

#### Inhabitants

The Marthino Tribe of the Margansti Confederation of the Ludoch mermen of the Dinisso Sea lives in the Martino Sea. The Ludoch are native to the Marthino sea since ages. At the moment the Ludoch make up still the majority of the mermen people of the Marthino sea, but in the

most northwestern parts their influence is almost vanished through the invasion of the Malasp.

The Hroarilli Tribe of the Malasp mermen of the Dashomo Sea also claims that these waters belong to them. They have conquered parts of the western Marthino sea from the Ludoch. Most of the Malasp that appear in the Marthino are warrior groups, but some family groups have also settled in the farrest western corners, and established their first bubble nest and a stretch of shallow territory to feed in.

Murthoi blue elves live in the coast near sea. They are found almost anywhere near the coast in the shallow waters, tending their gardens. Bigger colonies are found before the coasts of Banamba, Mirelos and Elamle.

Some Ysabba appear sometimes in the Marthino sea. This humanhating mermen species destroys, or damages, any of the ships that they encounter.

The Waertagi are a race of human -mermen hybrids, although don't live IN the Marthino, they live at the Edrenlin Island.

#### Culture

The Ludoch organize themselves in large family groups which are wandering the sea like a herd of dolphins, and could live here a wonderful and peaceful life, if the Malasp wouldn't invade from the Dashomo.

They are highly complex organized, with underwater group activities like dances, rituals and ceremonies.

The Ludoch mainly fish, to feed their family (which can be very numerous), but some of them are also hunters, to hunt the bigger fishes and to strike against aggressive predators.

The Malasp are organized in small family groups which each claim their own territory. They started to colonize the Marthino years ago, but only recently (when Terthinus started to use his power) began to press the native Ludoch harder. They are proud of their fighting capabilities and their past, which was at its highest point when they helped putting down the Godlearners. Their organisation has remained the same since that time.

The Malasp go only for the best of the best for food: big fish, whales, dolphins, sharks, and even mermen.

The Murthoi Blue Elves mostly only tend their gardens. They cooperate sometimes with the Ludoch. The greatest deed of the Murthoi for the Ludoch was to plant some special plants into the interior of the houses of Thinobutu that produce the oxygen that made the air bubbles inside these buildings breathable.

#### Language

The Ludoch speak Cetoi and a lot of them Seaspeech also. No human can learn to speak the mermen languages, and so some of them have learned a human tongue. The wisest among them have learned to write a human tongue.

The Malasp speak Triolini and a lot of them Seaspeech. Only their leaders are willing to learn small bits of human languages to claim their amount of tribute from humans.

The Blue Elves speak Murthoi, a lot of them speak Seaspeech, some of them have learned a human tongue or aldryami to trade with mermen, humans or land dwelling elves.

### Government

The Ludoch Margansti Confederation is a highly complex organisation which groupactivities are coordinated and lead by a Council of Elders. Before taking a new action this Council will be questioned and heard. They acknowledge Estengitorox, „King of the Mermen“ of Maslo as their leader.

The Malasp Hornili Tribe is organized in small family groups. Each group is lead by the strongest and cleverest among them. Each person that was defeated is controlled by the Leader of the winners from that moment on. The Invading force is part of the followers of the demigod Terthinus, the Voice of the Deep.

### Military

The Ludoch are a naturally peaceful race, and don't have had in the past an ever present military force, but they can form a fighting force if they have to defend themselves from Sharks, Giant Squids etc. very quickly. They use Sharkskin, sea-serpent hide or giant-crab shell as armor, and use the Trident as their primary weapon. They have developed some new tricks in recent years: using the ink of Squids to give them a good escape; or using the venom of some sorts of fish, like globefish, for the coraltips of their weapons for example, but the best weapon that was evolved was a weapon that works underwater from a distance through soundpressure: the soundpipe. Today the Marthino Ludoch have a big organisation of warriors among themselves to fight of the Malasp, which they hate and fear. Their higher strength and agility helps them to keep the areas of Marthino, were they currently dwell, secure of attacks by sharks and other carnivorous animals.

The Malasp are mighty warriors. Each Leader of their family group is also the leader of the fighting force. Men as well as women are usually good fighters. Even their children show combat tendencies. They rarely use armor at all, counting on their power and intelligence only. Their most common used weapons are Trident, rapier and their special underwater Crossbow, the harpoon. .. specialty among the invadeing forces is that their rapier is made out of some kind of glass like cristal, which makes it almost invisible in water. The Malasp are now expanding their ancestral territory further east into the Marthino sea, using a lot of metal weapons, and magic. Their high intelligence and power helps them to keep the carnivorous animals away from them.

### Religion

The Ludoch worship the sea pantheon, especially Magasta, God of Death and Leader of the Sea Gods, Triolina, Goddess of Sea Beings,

and Wachaza, God of War. They use their relationship to their gods for development in their culture, as the Council of elders determine.

The Malasp worship the sea pantheon, especially Magasta, God of Death and Leader of the Sea Gods, Triolina, Goddess of Sea Beings, and Wachaza, God of War. Shamanic ancestor worship is common as well. They use their relationship to their gods in their traditional way, for their gain in personal might and power.

The Murthoi Blue Elves worship Murthdrya, Goddess of sea plants.

### Points of Interest

#### BANAMBA

Banamba is the coastal, northern most area of Laskal. The coast before Banamba is inhabitat by Ludoch and Malasp, but the Ludoch here are even more common than on the fonrinit coasts. Murthoi Gardens are at most of the coastline.

#### EDRENLIN ISLANDS

At the Edrenlin Islands are three shipwrecked Waertagi Dragonships. The connection between the Ludoch and the Waertagi is traditional friendly. The Ludoch help the Waertagi repair their huge ships by bringing them parts of wrecked ships from the depths of the Marthino sea, and the Waertagi thank them by swapping these for new metal items.

#### ELAMLE

Elamle is one of two penninsulas that make up the region of Maslo. It has also plenty of Ludoch and Murthoi in its waters. Malasp raiding partys appear from time to time.

#### FONRIT

The coasts of Fonrit are supposed to be inhabitat by Ludoch, but nowadays the fishermen and Sailors of the western Marthino Sea will only encounter less than half of the time Ludoch mermen, that are forced to defend their territory, and more than half of the time the invading hostile Malasp.

#### KAREESHTU

The waters around Kareeshtu don't belong to the Marthino sea, but to the Dashomo, and are controlled by the Malasp mermen of the Dashomo sea, although they have not started to claim tribute from Dindanko for free seatravel.

#### KIMOS

For most people of Glorantha is everything east of Banamba a hidden land. But there is Kimos, a rocky, hilly region inhabitat by a primitive tribe of humans and the, only here found, Gorgers. These two groups constantly continue to fight a magical war against each other upon the majesty of the land. The waters around Kimos are not very much populated by mermen at all. You can blame the elemental activities of the humans and Gorgers for that. If mermen are encountered than this will be most of the time Ludoch. Malasp are rarely encountered.

### People of Note

#### Wakaran Pearleye A LUDOCH LEADER



Wakaran is one of the wise, and respected advisors of the Ludoch and a Priest of Triolina. He has been the Spokesman of the Council of Elders for many years. He wants to lead the Ludoch to a peaceful future, but he knows that the way to peace can sometimes be only reached through war.

#### Cyreelee Coralhair A LUDOCH TRADER



Cyreelee is, among the humans, the best known Ludoch trader. She is a Acolyte of Triolina. She deals in artifacts from wrecked ships, as well as corals, fish, and seagrass. Her friendliness hides her good knowledge of humans and their behavior.



## People of Note

### Ratanar the Shark LUDOCH WARLORD



*Ratanar leads a big bunch of warriors that searches the nearer areas of the current locations of Ludoch groups for invading Malasp. He is a Acolyte of Magasta. He is headstrong, which has caused some trouble for him in the past, but he is also a very agile and strong person, even for a Ludoch, which on the other hand saved him a lot of times.*

### Keraltos Terthinusvoice MALASP LEADER/WARLORD



*Keraltos is the most prominent Leader and Warlord of the Malasp, represents the power of Terthinus here and is a War Master of Wachaza. He is an intelligent tactician which uses the fierceness of the Malasp race for his own purposes. He is also powerful in warmagics which he uses against Ludoch and humans alike. All this makes him a mighty leader, but can't hide his cruelty.*

### MIRELOS

Mirelos is only the name of the elven forset, by humans it is sometimes called Karan, after the river that parts it from Elamle. The waters of Mirelos are inhabitat by friendly Ludoch, and lots of Murthoi. Malasp raid occasionally.

### BAMBARA MAUNDE

Bambara Maunde, the Gleaming City, in Tarahorn is a medium city, easily recognized, even from far away in the Marthino sea, because it is made of one single deep red colored coral. The local fishermen were once some of the richest in the Marthino sea, but that has changed in recent years. The richness of fish has faded in the last few decades. Trading ships from and to Kareeshtu and Maslo often stop in Bambara Maunde.

### BOGANI

Bogani in Banamba is a medium city that is populated mostly by exile yellow elves. Sometimes it is visited by human traders, rarely also by Elf Galleas from Wendo. The Ludoch trade Murthoi stuff there.

### BULULI

Bululi in Thinokos, a medium city, is different than the other cities of Fonrit. The inhabitants are also seagoing fishermen but the people of Bululi that state that they aren't really native this land, but that they are descendants from the mystical city of Thinobutu, now covered by the Marthino sea. Because of this they have a Ludoch mermen in their city council, but that is now only a remainder of old times, because Bululi has almost only Malasp in it's surrounding waters since years. They send their dead to the sea instead of more common rites like burning or burying.

### DINDANKO

The City of Dindanko in Kareeshtu is a large city, and is one of the most famous ports in all of Pamaltela. From here go most of the Kareeshtu merchants and warsails. Today the merchants are more common, but in the past there where also fleets of warsails send against Maslo, and other seagoing nations.

### DUMANABA

Dumanaba is made up of lots and lots of rafts, that make up the entire city. It reaches from one side of the mouth of the Baruling river to the other. Every Maslo or Fonrit tradership that passes the Marthino sea will visit this large city. During the Closing the fleet of Fonrit hid in Dumanaba. Ludoch traders were very common in the past, but in recent years become more and more uncommon.

### GOAN

Goan in Banamba is a Fonritan city state like most others, even when it is far away from political power. This large city has a small port where Ludoch sometimes visit.

### HEGUA

Hegua, in the westernmost Elamle / easternmost Mirelos, lies at the mouth of the Karan river. It is inhabitat mostly by fishermen, but a tribe of elves also gathers here. The fishermen of this small city cooperate with the native Ludoch in their fishings.

### ISLITH

The large city of Islith is the main seaport in Tarahorn, and it is the place where the King of Tarahorn lives, a good amount of seatravel starts here.

### KORARU BAY

The southwesternmost part of the Marthino Sea is called Koraru Bay, and on its most western part, where the Baruling river kisses the Koraru Bay is Dumanaba, the Floating city. Now the Koraru Bay is now only thinly populated by mermen at all, and the mermen encountered here will be most of the time Ludoch, but there is a fair chance that hostile Malasp are met.

### KORMANI

Kormani, a medium city, is a typical sea port of this region, even when it is slightly upriver.

### OLYN

Olyn in Elamle is only a small city with a small port. The main reason for this is that it is one of the cities visited regularly by the Mother of Monsters, and second is that only half of the people are working.

