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THE ULTIMATE ROLE-PLAYING GAME

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**DRAGON  
WARRIORS**

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BOOK SIX

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**The Lands of Legend**

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**by Dave Morris**

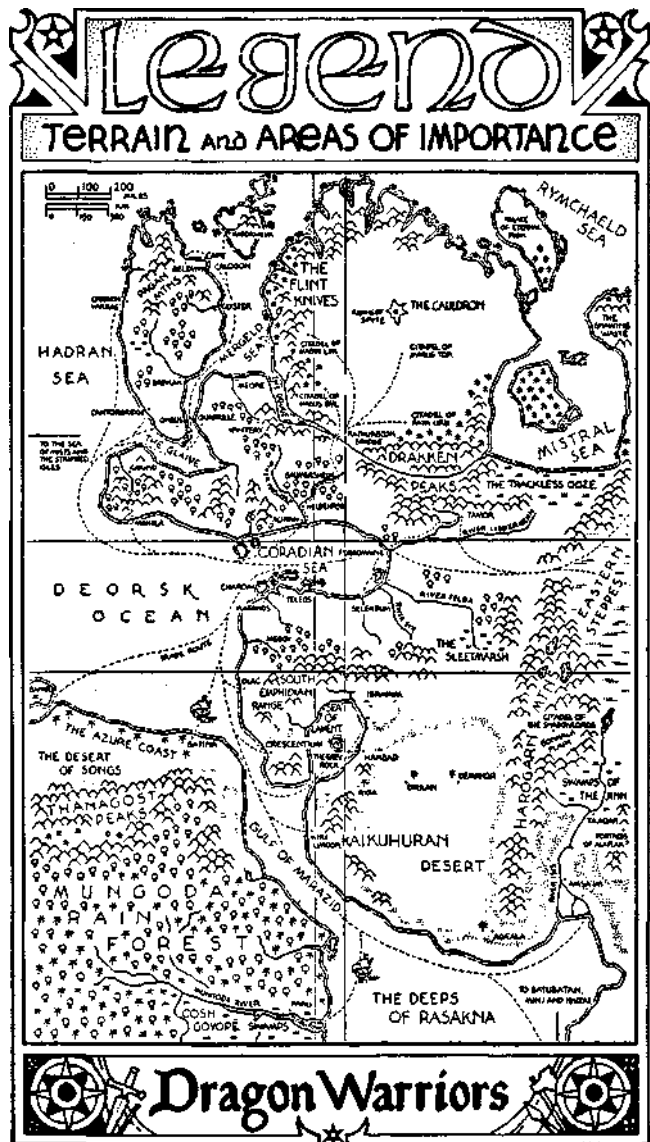
**Illustrated by Russ Nicholson and  
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**DRAGON WARRIORS**

Book ONE: DRAGON WARRIORS by Dave Morris  
Book TWO: THE WAY OF WIZARDRY by Dave Morris  
Book THREE: THE ELVEN CRYSTALS by Oliver Johnson  
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To Russ, Geoff and Alan, for reasons which a glance at this book should make obvious

# INTRODUCTION

'A myth is a pure and absolute imagination; a *legend* has a basis of fact, but amplifies, abridges or modifies that basis at pleasure.'

*Rawlinson*

Every role-playing campaign needs a setting. Without a fantasy world to be the backdrop for their escapades, players are losing out on nine-tenths of the role-playing experience.

Many GamesMasters enjoy constructing their own fantasy worlds, and often the world creation becomes a two-way process as the GM incorporates elements suggested by his/her players. That takes a lot of time, of course. The GM must prepare maps, lists of languages, details of calendar and weather - and much besides - before the campaign can begin. Hence this book. Here you have the essential material for setting a role-playing campaign in the world of Legend.

One book cannot go far towards describing every detail of a fantasy world. In any case, it is the prerogative of each individual GamesMaster to give his/her campaign its 'fine tuning' - the distinct flavour that makes it unique. Different groups have different styles. Some may choose to role-play dauntless Crusaders marching south with the banner of the True Faith, charging into battle against the pagan horde. Others will prefer to take the part of Ta'ashim warriors, defending civilization against the crude infidels from the north. Some will choose to focus on the broad canvas of Legend - trading and politicking their way to power in the courts of kings, getting involved in assassination and skulduggery in Ferro-main, or siding with various factions in the power-struggles of the Tamorian Senate. Those with a taste for low-key adventures can take a small section of Legend and develop it with meticulous care. For others with more exotic tastes there are always the areas we

have included off-map: the theocracy of Batubatan, with its gold temple-towers scaping the very floor of Heaven; the majestic land of Minj, awchirl with coloured silks and the clash of cymbals; Khitai, the empire that has endured throughout Time, where a ponderous bureaucracy involves itself in ever-greater refinements of etiquette and philosophy; or war-torn Yamato, where the *haiken* swordmasters follow their ethic of honour even if it leads them to ritual suicide.

Or, if you prefer, take a different time period. Set your campaign in the days of the Selentine Empire, or in the heyday of Ancient Kaikuhuru - or move forward to the Age of Discovery, when ships open up a new world beyond the western ocean. In this future time the old class divisions are crumbling as merchants buy noble titles, and old aristocrats sink into the peasantry. Musket and rapier have taken the place of bow and broadsword. Possibly sorcerers will not be the rare and solitary folk that they are in medieval Legend. There may even be a 'Magician's Guild'!

What I am saying is that GamesMasters can make their own campaign. You do not need to be constrained by what is set out in this book (change any bits you dislike, in fact) but there is plenty of detail here if you do not have the time to make up your own. I will be happy to answer questions sent c/o Transworld - though please try to make them yes/no questions and include a stamped self-addressed envelope. However, players should respect their GamesMaster's decision; the campaign is his, and he must have the final say. If you disagree with what he says, you can always quit the campaign - but it is no good asking me to 'over-rule' him!

Special thanks must go to several people. I had useful chats with Leo Hartas, who helped evoke many of the landscapes of Legend. Krarth owes much to his suggestions, and the Rathurbosk bridge is entirely his - in fact, he has made it the setting of a whole cycle of adventures. Discussions with Nick Henfrey and

Mike Polling shaped a large part of the DRAGON WARRIORS rules. I would also like to thank my regular gaming group: Oliver Johnson, Steve Foster, Jamie Thomson, Jack Bramah and Robert Dale. They are the innocent dupes on whom I try out many of my ideas, and they guide me both by their response as player-characters and by their constructive suggestions as players. Last but not least, all thanks and love to Yvonne Newnham, my fiancée, for unflagging support and perceptive criticism.



Note: permission is granted to photocopy maps and character sheets in this book for your own personal use.



# 1 The Lie of the Land

The world of DRAGON WARRIORS has a name: Legend. It is a place of warring nobles and mysterious wizards - a place for adventures. But there is a 'real life' behind the adventuring scenes. Legend is the world in which all books in the series have been set. Previously we saw only a small section of the world - the domains of a few lords of Ellesland. This book takes a look at a larger slice of Legend - a five-million-square-mile slice, in fact!

The GamesMaster should remember one thing in particular. Players may read this book, but their characters will not know very much about the world unless you, as GM, tell them. A character who knew everything about Legend that is included here would have a very high level of general education. If players make use of information that they (as characters) do not have access to, then the GM should change a few details here and there so as to give them a surprise. A nasty surprise ...

## **Cornumbria**

Ellesland (pronounced 'EL-ess-land') comprises five nations: Albion, Cornumbria, Thuland, Glissom and Ereworn. It is in Cornumbria and in Ereworn that the original natives of Ellesland still predominate. At one time they ruled from shore to shore, but their fierce armies were broken by the legions of Selentium in ancient times, and the people became citizens of the Empire. Later, when the legions departed to protect the core of the Selentine Empire (by then under serious threat from constant barbarian incursions out of the western plains), the Elleslanders were prey to attacks from the mainland. Finally they were driven back to Cornumbria by the invaders.

Authority in Cornumbria is centred on the lofty hill-forts where the chieftains and their grim thanes overlook the moors and valleys of their land. The High King is elected at the meeting of all the chieftains, and it is also not impossible for such an assembly to strip the High King of his rank (though this has happened only rarely).

Cornumbria was brought into the True Faith in the latter days of Selentium and has remained so since then. Perhaps harking back unconsciously to their ancestral tradition of a wild, solitary priesthood, Cornumbrian priests opted for a monastic Church with no central authority. The monks live in the most inaccessible and uncomfortable places - not just abbeys on chilly, windswept sea cliffs, but even in caves and on barren islands. They are famous for their learning and their works of art. (The illuminated manuscript known as *The Book of Dathnon*, of which there are five copies, is widely considered the grand masterwork of limnery.) However, the monastic Church of Cornumbria is effectively autonomous from the Selentine Church, and for that reason is regarded with some suspicion by priests of the neighbouring countries.

## Albion

The ancestors of the current inhabitants of Albion were reavers from the mainland - mainly from the region now called Chaubrette. They were originally heathens with the same grizzled warrior-gods as the Thulanders, but the True Faith now predominates. Trade routes extend far to the south and west, providing the lords of southern Albion with a rich source of taxes. With their coffers full, they are free to indulge their incessant squabbles.

1 Though the occasional accusations of black magic or even devil worship are surely unfounded!

This is a feudal society. Land is held by lords from the king. Originally this meant that there was a 'pyramidal' pecking order: the king ruling over his vassals, the dukes and earls, many of whom have vassal lords of their own. Most lords have castles where their retinue of knights and men-at-arms reside with them. Some knights have lands of their own and they, as well as some of the minor nobles, oversee their estates from manor houses. The peasants are the foundation of the feudal society. They work the land of the manor, which may be only one of many in the lord's fief.

That is the system in theory. In practice, like most feudal societies, it is somewhat upset by the rise of the merchant class. Merchants become wealthy without themselves producing wealth, but just by buying, transporting and selling the goods and produce of others. Specialized crafts also develop, so that, whereas in a small village a family must build their own house, make their own clothes, etc, in a town it is possible to pay someone else to do this. Eventually the craftsmen organize into Guilds and insist that you use Guild members to build your house and so on. The towns achieve autonomy from the local lord, receiving their charter direct from the king. The citizens of Port Clyster, for example, are freemen - not the vassals of Baron Aldred, nor of any other lord. Technically, a serf can obtain his freedom by escaping to a town such as Clyster and remaining there for a year and a day.

Tradition and mutual obligation are strong forces in Albionic society. The peasants work hard for their lord, but they are also under his protection. The knights who fight and even die in the lord's name also thrive by his beneficence. The king bestows the land, but in return he can call on his lords in time of war.

Albion's king, Hadric, has his court in the city of Ongus. Hadric is a weak king and a poor judge of character. This unpromising mix means that he has surrounded himself with ruthlessly self-serving advisers. Untold damage has been wrought in the last ten years of Hadric's misrule: the lands of loyal vassals

have been stripped away, unworthy men have been ennobled, peasants have suffered under a yoke of hard taxation. In the north, old foes like Aldred, Baron of Gorbun, and Earl Montombre care little for the king's law. They have their own grudges to pursue.

The towns of Albion tend to be quite small. Apart from the larger ports and market towns, most have grown up around a lord's castle - a place where the citizens can be sure of protection in times of trouble! Others may co-exist with a strongly fortified abbey. Confined within secure walls, a town's population is unlikely to number more than a thousand. In all the country, only about a dozen cities have populations in the tens of thousands. The overwhelming majority of the people live in manors consisting of perhaps twenty cottages.

## Thuland

The country north of Albion is a high, craggy place split by deep river valleys and cold blue lakes. The people - settlers from across the Mergeld Sea, both from the Mercanian Coast and from the outer Thulan islands to the north - are barbaric and fierce, often at war with their neighbours. Lords sit out the winter in smoky mead-halls, surrounded by their housecarls, waiting for the summer months of reaving. Wandering priests brave hostility and harsh weather in order to bring the True Faith to the people. In this they are hampered by the same rugged geography that prevents any real centralization of power.<sup>2</sup> Some of the lords have been converted, but even they show no inclination to completely reject the old gods of their ancestors - Wotan, Tor, Loge and the others.

The merchants here are also minstrels, welcome to barter their wares if they can regale the hall-heroes

2 The court of the King of Thuland is located at Katorheim. His rule is strong enough on the island itself, but the Thulan lords across the sea in Ellesland may really be considered to rule over semi-autonomous duchies.

with stirring tales. The serfs who till the land have no rights. To their lords they are of little more importance than animals.

## Ereworn

In the far north, the influence of law is scarcely felt at all. Brigands and masterless knights roam unchecked about the foothills of the Pagan Mountains. The racial stock is mostly native Elleslander, with an admixture of Mercanian and Algardian blood.<sup>3</sup> The gods worshipped here are the strange primeval deities that the Druids called upon - Lahmfada, Kernanu, Mor-kaan; shadowy entities of the forest and mountains.<sup>4</sup> The True Faith is not recognized at all.

The lords of Ereworn are either mad or irredeemably steeped in evil. Some are both. Vendettas among themselves and wars against Thuland, Cornumbria and Albion form the yearly round. The throne lies empty while numerous claims to the succession are made. Assassination is the accepted means to advance one's cause, and an entire subculture - the Clan of Harbingers, who live in solitary mountain villages and are roughly equivalent to Japan's *ninja* - has developed to cater to this need. Merchant-adventurers seldom brave the ports of Ereworn, for villains lurk as

3 Mercenaries from the continent were employed by both sides in the 'Black War' fought between Cornumbria and Ereworn some three hundred years ago. After hostilities dwindled down into the customary skirmishing, the mercenaries stayed on and gradually became absorbed into the native population.

4 Most of these gods were 'discredited' in the conversion of Cornumbria by the time-honoured proselytizing technique of equating the gods of the old religion with the devils of the new. As far as the average Cornumbrian is concerned, therefore, his northern neighbours are devil-worshippers. Generally this is perhaps a bit of a slur - the old gods are elemental and uncivilized, but not intrinsically a force for evil. However, some of the crazier lords (eg, Duke Darian - see *The Elven Crystals*) revere still stranger gods. Balor and Rimfax were demons even in the Druids' pantheon, and there can be no doubt that they truly appeal to all that is vile in the human heart.





thick as shadows and one's life may be lost as easily as one's merchandise. Outside the towns, the countryside is bleak and scattered with crude forts and peasant hovels. Many villages are deserted because of the Black Death that has claimed many of the people in recent years. At night the peasants shutter their windows and cower by the fireside while goblins dance on the rooftops and the Devil, they say, stalks the land with his two hounds - Pestilence and Plague.

## Glissom

The social structure, customs and religion of this small country resemble those of Ereborn. It has already been described in some detail in the adventure scenarios of Book Five.

## The Stranded Isles

A few words will suffice for these forlorn islands which are located dead west of Ellesland in the Hadran Sea. They are permanently covered by a pall of mist, for they lie at a point where the winds are still. We must rely on mariners' tales for our knowledge of the isles - as, for example, in the logbook of Olo of Cornumbria, whose ship was becalmed there for ten days. Olo wrote that 'the sea was like a pane of blue glass, the mist like drifting strands of silk'. Several of his crew claimed to see wild naked figures leaping among the cliffs by the shore, but there is some evidence that they had by this time resorted to drinking salt water. Only adventurers would have any reason to journey to this forsaken corner of the world.

## The North-west Mainland

The people of Chaubrette, Algandy and Kurland - the three great kingdoms of the north-west peninsula - incline to the view that the Elleslanders are simple ruffians, with coarse ways that set them little above their barbaric neighbours. Occasional wars across the

Glaive<sup>5</sup> over the years have caused much ill-feeling and doubtless fuelled this prejudice.

The royal families and nobilities of these countries are strongly linked by blood - and, in fact, there are also ties with some of the lords of Albion.<sup>6</sup> The last twenty years or so have been relatively peaceful. The land is fertile, trade profitable. Life is comfortable even for the peasantry. The 'robber' knights, who had been marauding and trouble-making through the length and breadth of the land for centuries, have been given an acceptable outlet for their rapaciousness in the form of the Crusades.<sup>7</sup> The Age of Chivalry is thus flowering, and warlike energies are channelled into such sport as tournaments, jousts and steeplechases. The perfect gentle knight of an elegant castle in, say, Chabrette cuts a very different figure from his rough Elleslandic cousin, sitting in a draughty keep, clutching a wench in one hand and a brimming mead-horn in the other.

From a geographic point of view, these lands are generally higher and more mountainous than Ellesland. Climate is similar, warmed by south-westerly ocean currents from the tropics.<sup>8</sup> These lands are more densely populated, and large tracts of forest have been cleared for farming.<sup>9</sup>

5 The Glaive: the channel separating Ellesland from the mainland.

6 As an example, Montombre's wife Talia is a niece of the King of Algandy.

7 The idea of the Crusade was formed jointly by the Pontiff and King Vergang of Algandy. Nominally a Holy War, it was more truthfully a way of getting these troublesome knights out of 'civilized' regions and putting them somewhere that they could grab land to their hearts' content.

8 Krarth and the Mercanian Coast do not receive the benefit of these warm currents and are correspondingly colder than Ellesland even though at much the same latitude. Krarth in particular is a flat country subject to winds off the polar ice. Temperatures drop to - 30° Celsius or lower in winter and rarely attain +15° in midsummer. Contrast this with the mean annual range of -6° to + 28° Celsius for Albion.

9 Even so, some 10% - 30% of the countryside is wild forest. Areas which appear close together on the map may be quite isolated from one another. A traveller might easily encounter a forgotten

## The Gouge

This is a deep rift-valley that cuts like a scar through the Drakken Peaks. The wind that screeches along it carries a permanent bitter chill. From some mountaintops along the edge of the Gouge, one may look down upon thick clouds crackling with an intense storm. The crashing thunder may indeed be, as the myths claim, the gnashing of the dragon Helgyrak as he stirs in his sleep.

No boat has ever navigated the length of the Gouge, but it is crossed at one narrow point by an extraordinary edifice called the Rathurbosk. This is a sprawling bridge-city covered with marvellous edifices and honeycombed with innumerable chambers and corridors that run throughout its structure. Particularly remarkable is the central tower, supported by flying buttresses, which houses a time-keeping device.<sup>10</sup> The bridge was constructed in the distant past by the magi of Spyte (see later) in order to facilitate trade between Krarth and the lands to the south. Elaborate laws were established so that merchants would know the Rathurbosk was a safe place to go and trade. The visitor will approach the Rathurbosk through a sprawling township that has developed on the south side of the Gouge. The townsfolk trade with the bridge-dwellers and offer their daughters for marriage. If he arrives after dark, our visitor must stay at an inn in the town, as the gates of the Rathurbosk are

palace enclosed by tangled woods barely a day's ride from a bustling town. This is particularly true of Algandy, whose woodland areas have an ill and eerie repute. There are times of the year when the moon raises a luminous ground-mist from the rotting leaves, and faerie sorcery drips from the boughs of old oaks...

10 This is a clock, of course. It may be the only true mechanical clock in all of Legend. Water-clocks are used in the New Selentine Empire, but evaporation can make them untrustworthy. Similarly, a draught can make a marked candle burn faster, and measurement of one hour using such a candle can be out by twenty minutes or more. Hour-glasses are known throughout the world, of course, but the cost of glass makes them expensive.

closed from dusk till dawn. In the morning, he may approach the sweeping structure. Perhaps a moment of trepidation takes his breath away as he gazes down into the dizzying gulf and wonders at the sorcery that supports this unique bridge. He will sign his name in the gatebook (or more probably have it written for him) and then pass through into a tiered plaza that climbs the curve of the bridge. Evidence of decaying grandeur surrounds him in the broken windows patched with animal hide and the moss that covers the cracked flagstones. Militia in their ornate uniform will greet him and politely request his weapons. If he demurs, they will point out that the traders who come here prefer things this way. The weapons will be returned when the visitor leaves, of course, but if he refuses to be disarmed then he must turn back now. Otherwise he will be directed past one of the naming-spires that stand at points throughout the Rathurbosk to a tall building across the plaza: the Flynt Ridd tavern. A high doorway admits him to the common hall of the tavern - a narrow cathedral-like chamber that extends up several stories. Through the perpetual haze of smoke<sup>11</sup>, gable-windows from the more expensive guestrooms can be seen overlooking this hall.

The hereditary keepers of the Rathurbosk are organized into a number of ancient clans, each with its own specified function. The duul Guidor clan are the administrators, and their head is called the Collector - ie, the collector of tolls and trade taxes. Many of the subsidiary families who were originally instated as the armed garrison have become absorbed into this clan, so the duul Guidors also enforce the law. Trilothi duul Guidor, eldest son of the present Collector, is thus head of the Rathurbosk Guard. Since the Blasting of Spyte many of the families have become slightly inbred and

somewhat mad. Emil duul Guidor, great-grandfather of the present Collector, was notorious for levying whimsical tolls on any adventurers who wished to cross into the interior of Krarth.<sup>12</sup> Our visitor may meet such notables as Hiabuor the librarian, Rauk the wizard, Vaturien the message-taker, or florid Gutmooto, who keeps the Flynt Ridd - and he may end up doubting the sanity of any of them!

## Krarth

Great heroes seeking treasure or magic power might have good cause to undertake the journey to Krarth. Few others would care to do so. It is a desolate expanse of tundra - bleak marshland even at the height of summer, ice-locked wastes in winter. The people eke out a cheerless existence, surviving on stringy plants and eels and warming themselves by sputtering peat fires. When the pack-ice closes like an iron fist around the coast, and bitter winds sweep down from the glaciers in the north, even the massive granite citadels give little shelter from the cold. In trade, this land can offer only timber (from the monumental conifers in the south-east), furs and slaves. Such things can be had elsewhere, and merchants who are interested will in any case venture no further than the trading-town of Rathurbosk.

At one time this land was under the absolute dominion of magus-lords who derived their powers from the demonic gods they worshipped. Every seven years they would gather in the eldritch fortress of Spyte to commune with their gods and, in doing so, renew their sorcerous energies. At the last convocation, nearly two centuries ago, something went wrong. Waiting beyond the sealed gates of the city, the magi's servants heard nonhuman voices raised in anger.

11 This is not just from the huge fire that burns in the tavern hearth. Many of the patrons smoke pipes stuffed with *tahac*, an evil-smelling narcotic weed that grows in south-eastern Krarth. The persistent side-effects of this weed may explain why most people on the Rathurbosk seem at least a little crazy.

12 Hook the outlaw, for example, when fleeing from justice in Algandy was allowed across in return for the most outrageous lie he could invent, but the captain of the soldiers sent in pursuit of him had to pay 1 Gold Piece for each of his men.



Screams were heard and strange lights danced on the walls. Running in mortal fear for their lives, the servants looked back to see lightning streaming up into the sky from the smouldering inner towers of Spyte. Some fled into the wilderness, but others waited for their masters at a distance of many miles from the city. Days of silence passed, then the ground began to tremble and crack. A moat of flame opened around Spyte, spewing gobs of molten rock far around. As the flames died down, the servants saw that Spyte now stood on an isolated pinnacle of rock, surrounded by a vast fissure that went right into the bowels of the earth. There was no way across, even if any had dared to enter the place. They could see that many of the towers had fused in the heat of the inferno, causing stone walls to twist like candle-wax. They waited long for their masters - some, blindly faithful, until the end of their days. But no one ever emerged.

The apprentices or heirs of the various magi took over their position of power in Krarth and thus founded a new nobility that rules to this day, but they have failed to master the secret lore of their predecessors. The shrines of the demon-gods no longer glitter with magical energy. The present-day magi scour their ancestral castles for secret sanctums where they might uncover the powers of old. They pore over the dusty grimoires and recite the arcane formulae to no avail. By the standards of those lost magi of old they are mere dabblers, no more competent than any common sorcerer - and some not even that. They have taken the titles and emblems<sup>13</sup> of the magi, usurped their old citadels, assumed overlordship of

13 The magi represented themselves by emblems. Each emblem showed the wand of the magus to whom it belonged. The elaborate designs of these wands were precisely specified, just as in other lands a knight or lord will have his personal coat-of-arms. The wand of the Magus Byl is described as 'a golden ell with nine ebon studs; three volutes enrubied and a black-and gilt gryphon atop', and so on. The genuine wands were presumably lost in the Blasting of Spyte, but the present magi carry facsimiles.

their subjects - but it is all a sham.

Some of the magi may be mentioned in order to give the reader an accurate picture. The Byl lineage is traditionally powerful, but is represented at the moment by one who hardly lives up to the tradition. Aytarn, the Magus Byl, is a young and inexperienced sorcerer. He assumed the title after his father disappeared on an expedition across the tundra, but he has taken little interest in the duties this should entail. He has grown into a pasty, grossly fat youth who dallies with his servants and allows his father's library to gather dust. The Byl manuscripts are rich with potent spells, if only they could be decoded; one of the original magi once chained the Malgash. This unworthy successor to the title shows no interest in recovering the old secrets, and is not likely to leave any heirs.

Rakov, Magus Lim, is generally believed to be a vampire. (If not a vampire, then some other form of undead.) He draws an awful tax from his subjects - one maiden every new moon. After he has drunk his full, the girl joins his earlier conquests. His undead 'wives', discarded and nearly mindless, roam the tundra unchecked, stalking and finally devouring their prey after enticing them with promises of warmth and glimpses of their comely fairness.

The Tor magi were also a powerful line. The current Magus Tor, Laglor, is a true descendant of the ancient lineage; whereas most of the magi slain in Spyte left only apprentices to assume their place, Magus Tor's wife had already given him an heir. The inner arcana of the family rituals were lost, but the magical power is strong in Laglor's blood and he is an accomplished sorcerer.

There are several female magi - or, more properly, *fatae*. Fata Uru (whose personal name is Jani) has no sorcerous ability, but is a wily politician. Planning a dynasty under which Krarth's ancient glory could be restored, she seeks to form an alliance by marriage with Laglor. Such a union would significantly alter the current balance of power, and many of the other magi

and fatae can be counted upon to oppose it.

There are dozens of other magi - too numerous for each to be described in detail here. Most are, in any case, of little interest - merely engrossed in personal indulgences and petty vendettas amongst themselves, taking no notice of the affairs of the world.

And what of Spyte? Does it hold the old power, the wands of the true magi and the means to summon the ancient demon-gods? Many adventurers, believing that it does, have made the journey to the Cauldron (the local name for the chasm surrounding the ruins). Even in summer, the journey is an arduous trek along disused roads and through slushy quagmire. Hunger, the elements, disease and wild beasts all take their toll. With a good guide and much luck, travellers may eventually reach the Cauldron - first glimpsed by the towering clouds of steam that it belches up into the frigid air. Then comes the problem of reaching the walls of Spyte. Even if this is somehow accomplished, there must be untold horrors pent up within. Few have ventured into Spyte since the Blasting, and of those not one has returned.

## The Mercanian Coast

The Mercanians are a loose alliance of tribes or clans. Agriculture is the foundation of their economy, but in centuries past they frequently supplemented this with raids across the Mergeld Sea in their fearsome dragon-prowed ships. Mercanians are famous for their seamanship, and they were able to raid the Cornumbrian or Erewornian coast as easily as that of Albion. Usually a lookout would spy the raiders approaching and the villagers fled from their homes, leaving the Mercanians to pillage what they wished and depart without bloodshed. Actual violence rarely occurred, but still the Mercanians gained a reputation for ferocity surpassing even their cousins in Thuland. They have kept their reputation to this day.

The raids each summer needed extensive and costly preparations - not always with a guaranteed return on the investment, as a hostile lord might be ready to repulse the attack. Eventually some Mercanians thought of a way to avoid this. Seeing plentiful lands and a comfortable climate in Ellesland, they settled and built homesteads in which to pass the winter months. If troubled by the local lords they fought at first, but more often they agreed on some tribute. Eventually they turned to farming and became much like the lord's other vassals.<sup>14</sup> Few families of Albion are without some faint trace of Mercanian blood somewhere in their lineage.

Rapine and pillage is one way of acquiring wealth. It is not without its share of risk. The Mercanians today are better known as traders than as raiders. The greatest of the jarls have filled their coffers with the fruits of trade around the Coradian ports. It is not unknown to see a Mercanian trading vessel even as far south as Opalar, or wending its way up the jungle-bound waters of the Mungoda!

Mercania cannot be considered as a single country, even though its sailors have explored far and wide and its warriors have fought in countless battles. The jarls are independent chieftains - land-owning lords - who convene occasionally at an assembly called the Thing to decide on joint ventures and matters of mutual interest. A great assembly of the very highest jarls, called the Althing, is theoretically held once every five years. In practice, petty jealousies and grudges held for generations prevent the Althing from becoming a more frequent or influential gathering.

14 There are two such Mercanian settlements south of Braying Cross, in Montombre's fief. The people of Torston and Sigurdingham speak Elleslandic with a few Mercanian words, follow the True Faith rather than their ancestral gods, pay homage to Montombre and serve in his army. Only their physical appearance (Mercanians are tall, pale-skinned and flaxen-haired) sets them apart from any other Albioman.

## The Trackless ooze

This is an area of marshes, lakes and desolate land cobwebbed by foetid rivers. The people who live here dwell in reed huts that sit on stilts above the dank ground. The life they lead is not one to be envied - poling themselves along the cold waterways on crude rafts, they forage for water-rats, fish and edible fungi. They must salt and store what they can in the summer months. Winter often brings blizzards and a deathly coldness that lies on the land like a shroud until the spring comes again.

Not only humans live in the inland waterways. There is also a strange species, known to scholars as 'newtlings' (the river-folk call them 'mud thrashers'). These amphibious creatures have a long-limbed upper body not unlike a man's, but from the waist they have a long, flattened tail which enables them to swim through the mud and water of the ooze. Their faces are wide and squashed-looking, with a rather comical expression. The rubbery lips are continually parted as they swim (or thrash) along, to allow the creature to suck in the river-weed on which it subsists. Newtlings are small (the size of a large dog) and may or may not be intelligent. The river-folk consider their flesh a delicacy, and hunt them mercilessly.

Along the coast live the *Vassklavi* fisherfolk. For them, winter can be a good time. If the sea freezes they may range far on the pack-ice - even as far as the Isle of Yggdras, where the meat of bears and wolves can be had.

## The Kingdom of Wyr

In earlier times this land was a vassal state of Krarth. Since the Blasting of Spyte, the Witch-King has been independent of the magi's authority. He calls the current magi 'pretenders' and refuses to recognize their right to rule. Clad in his silvered finery, he has

ruled from his Palace of Eternal Dusk for more than five centuries. Within the borders of his land, nature must bend to this great sorcerer's will. His subjects live in fear of his power, for he may visit any of them - even the lowliest peasant - in dreams and apply nightmarish torments if he finds they have done anything that angers him.

An elaborate social structure applies in the Witch-King's land - and there have been few travellers to give an accurate account of it. Three principal classes hold sway: the Armigers, the hereditary warrior-caste; the Solons, who administrate; and the Seers, who roam freely, perhaps as mediators with the common people, and are not subject to the Witch-King's occult blandishments.

The ancient gods of Krarth are worshipped here, and no missionary can ever bring these people the True Faith as long as the Witch-King sits upon his shadowed throne.

### **Yggdras Isle**

Nominally a client-state of Krarth. This cold, wind-swept land is sparsely populated but rich in timber and ores. Its people, famed for their overweening arrogance in the face of stark adversity, must pay a yearly tribute of gold and iron to the magi. Ancient buildings of blue-veined marble still stand here as enigmatic reminders of an earlier, prouder culture. The people of Yggdras hold markets in the walls of these ruined cities but do not live in them.

A legend states that the great Tree of Life is to be found somewhere on this island. He who eats of its fruit gains wisdom and mystic insight akin to that of a god. Footnotes to the legend sometimes add that the last god to pluck fruit from its boughs still lingers - dread Wotan, Father of the Heavens. We may assume that he would not readily permit others to reach it!

### **The Gnawing Waste**

This is a wild country of glacier-split mountains, merciless blizzards and soaring conifers. The people are reindeer-herdsmen and hunters. Dour and uncommunicative, they worship their ancestral spirits in hearth-altars and show no interest in strangers.

To the east lies the uncharted Svartgard Forest. Amid the black boles of strange silver-needed firs lurk all manner of primeval terrors: Night Elves, Trollbears, flickering Eidolons and macabre Ice-Ghouls. No one ventures here.

### **The New Selentine Empire**

Sometime after the conversion of the Empire to the True Faith, sectarian divisions brought about a split. Madrox Cosmogoran, commander of the First Legion, proclaimed himself Imperator at the mountain stronghold of Tamor (then a remote fort quite unlike the mighty city it has since become). Any quarrel the Imperator in Selentium may have had with this move was precluded when the southern part of the Empire finally collapsed as a result of barbarian attacks (from the area that is now the Sultanate of Opalar).

The New Selentine Empire is thus all that remains of the empire that once encompassed most of the mapped lands of Legend. Adapting their military techniques to oppose the Khanates to the east, over the centuries the legionaries of old Selentium became the Tamorian Cataphracts - grandly armoured knights on heavy warhorses. They expanded southwards, bringing parts of the old Empire under their dominion until they acquired the present territories. In the end they even sealed off the corridor of land by which the nomads could sweep west to sack Selentium. This is what earned them their soubriquet - 'the Bastions of the Faith'.

Nevertheless, the Empire is a heterodox state. According to their beliefs, the Saviour was 'promoted' to godhood by his actions in much the way that the Emperors of old were deified after their death. The Selentine Church, however, teaches that the Saviour was preordained to bring salvation to the world - literally, that he was the Son of God. The two factions are in almost complete agreement on the Saviour's teachings and on the nature of God Himself, but this one doctrinal difference is enough to separate the Tamorian Church from Selentium. Of course, it is on just such trivial wrangling that sectarian divisions are always formed.

The Empire is organized along superficially feudal lines, but there is still some sense of the old Republican ideals. Land is held by tenants from the *patres*, or nobles. But unlike a truly feudal society there are no serfs. Each man is technically free<sup>15</sup> and, though he may owe military service to the Emperor and the State, is not obligated to render such service to his 'lord' without due payment. The essential difference between this arrangement and feudalism derives from the Empire's monetary economy. People are paid for their services, are taxed in turn by the State, and civil matters such as administration and defence are supported by this revenue. Simple, all-encompassing law replaces the ties of duty and obligation that bond the feudal nation together.

All classes of citizen have some influence on the running of the Empire by means of the Centurial Assembly, in which all clans are represented. A simple ploughman may be a lowly individual indeed, but his clan - the extended family-group to which he belongs - will not be wholly lacking in influence. The Centurial Assembly agrees all appointments to the Senate at Tamor. Of course, some clans have more influence than others. The patrician clans, in point of fact, hold

15 There are slaves, of course - captured in war from among the eastern nomads or bought from Krarth or the ooze. But these are not citizens of the Empire.

the majority vote over all other classes. The Senate, comprising the hundred or so wealthiest landowners, can petition the Emperor and require him to account for his decisions before them. Without their support his reign would be short-lived. Technically the Emperor has sole power to appoint his successor (usually his heir), but the Senate must be consulted. On at least three occasions they have forced a different succession to the throne.<sup>16</sup> The Emperor at this time, Ardax Baltissa, has the solid backing of his Senate. Militarily, economically and politically, the Empire has rarely been stronger.

A visitor would find much to marvel at within one of the great cities of the Empire. Colossal marble entablatures stand above the entrance to civic buildings, showing in their sculpted friezes the past and present glory of the Selentine Empire. With great ingenuity, the Empire's engineers have built sewers to channel waste out of the city, plumbing to bring water to the richer homes and even a system of underfloor heating to keep houses warm in winter. Streets are paved - a sharp contrast to the muddy ditches that run through most western cities. Great braziers burn at the street corners by night, illuminating the stone facades of the buildings and casting a ruddy light on the bustling nightlife of entertainers, merrymakers and prostitutes. Militia patrols are ever-present, and any felon is assured of a swift arrest - though usually a fair trial also. Beyond the city walls, the traveller from the west would still have much to wonder at. The uncompromisingly straight roads that were the arteries of the old Empire criss-cross the landscape, allowing trade to move swiftly and safely between the towns. Advanced farming techniques ensure a rich harvest year after year.

16 Most notably in 885AS, when the then-Emperor's eldest son was widely considered to be too unstable and indolent to rule. The Senate preferred one of their own number, Kataxu Hirgandan. A compromise was reached by marrying Kataxu to one of the retiring Emperor's daughters,



Nowhere else in the world of Legend are the magic-using professions so organized. Here there are academies into which a child with promising psychic gifts can be placed at an early age. This is how the army of the New Selentine Empire staffs its sorcerous contingents - companies of martial mages trained for their specialized tasks of espionage, camouflage, morale, battlefield healing, and mass devastation. The sight of the massed ranks of Selentine military strength - patrician Cataphracts in gleaming armour, riding forth on giant warhorses; hawk-nosed mages in their palanquins, surveying the disposition of troops and producing auguries; scurrying infantrymen closing into formation with immaculate precision. This is a sight no less fearsome than the nomad hordes they must hold in check.

## The Nomad Khanates

An expanse of temperate grasslands and scrub lies to the east of the New Selentine Empire. It has never been explored or mapped; its exact limits are unknown. Somewhere further east and south are the strange, tradition-steeped lands of Khitai and Yamato. More southerly are the rich countries of Minj and Batubatan<sup>17</sup>, and the Palace Under Heaven where the Emperor of the Nine Mountains holds court. In the south-west, the grasslands must abut the far fringes of Opalar. But a traveller wishing to visit any of these exotic places would take the seaward passage along the Gulf of Marazid, not travel across the grasslands. These wild plains are the home of nomad peoples as fierce and untamed as the landscape they inhabit.

The nomads are horse and oxen herders who move continually as the seasons and the abundance of grass for the herd dictate. They obtain everything from their

17 Batubatan (pronounced BA-too ba-TAHN), a ratified land of golden temples where the people (yak herders and craftsmen) are almost outnumbered by their serene priests. Supposedly this was the native country of Sa'aknathur the wizard.

herd - the horses are steeds for war or hunting, cattle draw the tribe's wagons. Both are a source of meat and clothing and bone utensils. Horn and sinew are used in the construction of the nomads' composite bows, which in the hands of a skilled archer<sup>18</sup> can rain arrows on their enemies at a range of over 200 metres.

The social organization of these people consists of extended tribe-alliances whose ruler is called a Khan. The balance of power shifts as tribes change allegiance and as incautious Khans are assassinated. At the time of writing, the principal power resides in Sitai Khan of the Oshkosa. Other khanates are the Katagai, the Gunguska, the Khanate of the Sweeping Vast, the Khanate of the Black Pavilion, and the Hunkunkai.

One westerner is famous for his travels among these wild people. Niccolo of Wissenstein was sent in a party of explorers from the court of King Vorlest of Kurland, who charged them with discovering a safe land-route to Khitai. Niccolo quickly learned the nomads' tongue and set about his task; trying to establish contact with the Khans and make a deal with them guaranteeing 'safe conduct' for Kurlish caravanserai. In this he was not successful<sup>18</sup>, but he did produce a record of nomadic life which is quite unique. His visit to a nomad's home occurs early in the account of his travels:

"The clan are continually on the move, and for this purpose carry their homes with them. When the time comes to make camp, a family can set up one of these homes in under an hour. First a prepared lattice of willow hoops is raised, this being secured in the ground with heavy pegs. Large bolts of felt are wrapped onto this framework to form the walls of the home. The felt and the ropes used to lash the structure together are made from horsehair, and the clan's herd animals provide oils to make the home proof against cold

18 Bear in mind that most warriors of the tribe begin their training with the bow in early childhood.

19 And notoriously punished by Vorlest as a result.

and rain. The finished home is a roughly circular tent which the steppe people call a *gyur*.

Invited into one such tent, I found the ulterior decorated with rugs and trinkets. The central part of the roof, above the fire, is left open as one also finds in the mead-halls of Mercania and Thuland. Despite this, I can attest that the home remains warm and comfortable even when the bitterest steppe wind is blowing outside. My own host, whose name was Shweymar, invited me to sit beside him on the brown rug occupying the northernmost third of the floor, opposite the entrance. This was a great honour, as the steppe people keep this area for the head of the household, his elders and guests of high status. Behind us were several idols depicting Shweymar's household deities. In front of this area of high status, the floor is divided into two other sections. To the left of the doorway sit the women and children. The host's sons and younger male guests sit on the right. Utensils for cooking and other household purposes are kept in the left-hand area while weapons are placed in a rack between the right-hand area and the host's rug.

I was to discover that this tradition of signifying status extends throughout the steppes, even to the homesteads of the citadels.<sup>20</sup> Whether this is happenstance or real evidence that the tribes once belonged to a single unrecorded civilization - this question can never be answered.<sup>21</sup>

20 Indeed, not all of the steppes barbarians live a nomadic life. There are some citadels - rather squalid, mud-brick forts, in fact - but these are really 'depot towns' and have a very small permanent population. Although Niccolo seems to assume the citadel dwellers to be just a settled faction of barbarian society, this was probably because he was drawing a parallel with the country/town relationship in his native land. There is deep distrust between the rugged nomads and the handful who choose a settled life 'within the walls'.

21 Those interested in reading more of Niccolo's travels may find copies of his manuscript in the abbey at Wissenstein, the library of the Pontiff in Selentium or in the Vassilvio family library in Ferromaine.

## Ferromaine

Ferromaine, with a population of nearly a quarter of a million, is the largest city of the north. Approaching from the sea, even a voyager who is jaded by the splendour of other rich Coradian ports cannot fail to be impressed. More than a hundred elegant towers point to the sky. The tallest is more than 70 metres high, and each is covered with rococo decorations in an effort to outdo the splendour of its neighbours. These are the homes of the Ferromaine aristocracy - not lords of warrior stock, but wealthy merchants and bankers. Striding through the broad avenues, one passes the great palaces of the wealthiest families - the Senfritis, the Cotulios, the Vassilvios, the Sentapolos and others. It is easy to imagine the groomed, velvet-coated scions of these families as they shut themselves off behind marble facades and caress their overflowing treasure chests with furtive glee.

Marvellous cathedrals and public buildings are everywhere in abundance. Sun sparkles off the harbour, bathes the pale stone of the Dyuch's<sup>22</sup> palace in a soft gold glow, glitters back in rainbow shards from magnificent stained-glass windows. The merchant-patricians are eager to display their wealth and piety, and vie with one another in patronage of the arts. Walking back from the harbour and through the upper-class districts, one reaches the usual crowded jumble of shops and houses to be found in any town. Narrow streets stretch on like a maze - cobbled lanes where we can peer through the latticed shop-windows at fine glassware, roast meats, spicy buns and cakes, jewellery, fine silks and cloths, bottles of wine and brandy, or enticing artifacts brought from distant lands. Even here in the backstreets we find signs of

22 The Dyuch is the chief magistrate of the Ferromaine Republic - a very influential position. Technically he is supposed to relinquish all business concerns to ensure his decisions are impartial. In practice, he quickly becomes rich and fat on 'inducements' (bribes) paid to him by various factions. His term of office is seven years, but it is rare for a Dyuch not to be re-elected.

Ferromaine's wealth all around. But it would have been a different story if we had walked along the quays at the waterfront. Here the hovels of the shanty town huddle like desperate lazars on the fringe of the glittering city. Longshoremen wait with sullen eyes for the next flotilla of ships, when they can earn a handful of silver Matapans for days of backbreaking work. Beggars and crippled adventurers work the avenues of the city in shifts. Thieves skulk in the dark corners where the Ferromaine militia will never find them. The stink of poverty hangs in the air; the stench of humanity inhumanly treated.

Beyond the city lie more pleasing vistas. We walk up the road into the hills, perhaps passing the palanquin of a nobleman borne by grunting, black-skinned slaves. The ermine-trimmed curtains of the palanquin hang open, and we can see the noble enjoying sweetmeats popped into his full-lipped mouth by a rouged harlot. He raises languid eyes in our direction, perhaps gives an indulgent wave of his plump, ring-laden hand. With six good Kurlish mercenaries in his retinue, he does not fear bandits.

