Swords & Glory, vol.1

Tékumel Source Book

The World of the Petal Throne

by M.A.R. Barker



THE TÉKUMEL FOUNDATION

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Thank you very much and enjoy the World of Tékumel!

Swords & Glory, vol.1
Tekumel Source Book:

By M. A. R. BARKER

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0.100. Introduction

This volume presents the background materials required for a fantasy role-playing game campaign based upon the world of Tékumel. It is thus a reference work and not a game in itself. This book can be used to enlarge and enhance existing campaigns which employ the game "Empire of the Petal Throne" (by M.A.R. Barker, 1975), or it can be utilised as the foundation for gaming with the revised and rewritten version of this game which will follow as a continuation of this volume.

All of these materials are intended for adults — or for younger persons with greater than average imagination and an interest in exploring new and unfamiliar cultures. Readers of science fiction and fantasy will find the world of Tékumel entertaining and easy going, while those who prefer "real world" simulations may not. This is, of course, a matter of taste.

For those who are new to fantasy role-playing games, it must be pointed out that these are in effect "participatory novels": adventures generated and continued by the referee and the players. One member of a gaming group must take on the tasks of the referee: he or she must use the background materials, design the scenarios (or "storylines") within which the players will interact, and play the parts of the many non-player characters, creatures, etc. which inhabit the world. He or she must also be familiar with the game rules themselves and be able — and dictatorial enough — to settle questions about the rules and disputes. The referee has to draw up the detailed terrain maps for adventures out-of-doors and also the graph-paper maps of the underground labyrinths which many players will wish to explore. Suggestions for preparing these materials will be given later.

The tasks of the referee are arduous. He or she must not only do all of the groundwork mentioned above but also serve as the opponent and all-round "whipping boy" for the players. There are compensations, however. Where else can one find the opportunity to act as "the Gods," "chance," "Mother Nature," and a whole host of nonplayer characters and personalities all rolled up into one? If one's players enjoy the game, one has the satisfaction of having created something which in time becomes almost real and so intriguing as to occupy many hours of leisure time. An "ego-trip," *par excellence!*

The players, in turn, must cooperate in this endeavour. They must be willing to "role-play": to try to think as they imagine their characters think, to act as a real-life citizen of the particular fantasy world would act, and to lay aside the considerations of this world during the hours in which they game. Gaming styles differ from group to group, and from individual to individual. Some favour a "slam-bang adventure" format, with lots of excitement, fighting, and little social interaction. Others may prefer court and temple intrigues, plots and counterplots, a detailed and structured world, etc. All of these goals can be served by combining the right referee, the right players, and as much of the background materials which follow as are needed and wanted. For the "slam-bang" group, the referee may wish to set the scenario in a remote and rather simple region: a place in which the laws of the ancient and conservative Five Empires do not apply, where there are wild and dangerous creatures, and where one depends more upon his weapons than upon his tongue. Those who enjoy more complex scenarios will find plenty of places for their adventures: the vast and complex societies of Tékumel, the politics and machinations of the nations, factions, temples, etc., and the intricate social customs which prevail in the more urbanised and populous regions.

For best results, five to eight players make up a good-sized group. Smaller parties (even just one player and the referee) can be enjoyable, although the fun of inter-player camaraderie is lessened. A courageous referee can manage still larger groups — as many as 15-20 players — but these then tend to divide up into "natural leaders" and "born followers," and less aggressive players may not get much of a chance to "do their stuff." A fairly homogeneous group seems best for maximum enjoyment: people of approximately the same age and culture background. This should not exclude the precocious younger player, however, nor those who are older but still young enough in heart to be fascinated by vicarious adventure.

As its name implies, a fantasy role-playing campaign is not a casual parlour pastime, something to be started and finished within a single evening. It is designed to continue over several months or even years, with weekly, monthly, etc. meetings which may last for hours at a time. One establishes a character, a "persona" in a new and unfamiliar world, and watches this individual grow, progress in society, meet challenges and overcome them, and —hopefully — go on to retire as High General of the Empire (or something similar) at an advanced old age! This takes time, and it is not so much the final result as the excitement along the way which provides the interest. One can design short and simple campaigns, of course: scenarios which are complete in themselves within one evening's gaming. To me, at least, these are not as much fun as the longer-term process of character development just mentioned.