### WENDO

Wendo in Elamle has a forested dock for elves and is the only port which is used regularly by elf ships. The Murthoi elves sometimes visit this small city.

## Influences of the outside world on the Marthino

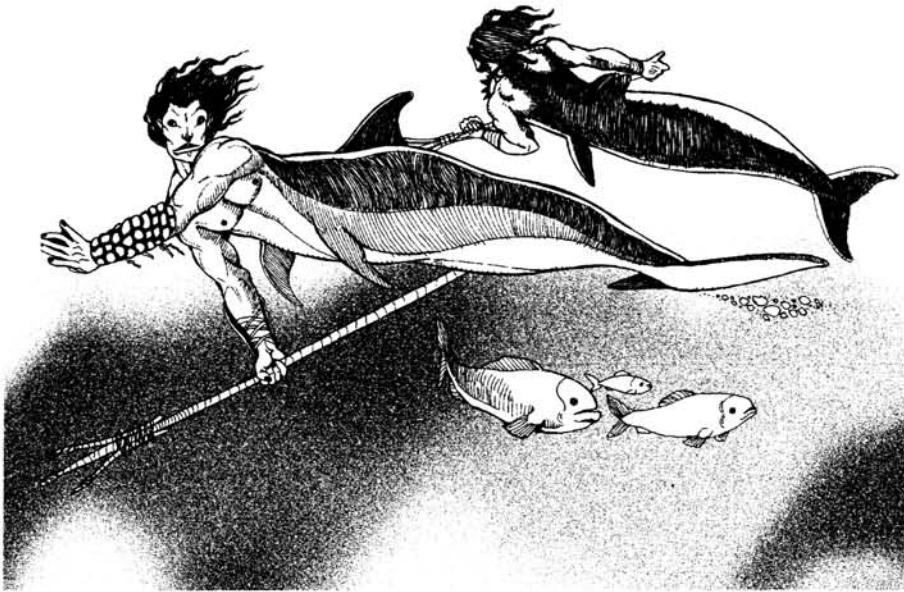
Currents, Winds, and Kimos aktivities

The Marthino child of the Serelazam current comes out of the Dinisso Sea, and splits in two parts. The first of this smaller currents goes into the eastern part of the Marthino Sea, varishes more and more, to become lost when it washes at the coasts.

The second of this smaller currents goes into the western part of the Marthino Sea, flows almost down to the Koraru Bay, where it splits again. One part goes into the Koraru Bay, where it runs out, and the other part flows up to Kareeshtu where it also vanishes.

Only small tides, up to one meter at highest, wash onto the coasts, except in Fire season where Orlanth Hurricanes and in Storm season where Typhoons can raise the tides up to house hights. The Underwaterworld where the mermen most of the time live is not affected by this.

The good winds make seatravel in Sea Season possible, and common. In Fire Season the Marthino Sea is visited by Orlanths Hurricanes, so that seatravel can't happen most of the season,



## Plunder Item

### SOUNDPIPE

This item was developed by the Ludoch of the Marthino sea, and its still a secret of certain people how they are made. They can hurt, injure, even kill a person underwater from distances up to 20 meters.

This soundpipe looks like a small, palmsized drum with a, up to 4 foot long, soundbox. They are made of Corals or bones. The skin is most of the time sharkskin or whaleskin. But the original one was made of Aluminium and mermenskin.

#### Religion:

Associated - Magasta\*  
 Friendly - Wachaza\*  
 Hostile - Wachaza\*\*  
 Enemy - Magasta\*\*

\* Ludoch only

\*\* Malasp only

There are few soundpipe weapons in whole Glorantha, and all of them are found in the Marthino. To obtain a soundpipe, which is famous among the Ludoch, you have to belong to them and have to be known by them as a famous warrior, or you have to meet one in battle, and win. To use the weapon you point with the open side onto an object or person and use the drum; one, fast hit. The soundpressure that goes through the body of water will hit the target only a second later. Underwater it is a excellent weapon, but on land it is useless, except as a small drum with a nonharmonious sound.

A Malasp would do almost everything to get one of these weapons, to destroy it. It might be worth up to 500 L for him, or he might consider to kill the trader instead.

except when the doldrums are present, but there they have to us rowers instead of sailors. Earth Season up to early Dark Season is a good time for seatravel, very good from Maslo to Fonrit. By the middle of Dark Season, up to end of Storm Season is seatravel on the Marthino Sea almost impossible, through striking Typhoons. During Sacred time the travel can start anew.

The primitive humans of Kimos, and the Gorgers reshape the face of Kimos with elemental powers to make the final goal against the other. Both participants doesn't seem to be interested in the outside world, or the Marthino Sea, but with their elemental war, which includes earthquakes, landslides, and volcano eruptions, they affect it. The activities of Kimos which are caused by the human inhabitants as well as the Gorgers are absolutely unpredictable. An Earthquake is likely to happen each other year, which shakes not only Kimos and the surrounding areas, but also the whole Marthino sea. Luckily it has almost no influence of the body of water, only on the seaground itself, but that is hard enough. Landslides may occur more often, but most of the time it changes only the face of Kimos itself, and maybe it destroys a Murthoi garden. Rarely a mermen gets injured by this. A volcano eruption is a more valid Reason to panic. Although it happens not very often it is a major threat to all nearby mermen and blue elves. Magma reaches for the sea, heates it, destroys whatever was there before. The Erruption is spitting Magma wide into the Marthino and endanger a lot of see inhabitants as well as seagoing boats and ships. Fierce storms and whirlwinds may appear also through the influence of the inhabitants of Kimos which is tough for the landdwellers, but not for the mermen. From time to time even the oceans rise to househighs by magic, to wash over the coasts. This is an event that influences the life in Kimos, but it is also one of the more real threats to the mermen, because they can be washed away onto the land if they are near the surface.

## Climate

The water is clear, middle blue-green in colour and at the surface in average all year 18 degrees celsius (65 degrees Fahrenheit) warm.

The air temperature is, in average, in Sea Season 20 degrees Celsius (68 degrees Fahrenheit), in Fire Season 25 degree Celsius (77 degrees Fahrenheit), in Earth Season 20 degrees Celsius (68 degrees Fahrenheit), in Dark Season 15 degrees Celsius (59 degrees Fahrenheit), and in Storm Season 15 degrees Celsius (59 degrees Fahrenheit) warm. Sacred Time is, in average, 15 to 20 degrees celsius (59 to 68 degrees Fahrenheit) warm.

Seaseason has a lot of rain as has Earth Season and the first part of Dark Season. Fire Season has almost no rain at all, but the splashing waters from the tides that are made by the Hurricanes keep the enviornms of the Marthino wet. Dark Season has a good amount of rainy days, as has Storm Season. Sacred Time comes with few rain.

## Seafaring

Seafaring on the Marthino sea is done by a lot of nations now, as it was in the past and will be in the future.

The Maslo Naval Confederation is one of the two Organisations which travels most on the Marthino sea. The Maslo Catamarans are the most common type of ship in Pamaltela, and was used since the first people reached the sea. It has a huge amount of Rowers on board which allows it to travel on the Marthino also in Fireseason. It is primary a warship and used mostly in the Marthino sea against Kareeshtu or ships from more distant places. The typical dual-hull design can be easily recognized from above and underwater. Maslo Merchant ships for long distant



**RQ Stats  
for the Rainbowfish**

CHARACTERISTIC	AVERAGE	ATTRIBUTES	
STR 1	01	Move 2 swim	
CON 1	01	Hit Points 1	
SIZ 1	01	Fatigue 1	
INT 2	02	DEX SR: 3	
POW 2D6	07		
DEX 2D6+3	10		
LOCATION	MELEE	MISSILE	POINTS
body	01-20	01-20	1/1
WEAPON	SR	A%	DAMAGE
aura	0	99%	in 100 foot radius peace aura

COMBAT NOTE: fumbles at 100  
SKILLS: Scan 25

**RQ Stats  
for the Blue-Moonfish**

CHARACTERISTIC	AVERAGE	ATTRIBUTES	
STR 3D6+12	23	Move 2 swim	
CON 3D6+9	19-20	Hit Points 27-28	
SIZ 3D6+24	35	Fatigue 42-43	
INT 2	02	DEX SR: 3	
POW 3D6	11		
DEX 2D6	7		
LOCATION	MELEE	MISSILE	POINTS
tail	01-03	01-03	2/7 (25)
abdomen	04-08	04-08	2/9 (33)
chest	09-13	09-16	2/11 (40)
r flipper	14-15	17	2/7 (25)
l flipper	16-17	18	2/7 (25)
head	18-20	19-20	2/9 (33)
WEAPON	SR	A%	DAMAGE
Bite	6	15%	1D6+bonus
Headbutt	6	30%	1D6+bonus

COMBAT NOTE: can attack once per round.  
SKILLS: Scan 50

travel are also common, but not so common than the catamarans.

**The Unity of Republics of Kareeshtu** is the second major force on the Marthino sea. The Kareeshtu warsails are small but numerous. They are faster than most other ships and have a deep keel, which makes it easy to recognize them from underwater. Although it is used for quickly close and board tac-tic, it is the preferred warsail of Kareeshtu. These warsails are used in the Marthino sea against Maslo and in the Dashomo sea, against the Umatelans, and sometimes also against people who are visiting from even more distant places. Kareeshtu Merchant ships are also common for trade use.

**The merchant ships of Maslo,** Kareeshtu or any other nation can't be separated by view from longer distances or underwater. Which makes it more easy for pirates to keep their identity hidden up to when it is to late. The native mermen have their own strategies to find out what kind of Ship it is: The Ludoch take a look on the underwater part itself very closely; a wise man will tell them by identifying the shells and signs of fish activities from where this ship comes from. The Malasp send a scout onto the surface to look closely, but hidden, and report to them if it is allowed to continue his voyage or if it has to be stopped, damaged or sunk. The few Ysabbau that are found in the Marthino will try to damage or sink any ship, and are not interested from which nation it is from. The Murthoi avoid contact to such huge ships.

**The elves of Wendo** use their Elf Gallegas with pride. They are made from one single living piece of wood. They travel rarely regualy. Their destination is most of the time unknown, but all of them begin and end their more or less long voyages in Wendo again.

**Merchants from Umatela,** Kethaela or other distant places sometimes visit some of the ports on the Marthino Coasts for trade. They use most of the times the same kind of merchants that are also used by Maslo and Kareeshtu. Other, more culture specific, ships of these nonnative cultures are quiet rare.

**The most common vessels** are the many rowboats, canoes, rafts, and smal sized catamarans that are used by the numerous fishers of the coastal cities and villages.

In the Past there where also **Waertagi Dragonships** around, three of them got wrecked during the closing at three differnt places in the Edrenlin Islands.

**Vadeli Ships** once sailed the Marthino sea for a few years, but they sunk, with parts of their enemy fleet of Maslo, at the battle of Oenriko Rock, near the coast of Njenaguya Island of Kareeshtu. To get control of the wrecks that are still there is one of the main reasons why the Malasp force their way into the Marthino sea.

In the future there will be a group of **Wolfpirates** visit the Marthino sea. They will land on the coast of Banamba in Laskal. Their leader, Harrek the Berserk, will unite its citystates by force and establish his kingdom. He will not remain long, but will return years later to rule his kingdom.

**Wrecks, and the sunken  
City of Thinobutu**

Sunken things change the view of the mermen that they have of the landdwellers and the outside world, and influence their future doings when they deal with them.