The nobles have their summer villas up here in the hills. It is close enough to the city to keep a watchful eye on business, but far enough out to avoid the noise and stench and bustle of city life. Behind the hills, roads meander out towards the towns and villages - and other cities, smaller and subservient, belonging to the Ferromaine League. We see a landscape of church steeples, vineyards and little stone cottages. A day's walk inland and we would come to the border of the Selentine Empire.

There are simple explanations for Ferromaine's economic ascendancy, and they may be briefly sketched here. For reasons connected with its strongly agricultural base, the Selentine Empire forces low interest rates. A merchant gains little by undertaking a risky long-range venture, because most of his profit will be taken by the ravenous Selentine exchequer. Ferromaine is gifted by its geographical location: a city

built on several islets in the Liederkehn estuary, it was destined for independence. In view of the wealth its fleets bring in through the Coradian Sea, the Empire had to make a deal. The Republic of Ferromaine was granted exemption from the taxes of the rest of the Empire provided it acknowledged the nominal suzerainty of the Imperator. Clearly this appealed more to the Ferromaine merchants than 'going it alone'. The security that came from being under the Empire's wing gave them an ideal economic climate for the most daring ventures.<sup>23</sup> Their fleets opened up trade with the Ta'ashim states, and with Khitai and Batubatan beyond.

### **Emphidor and neighbouring countries**

Emphidor's day is done, and not much need be said of these lands today. A number of fisherfolk ply the waters around the Emphidian islands, while inland one finds simple communities of sheep farmers. The marble ruins of the Golden Age line the coast, but the modern Emphidians shun these signs of their heritage with a mixture of awe and superstitious dread. They are a dull-souled, resigned, conservative race - as if the magnificence of their past has drained away their spirit. They bring a fatalism of the sort found in the Emphidian Tragedies to their faith and daily life. The region is poor in minerals and worthwhile exports. The only ships that dock here are those of eager adventurers, bound for the stygian labyrinths below the ruined acropolises and fallen colonnades.

In Molasaria, Analika and Hudristania the story is slightly different but no less bleak. Tiny villages squat miserably in the isolated mountain passes, like birds' nests huddled into a crag for shelter. Frightened peasants quake under the rule of a hundred local despots. Terror soars aloft on membraneous wings by

23 But Ferromaine is not without a choice. If they were not getting a good enough deal from the Empire, the High Councillors could always switch allegiance to Kurland.

night and sifts the carrion in lonely churchyards - for this is the traditional home of vampires, ghouls and werewolves. Black-clad priests trek from valley to valley, but the peasants are always torn between faith and fear. Spend a few days in any of the mountain villages and you will see a funeral procession wending a path down through the narrow streets - old men whose lined faces show the scars of many losses, grim youths with jaws set in sullen defiance, veiled women sending up a shrieking lament, and wailing children who have yet to learn the injustice into which they have been born. The mourners are led by a priest with a silver crucifix on his breast. Watch and wait - after the procession has gone past, once the wailing and the clanging of the priest's bell have faded into the distance, you may see another figure pass by. He follows the mourners at a respectful distance, his eyes showing only a weary determination. On his back he has a heavy knapsack. After the coffin has been lowered into the ground, the priest will linger to pay this man a few silvers before hurrying back with the other villagers to bolt his door. The stranger opens his knapsack and prepares the items he will need. He is a *draktoter* - a profession that combines gravedigging with another unpleasant duty. He takes the mallet and stake from his sack and turns towards the open grave. It is his job to see that the ranks of the *nosferatu* will not be joined by this unfortunate soul...

### **Selentium and the Asmulian lords**

At one time Selentium was the capital of the world - at any rate, of the western world mapped out in this book. It began as a city-state on the eastern rim of the post-classical Emphidian Empire. Through the citizens' modern approach to government, trade and warfare, Selentium quickly grew to become the strongest power south of Krarth. Its legions swarmed rapidly across the face of the map, building reliable

roads that drew the trade and taxes to the centre of the Empire. The troops of decadent and decaying Kaikhuru had already fallen before the might of Emphidor; now they collapsed completely. Pharaoh fled into the desert and a Selentine governor was installed at Siout (now Amsa'im). In the far corner of the world, the legions met with equal success against the belligerent warlords of Algandy and the savage tribes of Ellesland.

The heyday of the Selentine Empire lasted until 100AS, then a series of administrative blunders and problems of finance began to gnaw at the territories. Attacks from Thuland, southern Kaikhuru and the Eastern Steppe intensified, and the legions were stretched beyond capacity. Little by little, Selentium lost her grip on the world ...

Though the Old Empire is gone - and only its shadow is now visible in the New Empire of Tamor - Selentium is still vitally important as the spiritual centre of the west. Albion, Cornumbria, Algandy, Chaubrette, Kurland, Emphidor, Molasaria - these are the lands of the True Faith, the new religion which swept away the primitive older gods of the Empire. The True Faith was founded by a fisherman called Gatanades, now known throughout the western world as 'the Saviour'. His teachings were initially scorned by the corrupt emperors and people of Selentium, and Gatanades himself died a martyr. But as the collapse of the Empire accelerated, the Emperor Josturox decided it would be expedient to adopt the new religion to which so many of the people were turning. The True Faith became ensconced in the official Church of Selentium.

So it has remained. Selentium has been sacked more than once by barbarian hordes, and it has not always been safe for the Pontiff to reside there. At times the cardinals of the Church have been in the pocket of one Asmulian baron or another, voting and making proclamations according to their paymaster's wishes. But now the New Empire is strong enough to hold off the

waves of barbarian attack and so Selentium is secure. This is particularly ironic because the Church of the New Empire stands on the brink of heterodoxy from the viewpoint of the Selentine Church. Doctrinal distinctions are fine and need not be explored here, but much is made by theologians of the image of the Pantocrator - a stern aspect of the Saviour as 'Judge of the World' rarely seen outside the New Empire. Some believe the Pantocrator is based on an earlier deity of the Old Empire and not on the Saviour at all. The cardinals in Selentium would not deny that the Tamorians are devout, but they claim that devotion is awry. In answer, the Tamorians point at some of the odder beliefs of the Selentines. One example is the tripartite nature of God: the Fist of God, which metes out destruction to sinner and infidel; the Eye of God, which watches men's souls and judges them for Heaven or Hell; and the Mouth of God (the Saviour himself) which speaks in the heart so that one may know Good from Evil. A further analysis of these theological squabbles is best sought elsewhere, and it need only be noted that the differences between the Selentine and Tamorian Churches is receding into the background somewhat as the threat of the Ta'ashim faith brings a unifying force.

## The Ta'ashim lands

Ta'ashim is many things: the name of a region, of a faith and of a people. The Ta'ashim states today occupy the part of the world where, a thousand years ago, we would have found the remnants of Kaikuhuru and the southern provinces of the Selentine Empire. After the collapse of the Empire's control, it took hundreds of years for a central authority to build up. The unifying force that finally made this possible was Ta'ashim - literally, 'the Word of God' - an intricate blueprint for life and worship, set down by the Illuminate Akaabah in the sixth century AS.

Akaabah was an administrator at Dhulan<sup>24</sup>, a trading city whose population was a shifting mix of desert nomads, settled agriculturalists and merchants from far and near. Pondering the problems this caused, Akaabah gained the insight to set down the first chapters of his Ta'ashim codex. These deal principally with law and government. That they are a work of particular brilliance can be seen from the success with which they were applied. A century after the Illuminate's death, his teachings had made possible the creation of an empire of more than five million souls.

Divisions soon formed in the Ta'ashim world. Differences of geography, language and doctrine saw to that. Zhenir was the hub from which the Ta'ashim faith spread, ruled with an iron hand by the Caliph - whose title proclaims his absolute authority in both the secular and spiritual realms. The capital was at Demkhor, the Sacred City, where the Illuminate retired to compose the more reflective chapters of his work.<sup>25</sup> The Emirate of Marazid was originally an extension of Zhenir, the Emir only a provincial governor. This was also true of Opalar, though it was not long before the Emir here proclaimed his independence. In the ninth century, *badawin* pressure installed a new Caliphate dynasty. The new administrators and generals were desert nomads, more fiercely zealous than those they replaced. For these fundamentalists, the Holy City was not a place for the subterfuge, compromise and ignobility on which all governments thrive. The Caliph's court remained at Demkhor, but the capital was moved to Dhulan. This move did not diminish the importance of the Holy City, but reinforced it. Many other changes - most of them

24 Thu-LAHN', with the TH pronounced as in 'thy'.

25 The second section of the Ta'ashim holy texts deals with the individual's relationship with, and moral obligations to, God. Orthodox Ta'ashim includes a third cycle of chapters - apocryphal stories about the Illuminate's teaching, collected after his death. The unorthodox Marijah sect denies the importance of these later chapters.

carried out with sword and fire - led to this period being known as The Purging of the Law.

In Marazid, this change of dynasty was not appreciated. The Emir and his courtiers, cousins of the old Caliph, grieved for his death and denied the new regime's authority. The fact that Zhenir was now enforcing a strict return to basic Ta'ashim did not endear the new Caliph to Marazid or Opalar, where a rich and comfortable life meant that people were less interested in harsh disciplinarian doctrines. Despite this, Marazid's rejection of the new Caliph must be seen as only nominal: trade continued as before, marriages were arranged to ally the two dynasties, the pilgrim traffic to Demkhor suffered a few hiccups<sup>26</sup> and then went on unimpeded.

Opalar might have had stronger objections, but these were forestalled by an invasion of the Qadik - nomads from the hills and grassy slopes east of Harogarn. In 820AS these nomad bands swept south along the Isis, and in the following year they took the capital city of Amsa'im. The Emir fled with his life to Marazid.<sup>27</sup> The Qadik leader (there had been several warbands involved, but a series of illnesses reduced the number of leaders to one) shrewdly rejected the position of Emir. This would only mean his inheriting the previous incumbent's bad relations with the Caliph. Instead he proclaimed himself Sultan - a title indicating his earthly power by making no claim to spiritual authority. Essentially he was saying to the Caliph, 'Give up any claim to my realm, and in matters of the faith I will defer to you.' The Caliph saw no possibility of directly recovering control of Opalar, and

26 Some pilgrims from Marazid were attacked in the Kaikuhuran Desert by *badawin*. These tribesmen had been the allies of the new Caliph in his climb to power, but he was not slow to clamp down when their zeal was breaking the lucrative flow of pilgrims northwards.

27 Since he also found time to gather twenty wives, most of his sons and daughters, and an honour guard of sixty Opalarian warriors, his departure cannot have been unduly hurried. Always a wily politician, he probably had no difficulty finding the right Qadik faction and offering the right bribes.

responded by naming the Sultan 'the Fist of Ta'ashim'. Inspired by this honour, the Sultan began to mete out retribution against the moral laxity he saw among his new subjects. This lasted a generation or two, but the old Selentine/Kaikuhuran bureaucracy still 'shuffles the papers' in Opalar.<sup>28</sup> These civil servants, descendants of the original Kaikuhuran race, usually manage to absorb each new ruler into their imponderably ancient culture. Before long, strict Ta'ashim relaxed and things went on as before.

This is the situation today. The Caliphate of Zhenir, taking its authority from Ta'ashim law, forbids trade with infidels and enforces low rates of interest. Revenue is gathered from trading with the other Ta'ashim states<sup>29</sup>, but Zhenir is poor in resources (except for silver from western Harogarn) and depends on Marazid and Opalar for grain, paper and salt. Its economy is very reliant on the pilgrims flocking to Demkhor.

Marazid and (to a lesser degree) Opalar are the 'progressive face' of Ta'ashim. They trade with the northern infidels - and even with the savages who

28 As the old Kaikuhuran adage goes: 'Princes come and Pharaohs go, but the nod of Viziers makes the Isis flow.' The shadow of Kaikuhuru lingers today in Opalar even though the old racial stock has been swamped and submerged by more than one wave of invaders. Among the modern physicians, scribes and accountants there are many who can trace their ancestry back to the Kaikuhuran aristocracy. There are also a few out-of-the-way areas where you will still find fresh offerings of grain and beer placed each day on the weathered idols of Re'atn, Set, Horus, K'nemu and the other Old Gods.

29 The lands of the Ta'ashim faith are intrinsically richer in the kind of commodities which are easy to transport: silk, pearls, precious metals, etc. Merchants are held in high esteem. This contrasts with the north, where most communities must be as self-reliant as possible and most resources are such things as timber and furs, which are not cost-effective to transport over long distances. Poor roads, lawlessness and the plague have all contributed to stifle trade in the north (except around the Coradian Sea and up around the coast to southern Albion). The overall effect of these factors has been to make the Ta'ashim countries more peaceful and generally more advanced, though at the cost of losing the raw aggression which drives the northerners to expand their domains.

live across the Gulf. They have developed some of the finest art to be found in all Legend: mystics compose poems of great beauty and insight; the cities, glittering with wealth, are filled with marvellous spires, minarets and arches; sculptors and artists produce works of breathtaking grace, representing the profound glory of God with abstract imagery; mathematicians and astronomers study the universe and find God's pattern in everything around them.

## The Principalities of the Crusade

The Crusades have been the great propaganda coup of the Selentine Church. It may be unfair to see them as an expedient enterprise - a self-serving ruse of the Pontiff. Certainly, thousands of warriors and pilgrims made the arduous journey south sustained only by their faith. For the majority who took part, there was no ulterior motive. The aim of the Crusades was clear and just: to 'liberate' Ibrahim, birthplace of the Saviour, from Ta'ashim occupation.

But this view ignores the fact that a city is not a collection of historical sites, but a living populace. The people of the Holy City of Ibrahim follow the Ta'ashim faith, and have little interest in the theological arguments of priests in far-off Selentium. Furthermore, in spite of its avowedly religious basis, the Crusade has done several notables a lot of purely financial and political good. Merchants throughout the North (and particularly in the Ferromaine League) began to lend money to would-be Crusaders in need of finance. The opening of pilgrim routes meant also the opening of better trade routes - guarded not by mercenaries demanding huge sums of silver, but by zealous knights for *free*. Many merchants could already see their warehouses filling with Ta'ashim silks, spices, ivory and gems. The Church also made loans, at such high rates of interest that some old noble families were reduced to penury. As if there were not

enough God-fearing young warriors ready to crowd the decks of the Crusade ships, the Pontiff added another inducement. Any man 'taking the cross' south would be remitted half the time he would otherwise spend in Purgatory.

Rapacious robber-knights and mercenaries also wanted a piece of the action: lands were being carved off the flanks of Ta'ashim and these disreputables were quick to grab their share. The crowned heads of the north were pleased, as the removal of these troublesome types from their own domains meant that it was easier to keep order.

The first areas taken were the coastal provinces just south of Molasaria, for here the Crusaders could build up a power-base against the Ta'ashim.<sup>30</sup> Zhenir and Marazid had been at odds for some years, and delayed so long in marshalling a united front that the northerners had taken an area as big as Algandy and laid siege to Ibrahim before they could act. Two years later a renewed Ta'ashim initiative pushed the Crusaders out of Ibrahim and halfway back to Crescentium, and the situation has been see-sawing back and forth ever since.

The Crusader lands currently comprise four separate principalities. Ibrahim itself is supposedly held by Fengor Svartsen, a Mercanian warlord, in vassalage to the Pontiff himself. Boundaries fluctuate continually owing to internal as well as external pressure. It is important to remember that the Principalities are occupied territory. The northerners rule, but they have to co-exist with the natives of the region. Pushing through the bazaar in Crescentium, you will see a dozen olive-skinned Ta'ashim for every white northern face. At dusk the Ta'ashim call to prayer mingles with the church bells of the settlers. And, as in every occupied province, the threat of rebellion and

<sup>30</sup> Crescentium became their capital. Prince Estabulo of Algandy, commander of the first wave of attacks, surveyed Crescentium from one of the three hills overlooking its harbour and declared it 'a splendid city, like a host of pearls and gold laid on a cloth of green velvet'.

murder is always present. In every narrow alley and starlit doorway, behind the palms that line the streets and in the cool cellars under the houses, assassins gather and plot. Marijahs travel from Opalar to render their unique services, and find that it is not only the Ta'ashim natives who are eager to employ them. Rival factions within the Crusader governments also join the 'masked pavane', as they call the game of politics: bargaining to have their own superiors slain, or disposing of difficult underlings. The Knights Capellars in particular (a group notorious for their willingness to use any means to achieve their goals) are known to have contact with Marijah groups, and presumably employ them in various convoluted schemes.

## Harogarn

The Harogarn mountain range provides a natural eastern boundary to Zhenir. The lower hill slopes in the western part of the range are occupied by yak herdsman who follow the Ta'ashim faith and accept the suzerainty of the Caliph. These territories are the area designated as Ta'ashim Harogarn on the map.

Deeper into the heart of the range are the caverns of several Dwarven settlements. These folk are jealously proud of the veins of ore running through their mountainous abodes. Ta'ashim warriors sometimes come to conduct 'hit-and-run' mining operations, particularly for gems and precious metals. The carnage and ruin they leave behind after these missions explains the hatred that the Dwarves of Harogarn feel for mankind.

Gonhala is a high plain to the east of the major peaks. Inhabited by Centaurs and a few primitive human settlements, parts of the plain are strewn with semi-precious gems - or so the story goes. At the western edge of Gonhala Plain, the mountains rise steeply to form the Olympian peaks of Mount Danak, Mount Lurken and Mount Vasgor - named for the three Titans of the Gate of Time in Ancient Emphidian myth.

Legend says that tributaries of the Styx can be found here (see p 78). A wide rock shelf overlooks the plain from a height of some 200 metres. On this rock shelf, which is about 500 metres wide, stands the ruinous Citadel of the Shadowlords. Through this broken tangle of deserted buildings it is possible to enter the magic-laden underworld where the Shadowlords lie buried.

## The Mungoda rain-forest

Our imaginary travels have brought us to the 'Dark Continent' of Legend, which remains almost completely uncharted. Much of this continent comprises the giant Mungoda river-basin. Across the hinterland spreads the endless luxuriant growth of the Mungoda Jungle. Inland, above the flood plain of the Mungoda and its tributaries, fantastically tall trees like the pillars of a cathedral reach far up into the azure sky. An impenetrable canopy of green-black screens out the daylight so that little undergrowth is to be found on the forest floor. Walking through a spongy morass of fungi and rotting vegetation, a traveller could almost fancy he is walking on the ocean bed, as the tropical light is tinged a flowing green by the spreading leaves above. Orchids and many other flowers provide splashes of rich golds, blues and reds to this eerie scene. Moss-coloured sloths<sup>31</sup> inch along the twisted boughs and screech to one another when night falls. Tangled strands of poison ivy twine around the trees. Monkeys chatter and crash from branch to branch, alarming exotically plumed parrots which take flight at once in a blaze of copper-gold and emerald.

Closer to the rivers, the jungle takes a different form. The headwaters of the Mungoda tributaries lay down a rich loam when they flood. Silk cotton trees

31 Reported by one expedition to be 'animated growths of clumped moss or grey-green fungus that move - albeit slowly - and devour other vegetation as a man eats meat'.



more than 50 metres tall rear like castle buttresses from the mud. Around their squat bases sprout ferns, cacao trees, palms and a profusion of flowering bushes. Further downriver, jungle of this sort gives way almost entirely to palms as there are no longer enough nutrients in the floodwater to satisfy the giant buttress-rooted trees.

At its mouth the Mungoda River is several miles wide. Particularly to the south it is fringed by the extensive mangrove swamps of the Cosh Goyope<sup>32</sup> region. The natives of these swamps punt their log-canoes between the stilt-like roots of the mangrove trees when foraging or hunting - but they must be watchful to avoid the reptilian Dracomen who thrash clumsily through the reeds and muddy shallows. The river-people sometimes trade with Ta'ashim or Coradian merchants. Slaves, monkeys and parrots all fetch a good price as curiosities back home. Also prized are some spices and dyes and the woods (such as ebony, rosewood and mahogany) brought from upriver by other tribes.

Considerably further south, close to the equator, are the territories of the Volucrath. Nothing can be added beyond what was said in Book One about these warlusty creatures. Travellers must avoid this area.

North of the Mungoda Jungle, the land rises gently to form the Thanagost Peaks. Majestic conifers and breathtaking waterfalls may be seen as one climbs out of the drenching jungle into the sharp landscape of the highlands. A few isolated tribes of hunters live here, scattered among the lower valleys. Higher still, beyond the ancient plateau, the mountains rise dizzyingly until they are lost in snow and clouds, and probably no living thing has ever seen the topmost peaks.

Beyond the Thanagost range, the land drops steeply towards the rim of the desert. In places the slopes are vertical up to 600 metres, leading to the desert-dwellers' name for these cliffs - 'the Wall of the World'. Doubtless the unexplored Desert of Songs

32 Pronounced 'Cosh Goy-OPEH.'

holds many dust-choked ancient ruins, but adventurers must beware of at least one shadowy menace. A prehistoric civilization here had the custom of burying their dead in cave tombs - niches and tunnels cut into the rock-face. The tombs are now riddled with Grave Gaunts which scavenge across the drifting sands by night.



## 2 The Lore of Legend

One way to understand a place is to look at its folklore and myth. Legend is a world rich in magic, and many of its myths are more than half-true. Here, folklore does more than reflect the world and the people - it is the very essence of Legend. The following miscellany of characters, underworlds and magic items should give the GamesMaster and his players some of the flavour of life in this strange world.

### **The Altar of Jusjurandus**

Jusjurandus was an Apparitor, or attendant deity, of the old Selentine God of War. In Selentine theology his particular provinces were fidelity, obedience and honour. When warriors or others wished to pledge an oath of comradeship, they would go to the altar in his temple at Selentium. This altar has two upcurving 'horns', and the oath-takers would each grasp one of the horns as they swore their allegiance. According to the legend, any man who broke his oath later would suffer retribution according to the seriousness of his treachery. If his friend suffered permanent dishonour, harm or death as a result, the oathbreaker would succumb to incurable madness (see Book Five, p 55). Lesser consequences would be punished with some form of curse (Book Three, p 181) or ill fortune. The GM should note that the oath had to be *mutual* if the deity were to enforce it.

The Altar of Jusjurandus is now owned by the Senfriti family of Ferromaine.

### **The Armoured One of Skiosonar**

This delicate-seeming android was constructed by one of the nameless Wizards of the Pall of Dread, a secret

mystic sect of ancient times. It has two arms and two legs, but its superficially humanoid shape is belied by closer inspection. Its form is bizarrely slender, elegant, with stilt-like limbs and tapering face suggesting a huge bipedal insect rather than a man. Though it appears fragile, the greyish-white metal from which it was forged is stronger than steel.

There is a small hatch in the Armoured One's narrow chest, and this opens to reveal a chamber lined with striations of red crystal. If the heart from one who has been dead not more than eight hours is taken and placed in the Armoured One's chest, the metal limbs will begin to twitch with life. Within ten minutes the android will arise - now with all the memories and skills of the slain character. (Note that the character's soul is not actually brought to reside in the Armoured One. Only the raw intellect, devoid of human compassion, is reincarnated in the android's body. A Resurrect spell cast later would restore the original character to life, but lacking all memories of his previous existence. The Resurrected character would in this case act as 1st rank as long as the Armoured One continued to operate using his personality.)

A persona reincarnated in the Armoured One's body retains his own *Intelligence* and *Psychic Talent* scores but has the physical characteristics of the android: *Strength* 9 and *Dexterity* 18. Its design is not human enough for a Looks score to be relevant. The reincarnated character keeps the Profession and rank of his previous life. His Health Points score becomes only 10, but in the android body he has a natural Armour Factor of 6. He cannot wear heavier than leather armour on top of this, because the body is not able to sustain a heavy load. The android's eye-lenses see equally well in darkness or bright light, giving the character panoptical vision (see Book Four, p 39).

The Armoured One is affected normally by indirect-attack spells. Direct-attack spells that take effect will harm only the human heart that beats inside its chest. A Fossilize would turn the heart to stone without

affecting the android body. The heart could then be removed and a new one installed in its place. The enchanted metal of the Armoured One's body repairs itself naturally at the rate of 1 HP per day. Healing spells have only half their normal effect when used to repair the android body. All potions are useless.

Two factors govern the use of the Armoured One in a campaign. First, a character who is restored to life in the android body is soulless. If this happens to a player-character he becomes an NPC controlled by the GamesMaster. Only if his soul is brought back and his original body restored by Resurrect should he be allowed to continue with the character - now an amnesiac whose memories have been 'stolen' by an insectoid metal monster! Secondly, the GM should avoid referring to the Armoured One as an 'android'. This suggests a science-fictional basis which is inappropriate to the medieval world of Legend. As far as the characters are concerned, the Armoured One is just another magical horror in the tradition of living statues and metal-skinned demons.

## The Casket of Fays

This is a small silver-bound pine coffer. Each time it is opened, some strange and unpredictable effect results. This is determined by a random roll on the part of the GamesMaster. The effects are:

1. A tendril of green flame snakes out of the casket to strike a single target within 10m. The user can specify the target, but if he does not then the flame will double back and hit him. Treat this as a *Dragonbreath* spell.
2. Everyone within 10m is struck dumb for one minute. This will not prevent a Mystic from casting spells, but Sorcerers, Warlocks and Elementalists will be temporarily deprived of their magic.

3. A haunting siren song emanates from the casket. Characters in earshot (roughly 100m in the open) must roll equal to or under their rank on d10 or stand entranced. The roll must be made each Round unless the character can block his ears. The duration of the song is set by a Spell Expiry Roll unless cut short by closing the casket.
4. A foul plague of grey rats pour from the casket and rush away in all directions, only to vanish mysteriously when they reach cover such as a wall, thicket or shadows. They attack no one, but all characters in the vicinity have a 10% chance of contracting the Black Death (see Book Three, p 184).
5. A random Sorcery spell of 1st-8th level is cast upon any one specified character within 10m. The user of the casket does not know in advance what this spell will be - he might thus give a foe Armour, or Fossilize a comrade.
6. Utter darkness fills a zone of 10m radius, and no creature or spell can see within it. This effect also prevents the user from seeing. The darkness lasts until cancelled by a Spell Expiry Roll or until the lid is closed.
7. An illusory duplicate of one (randomly determined) character within 10m is formed. This moves and speaks according to the casket user's mental commands, but has no power to harm a character even if believed. Unless dispelled by shutting the lid, it lasts until its Spell Expiry Roll comes up.
8. An unaccountable blizzard blows out of the casket, affecting anyone in front of it in a roughly 90° arc to a distance of 10m. Torches and unshuttered lanterns are extinguished and characters must roll under their Strength on d20 each Round or pass out from the extreme cold. The blizzard lasts 1-6 Combat Rounds



whether or not the lid is closed. A character caught in it for more than four Rounds suffers 1d6 HP frostbite damage (but only 1d4 if clad in thick furs, protected by a *Survival* spell, etc).

9. The user opens the casket and pulls out a Spriggan. (For stats, see Book Four, p 134.) There is a 70% chance that the Spriggan will attack a character whom the user points out, and a 30% chance it will attack one of his own companions (though it will never turn on the user himself). The Spriggan does not vanish until it is killed.
10. A booming voice from the casket's depths speaks the name of the most powerful character within 10m. Only if there is no other person within 10m will the user be named. The victim suffers a 1d20 *fright attack* which, if it takes effect, leaves him rigid with fear for 2-8 Rounds.
11. A storm of pine needles streams from the casket. Anyone within 10m who was facing the user must roll under *Reflexes* on d20 or be blinded for the next 2-12 Rounds. The effect lasts for five Rounds, and no one can approach the user until it subsides. It is impossible to close the lid while the pine needles are shooting out.
12. Seven vampire bats (Book One, p 77) flap out of the casket and swoop to attack a foe indicated by the user. Unless slain, these creatures remain until dissolved into shadows by a Spell Expiry Roll. If the casket is shut before they have vanished, they abandon their original victim and return to attack the user.
13. Dank fog swirls around the user. There is a smell of soil and trees and cloying mushrooms. Tall figures glide forward, then half-glimpsed hands wrench the casket from him. The fog dissipates, leaving no trace of the mysterious figures or the Casket of Fays.

Unless otherwise stated above, the user of the Casket of Fays is not harmed by any of its effects.

## The Crown of Kings

This talmi-gold crown, studded with topaz, garnets and rubies, was worn by Guillaume II, the Great King who unified Kurland. The crown is imbued with some of Guillaume's legendary charisma, so that whoever wears it becomes a natural leader of strong character and authority. The wearer's rank is considered to be three steps higher than is actually the case insofar as *fright attacks*, certain spells, etc, are concerned. (Note this does not enhance any of the character's scores such as ATTACK or MAGICAL DEFENCE - he only obtains a brevetcy of + 3 ranks.)

The character is also able to command others by the sheer forceful strength of his personality. There is a limit to how far this aura of charisma extends, however. While everyone will find the character persuasive and charming, he can directly command but thirty normal men at one time. Ranked characters (ie, those belonging to an adventuring Profession) are of a more indomitable and independent nature, and the wearer of the crown can command a total of only ten characters of 1st rank, five characters of 2nd, or some other combination amounting to 10 character-ranks. Nor can he overpower the will of any character whose rank is higher than his own brevet rank.

In order to exert command over another, the wearer must approach him in cordial circumstances (not in the midst of battle!) and engage him in conversation for one minute. At the end of this time he rolls 3d6, adds his brevet rank and subtracts the rank of his intended underling. The result is the number that he must roll equal to or less than on 2d10 in order to bring the character into his control. (A failed dice roll will result in the character becoming extremely hostile to the crown wearer thereafter, and thus only one attempt

can ever be made on a given character.) If swayed by the wearer's words, however, the character becomes his sworn henchman. He will serve loyally until and unless the wearer frees him from command (at which point his former master becomes a hated foe, incidentally] or unless he is ordered to perform some obviously suicidal act. If this happens, he gets a special roll to break free of the command at once: under his *Intelligence* on d20.

## Dragon Pearls

These lustrous pearls are formed when a Black Dragon (see the entry for *Shen Lun* in Book Four) achieves Adepthood and thus becomes a human. Black Dragons themselves hardly being common, such pearls are correspondingly very rare.

A Dragon Pearl multiplies the value of things fivefold. If left overnight in a backpack containing 20 Gold Pieces, in the morning it will have turned them into 100. Place it in a nearly empty jug of wine and by sunrise you will have drink aplenty. The maximum rate at which this power can operate is to turn roughly 200 Crowns (in whatever form) into 1000 Crowns in a single night - but this is still enough, of course, to make a character very wealthy. The GamesMaster should bear in mind that sudden riches may be a mixed blessing. Envious souls, seeing the character's newfound wealth, may suspect the use of magic and try to steal the pearl. And a sudden influx of gold or gems onto the market will cause the value to drop, arousing the enmity of Jewellers's Guilds and indeed anyone who keeps much of his wealth in the form of treasure.

If swallowed by a domestic animal such as a dog or cat, the pearl will transform it into a fearsome monster of giant proportions. Best for its former master if he has always treated it well, for the animal will remember old grudges and can attack with the strength and speed of a Sabretooth Tiger! If a man

swallows the pearl, his eyes immediately begin to shine with azure light and smoke gushes from his mouth. His body grows and twists and darkens, until within minutes he has become a Black Dragon. All memory of his former life is soon lost. Then he ascends to the heavens and the long cycle of spiritual awakening must begin again ...

## Elven paraphernalia

These are 'common' magical items, being just standard equipment of Elven manufacture. They are most easily obtained in Algandy, where the forests are all but infested with Elves - but even here availability (Book One, p 61) is only 5% per month, and purchase costs will be twenty times that for the man-made equivalents.

Elven cloaks are usually green, sometimes black or russet-brown. They make the wearer more difficult to notice when he is standing in shadows or woodland. A human wearing such a cloak gets a +3 STEALTH bonus, and when camouflaged against a forest background will never be seen by a non-Elf below 2nd rank.

Elven boots assist their wearer to move swiftly and quietly. Worn by a human they give a +3 STEALTH bonus (not cumulative with the effect of an Elven cloak) and allow him to traverse forested terrain as though it were open country (ie, a movement rate of 25 miles a day - see Book One, p 130).

Elven bows confer skill at archery. A human who has an Elven bow adds 2 to his ATTACK score when shooting with it.

The reader should understand that these items are not what give an Elf his special abilities. An Elf dressed in man-made clothing and carrying a normal bow would still have his stealth and archery skill. Elven paraphernalia is magical by virtue of the fact that it was made and used by Elves - the 'faerie folk'. When used by a mortal, some of that faerie magic rubs off.

## **The Ghosts of the Magi**

These are five small luminous objects that hurtle through the night sky above Krarth. With a good eye they can be variously seen in other regions also, but it is above Krarth that they are brightest. The peasants of Krarth believe them to be the spirits of the five greatest original magi, cast into the upper heavens by the Blasting of Spyte (see Chapter One). The five are known by these names: Red Death, Blue Moon, Plague Star, Gift Star and White Light. The Krarthian peasants believe they will come into conjunction above Spyte in the year 1000AS, whereupon the gates of that deathly city will be hurled open. Astronomers of Khitai or the Ta'ashim lands, where the world is known to be round, could possibly map these moons' orbits and calculate any conjunction - though this has not been done.

## **Hand of Glory**

The bodies of those who died by violent means are often sought out by practitioners of necromantic sorcery. Violence and hatred charge the corpse with strong magical forces. One item that makes use of such forces is the Hand of Glory, the severed and dried left hand of a suicide. If a candle is placed in the fingers and bound in place with strands of human hair, it gives off a wan light that only the hand's maker can see by. If lit and carried into a house or castle by night, it prevents sleeping characters of lower than 1st rank (ie, those not belonging to an adventuring Profession) from awakening. The Hand of Glory will burn for about fifteen minutes and can be extinguished only by blood, milk or holy water.

In principle, anyone who knew how could make themselves a Hand of Glory. No spells are required, as the dead body already contains the necessary magic by reason of its unholy death. Few people do know how

to make a Hand of Glory, however. This kind of learning is rarely found in the monastic libraries of Legend. Moreover, the graves of suicides are difficult to locate. Like murderers they are buried in unconsecrated ground. But whereas a murderer will at least be buried at the point where two roads meet to make the sign of the cross, a suicide's sin forbids even that. He will be placed in an unmarked grave by the wayside or in the woods. The raw material needed for making a Hand of Glory is not easy to come by.

## **Helgrim's Hand**

History does not tell us how this item came to be made. Used for many years by the legendary Helgrim the Warlock, it has acquired his name by association. In its normal state, the Hand is a bulky gauntlet of silvery-grey metal with a large blue gem set into the back. When it is put on, there is a moment of intense agony as it welds itself to the wearer's hand. When this has passed, the Hand will actually be a part of the wearer, having transformed the hand within to living metal. It can only be removed by amputation, or if the wearer is slain.

Helgrim's Hand is so powerful a magical artifact that it possesses a kind of sentience - which, some myths say, is the spirit of Helgrim himself. It can completely dominate a character of 1st-3rd rank and exerts strong influence over a wearer even as high as 6th rank. Wherever possible it will try to lead its wearer into extreme danger, intending that he should either become powerful and experienced enough to fittingly wield its power, or else die in the attempt.

The Hand is bulky. A Sorcerer or Elementalist who wears it has a 5% chance of miscasting any spell he tries. It throws the wearer slightly off balance, causing a loss of 1 point from EVASION. A right-handed character must fight with his weapon in the other hand, because the Hand is too heavy to swing

accurately. This results in a penalty of -1 to both ATTACK and DEFENCE. (Note that all Sorcerers are left-handed. The chance of other characters being left-handed is about 15%.)

Despite these disadvantages, Helgrim's Hand is a useful possession. It has a number of functions which are used by expending 'charges'. The Hand continually replenishes charges by drawing energy from the cosmic flux, thus regaining one charge each Combat Round (10 charges per minute) up to its maximum level of 100 charges. The various functions are as follows.

<i>Illumination</i>	This creates a zone of light in a 5m radius around the user. This light does not negate the chance of surprise. Illumination costs 1 charge per Combat Round to sustain.
<i>Survival</i>	This is identical to the Mystic spell of the same name, except that it costs 1 charge per Round.
<i>Allseeing Eye</i>	Again, this is like the Mystic spell and costs 1 charge per Round that it is sustained.
<i>Protection</i>	2 points are added both to the user's Armour Factor and to his MAGICAL DEFENCE score. Use of this power consumes 2 charges per Round.
<i>Levitation</i>	This gives the same effect as the 7th level Mystic spell, at a cost of 4 charges per Round.
<i>Lightning</i>	A crackling discharge of electrical energy can be unleashed from the gem in the back of the Hand. This can be used in any of three modes, and each use (in whatever mode) costs 10 charges. In <i>focused</i> mode, the bolt can strike one target within 5m; it has a SPEED of 15 and inflicts 7d6 HP damage if it hits. In standard

mode it strikes 1-4 targets within 10m; it has a SPEED of 14 and inflicts 4d6 + 4 HP to a character who fails to evade. In *diffuse* mode it can strike 1-6 characters within 15m; its SPEED in this case is 13, and the damage for a successful hit is only 2d6 + 4 HP. In each case, the target subtracts his Armour Factor from the damage roll.

Any or all of these functions can be employed simultaneously, but only one can be activated in any given Combat Round. Once activated, a durational function (ie, any except Lightning) continues automatically every Round until the wearer cancels it.

There is one final property of the Hand that makes it quite difficult to obtain. When its wearer is killed, it immediately vanishes. Its inherent magic instantaneously transports it to a large treasure hoard somewhere else in the world, there to await discovery by another who would use its power.

### The High King's Cauldron

This silver cauldron was given to the High Kings of the Madhir race<sup>1</sup> by their Elven gods. Though far too large to carry about on adventures, it is an item of extraordinary power - perhaps the greatest of all magical items. It has the property of returning the dead to life.

Even if only a small fragment of the slain character remains, perhaps no more than a tooth or one finger-joint, the cauldron can resurrect him. The fragment must be placed in the cauldron at the solstice or equinox, as the last rays of the sinking sun disappear before the night. One man or woman, a comrade of the character, must keep watch over the cauldron all night, but whatever sounds or lights come from it he/she must not lift the lid and look within. To do so

1 The Madhir were the ancient inhabitants of eastern Ellesland.



would be to risk insanity, as well as undoing the enchantment and cursing the renascent character to eternal death.

The vigil ends at dawn, when the slain character emerges from the cauldron completely restored to full vitality, with none of his powers or faculties diminished. But there is one drawback. The Elves, having no souls themselves, made no allowance for the soul in the spells with which they made the cauldron. A character brought back from the dead in this way has lost his soul - he will not reflect in a mirror, nor can he walk upon hallowed ground. Nor can he be restored to life in the future by spells or potions.

The High King's Cauldron functions on only four nights of the year, as mentioned above.

### **The Immortal God-King**

In times so ancient as to be beyond present-day reality, the stately empire of Kaikuhuru spread like a tapestry of gold and silk along the banks of the Isis ...

Jasmine-scented night breezes stir the fronds of tall palms and waft between the elegant tents of Pharaoh's encampment. An imperial falcon takes flight, stark for a moment against the swollen moon. It is a night such as only the desert knows, where a million stars glimmer through limitless dark.

Imref Kharid is Pharaoh in these far-off times. We see him with his courtiers and high priests: a tall, imperiously handsome man in gilt-edged sable robes. Two long jewelled daggers hang from his belt. We know this is no soft, lazy, comfort-seeking monarch. Imref Kharid has just slain his predecessor and ushered in the IXth Dynasty by force of arms. The Xth Dynasty will soon replace him, as the fragments of history that have come down to us through the millennia tell a tale of betrayal and lost causes. One of these men whom we see Imref Kharid addressing in our dream - one of these men will turn against his proud lord. An army general, Khorhepscha, will be

placed on the throne he has lately won. Assassins wrapped in black will come for Imref Kharid: not two or three silent skulkers, but a horde of bloodthirsty cutthroats. He will barely escape with his life. He flees into the desert and draws a sandstorm about him like a cloak, stinging the eyes of his enemies and taking him beyond the reach of mortal men. How it must canker in the breast of this proud warrior, that he departs his empire like a common thief! His words seem to echo to us through the gulf of a million scorching desert days, a million velvet nights ... 'I shall not rest till the usurpers are scattered to the nine winds and I sit again upon my rightful throne ...'

The unimaginable years hurtle past like pebbles. We are again in the present day. Western knights storm the citadels of the Ta'ashim, forcing them back from the walls of the holy city, Ibrahim, and carving the Principalities of the Crusade in their wake. Unified by this threat from without, the Ta'ashim empires cease their doctrinal squabbles and unleash their deadly *harbiyan* horsemen. A gruelling war stretches across many years and spells the death of good and bad men on both sides.

Some Crusaders tell stories now of a stranger who lives on the desert fringes. Sometimes when a knight is wounded or set upon by Ta'ashim warriors, this stranger comes out of nowhere and hurls himself like a demon into the fray. He seems of the Ta'ashim race himself, yet he slaughters his countrymen without mercy. Once he has slain or driven off the Moors, he may help the knight back to within sight of a Crusader fort. But he never speaks, this stranger with his sun-cracked lips, and his eyes are like the distant stars of a Kaikuhuran night. He departs as mysteriously as he came. He seems to be but a mirage, a fancy cooked up in the baking brains of many a lost and frightened soldier. He wears robes of black and gold and fights with two jewelled knives, and in the Crusaders' barracks they call him 'the Immortal God-King', and wonder why he hates the Ta'ashim so.

## The Masque of Impenetrable Deceit

The mage Yashantu, renowned for his wiles, served several Imperators of the Selentine Empire as an emissary and spy. By his power of cloaking himself in a seeming - an undetectable illusion - he could pass wherever he wished.

A residue of Yashantu's illusion-magic remains even today in the mask he always wore to conceal his true face. The mask is of ivory and gold-filigreed alabaster upon which the shape of three coiled serpents is picked out in flecks of topaz. A magic-user who wears it can activate its properties by expending power equivalent to a 4th level spell (ie: a Sorcerer, Elementalists or Warlock pays 4 Magic Points; a Mystic makes a 4th level Psychic Fatigue Check). The mask then causes its wearer to look, smell, sound - and even feel! - like any other character he wishes to impersonate. Another character must look very carefully to see through this illusion, and even then the chance is only 1%. The effect can be Dispelled or Terminated like any normal 4th level enchantment. Otherwise it has a duration of three hours. The wearer can cancel it before this time by removing the Masque. To sustain the illusion for longer than three hours, or to change his disguise while the Masque is operating, he must expend more spell-energy.

## Nostro's Boots of Striding

Nostro the Miracle-Worker, demihuman mage of Selentine Ellesland, made these enchanted boots from the skin of an Elven lord. They have the characteristic of allowing whoever wears them to travel rapidly and tirelessly across any solid terrain. The wearer can move at 18m per Combat Round - a swift, unflagging jog. He can even go to sleep and the boots will keep striding, taking him where he wishes to go. He can cover some 160 miles in one day. The

boots do not assist in crossing marshes, rivers or sea.

## The Onyx Prowler

This is a little mannikin of luteous onyx jointed with metal rings. When a silver stud on its forehead is touched, the mannikin comes to life. It understands commands spoken in Ancient Emphidian, its main function being to spy or steal for its master. It has a STEALTH score of 26 and a PERCEPTION score of 20. (Treat its vision as el/sight - see Book Four, p 39.) It can pick locks and climb as an 8th rank Assassin with *Reflexes* of 18. It will always attempt to avoid combat, as it is too small to use any weapon - except perhaps a poisoned needle. It has DEFENCE 15, EVASION 7, Armour Factor 2 and 2 *Health Points*. It moves at 16m per Combat Round.