What, then, are the player's responsibilities? He or she reacts to the referee's scenario as it unfolds, telling the referee what action is being performed, speaking his or her character's part in any dialogue, and striving for the goals of material or social progress for his or her persona within the limits of the rules and the chosen role. Combat and sorcery require some dice rolling, and each player is expected to maintain a character record sheet which will list the capabilities, possessions, etc. of the persona. Players in a fantasy role-playing campaign need not compete directly against one another, as in other types of games; instead, they act as a group and combat the referee's creatures and fiendishly devised traps and snares. Some groups permit and encourage more selfish styles of playing: stealing treasures for oneself, plotting against other players' characters, and even deliberate murder. I can only speak from personal experience when I say that — for me — this detracts from the enjoyment of the game, particularly when there is no reason for it within the context of the simulation itself. Murder and mayhem may occur within the player group from time to time, but such actions should be in response to stimuli WITHIN the game and not motivated by casual greed or by misplaced "humour." Simulation, to me, is the desired end. I want my adventures to be as "real" as possible. Others may prefer a different gaming style, of course, and "to each his own..."

What kind of a world, then is Tékumel? The first response which comes to mind is that it is "ancient - mediaeval" in its over-all technology: there are swords, bows, armour, and all the panoply of the pregunpowder ages of Earth. It is also "science fictional" in possessing nonhuman races, "magic" (which is based more upon a science fictional foundation than upon the principles of mediaeval sorcery in this world), and occasional devices representing a technology far beyond that of the present. The rationale for all of this will be clear from reading the first few Sections of this book. Socially and culturally, Tékumel is as complex — and as alien to modern thinking — as Byzantium, ancient Egypt, Tenochtitlan, or the India of the Mughals. It is NOT a "traditional Western" ancient-mediaeval world, however. Its laws, mores, architecture — everything — will be as unfamiliar to those who are skilled in the lore of the ancient Mediterranean world or mediaeval Europe as anything can be. It is also NOT the world of any popular science fiction or fantasy author. The discerning reader will indeed perceive elements taken from all of these sources, particulary from Egypt, the Aztecs and Mayans, the Hellenic Age, Mughal India, and mediaeval Europe. I have also unashamedly borrowed ideas from science fiction and fantasy literature, a genre which I have been reading ever since 1938. Nevertheless, the ethos of Tékumel is not any one of these, nor, I hope, even an easily recogniseable combination. My desire is to create a mythos which will be interestingly different from the traditional ones mentioned above — yet one in which others can participate and gain the same enjoyment which I have had. If this is successful, then I shall be more than satisfied.

This very unfamiliarity may initially frustrate those who have never had a chance to see over the walls imposed by their culture. I have frequently been asked whether a game based upon Tékumel can be refereed by anyone but myself. Isn't Tékumel such a personalised and individual fantasy mythos that no one else can ever really get inside it? I don't think so. During the years after the publication of "Empire of the Petal Throne" I have received hundreds of letters from thoughtful, imaginative gamers from all over the world. These people have "entered" Tekumel and have found it to be "their cup of tea." Even given the rather spotty background materials previously published, hundreds — perhaps thousands — of players seemed to enjoy it, wanted more, and have been patiently awaiting the completion of this present volume and the game rules which follow.

To be sure, Tékumel will probably never have the popular appeal of a game based upon a more familiar, recogniseable background. Yet the audience for which this work is intended is still large enough to justify reworking the rules, expanding the game mechanics, and adding much futher cultural information.