The sunken fleets of the God Learners, the Vadeli and Maslo are strange pieces on the bottom of this sea. The Ludoch have investigated some of the wrecked ships in the past, but have not done anything with most of it. The Malasp that have took over that region plundered recently the easier to investigate wrecks, and are encouraged by their Leader, Terthinus, to get hold of every item that is left, especially quicksilver, iron and other metals.

The sunken City of Thinobutu still exists underwater, even if only ruins of them remain far in the deeps of the waters of the Marthino sea. The Ludoch have managed to put bubbles of air into some the buildings, so that they can breath and live there. It is the only place where Ludoch live all year long, instead of wandering around like the rest of their race.

**Creatures**

The Manatee, a race of unintelligent mammals, that are sometimes misinterpreted as mermen live also in the western part of the sea. They have reached far in to the west of the Marthino sea, but stopped to go westward when they encountered the unstead coasts of Kimos. The Ludoch ignore them most of the time, but the blue elves see in these large, coastnear living animals a threat for their underwater gardens. The malasp in turn see in the Manatee mostly only a good source for food.

Other creatures native to the Marthino Sea include a variety of Sharks ( Maku sharks, blue shark, grey shark and white shark are the most common), Whales (minke whale, sei whale, blue whale, fin whale, short finned pilot whale, melon headed whale, killer whale, pygmy killer whale and the false killer whale are common. The pygmy sperm whale and the dwarf sperm whale are found only in the east. The Sperm whale is only available at the deeper waters of the north. Rarely humpback whales are seen), Dolphins (the common dolphin, striped dolphin, spotted dolphin and bottlenose dolphin are the most common), Cephalopods (calamaris, octopus and other squids), various kinds of jellyfish, seahorse and lots of other fish (flying fish, swordfish and moonfish are the most spectacular. Thunfish the most interesting for fishers).

Two magnificent fish dwell only here: The Rainbow-, or Peacefish, and the Blue-Moonfish.

**RAINBOWFISH**

The Rainbowfish was created in the Godtime by Chalana Arroy. This fist sized fish shines and shimmers in all rainbow colours, even in the darkest depths of the see. It is beautiful and very tasty, but isn't eaten very often, because of it's special powers. The Rainbowfish has a magical aura of 100 foot radius which makes it impossible to attack anything within this area, that includes, of course, the fish itself. That gives the Rainbowfish the nickname of Peacefish. If a Peacefish is inprisioned somehow it dies an hour later, and it doesn't matter how good someone tries to tend it, the fish will die anyway.

Aura of Peace 5w2, Luminous 15, Need Freedom 10w2, Nimble 12, Small 18

**BLUE-MOONFISH**

The Blue-Moonfish is said to be created by Artmal, or his mother, Serartamal, the Blue Sky Witch. This cowsized, balloon formed fish is wandering the Marthino in small groups. It is often hunted by sharks, whales, very rare by Malasp and humans, and never by Ludoch. Every lifeform that consumes a Blue-Moonfish will turn into a blue-moonfish, step by step, in the next 7 weeks. The Blue-Moonfish has got its name from the multi-blue-cloured scales, like the blue streak in the sky, and that transformation that appears to be in connection with the cycles of the moon.

Arcane Senses 15, Large 10w, Lumbering 12, Resilient 18, Sense Food Shoals 2w, Strong 2w, Transform Eater into Blue Moonfish 2w2  
Bite 18+2 (or can attack using Large as a bash attack), Scaly Hide +1

**Short Synopsis of the History of the Marthino Sea**

**Before time**

• The Land, where now the Marthino Sea is, sinks, and with it the mythical city of Thinobutu. The survivors of this include the settlers of the Kumanku Islands, Thinokos in Fonrit (with it's city of Bululi), and the human inhabitants of Maslo.

**First age**

• A group of the Ludoch Dashomo Tribe settles in the Marthino Sea, and becomes finally the Marthino Tribe.  
• The magnificent boats of the Artmali sail the Marthino Sea.  
• Survivors of the sinking of Thinobutu reach the coast of Laskal.  
c. 100 - ships sail from Laskal to Maslo  
c. 200 - even more human settlers arrived in ships at Maslo

**Second age**

c. 590 - c. 940 - the godlearners, first in Waertagi ships, later in their own ships sail the Marthino sea.  
734 - Errinoru fleet sails  
943 - Closing begins striking the Marthino Sea.  
943 to 955 - Sea strikes against land  
956 - Closing of the Marthino Sea finished.

Waertagi of Edrenlin Islands are wracked.

**Third age**

? - The Egg of Erangalos Karastomabor appears at the Marthino sea.  
1588 - Closing broken. Vadeli, Afadjanni and Umathelan fleets reopen the sea.  
1588 - Vadeli fleet encounters Maslo fleet. Naval war begins.  
1594 - Vadeli crushed at the sea battle of Oenriko Rock. Vadeli and Maslo fleets destroyed.  
1596 - The Malasp send their first bigger „exploring team“ deep into the Marthino sea.  
1601 - Malasp begin to settle the Marthino sea by force, but stop shortly behind Kareeshtu.  
1612 - Malasp begin to invade the Marthino sea en masse. Fighting with the native Ludoch become commen.  
1622 - Harrek and his Wolfpirates cross, and land in Goan, in Banamba, the northern Part of Laskal.

**Cameos for human adventurers**

**Free the Prisoner**

The Malasp take an important person as captive as they recently tried to get tribute from a Fonritan city, and were refused. They later return and say that the captive will be used as a sacrifice for a ceremony in seven days. The PC's are hired by the mayor of the city or a friend of the prisoner to free him. They are send to the Ludoch to neoginate the price for their support in freeing the prisoner, and then to free the prisoner with the help of their new found friends (using breath air spells). (James Bond Movie like underwater combat opportunities!!!)

**The rich fisher**

At a city state is one of the boats of a rich fishermen attacked by Ludoch. They destroy their nets and free the fishes. That has happened never before, so that the PC's have to investigate why the Ludoch are doing this, or to take this case to a Ludoch council to get the bad guys punished for this. The PC's find out that these rich fishermen is using a kind of net that the Ludoch have forbidden to be used in this area, because the humans would capture every fish in the area, and in the future there woun't be enough fish for Ludoch or humans alike. The Ludoch state that the next time they will encounter such a net they would kill the owner. (Alternatively the rich fishermen could also put his venom waste into the sea. Green szenario: Save the Oceans!)

**The sunken Ship**

A ship has not arrived at a certain citystate.

**Population of the Marthino**

Ludoch	600.000
Malasp	250.000
Ysabbaau	10.000
Murthoi	120.000
<b>Total:</b>	<b>980.000</b>

**Marthino Sea Sample Events Table**

**Common**

- Ships from a Pamaltelan nation crosses.
- A Ludoch trader visits a human town.
- The Ludoch help local fishermen in their work for half of the fish they capture.

**Uncommon**

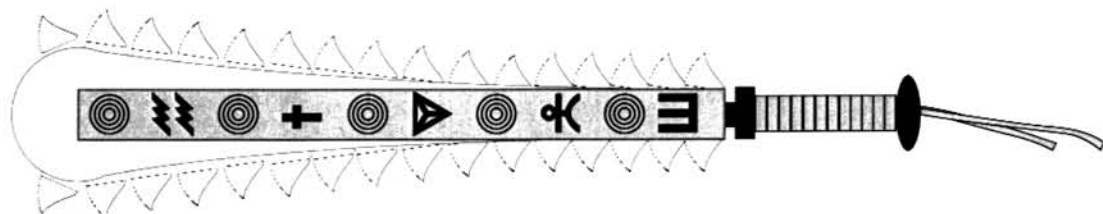
- Ships from far away nations cross.
- A boat is destroyed by Malasp forces without any cause.

•Sharks or whales attack fisherboats.

•Humans visit the Ludoch underwater.

**Rare**

- A human eyewitness a ludoch group ceremony.
- Malasp visit a human town for trade.







It sunk somewhere in the Marthino sea. The PC's have somehow to locate the ship and to get hold of a special item that was on this ship. If the PC's contact the nearest Ludoch community they learn that the area where the ship sunk is currently fully controlled by Malasp, and that the Ludoch are not willing to support the PC's in this case. (Good opportunity to negotiate and give diplomatic abilities priority! And to learn more about the Malasp.)

**The little Mermaid**

A Ludoch mermaid has seen a young human man and fell in love with him. The teenage mermaid, called Ariela, now wants to become a human. She asks the PC's to help her. (Come on, you know the story... Romantic Scenario!)

FOR MORE INFORMATION  
ON LUDOCHS SEE ALSO:  
HEROQUEST VOICES, P. 64 – 67  
ANAXIALS ROSTER, P. 117 – 118

**Introduction**

Laskal is a land of steaming jungles and verdant coastal plains. It comprises two

distinct areas: The coastal region of Banamba and the forest interior of Laskal proper. To the west are the rough hills of Mondoro, while to the south lies Dolorofey and the Mari Mountains and beyond the vast savannahs of Jolar. The Emblyli jungles of Errinoru form the eastern border while to the north are the waters of the Marthino Sea. It was a province of the Errinoru Empire in the Second Age and during the Closing had many fractured local rulers, who paid tribute to their elf overlords.

Laskal has a population of some three hundred and five thousand humans, while the numbers of Emblyli is uncertain. The inhabitants are a mix of dark skinned Kareeshtans, Torab Fonritans, and Agimori. They pay homage to a variety of major deities together with a host of minor sprits and gods. It has recently come under the influence of Golden Kareeshtu, subjecting the cities of the coast to garrisons of foreign troops, and enforced levies upon trade.

**Description**

Cooling air from the Marthino Sea tempers the tropical climate. During Sea

season, onshore winds produce pleasantly mild weather; rainfall is usually light and sparse. During Fire, Earth and Dark Seasons the monsoonal winds come from the East or Northeast, and there is a time of high temperatures, humidity and rainfall. Short sharp torrential cloudbursts can deluge the land, followed by baking bright sunshine causing the distinctive fogs and steaming vegetation. During mid Dark Season typhoons rage in from the Northeast. During Storm season there are cyclones, lasting over ten days, interspersed with days of fresh, light breezes and balmy weather.

Dense rain forests of Banyan, Fig and Rubber trees cover the interior of Laskal. The trunks of trees support lichens, ferns, and orchids. The Banamban coast has mangrove swamps and lagoons dotted along it, while the numerous estuary mouths are surrounded by forests of vines, sandalwood, coconut and tropical pines. Inland from the coast much of the primary forest has been cleared for agriculture. The numbers and diversity of animals are second to none in all Pamaltela. The coast is abundant in huge flocks of wading birds, the forests clogged with dazzling coloured parrots, and the scrub is rich in flightless bush fowl. Several

poisonous snake species dwell in the jungles and along creeks, as well as the huge Camudi forest-boa of the interior. Pythons, bandicoots, and cassowaries wander in the dim light of the jungle floor. While possums, clamber in the trees overhead. Lizards are common, most are small, timid and harmless, although the giant green gecko regularly attacks animals and children. Freshwater and salt water crocodiles grow to a tremendous size and both are aggressive man eaters, capable of travelling up the muddy low lying rivers to within feet of habitation. Clouds of spectacular butterflies and brightly coloured birds descend on mineral rich riverbanks and mud flats, while the air of the jungle buzzes with the sounds of dragonflies and wasps.