Once activated, the Prowler will function for three hours. After this time it again becomes a lifeless mannikin. Without specific orders to the contrary it will break off its mission and start back to its master after two and a half hours. If asked to spy for him, it returns to deliver an account of what it saw. It uses the Ancient Emphidian language, of course. The report will be constructed out of a number of standard phrases stored in its crystalline brain. These are the phrases it was taught by the unknown wizard who created it. It has hundreds of these phrases - a complete command of basic Emphidian - but cannot add to them. Thus it cannot report on specific matters. A report might be something like: 'Three men met. One wore red. Another was a warrior. They discussed military logistics. The man in red disagreed with the others.' It could not give the names of the men it spied on, the names of the fortresses or countries discussed in their plan, or a detailed explanation of why the men failed to agree. In general, the GM should assume that the Prowler's reports will only convey about 75% of the details it observed.

Each time the Prowler is activated, some of the magical life-energy stored in it is used up. When it is first acquired by a character, the GM should roll 2d6 to determine how many 'lives' it has left. Once the character has used it this number of times, it becomes no more than a simple onyx doll.

## Places of magic and mystery

The world of Legend abounds with haunted ruins and underworlds. The fortress of Sa'aknathur has already been mentioned, as have the fused remnants of Spyte and the crumbling Citadel of the Shadowlords. Another area of interest is the Trickster's Hall, a *staefheall* built to gigantic, even godlike, proportions and said to lie somewhere in the mountains of Thuland. A host of other rumours recount the famous places of ancient treasure: the desert pyramids where the God-Kings of Kaikuhuru sleep in death; the Garden of Columns, the titan Shab-ad-Din's elaborate henge, where some of the standing stones are said to be the vitrified bodies of careless adventurers; the marvellous Tower of Brass, which is located in the gnat-infested mire known as the Swamps of the Jinn; the lost city of Rakundus, outpost of the Selentine VIth Legion in the grasslands of the far south; the Temple of Faresh in the mountains along the Marazid coast - this temple is said to be walled with gold, and its towers and undying guardians flicker with a blue fire; the creeper-clad ruins of the Mungoda Jungle, etc, etc.

A few other antique places may be described in more detail, Skulldance Castle, in the Sleetmarsh, is so named because those few who escaped its gates have been unable ever to find it again. It has even been suggested that this dingy, brooding edifice moves at random through the mists of the swamp. This may be mere superstition; the castle is the home of Cathedron<sup>2</sup>, and may just be well hidden, or warded from unwanted attention by a cloak of his sorcery. Based on a few

more-or-less reputable accounts, it seems that Cathedron's spirit has outlived his physical body and still holds dominion within Skulldance Castle. If true, this is almost certainly due to the power of his Ebon Staff, an occult device he plundered from the demon-lord Feshtis in the fourth century AS.

Alaflak, the stronghold of the Marijah cult, is described here for want of a more appropriate section in which to mention it - though swarms of Marijah assassins inhabit this secret citadel, and only an adventurer of extraordinary bravery or madness would think to venture there. Alaflak is an elusive place. It may be located somewhere in the mountains east of Ta'aqan, in Opalar, but many believe it has no physical existence in this world. Alaflak, built in seven concentric rings corresponding to the seven Elements of Ta'ashim philosophy, is reached through the Nine Gates of the Winds: secret invisible 'doorways' which enable the Marijahs to confound their foes by coming and going as they please.

All adventurers know of the Tombs of Kala, a famous underworld below the city of Chalidexor on the Emphidian island of Kaxos. Pillared halls, bewildering tomb-and temple-complexes, marble galleries, and dusty corridors stretch for miles underground, descending in levels of increasing danger - and the greater the danger, the greater the possible treasure! Some parts of the underworld are flooded and must be explored by boat. A murky radiance still shines from nowhere in the deepest levels, a last vestige of the power of long-dead sorcerers. With sword or scroll at hand, parties of adventurers tread warily along the echoing passages and masonry-strewn chambers. One may come across a subterranean courtyard where the splashing waters of a fountain are frozen forever, an unchanging tableau where each water droplet hangs like a diamond in the air. Another chamber might

2 Cathedron the Unbidden, one of the seven 'Eternal Wizards' of Legend whose number also included Sa'aknathur, Torso the Necromage, Chang the Stormrider, and (possibly) Imref Kharid.

contain a series of burnished copper mirrors wherefrom the faces of Ancient Emphiolian sages still speak to passers-by. Beyond that, catacombs bring us to a vast hall ringed with telamons; delicate simulacra dance a slow, unending pavane without realizing that the music of their masters faded fifteen centuries ago. A hundred unexplored passageways lead on from here, and each might take a party to unimaginable wealth - or the way to dusty death.

Legend has many other such sites beyond the boundaries of the map in this book. Khitai has many under-worlds, as one would expect of so venerable an empire. The folktales of Minj speak of the Drifting Pavilion of the Mystagogue, which floats through the skies and which only an enlightened Adept can ever hope to reach. In an isolated wayside inn among the mountains of Batubatan, one can hear fireside tales of Gungun the Witch, a horrid entity who skulks about her hut of human bones - or of the Sacred Vistas of the Moon, a place within the heart of the unscaleable Mount Tlingat. It is impossible to voyage among the rough barbarians of the Eastern Steppe without hearing their (doubtless embroidered) tales of treasure vaults and empty citadels far out across the plains. Sailors bring back the myths of Yamato and still more distant shores: of castles of living coral rising from the ocean depths, of ghost-hulks whose rotting timbers creak with the weight of stolen gold, of lights that seem to mark out submerged cities, of islands patrolled by unliving monsters, of exotic ports full of dark pleasures and deadly perils, and of comely wenches who dance on the grey waves and entice poor mortals to join them in flickering palaces built from stormclouds.

### Sa'aknathur (SAH-ahk' nath-UR)

This is the 'Millennial Sorcerer of the West' to whom

Ancient Kaikuhuran texts refer. He was said to be able to call ships to him by the power of the winds, splitting them and taking their rich cargoes as a gull feasts upon a snail. Even the Kaikuhuran wizard Chefru, who served nine Pharaohs, respected his might and paid him a toll of three Demon Names. He lived on the Grey Rock, an island in the Sea of Lament, and could lower the sea around the strait to expose jagged reefs, thus controlling sea traffic to neighbouring ports. In latter days he no longer commanded this power, but was still vexatious to shipping until slain C.450AS by Hunguk the Pirate-King. His ruinous fortress still stands and has never been fully explored.

### Sa'aknathur's Marvellous Cabinets

These two large cabinets are made of mahogany from the Eastern Steppes and decorated with numerous copper bosses. They were supposedly constructed by the legendary wizard of the southern sea. They can be used as a teleportation system: a character who steps into one of the cabinets will instantaneously be transported to the other. There is no range limitation, but it is only the character himself who is transported - all his possessions, including clothing and weapons, are left behind in the first cabinet. Each use of the cabinets uses up one magical 'charge', of which they will have 1-100 when found.

One of the cabinets is rumoured to lie in the storage vaults of the Knights Capellars at their headquarters on Sandraust Island. The whereabouts of the other is uncertain, though a location somewhere in the labyrinth beneath Sa'aknathur's ruined fortress seems probable.



## The Seven Arrows of Athgeld

Athgeld was of famous outlaw of Ellesland who was given seven magic arrows by his mentor, Nunn o', the Yeth. Six of these arrows had the property that they would hit and kill whatever they were loosed at. The seventh would veer in mid-air in order to strike dead the man who shot it.

A character who finds and uses the arrows is indulging in a sort of 'Russian roulette'. The Games-Master rolls every time one of the arrows is shot, to determine whether it is in fact the cursed arrow. There is no way to find this out without actually using the arrow - *Oracle*, Sixth Sense, etc, give no information one way or the other. Each arrow can be used only once and then loses its enchantment.

It is not known if any of the arrows were ever actually used by Athgeld, but history records that he died of a spear-wound, so certainly he never shot the cursed arrow.

By some accounts, Nunn was a wise Mystic who lived in the woods and befriended Athgeld, teaching him his skills in the use of bow and psychic force. Other sources personify him as the Devil, horned and cloven-hoofed, and state that the seventh arrow will claim the archer's soul as well as his life. The reader is left to choose for himself between these two versions of the tale.

## The Spear of Screaming Souls

This appears to be an ordinary spear of black iron with indecipherable engravings along its haft. In combat it counts as an ordinary + 1 magical weapon. However, if it deals the death-blow to a human character it then draws his psychic essence - his spirit - into itself. The wielder can call upon spirits caught in the Spear to aid him in moments of peril. The action of calling upon them takes one Combat Round, and the spirits will take

form 1-4 Rounds after that. The spirits of characters below 5th rank fight as Skeletons, characters who were 5th-8th rank in life are represented as Ghouls, and those of higher rank return to unlife as Wraiths. Notwithstanding the creature stats used, all spirits held and summoned back by the spear appear as ragged, half-glimpsed images like shadows seen through smoke.

When the spirits are released by the spear, the wielder must roll to see if they obey him. This is determined by taking the wielder's rank, adding d20 and then subtracting 2d10. The final result is the highest rank among the spirits who will do the wielder's bidding. Any spirits who were a higher rank than this when alive will turn on him. Suppose that Eshmiel, current owner of the spear, calls upon its entrapped spirits. In life, two of these characters were 3rd rank, one was 5th and one was 8th. Four shadowy spirits thus appear to hear Eshmiel's entreaties. Eshmiel himself is 6th rank; his d20 roll is a 12 and his 2d10 roll is an 11.  $6 + 12 - 11 = 7$ . All except the spirit who was once an 8th rank character will thus do his bidding.

Once called forth, the spirits will remain until a regular 2d6 Spell Expiry Roll indicates they vanish. They do not return to confinement in the spear when this happens: having been summoned again to this Plane of reality, they are free to disappear into the Afterlife.

Spirits caught in the spear remain trapped for a period of one week. If the wielder does not summon them in this time they depart automatically.

Only human characters can be trapped by the Spear of Screaming Souls. Nonhumans and animals can, of course, be killed with it - just as with any weapon - but their souls (if any) are not drawn within. While a character's spirit is trapped in the spear, he/she cannot be restored to life by Resurrect spells and the like.

## Stygian Waters

The source of Stygian Water is the miasmic River of Despair which separated the realms of the living from the dead in ancient Emphidian mythology. Few adventurers will ever gaze upon that black river - except perhaps when they finally come to cross it. But the world of Legend is a magic world, where the substance of old myths sometimes spills over into reality. Fonts and pools filled with Stygian Water can sometimes be found in the darkness of underworlds. Although it does not respond to detection spells such as See Enchantment it can easily be identified: it deadens all sensation in any area of flesh it touches. It does not feel wet to the touch, therefore; if one dips a hand in there is only a momentary coldness. Nor can it be tasted.

Any part of the body that is immersed in Stygian Water becomes permanently invulnerable to normal weapons. The treated areas of skin become grey and unfeeling and will turn aside any blow from a nonmagical weapon, claws, talons, etc (but not enchanted weapons or spells). It appears to be the perfect defence, but there is a risk. Immersion in Stygian Water can cause death, the chance of this increasing with the body area that is immersed. A character who bathes in the water must specify how much of his body he is immersing. For game convenience this percentage should be a multiple of ten - 10%, 20%, etc - and the chance of instant death is equal to 25% plus the percentage body area immersed. A character who tried to immerse 70% of his body would thus have a 95% chance of dying on the spot! A character who survives this perilous bath is partially invulnerable. Whenever he is struck by a nonmagical weapon, he rolls percentile dice to see if the blow actually hits a treated area of his body, in which case it is negated.

One should not bathe more than once in this magical liquid, as a second immersion is invariably fatal.

Historical note: Magister Praetorius, a notable wizard of the Selentine Empire, built for himself a completely invulnerable undead warrior by using an amalgam of fragments from several immersed bodies. A series of events brought the wizard and his monster to the Rymchaeld Sea, where they were cast adrift on a raft. The monster turned upon its creator and continued to vent its mad rage on his lifeless body until the biting cold froze it into immobility. Centuries later it was found by mariners and taken south whereupon, being undead, it reanimated and began to maraud unchecked along the Mercanian coast. It was finally slain by Hraefgahl Stormrunner who, taking his cue from the trickster-god Loge, left it drugged meat and then drove his spear down its throat as it slept. Its innards were not invulnerable.<sup>3</sup>



This story is told in the *Saga of Hraefgahl and Hanori*. It may be that the drug was supplied by Loge as one would not expect an undead creature to succumb to any earthly draught. No reference is made to this, however, in the *Saga*.

## Travellers' tales

In any world which has not been thoroughly mapped, strange stories of distant lands will be rife. Legend is no exception. Of course, magic really works in Legend. This means that many such stories actually turn out to be true. But the GM should always remember that a 'realistic' campaign is best - too many incredible things spoil the game. When the player-characters are picking up rumours in taverns or from old adventurers, season those rumours with plenty of half-truths and whimsy. Many travellers will have found that if they tell the most outrageous lies they can invent, people are more in awe of their exploits than if they told the bald truth. Much of what the player-characters hear will therefore be misleading. For instance, some tales are told of Ascians, people who cast no shadow. This story began with the plain fact that in the far south - on the equator - people cast no shadow at noon. With retelling, the story became more fanciful. Now one often hears of these Ascians - apparently soulless, they are forced to serve the shamans who keep their shadows in sealed huts. This is not true, but arose when a sailor misunderstood what a colleague told him about the Ascians' religion.

Another tale often told concerns the Arachnanths, a race of spider-folk inhabiting the upper reaches of the Mungoda River. Some versions of the tale describe these creatures as having the bodies of men but with six hairy arms and a spider-like head. A different version claims that the people of this region are not hybrids, but normal men who are enslaved by a race of giant spiders. When the spiders wish to go hunting, they climb onto a man's back and ride him like a steed. Those who favour this theory believe that the 'man-spider' legend derives from an explorer having caught a brief glimpse of one of these spiders riding its human slave.

There are many other half-truths and fables to be heard: of the acephalous natives of the tropical islands

of Adamastor (probably a garbled account of orang-utans), the fierce women-warriors who once dwelt in mountainous Emphidor (certainly based on a satirical statement by the Ancient Emphidian philosopher, Cathanalides), the gleaming phantoms who dance in the sky above the Rymchaeld Sea, the glimpses of the Infinite Paradise that a thirsty men may see when staggering, close to death in the Kaikuhuran Desert, and of the carnivorous undergrowth of the Mungoda.

Furthermore, in a world like Legend the division between myth and reality is neither clear-cut nor constant. One man's lie may become the next man's folktale - then the belief of a whole generation. If sufficient people believe something strongly enough, it may slip into the real world. To cite one case: a learned scholar would realize that stories of Centaurs were originally based on a prehistoric encounter between horse-riding pastoralists and incredulous hunter-gatherers. To the hunter-gatherers, our scholar might say, it must have seemed that horse and rider were a single beast. A logical view - except that Centaurs definitely do exist, as countless adventurers who have visited the Gonhala Plain can attest. Logic alone is not enough, in the strange world of Legend.

## The Wendigo Pelt

Hunters from the Isle of Yggdras brought back this pelt after an expedition across pack-ice and through the Svartgard Forest. It is a large and heavily furred pelt, but completely unblemished as though just a scrap of a very much larger coat. The celebrated authority Nagonto Qua examined it and pronounced it to be part of the mane of the Wendigo, an arctic demon, which the demon must have lost in battle against some other monster of the northern wastes. The pelt is grey-white with a faint tinge of blue. It exhibits several magical properties. These are listed below, and there are probably many other powers that have not yet been discovered.



A character who stands on the pelt and speaks the secret names of the Four Winds (to be found in several of the ancient texts of Krarth) will be transported across vast distances in the blink of an eye. The pelt will take one character to any place he specifies, setting him down on open ground within 10 miles of the exact spot. It will do this only on nights of the new moon.

Another of the pelt's effects is metempsychosis, the moving of souls from one body to another. If two human characters go to sleep together under the pelt, they will awaken to find they have exchanged bodies (or exchanged minds, depending on one's viewpoint). This property was discovered by chance. Llaria the Seeress and her bodyguard Gunthur the Red apparently used the pelt as a coverlet. When they woke, the barbarian found himself in the woman's body and Llaria was startled to see she had the iron thews and bristling beard of her brawny lover! Naturally they redressed matters as quickly as possible by sleeping under the pelt again on the following night.

The third known property of the Wendigo Pelt is that one who wraps himself in it will know whenever lies are spoken. It has this property at all times.

The last of the pelt's magical effects works only when the moon is full. An Air Elemental who stands on the pelt as he casts a durational spell will find that spell lasts until daybreak. This applies to one spell per character.

### The Whispering Hat

Any thief would be pleased to own this black felt hat, which operates without expending magical 'charges' or the like. If turned inside out and placed in front of an arch or doorway, it gives rise to an unreal translucent figure. The figure has the vague shadowy outline of a tall man in a spreading cloak and wide hat. It does not move or fight, being merely a visual manifestation of



the spell the Whispering Hat casts. Even the loudest clamour and shouting is muffled by this spell so that from the other side of the arch/doorway it can be heard only as a faint susurratation - hence the name.

### The Witch-Baubles of Kao

These rounded pebbles of green-and-blue jadeite were brought back from the Isle of Kao, an offshore province that the Khitan Empire had forgotten it possessed. Captain Glathook, who found them, reported to his employers in Ferroniaine that the shamans of Kao believed them to be sacred relics of the god Nkel-Nkar, Who Recites the Cosmos. In the mythology of Kao, this all-knowing god had been blinded and his million jade eyes scattered throughout the world. The stones Captain Glathook's men called 'witch-baubles' were supposedly the eyes that had fallen on Kao.

Originally a set of sixteen, several were lost before the collection came into the hands of Prince Lorquilo, the present owner. For years no-one realized what magic power they contained, but when Lorquilo's court-sorcerer examined them he was quickly able to give a full account of their function. Each bauble stores knowledge of a specific spell. If their owner belongs to a magic-using Profession he can draw on that knowledge to cast the spell even if it properly belongs to a different spell-canon. One of the baubles, for example, was found to hold the *Intangibility* spell; Lorquilo's sorcerer was able to cast this (at a cost of 8 Magic Points) though it is normally available only to Mystics.

The baubles have a secondary benefit which their owner gains whether or not he is a magic-user. When attacked by one of the spells specific to the witch-baubles, he adds +2 to his MAGICAL DEFENCE. This only applies, of course, to direct-attack spells (see Book Two, p 12).

The witch-baubles respond to the aura and personal power of the person who possesses them. If their user

is 10th rank or higher they will float in the air at his mental command and trail along behind if he walks away without them. Their effects apply as long as he is within 3m - if forcibly moved beyond this range they fall from the air and will respond to the next character who touches them. If their user is of 6th-9th rank he can make use of their power within the 3m range but they will not levitate around him. A character of 5th rank or lower must actually be in physical contact with the baubles in order to use them.

(It is left for the GamesMaster to determine what spells are present in any witch-baubles the players find. Usually spells will be 4th-8th level, with a scattering of lesser or greater conjurations. The Mystic/Sorcerer/Elementalist/Warlock spell-canons are represented in the ratio 4/1/2/1 because of the proportions of such spell-casters among the shamans of Kao. Presumably the spell in a witch-bauble could be changed in some way - like re-tuning a radio! Characters who think of that will have to devise a plausible means of doing so.)



# 3 Debris From Babel

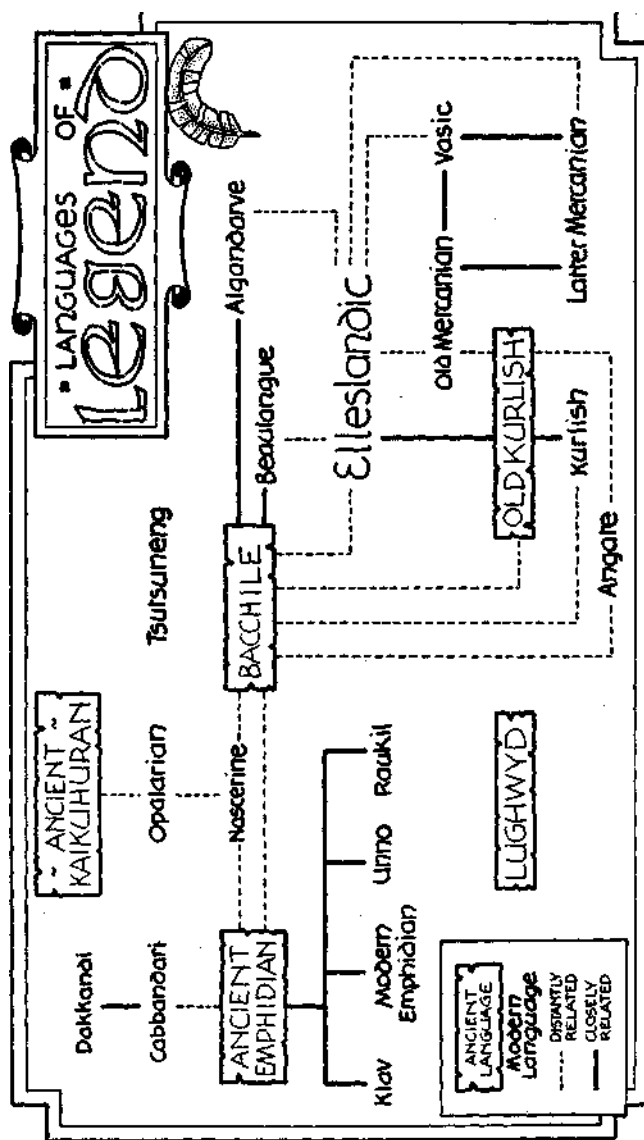
## Speaking a language

For simplicity of play, it is assumed that a character's command of a language can be categorized into one of three levels:

**Basic:** At this level the character knows almost nothing of the language - just a smattering of vocabulary at the very most. By wracking his brains he may be able to remember the words for 'hungry', 'cold', 'mercy', etc. (Roll under Intelligence on d20 to see if this is so - or else tell the player a few made-up words and see if he really can remember them.) Grammar is quite beyond him.

**Intermediate:** At the second level the character is fairly conversant with the language. He can follow anything said to him (perhaps misunderstanding it only if the GM rolls a 20 on d20), and can make himself understood most of the time. Simple concepts ('You wait here by the door and see that no one enters') can always be communicated, and more difficult sentences involving careful grammar ('I think that he would have done that if I had not been about to do this') will make proper sense if the character rolls under his Intelligence score on d20.

**Fluency:** is the third and final level. The character can now think in the language. Apart from his accent (less noticeable if he learns the language when young), he could be taken for a native. Extravagant and courtly speech does not necessarily follow from this. If the character learns the language from a foreign monk he will speak it in an educated and upper-class manner. If he picks it up by living in the back streets of a foreign town, he will learn a lower-class way of speaking.



## Learning a language

There are two ways to learn a language: employ a tutor, or live among native speakers. (Actually, the ideal way is to combine both methods.) The former method is more expensive but is also more reliable; if you are dumb, you might never figure out the language from day-to-day usage. In order to learn how to write you must have a tutor.

All languages are categorized according to how difficult they are to learn. Elleslandic has a large vocabulary but its grammar displays few irregularities and it is consequently undemanding. Bacchile has many convoluted constructions and words that must be declined, making it an arduous language to master. In the extreme, the Tsutsuneng tongue of Khitai, with its dependence on word order, pronunciation and even pitch, is a very challenging language for most westerners. These are the degrees of difficulty:

SIMPLE	Coradian traders' argot
UNDEMANDING	Elleslandic: Latter Mercanian; Naserine; Vasic; Algardarve, Angate; Beaulangue
COMPLEX	Old Mercanian; Opalarian; Bacchile; Kurlish (Old and modern forms); Lughwyd; Emphidian; Low Cabbandari; Dakkandi; Klav; Unno; Raukil
ABSTRUSE	Tsutsuneng; Ancient Kaikuhuran; High Cabbandari; Etya'be'yely

Languages are often related, and knowing one language helps when it comes to learning others that are similar. The way in which the various languages are related is set out in the language listings opposite.

The effective difficulty of a language is reduced by one step if it is *distantly* related to another language that

the character already knows. If it is closely related its effective difficulty is reduced by two steps. The advantage is less if the character is not fully fluent in the first language; a matrix is perhaps the best way to show this:

First language already known to ...			
Relation between first and second language		<i>INTERMEDIATE level</i>	<i>FLUENT level</i>
	CLOSE	one step easier	two steps easier
	DISTANT	no advantage	one step easier

EXAMPLE

Torlon, a merchant of Albion, wishes to learn Visic so that he can expand his trade into Thuland. He is of course fluent in Elleslandic (his native tongue), and since the two languages are distantly related he can study Visic as though it were a simple language.

The procedure for learning a language can now be explained:

Learning from a tutor

A tutor must first be found. 'Tutor' in this context does not have to mean a professional instructor - any native or fluent speaker of the language will do, so long as he is prepared to devote his time to teaching the character. His fee will depend on what he could be doing if he was not teaching the character. A humble sailor from the Ta'ashim lands will expect rather less than a silk-robed merchant from the same region. The availability of tutors varies so widely that it must be left to the GM. As a rule, tutors are easiest to find in bustling cities (particularly ports) where people from many different countries come to trade. The ideal is probably to learn from another player-character.

The time taken to increase by one level in the language (ie, from no knowledge to intermediate or from intermediate to fluent) is as follows:

SIMPLE language	three months
UNDEMANDING language	six months
COMPLEX language	one year
ABSTRUSE language	one to six years (roll d6)

This assumes at least four hours a day can be devoted to studying and practising the language.

Special note: Ancient Kaikuhuran and Lughwyd are 'dead' languages with no spoken form. A character who studies either of these languages will automatically learn the appropriate script (Qemor Hieroglyphs or the Kell alphabet). This takes no longer than learning a spoken language - the time spent becoming familiar with the scripts replaces the time that would be spent learning pronunciation.

Learning by usage

Living among foreigners is a great way to pick up their language. If you can't make yourself understood you will end up going hungry, and sheer necessity is a hard taskmaster. Unfortunately this method is not always very reliable. You may learn a smattering - just enough to point at things and say 'How much!' - and never acquire the grammar.

Every two months the character lives among native speakers of the language, he gets to roll d100. The percentage chance that he will increase his command of the language by one level is as follows:

SIMPLE language	70%
UNDEMANDING language	30%
COMPLEX language	15%
ABSTRUSE language	6%

These figures are modified by *Intelligence*: - 10% if the character's *Intelligence* is 5 or less; - 5% if this

score is between 6 and 8; no modifier for an average score of course; + 5% for a score in the range 13 to 15; + 10% if it is 16 or more.

*Combined method*

The best way to learn is surely to engage a tutor at the same time as living in a community where everyone speaks the language. This way you can put whatever you learn each day to practical use. The character gets to roll d100 as under Learning by usage above, but this roll is made every six weeks rather than every two months. Moreover, even if the rolls have failed it will never take the character longer to improve his knowledge of the language than the times listed for normal tutorial improvement.

**EXAMPLE**

Torlon has decided to live in Hakbad for a while in order to learn Nascérine. He rents a small rooftop apartment overlooking the spice vendors' market. After a day or two he meets a haughty Ta'ashim scholar who offers to tutor him. Turlon's *Intelligence* is 13, so his chance of picking up the language by everyday usage is 35%. Because he is also being tutored he makes the roll after every six weeks. Even if he somehow fails the roll three times in a row, however, he will automatically acquire intermediate command of the language after six months (the usual period for tutored improvement).

**Modern languages**

The following are the major languages of present-day Legend:

<i>Language</i>	<i>Where spoken</i>
ELLESLANDIC	Cornumbria, Albion

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VISIC	Thuland, Ereworn, Glissom
LATTER	
MERCANIAN	Mercanian Coast
CABBANDARI	Krarth, Kingdom of Wyrð
DAKKANDI	Yggdras
ALGANDARVE	Algandy
BEAULANGUE	Chaubrette
KURLISH	Kurland, Asmulia
EMPHIDIAN	Emphidor
ANGATE	New Selentine Empire, Ferromaine League
OPALARIAN	Opalar
NASCERINE	Zhenir, Marazid, Harogarn
ETYABE'YELY	Eastern Steppes (various tribal dialects)
KLAV	Molasaria
UNNO	Hudristania
RAUKIL	Analika

It is unnecessary to detail the diverse tongues of smaller ethnic and racial groups - the Wembun dialects of the Trackless ooze, Bakkatun (the language of the Gnawing Waste), the various language-groups of the Mungoda River peoples, etc.

**Ancient languages**

Reading old manuscripts is about the only way for the people of Legend to learn about the past. Monks take an abiding interest in ancient languages for this reason. Adventurers are also interested in old manuscripts - but usually with a view to discovering important myths and maps that could lead to treasure. Most well-educated people speak Bacchile (the language of the Selentine Empire) and in this sense it is a sort of 'lingua franca' among learned adventurers.

Kaikhuran is not spoken today - no one knows how the ancient hieroglyphs should be pronounced - but it is useful for those wishing to explore the pyramids of

the Pharaohs. Ancient Emphidian is rarely spoken except by fussy old pedants, but it is similarly useful when one delves into the labyrinthine ruins of classical Emphidor.

Other 'dead' languages include Old Mercanian, Old Kurlish, Lughwyd (not spoken), and the Millennial Song, the lilting tongue of Ancient Batubatan.

## Special languages

### *Arcane*

All Sorcerers know this language, derived from chants and spell-formulae handed down from ancient times. Because it is tied directly to real physical effects (a Sorcerer knows when he has his pronunciation right because only then do his spells work) and is spoken by demons and spirits, it has hardly changed in thirty centuries. Old magical papyri left in the pyramid-tombs of Kaikuhuru can be read and used by the Sorcerers of modern times.

Unsurprisingly, Arcane differs from all other languages. It is intended for unleashing and controlling occult forces, and everyday concepts cannot be expressed. Two Sorcerers from opposite corners of the world could use Arcane to discuss their theories of magic, but they would be hard pressed to discuss rising prices or taxation. The nature of the language, in fact, does not allow for simple unequivocal statements.

The written form of Arcane is quite straightforward, and any Sorcerer above the level of novice can read all texts without difficulty. Understanding what he is reading is another matter. The 'grammar' and vocabulary of the language build up in layer upon layer of increasing complexity, so the Sorcerer has little understanding of the higher forms of Arcane until he has increased his knowledge of the underlying magical principles. This explains why a Sorcerer of 1st rank can read a scroll of Resurrect. He knows how the words must sound and can recite them, even though he

has no idea of their meaning (any more than you or I would understand a passage that we read aloud from an academic textbook on subnuclear particle physics).

Note: Mystics, Warlocks and Elementalists do not have their own Professional equivalents of Arcane. Mystics cast spells by the direct action of their inner self upon the real world. Elementalists command the powers of nature through main force of will. Warlocks recite their spells using the language in which they were taught; some words of Arcane are incorporated, but the proper somatic gestures are the most important factor in Warlock magic.

### *Coradion trader's argot*

The merchants of the Coradian Sea have developed this simple tongue for bartering with one another. It can be used to haggle ('I'll give you 200 Florins per keg'), to specify quantities of numerous products ('I'll take all your stock of silk/wine/corn/timber ...'), to point out deficiencies in a cargo ('This brandy is tainted with vinegar!'), to arrange rates of interest ('Pay me by the end of the month, or I'll want an extra 50 Florins per day after that') and even to make insults ('Your tongue is a warty protruberance that is shiny with lies ...').

## Literacy

Most people in the medieval world of Legend are illiterate. In order to be able to read and write a given language you must (i) know the language to at least intermediate level and (ii) know the script in which it is written.

### *Learning a script*

Learning to read is a question of interpreting scripts - alphabets, in other words. It is possible to know how to read a particular script, and thus interpret what the

written characters might sound like, without knowing the meaning of the word in question. Elleslandic uses the Classic script also shared by many other languages, so a literate Elleslander travelling through Kurland, for example, would be able to read out a sign saying 'Hangistrare - Vo Boray' without knowing that this was Kurlish for 'Beware - bandits'.

Once a script has been mastered, the character will be able to read and write any language he knows<sup>1</sup> which uses that script. Essentially a script is a way of representing sounds on paper. Different letters may vary in their phonetic value<sup>2</sup> but it usually takes only a day or two to pick up the variations once one knows the script. Misspelling is not much of a problem because spelling will not become standardized until the invention of movable type printing in about three hundred years' time.

Scripts must be taught. They cannot be acquired by casual browsing. Tutors are considerably rarer and more expensive because literacy is not a major feature of the western areas of Legend. The various scripts (and time taken to learn them) are as follows:

**CLASSIC** (six months to learn) is used for Elleslandic, Kurlish, Beaulangue, Algandarve and Bacchile. Its widespread use derives from the fact that it was the legislative script of the Selentine Empire. The sharp, stately figures of this script can still be read on the old villas and monuments erected in the time of the legions. The current form of Classic is very similar to the sort used then.

**NIKKAR RUNIC** (six months to learn) is a spare, linear script that developed from characters cut into wooden plaques by the priests of old Mercania.

1 If the character's command of a language is only intermediate then a d20 roll against *Intelligence* must be made when he tries to read or write something, just as when he is trying to understand the spoken form.

2 Compare for instance the pronunciation of the French 'faux-fuyant' with English 'taught', 'buy', and 'truant'.

It is used for Old Mercanian, modern Mercanian and Vasic.

**EMPHIDIAN** (nine months to learn) is used for the ancient and modern forms of that language. Some of its cursive figures can be seen in the sinuous, fluid alphabet of

**JEZANT** (nine months to learn), the script used for all Ta'ashim languages - Nascérine, Opalarian, etc.

**QEMOR HIEROGLYPHS** are seen only in the tombs of the God-Kings of Kaikuhuru. This script was unwieldy and useless for practical purposes, and died with the Kaikuhurun language. Only tomb-robbers and some scholars can read it today.

**KELL** is used only for Lughwyd, the language of prehistoric Cornumbria.

**MAJESTIC** (one year to learn) is the bizarre alphabet used by the magi of Krarth for the High form of their language, Cabbandari.

**KHITAI PICTOGRAMS** (two years to learn) are an immensely difficult script to master. There is no phonetic scheme, so each pictogram must be memorized - and there are thousands. This script is used for Tsutsuneng and similar languages. In the land of Yamato, which lies beyond Khitai, it has been adapted into a more rational phonetic system.

All of the learning times given assume a minimum of four hours tutoring a day. Note that there are certain languages (those of the north-eastern nomads, the primitives of Cosh Goyope, etc) that have no written form. Also, there are two languages which no longer have a spoken form: Ancient Kaikuhuran and Lughwyd. These must be acquired from a tutor and the scripts (Qemor Hieroglyphics and Kell respectively) must be learned at the same time.

## 4 The Calendar

The calendar of the north-western lands differ slightly from our own, but for game purposes the differences are ignored in this book. Since much of the known world was at one time under the sway of the Selentine Empire, the old Reman Calendar of the Empire is still used. In this system, the standard year is 365 days long, with an extra day every fourth year to keep the calendar in line with the seasons. The year consists of twelve months, whose names of course vary according to the language one is speaking. These are the Elleslandic months:

*Forst-monath* Usually the coldest month, 30 days long. The working year begins with the first Syfsdae after Twelfth Night. This is a time when villagers make repairs to their houses and tools.

*Thawian-monath* 31 days long. Southern winds usually bring a thaw (winters are shorter than we know them), but often the chill on a thaw-wind is very bitter. This is the leanest time, as most of the winter supplies will be exhausted. Many die if the last harvest was a poor one.

*Ploh-monath* 30 days. The ploughs are brought out to break up the hard-packed soil.

*Oster-monath* 31 days. So called because Easter always falls in this month, but the precise date is derived from a lunar calendar and the procedure is known only to the Pontiff and his officials in Selentium.

*Horel-monath* 30 days. The seed is sown and the earth harrowed.

*Eath-monath* 31 days. With the coming of summer, sheep are shorn and manure (not a plentiful commodity) spread on the fields.



*Waed-monath* 30 days. The first Freyasdae of Waed-monath marks the celebration of midsummer. Most of the rites performed are pagan in origin.

*Heorfest-monath* 31 days long. The harvest is brought home, much cider drunk, festivities enjoyed through the warm summer evenings ...

*Arn-monath* 30 days. Most of this month's work is centred on the village barn, where grain must be threshed, tallied and stored.

*Halig-monath* 31 days. Autumn leaves carpet the ground, a chill creeps into the blustery air. Preparations begin for the coming winter. Firewood and nuts are gathered, winter corn sown, animals killed and meat salted. Repairs must be done on the manor house if the lord is to spend the winter there. This work also takes much of the following month.

*Bael-monath* 30 days. The nights draw in and the working day is short. Villagers huddle by their hearths. Traditionally this is a time when darkling forces stalk the land, and the superstitious do not venture out after nightfall. Bael-monath rarely passes without the first flurry of snow.

*Yeol-monath* 30 days (31 days if a leap-year). There is little work except for foraging and repairs. Many animals will have already been slaughtered and the meat salted. Pigs forage for themselves through the autumn, so the older ones are killed now to provide fresh meat for the twelve-day Feast of St Stephan. The villagers also dine well on roast chicken, bread, cheese and mulled ale. They eat heartily, knowing that they must tighten their belts in the coming months.

There is no fixed length for the week. In Ellesland, Algandy and Chaubrette it is seven days, but Kurland retains the old eight-day week of the Selentine Empire. The Elleslandic days are

Haligdae (the Sabbath)  
Syfsdae  
Tyrsdae  
Wotansdae  
Torsdae  
Freyasdae  
Boldursdae

(The correspondence to our own real-life week is of course deliberate - a measure of 'poetic licence' so that players will find the Elleslandic weekdays easy to remember.)

The passing of the years is reckoned from the supposed date of the Saviour's martyrdom. Using this as a basis, the present year is 993AS.<sup>1</sup>



AS = Anno Sancto, 'in the holy year'. Dates before the martyrdom are suffixed by PD, which denotes 'prior to deliverance'. Again, we are taking liberties by translating the Bacchile and Elleslandic into Latin and English equivalents.

## 5 Crime and Punishment

It is impossible in the space of one chapter to give much more than an overview of the laws that pertain in Legend. The following must be taken with this caveat in mind.

Because adventurers often tread close to the boundary between law and crime, complex legal cases may arise in the campaign. The GM should work with two basic principles in mind. First, the countries of this part of Legend are in an early feudal stage of development. This means that the most heinous crimes imaginable are those involving betrayal of one's liege lord - or (because feudal obligation works both ways) unfair treatment of a vassal. This has to be the case, as crimes of this sort strike at the very heart of feudalism. Crimes such as blasphemy and sacrilege are also dealt with severely, as the Faith is a cornerstone of the feudal state - it establishes the nobility's 'divine right' to rule.

Secondly, players will soon find that 'justice' in Legend is barely recognizable by twentieth century standards. Extraordinary defences may be put forward and accepted. ('True, the man died by my hand. But 'twas my sword that must take the blame, fashioned as it was by the pagan hermit Bruno the Wild.') Guilt or innocence will more often hinge on one's skill with a weapon - or one's ability to pluck a poker from the fire without flinching - than on 'Truth'. Hearsay or outright fabrication are admissible in court.

Only in the towns would a traveller from our own world see the beginnings of justice as we know it. The Guilds are more interested in fair trading and price controls than on the niceties of feudal obligation - and few guildsmen are handy with a sword, so their civil courts use juries instead of trial by combat.

There are six types of court: the King's Court, the Court Of High Justice, the Manor Court, the Ecclesias-

tical Court, the Civil Court and the Market Court. We shall consider each in turn:

The King's Court is also known as the Circuit Court because the magistrates continually travel the length and breadth of the land. The purpose of this court is to try any freeman or townsman accused of a serious crime such as robbery on the King's highway, or murder. Formerly, cases of this sort would have been heard by the local lord or his steward, but all too often this meant summary judgements and harsh sentences - not just for the guilty man, but for his immediate family as well! Kings began to see that by providing the common people with a fair recourse to justice, they consolidated their own position as gracious rulers to whom all could turn.

In recent years, at least in Albion, this ideal has become tarnished. The King is too ineffectual a ruler to prevent his lords exercising their autocratic edicts. Many of the more ruthless lords apply inducements (both covert and open) to prevent people using the Circuit Courts. The system also depends on the Circuit magistrates being honest men, and in recent years this has not been so. In Albion, many are now saying that 'the saints sleep and Hadric nods on his throne'. Often people choose the Manor Court (the devil they know ...) rather than facing an arduous journey to town and a hefty bribe to get justice from the King's magistrates.

Most of the offences tried by the Circuit Courts carry the death penalty (usually by hanging).

The Court of *High Justice* exists to adjudicate grievances between a lord and his vassals. Any proven member of the nobility or gentry can apply to be tried under this court. If the defendant is a vavasour - a landed knight or minor noble - his case is heard by the other vassals of his liege. If he is a great lord himself, the matter is judged by an assembly of the other great lords who are his peers.

In the latter case, the King or one of his representatives will preside.

If the case reaches an impasse, the plaintiff and defendant may wish to take their case to a higher authority. Trial by combat is arranged, using whatever armour and weapons they can both agree to. Each must swear an oath before God that he bears no talismans or rings, has imbibed no magic potion and will not call upon sorcery in the battle. They begin to fight at noon, and if the defendant is still standing at sunset then it is thought that God has judged in his favour - he is acquitted. In Chabrette and Algandy, where decades of peace have bereft many a knight of his fighting spirit, a man may have a champion to fight on his behalf. This tends to make nonsense of the whole idea, of course.

A vassal who is shown to have betrayed his oath of fealty to his liege usually faces death by beheading. At the very least his lands are stripped away and he suffers the degradation of becoming a lordless wanderer. At worst, his sons will be executed along with him. A lord who has not been true to his vassals may have to cede some of his lands. Very rarely (only after repeated offences and if the King is strong enough) he will forfeit the entirety of his fief.

The Manor Court, held in the great hall of the manor house, is where the lord or his steward deals with the affairs of the village. Misdemeanors are not the court's only concern, as this is also the place to discuss all village business. Decisions are made about when to sow and when to harvest, which beast to claim as heriot<sup>1</sup>, whether to grant a serf permission to marry off his daughter, and so on.

All freemen of the village attend the Manor Court, which usually convenes every six weeks or so. After

1 Heriot: a death-duty applied to villeins. Technically, the lord claims the villen's best beast, but if he is a lenient man he will probably make do with a not-too-obviously mangy substitute!

attending to the village business, grievances are brought to the lord's attention. A man may claim that the miller took too much of his grain (millers are proverbially the scoundrels of village life), that a serf shirked his duties on the demesne, or that his plough was vandalized one night and he believes his neighbour to be responsible. The lord will consult with the freemen before passing judgement - and woe betide the serf or cottar who has transgressed against his betters! If one freeman accuses another, the weight of opinion will usually decide the matter. If the other freemen are unable to advise the lord, or if their judgements are contradictory, he may well order the litigants to undergo trial by ordeal. In one form this requires the accused to take a stone out of a pot of boiling water. If the scald festers, God has pronounced the unfortunate fellow guilty. Freemen may also ask for trial by combat, though the lord is not bound to grant it. One of the litigants could be an obviously more capable fighter, and the lord will be aware that freemen rarely have the wherewithal or opportunity to hire themselves a champion.

The penalty applied by a Manor Court is usually a fine or a spell in the stocks. Fines or confiscation of livestock will hit hard in winter, so this is when villagers are usually on their best behaviour.

The Ecclesiastical Court: has jurisdiction over any heretic, blasphemer or sacrilegist. In practice, since an unproven charge lays the accuser open to a counter-claim for slander, the wealthy and powerful are rarely summoned before an Ecclesiastical Court. Such courts also seem to attract trumped-up charges. If you have a rival whom you would like to get rid of, the best way is to bribe a few prestigious witnesses into branding him a heretic. This is a favourite tactic for a king dealing with an intransigent baron: if the heresy charge holds and the baron is excommunicated, many of his men-at-arms will desert him.