To those who have never looked at Tékumel, I can only suggest the following: if you are interested in a role-playing game based upon the sort of mythos described above, and if you want to explore something less familiar than the "tried and true" backgrounds of our Western civilisation, then you may enjoy Tékumel. Start by reading the background materials given here. Treat them as you would a story. Look at the table of contents and read those Sections which interest you most. Browse. Use the index. Pick out a nation or culture which attracts you more than the rest and go through the book to find everything I have said about it. Don't try to assimilate everything at one sitting. If you are planning a campaign, all you need is the first, immediate locale and an introductory scenario. You will need maps of the underground labyrinths in which your players will want to adventure, plus some ideas about the terrain and the inhabitants of your region. Other things can come later. Then utilise either the older gaming systems of "Empire of the Petal Throne" or the new rules which will follow. Construct a few characters, learn the basics of the movement, combat, and magic systems —and play! I think that you will quickly find yourself "at home" on Tékumel, and as your campaign grows and your players become more experienced, further details will just flow. I have heard from dozens of players to whom the social structures, religions, personalities, creatures, etc. of Tékumel are as familiar as though they had lived there all their lives. Many gamers know the rules better than I do myself (and are forever catching me out on points I had forgotten). So real do these creations of fantasy become that they take on all the hues of reality during a gaming session. Players quickly learn to laugh at the gruff and clumsy Ahoggyá, to dread the sweet fragrance of musty cinnamon, to shudder at the undead minions of mighty Sárku, to glory in the drums and glitter of the Legions of the Petal Throne, or to stand bravely beside the Baron of Yán Kór in his quest for justice and revenge. It all depends not so much upon "familiarity" versus "alienness" as upon the degree to which these things conjure up visual images and interest you. If you like these features, you will like Tekumel.

Once you have purchased this book, moreover, you are welcome to pick and choose from it and use it in your own gaming as you wish. There is no need for "your" Tékumel to be identical with "my" Tekumel. Introduce other characters, different animals, further races — after all, my terrain maps show only a portion of the planet's northern hemisphere, and there is lots of room around the other side! Change the social structures, throw out or ignore features which do not appeal to you. Use your own imagination to bring in features which you and your players will enjoy. The game can function as a springboard into your own fantasy mythos, and if you go on to develop this, we shall all be the richer. If you already have a campaign which uses some other set of rules, you may still wish to utilise these background materials either directly or as a stimulus to enhance your world. Even were we to issue a monthly newsletter or exchange data by telephone, there is no real way to prevent your history from diverging from mine. I can indeed provide further materials — and some are already available from the publisher of this book — but we cannot keep your Tékumel from drifting away from mine. This is as it should be. You have just bought MY Tékumel. Now make it YOUR Tékumel.

0.110. THE ORGANISATION OF THIS BOOK

This volume is divided into two major Sections, each indicated by a numeral in front of the decimal point: "0.XXX. Introduction," and "1.XXX. The World of Tékumel." The brevity of this first Section and the length of the second may make this dichotomy appear to be useless and trivial designation at first glance, but the game rules which follow will continue this system, and as one becomes involved in the details of the gaming mechanisms themselves, it will be seen that this numbering system will be quite helpful.

Within each major Section, sub-Sections are signified by even 100's after the decimal point: e.g. 1.100, 1.200, 1.300, etc. Each of these in turn may be subdivided into decades: e.g. 1.100 may include 1.110, 1.120, 1.130, etc. Further divisions can be created by employing the digits within each decade: e.g. 1.110 may contain 1.111, 1.112, 1.113, etc. An attempt has been made, however, to prevent too many numbered Sections from becoming a burden upon the reader, and headings may thus include several closely related topics. An index is provided at the end of this volume, and this will make most subjects reasonably accessible.

Frequent references are made in the pages which follow to four large terrain maps. These are not included in this volume itself but are to be issued separately.

1.000. THE WORLD OF TÉKUMEL

1.100. Astronomical Data

The planet Tékumel, as it is named in the Tsolyáni language, is the third of five planets swinging about a small star (now called Sinistra, Nu Ophiuchi). The approximate orbital periods, diametres, and mean distances from Tuléng (as the Tsolyáni name their sun) are as follows:

Planet name*	Orbital period	Diametre	Mean distance from the sun
Ülétl**	73 days	6,102 km	51,000,000 km
Riruchél	220 days	27,308 km	107,000,000 km
Tékumel	365 days***	20,838 km	148,600,000 km
Shíchel	2.5 years	33,500 km	275,000,000 km
Zirúna	5.2 years	7,658 km	449,000,000 km

*Names are given in the Tsolyáni language unless otherwise indicated. Other tongues possess their own nomenclatures.

**The Tsolyáni phoneme *ü* (written *y* in some earlier works on Tékumel) is pronounced like the "umlaut *ü*" of German *über* or the *u* of French *tu* in western Tsolyanu. In the eastern regions this vowel is a high central unrounded vowel: the "*i* without a dot" of Turkish. See Sec. 1.1210.

***All figures in this section are approximations, of course. When Tékumel was terraformed, its year was made almost the exact equivalent of that of old Earth.