The Marthino Sea and Koraru Bay are rich with life, in an amazing spectacle of colour and form. Stunning coral reefs line much of the coast. Sharks, sea snakes, rays, turtles, sea cucumbers, a multitude of diverse colourful molluscs, and hundreds of kinds of vibrant fish choke the tropical waters.

### Inhabitants

There are at least seventeen known tribes dwelling in Laskal, plus the Fiwan and pygmies of the deep jungle. The inhabitants are primarily Agimori, along the coastal strip of Banamba they interbreed with Torabs, Blue skins and a smattering of Wareans. The city of Bogani even houses a considerable population of rootless Embyli. Both Ludoch and Malasp Triolini dwell in the Marthino Sea and Koraru Bay. Inland, the people are of a smaller stature and the mixing of races less pronounced. Muri live in the jungles and hilly area of the south and there are rumours of a human tribe that dwells in the Forest of Disease.

Several Fiwan peoples exist deep with the jungles, such as the invisible Sinipi or the strange Hiti pygmies. The Bat-Fiwan, Forest Rhino-Fiwan and Leopard-Fiwan live in the deep wilds, and there are rumours of Spider-Fiwan and Monkey-people. The people of the jungle tell of the pygmy Monkey-People that hides deep in the caves of the dense jungle. They are said to be like true people although only small and they chatter in

some unintelligible language. They have long straight hair, short sturdy legs and pointy teeth, and are said to roam about in groups with monkeys. They are able to run very fast and hop speedily across rocks and boulders and despite their small size are as strong as three men. They use stone knives to cut up mangoes, their favourite food. The Hiti are reputed to live in caves or in the depths of the forest and have strange customs. Their skin is furry and their hair reaches their waists. They are seldom dangerous, preferring to play tricks on villagers, including making off with women. The Hiti are rumoured to have beautiful gardens and are able to make the plants dance. Some suggest they are renegade Runners or pygmy Embyli. The Afukere, Forest Rhino-People, known as the Earthsprung people have long front teeth and black hair. The Mumutuambu, Leopard-People are wild, Hairy and cannibalistic. They take lone hunters or women collecting fruits, sneak into villages at night to eat children, or attack pigs and sloths. Villagers claim they can hear the Sinipi blowing their panpipes in the deeps of the forest and conch shells along the coast. Everyone agrees they are strong, although few have ever seen them. They are reputed to be headhunters. Many claim the existence of the Mongoes, a tribe of pygmies who now are forced to live in the high lands. They used to dwell in the jungles, but were so stupid they could not survive, even here. They used to steal even

when offered gifts.

## The Material World

### Agriculture

About seventy-five percent of the population derives a living from agriculture. The forest peoples of the west live on small plots at the outskirts of their villages and are heavily reliant upon subsistence farming of the predominantly ferrallitic and dark red soils. The Elven-jungle people of eastern Laskal do not practise slash and burn clearing for their limited food growth, instead they work in harmony with the jungle and its inhabitants, relying on hunting and gathering in deference to their once supreme overlords, the Embyli. Those on the Banamba coast farm vast tracts of irrigated farmland, with practices having much in common with Afadjann or Kareeshtu. The soils of the coast are dark brown Vertisols ideal for millet growing, with orange and pineapple orchards replacing the cultivation of traditional crops like banana, taro and yam in these areas.

Despite the abundant marine life Banamba has a small fishing industry. Small boats operate mostly in the sheltered coastal lagoons, fishing for skipjack or yellow fin tuna. The Kareeshti heavily tax and regulate all fishing, and demand high levels of tribute for the privilege. There is some limited

herding of Tanuku and three-toed Bongo antelopes and, even rarer, the ranching of imported cattle by coastal dwellers. The jungle people regularly keep sloths for meat and other by-products.

### Food and Drink

On the coast fish, and shellfish, coconut, breadfruit, taro, and bananas are staple foods for villagers. In the interior cassava, sweet potatoes, and yams are the staple vegetables. Turkey tails, dog, crocodile, fruit bat, and parrot are all savoured by those of the interior along with papayas, mangoes, and other jungle fruits. Favourite dishes include suckling pig, green pawpaw curry, boiled yam in coconut cream and the traditional Ravazava stew. Along with these main dishes, they eat side dishes of boiled greens, mashed plantain and millet porridge. A hot fiery sauce made from peppers, onions, garlic, lemon and chilli smothers all these dishes. The Tanala forest people are very fond of sweetening all dishes with honey while the Tanambohoaka tribe



are strict vegetarians only eating fruits. Popular sweet dishes of Banamba include doughnuts, deep fried bananas, and honeyed cashew nuts.

Fermented coconut palm toddy, or White Beer, is enjoyed along with a crude rum, Sakau, a juice extracted from the roots of the pepper plant, and the infamous narcotic Goan mushroom juice.

### Crafts

In the jungle villages weaving has developed to a high level of skill, especially of dried bark clothing. Most uses split bamboo, vines, cane, and dried coconut or pandanus leaves without the use of a loom. The people are especially known for their fine baskets and decorated floor mats. With the abundance of local woods the fine wooden furniture, carved doors and shutters are prized trade goods. The tribes of the jungle make many fine masks, while the Tanaifasy of the coast produce exquisite fertility dolls. The Betsileo tribe are especially renowned wood carvers, known for their inlaid music boxes made from the living wood of the Singing Tree. The Betsileo are the only ones who can make these superb boxes, as they have an ancient agreement with the Embyli.

Beautifully embroidered festive clothing is also a speciality. The most impressive of all of which is a cloth, woven in narrow brightly coloured strips with dazzlingly complex patterns. Many tribes produce cloth printed with black or dark brown geometric designs. Each colour of printing has special significance; vermilion red for celebration of the earth, while blue symbolises love and yellow is for success and wealth.

### Architecture

#### Towns and Villages

The towns and cities of Banamba are predominantly Fonritan in nature. The typical city home is tall and narrow with multiple storeys, and constructed from red mudbrick or wood with small open windows. The houses open towards the west, with brick pillars in the front to support open porches. Amusing and intricate woodcarvings adorn wealthier homes. The towns of the coast regularly contain many small buildings of cut Laterite crust or stone. Larger buildings and temples are exclusively the latter.

The villagers of the interior live in round, thatched huts made from wood. Higher ranking families raise their houses on stone platforms with temples and associated buildings being further raised on elaborate carved pilings of wood and stone. Freshwater springs or river estuaries are at the core of many villages. Communal houses with roofs of mahogany and twisted nipa palm stand in the public square of most permanent villages. The men have their own, while the other villagers meet in the community house. Wooden or stone statues are a common sight; they are mostly



anthropomorphic although animalistic statues are not unknown.

### Trade and Transport

Golden Kareeshtu dominates all exterior trade and enforces this control, rigorously and viciously, by military edicts. The Kareeshti garrison of Dumanaba controls the road to Afadjann. The trade to Jolar and beyond is largely beyond Kareeshti control. Some Fonritan slavers pass through Laskal to trade at Sees Ananjarb. The coast of Laskal is currently in bondage to the Malasp. Every ship must pay both homage and tribute to the grasping merfolk. With the passing years, the merfolk's demands have become even more rapacious, and recently merman inspectors have taken to coming onto the land, and being taken inside undines aboard carriages to view interior activities. Coinage is rare, only the city dwellers use it openly; slaves or more commonly millet seed are currency for most Banamban people.

The locals of the deep forest pursue some limited trade with the Embyli of Moine and Gaskallia. In the interior stone or shell-money, clam shell rings, dogs' teeth and red feather coils are all popular currency. Rings of pink shells or stones are worth twice as much as red while the most valuable are yellow, worth some fifty silver, orange and brown are next, white shells are worth one silver and black the least. Red feather money is made of brown pigeon feathers bound together in plaits of a long coil, which is covered with red head and breast feathers of

the scarlet honeyeater. Kareeshtan slave traders will habitually acquire their living cargo by trading with the local chiefs for a handful of coloured glass beads, or gaudy necklaces. Imports comprise luxury goods, perfumes, pottery, glassware, and metal goods, while exports include laquerware, timber, slaves, ivory, spice, shells, wooden carvings and feathers.

### Disease

Because of the climate, disease is rife. Pale skinned foreigners are subject to severe sunburn, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke. The damp, humid atmosphere encourages fungal infections of all parts of the body. Infectious diseases are rife, including diarrhoea. Stomach cramps, nausea, watery diarrhoea, and a bloated stomach accompany Bloat (Giardia). Cinch (Dysentery) produces fever, headaches, vomiting and stomach pains. Churl (Cholera) produces muscular cramps and vomiting in its mild form. It quickly worsens with symptoms of swollen limbs and scrotum, skin rashes, acute diarrhoea, blindness, and weakness. The Dreaded Lurgy (Typhoid) causes a headache and sore throat, together with fever and constipation. The Lurgy soon develops to induce trembling; delirium, weakness, and pink spots cover the body. Dehydration, ulcers and throbbing pustules accompany weight loss in the acute stage. Langour and pneumonia are the preludes to death by Lurgy. Worms are a constant problem for many, locals and foreigners alike. Locals offer propitiatory worship to Swems in an attempt to prevent infestation. Bilharzia and river blindness infect many of the water sources of populated areas.

Laskal is renowned for the Forest of Disease, named after the high likelihood of contracting any of those diseases mentioned above, as well as the insect born sicknesses of Laskal Lassitude (Malaria), Sleeping sickness, Yellow fever, and Typhus.

## The Social and Political World

### History and Mythology

At the Dawn, all of Laskal was an unbroken blanket of virgin rainforest. The inhabitants were primitive Stone Age peoples living in harmony with the Embyli of the forests. In 469, came a wave of Artmali immigrants. They came into cultural conflict with the Gendaran of Maslo as both parties attempted to achieve ascendancy over Laskal. The Artmali won this conflict and Laskal came under the influence of their empire. Later in 472, Garangordos arrived from the south.

In 478, the Gendaran and the Artmali again came into conflict, as the Elamble peoples attempted to take control of



Laskal. Garangordos and his Agimori people were forced out and renewed their migration northwards to the lands of modern day Fonrit.

In 650, the conquests of Elamle officially became an empire. By the end of the seventh century Laskal was part of the Embyli Empire of the House of Errinoru, which extended as far as the Onlaks peninsula. This began a time of peace and plenty; the humans and elves again dwelt together in harmony. The Council of Elders dominated the government of the land for hundreds of years, allowing local chiefs to rule the people as long as they paid respect and tribute to the Embyli and worship to the gods of the elves. In 751, the star of Errinoru appeared in the skies to the east and the great Elven hero reappeared in the world. In 960, refugees settled the coast of Maslo and drifted westwards into Laskal.

The Closing reached Laskal in 965. In 975 The Plague of Insects ravaged the Errinoru jungles and brought about the downfall of the Empire. The influence of the Embyli waned to be replaced by that of the Agimori people of Maslo. In 1077, The Invisible Fleet destroyed the God Learner Fleet in the Koraru Bay. During the Closing, the Marthino Sea was impassable; the only fleet that survived it was the Hidden Fleet of Dumanaba. In 1561, the first missionaries of the Transcendental Church of Saint Ebbesh reached the land.