Additionally, a churchman accused of any crime may have his case tried by an Ecclesiastical Court rather than a secular one. The trouble is that Ecclesiastical Courts are very lenient when dealing with secular offences, and even a church door-keeper has recourse to them. Thus a great many men who are not legitimate churchmen almost have carte blanche to treat the law with impunity. In southern Albion, in fact, a man proves himself a 'churchman' before the law if he can read from the Scriptures in Bacchile (see Chapter Three).

Ecclesiastical Courts are entitled in serious cases to use the death penalty (by burning or impaling), but usually do no more than demote the criminal in the Church hierarchy. If he bribes the right people, even a heretic can get off lightly: an excommunication or anathema, rather than being burned at the stake.

The Civil Court, organized under the mayor and guildsmen of a town, deals with cases of theft, vandalism, dishonest trading and the like. It will usually impose a fine. In the case of a mugging or (still worse!) damage to property, the penalty is more likely to be mutilation - perhaps loss of an ear, eye or hand. Imprisonment is usually a last resort, to be used only when the case is outside the Civil Court's jurisdiction<sup>2</sup> and must wait for a sitting of the King's court. Keeping a prisoner costs the town money for food, guards, etc. If the King's Court is not due for a visit in the next month or so, the town council may decide their prisoner is not worth the expense. In this case they will probably arrange for him to 'commit suicide' in his cell.

The Market Court exists to deal on the spot with any offender at a market. A trader who dilutes his ale or short-changes his customers, faces a hefty fine or a day in the pillory. One who dodged the market toll would be expelled after having his forehead

2 Crimes such as arson, smuggling or treason.



branded so all might know him to be dishonest. Only affairs of the market itself are dealt with, and any criminal offences are referred to the Civil Court of the town. Market Courts are usually scrupulously fair, as it is in the interest of all traders involved that they keep the trust of their customers. It is a waste of time offering a bribe - indeed, there is rarely the opportunity to do since all cases are heard immediately in full public view.

Any crimes committed by player-characters will probably fall under the jurisdiction of a Civil Court or the King's Court. The rules provided here apply to these courts. Other courts (especially the Manor and Ecclesiastical Courts) depend so much on trials by ordeal, circumstantial evidence and special appeals (ie, bribes and blackmail) that they cannot be encapsulated in a few tables of rules. The workings of those courts must be gamed between GM and players.

### Coming to court

There are quite a few steps to go through before a criminal is actually brought before a court.<sup>3</sup> These are set out below:

- 1 Does anyone witness the crime?
- 2 If there are witnesses, what do they do about it?
- 3 Generally, crimes openly committed by player-characters are the result of bad GamesMastering, bad role-playing, or both. The classic example is when the players take a dislike to an obstructive NPC, sneak into his shop/home late at night and kill him. This has to be considered as bad role-playing, because how often would a sane person murder someone out of petty annoyance, even in the turbulent society of the Middle Ages? Unless the player has made a consistent effort to portray himself as a psychopath, the GM would have to consider, applying an experience points penalty (around 10 points, say) for bad characterization. Hopefully this sort of heavy-handed GMing will not be necessary. Players should role-play because that is the fun of the game, not because they risk losing experience points if they don't.

- 3 If tracked down and apprehended, can the felon bribe his way out of trouble?
- 4 If brought to court, can he bribe the judges?
- 5 If found guilty, what sentence will he get?

Witnesses

In some cases it is obvious that plenty of people saw the character commit his crime. If I walk into a goldsmith's shop in broad daylight, run the proprietor through and grab a handful of jewellery then I have probably been seen doing so by at least a dozen people. A roll is only made on the table below if the characters make some effort to avoid attention or if the crime is committed at a time or place where few people are about. If they just blunder about they are bound to be spotted.

Scene of crime	Chance and number of possible witnesses
Town (busy area)	day: 95% of 2-12; night: 45% of 1-6
Town (backstreet)	day: 60% of 1-8; night: 30% of 1-6
Village	day: 85% of 1-10; night: 15% of 1-3
Major highway	day: 40% of 1-6; night: 5% of 1-2
Deserted area, woods, etc	day: 25% of 1-6; night: 1% of 1-2

Note that this table gives the number of possible witnesses. These are people who stray upon the scene at the crucial moment and may or may not notice what is going on. The criminal is allowed a Stealth Roll to see if he goes unnoticed. For this, the GM must have PERCEPTION scores for the potential witnesses. He makes a d20 roll to see who they are:

	Normal man	Ranked character	Guard/militia
Town	1-13	14-15	16-20
Village	1-18	19	20
Highway	1-17	18-19	20
Countryside	1-16	17-18	19-20

Normal men have a PERCEPTION of just 4. For ranked characters, determine their experience according to

Book One, p 75, and then refer to Book Four, p 31. Members of the militia or town guard will usually be Knights of 1st-3rd rank, and will therefore have a PERCEPTION score of 5. The GM may throw in a high-ranking officer, of course, if the players are getting away with murder ...

What do the witnesses do?

Militia and guards are employed by monarch, lord or town council to enforce the law. If they see someone in the process of committing a crime they will probably step in to arrest him. Ordinary men, on the other hand, want nothing so much as a quiet life and will generally avoid getting involved, though they might raise a hue and cry. Other ranked characters as indicated by the last table could be grand gentlemen or nobles - or just scurvy adventurers like the player-characters. Probably quite powerful, they will not hang back out of fear. Whether they try to stop the criminals depends on who they are and what they stand to gain.

	Do nothing	Raise hue and cry	Extort	Try to apprehend
Ordinary men	1-6	7-14	15-18	19-20
Ranked characters	1-5	6-7	8-13	14-20
Guards or militia	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-20

The following modifiers are applied to the d20 roll:

Town	(no modifier)
Village	-1
Countryside	-2
Night-time	-1
Witnesses outnumber felons by 2:1	+3
Felons outnumber witnesses by 2:1	(roll on d8 Instead of d20)

Raising a hue and cry will result in an irate mob gathering and chasing the felons. The size of the mob will depend on where this is all taking place. In the country, 1-8 foresters or peasants will gather

wielding staves, pitchforks, axes or ploughshares as appropriate. In a village, the mob will consist of 2 - 20 freemen, serfs and cottars. The freemen will all have swords and stout longbows; if the felons try to escape into the surrounding countryside they may form a 'posse' to pursue - and send at least one man to fetch the lord and his knights. A hue and cry is most successful in a town, where it will quickly generate an angry group of traders and workmen at least 8-80 strong.

Chantage is 'hush money'. The witnesses approach the felons (either straightaway or later on when they think they've got away) and demand payment not to go to the authorities. Only one of the witnesses will actually approach the felons, usually with the traditional line, 'My friends know who you are; if anything happens to me ...' The actual sum demanded as chantage is up to the GM. It will depend on how much the witnesses think they can get. As a guide, assume perhaps 25 Florins in the case of a mugging, 50 Florins for a theft, and 100 Florins or more for a murder (according to who the victim was).

**On-the-spot 'fines'**

If a felon is cornered by soldiers or members of the town guard there is a chance they will levy an on-the-spot fine (actually a bribe) not to take him in. The chance of this depends on three factors: the seriousness of the crime, the honesty of the militia, and the chance they think they have of making an arrest. Faced with a group of reasonably well-armed adventurers they would prefer to take a bribe rather than risk their necks in a fight.

If the characters have a chance to offer a bribe, they must make the minimum bribe appropriate to the crime. If they offer less, the militia will just take the bribe and then arrest them anyway (unless they look too tough). Minimum bribes are roughly as follows:

50 Florins for a minor crime such as mugging or picking the pocket of an unimportant person (villein, town menial or riffraff).

100 Florins for a more serious crime such as stealing from or mugging a freeman or townsman - or killing an unimportant person (a cottar, riffraff or charcoal-burner).

300 Florins or more to ignore a very serious crime. These include smuggling, theft or destruction of a lord's property<sup>4</sup>, killing a freeman or townsman, damaging Church or town property, etc.

500 Florins or more for a heinous crime - treason, rioting, arson, attacking a member of the gentry or nobility, killing a member of the militia<sup>5</sup>, etc.

The GM first decides on a Bribe Rating for the militia, according to the guidelines below. The lower the Bribe Rating, the more honest they are:

<i>Type of militia</i>	<i>Bribe Rating</i>
Pressed levies	10
Town militia	7
Noble's men-at-arms	5
Soldiers of the King	3
Elite troops*	2

(\*eg, the Knights Capellars, often charged with enforcing the law in the Principalities of the Crusade.)

To see if the bribe is accepted, the GM rolls d20. If the score is less than their Bribe Rating, the militia take their pay-off and let the characters go. The following modifiers are applied to this roll:

- 4 if the felons outnumber the militia by 3:2 or more
- 2 if the felons outnumber the militia by up to 3:2

4 This covers poaching, and also the murder of a villein.  
5 Not technically a 'heinous' crime as far as the law is concerned, but soldiers usually reserve their own brand of 'rough justice' for someone who harms one of their own comrades. When feelings run high, a large pay-off is required.

- + 1 if the militia outnumber the felons by up to 3:2
- + 2 if the militia outnumber the felons by more than 3:2
- 1 if twice the minimum bribe is offered
- 2 if three times the minimum bribe is offered
- + 5 for a heinous crime
- + 3 for a very serious crime
- 1 for a minor crime
- 1 if in a town
- + 1 in a village
- 1 on the highway or in the countryside

Note that a roll of 20 (before modifiers) always indicates that the bribe is refused. In this case the militia are just managing to choke back their rage. Any further trouble, and the felons will probably not live to see the gaol-house!

### 'Reasoning' with the judges

It is still possible to squirm out of trouble after being arrested, but it costs a lot more. In order to bribe the judges and court officials, the character must have access to them. This is easy if the character is a person of some status - a noble, priest or well-to-do merchant. Characters of more lowly standing will have to bribe their gaolers to arrange a meeting, and this costs 50 Florins regardless of the crime. A Bribe Rating for gaolers is irrelevant; they always take whatever they are offered, then a d6 roll is made:

<i>d6 Roll</i>	<i>Result</i>
1	gaolers pocket bribe and do nothing
2-3	gaolers pocket bribe and later beat the character up to get any more money he has
4-6	gaolers accept bribe and arrange for character to meet a court official as requested

Assuming the character gets access to the judges, he may attempt to bribe them. Ideally this should be phrased in a way that does not force the judge to acknowledge the payment as a bribe. (For example: 'Ah, Lord Jathurno, I understand you will be officiating at my trial. I regret this misunderstanding has brought me into a public court, and I am making you a small gift to recompense you for the trouble my rash actions have caused.' To which one would hope the worthy Lord Jathurno to reply: 'Your gift is magnanimous, sir. It shows a noble heart, and I perceive that many false accusations have been levelled in this case. I think you need have no fear, as I am now inclined to view the charges against you as a tissue of mischievous nonsense...')

The amount that must be offered to judges for a successful bribe is ten times the sums listed above for bribing militia. The minimum bribe to get off an arson charge would thus be 5000 Florins. Each, multiple of the minimum amount gives a 25% chance that the character will be found Not Guilty. Returning to the example of a charge of arson, a bribe of 15,000 Florins would give a -75% modifier to the chance of conviction.

Apart from bribes to the judges, other factors have some influence on the trial's outcome. These are summarized in the Chance of Conviction Table. The base chance that the character will be found Guilty (before applying any modifiers) is 5d20%. Once all bribes have been paid and all modifiers tallied, percentile dice are rolled for the court's verdict.

### CHANCE OF CONVICTION

<i>Factor</i>	<i>Modifier</i>
Base chance	+5d20%
Bribe to judge	- 25% per minimum bribe
Minor crime	(2d20 - 30)%
Serious crime	(2d20-20)%
Heinous crime	+ 4d10%



Reputable eye-witness testimony	15% (+ or -)
Accused is innocent	- 25%
Accused is only an accomplice	-10%
Accused is a foreigner or riffraff	+20%
Other factors	at GM's discretion

The procedure may be clarified by an example. Emek, a barbarian from Cosh Goyope, is with a group of colleagues in Ferromaine when they start a backstreet brawl. A man is killed. Later the militia track Emek to his hostelry - a Mungoda native is not difficult to trace in Ferromaine! Emek tries bribing them, but he does not realize that the man whom his colleagues killed was a younger son of the Senfriti family. His 300 Florin<sup>8</sup> bribe is woefully inadequate for such a crime. The sneering militia captain takes the money and then roughs up Emek for his impudence before frogmarching him to gaol.

Languishing in his cell, Emek is visited by his colleagues. Among the people of his race, honour and loyalty are paramount. He will not rat on his friends even though it means taking all the blame himself. His colleagues pay out a few routine bribes to get him better food and treatment, and also contact the magistrates with an offer of 5000 Matapans. This is duly accepted.

The case comes to trial. The GM begins by rolling 5d20 for the base chance of conviction: a score of 31 indicates that things stand initially in Emek's favour. The bribe given by Emek's colleagues reduces this to 6%. Random factors amount to an additional 4d10% in the case of a heinous crime (greater and more exact than for lesser crimes, where not so much care is taken over the evidence), and this roll brings the chance of conviction to 36%. Emek's colleagues are not prepared

to testify as witnesses, of course - but an officer of the militia saw the crime and gives evidence against him. So far the total chance of conviction is 51%. The fact that Emek was only an accomplice (in fact, his friend Dunston struck the fatal blow) works in his favour, but is more than countered by the fact that he is a foreigner - a 'savage', in the eyes of the Ferromainians. The final conviction chance comes to 61%. Rolls of 01-61 on percentile dice will indicate a Guilty verdict. The GM rolls a 58: 'While not all the evidence has been clear-cut, it is the opinion of this court that your barbaric instincts got the better of you and, along with person or persons as yet unidentified, you did slay Master Marco Senfriti following a dispute over a young woman. As you have obstinately refused to name your accomplices, I have no choice but to devolve the entire burden of blame upon your shoulders. It is the sentence of this court...'

Note that a percentile roll of 01-05 always indicates a conviction. Luck works more rarely in a felon's favour, but a roll of 100 is always Not Guilty.

## Passing sentence

Sentence depends on the crime and on the criminal. If Master Marco Senfriti had been murdered by one of his own well-to-do cronies rather than a barbaric stranger, the court might have been more lenient. If Emek had stolen a loaf of bread instead of killing the son of a Ferromaine notable there would be no threat of execution.

Two factors determine the court's sentence. The first is the relative status of felon and victim. Find both of these on the list below and subtract the felon's status from the victim's status:

<i>Social class</i>	<i>Status number</i>
Nobility*	8+
Gentry**	6-7

6 Actually 300 silver Matapans, this being the coinage of the Ferromaine League.

Craftsman	4-6
Professional	5-6
Tradesman	4
Menial***	3
Freeman	4-5
Villein	3
Cottar	2
Riffraff, out- cast, barbarian	1

\*This includes city dignitaries such as Guild Masters, even if they are not strictly speaking members of the nobility. High positions in the clergy (bishops, etc) are usually held by nobles anyway.

\*\*Lesser city dignitaries and church officials are of this status regardless of birth.

\*\*\*Except for militia, who are counted as Status Number 4.

Applying this system, we find that Emek has Status Number 1 and his victim, being a younger son of the Senfriti family, counts as Status Number 7. His sentence category will thus be found on column + 6 of the following matrix:

	Status differential (victim's - criminal's)															
	-6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 -1 -3 +4 +5 +6															
Treason*																A
Arson	F	E	C	C	C	C	B	B	B	B	A	A	A			
Rioting																B
Murder	F	E	D	D	C	C	B	B	B	B	B	A	A			
Rape	F	F	E	E	D	C	C	C	C	B	B	A	A			
Smuggling																B
Vandalism	G	G	F	F	F	E	E	E	E	D	D	D	C			
Theft	G	G	F	F	F	F	E	E	E	E	D	D	C			
Mugging	G	G	F	F	E	E	D	D	D	C	C	B	B			
Pilfering**	H	H	H	G	G	G	F	E	E	E	D	D	C			

\*A very high noble found Guilty of treason may suffer merely exile or life imprisonment. This depends on the resources he can bring to bear (huge bribes and so on).

\*\*For convenience, 'pilfering' is considered to be a theft of under 30 Florins.

Obtaining the appropriate letter from the matrix, we can now pass sentence<sup>7</sup>:

A Death (hanging, drawing and quartering)

B Death (hanging or beheading) or Life Imprisonment

C first offence: Mutilation (loss of eyes and one hand)  
second offence: Death (burning)

D first offence: Mutilation (loss of one hand)  
second offence: Blinding  
third offence: Death (hanging)

E first offence: Public Flogging (80 lashes)  
second offence: Disfigurement (loss of ears/nose)  
third offence: Mutilation (loss of hands)

F first offence: Public Flogging (40 lashes)  
second offence: Flogging (80 lashes)  
third offence: Gaol (2-20 years)

G first offence: Public Flogging (20 lashes)  
second offence: Flogging (40 lashes)  
third offence: Gaol (2-12 years)

H first offence: Warning and Fine (50 Florins)  
second offence: Pillory (1-6 days)  
third offence: Branding  
fourth offence; Gaol (1-6 years)

It is always possible to get a Mutilation or Blinding sentence commuted to a Public Flogging and a fine of 1000 Florins. By paying a fine of 500 Florins, one can get a sentence of Disfigurement commuted similarly. Any other sentence (except Death!) will be waived altogether in return for 500 Florins.

Paying over an additional 1000 Florins to the court will usually mean that the conviction is struck from the record. That means that a subsequent conviction will then be treated as a 'first offence', and this is the get-out clause for a number of well-off habitual criminals

7 If the judge took a bribe but did not deliver a Not Guilty verdict, he will probably commute the sentence by one step.

(such as Flodorien Sentapolo, a young bravo guilty of regular petty offences around Ferromaine).

After sentence has been passed, the GM should always allow player-characters a few days (while waiting for the executioner to arrive, or whatever) in which to organize an escape attempt.

## 6 Wargames

'Spring is with us again,' wrote the warrior-monk Ethmund of Jarrelbury. 'The flowers blossom, the birds sing, the land is sweet with God's abundance. Gather to your lords, O knights! Churn the soil with your horses' hooves! Break your spears on the enemy's breast, spill streams of blood across the ploughed fields. Exult in the glory and the honour of war!'

It is clear from these words that the ruling class (into which Ethmund was born) see war as more than just a means to extend territory and fill empty coffers. It is their whole way of life. A gentleman is trained from earliest childhood in the martial arts. By a relentless curriculum of bruising stave fights, hunts, steeple-chases and archery contests he grows to adulthood - his body hardened with muscle and accustomed to endure aching wounds, his mind trained in the tricks and stratagems of battle.

Life in a cold, grim castle has scant pleasures. Hunting, feasting and falconry are the knight's entertainments. (To this list we can add, in a few wayward cases, roistering among the peasants. Not infrequently a villein's son will bear a curious resemblance to the lord of the manor.) The cultural diversions that a well-to-do merchant may enjoy in the larger towns and cities are unknown in the country. It is hardly surprising that when there is no military campaigning to keep them busy, knights find outlets for their boredom - games of war that not only relieve the tedium but also enable them to keep their warrior skills honed.

Games such as the tourney and the joust probably had their origins in disputation (Book One, p 141) and skirmishes 'for fun'. These activities evolved out of the knightly spirit, and were combats in deadly earnest even though free of rancour. But there are areas where it seems that war is going out of fashion. Decades ago the lords of Chaubrette, Algandy and the

coastal principalities of Kurland were constantly at one another's throats. Barely a year would pass without one old grudge or another erupting into war. Livestock and slaves would be taken; smoke would go up from the peasants' crofts. But a number of factors have begun to change the age-old ways. The increasing strength of centralized government and reliability of law means that disagreements can often now be settled judicially, by petitioning the King. Developments in farming (the yoke and three-year crop rotation) have led to greater prosperity, so the need for war is less. Many nobles now have a vested interest in peace, as they are beginning to dabble in mercantile activities and have found this even more profitable than their traditional source of revenue (the land). The typical motive that usually drove a lord to war was to seize land from his neighbours, but trade flourishes in safe, untroubled times. A lord who starts a war will find his trading overheads going up - he could end up poorer, even if he wins the war. Lastly, many of the more troublesome and belligerent knights have been safely enticed away from civilized lands, having found their own form of heaven in the endless campaigning of the Crusades. Now these countries<sup>1</sup> have become relatively peaceful and are entering their age of high chivalry. The tourney and the joust have become formalized games, with specific rules to minimize the risk of injury.

### **The tourney**

Tourneys take the form of a battle in miniature. A host of knights gather at a meadow. They may send out a general announcement to take on all comers, or the tourney may be a regular event. The Fay Bridge

tourney, in Ellesland, has become virtually an annual fair. When many knights have gathered there are days of feasting and plotting. Knights who have heard of another's prowess may seek him out with a challenge to single combat - and old scores may be settled, either in open combat or through the services of an assassin. After several days an area of meadow is fenced off to form the lists. Any knight may ride into the lists, heave about him with sword and spear as he wishes, and ride out when he needs to rest or rearm. If a man can down a foe or force him to cry 'craven', he may demand a ransom. The amount will have been pre-arranged at the start of the tourney, when an exact formula measuring the worth of a man's ransom against his status will have been agreed. The sum will typically vary from some 500 Florins (for the poorest and humblest knight) to 5000 Florins or more for a great noble. Strategy as well as simple weaponskill plays its part, of course, and bargains are often struck in advance. You may ally with Worstan the Wild to bring down Bretwald of Klavaynall and agree to split the ransom - but beware, for Worstan might get together with Bretwald before the lists and arrange to double-cross you!

The climax of the tourney is the melee. This is like the lists, but there is no boundary to the battle zone. A hundred knights may divide into five factions of twenty men each and ride into combat. Most are quickly unhorsed and the affair soon turns into a series of skirmishes as each group finds others to fight. As before, diplomacy is important and groups may band together or suddenly split apart as some of their members switch allegiance at a prearranged signal. A knight who flees may be pursued into woodland or open country. If he is caught he must stand his ground or surrender and suffer parole. (Honour forbids a second escape attempt after one has surrendered.) If he can evade his pursuers until nightfall then the melee ends and he can return safely, with his reputation a little tarnished but his wealth intact.

1 Until recently it would have been possible to include Albion in this list - at least the southern shires of Albion, rich in agricultural land and undisturbed by Mercanian raids. But King Hadric's weakness changes matters. The trend has reversed; the barons have begun to war again.

In the heat of battle, tempers rise. The idea is to take an opponent for ransom, but deaths do occur - especially in the melee. One factor that discourages this is the payment of wergeld - a sum that must be paid to a knight's family by his killer if he is slain in the lists or the melee. Wergeld is usually the same sum that the knight would have been worth for ransom. Sometimes an indignant knight will refuse to pay up, claiming that the accident was the other's fault, and the deceased's relatives will then usually take up the matter. This is one of the many ways that grudge fights may be spawned. A knight who slays another in agreed single combat is not liable to pay wergeld. It applies only in the press of lists or melee, where frayed tempers and overexuberance might otherwise lead to wholesale slaughter.

Virtually anyone may participate in a tourney. A horse and a suit of armour are all one needs to establish one's credentials. In practice this usually means that only Knights and Barbarians take part. (Barbarians are uncouth, but Knights do not object because pitting yourself against a berserk Barbarian is a good test of nerve and skill.) Theoretically a Warlock, Sorcerer, etc, could take part - but these Professions are very rare, and if they feature at a tournament it is likely to be behind the scenes (Cursing your opponent before he enters the lists or whatever) rather than mucking in on horseback. An open display of magic would be frowned upon, to say the least. A Warlock who thinks it is great fun to unman five bold Knights with a *Pacify* spell obviously does not know the meaning of the word vendetta.

## The joust

This is a much more civilized affair. Gloriously coloured pavilions are set up before the grand white battlements of a wealthy nobleman's castle. Pennants flutter in the breeze. Splendid in their livery, bright

shields sparkling in the sunlight, knights parade on proud chargers vying for a lady's favour. Riffraff are excluded. You must have been born into the gentry or nobility to take part. Common soldiers who have been knighted for distinguished bravery or some other vulgar reason are not permitted ...

In fact, this exclusive ruling is the unattainable ideal. It operates only in Chaubrette and southern Albion, where the ruling class do not want their pride (or hauberks) dented by the professionals who 'do the rounds' of jousts for a living. In other parts of the world it is usually possible to get into a joust as long as you have the prerequisites - horse, armour and lance. Rough-hewn gentry of Kurland have no incentive to exclude low-born opponents, for they have not themselves yet been softened by prosperity and peace. The hellraising knights of the Holy Realm will joust with all comers on the fields of Crescentium. Danton of Breyberg was said to call on the Devil himself to take up his challenge, but history records that it was a swarthy Ta'ashim warlord, jocularly accepting on the Devil's behalf, whose spear-point found Danton's proud heart.

Noble entertainments accompany the joust. There is feasting and drinking, usually *al fresco* amid the pavilions like a modern barbeque. Balladeers evoke the halcyon days with their epic tales. Older knights may watch the vigorous activities of the youngsters with a wry gaze, then go off to their falconry. Dashing knights woo fair damsels with suave gentility, according to the precepts of courtly love. In the far southern kingdoms, the scene may be slightly different - the Ta'ashim call to prayer goes out from minarets through the velvet dusk, heady fragrances waft from the hookahs, and dancers in jewels and silk perform for the assembled warriors.

As at a tourney, there will be some grudge fights to decide who has wronged whom, or who is the mightier. These battles are outside the normal sphere of the event, and are frowned upon by most of those present.

## Who attends the event?

When a joust or tourney takes place in the campaign, the GM first needs to determine how many warriors are participating. This is typically given by a roll of  $10d12 + 10$ , though the number may then be adjusted up by as much as 100% in a populous area or if the event is a well-known one (eg, the Fay Bridge tourney mentioned earlier), or down by perhaps 50% in a remote rural area.

This is just the number of actual participants - or potential participants - in the event. They will be lords (or chieftains) with their knights (or hall-thanes). Each lord will be attended by 3-18 knights, so the GM can use this procedure to subdivide the participants into separate households. For instance, if a total of thirty warriors were attending, the GM might find that these were three lords accompanied by seven, nine and eleven knights respectively. Optionally, a few of those attending a tourney may be lordless warriors (not a highly regarded sort of person) or champions who choose to conceal their true allegiance and identity.

Along with the warriors themselves there will be many others attending - wives, daughters, servants, advisers, priests. The last is an especially important figure. The tourney should be a non-fatal (though hardly bloodless) affair, but God often wills it otherwise. Not many warriors would care to fight without their confessor near at hand. However, the priests who attend tourneys are usually monks, as the Church has forbidden its clergy to become involved because tourneys provide a too-popular alternative to the Crusade.

Along with these fine gentry and nobility there will be a host of hangers-on: entertainers, charlatan soothsayers who declare which days are most auspicious for fighting (for a price), armourers from nearby villages or towns who know there will be plenty of work for them, merchants who come to sell fine silks and

furs to the ladies while their lords clash in the lists... And some members of the more mysterious Professions may attend! openly or otherwise. This is best determined by the GM, but if a random procedure is needed then use the following guidelines:

15% chance of 1-4 Sorcerers (or Elementalists if the event is taking place in northern Ellesland or along the Mercanian coast). These will generally be 'court' magicians who travel with a lord's retinue in order to provide healing spells and auguries as needed.

10% chance of 1-4 Warlocks, who will probably be taking part and may or may not choose to be open about their powers. Remember that the inner arcana of a Profession is not general knowledge as far as other Professions are concerned. The average Knight or Barbarian has no idea what a Warlock can do (ie, player-character Knights and Barbarians should not cheat by looking at Chapter 9), and any remotely mysterious participant who seems unnaturally lucky at a joust may find himself accused of being a Warlock.

5% chance of 1-3 Assassins. These will appear to be typical attendees - minstrels, traders, acrobats, local woodsmen or whatever. An Assassin might even disguise himself as a knight, but he will only be a nominal participant. His real reason for being at the tourney will be something sinister, of course.

10% chance of 1-3 Mystics. Members of this Profession come from all strata of the feudal society. Many are fiercely independent foresters or shepherds, but sometimes even a lord's son may be drawn to the Mystic Way. Those attending a tourney or joust will usually be younger sons (or daughters) of the presiding lord, or friends of the combatants.

As for the participating warriors themselves, the GamesMaster determines their abilities using the table on p 75 of Book One. The more prestigious events such as the Fay Bridge tourney require a modifier of up to + 25 to be added to the d100 roll. Very few 1st rank characters would be rash enough to take part knowing they might be up against the flower of the kingdom's chivalry. Once his rank has been established, each warrior can then be equipped according to pp 80-81 of Book Two. By reason of his wealth, a noble should be equipped as though he were three ranks higher than he actually is.

A lord will only take part in the event himself if he is at least 4th rank. In any case, he is under no obligation to accept a challenge to personal combat from one of lower status. If this happens, the lord will usually send one of his knights to meet the challenge on his behalf. In theory this is so that the lord's champions can test an opponent's mettle and see if he is worthy to stand against their liege. Behind the patina of self-deception, the truth is, of course, that no lord wants to lose face by losing to a social inferior. A lord cannot refuse a challenge from an equal, however. If this occurs and the challenged lord is obviously outclassed, there may be some behind-the-scenes bartering to 'induce' the other to withdraw his challenge. Alternatively, any Assassins on hand may make themselves known to the challenged lord and offer their services - 'Ah, were



an unidentifiable illness to suddenly strike down the Earl of Hurstington, then you would be spared any risk of embarrassment or injury, my lord ...'

## Ransom

At a tourney, a man's ransom is assessed by the Marshal of the Tournament. If the event is being held near a castle, the Marshal will be the steward or other senior retainer of the local lord. Otherwise he will be a veteran chosen by common consent. Ransom depends on wealth, status and skill. For a typical combatant,

Ransom = rank x 200 Florins  
+ half the total cash the character is travelling with  
+ 20% of the value of the character's armour and main weapon

With regard to the last factor in this equation, the Marshall will assess any form of magical armour or weaponry at 2,000-24,000 Florins above its base (unenchanted) value. This is because an experienced warrior can tell quite quickly if a suit of armour or a sword-blade is enchanted, but he cannot easily determine how enchanted.

Status applies a further modifier to the ransom amount derived as above:

<i>Character is...</i>	<i>Adjustment to ransom</i>
A Barbarian	-10%
A lordless wanderer (includes most adventurers)	-20%
A known Warlock	-10%
One of the nobility	+25%
A lord's heir	+75%
A lord	+175% or more

Besting a character at a tourney does not give one title to his possessions. He may offer his armour or horse in

lieu if he has insufficient funds to pay. If for some reason he or his family cannot meet the stipulated ransom, he must swear allegiance to the warrior who bested him.

Ransom at a joust is somewhat different. Besting a character entitles one to claim ransom as above - but one also gains disposal of all equipment the character was using when he fell/surrendered. This includes his horse if he was knocked from the saddle. It is considered good form to allow the vanquished character<sup>2</sup> to buy back the equipment. Charging more than three times the base value for a magic item is thought exorbitant - and such lack of charity would surely bring bad luck. Any transgression against the rules of acceptable behaviour will certainly result in the offender being excluded from future jousts.

## Jousting rules

In a joust, two warriors with lances charge one another on horseback, each attempting to knock the other from his saddle. If both are still in the saddle after three charges<sup>3</sup>, they dismount and continue the fight with sword and shield. This goes on until one of them falls or surrenders.

The jousting rules are slightly different from normal DRAGON WARRIORS combat. As the combatants meet, both Hit Rolls are made simultaneously. There is a chance that a successful blow will glance off the opponent's shield; this is indicated by a roll of 1-2 on d6. Otherwise, a character who is hit must roll under his Strength + rank + *Reflexes* to stay in the saddle. This roll is made on 3d20 if he is riding a warhorse and on 4d20 if it is a normal horse.

The lances are blunted to avoid serious injury, but a successful hit will still inflict 3d4 HP damage. Armour will give some protection by absorbing its AF from the

2 Or his family, if he was slain.

3 Or if both of them fall together.



damage roll. A lance-propelled fall from the saddle of a charging horse can also be quite painful. Usually the only damage taken will be 1d6-2 HP<sup>4</sup> but there is a 15% chance of a more serious injury. If this is indicated, roll on the table below:

#### JOUST FALL DAMAGE

*d100 Roll Nature of injury*

01-20	sprained/dislocated shoulder: regardless of armour, character takes a 1d4 HP wound; he must fight as though Weakened (Book Two, p 23) until injury heals
21-45	sprained/dislocated arm: character takes 1d3 HP wound and is at - 2 off both ATTACK and DEFENCE until healed
46-75	sprained/dislocated leg: character takes 1d3 HP wound; until healed, he loses 1 from both ATTACK and DEFENCE, halves his EVASION and movement rate, and cannot run
76-85	broken arm: character takes a 1d4 HP wound; he loses 2 from both ATTACK and DEFENCE and cannot use two-handed weapons (including bows) until the fracture heals
86-97	broken leg: the character takes a 1d4 HP wound; other effects are as for a sprained leg, above
98-100	broken neck: character dies unless a spell of Greater Healing is cast upon him within one minute, and even then he cannot fight for the next 1-3 days; Miracle Cure is also needed 20% of the time to prevent paralysis

<sup>4</sup> This assumes that some form of armour is worn - see Book One, p 66.

Non-fractures are split evenly between sprains and dislocations. In all cases, unless magic is employed, the healing times are the same: 1-10 days for a sprain, 1-12 weeks for a dislocation, 4-6 weeks for a fracture. Dislocations involve torn ligaments and may recur unless Miracle Cure or Purification is used to effect a permanent cure. The chance of this is 2 % each month - and the GM will also use his own judgement at other times (eg, a dislocated knee may well be put out again in a fall).

#### Other combat entertainments

Two other 'wargames' exist that do not belong to the knightly tradition of Ellesland and the western countries. These are the elaborate duels of the Tamorian Arena and the terrible Battlepits of Krarth.

The arena at Tamor represents a return to the admiration of martial skills known by the patricians of the early Selentine Empire. In olden times it would have been two enslaved gladiators with net and trident who fought one another in the arena. Somewhat later, as the Empire became bloated and decadent, the mob demanded baroque variations on the theme - from the seats where the patricians once nodded and applauded their appreciation of an elegant feint or parry, the crowd now roared ecstatically at each new sadistic spectacle. The decadence was dispelled by the influx of barbarian invaders and the rise of the True Faith. The sands intended to soak up the gladiators' lifeblood have been swept from the arena floor. It is now a marble-paved plaza where duels and contests involving up to a dozen participants are held. Anyone can present himself, with up to five companions, to the Overseers of the arena in Tamor. They will assess the overall skill of the character(s) and then post his/their challenge throughout the city. Once another team of equal skill has been located to take the challenge, both sides agree on the nature of their contest - they may

choose a wrestling match or a bout of fisticuffs, an archery contest or a battle with full weapons and armour. In the last instance, limits must also be set: to first blood, or until surrender. Contests to the death are not permitted, and any character who deliberately brings about the death of an opponent faces a charge of murder under Selentine law. Usually there are events at the arena two or three times a week. One may sit in the spectator stands or, if the current battle is not of interest, wander down corridors that lead to halls behind and beneath the arena. A plethora of subsidiary entertainments take place here - acrobats, courtesans and musicians will perform for a few gold coins, and there are stalls where one may buy wine or herbal drinks, souvenirs of the arena, or even consult a fortune-teller. The usual question put to the fortune-tellers concerns who will win the forthcoming event in the arena, for the 'hazardines' (who cover bets) are ever present and vast fortunes may be wagered on a professional contestant with several victories under his belt. (Signs on a fortune-teller's booth proclaim his past successes, if the traveller can read the spiky Classic script - eg, 'Bakrus the Allseeing: foretold the victory of Lubo Halfspear, the calamitous defeat of Ulochus Garexa in the year 981AS, etc.' Most of these fellows are charlatans, of course, and some are in partnership with the hazardines.)

The Battlepits of Krarth are not a place for honourable duels or the clash of chivalric heroes. These sprawling tunnels extend for miles under the wintry marshland of the north, occasionally opening into subterranean chambers or into high-walled amphitheatres that are open to the sky. Every thirteen lunar months, the magi of Krarth assemble their champions. These are usually captives or slaves bred for the purpose, but sometimes an adventurer will travel to Krarth and offer himself as a participant. The champions are armed with various odd tools, weapons and clues before being released into the battlepits at different points. The magi gleefully view their progress

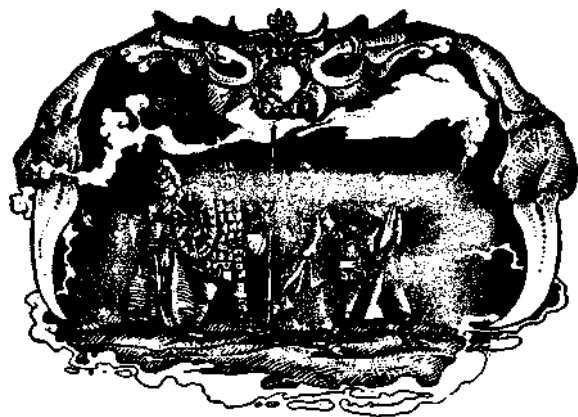
in antique scrying-spheres and may intervene magically to help or hinder within carefully prescribed limits. The contest ends when a champion locates the Emblem of Victory somewhere in the labyrinth and returns with it to safety. To do so he must pass through numerous magical wards - a hall of gold mirrors which reflect the character as members of other Professions and bring these to life to fight him; a corridor where some of the flagstones are illusory, and the character must know or deduce the numerical sequence of these or plunge into a necromantic void; a maze which is patrolled by Lanadares of the Brazen Heart, a beauteous female android who sets conundrums and attacks if they are answered wrongly; a fungus garden where the character must find the hidden exit before he is poisoned by the insidious spores that fill the air; and the Chasm of Broken Chains, whose bridge leads to safety but one must first face the revenants of the three deadliest foes from one's past. Victory means freedom - and a lavish reward.<sup>5</sup>

### Experience points

Experience awards for victory in a wargame will depend on how close it is to real battle conditions. All fights to the death are worth full experience points, of course. The object in a joust or tourney is usually to incapacitate your foe or force his surrender, however, and this is worth only half the usual experience points. In some special cases the award will be reduced even further - if you bribe a knight beforehand to surrender to you, you get no experience for having beaten him! Victories in the Tamorian Arena are only ever worth half experience because duels to the death

<sup>5</sup> The purpose of this slaughter ritual is not just 'entertainment'. By his champion's victory a magus gains wealth, territory and concessions from his fellows. Any disputes outstanding from the previous year are settled in his favour. Some even say he gains the esteem of the gods.

are forbidden. Characters get full experience for fighting their way through the Battlepits of the magi, where no quarter is asked or given.



## 7 In the Beginning

The purpose of this chapter is to give each player-character a background, a provenance upon which the player can build his life history from birth to the time he enters the campaign as a young blood of 1st rank. The same procedure can also be used for NPCs (non-player characters) if required, as the tables below will supply a history for any newly rolled character.

Often a player will like to concoct his own life history. The GamesMaster will certainly allow and encourage this if the player's ideas are (1) interesting and (2) do not conflict with the needs and style of the GM's campaign. But sometimes players take the chance to be extravagantly optimistic ('Okay, I've worked out my life story - I'm heir to the Kingdom of Algandy ...'), and at other times even the most inspired player will find his imagination flagging. Then it is time to let the dice lead the way: refer to the tables and see what result you get. You may be surprised to find that your new Knight character was born into a merchant's household or that your Assassin could have followed his father into the Plasterers' Guild. How can this Warlock be a scion of the nobility, how can this Sorcerer suffer the stigma of coming from a community of charcoal-burners? Finding answers to questions like these will spur you into developing a fully fleshed-out personal history.

Having created a new character, dice are rolled to determine his social position by birth - ie, whether one or both of his parents were nobles, peasants or whatever. Since most 1st rank characters will probably be about 17-22 years old, it should not be surprising that this is not always the social position that the character now enjoys. A lot of water can pass under the bridge in seventeen years. The GM will often rule that the character has suffered several changes of fortune in his time. Take the example of Launfric, a

character whom the dice indicate to be of noble blood. The GM may decide that this roll applies only to his mother, abducted in her youth by raiders from Mercania. A birthmark on his forearm is Launfric's only clue to his father's identity. Or possibly it was his father who was the noble - a lord who dallied with a comely tavern-wench one night and passed on without a second thought for the brat he had sired. Yet another alternative would be that a rival lord had slain Launfric's parents and taken his father's lands. Launfric is then a dispossessed heir, doubtless scheming for the day he will take revenge on his parents' murderer.

There are many ways for the GM to ensure his campaign is fair and balanced between all the players while at the same time giving each player-character a colourful and individual life history.

### **Interlude: social class**

Most of the societies of Legend are feudal, with the complex system of mutual obligation and status structure that this entails. It will help if players have some idea of the relative status of the various classes. Bear in mind that status is not entirely fixed. There is some degree of social mobility - not much in an orderly region such as Chaubrette, but in Algandy or northern Albion levies may be knighted in the same battle that deprives a lord of all his estates. Modifiers such as wealth and prestige (especially high office in the Church) also make a great deal of difference. Riolta, the 1st rank Sorceress, provokes only sullen looks and mumbled prayers when she passes a group of serfs tilling the fields, but if she survives to become Riolta the Wyrdcaster, wealthy 6th rank Sorceress with her own (appropriated) castle, even great barons may treat her with respect.

The nobility are the powerful lords and their families - men such as Montombre, Grisaille and

Baron Aldred. Their attendant knights form the gentry, and this class also comprises minor lords-of-the-manor. (The erstwhile lord of Axbridge village, Sir Hathnar, was such a one, the vavasour or sub-vassal of Aldred, who removed him and took direct responsibility for Axbridge about a year before the events of Book One.)

The division between town and country is beginning to take shape, although it is only along the shores of the Coradian coast that more than one-tenth of the population choose the former with its admixture of wealth and squalour, security and discomfort. Craftsmen have the highest status in the town - after the local nobility and gentry, of course. These are the masons, shipbuilders, carpenters, etc, who are now only just beginning to consolidate the Guilds, destined to wield much power in the centuries to come. At approximately the same level we find the learned professionals - the scribes, lawyers, doctors and so on. Next are the tradesmen, a group comprising such occupations as butcher, grocer and baker. Below these come the menials, who are essentially the feudal working class. Rather than following a set occupation throughout his life, a member of this class will do whatever job he can find that pays him a living. Some will belong to the town guard, unless this function is performed by soldiers of the King or the local lord. Extra guards will be taken on at festival times, and some university towns have a separate force for the 'gown'. Other menials will perform tasks such as lighting the street-lamps (some towns have bronze bowls full of pitch set at the end of main thoroughfares), collecting refuse and sewage, delivering pitchers of water, town-crying and burying the dead. Last of all are a group we may call the riffraff, using this term to encompass beggars, street hawkers, whores (but not the more reputable madams who could almost be considered professionals and borrow some of the status of

1 Except in some old Selentine cities that actually have a plumbing system.

their prestigious patrons), cutpurses, lazars and other indigents.