The Opening reached Laskal in 1586 when sailors from Maslo landed to great rejoicing. Further west the Vadeli landed and were taken as gods by the locals. In 1594, the ships of Dumanaba issued forth from their hiding place to destroy the Vadeli Fonritan Fleet in a surprise maneuver. In an attempt to display their superiority and to quash their unsuspected rivals to the seas, the Vadeli brought reinforcements from Umathela, which met the fleet of Hoom Jhis at Oenriko rock. This naval battle destroyed both fleets; the Vadeli lost Fonrit, whereas the Dynast lost Elamle. The Shak of Kareeshtu took full advantage of the situation and set about rapidly constructing a battle fleet of his own. By 1596, his Warsails had made contact with the cities of the Banamban coast. In 1598 he established his first garrisons and exacted his first tribute on trade and shipping. From this time onward, the power of Kareeshtu gradually grew to become the dominant force.

### **Events of The Hero Wars Phase One 1621-1630**

*During 1620, Bukanabukboom increases her political and military power along the coast. She constricts and kills yet another of the Shak of Kareeshtu's emissaries. Her conquests and victories mount and all seem powerless to stop her total supremacy.*

*In 1622, Argrath, Harrek and the Wolf Pirates fleet arrive and chase off the Bat-Fiwan of Goan to establish Harrek's claim of conquest. Harrek forged his own kingdom, uniting the city-states of the Banamban coast against Bukanabukboom. In 1624, the Jann of Afadjann launches another invasion of Kareeshtu. While the Shak is defending his western borders, he is unable to thwart the efforts of the Malasp in their domination of his shipping in the Marthino. There are riots in some of the Banamban cities and the Kareeshti garrisons are wiped out. Firebergs come floating southward on the Dinisso current. Then a current of searing water comes squirming toward the coast from the north diverted by the mystics of Vithela.*

### **State and Government**

The coastal society of Banamba has much in common with Fonritan states. The 'nobility' comprises the leading families of Banamba, officials of Golden Kareeshtu, leading priests and several estranged Laskal households. The cities of the coast pay tribute to Kareeshtu, which controls the government of Banamba. In practice, Kareeshtu appointed councils control much of the government of towns and cities.

Within the jungle life of Laskal the clan and not the individual is the most important element of society. One notable exception are Merina from the highlands of Dolorofey. They are pale skinned and have a caste system based on colour: nobles, (Andraina), commoners, (Hoav) and workers (Andrevo). Communal principles achieved around village living form the basis of life. Among the common people nobody is better or worse off than anyone else, equality is a cardinal rule in villages. This ruling ensures that nobody goes hungry or uncared for - everyone contributes in some aspect; fishing, hunting, tending fields, sculpting wood or repairing and building huts. Each clan has its own distinct traditions and legends, bridal exchanges, and festivals and dances, which in turn affect how they interact with their ancestors and the spirit world.

The peoples of the interior clans believe their chiefs to be in divine communication with the deities of the forest, a belief stretching back to the time when the chief was the human representative of the Embyli. He is responsible for the weather, crops, for the health of his subjects and fertility of the animals. His own health and vitality are of great importance to the community, for their sake he must avoid any bodily weakness, as this may render him liable to deposition or death. Sacrificial regicide is widely practiced among forest and jungle clans, although less so by Banamban clans.

In Laskal proper, dealings between people are controlled by an undifferentiated

blend of local, personal government with social and minor religious customs. While corrupt courts of Kareeshtu lackeys dominate the system of the cities of the Banamban coast. These court hearings usually end up with sentences of lashes with the Sjambok whip or for more serious crimes beheading with the immense Kareeshtan sword.

### **Warfare**

The dominant military force in the region is Golden Kareeshtu. It has an overwhelming naval presence along the Banamban coast, patrolling the trade lanes, restricting the worship of Dormal and collecting tribute. Kareeshtu maintains a sizeable number of marines and a small garrison of elite warriors in Dumanaba, to control the road to Afadjann, Bogani and Goan. A smaller number of troops are deployed to the strategic towns of Banamba.

The city-states of the coast have small standing garrisons of poorly equipped troops. The best soldiers, much supplemented with mercenaries, are used for raids and the regular border conflicts between the city-states.

The clans of Laskal have little military might; each clan leader can call upon the warrior-men of his own clan for protection, when raiding enemies or exacting vengeance. Exceptions include the Tsimihety tribe, who are very passive and never engage in war and the Tamaisaka tribe, who are known as great warriors, acting as mercenaries to surrounding clans.

### **Society and Conduct**

In Laskal proper, each extended family has a small plantation and scattered plots of vegetables. The nearby jungle provides foods such as wild nuts, ferns and fruits as well as material for building and firewood. The exchange of gifts is an important part of society, as it creates a much-revered network of mutual obligations. The one who offers the gift receives prestige from the action, while the one whom receives it is obligated to respond. In all important stages of life a gift is given, symbolic offerings made and discussions held. After that dancing, music, feasting and laughter all follow. When clanspeople enter the home of a chief, they will offer a small token as a sign of respect and allegiance. Food, textiles, or shell-money.

Life for most begins in a smoky hut or squalid urban dwelling. The mother works until this day and gives birth alone; she bathes the child and then calls the guardian to blow the breath of the totem into the ear of the child. The baby is breast fed, while the father lives separately in the men's hut. Traditional knowledge is passed on and all children go naked until seven years of age, when girls are given a grass or woven skirt and boys are gifted a penis sheath. At age fourteen to eighteen, some Laskal clans



circumcise boys and girls at age twelve to fourteen. The city dwellers of the Banambam coast now frown upon this act. They see themselves as far too civilized for it to persist. Although the ablation of the two front teeth is still widely practiced by interior and coastal peoples alike.

Women have a special place in Laskal families. A woman's main role is that of good wife and mother. Agricultural and domestic duties are treated as women's work, although they are also done by men. Girls are expected to learn the ways of adulthood at an earlier age than boys and are further expected to treat their male counterparts with respect, even the younger ones.

There are several types of marriage within Laskal. They all involve the exchange of Bride Price, which can be as much as five to twenty feather coils, worth some five thousand silver, most commonly paid in feather coils or goods, such as livestock, or in kind. Bride Service occurs as a supplement to this, young men live with the bride's parents and render bride service which can be tending livestock, or hunting for the forest clans. He is expected to stay with them until three children are born. Exchange Marriage, whereby two women from different kin groups marry a man from the other's group. Polygamy is widely practiced among the jungle clans; women usually marry at age nineteen whereas men do not marry until age twenty-five. Sister Marriage, occurs where two sisters marry the same man and become co-wives, this can also be with two non-related women. Another kind of marriage that is popular is between cousins, whereby marital partners are within the same descent group. True monogamy is extremely rare. A bride is a member of her husband's family after marriage. Although all children are part of the husband's clan, when a child is born, it is always part of its mother's clan through the mother's brother. This "uterine" uncle takes on a role in the child's life that is more important than the father, because he is the child's guardian and mentor. Divorce is uncommon, although a woman whose husband has died can expect to marry her husband's brother. The clan begins marriage preparations weeks in advance, although, the marriage is sealed through a simple act of sitting together and sharing a meal then dancing the marriage dance and an elaborate festival. During the wedding a traditional feast of yam, taro, sweet potatoes with chicken, fish, or shellfish is eaten with coconut milk. Amongst the forest clans, group marriage is more popular. Men arrive at predesignated sites with freshly cut reeds and grasses. They carry these to the tribal leader and all dance in front of the eligible women. They attempt to impress those with red feathers in their hair, for these are of the noble bloodline.

At death, traditional gifts include rare

metal coins and the funeral lasts some twenty days and the mourning for a year. The body is placed in the foetal position in a basket or dugout tree trunk, or laid in a cave or tree. The tribes of the interior believe that the soul of the dead lingers and they carve wooden masks for the soul of the departed to dwell within. The death is not the last that is seen of an individual. The peoples of Laskal hold their dead dear; whenever they need to speak to their ancestors they exhume the body and perform the ritual of Turning of the Bones, accompanied by the antics of an Omibassy healer and sacrifice of animals.

### Dress and Decoration

Among the tribes of the coast, the most distinctive element of female dress is the white cotton Lamba, which is worn around the shoulders and draped over the head, with one tail hanging behind. When this tail hangs to the right, it signifies that the wearer is mourning and is called Green cloth, even if it is not green. On special occasions people wear red Lambas, signifying authority. Women of some tribes wear colourful dyed Lambas, which they use for carrying babies, or working in the fields. Men also wear Lambas, either tied around the waist or around the shoulders, although they are easily distinguished from women as they wear outstanding hats, wide brimmed millet straw, or cone shaped palm leaves. Pelts of Banded Mongoose, Jackal, Lynx and Civet are all popular as capes and wraps. Supplemented by elaborate beaded and feathered cloaks and headdresses. Men of the Banamban coast also wear long white cotton shirts, while women wear the Kareestan Bui Bui. Peoples of the jungle interior are usually naked to the waist, with women wearing short dried grass or bark skirts and men wearing a leather penis sheath.

Tattooing is common among Banamban and interior tribes. It is considered to be the culmination of the rite of passage into adulthood. Many patterns have a traditional significance depending upon age and social position, with only clan leaders allowed to have full facial tattoos. The patterns are relatively simple and repetitive, with women being less covered than men. Facial engraving is practised by many jungle clans, with deep scarring and bright pigments. Men have scars under their eyes and foreheads, while women prefer the back of the thigh or breasts for such ornamentation. Traditionally, women have pierced lips, noses and ears indicating tribal identity. They wear a jewelled pubic Pikuran; the different styles denote differences in age, status and clan origin. Both sexes of the Laskal clans wear their hair long and beaded, the most outstanding examples of which are the Zebanzaro who adopt elaborate plaited styles and the Tsimihety who never cut their hair. Along the coast men wear their hair

very short or shaved. Dancers wear aluminium bracelets and calabash leg rattles filled with seeds or a beaded cap with a mongoose fur pom-pom and necklace of leopard teeth.

## The Mental World

### Religion

The original deities declined in popularity with the coming of Garangordos. As he attempted to forge a kingdom his attempts were foiled by the Embyli, whose influence eclipsed that of Garangordos. Once he had been driven away by the Embyli, they instituted the practice of their own religions. Later, their influence waned and many of the temples of Maslo deities returned to the jungle and the traditional pantheon of deities re-emerged as the most popular form of worship among the people. These deities include Gandouriak Sky Man, Gudonera the sun god, and Warinamba, god of Storms. Among some jungle folk Hakuise, The Serpent Queen is venerated. The local chiefs worship Kana, god of Chiefs and his servant Lonobado, god of the dead. Mama, Earth Woman is still venerated along side Pamalt among some of the deep jungle clans. Maofa the Trickster and Ranteana Spider Queen are also worshipped. Vumatola the warrior god and Pankujaja the pig god are both worshipped during times of conflict. The Yellow Elves worship Embyldrya, Falutha, Halamalo and their other Elven deities.

The naturalistic pantheon of land and fishing spirits, nature beings and ancestors are worshipped throughout Laskal, although, less so along the Banamban coast. These include Kalwoan, First Man and his survivor son Nui Nui. Golad the Fish King is popular along the coast and Tanutu, Daughter of the Forest Goddess Embyldrya, is the intermediary between the jungle folk and the Embyli. The inhabitants of the Banamban cities also worship Kadiola, the wily water spirit of the Koraru Bay while the fishermen of the coast revere Dinisso. The traditional gods of the Doraddi, that were brought into Laskal by Garangordos and his followers have remained worshipped among the jungle folk, although more so by the Agimori coastal dwellers. Pamalt the Earth King, Yanmorla and Sikasso the Old Women, Vangono the Spear, Nyanka the Midwife, Aleshmara the Mother-in-law and Cronisper the Wise are all worshipped with local variations.

The proximity of Golden Kareeshtuu has promoted the worship of Ompalam the great god of subjugation, the Lord of Slavery as well as Tentacule the Kareestan god of slaves.

### Intellectual Life

Education is restricted to those of high status in the Banamban cities. It centres

about the learning of reading, writing and mathematics. The study of the natural world, flora and fauna and astronomical teaching are all highly restricted. Learning among the jungle people is limited to the passing of oral tradition through stories, poems, songs and dances.

Jungle folk will call upon healers (Ombiasy), who hold considerable power and social status. They are easily recognised by their Pangolin headresses and Antbear claw necklaces. These Ombiasy use herbal remedies, mixed with potions and rituals aimed at securing the help of the ancestors. In some clans this Ombiasy also acts as the Day Creator, who performs pre-dawn divinations and talks to the spirits.

### Music, Language and Literature

Music making is an important element of every intense clan ceremony, initiation, courting, or mourning. Bamboo pipes and wooden flutes are common, used singly or tied together in sets. Stamping drums of bamboo are also popular, as are rattles, spinners and dance sticks. Only men are allowed to play the drums, while women play the nose flute. Full throated vocal renditions, or rhythmic choral chanting accompany most music.

There is literature of a limited form. Carved wooden storyboards display epics and poetry, epithets and recounts of battles are performed in an eloquent discourse. The people of the jungle have a long-standing oral tradition of storytelling. Several tribes of are renowned for the telling of proverbs, which encompass wise and witty sayings. The locals predominantly speak Banamban, although Kareeshtan is also popular. The clans of the interior still speak a Fiwan dialect.

Dancing is seen as part of tradition, with villagers dyeing their skirts yellow at many festivals, which are a mixture of dancing, music and storytelling. These events accompany all customary gatherings, designed to strengthen clan relationships. Dancers paint and adorn themselves to resemble scenes from mythology or everyday life. This is epitomised by the Pilou Dance, which tells the entire story of the people's history and myth. One of the most popular dances is the circular Mougodro. Others include the women's bamboo dance, the Tam Tam which uses immense drums and the Wadhana, performed around the millet grinding mortars.

### Visual Arts

Shell-money necklaces double as personal decoration along the entire Banamban coast, with more elaborate oyster-shell necklaces further east. Forehead discs, made from traded turtle and clam shells come from Maslo. Jungle people wear necklaces of possums or dog's teeth or fine boars tusks. Belts of red, black and white shell money have found their way

into the interior and some people wear ear ornaments complete with dolphin teeth and beads. White cowry shells are used on leg bands and combs are worn as hair ornaments, combined with garishly coloured ribbons. The ornamentation of stone mortars, canoes, house posts, shields and ritual staffs is common place. Carvings incorporate human, bird, fish and animal motifs, in combination with the portrayal of deities and sprits being popular.

## Places of Interest

### Alasiento

This large town is the last major stronghold of the Kareeshti along the coast. Jugara rules under the auspices of Kareeshtu, although he secretly objects to paying tribute seeking instead to align his town to those of Kimos. There is a permanent force of Kareeshti marines stationed here, as much to keep a watchful eye on Jugara and keep him under the thumb, as to guard shipping and trade.

### Bogani

A medium city ruled by King Sumandiagaru, who sits upon a golden stool. He welcomes the inhabitation of Bogani by refugee Rootless Embyli. The centre of Bogani is the site of a garden, entrance to which is restricted to the nobles and leaders of the Embyli.

### Dumanaba

The floating city. An outline can be found in *Missing Lands*.

### Emishi

This small city is on the far northeastern coast and ruled by Queen Bukanabukboom, who locals know as Hakuise Mama or 'Serpent Queen'. In the precincts of her city is a huge water pit, the home of a monstrous Anaconda. It consumes her enemies and ritual sacrifices alike.

### Forest of Disease

Banambans and outsiders call the jungle of eastern Laskal the Forest of Disease. It is named after the high likelihood of contracting many virulent diseases, most notably the insect born sicknesses of Laskal Lassitude (Malaria) with high fever, languor, painful joints, chills and profuse sweating.

### Goan

Kwararafa, a Shaman-Priest of the Bat-Fiwan, rules the large city of Goan. It is famous throughout Pamaltela for an intoxicating mushroom beverage.

### Jabala

This floating town lies on a lagoon on the central coast of Banamba. Tirenadak, a ruby gulletted Pelican-Keet, rules it. The Keets first arrived here after the destruction of Keetela (Duravan); their ancient nesting ground by Endaralath, King of the Togaro Ocean. During the Closing, they believed themselves to be the only surviving members of their race; the Opening did little to alter this belief. It was not until 1608 and the arrival of a Flamingo-Keet trading vessel that the reality of their status dawned on them.

### Kosaarku

Chief Mansakan of the Sihanaka rules this small citadel. His people used to eke out a living from fishing and collecting shellfish from along the coastal flats and marsh to the east. Since the arrival of Kareeshtu, they now act as willing intermediaries in the growing slave trade. Within Kosaarku is an enclave of Ebbeshite Malki, their influence is steadily growing and they have open access to the presence of Mansankan.



# Gods of Laskal

## Gandouriak, Sky Man

In the creation time, Gandouriak and Mama became inextricably entwined to produce a child. Jealous gods suggested that the unborn child should slay his parents. Tanuta, Jungle Daughter, suggested it would be better to tear them apart. Her mother, Embyldrya, simply pushed the sky upward with her head and the earth downward with her feet, separating the two without bloodshed. Yet, one of the jealous gods, Warinamba hurled storms and strong winds at his kin. One by one, they submitted to the storm, except for Yumatola. He turned on his cowardly brethren and ate them as punishment. However, he could not kill Warinamba, due to ancient debts.

## Gudonera, the Scorching Sun

He is the Leg-Child, his conception was a mysterious one. One day Gandouriak, his father was by the shores of the Marthino Sea, and saw a great fish sporting in the shallows. Attracted by the brilliance of its scales he entered the water and played with the fish. Sometime later Gandouriak's leg swelled up, where the fish had rubbed against him, it began to pulse and then burst open and Gudonera was born. As he grew up, he frightened all the other children, as he was too aggressive. They feared to play games with him, and such was his unpopularity that he was threatened to leave the seashore village. Gandouriak sent Gudonera to his father, Golad, the fish god appeared and Gudonera went inside his mouth and swam away to the east. He warned Gandouriak to take to hiding in the shade of a great rock of the shore, for he was going to scourge all men. Gandouriak and his followers took refuge in the shade and could see the sun rise and burn the animals, plants and men. They were the only ones to remain; all others fled or killed by the scorching sun. To halt his burning, his father tossed sand into his face. Therefore, the clouds came to protect the righteous people.

## Hakuse the Serpent Queen

At the beginning of the world, she helped in the acts of creation. She made some men in her own form, pigs and other animals, and trees too. She made things produce food without labour for her men. When the first woman went to collect fruits, she left first baby with the Serpent Queen. However, the baby screamed and cried. Unable to stand the noise Hakuse coiled herself around the baby and strangled it. First woman was so enraged she hacked at Hakuse with an axe and the Serpent Queen fled into the jungles. Here she still dwells today and she sends her daughters out to steal babies and kill unwary hunters or mothers.

## Kana, God of Chiefs

Kana dwelt alone in the sea and during the Great Darkness he remained alone. When the sun rose, the god of ancestors, Lonobado helped Kana to fashion the earth and furnish it with living things. When the First man, Kalwoan came alive he followed the laws of Kana and he became leader of all men. However, Kalwoan showed Kana no respect by taking Hokalani so death came into the world, so that men would obey the will of Kana.

## Mama, Earth Woman

She is the wife of Gandouriak, Skyman. She also married Kalwoan, bore him many children and showered the people with her blessings. However, when Kalwoan indulged in an incestuous relationship with Hokalani, Mama was so angry that she left mankind and asked Pamalt, her father to bring death into the world. Lonobado, his son brought it forth.

## Maofa the Trickster

He is small in stature, yet nothing frightens Maofa. When he was born, his mother Taranga wrapped him in a tuft of her hair and cast him

into the sea. Saved by Kalwoan, Maofa was returned to the land and rejoined the people. Women fascinated Maofa, and his mother encouraged him to have many affairs, even with the Lightning Girl and Tidal Wave Woman. His blood made shrimps red and his love made rainbow girl blush red. He unintentionally gave sharp teeth to salt water crocodile, who in turn shared them with Shark. Yet, his finest gift was fire, which he tricked from Lodril in the Mari Mountains.

## Nui'Nui, survivor son of Kalwoan

Kana became so angry with men that he sent Tidal Wave and Monsoon to wipe out the people with floods and rain. The clouds stirred up and the whole of the storm gods rose in his aid. Only Nui'nui survived the flood by building a canoe and sailing to the high lands of Mondoro. Later he returned to the lowlands of Banamba and here his descendants dwelt in harmony with the yellow wood people until the arrival of the Wanderer Woman and the birth of her son, the Discontented One. He died before he could rid them from the land, and his son Rokola chased them from the land.

## Pankuja, Pig God

He is the Hog Child. He was born with the face and body of a pig, with human hands and feet. He soon grew into strong and energetic god, there were few to challenge him, even his parents were in awe. In battles, he would use his snout to throw up mounds or dig trenches. He would wield a club; and when he charged his enemies, terrifying snorts came from his nostrils. He would delight in the bloodshed and battle. Because of his prowess, Pankuja was a welcome ally during the Darkness and the Dawn Age. Once he tried to woo the daughter of the sun. She spurned him with insults, and soon the followers of the two were at war. She cheated Lodril to spew his fire out on the people, but Pankuja summoned allies of the Sea and Storm Tribe to quell the fires with fog and rain. He always acts in impulse and those who summon his aid in combat or love share these impulses. Pankuja demands human sacrifice for his gifts of bravery and victory.

## Ranteana, Spider Queen

After Time was born and the world was anew, she commanded Mama, Earth Mother and Diniso to be united and reproduce. They birthed Kalwoan the Oldest, Merana, the Woman Between, Togorumu, Octopus Lord, Kuri the eel and many more. Next, she asked the two to aid mankind, Kalwoan, and Hokalani First woman came from the sea to the shore and their children came out from the dark jungle to the shore.

## Golad

He is the Fish King. His twin brother in the Marthino is Gonro, a deity of land and water. The womb of the earth held both until Embyldya pushed Gandouriak upward. Golad fought with the octopus Togorumu to take his place in the waters of the ocean of his friend Togaro. His lover is Ermanthver, Eastern Queen of the Waters; their First Spawning hatched Pomacent, Mistress of the Anemone fishes. She is the mother of all the Clownfishes and Damselfishes, including the Blue Chromis of the Maslo Sea and the Jewelfish of the Marthino Sea. Their Second spawning produced Pomacent, Mistress of the Angelfishes. She is Queen of all the Angelfishes of the Eastern Oceans, like the Living Flame Angelfish of the Togaro Ocean.

## Kalwoan, First Man

He taught the people how to build houses, canoes, how to hunt and fish, how to talk to the ancestors and how to dance. His Descendant, Rokola challenged the Wanderer Woman and her strange son Garangordos and they departed in mistrust. Rokola kept the true ways when many of the forest people joined with the strangers to die in the Hopeless Trek.