In the countryside, the pre-eminent class are the **freemen**. To this group belong farmers, artisans (blacksmiths, wheelwrights, armourers, etc), foresters, innkeepers (like the famous Gully, whose inn is the best in northern Albion), and the men-at-arms who form the bulk of a castle's garrison. They are the feudal middle-class, few in number but usually quite well off by the standards of the time. Many own horses, swords and even armour. They are their lord's vassals and owe him a number of services, including forty days in his army each year, but they own property and may come and go as they please. Below the freemen come entertainers and merchants. (Though it should be added that the bards<sup>2</sup>, who journey from castle to castle with their epic tales and songs of vanished glory, are really very highly regarded and may be on a par with the gentry.) **Serfs**, or villeins, come next. They are as much a lord's property as is his livestock, and sometimes not much better treated. They have no rights in law, nor title to their homes. They must work three days in each week on the lord's land and grow whatever they can for their own needs in the time that remains. Nonetheless they are of higher status than the **cottars** who, though technically free and able to possess a cottage and a plot of land, have no fixed identity within the feudal structure. They are often very poor and must perform their tasks for a daily (and barely sufficient) wage. A cottar will turn his hand to any employment available, therefore. He may dig ditches, herd cows, press apples for cider, keep bees, thatch the roofs of other villagers, fetch and carry and run errands - and in return get a few coppers from the village reeve. A cottar's freedom is of no advantage to him in a society where a man is judged by his obligations and his standing. A serf will say to a cottar, 'I am a bondsman whom my lord values and protects as

his property' - not with any sense of dissatisfaction, but with the assured superiority that comes from knowing his place in the scheme of things. Little wonder, then, that this class often produces the sort of disaffected ne'er-do-well who is likely to become an adventurer. Close to the bottom of the pile are the slaves, nowadays rarely seen in the more 'enlightened' lands of the True Faith though common enough in the Ta'ashim countries and also in Thuland, Ereworn, Krarth, Mercania and some parts of Cornumbria. We should also mention the outlaws, who live in the wildwood and respect no authority. Last are the charcoal-burners, lower even than the riffraff of the towns. These strange, secretive folk live in isolated communities at the forest's edge and make occasional visits to the nearby villages to barter their only commodity in exchange for food and tatters of hide. A sullen people with an inbred distrust of strangers, they smell vile, are stained swart by the smoke of their fires, die after a short and ugly life, and venerate pagan spirits that they knew in prehistoric times.

These, then, are the possible provenances of an adventuring character. To the above it need only be added that by the life he has chosen for himself an adventurer rarely commands the respect that might be his by birth. A freeman and even a serf would peer down his nose at any lordless wanderer who came into his village - though if the wanderer is clad in armour and has a strong sword-arm he will doubtless be treated with a semblance of equality.



2 Called in Cornumbria and Ereworn the *filidh*.

CHARACTER SHEET

## PROFESSION

**CASH**

[illegible]

Determining background

A player uses the following tables once he has generated a new 1st rank character. (Players with already established characters could also use these rules, but it is usually unsatisfactory to suddenly 'discover' a character's life history when he/she has been in the campaign for sometime.)

Two Professions do not use the tables. Elementalists are a very localized subgroup, the shaman-priests of Thuland and Mercania.<sup>3</sup> They are a class unto themselves. A few foreigners may become apprentice to an Elementalist and learn the skills that way, but most Elementalists are born into their Profession. Barbarians must come from one of a limited number of backgrounds. The social position a Barbarian holds in his homeland counts for naught in the civilized countries, and so this aspect of a Barbarian's provenance is ignored.

3 Actually, a few Elementalists hail from other backgrounds. The kastrian sorcerers of Khitai and the storm-wizards of the Desert of Songs can also be considered Elementalists within the structure of the DRAGON WARRIORS rules. Neither of these is a particularly likely source of player-character, however.

BACKGROUND Table 1

Parents' class:	Adventuring Profession				
	KNIGHT	MYSTIC	SORCERER	WARLOCK	ASSASSIN
Nobility	01-18	01-03	01-13	01-10	01-02
Gentry	19-53	04-07	14-22	11-21	03-06
TOWNSPOK	Craft <sup>1</sup>	54-55	08-14	23-26	22-28
	Profession <sup>2</sup>	56-57	15-21	27-39	29-35
	Trade <sup>3</sup>	58	22-24	40-42	36-38
	Menial	59-61	25-27	43-50	39-41
	Riffraff	62-64	28-30	51-54	42-43
Merchant	65-67	31-34	55-57	44-50	32-34
Entertainer	68-71	35-41	58-62	51-58	35-39
Freeman <sup>4</sup>	72-83	42-61	63-75	59-69	40
Serf	84-87	62-75	76-83	70-76	41-43
Cottar	88-93	76-89	84-87	77-84	44-47
Slave	94-96	90-92	88-98	85-90	48-49
Charcoal-Burner	97	93-96	96	91	50-53
Tamorian Cataphract	98-99				
Marijah Assassin					54-65
Clan of Harbingers	-				66-96
Krarth magi		97	97-98	92-96	97
Other <sup>5</sup> (GM's choice)	100	98-100	99-100	97-100	98-100

- 1 Refer to Background Subtable 1a.
- 2 Refer to Background Subtable 1b.
- 3 Refer to Background Subtable 1c.
- 4 Refer to Background Subtable 1d.
- 5 As examples, this category could include: characters who do not know who their parents were; characters born to a licentious monk or nun; any nonhuman character (if such are allowed in the campaign); characters with some sorcery or mystery attaching to their origin (found asleep in a cave and awakened after a hundred years, lost and without memory after a visit to an Elven hall, etc, etc).

Some of these categories require further explanation:

The Tamorian Cataphracts are the warrior elite of the New Selentine Empire. Though the Selentine Empire is no longer the all-conquering power it once was, its myth still lingers. A character born into the Cataphract class would logically be somewhat arrogant and proud. The player should also ask himself why his character chose to go out into the world as an adventurer rather than following his father as one of the 'Bastions of the East'.

Some characters may be the sons or daughters of the Krarth magi (the sorcerous overlords of that frozen land - see p 25). The magi are not numerous, but they do sire an extraordinary number of progeny through more-or-less casual dalliances. Faced with the alternative of poisoning or garrotting by one of their legitimate half-siblings, many of these leave Krarth and join one of the arcane adventuring Professions.

Assassins who do not originate among the *Marijahs* or the *Clan of Harbingers*<sup>4</sup> are 'self-taught'. They developed for themselves the skills they needed to pursue their chosen career. This is rarely as satisfactory as being trained within a long-established Assassins' society - a fact which is represented in the game by giving all Assassins of Marijah or Harbinger provenance an initial lead of 2d6 experience points when they first enter the campaign. This is quite an

4 Other Assassins' groups exist, including the cultists of the Goddess of Ebon Annihilation in Minj and the sulsa of far-off Yamato. Members of these groups will rarely be met in the parts of Legend covered by this book.

advantage, but it must be weighed against another factor. Societies of Assassins do not like anyone quitting their ranks because they fear the fugitive member may reveal their secrets. The risk of this is admittedly slim in the case of a 1st rank character, who will have been entrusted with few of the society's inner arcana. Even so, there is a 10% chance that others of the society will be assigned to track down and silence the fugitive. If this is the case (indicated by a roll of 01-10 on percentile dice), the GM makes a secret note of the fact that the character is pursued by 1-3 Assassins from his former society. They begin at 1st rank themselves but will, of course, acquire experience just as the character does. In any game-month they have a 3% chance of locating him. This increases if he should stay in one place for a period of time: + 1 %/month to a total maximum chance of 10% in any month. This theme can make an excellent continuing subplot to the main campaign: the fugitive's attempt to stay one step ahead of his hunters. The showdown, when it occurs, should provide the character with a fight he can win - but not easily. By eliminating his pursuers the Assassin breaks his last links with the past he sought to escape. If the GM handles this well it can be a very powerful and seminal episode in the character's life.

If a character's father was a craftsman, professional, tradesman or freeman, a further check can be made on the subtables below to find out his occupation. This affects the character himself in only a very few cases, but it can add chrome to his life history.

('Other' on these tables takes in the less-common occupations such as rope-maker, cooper, oil-maker, etc. Also, there is always the possibility that one or both of the character's parents were professional adventurers themselves.)

## BACKGROUND SUBTABLE 1a

### Craftsmen

<i>d100 Roll</i>	<i>Father's occupation</i>
01-05	Armourer/Weaponsmith
06-12	Artist
13-24	Blacksmith
25-36	Carpenter
37-45	Cartwright
46-49	Foundryman
50-53	Instrument-maker
54-60	Jeweller/Goldsmith
61-62	Limner
63-67	Locksmith
68-74	Mariner*
75-84	Mason
85-90	Shipbuilder
91-100	Other

\*This applies only to skilled mariners - captains, pilots, etc. Ordinary seamen are just menials.

## BACKGROUND SUBTABLE 1b

### Professionals

<i>d100 Roll</i>	<i>Father's occupation</i>
01-17	Administrator
18-28	Architect
29-32	Cartographer
33-45	Doctor
46-61	Lawyer
62 - 69	Paper-and-ink maker
70	Professor*
71-90	Scribe
91-100	Other

\*University professors are mostly monks. Very few have offspring - at least, that they would acknowledge.



## BACKGROUND SUBTABLE 1c

### Tradesmen

<i>d100 Roll</i>	<i>Father's occupation</i>
01-11	Baker
12-19	Butcher
20-21	Chandler
22-25	Clothier
26-29	Cobbler
30-39	Fishmonger
40-43	Fruiterer
44-45	Furrier
47-56	Grocer
57-66	Innkeeper
67-73	Merchant
74-77	Miller
78-83	Moneylender
84-87	Vintner
88-100	Other

41-44	Weaver
45-46	Cook
47-48	Falconer
49-64	Farmer
65-71	Fisherman
72-75	Forester
76-78	Innkeeper
79-80	Major-domo
81-85	Man-at-arms
86-87	Miller
88	Miner <sup>2</sup>
89-90	Priest <sup>3</sup>
91-93	Shepherd
94-100	Other

- This means a mining foreman - one who could recognize where gold or whatever is present and supervise the mining operation. Serfs would do the spadework.
- Village priests are not monks and are often married. The rector, if any, is likely to be gentry - possibly a relative of the lord of the manor. He will usually be unmarried.

## BACKGROUND SUBTABLE 1d

### Freemen

<i>d100 Roll</i>	<i>Father's occupation</i>
01-02	Animal trainer
03-04	Architect-Engineer <sup>1</sup>
	Artisan -
05-11	Armourer/Weaponsmith
12-16	Blacksmith
17-21	Bowyer
22-25	Carpenter
26-30	Cartwright
31	Chandler
32-35	Fletcher
36-39	Mason
40	Potter

<sup>1</sup> ie, a military engineer skilled in designing castles, bridges and siege engines; he would not be needed to design simple hump-backed bridges across streams or for other day-to-day needs in the village.



## BACKGROUND TABLE 2

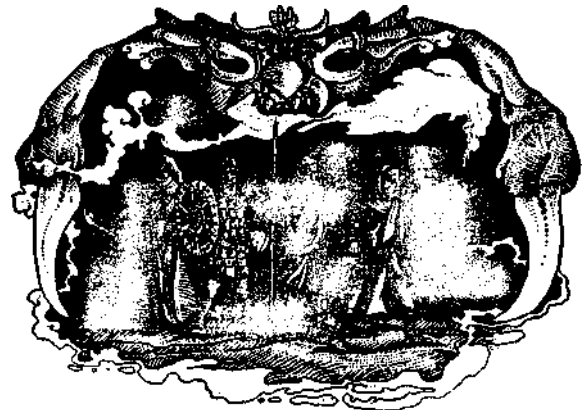
Barbarian characters use this table to determine where they come from:

<i>d100</i>	<i>Details</i>
01-19	Thuland The people of Thuland are not completely uncivilized. In fact, they have a highly developed 'early feudal' society. The warriors of this land are represented as Barbarians rather than Knights because this reflects their temperament and fighting style.
20-42	Mercanian Coast Like the Thulanders, these people are tall and fair-skinned, often with red or blond hair.
43-55	Eastern Steppes These people are horse nomads. The character may choose his Khanate of origin, the principal ones being: the Katagai Khanate, the Khanate of the Black Pavilion, the Khanate of the Raven, the Khanate of the Sweeping Vast and the Oshkosa Khanate. Steppes nomads are usually short and very stocky. Skin-colour is a rich olive-gold and hair (usually worn in pigtail) is black or tawny brown.
56-58	Gnawing Wastes These white-skinned, brown-haired people are reindeer hunters and herdsmen.
59-60	Trackless ooze A male character of this hunter-gatherer society will have elongated earlobes from the bone earplugs he would have worn as a child. Females, who share the lanky, rangy appearance of their menfolk, go unadorned.

61-68	South Emphidor The mountain-dwelling shepherds of this part of the world still lead much the same existence as their ancestors did a millennium ago.
69-73	Harogarn Mountains This region is famed for its tough, swarthy yak herdsmen who dwell in uneasy and often violent proximity to the Dwarven settlements here. A Barbarian from the Harogarn range is thus typified by his hatred of Dwarves.
74-77	Drakken Peaks The conifer-wooded slopes of the Drakken Peaks of southern Krarth are inhabited by a race of sleekly handsome, saffron-skinned hunters and foresters. These tribes have little commerce with the people of Krarth's hinterland. Individuals are prized as slaves at the courts of the magi.
78-86	Kaikuhuru Desert A character from this region will have the characteristic aquiline features and brown skin of the badawin. These desert nomads herd camels and are famed for their fierce pride, sense of honour and elaborate code of hospitality.
87-93	Northern Zhenir As is apparent from their dark skin and hooked noses, the horse nomads of this region are related to the badawin of the desert. Unfortunately they do not share the badawini's code of honour, and because of the ambushes they set for Crusaders they have acquired a reputation for treachery.

- 94-95      Mistral Sea The vassklavi fisherfolk ply the coastal waters north of the ooze, Through a genetic quirk, many individuals of this race have what is sometimes called 'cuts in the eye' - jagged black sections across the iris.
- 96      Azure Coast A number of nomadic fisher-gatherer tribes live along the shores, moving whenever the ocean currents bring shoals to another part of the coast. These people are dark-skinned, slant-eyed and lack body hair.
- 97      Thonagost Peaks A character from one of the hunting tribes of these mountains (eg, the Mokunyu and the Moloca) will have the black skin and narrow eyes that are characteristic of all peoples of this continent. The favoured weapons of such people are spears and slings.
- 98      Mungoda Jungle There are many tribes inhabiting this vast ram forest. A sweeping generic statement about their way of life is not possible. The Uktari of the ulterior are skilled and deadly hunters - masters of bow, sling, spear and club. A warrior of this tribe can be identified by his teeth, sharpened to become evil fangs, and the scarified marks across his body. The Uktari are feared by the more peaceable tribes, including the Tenuk, the Kolaki, and the Eraruti. These peoples are agriculturalists, cultivating root crops in forest clearings and maize on lakeside 'floating gardens'. They also hunt for game and gather fruit, berries and insects.

- 99-100      Cosh Goyope The swamps of Cosh Goyope support a number of river-dwelling tribes. These people rely on their keen senses and skill with their log-canoes to avoid their deadly enemies, the lumbering reptilian Dracomen. They eat fish, frogs and grubs and sometimes forage for fruit away from the main waterways. Monkeys are also hunted - not only because they add variety to the diet: a monkey brought down by a spear or arrow is often one less scout for the Dracomen (see Book Four). An individual's tribe and status are indicated by his/her body-paint and costume of feathers and wooden plaques.



BACKGROUND TABLE 3

Elementalist characters use this table to determine where they learned their magical arts:

d100	Details of provenance
01-35	The Pagan Mountains
36-55	Thuland
56-90	Mercanian Coast
91-94	Desert of Songs
95-96	Khitai
97-100	Outcast*

\*This does not mean the Elementalist *himself* is an outcast, but rather that this teacher was a wanderer or exile. The player may use Background Table 1 (the column for Sorcerers) to determine his parents' social class - or he may assume that the Elementalist who taught him was his father.

Nationality and native tongue

The player has now determined the social niche into which his character was born. Barbarians (having used Background Table 2) and Elementalists (using Table 3) will know their country of origin. For others this will probably not have been specified. A Knight who is the son of a Cataphract knows he comes from the New Selentine Empire - but the son of a miller, blacksmith, jeweller, or whatever might have been born in any country. This is left for the player to decide after consulting his GamesMaster. Probably the character in most cases will be a native of Ellesland, if that is where the campaign is set.

Usually the character's main language (in which he will be fluent) is the tongue of his native country.<sup>5</sup> See page 92.

5 One can think of a few cases where the life history the player chooses might preclude this. Camilla, for instance, is the daughter of a wealthy Ta'ashim merchant. She survived a shipwreck off the south-west coast of Albion when she was just a baby, and was

Other languages

In an age when most people do not travel and very few receive a formal education, characters are unlikely to be multilingual at first. (Barbarians are the notable exception. Even a 1st rank Barbarian is quite widely travelled.)

A roll is made on the table below to see if a character has a second language. If he/she does, the player chooses from the list of modern languages in Chapter Three. Ideally, the choice should be one that fits in logically with the character's life history. ('My father was a sea captain and often took me with him when he crossed the Glaive. That's how come I speak Beaulangue...')

A character who knows a second language to at least intermediate level rolls again to see if he knows a third, and so on.

d20 Roll	Result
1	character is <i>fluent</i> in an additional language
2-3	character knows an additional language to intermediate level
4-5	character knows a few words of another language
6-20	no additional language

Modifiers to the d20 roll:  
The following modifiers take account of parental class:

Nobility	-2
Gentry	-2
Mariner	-2
Merchant	-1
Major-domo	-1

All Barbarians subtract 6 from the die roll.  
found and brought up by a fisherman and his wife. Although obviously of Ta'ashim blood, she speaks fluent Elleslandic with her adoptive parents' accent - and knows no words of Nascérine.

Regardless of dice rolls, there should always be a common language which all player-characters in the campaign speak to at least intermediate level. The GM will give a 'free' language to any character who would otherwise be unable to understand his comrades. (The player may adopt a foreign accent if he wishes!)

Literacy and ancient languages

Literacy is acquired through a formal education. Though this often means a Church or monastic education, the character may have been taught by his parents or a relative. In addition to knowledge of Classic script (and thus the ability to write most modern languages that he knows - see page 96), formal education is also likely to give the character one or more ancient languages.

Sorcerers and Warlocks are always literate, having been taught to read and write by the Master Sorcerer under whom they studied. Other characters roll for literacy according to their social provenance:

<i>Parental background</i>	<i>Chance of literacy</i>
Nobility	15%
Gentry	10%
Craft	10%
Profession	35%
Trade	7%
Freeman	8%
Serf	3%
Cottar	2%
Merchant	10%
Entertainer	8%
Menial	5%
Riffraff	2%
Charcoal-Burner	1%
Other	1d20%
Barbarian	1%

If the dice roll indicates the character is literate, roll on the following table to see if he knows any ancient languages:

<i>Ancient language</i>	<i>Chance of knowing (&amp; level)</i>
Bacchile	70% (roll d6: 1-3 = intermediate, 4-6 = fluent)
Emphidian <sup>1</sup>	20% (roll d6: 1-4 = intermediate, 5-6 = fluent)
Old Mercanian <sup>2</sup>	5% (roll d6: 1-4 = intermediate, 5-6 = fluent)
Old Kurlish	25% (roll d6: 1-3 = intermediate, 4-6 = fluent)
Kaikahuran <sup>3</sup>	3% (roll d6: 1-5 = intermediate, 6 = fluent)
Lughwyd <sup>4</sup>	5% (roll d6: 1-5 = intermediate, 6 = fluent)
Special <sup>5</sup>	3% (roll d6: 1-4 = intermediate, 5-6 = fluent)

- 1 Includes knowledge of the Emphidian script
- 2 Includes knowledge of Nikkar Runic script.
- 3 Includes knowledge of Qemor Hieroglyphs; Ancient Kaikuhuran is not spoken.
- 4 Includes knowledge of the Kell script; note that Lughwyd exists today only in its written form.
- 5 Special: the character has had an unusual education and may choose 1-3 further languages - ancient or modern. He will be able to speak, read and write these at the level indicated by the d6 roll.

The system in action

Let us take an example to see how the tables work. A player has just rolled a new character, a 1st rank Assassin. Rolling on Background Table 1 he discovers that his provenance is the secret society of Marijah Assassins. He is adamant that his character is of the western race, however, so he devises a life history that permits this. He was a Crusader's son, kidnapped by the Marijahs when he was only a few months old and brought up as one of their own. He is thus fluent in Nascerine and has a Ta'ashim name, Ma'aruf. The Games-Master's campaign begins in Kurland and, before he will allow the player's chosen background, some rationale must be given for how he comes to be so far from home. The player suggests that he was assigned to kill a Grandmaster of the Knights Capellars, caught, and brought back to Kurland as a prisoner. When the story of his life was pieced together and explained to him, he turned violently against his Marijah 'brethen' and became a convert to the True Faith. He argues that, given the course of his life until now, he should

speak Kurlish to at least intermediate level (see p 87). The GM cannot help but agree (he likes the inventive background the player has devised, but he does not need the complication of a character who cannot understand what the other player-characters are saying); he permits this and also gives the character a - 4 modifier on the additional languages table (p 155). After rolling the dice, it turns out that Ma'aruf speaks *fluent* Beaulangue (presumably learnt during his time on a Capellars ship bound for Kurland), intermediate Kurlish and of course *fluent* Nascerine.

He then checks for literacy (p 156). As he conies under the category of 'other' he first rolls d20 and gets a 9. This means he has a 9% chance of being literate, so he rolls percentile dice and he gets a 04. He is indeed literate, but here the GM steps in. His education is likely to have been gained while he was still with the Marijah Assassins, so instead of knowing the Classic script (as would be the case with a western character) he has been taught Jezant. He can read and write his 'native' Nascerine. Rolling for ancient languages, he obtains Emphidian and Kaikuhuran to intermediate level.

Summarizing all this on the back of his character sheet, the player writes something like:

Crusader's son brought up as a Marijah Assassin. Later brought back to Kurland by the Knights Capellars and converted to the True Faith.	
Languages:	Nascerine ( <i>fluent</i> and literate) Kurlish (spoken only - <i>intermediate</i> ) Beaulangue (spoken only - <i>fluent</i> ) Anc. Emphidian (literate and spoken to <i>intermediate</i> ) Anc. Kaikuhuran (literate to <i>intermediate</i> ; not spoken)
Scripts known:	Jezant, Emphidian and Qemor Hieroglyphic

Lastly (and unknown to the player) the GM determines whether Ma'aruf is pursued by any of his former comrades. The chance of this is normally 10% (p 146), but the GM reflects before rolling the dice. He has been rather generous in allowing a - 4 modifier for Ma'aruf's spoken languages chance, after all. He ups the probability to 20% and rolls - Ma'aruf is indeed being hunted by two Marijah Assassins. Ah well, such an inventive player will not be bothered by a little spicing of that sort!



## 8 Going Places

The use of a complete fantasy world as a campaign backdrop will logically widen the scope of adventures. Brief jaunts across the downs to raid an ogre's keep will be replaced by long-range planning. Adventurers of any mettle will quickly set their sights on the ruins of Sa'aknathur's fortress, the Citadel of the Shadowlords, or one of the Kaikuhuran pyramids.

This will involve a lot of travelling. This aspect of the game can involve considerable book-keeping, and the GamesMaster will find it is worth learning a few tricks of the trade:

1. Prepare a game-time calendar for the journey. Any worthwhile campaign should have a calendar anyway, but for an extended period of travel it is vital. Keeping track of how long the journey takes is particularly important if the GamesMaster is weaving in some concurrent plot elements: an NPC party trying to beat the player-characters to their destination, political upheaval in the Crusader lands that could impede their progress, etc.
2. Work out the total distance the player-characters will be travelling before they set out. This way you will know how many miles they have to go through forest, open country, etc, between each major town. A marker can be used to show the party's rough location, but it is neither necessary nor realistic to pinpoint them on the map at all times.
3. Major areas of forest are marked on the map, but throughout much of the north-west (Kurland, Chaubrette, Algandy, Ellesland and Thuland) even terrain indicated as 'open country' is in fact cobwebbed with swathes of woodland. It would be confusing and unplayable to depict all

such areas on a map of this scale. Instead, the GamesMaster should allow for the fact that about 20% of the open country of these lands will consist of thinly populated forest. This makes no significant difference to the travel times quoted in Book One, but does mean that there is a 20% chance that any random encounter should be taken from the Forest rather than the Open Country Table.

The GamesMaster should also reflect this fact by means of incidental descriptions, as the flavour of the game is enhanced considerably when the players have an accurate picture of their surroundings. For instance: 'You leave the thickly wooded countryside of Kurland behind you and move down the coast towards Asmulia. Within the space of a few days you notice the sharp contrast. The landscape you are now riding through is sparsely wooded - unlike Kurland, where you could usually only tell your next destination by a plume of hearth-smoke rising above the treetops, here you can see villages from miles off. Across the valley you see a villa beside an olive grove. Vines grow on the north of the valley, but here on the south you find only scrub. The scent of juniper and lavender wafts on the breeze ...'

4. Very long journeys often mean that a game-tune period of many months may be skimmed over in a matter of a few minutes of real-time. However, it is not in the best interests of the game to be too quick about this. A sense of the ludicrous may creep into a game where the GamesMaster says something such as, 'You ride south through Algandy, spend a few days in Ferromaine where you charter a ship, then you sail across the Coradian Sea and down the Gulf of Marazid until you reach the mouth of the Mungoda River after about a month. You find a guide and bearers and make your way inland through thick jungle,

finally arriving at the ruined temple Sengool told you about three months after you set out.'

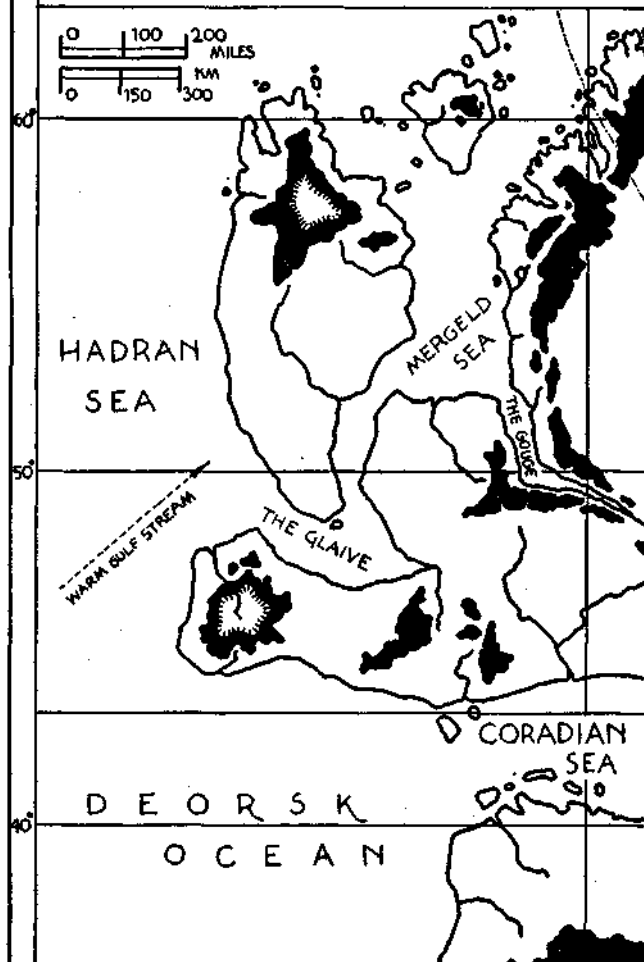
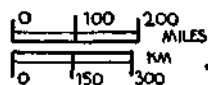
Such an introduction is implausible and does little justice to the adventure that is to follow it. I recommend that you never spend less than half an hour gaming each campaign month. Something of interest must happen in that time. Devise a meeting with officials in Ferromaine - are the player-characters stung for duty tax, wrongfully arrested by the city guard? Embroil them in a subplot which may take up the whole gaming session (though try not to lose the impetus of the main adventure in doing so). As a last resort, at least throw in a preplanned 'random' encounter. (One useful trick that allows you to move through game-time at an accelerated rate is by means of a film-like montage. Wait for the players to begin a discussion amongst themselves - a plan of action, an argument over spoils, or whatever - then run them fairly freely through their journey, interjecting briefly sketched events or remarks from NPCs, such as the ship's captain, at intervals to show that time is passing. As in a film, a few minutes' action can thus be made to seem to cover days or weeks.)

5. Be strict, especially when the player-characters move into unexplored regions. Liberally enforce any hardships or difficulties that emphasize that they are not just going for a stroll along a country lane! In the Kaikuhuran Desert, lack of water may be more of a threat than any mummified monster. Adventurers in the Mungoda Jungle will have to contend with insects, drenching humidity, disease and slow progress (possibly less than a mile a day along the lower reaches of the river).
6. Language barriers will be an obstacle on many long journeys. The player-characters will need

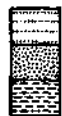


# Legend

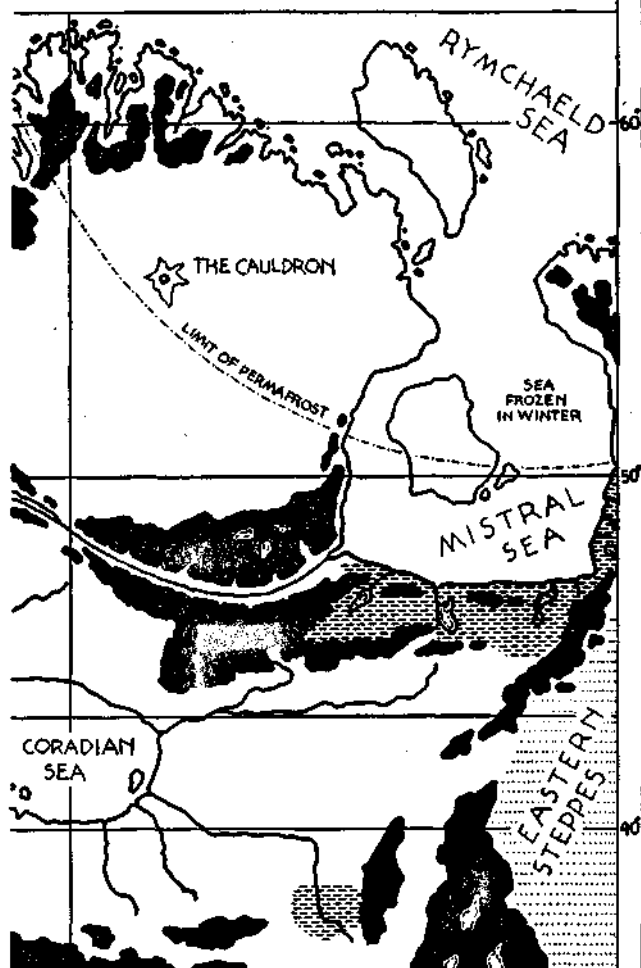
## PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY

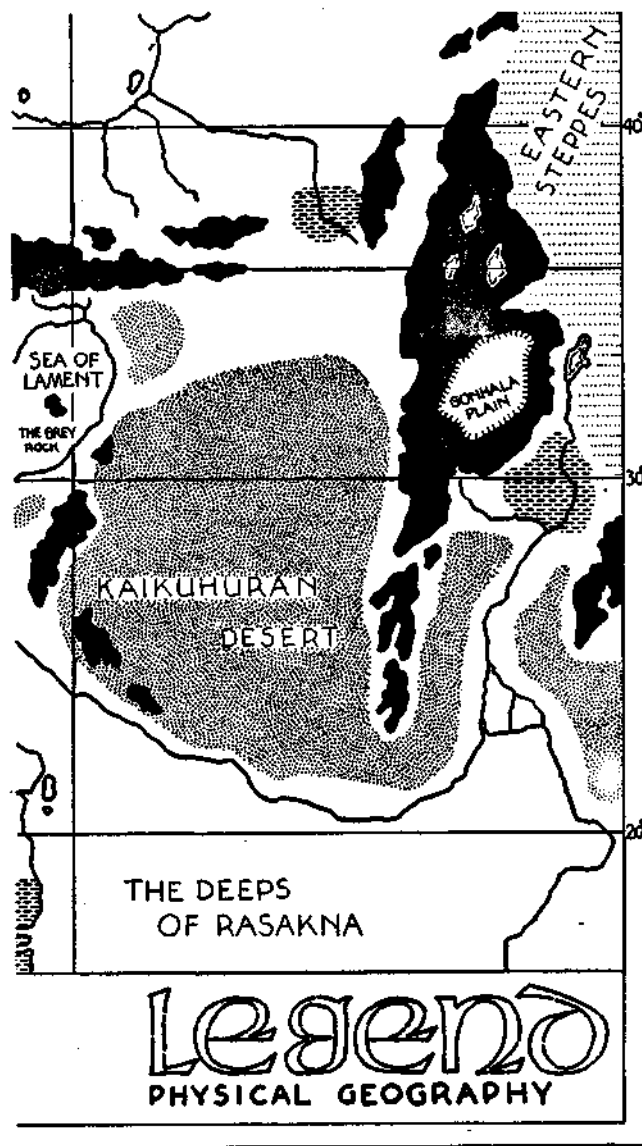
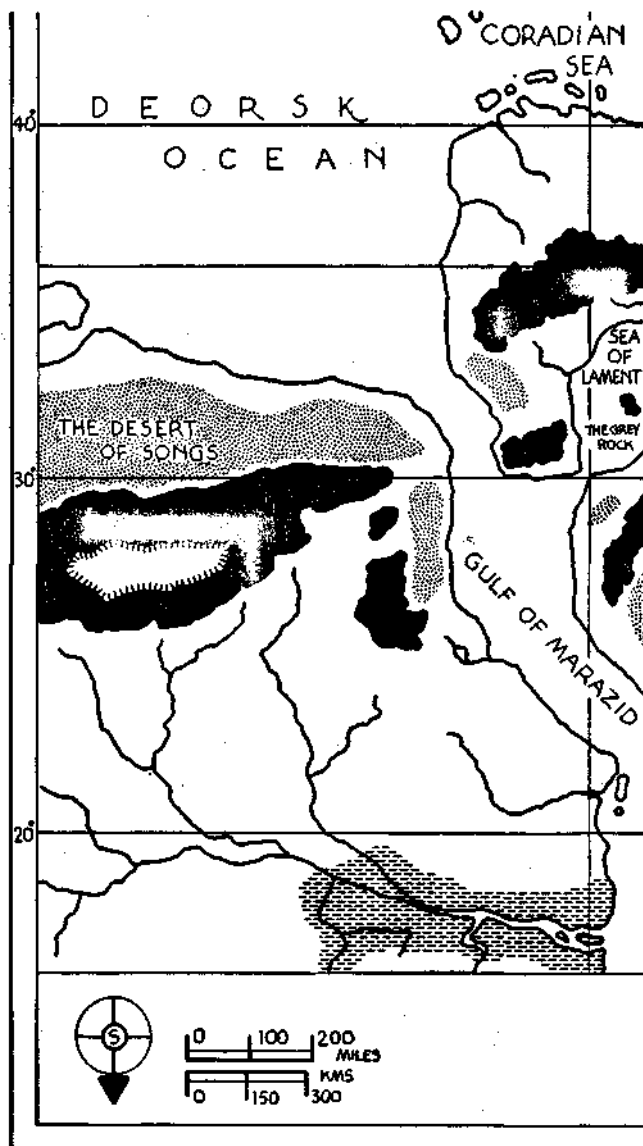


MOUNTAIN RANGE  
OVER 1000M  
HIGH  
PLATEAU  
LAKE



STEPPE  
SAND  
DESERT  
MARSHLAND





to hire an interpreter or learn the necessary languages themselves. Otherwise there will inevitably be misunderstandings. Remember that even if they find a way to communicate, they may be unaware of the local customs and unwittingly offend someone. In Khitai, for instance, it is a mortal insult to approach someone with your hands behind your back. To do this to a mandarin or government official could result in torture or death.

## Sea travel

### Vessel Types

Ships are of two basic types. Longboats (strictly speaking, longships) have a single square sail and up to fifteen pairs of oars. They are steered with a single oar slung on the starboard ('steering board') quarter. The sail is used for long journeys while the oars are brought into play for rapid manoeuvring and inshore travel. Life on board is uncomfortable, as there is rarely more than a stretched tarpaulin for shelter and the sides are so close to the waves that the crew must bale incessantly in rough weather. Nevertheless, these are ideal warships and are employed as such by most northern nations.

Trade around the coastal waters of the north is flourishing. Ports all around the Coradian Sea thrive on the exchange of fish and iron from Ellesland and the Mercanian coast, salt and silver from Kurland, Algan-dian timber and copper from the Empire. To transport their goods, the merchants use cogs - heavy double-ended ships with a rudder and single mast. They carry larger cargoes than longships, and can be run by a smaller crew, but are slower and less manoeuvrable. A cog can rarely outrun a longship, but it has advantages of height: standing some 5 metres out of the water (as compared to 1 metre for a longship) makes it difficult to board.

### Ship characteristics

The following information summarizes game-rules for various ships. Optimum crew indicates the number of officers and ordinary seamen needed to run the ship efficiently. (If a full crew is not available, see the section on *Undermanning*, below.) Further passengers/cargo is the additional load the ship can take on board. Men require space to move and breathe, so a single passenger occupies 250kg worth of cargo space. This figure assumes a passenger with minimal possessions and who is willing to endure rather cramped conditions. (Crusaders, for instance, typically make the passage south on bunks 0.6m wide by 1.5m long; each man must lie with his head between the next man's feet.) An adventurer with his weapons, armour, treasure-chest, occult books and other paraphernalia will occupy at least twice the space. Ship Points (explained in greater detail later) are the vessel's equivalent of *Health Points*. Storm damage reduces Ship Points, and if they reach 0 the ship sinks. Cost to buy is self-explanatory; this sum does not include the wages of the crew or the cost of routine maintenance.

#### SMALL LONGBOAT

Optimum crew: 1-3 officers; 50 oarsmen  
Further passengers/cargo: 20 men/ 5000kg  
Ship Points: 10  
Cost to buy: 5000 Florins

#### MEDIUM LONGBOAT

Optimum crew: 2-6 officers; 70 oarsmen  
Further passengers/cargo: 30 men/ 7500kg  
Ship Points: 15  
Cost to buy: 6500 Florins

#### LARGE LONGBOAT

Optimum crew: 4-10 officers; 170 oarsmen  
Further passengers/cargo: 50 men/ 12,500kg  
Ship Points: 25  
Cost to buy: 10,000 Florins

## SMALL COG

Optimum crew: 1-2 officers; 10 sailors  
 Further passengers/cargo: 50 men/ 12,500kg  
 Ship Points: 18  
 Cost to buy: 15,000 Florins

## MEDIUM COG

Optimum crew: 2-4 officers; 20 sailors  
 Further passengers/cargo: 100 men/ 25,000kg  
 Ship Points: 25  
 Cost to buy: 30,000 Florins

## LARGE COG

Optimum crew: 5-7 officers; 30 sailors  
 Further passengers/cargo: 150 men/ 37,500kg  
 Ship Points: 32  
 Cost to buy: 50,000 Florins

For comparison, a standard five-man rowing boat has 2 Ship Points and costs about 75 Florins.

## Weather at sea

At the start of any sea voyage, the GamesMaster decides on the wind conditions for the day of departure. Each day of the journey, a d6 is rolled to see if and how the wind changes:

	Previous day's wind			
	CALM	BREEZE	GALE	STORM
2 degrees calmer			1	1
1 degree calmer	—	1-2	2	2-4
no change	1-3	3-4	3-4	5-6
1 degree stronger	4-5	5	5-6	—
2 degrees stronger	6	6	—	—



## EXAMPLE

A party of adventurers set out on a fine day from Port Beltayn, with a brisk breeze billowing out their sails. Rolling at dawn for the next day's weather, the GamesMaster gets a 5, so the wind increases one degree to become a gale. The following day he rolls a 1: the wind drops and the ship lies becalmed.

## Making headway

The wind speed, found using the rules above, is what determines how far a ship can sail in a day. The figures given here assume a full day's sailing in the open sea, but in fact longboats usually skirt the coast and put in to land at night. Camping on the shore is safer and more comfortable than sleeping at sea, and means that the large crew can forage rather than overburden the ship with all the provisions they need for the journey.

## DISTANCE COVERED UNDER SAIL IN 24 HOURS

	<i>Longship</i>	<i>Cog</i>
CALM	0-3 miles	0-3 miles
BREEZE	4d20 miles	3d20 miles
GALE	9d20 miles	8d20 miles
STORM	1d100 miles in random direction	

The advantage of a longboat, of course, is that it can use its oars if the wind is low. Cogs also carry oars, but too few to do much more than scull them along when becalmed. A full day's rowing is not feasible unless one has tireless undead or automata to man the oars.

## DISTANCE COVERED UNDER OAR IN 12 HOURS

<i>Longship</i>	<i>Cog</i>
60 miles	5-10 miles

Rowing in a storm is not possible in a cog. A longship may use its oars during a storm to try and hold its position; it is then blown only 3d20 miles in a random direction. This is only possible for the first day of the storm.

Storms

A storm at sea is one of the worst dangers a ship can face. Longships are particularly prone to storm damage and will usually head for land if the captain thinks a storm is brewing.<sup>1</sup> The GamesMaster checks for this by making the d6 roll for the next day's wind (see above) and then making a d20 *Intelligence* roll on behalf of the captain. If the d20 roll is less than the captain's *Intelligence* he has correctly forecast a change in the wind up to four hours before it actually occurs.

The chance of a ship taking damage during a storm depends on the ship type and on how long the storm continues:

CHANCE OF STORM DAMAGE

	<i>1st day</i>	<i>2nd day</i>	<i>3rd day on</i>
Longship	20%	30%	45%
Cog	10%	15%	20%

Make the percentile check each day. Once the ship sustains damage, its chances of taking further damage are increased by 5% until repairs are made.

The first time a ship takes damage it loses 1d6 Ship Points. (These are the vessel's equivalent of Health Points and are listed above for various ship types.) If damaged again before making repairs, it loses a further 2d6 Ship Points each time. A damaged ship should be repaired without delay - 'a stitch in time ...' etc.

<i>Ship Points lost</i>	<i>Result(s)</i>
up to 4	Ship requires light repairs which can be carried out while under way. Repairs restore 1-2 SP per day.

1 Except in the case of landward winds, when the prudent captain heads out into the open sea.

5-8 More serious damage. The ship must be beached before repairs can take place, and these will restore 1-3 SP each day. Once remaining repairs are reduced to 4 lost SP or less, ship can be relaunched - or repairs can continue at this rate until fully seaworthy again.

9-14 Very serious damage. Ship has a 25% chance of foundering each day it remains at sea. Movement is reduced to half normal. Once in harbour, the ship can be repaired at the rate of 1 SP every two days until 8 or fewer SP remain, to be repaired.

15-17 Heavy damage. Sails, rigging and mast are destroyed and oared progress is slowed to 1d6 miles per day. Ship has a 75% chance of foundering each day.

Notwithstanding these damage ratings, a ship always breaks up and sinks immediately if its Ship Points score is reduced to zero. Characters who roll under their *Reflexes* on d20 have clung to a piece of wreckage; others drown.

*Lost at sea*

Getting lost is something best left to the GamesMaster. It should be used as part of his planned gaming session rather than featuring as a regular hazard. Note, however, that travellers blown off-course by a storm will not know exactly how far it has moved them - they will have to estimate their new position based on the direction in which the wind was blowing.

Navigation is usually just a matter of following the

coastline. Other indicators of position are the sun, the Pole Star and the 'Ghosts of the Magi' (five small heavenly bodies that orbit low and quickly around Legend). If there is a fog (which is again a matter left to the GamesMaster's whim) such navigation may not be possible. This is the time when sailors seize their crucifixes and pray that Fate will not hurl them onto the Stranded Isles, the Reefs of Moganstruder, the Atoll of Gargana the Beautiful, or a dozen other notorious hazards.

*Undermanning*

A ship can function with a reduced crew. At crew levels down to 50% of the optimums given above, the ship will still be able to move at half-speed; the chance of taking damage in a storm increases by +10% . If the crew is depleted even further, the ship will only be able to scull along at about 10 miles a day. The chance of taking storm damage is doubled.