# LEGENDS OF THE EMBYLI

From the Chronicles of Fethela Fodronu

by Shannon Appelcline



I MUST ADMIT that in these chronicles I have long suffered a bias, an attention toward a certain subset of elven life. I have spoken of the green and the brown, as if they were the entire song, when in truth they are but two of the strongest melodies. I have not spoken of red, though they were the great melding of Taker and Grower. I have just touched upon the white. I have not spoken of the blue, though they are equal kin to the two others. And, I have not spoken of the yellow at all. The Yellow Elves. The Embyli. The jungle fronds. They are perhaps the most populous of our kinds. They are the broad-leafed evergreens. They are the palms and other trees of the jungles, but they also spring forth from more temperate plants that lived through the Black Age, such as the Southern Magnolia, the Cork Oak, the Holly Oak, the Live Oak, and the Monkeypuzzle. Today I will sing of these people, my kin, and I shall tell you their stories and their myths.



## The Birth of the Yellow Elves

*A Tale of the Red Age told by Norrinal  
of the Errinoru Forest*

The Red Age was a very hot age. Most people don't remember that, but we do, because the warmth of the Red Age gave us birth.

Everything got so hot because of Halamalao, who had fallen far down in the sky. This was our fault, or rather the fault of the elves that lived before us. In the attempt to grow more, they tried to slip under the sky dome, far to the north, and in doing so they knocked it askew. Halamalao rolled halfway down the dome before he regained his equilibrium--and he did recover, he did stop falling--but now he was halfway down in the sky.

Now our brethren in the north, they like to pretend that Halamalao is all light, and sometimes they forget that he's warmth too. When Halamalao fell halfway down the sky, he no longer just felt warm too us, but hot. That was worse here in Pamaltela than it was up in Genertela because of what had happened to the sky dome. This was because the elves in the north changed the orientation of the sky dome when they tried to slip under it; in the north it's no longer touching Gata, while here in the south, the sky dome dips down into the dark place.

After Halamalao fell halfway down the sky, he found that he had to travel around the dome to keep everyone warm and everything lit, and because of the sky dome's tilt, that meant he came a lot closer to the ground here in Palamtela than he did in the other side of the world. And so that meant that in order to keep the people in Genertela alive he practically had to burn us.

In fact some of the green elves who lived in Pamaltela, they did get burnt--their leaves torn away, only charred limbs and ashes left behind--and that's why we have brown elves in Pamaltela. Probably, all of the green elves in Pamaltela would have burned away too if Gata had not seen their plight. She sent Nanakao, the daughter of earth and water, to offer us succor, life, and healing.

Nanakao taught the surviving elves of Pamaltela to stretch their leaves long and wide, so that they could provide shade and respite from the sun, and so they could capture the most minute drops of moisture before they boiled away under Halamalao's worst heat. This was her first gift to the elves of Pamaltela.

Then, when she learned that our women had been the first to succumb to the boiling heat, she taught us how to offer ourselves up to the wood spirits to propagate our species. This was her second gift to the elves of Pamaltela.

Then, when she saw that our heartwood was shattered because of how we had changed, she told us that one day our purity would be renewed, that an untainted seed would be found. That was her third gift to the elves of Pamaltela.

Where once we had been Vronkali--in the days before they were needle-tipped warriors--now we are Embyli. We are the broad-leaved evergreens that prosper in the sun--the palms. We are the yellow elves.

Where once we cursed our lot and what we had left behind, we now revel in what we are, for we are the most populous of the Aldryami upon Glorantha, and thus the true heirs to Her blessings.

## The Empire of Errinoru

*A Tale of the White Age  
told by Norrinal of the Errinoru Forest*

In the oldest days, when we Embyli were first born upon Glorantha, we had the help of an old midwife who is now gone. Her name was Nanakao. She helped us to become that which we are, and she also gave us the hope that we carried in our souls for many seedings, for it was she who told us that in the last of days there would come a seed that was untainted, and he would help us to become that which we had been.

We called this hope Errinoru, which means he who is untouched by the sun and we held it in our hearts through all the worst times of the world. In the Black Age we could not find him, because Halamalao was gone entirely and we could not see. After the new Dawn we dared not find him because Halamalao burned terribly hot again in the sky, and we knew an untainted seed could not survive. It was only when the White Age blossomed that hope could become reality.

This is the first secret of Errinoru. Errinoru grew from the essence of the greater spirits. When Halamalao stopped in the sky several hundred years after the new Spring he changed and afterward he was not as warm. This is because our oldest and wisest dryads had travelled to the Primeval Jungle and brought back a bit of Halamalao's essence while he wavered in the sky. Afterward, Halamalao's missing warmth lay with us; the dryads used that essence to prepare the soil in which the untainted seed would grow.

It took generations more, but in the year the humans number six hundred and ten after the Spring our Errinoru was born, and he began to fulfill Nanakao's many prophecies by bringing together the jungles of Pamaltela. He confronted all the children of the Taker--retrieving the Ironseed from the stone men, binding the dark men by oath, and terrifying the fire men through the secret of his heritage. He travelled to the Dark Lands of the Taker and brought back His power. When we were guided by Errinoru's vision it seemed like the Jungle would grow forever.

This is the second secret of Errinoru. Errinoru sired a great house, but he never lay down with the dryads, nor did his descendants. During Errinoru's long life, the House of Errinoru grew great, but even now none knows how they seeded.

The reign of Errinoru's House lasted for almost four hundred years, but in the year the humans number nine hundred and seventy-five after the new Spring, a new type of chewing insect suddenly appeared, and after they had eaten their way through the Jungle, there was not a single member of the House of Errinoru still alive.

This is the third secret of Errinoru. The monsters that destroyed Errinoru's house came from the Darkness below. They were the vassals of the dark men, sent especially to take vengeance. Some say they had followed Errinoru back when he had visited the Dark Lands, while others say they lusted after the bit of Halamalao which had imbued Errinoru's soil. We say only that this was a great sorrow, and that we shall never again see his like again.

The Jungles where Errinoru once dwelled prosper still, but our glorious leader is gone, and the song of the Jungle is sundered once more.

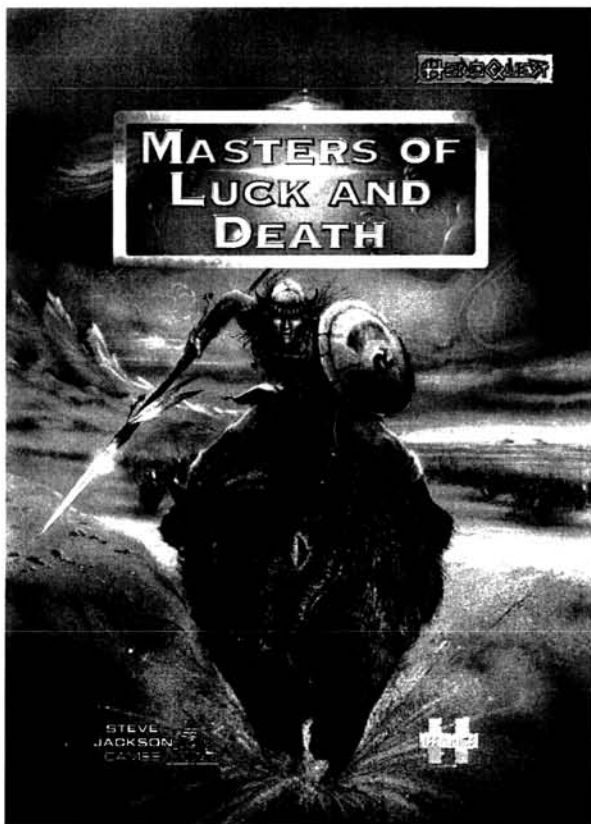
# MASTERS OF LUCK AND DEATH

## Hero Bands for the Hero Wars

The great and the mighty prepare for the end of the world. Heroes of courage and conviction band together to destroy evil, drive out the corrupt, and save their world, which stumbles towards doom. Warriors seek to heal a wounded land, scholars trust to their instincts, and magicians seek new magic. Friends and foes are uneasy allies, enacting sacred pacts of assistance. Even giants, gods, and dragons will fall before their might.

### The Great War Looms

*Masters of Luck and Death* contains guidelines for campaigns based around particular types of heroes: fighters, healers, scholars, wanderers, and magicians. It details twenty-seven hero bands, from the hardened warriors of the Brotherhood of the Golden Bow to the dashing entertainers of Captain Dashwood's Traveling Show; from the Comet Seers who call stellar flame from the heavens, to the ghost-walked corridors of Jevdur Library, which hold ancient secrets and tantalizing hints of the future. Each band is fully described, with goals, renowned members, guardian, and an illustration of a typical member. Will your heroes become their allies or even seek to join? Or will these groups become their enemies, primed to kill them or doomed to die at their hands? These are the questions only your heroes can answer.



## Coming Soon: GATHERING THUNDER

Join Kallyr and the rebels as they carry forward their plans to free Sartar from the Lunar invaders. Bring hope and magic to the faithful in *The New Breathers*; bring food to your kin and strike against the collaborators in *Sheep, Clouds, Thunder*; fight the forces of kinstrife and undeath in *Orane's Spindle*; gain new allies and train the next wave of rebels in *The Other Side of the Dragon*; try to save a clan from itself in *Final Days at Skullpoint*; and rise into the sky with Kallyr to bring one of the ancient planets back to the world in *The Sky Ship*. Iceland was the beginning. Now is the time to strike back!



# Homeland: Errinoru Jungle

by Shannon Appelcline

*This is ultimately a draft of an Aldryami homeland.*

*There will doubtless be revisions by the time a full Aldryami book is released, but this is a good start.*

**T**HE ERRINORU JUNGLE is, perhaps, the greatest Aldryami stronghold remaining in Glorantha. Though its great empire collapsed in the Second Age along with the royal house of Errinoru, still the memory of past glory remains. Seven separate yellow elf tribes may now be found in the Errinoru Jungle, each with their own Great Tree. They are: Gaskallia, Novarooopia, Feofaxi, Garbulia, Jhostrobbios, Ytarian, and Zhnaquafian.

Like most of their peoples, the yellow elves of the Errinoru Jungle are quite secretive, and loathe to allow foreigners into their jungles. Each of the seven tribes works as a cohesive unit with very few rebels or discontents ever emerging. The yellow elves all hear Seyotel's song and are united by it.

Although the Jungles of Errinoru are centered around Councils of Elders, they tend to be ruled by dryads, effectively establishing Queendoms throughout the Errinoru. The dryads' power comes from the fact that they are the sole source of reproduction within the Errinoru Jungle; there are no female yellow elves.

## Errinoru Jungle Homeland Keyword

*Species Available:* Dryad, Yellow Elf

*Occupations Available:* Entertainer (Singer), Gardener, Healer, Scholar, Warrior

*Native Abilities:* Befuddle Invaders of Jungle, Geography of Errinoru Jungle, Legends of the Hero Errinoru, Yellow Elves Only--Sense Dryads, Sense Broad-leaved Evergreens, Dryads Only--Command Yellow Elves, Secretly Manipulate.

*Typical Personality Traits:* Hate Jungle Trolls, Remember Better Days, Respectful of Community, Wary of Outsiders.

*Typical Relationships:* to Sapline; to Council of Elders; to Seyotel.

*Magic:* Common magic, Grower (wizardry).