Ships' crew may suffer attrition owing to storms (at the GamesMaster's discretion) and sea monsters. This is more likely to affect the ordinary seamen than their officers, who are careful to avoid unnecessary risk.

**Encounters at sea**

Two distinct encounter areas may be defined for sea travel. Charted waters includes the Coradian Sea and the trade routes up along both coasts of Ellesland and at least halfway up the Mercanian coast - and down the Gulf of Marazid to the Isis estuary. Uncharted waters are all other regions: the Hadran Sea, the navigable stretches of the Rymchaeld Sea, the endless Silent Sea south-east of Minj, etc. These are parts of the ocean where trading vessels venture rarely - and never willingly.

Ships will be sighted at a distance of roughly two miles on a clear day. At 150 metres it is possible to make out the details of flags and blazoning. At night the

sighting distance is no more than a mile at best - and that only in strong moonlight or if the other vessel unshutters her lamps. Dense fog brings visibility down to between 5-50 metres.

Type: CHARTED WATERS

*Chance of encounter:* 20%, check at dawn and dusk

d100	Encounter
	Ship -
01-36	Merchant vessel
37-43	Soldiers
44-55	Crusaders
56-63	Pilgrims
64-66	Adventurers
67	Wizard
68-69	Gorgons
70-71	Ghouls (only off Ta'ashim coasts)
72-75	Blue Men (only in northern seas)
76-79	Priests
80	Nobles
81-90	Pirates
91-95	Kappa (20-50)
96-99	Castaways
oo	Sea Monster

A merchant vessel will probably be a cog, perhaps (45% chance) in a flotilla with 1-4 other ships. Its cargo will be worth some 1000 to 10,000 Florins in one form or another. Grander treasures can be transported, but always in convoys with a longboat escort.

Crusader ships can be an incredible sight. Some are gigantic - built to carry a thousand men! - and they are always crammed to the gunwhales with eager Crusaders and wretched animals.

Adventurers are determined using Book One, p 75; but discount rolls of 50 or less and reroll (low-ranking adventurers rarely put to sea). As on the player-characters' own ship, there will probably be a party of perhaps six adventurers and unranked characters will make up the crew.

The ship of a Wizard is taken in this context to indicate a magic-user of 9th rank or higher. By Profession he might be a Sorcerer, Mystic, Elementalists or Warlock. He may (30% chance) be accompanied by an accomplice of 1st-6th rank and half a dozen bodyguards (3rd-6th rank Knights). The balance of his crew will be ordinary, unranked humans.

A ship carrying Gorgons will probably hold 2-8 of these vile beings along with a crew of human slaves. A Ghoul ship, on the other hand, will be full of the creatures - perhaps as many as forty of them if (as is likely) it is a stolen Ta'ashim merchantman.

Priests travel with a bodyguard according to their station, though never fewer than two or three Knights of 1st-3rd rank. Similarly, nobles travel with a retinue of warriors - usually twenty or thirty men-at-arms, of whom ten will be Knights of 1st-4th rank or higher. Treasure carried in both cases will amount to 300-3000 Florins.

Naturally, pirate ships are never obvious about their intentions. They will show another flag or pretend to be in trouble until their prey draws near. Then they hurl grappling irons, pull in close to the enemy, and start to swarm aboard. Pirate ships are normally cogs carrying at least thirty men - and sometimes as many as a hundred. Pirates are unranked characters for the most part, though their leaders may be adventurers of any rank (see Book One, p 75).

If the GamesMaster needs to know the nationality of an encountered ship, he may use his own judgement or the following table:

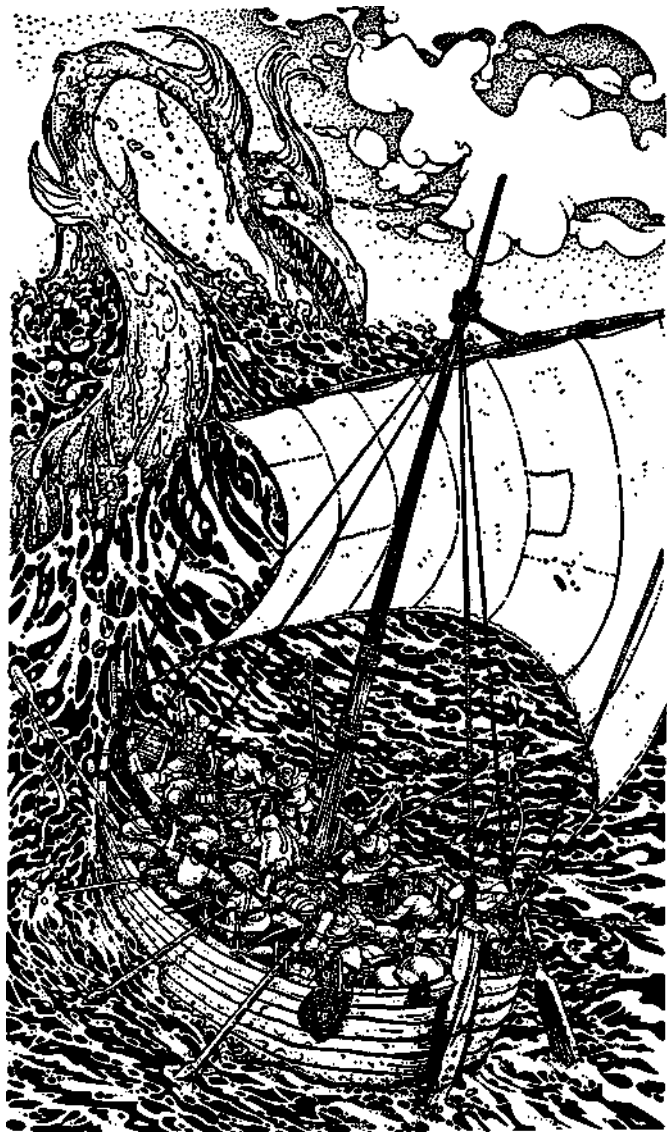
<i>d100 Roll</i>	<i>Nationality</i>
01-20	nearest country
21-30	Mercanian
31-35	Thulan
36-42	Albish
43-46	Cornumbrian
47-49	Erewornian

50-59	Chaubrettean
60-65	Algardian
66-70	Kurlish
71-85	Ferromaine League
86-90	NewSelentine
91-93	Marazid
94-95	Opalarian
96-00	Other

Castaways may be encountered on rafts or clinging to drifting timbers, adrift in open boats or stranded on small islands. The size of the castaway group is left to the GamesMaster. Castaways appearing as the result of a random encounter can make interesting NPCs - the GamesMaster must ask himself what they are doing here miles out to sea. Are they rival adventurers? Shipwrecked Crusaders? Are the three scruffy men with ragged beards actually Algardian royalty? Or Marijah Assassins using a novel disguise to meet and infiltrate the player-characters' party?

Kappa raiding parties rise straight up out of the depths, so there is usually no warning of their attack. They will clamber aboard, try to seize treasure and if possible inflict a few casualties in the process, then plunge back into the ocean when the tide of battle turns against them. Sailors hate these beings as one might expect, and even buy expensive stocks of 'St Elmo's Embrace' - a sticky, corrosive chemical mixture to fling at the Kappa which stings them and reacts violently with water.

Sea Monsters can have any size or fanciful shape the GamesMaster wishes. An 'average' Sea Monster (if there were such a thing) might have stats equivalent to a Dragon's - ATTACK 30, *Health Points* 70, etc; see Book One. Each attack of such a creature will have a 50% chance of inflicting 1 Ship Point damage on the hull.



Type: UNCHARTED WATERS

Chance of encounter: 15%, check once a day

d100	Encounter
	Ship -
01-02	Wizard
03 - 09	Volcreths (only south of Mungoda estuary)
10	Ghost Ship
11-12	Orcs
13	Skeleton Crew
14-17	Blue Men (only in Rymchaeld Sea)
18	Vampires
19-23	Adventurers
24	Automata
25	Other (GM's choice)
26 - 30	Spirits of the drowned
31-38	Water Elements (1 - 8)
39-43	Gryphons
44-45	Grave Gaunts (only off the Azure Coast)
46-55	Hellions
56-59	Jumbees (only when becalmed)
60-74	Kappa
75-76	Nightmare
77-80	Oni (southern and Oriental waters only)
81-91	Sentinel Crabs (3 - 30)
92	Sea Monster
93 - 94	Shen Lun (only in Oriental waters)
95-96	Island
97-00	Special (GM's choice)

Ghost ships are deserted hulks found drifting in the open sea. Often it is a complete mystery as to why the crew abandoned ship. A ship of this sort is not necessarily haunted. A ship with a *Skeleton Crew*, on the other hand, is inhabited by Skeletons or Zombies. Sometimes these creatures are surprisingly intelligent, and they may have magical powers. (An example is the infamous leman ship of the Gulf, crewed



by silent slaves and carrying a hundred voluptuous harem-girls as passengers. All of these become hideous flesh-eating undead once a group of poor sailors have been enticed aboard!) One unpleasant encounter in my own campaign involved an Eaves Phantom (see Book Four) which had arisen from the sunken wreck of a pirate ship and latched onto a passing merchantman. The player-characters' ship arrived on the scene to find the merchantman drifting in open seas, apparently deserted except for one wretched madman (formerly the ship's priest) crouched in the hold with a crucifix. The rest of the adventure became a grim cat-and-mouse hunt for the incarnate Eaves Phantom.

A ship of Vampires may have 1 - 3 of these beings on board. The crew will not always know about it - though they may be beginning to mutter about 'mysterious illnesses' or the strange wooden boxes in the hold. Sometimes Vampires of high rank (eg, Magus Lim of Krarth) have human servants whom they can use to man their ships.

Automata are occasionally found adrift in magically propelled barges built by the ancients. One, encountered by the ship carrying Cardinal Fustanor back to Selentium, spoke in a tinny voice and claimed to be the sage Diomakalas, having transferred his soul into a metal body to forestall death. The cardinal, pointing out to his men that this Diomakalas had been dead two thousand years, induced them to destroy the Automaton as an instrument of the Devil.

*The Spirits of the drowned* are raging, mindless, tattered shades that flit about the mast during storms, plucking at sailors in the rigging. They never make a concerted attack on the entire ship's company. The GamesMaster can use the stats for Ghosts, Wraiths or Spectres. *Jumbees* are creatures of cold grue and appear out of thick mists when a ship lies becalmed.

An encounter with flying creatures such as *Gryphons* or *Grave Gaunts* obviously indicates that there is land nearby, as larger beings cannot stay in

the air indefinitely. This does not hold true for Oni or Shen Lun, which fly by means of magic.

The GamesMaster should devise other encounters for variety. Many encounters are actually entire scenarios in themselves, or may turn out to be threads in the main adventure. Consider the possibility of one intriguing encounter: a figure appears on a flying steed and careens towards the deck. He lands just as the first rays of dawn touch the sky, and his hippogriff dissolves from under him. How does this Warlock come to be so far from land, using his Flying Steed spell dangerously near dawn? Was he in desperate pursuit of a mortal foe? Has he flown unsuspectingly through an Astral Gate - perhaps from the far side of the world? Did he take off from a ship that later sank (and if so, did he sink it)? Since he does not speak any tongue the player-characters recognize, the mystery will not be cleared up easily ...

### **The cost of sea travel**

The cost of buying a ship outright has already been given. Even with the means to do so, characters might prefer to charter the vessel for one specific journey - or merely to pay for their berth on a vessel going in the right direction.

Paying for a berth is possible for any voyage to a common destination. It is easy to find a trading ship that will be sailing from Breyllak to Ferromaine, say, and for an agreed sum the captain will probably take on a few passengers. Deck passage costs in the region of 50 Florins per hundred miles. This secures the passenger a small space barely 1m by 2m. He must bargain for food separately, or bring his own provisions, and is expected to muck in with the sailors when needed. Larger sums bring more comfort and privacy, of course. 200 Florins per hundred miles will likely induce the captain to make his own bunk available! Cogs usually have ample space for those

willing to pay their way. The captain of a longboat will expect travellers to work their passage - freeloaders are not appreciated, but of course the cost of the journey is considerably less (about 20 Florins per hundred miles).

When a large group wish to travel together, they must charter a boat between them. This is also necessary when one intends to travel to an uncharted or rarely visited area. The ship-owner will base his fee on the riskiness of the voyage. A journey to the mouth of the Mungoda River or beyond the Sultanate of Opalar to Minj might incur a 25% chance of disaster. The ship-owner doubles this (to be on the safe side) and thus charges 50% of his ship's total value as the charter fee. The wages of officers and crew must be paid in addition to this - and they will expect a 50% bonus as 'danger money'.



## 9 Masters of Swords and Sorcery

### A new adventuring Profession

Warlocks are fighter-mages. Their ability to use magic does not equal that of Sorcerer or Mystic, but this is counter-balanced by the Warlock's skill with weaponry. The skills gained by Warlocks of very high rank (8th and above) are similar to those available to Knights, though with a strong supernatural slant.

Human and Elven characters may belong to this Profession. Dwarves are excluded because of their inability to use magic.

### Minimum requirements

A character is only eligible for this Profession if he has an *Intelligence* score of at least 11 and a *Psychic Talent* score of at least 9.

### CHARACTER CREATION SUMMARY - Warlocks

- A. *Strength, Reflexes, Intelligence, Psychic Talent* and *Looks*: roll 3d6 for each (*Intelligence* must be at least 11; *Psychic Talent* must be at least 9.)
- B. *Health Points*: roll 1d6 + 5
- C. Basic ATTACK 12, DEFENCE 6
- D. Basic MAGICAL ATTACK 13, MAGICAL DEFENCE 4
- E. Basic EVASION 3
- F. Basic STEALTH 13, PERCEPTION 5
- G. Initially equipped with lantern, flint-and-tinder, backpack, bow, quiver with six arrows, dagger, chainmail armour, 2-20 Florins, two-

- handed sword or spear or sword and shield.  
H. Initial Magic Points: 2

## Weapon Groups

A good deal of the Warlock's time is spent studying magic. He does not have the hours of combat practice available to the other fighting Professions, and cannot be an expert in a whole range of weapons. Instead, he must confine his training to specific Weapon Groups. By specializing, he can hone his skills with the weapons of his choice until he is virtually the equal of a Knight or Barbarian.

At 1st rank, the Warlock is equally skilled in the use of all weapons. He only needs to specialize upon reaching 3rd rank, when the combat techniques he must use are beginning to get quite complex. At 3rd rank, he chooses two Weapon Groups from among the following:

<i>Weapon Group I</i>	<i>Weapon Group II</i>
Flail	Dagger
Mace	Shortsword
Morningstar	Sword
<i>Weapon Group III</i>	<i>Weapon Group IV</i>
Halberd	Two handed sword
Staff	
Spear	
<i>Weapon Group V</i>	<i>Weapon Group VI</i>
Battleaxe	Bow
<i>Weapon Group VII</i>	<i>Weapon Group VIII</i>
Crossbow	Cudgel
Javelin	Unarmed combat
Sling	
Thrown dagger, rock, etc	

When fighting with a weapon belonging to one of his chosen Weapon Groups, the Warlock uses his full

normal ATTACK and DEFENCE score. If obliged to fight with a weapon type that he is not familiar with, he suffers a penalty of - 2 from both ATTACK and DEFENCE.

The initial choice of Weapon Groups is not unalterable. If a Warlock who chose Groups III and VI at 3rd rank later wanted to switch the first of these to, say, Group IV (as he might do if he acquired a magical two handed sword) then he could do so. The switch-over from one group to another takes two months of game time; during this period the Warlock is proficient in neither group.

## Wearing armour

Warlocks, like Knights, can wear and fight in armour of any sort without incurring a Combat Factors penalty (see Book One, p 42). Also, armour does not impede a Warlock's spellcasting - in this respect, Warlocks have a definite advantage over Sorcerers and Mystics (Book Two, pp 18 and 54).

## Casting spells

A Warlock's magic operates just like a Sorcerer's (though the spells themselves are different). The Warlock can cast spells whose level does not exceed his rank, and in doing so he expends Magic Points equal to the spell's level. A Warlock has lower reserves of magical energy than a Sorcerer of the same rank, however:

<i>Warlock's rank</i>	<i>Magic Points score</i>
1st	2
2nd	4
3rd	6
4th	8
5th	10

6th	12
7th	14
8th	16
9th	18
10th	20 etc

Any expended Magic Points are replenished at sunset.

A Warlock's Magic Points are exactly equivalent to Sorcery Magic Points except where otherwise stated - ie, they are regenerated by a Potion of Replenishment, attenuated by a *Spell Screen*, etc, etc.

## Spell duration

Most durational spells available to Warlocks are subject to a Spell Expiry Roll (Book Two, pp 11-12). However, this differs from the usual kind of Spell Expiry Roll in that a d20 is used, and the spell wears off on a roll of 20. Warlock spells tend to be powerful but short-lived.

If the spell's duration is being determined on a minute-by-minute basis (rather than by a Spell Expiry Roll every Combat Round), the chance of it wearing off is 40%. That is, the player (or the GM, in the case of a non-player character) rolls d100 at the end of every minute that goes by: on a roll of 01 - 60 the spell is still going, on a roll of 61 -100 it wears off.

A Warlock can terminate his own durational spells before they wear off naturally. He must take a Combat Round to do this. If the spell is one which takes a Spell Expiry Roll, he gets back half the Magic Points (rounding down) that he used to cast it.

## Simultaneous casting

There are some spells that a Warlock is able to cast simultaneously as one action. These spells are marked with an asterisk on the spell list that follows. Assuming

that he has enough Magic Points, a Warlock can cast two of these asterisked spells in one Combat Round. This ability means that Warlocks can 'power up' for battle faster than the other magic-using Professions can.

## The spells

These are the spells available to Warlocks. A Warlock can only cast spells of levels up to and including his rank. It is possible to cast two of the asterisked spells simultaneously (if Magic Points allow).

### Spells of Level One

EYES OF NIGHT\*  
HEAL INJURY  
IMPERIL  
PERCEPTION OF  
SORCERY  
SILENT WARRIOR

### Spells of Level Two

CAMOUFLAGE  
FEARLESSNESS\*  
FORTUNE  
  
INQUIRY  
WARNING

### Spells of Level Three

DECEIT  
ENHANCEMENT\*  
HAVOK  
ILLUSION  
TELEKINESIS

### Spells of Level Four

AEGIS\*  
NEUTRALIZE TOXIN  
ORACLE  
TURNCOAT  
VITALITY

### Spells of Level Five

FORCE OF WILL\*  
HELLFIRE  
SLOW  
SOULBANE  
TERMINATE  
ENCHANTMENT

### Spells of Level Six

ANNIHILATE  
LUNACY  
PANOPLY\*  
SIGIL OF DESTINY  
  
VAPORIZE

### Spells of Level Seven

NEMESIS  
PACIFY

### Spells of Level Eight

DEMON PATH  
ENERGY BOLT

RUNIC WEAPON\*  
SPELL SCREEN  
THE TRICKSTER'S  
HAND

GAUNTLET  
KILLING FRENZY\*  
  
REINCARNATE

Spells of Level Nine  
FLYING STEED  
INVULNERABILITY  
SIMULACRUM  
SONG OF BATTLE\*  
TELEPORT

## **WARLOCK SPELLS OF LEVEL ONE** (1 Magic Point to cast)

### **W1-1 Eyes of Night**

Durational - lasts for ten minutes

The Warlock's eyes glow brightly, casting a beam of red light to a distance of 20m. This enables him to see perfectly even in utter darkness, and by looking at something he can illuminate it so that his companions can see it. Use of this spell temporarily reduces the Warlock's STEALTH score by 2 and negates any chance of surprising his enemies.

### **W1-2 Heal Injury**

Range: touch

The caster can use this spell to recover 1d4 HP when wounded. Alternatively, he can use it to threaten an injured comrade. The spell cannot bring a character back from the dead (- 3 HP or more), nor increase a character's Health Points above his normal score.

### **W1-3 Imperil**

Match caster's MAGICAL ATTACK vs  
target's MAGICAL DEFENCE

Range: touch

Durational - d20 Spell Expiry Roll applies

For this spell to take effect, the Warlock must touch the intended victim within one Combat Round of casting - that is, his next action after casting the Imperil spell must be a successful hit either with his hand or a melee weapon. If his Hit Roll fails, the spell is wasted. The spell will pass through clothing and armour, however, and does not depend on a successful Armour Bypass Roll. If it takes effect, the victim is rendered more vulnerable to wounds. Any wound he takes from a *melee* weapon (ie, swords, spears, etc, but not arrows or crossbow bolts) while the spell lasts will be for 1 Health Point more than usual. A character under this spell thus takes 5 HP damage from a normal sword-blow, 7 HP from a battleaxe and so on.

### **W1-4 Perception of Sorcery**

Durational - d20 Spell Expiry Roll applies

This spell enables the Warlock to sense magic within a range of 3m. By concentrating on an object or being, he may be able to determine whether it is enchanted or under the effect of a spell. He is not able to determine anything about the nature or strength of the spell. Perception of Sorcery is not infallible; a d20 roll is made (by the GM) for each object/person scrutinized, and the Warlock only senses any spells present if the roll is under his Psychic Talent score. (Having got a negative result, successive examinations of the same object/person will continue to yield the same result unless a spell is later cast on it - cf Sixth Sense, Book Two, p 71). The Warlock must take a full Combat Round for each object or being he wishes to investigate using this spell.

### **W1-5 Silent Warrior**

Range: 5m

Durational - lasts one Combat Round

A phantasmal warrior is created to strike at one of the caster's enemies, or perform some other action taking no more than one Round. The Silent Warrior cannot be harmed, but he can be dispelled by means of a Ring of Negation, *Dispel Magic* or *Terminate Enchantment* if there is time to do this before he attacks. He strikes at the end of the Combat Round in which he was created; his ATTACK score is 18 and his greatsword is a d10, 5 weapon. After this single blow, he fades out of existence.

## **WARLOCK SPELLS OF LEVEL TWO** (2 Magic Points to cast)

### **W2-1 Camouflage**

Durational - d20 *Spell* Expiry Roll applies

This spell enables the caster to blend in with whatever he is standing against, covering him with the illusion of a stone wall, a hedgerow, an open field or whatever. He adds +2 to his STEALTH score and suffers no STEALTH penalty for lack of cover (see Book Four, p 33). However, he only gains these benefits when more than 5m from his enemies - at closer ranges, the *Camouflage* spell is ineffective.

### **W2-2 Fearlessness**

Durational - d20 *Spell* Expiry Roll applies

While under this spell, the Warlock cannot be affected by *fright attacks*. The spell prevents him from experiencing the emotion of fear. It does not turn him into a berserker. Low-ranking characters are apt to become a little reckless when using the spell, but more experienced Warlocks will be accustomed to its effects and should be better able to distinguish between lack of fear and lack of caution.

### **W2-3 Fortune**

Durational - d20 *Spell* Expiry Roll applies

This is an all-purpose 'good luck' charm. It enhances the Warlock's chance of success in anything he attempts. In game-terms, he may add or subtract 1 from any dice roll he makes - but he can only apply this modifier to one dice roll in any given Combat Round. That means that he could increase his chance of hitting an opponent, say, but he could not also increase the chance of the same blow striking through armour. He must declare when he is taking advantage of the spell's effect before making the roll. The spell also may be used to influence rolls made by the GM on the player's behalf. It cannot influence rolls made by other characters (eg, a Hit Roll made by the Warlock's opponent). The Fortune spell itself is excluded from its effect; the caster cannot use it to influence its own *Spell* Expiry Rolls.

### **W2-4 Inquiry**

This spell enables the caster to assess instantaneously all characters within a radius of 15m to determine whether they are protected by some defence (such as *Spell Screen* or *Wall of Magic*) which shields against direct-attack spells. The caster may also be able to determine the strength of such defences. The chance of doing this is rank x 20%: the GM rolls d100, and if the score is less than or equal to the Warlock's rank x 20 then he is told the strength of the magical defences. If the roll fails (and a 96-100 is always counted as a failure in this case) then the GM gives a misleading result within  $\pm 1d8$  Magic Points of the defence's actual strength. Inquiry does not distinguish between the various types of direct-attack shields, it merely informs its caster of the total Magic Points (spell-levels, in the case of a Mystic) that could be blocked by the shields at the instant of probing (A *Spell Screen* cannot be distinguished from a 5-MP *Wall of Magic*, for example.)

## W2-5 **Warning**

Durational - d20 Spell Expiry Roll applies

A small bell, apparently fashioned of red gold, appears in the air behind the caster and floats noiselessly along within him when he moves. Being ethereal, it cannot be seized out of the air or separated from the caster by any means. Its function is to produce a warning clangour if he is about to be attacked, thus negating any chance of surprise or shock attack against him.

## WARLOCK SPELLS OF LEVEL THREE (3 Magic Points to cast)

### W3-1 **Deceit**

Range: touch

Durational - lasts one day

The Warlock can apply this spell to a character (including himself) or object so that detection spells will obtain a false reading. He could, for example, apply it to an enchanted talisman so that it would register as nonmagical under a Detect Aura, or use it to make himself appear more or less powerful than he really is to a Mystic using the Assessment spell. The spells and abilities which may be fooled by Deceit are: ESP and Premonition, *Detect Aura* and *Oracle*, *See Enchantment* and *Assessment*, *Perception of Sorcery* and *Warning*. The spell always works against characters whose rank does not exceed the Warlock's. More experienced magic-users have a chance (20% per rank higher than the Warlock's) of realizing they are being deceived.

### W3-2 **Enhancement**

Durational - d20 Spell Expiry Roll applies

This spell temporarily increases the Warlock's *Strength* and *Reflexes*: if the characteristic is 17 or less

it increases to 18, if it is normally 18 it increases to 19. After the spell wears off, both characteristics are depleted 1 point below their normal scores until sunset. The Warlock can go on to use this spell a second and third time, etc, in the same day - but each use depletes the normal characteristic scores by a further point, and he must not reduce either score below 1.

### W3-3 **Havok**

Match spell's SPEED of 14 vs  
target's EVASION

Range: 12m

This releases a glittering wave of energy that engulfs a single being; according to legend, it is sometimes possible to glimpse a giant ghostly hawk within the light of the blast. If it hits its target, the spell inflicts 3d10 HP damage. The damage roll is reduced by the target's Armour Factor (if any).

### W3-4 **Illusion**

Range: 20m

Durational - d20 Spell Expiry Roll applies

Except for the different Spell Expiry probability, this is identical to the Sorcery spell of the same name. An illusion of up to 2 cubic metres volume can be created, and even if examined closely there is only a 5 % chance of distinguishing it from reality. An illusory sentry thus looks and sounds just like a real person, and even feels solid to the touch. It can made to seem to attack someone who believes it and (although it is illusory and therefore not able to actually harm him) its sword will make a convincing clang and give off a shower of illusory sparks when it strikes his own.

The Illusion can be cast onto a character (including the caster] in order to give a near-perfect disguise, with the single limitation that the Illusion must be equal in at least one linear measurement to the size of the thing it is covering.

### W3-5 **Telekinesis**

Range: 25m

Durational - d20 Spell Expiry Roll applies

This is the same as the Mystic spell (Book Two, p 60). The caster can lift and move an object weighing up to 500 grams (1 lb) without touching it. Telekinesis does not move an object with any great speed or force - a missile would have a SPEED of 8; a dagger or cudgel could be wielded at half the caster's normal ATTACK, but would inflict only 2 HP on a successful hit.

## **WARLOCK SPELLS OF LEVEL FOUR** (4 Magic Points to cast)

### W4-1 **Aegis**

Durational - d20 Spell Expiry Roll applies

The Aegis spell provides the Warlock with a magical protection which takes effect when he is about to be struck by a weapon (whether in melee or by an arrow, etc) or by an indirect-effect spell (see Book Two, p 12). He rolls d6, and on a roll of 1 the attack is negated.

### W4-2 **Neutralize Toxin**

Range: touch

Durational - d20 Spell Expiry Roll applies

This spell may be applied to the caster or to one of his companions. While it is in effect, poisons that enter the character's body are immediately neutralized. Note that if the spell is cast on a character *after* he has been poisoned then it will prevent him taking any further damage, but will not restore any Health Points already lost.

### W4-3 **Oracle**

Durational - lasts for one minute

This duplicates the Sorcerer's ability to contact the spirit Plane and put questions to its denizens. Three yes/no questions may be asked within the one minute the spell lasts, and there is a 75% chance that the spirits will know the answer. If they do not know, they will answer randomly, and will also do this if the question is phrased ambiguously. Questions which concern the future or a character's secret thoughts will not be answered - the spirits speak only of tangibles, not speculations and fancies.

(It is quite important for the GM to time a player-character who uses this spell. Players should not be allowed to look at a watch, as accurate time-keeping devices are very rare in the medieval world of Legend.)

### W4-4 **Turncoat**

Matchcaster's MAGICAL ATTACK vs  
target's MAGICAL DEFENCE

Range: 5m

Durational - d20 Spell Expiry Roll applies

If successful, this spell causes a single enemy of the caster's party to switch sides and attack his own comrades. It can only be cast once a fight is in progress, and has no effect on a lone foe (ie, one who has no comrades to turn against). An affected character does not lose his hostility to the caster - if and when he has slain all his own companions, he will resume his attack on the caster's party even if the spell is still operating.

### W4-5 **Vitality**

This restorative spell has the effect of adding up to 12 HP to the Warlock's Health Points score when he is injured. It will not take him above his normal (unwounded) Health Points score, of course. Vitality can only be used to heal the Warlock himself; it has no effect on another character.



## WARLOCK SPELLS OF LEVEL FIVE (5 Magic Points to cast)

### W5-1 Force of Will

Durational - d20 Spell Expiry Roll applies

This spell gives the Warlock the ability to completely ignore pain, allowing him to stay in combat until virtually hacked apart if need be. He does not black out on reaching 0 HP and must be reduced to - 20 HP in order to kill him. Under the effect of this spell it is thus possible to endure terrible wounds and then use *Vitality* or *Heal Injury* to restore oneself before the spell wears off. Of course, if the *Force of Will* spell should expire when the Warlock's HP score is - 3 or less, then he dies at once.

### W5-2 Hellfire

Match caster's MAGICAL ATTACK vs  
target's MAGICAL DEFENCE

Range: 15m

Durational - lasts until dispelled or flames  
are put out

A character or creature who succumbs to this spell immediately bursts into flames. He takes 3d6 HP damage every Round until the *Hellfire* is extinguished. Armour gives no protection (it is actually the victim's body that is burning), and nonmagical armour will be gradually burnt away by the flames, losing 1 from its Armour Factor each Round. The *Hellfire* can be countered with *Dispel Magic* or *Terminate Enchantment* or the flames can be beaten out. This requires a roll of 6 on d6, but before attempting this each Round the victim must first roll equal to or under his rank on d8. Failure means that he starts to panic and can do nothing to save himself. Comrades can also try to put out the flames by pouring on water, smothering them with a cloak or whatever; each character attempting this rolls d6 and, as before, the flames go out on a roll of



6. Helping in this way is risky, though, because any character within 2m of the victim suffers 1d6 HP burn damage every Round (in this case less Armour Factor, if any).

**W5-3 Slow**

Match caster's MAGICAL ATTACK vs  
targets' MAGICAL DEFENCE

Range: 12m

Durational - d20 Spell Expiry Roll applies

This causes 1-8 beings to move and think at half normal speed. *Slowed* beings only get to act in alternate Combat Rounds. Unless he has a higher *Reflexes* than the Warlock and has thus acted already, an affected character loses his action (Book One, p 43} for the Combat Round in which the spell is cast.

**W5-4 Soulbane**

Match spell's SPEED of 17 vs  
target's EVASION

Range: 15m

With this spell the Warlock can fling a tendril of black fire that burns the psychic essence of the one it strikes. The effect of the spell is to reduce the target's MAGICAL ATTACK (if any) and MAGICAL DEFENCE by 2d8 points. If the target is wearing enchanted armour then he can reduce the dice roll(s) by the armour's magic bonus. Neither score will be reduced below 0, and depleted scores recover at the rate of 1 point every Combat Round. Note that this is an indirect-effect spell and is not impeded by *Wall of Magic*, *Spell Screen*, etc.

**W5-5 Terminate Enchantment**

Range: 5m

*Terminate Enchantment* dispels a single durational spell. As with *Dispel Magic*, it does not affect spells which were cast with more Magic Points than itself. If

he directs it at a character who is under more than one durational spell, the Warlock must specify which spell he is trying to terminate - if he does not, the GM determines randomly which spell is affected.

**WARLOCK SPELLS OF LEVEL SIX (6 Magic Points to cast)**

**W6-1 Annihilate**

Matchcaster'sMAGICALATTACKvs  
target'sMAGICALDEFENCE

Range: 15m

This silent spell affects a single being of up to 8th rank (or rank-equivalent). The victim is utterly destroyed and cannot be restored to life by any known means.

(Special note: If a player-character or important NPC should fall prey to an Annihilate spell, the GM may allow the other player-characters to discover some way to bring him back to life. This should not be an easy task - *Divination* or another magical source might reveal that they can recover his soul only by travelling to another Plane of reality or even venturing into Hell! Retrieving his body would then be another task; quite possibly his original body would turn out to be lost forever, and his only hope would be for the soul to be bound into the body of the Warlock who slew him. The idea is that Annihilate is a very deadly spell but it should generally be possible for the player-characters to achieve even an 'impossible' task if they are prepared to persevere with the arduous quest it entails.)

**W6-2 Lunacy**

Match spell's *fright attack* intensity of 21  
vs target's rank

Range: 2m

This baleful conjuration can only be employed

outdoors when the moon is in the night sky. It causes the Warlock's eyes to fill for a moment with the cold, deranging gleam of moonlight. A character facing him in close combat at that moment has an 80% chance of looking straight into his eyes, and if this happens the character is subject to a *fright attack* of intensity 21. This is like a Ghost's *fright attack* (see Book One, p 91), but instead of killing the character it drives him into a state of hopeless insanity. He becomes a mewling half-wit who can do no more than grin at the Warlock and gurggle unintelligibly.

There is a drawback to this spell. In the Round he casts it, the Warlock is blinded and consequently at - 8 DEFENCE.

#### W6-3 **Panoply**

Durational - d20 Spell Expiry Roll applies

An invisible force surrounds and protects the Warlock, giving him a + 2 bonus to his Armour Factor. If he is wearing chainmail, for instance, he gets a total AF of 6 as long as the spell lasts.

#### W6-4 **Sigil of Destiny**

Durational - lasts one day

To use this spell, the Warlock predicts something that might befall him or one of his companions in the next twenty-four hours and 'seals' his prediction with the *Sigil of Destiny*. The idea is that by making this prediction he prevents it from coming true. The prediction usually concerns a fatality ('I will be killed by a sword-blow' or 'Sir Cuthbert will slip while climbing and die from the fall'), though the Warlock can predict a non-fatal occurrence if he wishes (eg, 'I will be wounded by a sword-blow'). If the occurrence should happen as predicted within twenty-four hours, the *Sigil* is activated and cancels out the effect.

For example, suppose the Warlock predicted that he would be slain by a Dragon and this in fact happens. The last fatal wound is immediately negated as if it had

never happened and combat proceeds - no doubt with the Dragon wondering why its fiery breath didn't leave so much as a scorch mark on the armour of this Warlock.

The following limitations apply to the *Sigil of Destiny*. The prediction must indicate death wounding/incapacitation by

- (i) a WEAPON - the weapon type must be specified (eg, sword, spear, etc); the effect of the Sigil will be to negate the crucial wound;
- (ii) a CREATURE - any species other than human; in this case the weapon (if any does not need to be specified;
- (iii) a SPELL - the spell level and attack mode (direct or indirect) must be specified; the Sigil prevents it from affecting the protected character;
- or (iv) as a result of a failed roll on *Reflexes* Strength (includes poisons) or *Intelligence* - the characteristic involved must be specified; the Sigil allows the character to take the roll again, this time with automatic success.

The prediction must relate to a single character, and only that character can be saved by the Sigil's effect. Each casting of this spell is good for only one 'extra life' and is then used up - eg, you cannot predict taking a wound from a Skeleton and thus acquire total invincibility against every Skeleton you encounter while exploring the Labyrinth of Aktrium. The spell only covers effects that are direct, instant and obvious. Consider a Warlock who, having predicted death from a sword-blow, is struck a non-fatal wound with a sword. The sword happens to be coated in a slow acting poison from which he dies several hours later. The sword may be said to have brought about in death, but only indirectly (it was actually the poison

that killed him). The Sigil would not come into effect in this case.

#### W6-5 **Vaporize**

Durational - d20 Spell Expiry Roll applies

The caster changes into a cloud of reddish mist. In this form he is immune to normal (nonmagical) weapons and to indirect-attack spells such as Energy Bolt. He can drift along at a rate of 3m per Combat Round and seep through even the smallest cracks, so only hermetic obstacles like Bastion can bar his way. While in vapour-form the Warlock cannot cast spells, though durational spells that he cast beforehand continue to operate.

### WARLOCK SPELLS OF LEVEL SEVEN (7 Magic Points to cast)

#### W7-1 **Nemesis**

Durational - d20 Spell Expiry Roll applies

In casting this spell, the Warlock selects a character within 15m. The spell increases the effectiveness of any attack he makes on the specified character: he can adjust his Hit Rolls, Armour Bypass Rolls and damage scores against the character by 3 points each. Any spells he casts at the character gain a bonus of +3 to SPEED or MAGICAL ATTACK (whichever is applicable), and if the spell is one which inflicts damage on its target then the damage amount is increased by 3 points. If the Warlock can slay his chosen foe while the Nemesis spell lasts, he gets twice the regular experience points award (Book One, p 52) - but if the foe is killed by someone else, or is still alive when the spell wears off, the Warlock immediately *loses* 1d10 experience points.

#### W7-2 **Pacify**

Matchcaster's MAGICAL ATTACK vs targets' MAGICAL DEFENCE

Range: 15m

Durational - d20 Spell Expiry Roll applies

This causes up to 12 (roll 2d6) beings to cease hostilities against the caster. They will still be able to attack the caster's allies, but can take no action which might harm him. *Pacify* is not an *Enthrall* spell. Affected characters do not become friendly to the caster, they merely acquire a mental block that prevents them from attacking him. If the Warlock attacks a character he has *Pacified*, that character snaps out of the spell immediately.

#### W7-3 **Runic Weapon**

Durational - d20 Spell Expiry Roll applies

A magical weapon appears in the caster's hand or in the hand of a specified character within 12m. This weapon is the colour of blood and shimmers with a strange golden light. It must belong to one of the caster's chosen Weapon Groups (p 184), so a Warlock who specialized in the use of battleaxe and bow could not use the spell to create a magic sword. The *Runic Weapon* is +3 (see Book Two, p 84) and unlike a *Vorpal Blade* it can be put down or freely handed to another character.

#### W7-4 **Spell Screen**

Durational - d20 Spell Expiry Roll applies

Other than its shorter average duration, this is the same as the 7th level Sorcery spell. The Spell Screen protects its caster from direct-attack spells by reducing any spell cast at him by 5 Magic Points. It does not affect spells cast by the Warlock himself.

A spell which gets through the Screen with reduced strength may still affect the Warlock, but its effective

MAGICAL ATTACK against him is reduced by the difference between the spell's Level and the number of Magic Points remaining in it.

#### **W7-5 The Trickster's Hand**

Range: touch

Durational - d20 Spell Expiry Roll applies

With this spell, the Warlock surrounds himself (or one companion on whom he places the spell) with a magical defence against missiles such as arrows or thrown rocks. Enchanted missiles that are shot at him simply drop out of the air at a distance of 3m. Nonmagical missiles are more spectacularly affected: when such a missile gets to within 3m of the protected character, it stops in mid-air as though seized by an invisible hand. Suddenly it reverses and flies back towards the person who shot it. The attacker is thus hit unerringly by his own missile, which penetrates armour in the normal way (ie, Armour Bypass Roll as usual) although it inflicts 1 less Health Point of damage than usual.

The spell defends only against missiles targeted at the protected character. An arrow, etc, shot past him at another character will be unimpeded even if it passes closer than 3m. Any missile weighing more than 20kg (for instance, the shot of a trebuchet or siege catapult) will pass through the spell-barrier without being stopped.

**WARLOCK SPELLS OF LEVEL EIGHT** (8 Magic Points to cast)

#### **W8-1 Demon Path**

Durational - lasts two minutes

This enables the Warlock literally to walk on air. The effect is accompanied by faint, glowing red 'stepping stones' that appear under the Warlock's foot with each step he takes and then fade as he passes on to the next.

He can move safely at normal walking speed, but if he tries to run or fight on the Demon Path he must roll under his *Reflexes* on d20 or fall to the ground below.

#### **W8-2 Energy Bolt**

Match spell's SPEED of 17 vs targets' EVASION

Range: 15m

A thunderous blast of scarlet energy rips through the air to strike 1-3 beings within 15m. If not dodged, the Energy Bolt inflicts 5d10 Health Points. This damage roll is reduced by the target's Armour Factor if any - a Basilisk (AF 2) would take only 5d10-2 HP, etc.

#### **W8-3 Gauntlet**

Durational - d20 Spell Expiry Roll applies

When this spell is cast, a disembodied gauntlet of glittering gold mail appears in the air within 6m of the Warlock. Gliding through the air at a speed of 24m per Combat Round, it will strike at the Warlock's foes or perform other actions for him such as opening chests, fetching items, etc. It can be given a weapon (including a Runic Weapon) or can attack with its metal talons (d10, 4). It has ATTACK 20, DEFENCE 18, Armour Factor 4, 12 *Health Points*, EVASION 8. It is not affected by direct-attack magic. If its *Health Points* score is reduced to zero it falls from the air and vanishes in a blaze of red flames.

#### **W8-4 Killing Frenzy**

Durational - d20 Spell Expiry Roll applies

While under the effect of this powerful combat spell, the Warlock is able to make two attacks every Combat Round. The first of these must be taken at the point in the Round when he would normally get his action (Book One, p 43) and the second at the very end of the Round. The Killing Frenzy allows only multiple weapon

attacks. If the Warlock does something else (casting a spell, moving, etc) instead of attacking with a weapon he does not get a second action in that Round. Furthermore, only attacks with a weapon in which the Warlock specializes (ie, which belongs to one of his chosen Weapon Groups) are affected.

#### W8-5 **Reincarnate**

Match caster's **MAGICAL ATTACK** vs  
target's **MAGICAL DEFENCE**

Range: touch

Durational - lasts until dispelled

With this spell, any character who has been slain during the previous seven days can be brought back to life in the body of another. The target of the spell (whose body forms the 'host' for the Reincarnated soul) must be quiescent - unconscious or drugged - for the spell to work. If the spell works, the target's body becomes possessed by the mind and soul of the slain character. *Looks*, *Strength* and *Reflexes* remain those of the host but in all other respects (skills, personality, memories, etc) the Reincarnated character is dominant. Unlike an Amulet of Soul Storing, this spell does not displace the original persona, which remains dormant within the body. In times of psychic stress (taken to be whenever the Reincarnated character has a direct-attack spell cast at him) the dormant 'host' persona may try to reassert possession of the body and suppress the 'intruder' persona. The Reincarnated character rolls 3d6, adds his rank, and subtracts the rank of the 'host'; he must roll the final total or less on 2d10 in order to retain dominance. If he fails the roll, the 'host' persona regains mastery of his own body - but the positions are merely reversed, the Reincarnated soul is not cast out but remains dormant within the body until banished by *Dispel Magic* or *Terminate Enchantment*.

The advantage of the *Reincarnate* spell is that it may be used to bring a character back from the dead even if



his original body is lost or totally destroyed. The disadvantages are twofold - first as explained above, and second that there is a small chance (5%) that the soul the caster places in the host body will not be the soul he intended. Reaching into the spirit world is like standing at the mouth of a vast dark cave and yelling for a friend lost within: someone - or something - else may come in answer to your call...

## **WARLOCK SPELLS OF LEVEL NINE (9 Magic Points to cast)**

### **W9-1 Flying Steed**

Durational - lasts three hours (maximum - see below)

This is a Warlock's equivalent of the Destrier spell (Book Two, p 40). It brings a flying Hippogriff to act as his steed for up to three hours. The spell can be cast only during the hours of night and terminates at sunrise if it has not expired before then. (This applies whether or not the sun's rays actually fall upon the Hippogriff). The spell also ends if the Warlock dismounts.

The Hippogriff is equine in form, but it has wide leathery wings, taloned feet, scales and a narrow, almost reptilian, head. Its scintillant golden eyes see equally well in darkness or light. It has ATTACK 20, DEFENCE 6, MAGICAL DEFENCE 10 and EVASION 6. In combat it will bite (d8 + 2,5) or claw (dl2, 6). Its tough scaly skin gives it an Armour Factor of 3 against nonmagical weapons (but AF0 vs enchanted weapons and indirect-attack spells). It has 20-30 *Health Points* (roll 2d6 + 18) and is 8th rank-equivalent. In flight it can cover more than 30 miles in an hour, and can track a quarry across open terrain with 70% efficiency.

### **W9-2 Invulnerability**

Durational - d20 Spell Expiry Roll applies

With this spell, the Warlock encloses himself and one companion inside an invisible barrier that is impervious to all spells, ring-effects, creatures, extremes of heat and cold, and all weapons (magical or not). Similarly, attacks of this sort cannot pass out of the sphere of effect. Only attacks such as hypnosis or *fright attacks*, which do not depend on anything passing through the force field, can affect those protected by this spell. Unlike an Impregnable Sphere (Book Two, p 68), Invulnerability allows the caster to move around - but only quite slowly: 5m/Round. Note that although the Invulnerability spell blocks spells cast at those within it, it can still be eliminated itself by Dispel Magic or Terminate Enchantment.

### **W9-3 Simulacrum**

Durational - d20 Spell Expiry Roll applies

The Warlock can create his own double. The Simulacrum has all of the original's normal stats - ATTACK, DEFENCE, Strength, Health Points, etc. That is, even if the caster's scores are enhanced or depleted for some reason (such as Nemesis, wounds, etc) the Simulacrum will only have his normal, unadjusted scores. The only exception is his Magic Points score; the Simulacrum will have the current MP score of the Warlock (after making the deduction for casting this spell). The weapons, armour and equipment of the Simulacrum will be nonmagical copies of those possessed by the original. The Warlock can see through his double's eyes (and vice versa) and it will obey his telepathic commands across any distance. Whenever the original or the double takes a wound, succumbs to a spell, etc, there is one chance in six that the other will suffer the same effect; this is indicated by a roll of 1 on d6.

It is possible to tell the Warlock and his Simulacrum

apart when both are seen together. The duplicate's face has a rather dusky cast and the colours of its robes and armour seem dull in comparison to the original. If it speaks, its voice sounds unnatural and distant. It forms from out of the original's shadow, and while the spell is in effect neither the Warlock nor his Simulacrum casts a shadow or reflects in a mirror.

#### W9-4 **Song of Battle**

Durational - d20 Spell Expiry Roll applies

*The Song of Battle* is an eerie cadence that transforms the Warlock into a ferocious berserker. His eyes begin to glow with a ruby fire and a fine tracery of red sparks covers his armour, accompanied by the stench of brimstone in the air. Intelligent creatures up to 2nd rank and animals up to 4th rank-equivalent have a 30% chance of fleeing in panic if he attacks. He becomes immune to direct-attack magic (*Fossilize*, *Pacify*, etc) and adds 1 to all Armour Bypass Rolls. He also gains + 8 ATTACK and + 4 DEFENCE. While this spell lasts, the Warlock cannot use any other magic.

#### W9-5 **Teleport**

This is identical to the Mystic spell of the same name. It enables the Warlock to transport himself instantaneously to somewhere within 100m. However, he can only teleport to a place which he can either see when he casts the spell, or where he has been before.

### **Other abilities of a Warlock**

Warlocks do not have access to the special skills of a Sorcerer. They cannot read magic scrolls. Nor can they prepare potions - though they can benefit from the effect of a potion, just like any other character. The same applies to magic rings and talismans.

Listed below are the eight talents available to Warlocks of advanced rank. As befits this Profession, 210

the talents are a combination of martial and magical skills. A Warlock selects one of these talents upon reaching 8th rank, then another at 9th rank and so on.

*Appraise Enemy*

*Arrow Cutting*

*Fight Blind*

*Unarmed Combat*

*Minor Enchantment (Weapons)*

*Minor Enchantment (Armour)*

*Major Enchantment (Weapons)*

*Major Enchantment (Armour)*

### **Appraise Enemy**

This skill enables the Warlock to determine the Profession (if any) and rank of a character just by watching him for a few moments. The GM rolls d20, and if the score is under the Warlock's *Psychic Talent* he informs him accurately of the character's Profession and rank. If the d20 roll fails, the GM derives a random result for the observed character's rank based on the average rank distribution (Book One, p 75) and gives his Profession as whatever seems most plausible. (Note that even without this skill it is usually easy to tell a Barbarian, say, from a Sorcerer!) Use of the skill takes one Combat Round for each character observed. It can only be used once on any given character - ie, the Warlock cannot double-check in case of a mistake the first time. Because this is a skill rather than a spell, it is not affected by Deceit or Mind Cloak. However, for the same reason it is affected by an Assassin's disguise skill, and an Assassin who disguises himself successfully will be able to fool the Warlock into thinking him to be some other rank and Profession.





## Arrow Cutting

This talent allows the Warlock to knock or catch arrows out of the air before they hit him! This calls for total concentration, so he cannot do it while spell-casting, in melee, etc. He is able to pit his DEFENCE score against the bowman's ATTACK. The Hit Roll is thus made as for normal melee combat, except that the usual range and visibility modifiers (Book One, p 39) still apply also. The Warlock will have to split his DEFENCE (Book One, p 42) if more than one arrow is shot at him in the same Combat Round. The Arrow Cutting skill can only be used if the Warlock can see his attacker; this is because he needs to see the release of the arrow to time his parry - he does not actually follow it in flight with his eye! Despite the name, this skill applies to all missile weapons (throwing stars, arrows, javelins, etc) except for crossbow bolts.

## Fight Blind

The Warlock acquires a kind of 'radar' sense. When fighting blind (in pitch darkness or against an invisible foe, for instance) he incurs a penalty of only - 2 ATTACK and - 4 DEFENCE. (This is only 50% of the usual penalty for fighting blind; see Book One, p 56.)

## Unarmed Combat

In order to select this skill, the Warlock must have chosen Weapon Group VIII as one of his fields of specialization. If he later switches to another Weapon Group, he loses the use of this skill. When fighting unarmed, the skill means that he uses a d6 for Armour Bypass Rolls and inflicts 3 HP damage on a successful blow.

## Minor Enchantment (Weapons)

This gives the Warlock the ability to forge enchanted weapons. There are three sub-levels to the Minor Enchantment skill: basic, advanced and master. The first time the Warlock chooses this skill it gives him the ability to produce + 1 magic weapons. He must wait until he gains another rank and then take the same skill a second time in order to reach the advanced level required for + 2 weapons. For master level (+ 3 weapons) he must take this skill three times. The time taken to create an enchanted weapon is given in Book Two (p 72). There is a 1 % chance that the weapon will turn out to be flawed.

## Minor Enchantment (Armour)

This is exactly the same as the previous skill except that it governs the construction of enchanted armour instead of weaponry.

## Major Enchantment (Weapons)

A Warlock is only able to take this skill when he has Minor Enchantment of Weapons at the master level. The skill enables him to produce three magic swords which are listed below. He can make only one of each type of sword in his lifetime, and each takes a year and a day to make.

These items must be swords of some form - a normal sword, shortsword, scimitar, two-handed sword or whatever. It is not possible to forge other types of weapon using this skill.

**Volcanic Sword** The wielder of this sword can cause its blade to glow white-hot or even burst into flame. This adds + 5 HP to the damage the weapon inflicts; eg, a Volcanic Shortsword becomes a (d8,8) weapon.

This applies only against creatures that can be affected by heat and/or fire. A Spectre, for instance, being ethereal, would only take damage as from a normal magic sword.

*Severblade* The edge of this sword is always razor-sharp. While fighting with it, a character uses d20 for Armour Bypass Rolls. The damage inflicted is as it would be for a normal sword.

*Vampire Sword* This sword leeches the life-energy of those it slays and channels it into its owner. If wounded, the wielder of the Vampire Sword gets back 3 HP for every living creature or character he kills with it.

The power listed above are the only magical powers these weapons possess. They cannot be imbued with magic bonuses (+ 1, etc) in addition to these powers.

### Major Enchantment (Armour)

A Warlock must have mastered the Minor Enchantment of Armour before he can acquire this skill. When he takes the skill, he must select one armour type from the three given below. He must take the skill a second time if he also wants to be able to make one of the other armour types.

All of these types of magic armour are plate. Like the special swords given above, they have no magic bonus; this means that they have an intrinsic Armour Factor of 5. Fashioning a suit of these armour types takes three years. There is a 1% chance that the armour will turn out to be flawed.

*Nullplate* This must be made with an alloy of silver which becomes jet-black in the process of forging. The armour must be studded with emeralds and jade, and the total cost is likely to approach 5000 Florins. Whoever wears the armour is protected at all times by a kind of low-power Spell Screen that

reduces any direct-attack spells cast at him by : Magic Points. This defence is not cumulative in effect with a regular Spell Screen - ie, if the wearer casts a Spell Screen then for the duration of the spell his total defence will stop 5 MPs, not 8 MPs.

*Herculean Armour* Made from an alloy of gold and decorated with rubies, topaz or fire opals, this armour is likely to cost some 4000 Florins. It has a reddish, coppery appearance when finished. The wearer has a Strength of 20 at all times, allowing him numerous advantages as set out in Book One (pp 35 and 69-70).

*Fortress Armour* An alloy of platinum produces a suit of armour that shimmers like quicksilver. Moreover it must be adorned with diamonds, and the total expense may be more than 8000 Florins. Probably it is worth the price, as it protects its wearer from all forms of destructive energy (a Dragon's fire, lightning bolts, and all indirect-attack spells that specifically inflict damage) by reducing the damage roll by 20 HP. Note that this renders the wearer completely immune to such things as the *Dragonbreath* spell and gives him considerable protection even against *Firestorm*, *Thunderclap*, *Energy Bolt*, etc. The armour gives no protection against direct-attack magic and, as stated above, it counts as normal plate (AF 5) against swords, arrows, etc.

### Stats for an average Warlock

Following the customary procedure in the DRAGON WARRIORS rulebooks, the scores below are for 'typical' Warlock whose *Strength*, *Reflexes*, *Intelligence* and *Psychic Talent* are all between 9 and 12 (ie the average range). The adjustments for characteristics outside this range are listed on page 32 of Book Four.



# 10 'Mungoda Gold' A DRAGON WARRIORS adventure

This is a more open-structured adventure than that have appeared in the earlier DRAGON WARRIORS books. It consists of a number of episodes - capsule scenarios - linked by a main storyline. An adventure of this sort requires an experienced Games Master and players who are capable of good role playing. A group in which the player-characters have reached 6th-8th rank (the appropriate rank for this adventure) ought to qualify.

By way of a general overview, the adventure involves a long sea voyage in the employ of Melano, a merchant who has staked everything he has on the venture. Unbeknown to the other characters, there is an Assassin among the crew and his aim is to see that Melano dies on this trip. The adventure will culminate with a mission that the player-characters must undertake in order for the trip to be a success. In doing so, they may find themselves up against a powerful group of NPC adventurers from the land of Khitai.

## I. IN FERROMAINE

### **An offer of employment**

The story begins in Ferromaine (or in another port on the shores of the Coradian Sea). The characters are approached by a servant representing Melano Fio rensca, a merchant-adventurer. The servant asked them to come to Melano's townhouse for lunch the following day.

The characters have the chance to make a few enquiries. For the price of a round of drinks they can

buy the common knowledge that Melano belongs to a cadet branch of the influential Senfriti family. By the standards of Coradian merchants he is not rich. If they want more information they must look further than the taprooms of Ferromaine. Other merchants and clerks will say that Melano squandered his inheritance on foolish ventures. This is the 'official line' among the well-to-do but the characters will get closer to the truth if they question sailors or longshoremen. Melano's career has been deliberately stifled by rivals in high places. His brisk demeanour and reluctance to bestow the usual inducements made him several enemies, and these enemies were not slow to take action when his business interests encroached on their own. Most of the traders of the city have been advised not to handle Melano's goods, and his warehouse was badly damaged by a fire.

There is a last bit of information. Melano has been out of town for the last eight months, and after his return recently he has cashed in all his remaining investments in order to buy and outfit a larger ship. He has hired an excellent crew and filled the hold with a bizarre miscellany of goods: porcelain, hides, wine, dyes - even longbows. Nobody can suggest exactly what he is up to, but it is obvious that this is to be some kind of last, desperate trading venture.

The characters will not be kept in suspense for long. Following the servant's directions they make their way to Melano's townhouse in the Brasenose Quarter, a somewhat shabbily genteel district of Ferromaine. The house is boarded up. Tentatively ringing the bell that hangs by the gate, the characters are startled to see a hunched form emerge from the front door and hobble down the path towards them. It is the servant they met the day before, and he is carrying a large haversack across his shoulders. He wrenches open the gate and motions them in, then plods testily past them into the street. 'My erstwhile master awaits you in the vestibule,' he snaps. He turns to go, then looks back as they approach the house. 'Be warned that he surely

has some harebrained scheme that can bring you only hardship and woe. He is so far bereft of his wits that he has lately dismissed an old and valued servant.'

The characters enter the house to find a tall man in his mid-thirties pacing restlessly around the vestibule. He wears scarlet hose, a thick overrobe bordered with miniver, an elegant peaked cap, and a doublet of black velvet with slashed sleeves showing a blaze of red silk beneath. The immediate impression is of a very successful Coradian businessman, though that image is hardly borne out by what they can see of the house: scuffed bare floorboards, dusty, devoid of furniture, with several cracked panels in the walls...

Melano (for it is he) notices them and steps forward. 'Greetings. I must apologize for this disarray - one of my minor residences, you understand. I intended my servant to bring you a message this morning suggesting we meet instead at a tavern, but obviously that message did not arrive.' He begins to usher the group towards the door. 'Come, let us go to Tacco Veruchi's, an excellent eating-house a few streets away ...'

Melano is making every effort to seem prosperous so that the characters will join his venture. The townhouse was rented, and Melano's rent is so far in arrears that his landlord sent some bully-boys around this morning to seize Melano's furniture and wardrobe. He has lost everything except the clothes on his back and his belongings already aboard his ship in the harbour. His servant continually urged Melano to abandon his plans, sell the ship and retire to the country. When he refused to have any more to do with the scheme - even to redirecting the characters to Tacco Veruchi's for the meeting - Melano dismissed him.

Once settled in a private room at the eating-house, Melano explains his proposition. He is planning a sea-voyage to the mouth of the Mungoda River to trade with the natives there. He has already made one trip and discovered that the natives were able to obtain large quantities of gold from other tribes upriver. He has

asked them to obtain more in expectation of his return, and has come back to Ferromaine to stock up on suitable goods for trading. He has only rough ideas of what kind of thing that Mungoda natives would want in exchange for their gold, but he is confident that the trip will make a bountiful profit. 'In exchange for a topaz-and-silver hatpin they gave me this...' He reaches into his belt-pouch and takes out a battered gold artifact as big as an egg. 'On that one transaction I made a profit of more than a thousand Matapans.' He tosses the artifact onto the table. 'A thousand Matapans - a hundred Crowns - now, to split between you. After our mission you will each receive another 500 Matapans for every month you have been in my service, and a twentieth part of the profits to share out. This is a considerable offer, I know, but I will expect you to earn it. On my last voyage I lost one of my two cogs to pirates and barely escaped with my life when I encountered a horde of lizard-men in the jungle. Persons of your reputation will ensure that trouble gives us a wide berth - or founders if it does not!'

## Melano's venture

There *is* an obstacle to Melano's schemes. Melano is not aware of it. The Knights Capellars are well-established throughout the lands of the True Faith as bankers and financiers. They have large stocks of gold, and as a consequence they would not like to see a sudden devaluation of that metal. That is exactly what would happen if Melano's trip were to prove successful. Melano's captain on the first trip informed the Capellars about it, and they are now preparing to dispatch an expedition of their own. This will not be a trading expedition, however; they intend to take the gold by force of arms.

Meanwhile, Melano must be eliminated. The Capellars would prefer not to risk any whiff of scandal in Ferromaine itself (they have ample political

problems already), so they have infiltrated an agent into the crew of Melano's ship. This fellow pretends to be from Emphidor but is in fact a Marijah Assassin - a group with whom the Capellars have quite cordial links. He will either sabotage the ship so that they have to put into Crescentium (where the Capellars can take direct action) or, if that fails, simply dispose of Melano quietly one night.

TAKANDER 'Emphidian sailor' (10th rank Marijan Assassin)

ATTACK 25

DEFENCE 17

MAGICAL DEFENCE 14

EVASION 9

STEALTH 28

Health Points 16

PERCEPTION 17

(*St* 15; *Rf* 16; *Int* 16; *Psy* 15; *Lks* 10)

Paraphernalia: Ankh of Osiris; Potion of Control; Sands of Slumber; nine throwing spikes (d2 + 1,2); five applications of Assassin's Lotion; six flash pellets; sword (d8 + 1,4); dagger (d4 + 1,3); other tools of trade.

Apart from the player-characters Melano and Takander, the ship's complement is as follows:

*Hieronymus Vant* the captain, a freeman of Asmulia; he is short and gruff, and runs a tight ship

*Fustian Worlo* pilot and first officer, also from Asmulia; he has sailed with Hieronymus for years and is a loyal friend

*Dialko Latumofis* the ship's doctor; he is from Ferromaine, a kindly, passionate man in early middle-age

*Akron Treefeller* the Mercanian helmsman, a tough red-bearded giant of a man with a fondness for strong liquor

*Tirant* of Baumersheim, the ship's chaplain; a priest is always useful on board ship to keep up the crew's morale, but Melano rather resents having

to pay the 70 Matapans a week that this idle pedant is costing him

There are also fourteen ordinary seamen (in addition to Takander) and a cabin-boy named Spruk.

Melano has chosen his men carefully. All (except Spruk and Dialko) are armed with swords and know how to use them. Treat them as equivalent to average 1st rank Knights (ATTACK 13, DEFENCE 7, 1d6 + 7 *Health Points*, etc - see Book One, p 149). Akron, when drunk, becomes absolutely fearless and should be treated as a 2nd rank Barbarian.

The ship is called *The Pantocrator's Fist*. She is a medium-sized cog, presently carrying an assortment of goods worth roughly 2500 Crowns on the Ferromaine market. Melano has chosen bulky, readily available goods that would be of little interest to thieves or pirates. There are four cabins: one of fair size for Melano himself, and smaller ones for the captain and for Dialko and Fustian (who double up). The fourth is a larger cabin which Melano intends to be shared by player-characters of higher class. It can hold up to three people comfortably, so any other player-characters must make do with a tarpaulined-off section of the crew's space below deck. Sleeping arrangements and watches are entirely the player-characters' own concern.

Spruk has a sleeping-mat in Melano's cabin. Player-characters may wonder at their relationship, but they would have no way of knowing that the lad is actually Melano's illegitimate son. Melano intends one day to acknowledge him as his heir, but in the meantime he keeps things secret so that Spruk does not inherit the enemies that he himself has acquired.



## II. THE JOURNEY

The journey from Ferromaine to the Mungoda estuary will probably take about two months. For most of the way the captain will stick close to the main trade routes, though with a weather eye for rival merchants who might decide to follow them. The GamesMaster can use the random encounter tables of Chapter Eight to liven up the tedium of a long sea voyage. In addition, the three 'Saturday Night Specials' below can be introduced at points along the way.

### Men of zeal

A huge cog appears on the horizon and gradually draws closer. The player-characters can hear whoops of delight as crowds of people appear on the deck. Amid all the confusion, several stern figures in white tabards try to induce some order among the passengers. As everyone crowds to the near rail to look at *The Pantocrator's Fist*, the ship lurches dangerously to one side because of the weight. One man stumbles over the side and is only saved by a burly, white-tabarded knight who seizes him by the collar and pulls him back. As player-characters would know from the eight-pointed indigo cross on their chests, the knights are of the Worshipful Order of St Wythan - the Knights Capellars, in other words. Fortunately, the particular Capellars in charge of this ship are not involved in the plot on Melano's life.

The commander of the Capellars signals that he wishes to come alongside and, receiving no objection from Hieronymus or Melano, soon brings his vessel within hailing distance. The name of this huge ship - which dwarves *The Pantocrator's Fist* - is clearly visible painted on her prow: *The Deliverance*. As before, you can paraphrase and extrapolate from the following:

*'Ahoy, Pantocrator's Fist!' cries the leader of the Knights. Tour ship has a God-fearing name.'*

*'We are God-fearing men,' shouts back Melano, introducing himself. 'We are out of Ferromaine and bound for Paru town, which is to be found upon the Mungoda.'*

*'An adventuresome mission indeed, good Melano. I am Runalf of Corvenna, lately Provincial Commander of the Knights Capellar in Braeburg. Now I am taking this horde of unlikely pilgrims to the Holy Land.' He gestures jovially at the crowds packing the deck, who reply with a spirited cheer. It is apparent that Runalf is a well-liked man. At this distance you can make out the faces of some of the other Capellars, however. They have the sour, uncompromising expressions that are more typical of the Order.*

Runalf bellows away goodnaturedly for another fifteen minutes or so. If any player-character shows an interest in the Crusaders' voyage he will invite them to join his ship. Naturally, Melano will want his money refunded if a character actually takes Runalf up on this offer! (If you wish, you could have one of the sailors on The Pantocrator's Fist suddenly 'see the light' and ask to go with the Crusaders. Melano will not be entirely happy about that, and it may lead to an interesting exchange depending on whose side the player-characters take.)

## **Erewornian pirates**

One day, shortly after dusk, an approaching ship is sighted in the fading twilight. The doleful sound of a drumbeat carries across the grey waves. Akron stares grimly out towards the longship and declares that it is a vessel of Ereworn. Unless anyone asks, he will not bother mentioning that he can identify it from the tempo of the drumbeat.

The longship swings into a broadside position at a distance of about 250 metres. It is a large vessel with two banks of rowers. Those on deck sit hunched over their oars, resting. At this distance it is possible to make out the shouted commands of the oarsmaster as he calls strokes to hold the ship's course. One bank of oars is enough to keep up with Melano's slow cog.

Two or three tall figures stride along the deck towards a tarpaulin. It is drawn back and the characters can now see that the Erewornian ship is equipped with a catapult. 'They are pirates, then ...' murmurs the captain, fingering the hilt of his sword.

They lose sight of the three figures - presumably the Erewornian officers - and then a strange, pale-green glow becomes visible in the cup of the catapult. A pirate scurries to release the catch. A green projectile is flung high into the air and begins to arc down towards The Pantocrator's Fist. From here you may wish to paraphrase the following:

*The crew scatter in all directions as the strange projectile descends. For a moment you think it is going to miss the deck, but then it veers in mid-air and falls with a slushy hiss. It looks like a huge ball of green snow, maybe, or else a very dense cloud of glowing vapour. You take a few steps forward, perplexed. The captain has ordered pails of water brought, thinking that the object was a lump of flaming pitch. But it gives off no heat or flames, just a billowing column of pale-green vapour.*

*Something is happening. The column of vapour rises higher, thickening. Something dark is visible inside the swirling cloud; three figures. A sudden gust of wind stirs the cloud and disperses it. As the tattered wisps drift away, three black-armoured warriors are revealed. They are swathed in cloaks of black and vermilion and stand in a circle, their hands resting on the pommels of their unsheathed swords. The tallest has long black hair with a single streak of silver. You draw your own swords as you see how his eyes blaze with malevolence ...*





These three are Ghulfang, Varun and Rashang, three Erewornian Warlocks. More accurately, they are Simulacra of the Warlocks, who remain on the safety of their own vessel while sending these magical twins to do their fighting. Their dramatic entrance was achieved by using a special spell they obtained from a Cabbandari manuscript, a spell which transforms its caster into a cloud of cohesive vapour. (Doubtless one of the ultra-powerful magics used at one time by the true magi of Krarth.) The cost of casting this and the Simulacra spells has already been deducted from the Magic Point scores given here.

**GHULFANG** 13th rank Warlock  
 ATTACK 25 Two-handed sword (d10, 5)  
 DEFENCE 20 Armour Factor 5  
 MAGICAL ATTACK 26 13 Magic Points  
 MAGICAL DEFENCE 17  
 EVASION 7 STEALTH 16  
 PERCEPTION 12

*Health Points 17*

(*St* 11; *Rf* 13; *Int* 18; *Psy* 11; *Lks* 13)

Skills: Appraise Enemy (roll d20 under *Psy* to determine opponent's rank and Profession); Arrow Cutting (can apply DEFENCE against arrow); Fight Blind (only loses 2 ATTACK and 4 DEFENCE when unable to see opponent); Unarmed Combat (d6, 3); Minor Enchantment of Weapons (advanced - can produce + 2 weaponry)

Weapon Groups: IV and VIII

Paraphernalia: Flask of Aitheron; (with the real Ghulfang on the longship: + 2 sword; +1 plate armour; Ring of Red Ruin - 5 charges)

The strategy of the attack is quite simple. Ghulfang's Simulacrum uses the Aitheron to create an Air Elemental which he commands to seize as much treasure as it can carry back to the longship. While it is doing this, the three Simulacra keep the crew busy. Ghulfang and his cronies are used to dealing with

ordinary sailors - who usually just stand and shiver after seeing the way this sinister trio come aboard! A fight with the player-characters will make them work for their loot, but the sailors will not join in until it is obvious that the Simulacra are going to lose.

VARUN 11th rank Warlock  
ATTACK 24 Two-handed sword (d10 + 1, 6)  
DEFENCE 17 Armour Factor 5  
MAGICAL ATTACK 24 9 Magic Points  
MAGICAL DEFENCE 15  
EVASION 5 STEALTH 15  
PERCEPTION 10

Health Points 12

(*St* 17; *Rf* 9; *Int* 12; *Psy* 14; *Lks* 9)

Skills: Minor and Major Enchantment of Weapons  
Weapon Groups: IV and VI

Paraphernalia: (all with the real Varun: Severblade;  
Amulet of Soul Storing; Ring of Sentinels - 1  
charge)

RASHANG 11th rank Warlock  
ATTACK 23 Two-handed sword (d10, 5)  
DEFENCE 16 Armour Factor 5  
MAGICAL ATTACK 25 9 Magic Points  
MAGICAL DEFENCE 16  
EVASION 6 STEALTH 15  
PERCEPTION 11

Health Points 14

(*St* 13; *Rf* 9; *Int* 14; *Psy* 16; *Lks* 7)

Skills: Minor and Major Enchantment of Armour  
Paraphernalia: (all with the real Rashang: +1  
sword; Nullplate; flask of Love Philtre; two flasks of  
Aitheron; Mephisto's Bow - a longbow whose  
arrows cast Curse on the target if they hit, at a cost  
of 1 MP to the user)

The GamesMaster should remember to check Spell  
Expiry for the Simulacra. Once the Air Elemental  
returns to the longship with some plunder from the

cog's hold, the Warlocks will break off the attack and  
dispel their Simulacra - unless they have spotted one  
of the player-characters using a particularly luscious  
magic item, in which case they will concentrate their  
attacks to kill him and then send in the Air Elemental to  
grab the item(s) in question.

The Warlocks will avoid ship-to-ship combat if at all  
possible, preferring the snatch-and-run tactics that  
have served them so well in the past. If forced to make  
a stand, they will use their catapult to hurl rocks at The  
Pantocrator's Fist and then grapple with a view to  
boarding. Presumably the player-characters will have  
the sense not to pursue once the Simulacra are dealt  
with. Melano and Hieronymus will not push their luck  
if they see the pirates' ship leaving, anyway. As for any  
lost cargo or items stolen by the Elemental - Melano  
shrugs: 'Think of it as a toll,' he says wryly.

It is extremely unlikely that the player-characters  
will turn things around so far as to take the pirate ship.  
In case they do, however, fifty of the oarsmen count as  
unranked characters (ATTACK 11, DEFENCE 5, etc)  
and the remaining thirty should be treated as 1st rank  
Knights. The oarsmaster and other senior crew-  
members (there are eight in all) are 5th rank  
Barbarians. All wear leather armour and use ordinary  
swords. In any attack on the longship, the Warlocks  
will of course deploy their full magical arsenal listed  
above. The ship's coffers presently hold about 30,000  
Florins

## The Tower of Night

This episode comes after The Pantocrator's Fist has  
navigated the Gulf of Marazid and is sailing  
southwards along the coast towards the Mungoda  
estuary. For maximum effect it will help if someone of  
importance has been killed earlier. If none of the  
player-characters died fighting Ghulfang and his  
cronies, stage-manage Melano's death at the hands of

*Takander just before the following events take place.*

*Hieronymus and his officers are obviously nervous because they are in unfamiliar waters. All they have to go on are some simple charts prepared after Melano's earlier trip. Still worse, a storm is obviously brewing in the south-east. Strong winds are blowing in towards the shore and it is necessary to take the ship out into the open sea for safety.*

*The storm rolls in like a shroud across the sky. A rough swell soon turns into high waves that threaten to swamp the ship. Sheets of flickering lightning crash between the clouds, illuminating the pale and terrified faces of the sailors.*

*Things go from bad to worse. Hieronymus staggers along the deck, holding onto the rail for dear life, to tell you that the wind is shifting. A westerly gale is flinging you right out into the middle of uncharted seas!*

*You should go through the motions of rolling for weather, ship damage and so on, but disregard any disastrous results. A wreck at this point would not be in the best interests of the adventure! The Pantocrator's Fist is blown eastwards for a day and a night, with every hand on deck struggling to bale water and see that none of the cargo is washed over the side. At last, the wind dies. Dawn rises on a limping ship and tired, bedraggled crew:*

*In the light of a new day you begin to take stock of the damage. Some kegs of wine that were not tied down securely have gone over the side. Miraculously only one of the sailors is missing. The sky is sullenly overcast, but a glimpse of the sunrise allowed you to get your bearings. 'We are far out in what the Ta'ashim sailors call the Deeps of Rasakna,' announces Hieronymus. Though you are all exhausted, repairs on the rigging must begin at once. Master Worlo will organize shifts - '*

*He stops short and stands gaping into the*

*distance. Following his gaze you see a tall pinnacle touched by a single shaft of pink sunlight. 'Could it be land? An island ...?' muses Hieronymus. He snaps orders and soon the damaged ship is being sculled in towards the pinnacle.*

*When you draw closer you see that it is actually an immense tower of coral rock that rises straight up out of the ocean depths. A staggering sight indeed - especially as the coral gives the strange impression of having grown to form this tower. But-tressess jutting out from the sides form four harbours where your ship could dock. There is a brief argument about the wisdom of staying here, but the damage to the ship means that you really have no choice. Inching into the harbour mouth, you catch sight of an armoured figure standing in front of a massive archway into the tower. He waits as you dock and steps forward when you jump down onto the quayside.*

Without a word, this figure gestures for the characters to follow him. They may notice a powdery scent in the air behind him. He takes them through the archway into the tower, then through a wall of glittering energy that parts to admit them. They stand in a vestibule. The energy-wall forms again behind them and there is a moment of dizziness. Then the wall fades again - but not to reveal the archway and the quay beyond. The scene has changed; somehow they have been transported into the tower and are now looking into a darkened audience chamber. On the far side of the chamber, a wall of clear crystal gives a view of the ocean depths. The only light comes from strange luminous fish that dart to and fro in the water. There is a dais on the far side of the room, against the pane of crystal, and silhouetted against the shifting pattern of lights a seated figure can be seen. He raises his hand in greeting and speaks, saying: 'Welcome, travellers, to the home of Azhahn.'

The characters have found their way to the Tower of

Night, the home of Azhahn the Weaver of Enchantments. Azhan is centuries old, and very powerful. His tower is a truly enormous edifice of coral stone that rises a hundred metres or more above the waves and has its foundations in the fathomless depths of the sea. His only companion is silent Morclasto, the heavily armoured warrior who met the characters when they docked.

The characters are probably feeling rather nervous by now, but Azhahn's intentions are not at all hostile. This is fortunate because he is a superhumanly powerful wizard against whom mere mortals would stand little chance. Mighty as they may be, the player-characters would last only a few seconds in combat with him. Since Azhahn himself is not going to start a combat, the only way this can happen is if the player-characters decide to act aggressively. If they do, they deserve what they get. All that Azhahn requires from them is a few hours' company and pleasant conversation. In return he will provide them with a great deal...

Morclasto waits by the door as his master talks with the characters. They cannot see the wizard very clearly in the gloom, but as their eyes adjust they will notice that he wears heavy gold-and-azure robes and an ornamental pectoral studded with star sapphires. His hands are gloved and a mask of painted wood conceals his face; the mask appears to have no eye-slits. Azhahn tells them that he would like them to conduct their repairs in the safety of his harbour, and that Morclasto will provide any materials they need. He also invites them to join him for dinner that evening. Adding that he is aware they have suffered recent bereavement (a reference to whichever character has been killed previously), Azhahn says that he will 'set matters to rights'. Doubtless the player-characters will ask him what he means by that, but Azhahn has a leisurely manner and simply adds that in time all mysteries are dispelled. (Players often find cryptic NPCs annoying, but this is not an excuse for violence -

as they will hopefully realize!)

After the audience with Azhahn, Morclasto takes them back to the ship. Repairs go well, and by late afternoon the ship is fully seaworthy. Towards dusk the sky begins to darken, but though thick clouds pile up and blot out the sun there is no wind. This is not another storm. Within minutes it has become as dark as night, and there is a tingling in the air as though massive energies are gathering. Suddenly a startled sailor shouts something and points down into the water: a fine tracery of glowing filaments converge on the ship like a web. The centre of the energy-web seems to be the pallet where the dead character's body was placed. The characters gather to watch as Azhahn's wizardry takes effect:

*You catch glimpses of filaments of sparkling light moving through the air. The energy is only visible out of the corner of one's eye, but everyone - even the least psychically gifted - can feel the tremendous surge of power of flowing in towards the ship. Towards the corpse on the pallet.*

*Outside, everything is black except for the network of lights beneath the water and a soft glow outlining the Tower of Night. The lamp in the cabin flickers and goes out. Someone is about to relight it, but then there is a gasp as everyone present realizes there is a faint glow around the corpse. Now you can hear a high whistling in the air. Sparks play around the body and make an acrid taste in the air.*

*Suddenly the corpse stiffens and sits bolt upright! There is a ghastly expression set on its greyface, like a soundless scream. All hearts skip a beat. The corpse's eyes snap open and it gives vent to a shriek, then slumps forward. The lamp catches alight again, and a wash of red sunset floods into the silent cabin. The tracery of light fades away. Instead of dead flesh you are gazing down on a living, breathing form. Your comrade is with you once again . . .*

The characters will never again see such a dramatic

resurrection. The character who has been brought back from the dead is fully restored - no reduction in Health Points or characteristics when Azhahn's magic is involved. Fortuitously, the character has been resurrected just in time to dress for dinner ...

*You return with Morclasto to the audience chamber. Silk cushions have been set out around a cloth spread with a mouthwatering array of pastries, seafood dishes and sweetmeats. There are even some real surprises among the dishes: roast quails, pickled eggs, venison and fresh fruit.' Seated on his dais, Azhahn bows in greeting and invites you to join him.*

The room is lit, as before, by the luminous glow from the fishes on the other side of the crystal window. Azhahn has also had some oil-lamps placed along the room so that the characters can see to eat, but he remains half hidden in the shadows.

Azhahn does not eat (nor does Morclasto, who stands in silence beside his master), but entertains his guests with old legends while they dine. Afterwards he may invite one of the characters to play a tune (Dialko is, in fact, quite an accomplished flautist) or tell a tale. He is pleased to discuss any subject the characters find interesting. Theology is a favorite topic of his (he belongs to the Ta'ashim faith, though could hardly be called dogmatic) but he will break off any argument if anyone becomes offended or upset. The most important thing to Azhahn is that his guests enjoy themselves. You should also note that he does not use or discuss magic except when absolutely necessary. He happily resurrected the characters' dead companion but he does not bother with paltry tricks like levitating the wine-jug or creating sorcerous music.

*The hour is late, and Azhahn notes that some of his guests are getting sleepy: 'Forgive me, you will wish to return to your ship. But before you go, allow me to show my gratitude for your excellent company*

*He turns and waves Morclasto forward. The armoured giant bears a large wooden chest over to you and sets it down. It contains the following: a silver ring with a serpentine band; an ivory baton; a black-and-gold lacquered mask; a cedarwood flute; a bronze gauntlet decorated with garnets; a jade amulet consisting of several plaques in the shape of inscrutable faces; a fist-sized globe of yellow crystal; a mirror of polished copper; an iron tore; a slender dagger with a onyx pommel, and a small bronze bell.*

*'Please take a gift that will serve as a keepsake of your visit here,' says Azhahn.*

Each of these items is enchanted to allow the person who owns it one use of a given spell. An item works only for the character who chooses it, so the characters cannot swap them around once they find out what they do. As each character takes his choice from the selection, take him/her to one side and reveal what the item does. Alternatively, prepare notes or file cards to hand each player. Your description should tell the character what the effect of his one-use spell will be, not the spell's name. Saying 'it's a Pursuit spell' would mean nothing to a Knight - or to anyone but a Mystic, for that matter.

Each person at the dinner can take an item. The player-characters may or may not have the good manners to let their employer choose first. The NPCs at the dinner will be Melano, Hieronymus, Fustian, Dialko and Tirant. Therefore if there are more than six player-characters in the party you will need to invent a few more items. The specific power of each item is as follows:

<i>Item</i>	<i>One-use spell</i>
ring	Phantasm
baton	Terminate Enchantment (16 Magic Points)
mask	Invisibility
flute	Raise Fog

gauntlet	The Trickster's Hand
amulet	Miracle Cure
globe	Pursuit
mirror	Teleport
torc	Command (with MAGICAL ATTACK of 58)
dagger	Animate Bones
bell	Destrier

Activating the power of one of these items is an action and takes a full Combat Round.

The characters will not see Azhahn again. Morclasto comes to the quay the next morning to see them off, but he is as uncommunicative as ever. They sail away across a rich blue sea under a sky with only a few high wisps of cloud, and when they turn back for a last look at the fabulous Tower of Night they find it is already out of sight.

From here it is plain sailing. Within a week The Pantocrator's Fist has reached its goal: the sixty-mile-wide mouth of the great Mungoda River....

### III. THE MOUTH OF THE MUNGODA

All too often, players fondly imagine that their characters can get away with flaunting the rules of common sense. Just because DRAGON WARRIORS is a fantasy game, however, there is no reason to be unrealistic. Realism is a very desirable ingredient of the campaign, because it undercuts and so accentuates the magical elements when they occur. This is why two special rule points are discussed next:

#### Problems of climate

The Mungoda basin is noted for its heat and humidity. A man who tried to wear full armour would quickly boil alive. Fortunately, some body areas are more likely

than others to be struck in combat (the arms and shoulders are hit more often than the chest or the belly, and so on) and so it is possible to discard much of one's armour coverage without losing all the armour's protective value.

'Stripped down' armour for use in this tropical climate gives the following reduced Armour Factors:

<i>Armour type</i>	<i>AF</i>
none; padded leather	0
hardened leather	1
ring mail; chainmail	2
plate	3

Magic armour provides half its normal AF bonus when stripped down - so +2 plate (normally Armour Factor 7) becomes AF 4. Fractions are rounded up.

If the GamesMaster and players have a taste for realism, they may wish to further reduce the AF of stripped-down armour where missile weapons are concerned. Whereas it is possible to say that a swordsman will hit one's forearms rather than one's back - and so discard backplate but not vambraces - an arrow might as easily strike either.

#### Disease

The climate brings a second problem. The Cosh Goyope region is rife with diseases, which can be contracted from insect bites or simply from drinking the water. Each week spent on or near the river, the GamesMaster rolls d100 for each character to see if he/she has picked up a disease:

<i>Character's rank</i>	<i>Chance of illness</i>
Unranked or 1st-3rd	15%
4th-6th	10%
8th-9th	5%
10th up	1%

<i>Modifiers</i>	Assassin	-5%
	Knight or Barbarian	-4%
	Warlock or Mystic	-2%
	wearing armour	+3%

(Adept Mystics are of course entirely immune to disease - see Book Four, p 45).

If a character becomes ill, another roll is made to determine which of the diseases of the region he has caught:

<i>d100</i>	<i>Diseases</i>
01-35	The Trembles
36 - 45	Gods' Feasting
46 - 80	The Barbed One
81 - 00	White-Eye Grin

These are direct translations of the native names for the diseases. Often they have quite similar symptoms to familiar diseases such as leprosy (see Book Three), but because they are indigenous to the Mungoda region they are difficult for non-natives to shake off. Player-characters (except for the very occasional Barbarian who comes from this part of the world) will have low natural resistance to these ailments.

The basic rule for any of these diseases is as follows. The afflicted character attempts a Recovery Roll each day. Usually this is made on 3d6 (exception: see God's Feasting below), and the character must score under his current Strength to recover. If he fails, he tries another Recovery Roll the next day, but this time he adds 1 to the dice roll, then 2 the next day and so on. If he fails to make a successful recovery within the disease's specific term then he either dies (if it is a terminal illness) or becomes prey to periodic bouts of the disease (in the case of a chronic illness).

The following modifiers are applied to the Recovery Roll:

Complete rest	-2
Treated by physician	-2
Treated by shaman	-1

Cure Disease spell	-3
Purification or Miracle Cure	-6
Strenuous exertion, etc	+2
Under Curse	+1d6

Note that the usual curative enchantments are not fully effective against these unfamiliar maladies. They do not give a guaranteed cure, merely a better chance of making the day's Recovery Roll as shown above. A character who is brought back from the dead by the Resurrect spell is 80% likely still to be suffering from any diseases he had caught. The Phoenix spell, however, cleanses the body of all ailments.

The Trembles are caused by a virus found in river-mud. A character who falls into swamp water must make an immediate check to see if he contracts the disease. The effect of Trembles is uncontrollable shivering followed by palsy. An afflicted character temporarily loses 2d6 from *Reflexes* and 1d10 from *Strength*. If either score goes to 0 he must be left in his bed or carried around in a litter. The term of this illness is 10 days, and if the character has not recovered by the end of this time he has a 5% chance of dying. The Trembles are rarely fatal, however, and more probably the character will be prone to relapses every 1-3 years. After each bout of Trembles the character's *Strength* and *Reflexes* return to normal but are permanently depleted by 1 point each.

Gods' Feasting is the Mungoda euphemism for leprosy, which the river-folk believe is caused by the invisible spirits devouring a victim alive. This malady is very virulent and Recovery Rolls are made on 6d6. The disease initially causes the loss of 1 point of *Strength*, *Reflexes* and *Looks* each week. The term is 1 month, and if recovery is not made in this time it is not long before the hands and feet begin to mortify and rot away. The character is not dead, but his adventuring life is certainly over.

The Barbed One is so-called because it gives the impression of a small spiny creature wriggling within

one's bowels. The victim temporarily loses 1d3 Strength, 1d4 *Reflexes* and 1d4 *Health Points*. He suffers continual diarrhoea and vomiting. The term of this illness is 4 days, and if the character fails to make his Recovery Roll by then he will suffer further bouts at intervals of 3-18 months. Fortunately the victim's Strength, etc, are not permanently reduced, returning rapidly to normal after each attack of the malady.