*Common Names:* Dryads--Aji, Aroo, Ibi, Inelu, Ipa, Oli, Orrina, Oru  
Yellow Elves--Eolli, Errinoru, Ekytu, Ezhibi, Faxia, Feorru, Garinio, Gajhi, Gasibbios, Ghorooopian, Jhosti, Jhoino, Kalli, Kytibbio, Lynelu, Moru, Mirrian, Norrinal, Novaroo, Nyzhaq, Ytrru, Yubbios, Zhnaq, Zhosti

## Origin

In the Red Age Halamalao fell out of the sky, and the lands that would become Errinoru began to warm. Nanakao, the daughter of earth and water, came to the Aldryami and taught them how to stretch their leaves so that they could shade their trunks and capture the least drops of water. Thus they were shaded from the worst of Halamalao's warmth and became the Embyli. Unfortunately the females of the species did not adapt quickly enough and were returned to Trigora's embrace. Once more Nanakao provided for the

Aldryami by bringing the dryads to their land and ensuring that the jungle would continue forever more.

## Common Religions

### Seyotel

The plant peoples of the Errinoru Jungle, yellow elves and dryads alike, are united together in the great song of their people: Seyotel. Through this communion they gain knowledge of their jungle, their peoples, and the world around them.

*Talents:* Coax Seed to Sprout, Find Hidden Seeds, Find Plant Life, Move Flawlessly through Jungle, Sense Corruption within Plants, Sense Danger to Jungle, Sense Emotions of Embyli, Sense Presence of Embyli, Speak without Words to Embyli

### Mother Dryad (dryads only)

Some dryads commune with Mother Dryad, the first of their kind, brought to the Errinoru by Nanakao. She now dwells eternally with Trigora, removed from the cycle so that she may watch over her descendants. She teaches her greatest skills: how to command, protect, and heal.

*Talents:* Allure, Change Paths, Command Natural Creatures Born in Home Grove, Control Plants in Home Grove, Deflect Weapons, Extinguish Fire, Grab Limbs, Heal Plant Life, Move Unseen, Perceive Events in Home Grove, Unseen Whisper

## Special Religion--The Grower

Yellow Elves follow a unique form of essence worship which obeys the general rules of wizardry, but not the strictures and physical manifestations of the churches of western Genertela. Some yellow elves believe that the western Genertelan churches are pale reflections of the primeval Embyli religion, with the Invisible God being another name for the Grower and the Devil acting in the role of the Taker.

The magic of the Grower religion is entirely embodied in songs. Great Singers (as Liturgist are called) offer blessings through Great Songs (taking the place of Scriptures) while individual practitioners can sing Small Songs (taking the place of Formularies). Within their jungles, Yellow Elves can commune as one even when apart, allowing Great Singers to bless Embyli and recharge Talismans even when their followers are scattered far.

The followers of the Grower are able to worship some of the same spirits known by the green and brown elves with no penalty for misapplied worship. Their Great Singers explain that Halamalao carries the prayers through the essence plane as penance for the harm that he did to the Yellow Elves before time.

As with all elven religions, the worship of the Grower places great importance upon its worshippers' place in the cycle--between life and death, the Grower and the Taker.

## Grower Church Keyword

**Abilities:** Recognize the Joy of Life, Tenets of the Embyli, Worship the Grower

**Virtues:** Loyal, Self-sacrificing, Xenophobic.

**Magic:** Benefit from the blessings of The Great Songs of the Grower.

**Other Side:** Worshipers ascend to Potential, the realm from which the Grower grew the world. There they shall be purified down to their essential state, so that they full potential may once more be realized, then they will be returned to Glorantha to continue doing the Grower's work.

**Advantages:** May recharge talismans and benefit from new blessings if in the same jungle as a Great Singer who is actively conducting worship.

### The Great Songs of the Grower

This is the greatest of the songs of the Embyli and may be a fragment of the song which the Grower long ago used to make the world.

**Common Blessings:** Be Attuned with Jungle, Bless Embyli, Grow Well, Hide in Jungle Foliage, Make Soil Fertile, Understand Place within Cycle.

**Blessings:** Bless Dryad, Bless Grove, Bless Runner, Bless Slorifing, Bless This [Plant], Confirm Adult Growth, Dedicate Seed, Find Way through Jungle, Grow Quickly, Grow Robustly, Grow Strongly, Name New Growth, Protection from Disease, Protection from Spores, Resist Anger, Resist Foreign Ideas, Resist Hunger, Resist Oblivion, Resist Stagnation, Staunch Sap.

**Curses:** Curse Darkness, Curse Fire, Curse Foreigner, Curse Insect, Curse Troll.

### Sample Songs of the Grower

**Any (dryads only):** Ipa the Mother Dryad (Sainly Order)  
Formulary: The Small Songs of the Mother Dryad (sample spells: Ensure Conception, Forego Conception, Foresee Weather, Make Wise Decisions, Predict Response to Action, Sense Emotion).

**Entertainer:** Seyotel the Great Song (Sainly Order)  
Formulary: The Small Songs of Seyotel (sample spells: Entrance Animals with Song, Sing the Beautiful Song, Sing the Calming Song, Sing the Fare Well Song, Sing the Stunning Song, Sing the Tearful Song, Sing the Unforgettable Song).

**Gardener:** Gata the Nurturing Soil (Sainly Order)  
Formulary: The Small Songs of the Nurturing Soil (sample spells: Break Stone, Nurture Plant, Sleep Beneath Earth, Soften Soil, Sense Walking Upon Earth, Sprout Seed).

**Healer:** Nanakao the Life Giver (Sainly Order): The Small Songs of the Life Giver (sample spells: Cast Out Insect, Cure Disease, Heal Wound, Purify Water, Quench Fire, Staunch Sap).

**Scholar:** Halamalao the Light Sun (Sainly Order): The Small Songs of the Light Sun (sample spells: Banish Darkness, Blind Foreigner, Brighten Light, Remember Fact, Seek Inspiration, Understand Foreigner).

**Warrior:** Errinoru the Great Ruler (Sainly Order)  
Formulary: The Small Songs of Errinoru (sample spells: Call Light, Kill Troll, Strengthen Arm, Remember History, Terrify Humans, Toughen Bark, Unite Embyli, Wither Stone).

## Reasons to Have Left Home

As with Aldryami the world over, the Embyli of Errinoru love their communities and are loathe to leave them. If they remove themselves too far, they cease to hear the Song of the Errinoru and sometimes grow despondent or even suicidal. There are three types of Embyli who leave the Errinoru. The first are the lost. They have cut themselves off from the Song purposeful and are considered insane. The second are the worthy. These leave at the request of the community to do tasks to benefit the Jungle. The third are the noble. These are questers of Errinoru who believe they do his specific work, to return his noble house to the Jungle he once united.

## Species Keywords

**Dryad:** Camouflage Self in Jungle, Climb Tree, Commune with Tree, Elfsense, Lithe, Move Silently, Seduction

**Yellow Elf:** Acute Hearing, Agile, Alert, Camouflage Self in Jungle, Climb Tree, Elfsense, Move Quickly in Jungle, Jungle Plant Lore, Stealth

## New Occupation Keywords

### Gardener

Gardeners are those Aldryami who tend the forests, ensuring that the trees, the bushes, and the undergrowth all remain healthy. They do the work of the Grower with the assistance of Gata, the nurturing soil. In most forests, gardeners form the majority of the Aldryami workers.

**Beginning Hero Suggestions:** Gardeners are the least likely type of Aldryami to leave the forest, however they may do so if they are set upon a task which they believe will aid the forest as a whole. They are most likely to be questers, seed carriers, or visionaries.

**Appropriate Homelands:** Any Aldryami forest.

**Abilities:** Graft Branches, Guide Plant Species Growth, Know Local Forest, Know Plant Types, Predict Weather, Recognize Disease, Replant Trees, Take Unhealthy Plants, Tend Plants.

**Typical Personality Traits:** Friendly, Hardworking, Protective.

**Typical Relationships:** to Forest.

**Typical Forests:** Depending upon the forest, a Gardener may have helpers in the form of runners, sprites, giant insects, or even red elves.

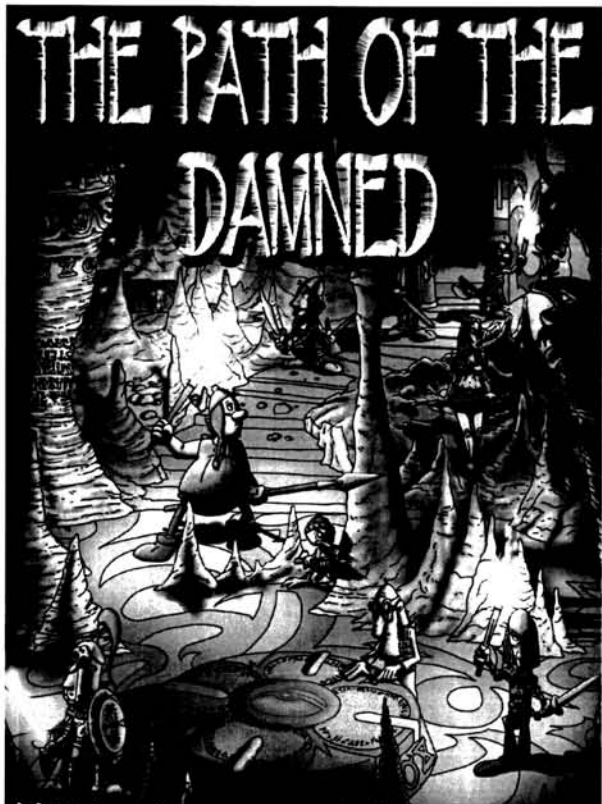
**Standard of Living:** Common.

**Typical Equipment:** Gardening tools.



# Chaos Society

P R O D U C T S

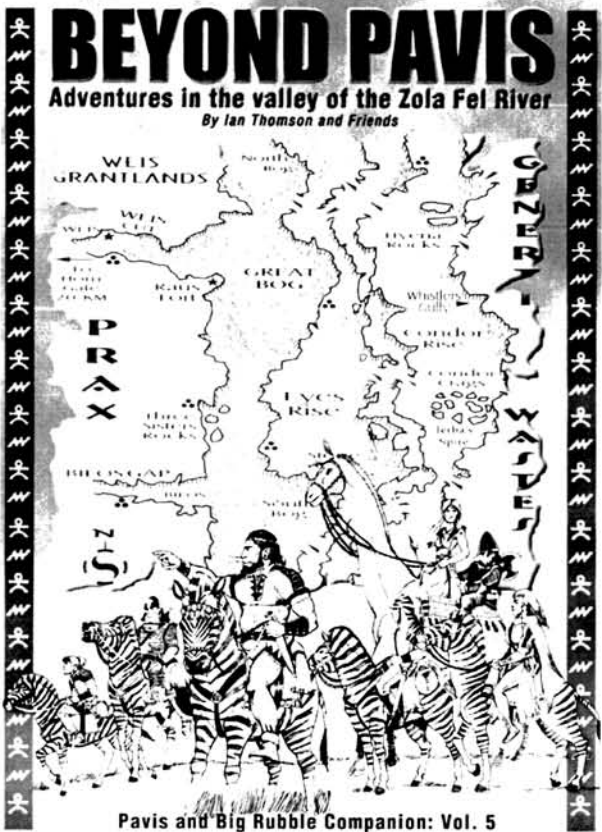


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