White-Eye Grin is a fever which attacks the brain. The victim falls into a coma. If he does not recover within the disease's term of 2 weeks he either dies (20% chance) or suffers the permanent loss of 1d3 Intelligence. In the latter case, the malady recurs every 1-6 months.

## Arrival at Paru

Paru is a large sprawling town one hundred miles up the Mungoda estuary. There is no problem reaching this; the Mungoda is deep enough that an ocean-going vessel could sail more than six hundred miles upstream. The town lies on the fringes of the Cosh Goyope swamplands and consists of hundreds of bamboo huts built on stilts out over the water. Plank walkways connect the huts, but the most common mode of transport for the people of Paru is the dugout canoe. By keeping out from the bank the river-folk avoid the hunting parties of Dracomen (see Book Four) that trudge through the marshes in search of human prey. Food comes from the river and from trade with other tribes upstream, so it is possible for a native to live his entire life out on the Mungoda without ever venturing onto dry land.

Melano has an acquaintance from his previous visit here: Imbi, a wily old trader who seems to have an incredible number of sons and grandchildren. The characters will be conveyed to Imbi's hut (quite a grand dwelling by the meagre standards of the town) in dug-outs rowed by his sons, served with drinks by his

granddaughters and grandsons, and so on. Imbi affects the disposition of a bucolic rascal and pretends that his command of Nascérine (the mutual tongue in which he must converse with Melano's group) is worse than it is. Thus he might say: 'Good sirs! Good sirs! Imbi's home, your home. Make free with food and grandchildren. Tomorrow talk barter, much glitter-money for your wares, yes?' Melano is aware that this is just a pretence, and that Imbi is as shrewd a businessman in his way as any merchant-prince of Ferromaine.

Imbi's main rival in Paru is a fellow named Lokto, a trader whose hut lies at the other edge of the town. Lokto is very jealous of Imbi's friendship with the foreigners and will send his own grandchildren swimming like fish along the river to invite the characters to negotiate with him instead. In the middle of the feast Imbi lays on, a boy's voice calls out through the dusk: 'Masters! Good sirs from afar! Imbi is big rogue; take your business to Lakto's hut.' This attempted poaching of his clients enrages Imbi, who leans out of the window and yells abuse at the lad before sending some of his household to drive him away. 'Lakto has worm in place of tongue!' is all he will say to his 'honoured guests'.

The next day the characters may care to take a canoe-trip along Paru. They will see that the nearest huts to the shore are where the poorest people of the town live - and even these are at least two hundred metres out over the water. Townsfolk pole past on rafts with their wares, and a bustling river-market develops by midmorning. In net-corrals encircled by planks they see natives farming the Ngokla, a hideous trilobite crustacean considered to be a great delicacy. As they approach Lakto's huts they discover a three-masted junk lying at anchor, triangular sails folded like paper fans. It is a vessel from the great eastern land of Khitai, as Akron will be quick to point out. An elderly man in fine robes sits under a parasol on the deck, apparently painting. He leans forward to scrutinize the



characters as they row past, revealing unpleasantly disfigured features and a withered arm as he leaves the concealing shade of the parasol. He appears not to understand anything the characters may call out to him, but soon goes back to his 'painting' (actually he is writing with the brush-pen used in Khitai) as though they do not interest him. If the characters ask the boy rowing their canoe who this Khitan is, he merely grins and says, 'Lakto's guest. Big magic-man from far off.'

In fact the characters have caught their first glimpse of Subotai the sorcerer. He is here in the party of Lord Chonmaru, a Khitan noble. They intend to do some trading with Lakto, but they also have other plans. They have been more meticulous in examining the Paru artifacts than Melano was. The artifacts are clearly of ancient Kaikuhuran design, and this bears out an old legend that, thousands of years ago, high priests and aristocrats who fell from favour at Pharaoh's court would be sent into exile across the Deeps of Rasakna to the Mungoda Jungle. Acting on the theory that these nobles (often sent into exile with hundreds of guards and servants) maintained a secret civilization here, Chonmaru and his group hope to find the Kaikuhuran ruins where they believe the Paru traders are getting their gold artifacts.



## The expedition from Khitai

The Khitan party comprises: Lord Chonmaru, the young noble who is funding their expedition; Subotai, a wizard of considerable ability; three henchmen, one of whom is from Opalar; two ship's officers (Chonmaru himself functions as captain) and twelve ordinary seamen.

Hopefully it will be possible for the player-characters to have some conversation with the Khitans before the inevitable hostilities commence. Subotai speaks Opalarian and Nascerine fluently and can make himself understood in Ancient Emphidian. (And he is able to read Qemor Hieroglyphs.) Chonmaru has a smattering of Nascerine, and Hiwan and Kalung have picked up enough words of both Nascerine and Opalarian for their new colleague Farima'al to understand them. In particular they can discuss military tactics, women and gambling odds with considerable fluency. (All the Khitans speak Tsutsuneng, of course, but it is doubtful if any of the player-characters will know that one!)

SUBOTAI	13th rank Sorcerer
ATTACK 17*	*Left 'hand' (d4 + 2, 5)
DEFENCE 11	Armour Factor 0
MAGICAL ATTACK 31	47 Magic Points
MAGICAL DEFENCE 21	
EVASION 6	STEALTH 16
	PERCEPTION 13

*Health Points 11*

(St 9; Rf 9; Int 15; Psy 17; Lks 4)

Paraphernalia: +2 metal 'hand'; fan with Invisibility spell; Amulet of Sovereignty over Violence; Flying Carpet; two sachets of Amianthus Dust.

(As a Sorcerer of Khitai, Subotai's spells would logically be slightly different from those of western mages. The GM can use the same rules but describe any spell that Subotai casts as though it were something unfamiliar. His Deathlight appears as multiple

converging beams of many-coloured light; his *Tangle vines* manifests itself as a ruby band which encircle the target's legs, etc.)

Subotai was born into a nomad family from beyond the north-western provinces of Khitai. His tribe was attacked by another, and although he was young at the time Subotai can remember the scenes of carnage as his parents and brothers were slaughtered all around him. Somehow he was passed over in the orgy of destruction, and later sold by a nomad warrior to a Khitan magistrate. Noting the young Subotai's sharp intellect, the magistrate took him off household chores and saw to his education. When he reached manhood, Subotai was given his freedom by the old magistrate, who also paid his entry fee into the Civil Service examinations. Subotai passed these with flying colours and went to the capital, Pashang. He made wise friendships and bribed the right people, so that his influence went from strength to strength.

The other bureaucrats of Pashang disliked Subotai. He was a foreigner, after all, and seemed inordinately successful in his career - and unreasonably popular with several Imperial Khitan princes. Plots were hatched to bring him low. On a hunting trip with Prince Latong he became separated from the main group and was attacked by thugs hurling pots of 'Emphidian Fire' - a sticky, inflammable stuff used in sea battles. His horse threw him, his bearers scattered. Subotai retaliated with magic (he was a powerful sorcerer even then) but was splashed with the burning liquid and overcome with pain. Luckily for him the prince had sent several men of his bodyguard back to look for his friend. They came upon the scene to find a thug just about to slay Subotai as he writhed in agony. The thugs were captured or driven off, and the captives soon induced to reveal who had paid them to ambush their prey. The prince soon saw to it that the plotters were punished for their crimes - executed, assassinated, exiled or reassigned, according to their status.

The injuries Subotai had suffered forced an absence from his office at the Palace of Overseeing Wisdom. His burns responded slowly to treatment, and that treatment slowly dwindled away his resources - and protocol also demanded lavish gifts for Prince Latong in return for his kindness. Finally impoverished, he was obliged to retire to his country estate. He returned to the study of magic which had absorbed him in his younger days. He became, in time, one of the mightiest wizards of all Khitai.

Now about sixty, Subotai is a portly man who dresses elegantly in velvet tunics and silk brocade gowns. His manner, clothing, makeup and lacquered hair all suggest a well-to-do Khitan dignitary, but on careful inspection his darker skin and narrow eyes betray his nomad origin. His face is horribly disfigured - the scars he still carries from the ambush decades ago. This is particularly noticeable on the left side of his face. He lost an eye, in fact, which he has replaced with a facsimile in apple-green jade. The scrutiny of this false eye is somewhat disturbing, and many say that he can see more with it than with his good eye. By this it is meant that Subotai can look into a man's heart to determine his motives and intentions. The burns also withered his left arm, which is now supported by a framework of iron hoops and rods. Most of the fingers on the left hand are missing, but the arm support terminates in a fretwork claw with which Subotai can fight if he has to. All his sorcery has been unable to restore the burned flesh (perhaps because of a 'mental block?'), but in some way the spells intended to heal his arm have imbued his arm support and metal claw with strength and magic power. This is factored into the stats given above.

Among his other possessions Subotai has a paper fan bearing some elaborate Tsutsuneng calligraphy. It reads: 'I keep them hidden, my robes of scarlet ...', these being the opening lines of a famous Khitan poem. If the fan is waved three times rapidly in each direction it will cast Invisibility on the person fanned. It does this

once a day. His Flying Carpet is unsuitable for inter-continental travel but is fine for cruising over the jungle treetops - as the player-characters should see for themselves later. Subotai's travelling-chest contains about 15,000 Florins worth of gold, silver and gems.

CHONMARU	10th rank Knight
ATTACK 23*	*Magic sword (d8 + 2, 5)
DEFENCE 18	Armour Factor 3
MAGICAL DEFENCE 13	
EVASION 7	STEALTH 15
	PERCEPTION 10

*Health Points 21*

(St 11; Rf 14; Int 13; Psy 14; Lks 13)

Combat skills: Swordmaster (critical hit on Hit Roll of 1 or 2); Sword Weaponskill (+ 1 Armour Bypass, included above); Disarm Technique (when opponent makes a Hit Roll of 20, roll 3d6 higher than his rank to disarm)

Paraphernalia: +1 metal sword; Healing Potion (one draught); Phlogiston (one bottle); Theriac (one draught); Ring of Teleportation (5 charges)

Chonmaru is the grandson of Jurekmai, the magistrate who nurtured Subotai in his youth. Subotai does not like him and is dubious about the worth of their mission, but when Chonmaru approached him for assistance Subotai's burden of obligation was such that he could not refuse.

Chommaru is a typical Khitan aristocrat: hot-tempered, arrogant, vain and distrustful of foreign 'barbarians'. His redeeming qualities are impeccable manners, disregard for danger, a strong sense of honour and a love of the fine arts. This expedition is his pet project, something he has been planning for years. He intends to make his reputation on its success, and would only be deterred from his aims by extreme violence.

If they share a common tongue, player-character

Knights or Barbarians might strike up a friendship of sorts with Chonmaru. He admires the qualities of a strong and disciplined personality, a rigorous devotion to warrior skills, and an eye for delicate beauty. Sometimes he relaxes by making ink drawings of the jungle, and an aesthetically inclined character might glean something of his temperament and dexterity in the clean, precise lines of his sketches. The greatest honour he will give (only if he takes a real shine to a character) will be to display his full suit of armour - a lacquered masterpiece with mother-of-pearl and ivory decorations. He beams with pleasure at any words of praise a character may have for this fine harness, eg - player-character (in faltering Nascérine): 'It's pretty good armour.' Chonmaru (nodding vigorously): 'Oh yes, but please excuse me correcting your Nascérine; you mean to say, particularly magnificent. Similar-sounding words can be confusing.'

Chonmaru also brought along three of his family retainers. One died on the passage from Khitai, and Chonmaru hired a replacement for him in Opalar. These three are all average 4th rank fighters:

HIWAN	ATTACK 16	MAGICAL DEFENCE 6	
	DEFENCE 10	EVASION 4	<i>Health Points 16</i>
KALUNG	ATTACK 16	MAGICAL DEFENCE 6	
	DEFENCE 10	EVASION 4	<i>Health Points 16</i>
FARIMA'AL	ATTACK 16	MAGICAL DEFENCE 7	
	DEFENCE 10	EVASION 4	<i>Health Points 13</i>

All are armed with sword (d8,4), crossbow (d10,4) and dagger (d4,3). Because of the sweltering heat, their mail harness has been stripped down to Armour Factor 2.

The officers and sailors aboard the junk should be considered to be normal unranked characters (Book One, p 102) in all respects except that they get +1 on ATTACK when shooting a crossbow. This is something they have had to do quite a lot of over the years, and numerous encounters with the pirates of the South Sea have turned them into fairly skilled bowmen. If forced to melee they fight with swords (d8,4) and wear no armour.

The total wealth aboard the ship (excluding Subotai's coffer) comprises silver, gold and jewellery to the value of 25,000 Florins. Chonmaru's armour is worth a great deal to any Khitan noble, though few would deign to give money for it. If bestowed as a gift it could secure the noble's friendship and patronage for a time, however.

### No deal!

The player-characters return to Imbi's hut after their tour of Paru to find their employer in a very distressed state. Essentially, the problem is this: Imbi has become wise to the fact that, although gold seems worthless to him, it is obviously a valuable commodity where Melano is concerned. He is no longer falling happily into line with Melano's plans to sell common Ferromaine goods for a knag's ransom. Instead, he wants Melano to provide something commensurate with the gold's value. Specifically, he wants Melano's hired warriors - the player-characters - to drive off a hostile tribe that recently migrated into the region.

The people of Paru have never had much trouble avoiding the clumsy Dracomen, who shun the river and thus cannot get to the stilt-buildings. These newcomers are another matter. Sometimes they launch night raids to set fire to huts and carry off women and children. Their attacks on river traffic are costing Paru (and Imbi in particular) dearly. Sometimes they ambush the foraging parties who go ashore to gather nuts and fresh meat. Imbi's people are not warriors, so he wants the player-characters to deal with the problem. Then, he says, there will be gold aplenty.

Back aboard *The Pantocrator's Fist* the alternatives may be discussed. Melano could trade his goods, but as long as there is something else that Imbi wants he will hold out for that instead. Melano might even get less than the market value in Ferromaine! The characters could simply seize Imbi's gold by force and sail off, but

Melano does not approve of that approach. Moreover, his opinion is that Imbi does not keep much gold in his hut, but only sends his people to get some when he needs it for trading purposes. The gold is presumably taken from old ruins somewhere in the jungle - Melano has not thought much about it - but the chances of finding out where seem pretty remote. In the end there is really only one conclusion; they must do what Imbi wants. Since this will involve the player-characters in greater danger than was expected when they signed on, they should start to renegotiate their cut at this point. Melano will not be happy with any change in the share-out, but without their co-operation he will get nothing. He has to agree.

Once the player-characters are equipped. Imbi provides them with a couple of his nephews as guides. These two, Junja and Ganni, have inherited their uncle's sense of self-interest and will be coming along purely as non-combatants. They are ordinary unranked characters armed with bows and daggers. They will take the player-characters through the jungle until they find an encampment of the *Akmatli* (as they call the hostile tribe) and let them take things from there.

### Encounters in the jungle

The expedition will be travelling through semi-swamp and lush jungle. In such terrain it will be impossible to move much faster than ten to twelve miles a day. The chance of an encounter is 20%, checked as usual at dawn and at dusk. A special encounter table is used:

d100 Roll	Encounter
01 - 20	<i>Akmatli</i> tribesmen (2-12 kasha and 0-5 ushok; see below)
21-31	Python
32-40	Crocodiles (1 - 8)

41-43	Fungus Men (1 - 20)
44 - 60	Dracomen (2 - 20)
61 - 64	Skullghasts (2-8)
65 - 66	Wyvern
67	Jumbees
68 - 75	Weretigers (1-2)
76 - 80	Mere-Gaunt
81-90	Jaguar (stats as Wolf)
91 - 00	Harmless/nuisance encounter (monkeys, parrots, large dragon- flies, etc)

## The Aknatli tribe

These people are part of a large hunter-gather tribe that inhabits the hinterland of this continent. They revere a totemic spider-deity and it is their habit of dressing in ritual war-cloaks (see below) that has led to stories of 'spider-folk' living deep in the Mungoda Jungle.

Most of the tribe's warriors are normal unranked characters, being primarily hunters whose favoured weapons are the club and the dart javelin. When fighting human opponents they will coat these darts with an aromatic resin. Anyone wounded by the dart must roll Strength or under on 2d6 or succumb to the resin's effect, in which case the victim loses 1d3 Health Points each Combat Round until cured or dead. These hunters are called, in their own tongue, kasha.

The special champions of the Aknatli are called the *ushok*. These are fighters (Barbarians) of 1st rank or higher. They are the specialized representatives of the tribe in its dealings (ie, battles) with outsiders. They disdain the use of missile weapons and the trapping-skills developed by the kasha hunters, preferring to fight their enemies at close quarters with poison-tipped spear or with shield and obsidian-edged club. Ushok are readily distinguished from the lower-status kasha by their hair (which they wear plaited into eight

thick strands which hang down to their shoulders), the 'spiders' eyes' warpaint design on their chests, and the furry russet cloaks which are designed to spread out into eight sections when the ushok warrior is leaping and running through the jungle towards his prey.

The Aknatli are out of their native territory here. The poisoned darts used by the kasha are quite effective *in* the open forest inland, but are almost useless in the thick undergrowth of the Cosh Goyope region because the close proximity of the trees and bushes makes it difficult to get a clear throw at the target. Apply an ATTACK penalty of 3 at medium ranges and 7 at long ranges. It is precisely because they are not very successful hunters in this terrain that the Aknatli have started to prey off the river-folk.

## Picking up the spoor

The player-characters' aim should be to find a small group of Aknatli and follow them back to the tribe's encampment. A Mystic with the Pursuit spell will make this task a lot easier, as the characters must otherwise rely on good Stealth Rolls. The trail will take them two days' trek into the deep jungle, until they finally arrive at their goal:

*The ground rises, becoming steadily drier until you have left the muddy swamp far behind. You are still walking through thick forest, having to hack your progress past huge nets of creepers at times, but at least you are no longer plagued by the stench of the marsh or the incessantly biting mosquitoes.*

*You come to a clearing so abruptly that you almost stride straight into it without realizing. That would have been a mistake: you can count the huts of at least sixty Aknatli tribal warriors. Taking cover behind the thick boles of the trees, you peer into the wide clearing. The Aknatli have camped against what you first take to be a grassy hillock. Noticing the snagged ranks of moss-coated columns protrud-*

ing through the earth, and the gaping stone doorway in the side of the hill, you can see that it is a ruined pyramid half-buried under the soil and vegetation of centuries. Imbi's nephews are outraged. 'Vile Aknatli!' hisses Junja between his teeth. 'Make camp in front of uncle's treasure-hill!'

Scouring the clearing, you see only a few people moving about - but the array of spears and swords in the weapon-racks suggest that many more are taking a siesta inside the grass huts. Then your gaze alights on five figures you had certainly not expected to run into here in the jungle: the travellers from Khitai whom you saw on the junk moored near Lakto's hut. They appear to be trying to communicate in sign language with a group of russet-cloaked Aknatli warriors. What makes it a particularly odd scene is that they are standing on a carpet which hovers about a metre off the ground!

Subotai is about to give up trying to negotiate with the ushok, who are protesting because he wants to enter the ruined pyramid. It would certainly be a mistake for the player-characters to attack him now, as they may need his help to overcome the Aknatli warriors. Chonmaru, beside him, is getting very impatient and suggests they take the Flying Carpet up for an aerial attack on the camp. The stats for the Khitans have already been given (p 245). The warriors of the camp are as follows:

Five SENIOR USHOK	4th rank
ATTACK 17	Spear (2d3, 4 and poison)*
DEFENCE 10	Armour Factor 0
MAGICAL DEFENCE 6	Health Points: 16,17, 17,18 and 15
EVASION 6	Reflexes: all 13

\*Not being metal-tipped, these spears are slightly less effective in penetrating armour than those the player-characters might have occasion to use.



Sixteen USHOK	1st rank
ATTACK 14	Club (d6, 4)
DEFENCE 6	Armour Factor 0 (and shield)
MAGICAL DEFENCE 3	<i>Health Points:</i> all 13
EVASION 5	<i>Reflexes:</i> all 12

In addition to these fighters there are the normal hunters of the tribe. They will try to stay out of melee if possible. Remember that here in the clearing their dart javelins are fully effective, though they will not very well be able to use them once the ushok are in the way.

Sixty KASHA	1st rank-equivalent
ATTACK 11	Club (d6, 4) or Javelin {d6, 4 and poison}
DEFENCE 5	Armour Factor 0 (and shield)
MAGICAL DEFENCE 3	<i>Health Points:</i> all 7
EVASION 3	<i>Reflexes:</i> all 11

The shields they are using are only hide stretched over a light wooden frame. Such a shield will break after deflecting one blow from a steel weapon.

The Aknatli have no reason to fight to the bitter end. Once they have taken 10%-15% casualties (or the loss of more than one senior *ushok*) they will gather their children, livestock and womenfolk and flee into the undergrowth.

## The pyramid

Any reasonably knowledgeable adventurer who enters the pyramid will recognize the Ancient Kaikuhuran style of its architecture. This may come as a surprise to the player-characters but not to Subotai and Chonmaru. In fact, the Kaikuhuran nobles who were periodically exiled here by Pharaoh controlled a small empire of enslaved natives. They built many temples, palaces and tombs in the style that reminded them of their homeland. This - the tomb of quite a

minor prince - is merely one of the more accessible ruins.

Beyond the entrance the characters pass through a rubble-strewn vestibule and into a wide corridor that leads into the interior of the pyramid. Numerous secondary burial-chambers were built off this corridor to accommodate the household and servants of the prince. Some of these burial-chambers have been broken into and rifled (by Imbi's sons, of course), but there are still a dozen that remain unopened. The stone blocks sealing each chamber will take about one man-hour to excavate. The typical contents of a chamber is: one mummified corpse swathed in linen and sealed in a stone casket; various implements and/or weapons, now mostly rotted and useless; clay tablets detailing the life and achievements of the chamber's occupant, and setting out the kind of pleasures wished for the deceased in the next file; a few gold artifacts, together worth 20-400 Crowns.

In all, it is possible for the characters to turn a tidy profit just by emptying the side chambers of their gold. Even so, they will doubtless continue along to the end of the corridor where a massive stone portal bars the way into the main burial chamber. If anyone present can read Qemor Hieroglyphics (and remember that Subotai can, if he is still with them) they will be able to make out the inscription on the door-seal. This translates roughly as: *SHEFBU CHA'AF, Lord of Light, Caster of Enchantments Against Enchantment; Wielder of Swords Against the Fray: Now are the Bright Songs turned to Dust.* This inscription has no particular significance except as a fragment of Kaikuhuran poetry.

The bronze seal that holds the door shut is easily broken. The door swings aside to show a low-ceilinged tunnel sloping gently downwards. Tall characters will have to stoop to walk along it. If anyone tries, they will soon experience the powerful spell that Shefru Cha'af's priests laid on this tunnel. A Sorcerer, Warlock or Elementalist who walks along the corridor

will be gradually drained of his power (Magic Points) with each step he takes. This effect is proportional to the character's rank, so that any Sorcerer, etc, who walks the whole length of the tunnel and steps into the tomb chamber will find that he has 1MP left (assuming he had at least that when he entered the tunnel). He will be aware of what is happening, and if he turns back at any point he loses no further Magic Points - that is, the tunnel only drains power from magic-users who are going into the tomb. Magic Points that have been drained will recover normally once the character has left the pyramid.

The tunnel has a different effect on other characters - ie, Knights, Barbarians, Mystics, Assassins and those not belonging to any adventuring Profession. This time it is the character's physical energy that is sapped: his *Health Points*, in other words. A character who walks right down the tunnel to the tomb chamber at the far end will lose half of his normal *Health Point* score. If he was badly wounded when he stepped in, this could of course be fatal - you should warn the player and give him a chance to turn back if this is going to happen. Health Points lost in this way can be restored by the usual spells, but natural healing cannot occur while the character remains in the pyramid.

The purpose of the tunnel is to weaken tomb-robbers so that they will be no match for the Guardian Demon (see below). It was easier and safer for Shefru Cha'af's sacerdots to arrange things this way - a blanket spell debilitating each intruder as he enters - than to summon a much more powerful demon. However, there is a way around the problem for any party that includes at least one Sorcerer, Elementalist or Warlock. The character can cast a durational spell, walk down the tunnel losing all but one of his available Magic Points in the process, then cancel the durational spell once he reaches the tomb chamber itself. This gives him back half the Magic Points he used to cast it. (It takes four Rounds to walk the full length of the

tunnel, but you should perhaps waive the need for Spell Expiry Rolls if a player has this idea. It would be rather unfair to let an unlucky dice roll spoil an elegant plan!)

*The tomb chamber is a high vault faced in grey-green stone and shored up by massive tapering buttresses. The prince's glided sarcophagus rests in a niche in the opposite wall. It is set above the floor, with its base on a level with your eyes.*

*You are immediately aware of a presence gathering in the room. A long adventuring career has taught you to recognize the stench of malign magic. Something hunched and indistinct is taking shape in the centre of the room: a smoky, long-limbed monstrosity. You see no eyes or any other features until it opens its sharply angled maw to reveal a glowing gulf of blue light. You have the impression that its head consists entirely of a wide gaping mouth - then it gives an awful howl and leaps to the attack -*

#### GUARDIAN DEMON

ATTACK 30 Claws (dl2, 9 and strong poison)

DEFENCE 20 Armour Factor 5

MAGICAL DEFENCE 11

EVASIONS

STEALTH 9

PERCEPTION 14

(panoptical)

*Health Points* 52

*Reflexes:* 17

Rank-equivalent: 16th

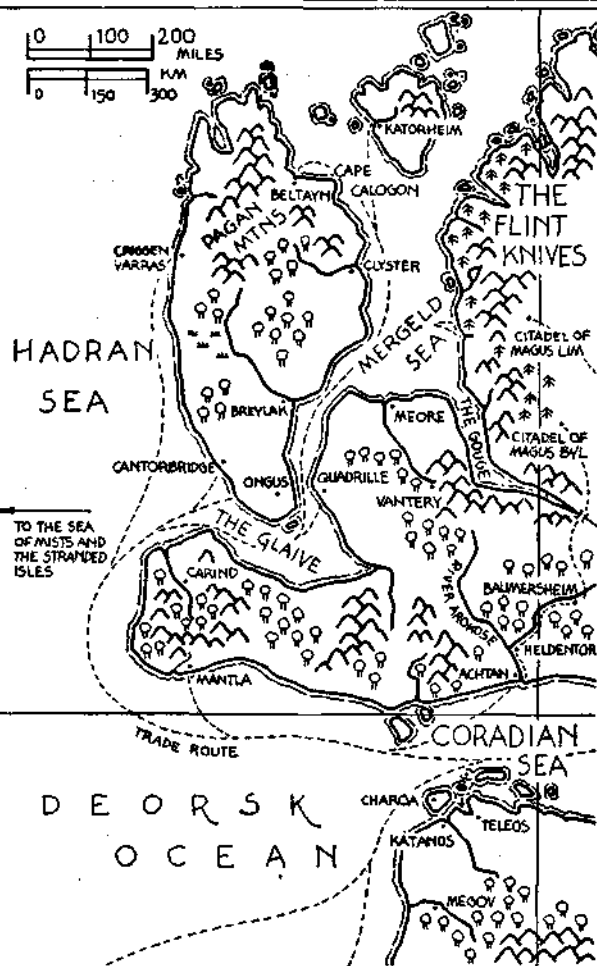
Rings and amulets do not function in this chamber. Potions, however, can still be used. If the demon is defeated there is nothing else to stop the characters ransacking Shefru Cha'af's tomb. The total value of the treasure here is 250,000 Florins. Mostly this in the form of gold ornaments, but there are also some jewelled ornaments on the prince's corpse.



# Legend

## TERRAIN AND AREAS OF IMPORTANCE

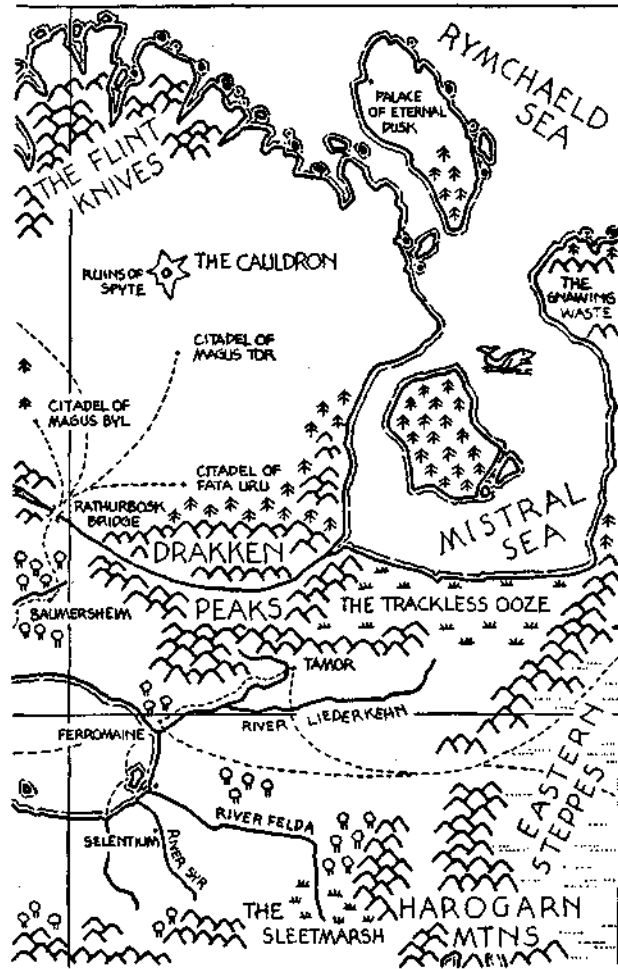
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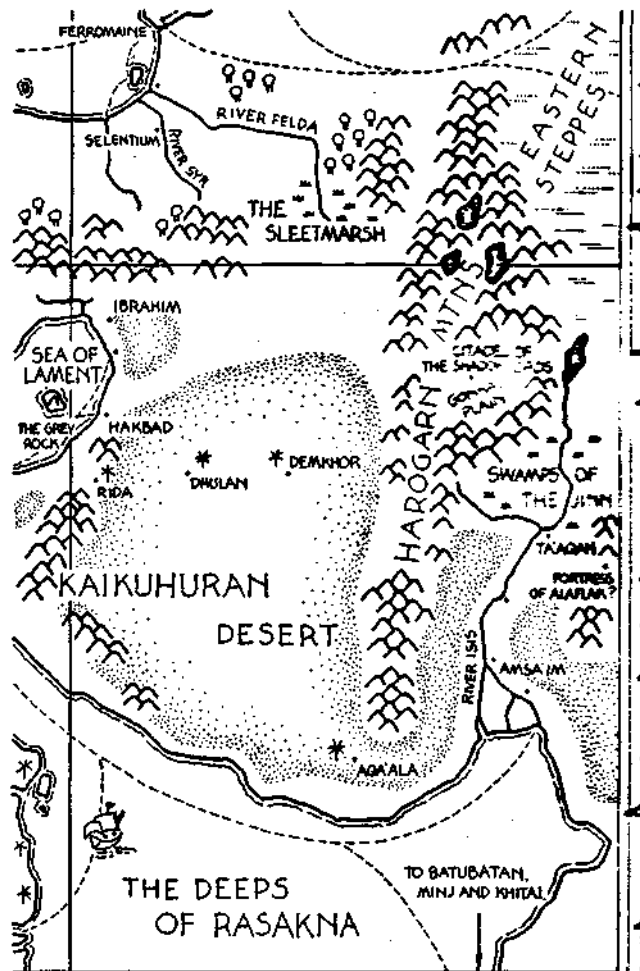
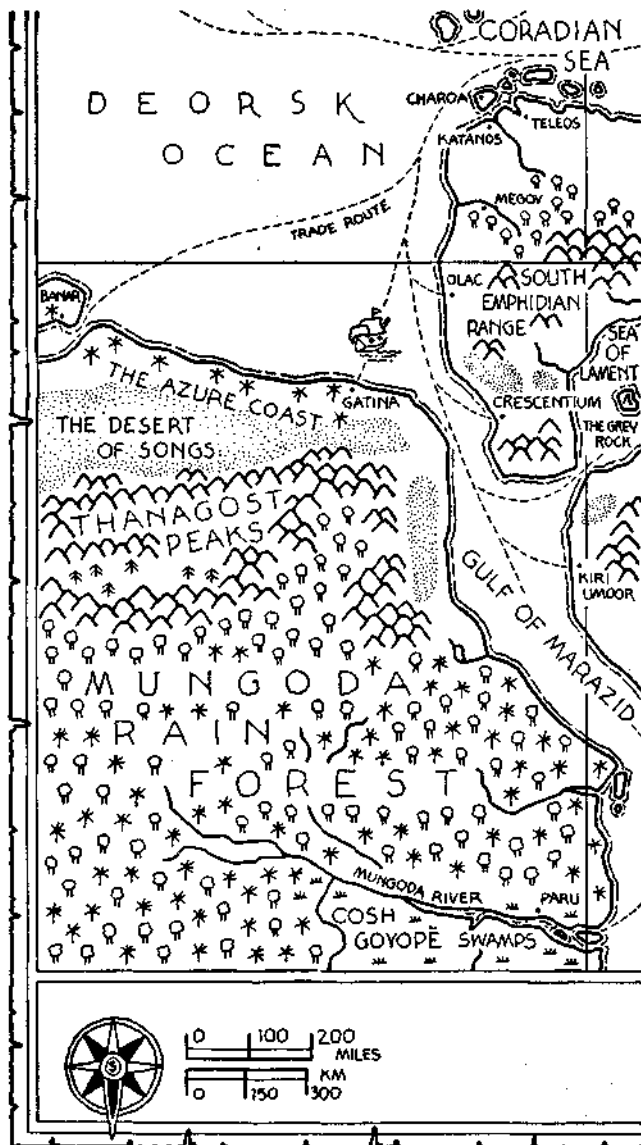


MOUNTAIN RANGE  
CONIFEROUS FOREST  
DECIDUOUS FOREST



TROPICAL FOREST  
DESERT  
COASTLINE





**Legend**  
**TERRAIN AND AREAS OF IMPORTANCE**

#### IV. WRAPPING UP

The adventure is, of course, far from over. The player-characters still have to discuss the division of the spoils with Melano. The voyage home still lies ahead. They may have befriended Subotai or slain him - or made of him one of those perennial NPC enemies that are the spice of a good campaign. The mysterious Knights Capellars have not abandoned their intention to snuff out Melano's life, and they may decide to deal with the player-characters at the same time. All of these plot-threads can be used to generate further adventures that may take place weeks or months after this one.

All in all, though, Melano ends up happy - at least for now - if the characters return with their mission a success. Imbi has some gold artifacts ready with which to buy most of the cargo aboard The Pantocrator's Fist. Enriched, Melano now envisages another scheme: he hopes to return with a larger expedition and strike out into the jungle in search of further gold-laden Kai-kuhuran ruins. Whether or not the player-characters decide to accompany him next time is up to them . . .

## Appendix I

### SHOPS AND SOURCES

Fantasy role-playing is still a hobby rather than a general interest, so for accessories such as dice and scenario packs you must usually go to a mail-order company. Send a stamped, addressed envelope for their catalogues:

Gomes Workshop Mail Order  
Chewtown Street  
Hilltop  
Eastwood  
Nottingham NG16 3HY

Esdevium Games  
185 Victoria Road  
Aldershot  
Hampshire GU11 1JU

Games  
85-87 Victoria Street  
Liverpool L1 6DG

It is also possible to find various outlets of Virgin Games Centre, etc, spread around the country.

There are several magazines devoted to fantasy games. Most are available from newsagents. *GameMaster* is particularly useful, with articles on towns, social classes, skills, trade, and much else of importance to any good FRP campaign. There is also a 32-page scenario every issue, more than justifying the high price. *White Dwarf* is the best-known magazine of the hobby. Published monthly, it usually has a couple of scenarios and numerous features. *WD* is cheaper than *GameMaster*, but generally treats subjects in less depth and tends to concentrate heavily on the products of its publishers (Games Workshop). Also from Games Workshop are *The Good Games Guide* and *Warlock*



GGG carries copious game reviews (worth consulting before you buy, as most FRP products are so expensive) and a scenario or two. *Warlock* is devoted to game-books of the 'if you do this go to 91, if you do that go to 113' variety. From Liverpool comes a promising new magazine, *Adventurer*, which I have not seen at the time of writing.



## Appendix II

### OTHER WORLDS

Legend is one possible setting for your DRAGON WARRIORS campaign. History, cinema and literature provide hundreds of others that you and your player might prefer. Here are some alternative suggestions

#### Feudal Japan

Sixteenth-century Japan was wracked with constant strife and intrigue between the mighty clans. The daimyo (lords) and their samurai rule and peasants had little say. A samurai could even slay a peasant for no reason other than testing the edge of his sword!

Japanese society at this time was in many ways very like early medieval Europe. If you were to run DRAGON WARRIORS adventures in this setting Knights would become Samurai. (A very close equivalence, as the two words both mean - roughly speaking - 'one who serves'.) Barbarians would be the fierce Yamabushi, warrior 'monks' of the mountains. Mystics correspond to the adepts of Zen ascetic monks who were believed to harness uncanny psychic powers. Elementalists are the Shugenja wizards, while Warlocks become the Kiai Masters who combine martial and magical skills. Lastly, I suggest that Sorcerers and Assassins are both interpreted as Ninja. The ninja are nowadays thought of as stealthy martial artists, but in their day they were night's own black agents, the practitioners of magic.

An excellent sourcebook for Japanese campaigns is S.R. Turnbull's *The Book of the Samurai*. Also look at Richard Storry's *The Way of the Samurai*. More esoteric but very enlightening is Musashi's *Book of Five Rings*.

### *Pre-Columbian Mexico*

Little enough is known of the civilizations of Mesoamerica that a GamesMaster who wishes to use this setting can make of it what he will. A campaign could be set in the time of the Maya, for instance, and the events of the campaign could be set against (or even explain) the collapse of the Classic Period.

The last great Mesoamerican empire was that of the Aztecs. This society had three fighting orders: the Eagle Warriors, the Jaguar Warriors and the Arrow Warriors. These may be made to correspond (though I make no pretence to historical accuracy here!) to Knights, Barbarians and Assassins respectively. Player-characters of the appropriate Profession should not automatically become members of a fighting order, however; they must win the right by proving themselves in battle - and perhaps cultivate a few NPC sponsors as well.

The dark priests of the shadowy god Tezcatlipoca ('Smoking Mirror') are the Aztec Sorcerers, while the priests of benevolent Quetzalcoatl ('Feathered Serpent') are Mystics. Warlocks are the martial priests of Huitzilopochtli ('Hummingbird Wizard'), deity of sun and war. Elementalists can be used to represent the last magicians of the now-faded Maya.

There can be no better book for the prospective GamesMaster than Gary Jennings' *Aztec*. This magnificent novel not only creates a totally credible version of Aztec society but also has enough ideas and plotlines to fuel a campaign for years.

### *Roman Britain*

The Roman occupation of Britain is an excellent backdrop for a DRAGON WARRIORS campaign. Players may identify with the invaded Britons - or with the Roman legionaries, outnumbered in a hostile land. An energetic GamesMaster could even run two groups of players on opposing sides.

Barbarians and Elementalists are the British warrior-nobles and druids. Assassins can be used

both as the 'guerillas' of the Britons and as the Roman scouts (LRPs of SPQR, so to speak) who ranged the forest in search-and-destroy missions. Knights and Warlocks feature in the game as the legionaries and their attendant priests of Mars. A few Sorcerers could be explained away as wandering mages from Egypt. If the campaign is set a century or so later, when the occupation has been consolidated, the cultists of Mithras can be introduced also. Some of their priests can then be Mystics.

There are many good sourcebooks for this period. Peter Clayton's *Companion to Roman Britain* has much useful and inspirational detail.

When considering a historical basis for DRAGON WARRIORS, the first step is to find out as much as you can about the period. If the campaign is set in a world of your own creation you can make up details as needed, but if you are using a real time and place then you need to know at least as much about it as your players do! There are several series of the 'Everyday Lives' sort, and few periods in history are not covered. It would be churlish of me not to mention the help I have had in creating Legend from Michael Wood's stirring *In Search of the Dark Ages*, Pierre Miquel's *Knights and Castles* and Morris Bishop's *Book of the Middle Ages*. The last is an indispensably informative work, enlivened by the author's dry sense of humour. Try dipping into Lewis Thorpe's translation of Gregory's *History of the Franks* if you can find it. The sixth century is not quite like Legend as described in this book (I had the tenth to twelfth centuries vaguely in mind), but the *History* is full of amusing anecdotes.

### *Settings from fantasy literature*

Alternatively, you might base your campaign on a favourite novel. J.R.R. Tolkien's Middle Earth and RoberE.Howard's Hyborian Age may seem obvious candidates, but the problem with choosing a too-familiar setting is that your players can read the

books and find out more about the world and its history than their characters ought to know.

Fortunately there are many less well-known works of equal or greater merit. Jack Vance's *Lyonesse* (from the novel of that name) is a fay and intricately detailed world. Vance provides a map, genealogy and full picture of the morass of alliances and wars between his various kingdoms. With very little work it could become the background for an FRP campaign. Vance's other novels are also worth reading, though not all feature settings that would be suitable as game worlds. His *Dying Earth* cycle - *The Dying Earth*, *The Eyes of the Overworld*, *Cugel's Sage* and *Rhialto the Marvellous* - would not be easy to translate into game-mechanics, though all read very much like the adventures of characters in a picaresque campaign.

There are dozens of scenario ideas, too, in Professor M.A.R. Barker's Tekumel novels: *The Man of Gold* and *Flamesong*. Barker is not as accomplished an author as Tolkien (to whom he is often compared), but his imagination is unequalled and his fantasy world of Tekumel is (to my mind) the most meticulous and rich creation in all fantasy literature. Since Barker is himself a GamesMaster - and one of the grey eminences of the FRP hobby - you will find his world covers all the details that role-players find important.

Fritz Lieber's Nehwon books (*Swords in the Mist*, etc) are justly popular. I like his world because it is restrained - low in magic, high in eeriness and atmosphere. All his characters are human - well, you have to wonder about Ningauble of the Seven Eyes and Sheelba of the Eyeless Face; but at least there are no clichéd 'elvenbards', 'merry dwarves', or 'grumpy gnomes' to clutter up Nehwon's landscape. TSR Inc (publishers of *Dungeons & Dragons*) have produced an entire sourcebook which maps out Lieber's city of Lankhmar, so a campaign could be set there without much effort.

Lack of space forces us to pass over many other famous fantasy authors. Mike Moorcock's *Eldritch* books have been translated into FRP form in the game *Stormbringer: The Chronicles of Corum*, based on Celtic myth, are much better. Zelazny's *Amber* series hardly demonstrates the quality of invention of which he is capable; take a look at *Lord of Light* which could make a quirky campaign. Eric Goldberg's *Tales of the Arabian Nights* is not a book but a boardgame - or rather, a hybrid of boardgame and role-playing game. Used alongside the *DRAGON WARRIORS* rules it could form the basis of a first class campaign. Also of interest are Wolfe's *Book of the New Sun*, LeGuin's *Earthsea* trilogy, Lupoff's *Sword of the Demon* and Jennings's *The Journeyer*. And of course, the classic fictional works such as *Beowulf*, *Gawain and the Green Knight*, *Don Quixote* and *Le Morte D'Arthur* are all vital references with which every GamesMaster and player should be familiar.

A final note. If you do not like our *DRAGON WARRIORS* world and cannot find one in all of history or fantasy to suit you, you can always invent your own. Many autocratic GamesMasters (myself included) do this because it gives them total control of the campaign background. Nobody can whip out a copy of the book and tell you you're wrong about what happened to Charlemagne/Sauron/Balin/Hygelac. Putting a world of your own together is a monumental labour, but most GMs (and players, fortunately!) would agree that it is worth the effort.