Ülétl rotates upon its axis in about half a day. Riruchél has a 9 day rotation, Tékumel one of 24 hours, Shíchel one of 105 days, and Zirúna a "day" of 86 standard years. Apart from Tékumel, only Riruchél is marginally inhabitable, and then only at the poles. Ülétl's atmosphere is composed of unbreathable gases, Shíchel's is largely methane; and Zirúna is an airless ball of rock and ice.

Tekumel has two moons: greenish Gayél has an orbital period of about 30 days, a diametre of 4,400 km, a mean distance from Tékumel of approximately 568,350 km, no rotation (i.e. it always presents the same face to Tékumel), and apparently no atmosphere. Reddish Káshi circles Tékumel once in about 15 days, has a diametre of 1,900 km, a mean distance from Tékumel of 357,094 km, no rotation, and no atmosphere. Riruchél has three moons, and Shíchel five, the details of which may be omitted here.

The colours of the various heavenly bodies, as perceived from Tékumel, cause them to be associated with certain of the deities of the Tsolyáni pantheon (Sec. 1.610). These relationships may be noted here.

Heavenly body	Colour	Associated Tsolyani deity
Tuléng (the sun)	Yellowish white	Hnálla, the Supreme Principle of Stability
Ülétl	Dusty brown	Sárku, Lord of Worms and Master of the Undead
Riruchél	Scarlet	Karakán, Lord of War and Master of Heroes
Shíchel	Sky-blue	Avánthe, Mistress of Heaven and Mother of Devotion
Zirúna	Dim, flickering purple	Hrú'ü, the Supreme Principle of Change, Master of Negation and Non-Being
Gayél (moon)	Emerald green	Dlamélish, Green-Eyed Lady of Fleshly Joys and Mistress of Demons
Káshi (moon)	Bloody orange-red	Vimúhla, Lord of Fire, Power of Destruction and Red Ruin

The natures of these associated deities provide the astrological qualities of the heavenly bodies: e.g. a child born with Káshi in the Ascendant and Riruchél in the Mid-Heaven is thought to possess the attributes of a mighty warrior.

Aside from the seven listed above, no other bodies are visible in the skies of Tékumel. There are no stars. The reasons for this will be hinted at below.

1.110. CLIMATE

In comparison with other worlds inhabited by man, Tékumel is both large and hot. The polar icecaps are rather small, and temperatures in the northern sub-polar tundra areas average from 25 degrees to -5 degrees C in the north to 0 degrees-20 degrees C at 55 degrees north latitude. Much of this area would be quite pleasant except that the region is rocky and inhospitable to agriculture. The natives, the Lorún (see below), hunt and glean a meagre living from edible mosses and hardy tubers during the winter, while the summers bring a swift burgeoning of life, making survival easier. The southern sub-polar areas, on the other hand, are comparatively fertile. The nonhuman Urunén (see below) who dwell there are able to farm, hunt, fish, and gather food throughout the year.

From western Mu'ugalavyá (map 1; for a description of these terrain maps, see Sec. 1.300) all the way across nearly to the eastern coast of Salarvyá (map 4) the climate is "continental": daily temperatures vary considerably, seasonal variations occur, and the air is clear and dry. The interior of the continent is too far for the westerly winds to bring in moisture off the sea. Many of the mountain ranges on maps 3 and 4 are barren; there are deserts; and underground sources are needed to water the fertile valleys of Mihállu, etc. As an example in the west, one may cite Khirgár (map 2): the average mean temperatures there range from 12 degrees to 32 degrees C, with the hottest days of the summer attaining as much as 40 degrees C. Ssa'átis (map 1) and Béy Sú, (map 2) are much the same, but Fasíltum (map 2) is warmer with occasional scorching days reaching 48 degrees C. Altitude and distance from the sea make such towns as Tkémar in Rannálu (map 3) a little cooler and much drier: temperatures there range from 10 degrees to 29 degrees C, with the hottest reaching 35 degrees C.

There are no transverse mountain ranges to block the sea winds in Livyánu and Shényu (map 1), and the climate there is "marine": a narrower range of temperatures, high humidity, and less seasonal variation. Proximity to the equator makes for greater heat, however, and the average mean temperatures at Tsámra (map 1) vary between 29 degrees to 41 degrees C, with summer extremes attaining 53 degrees C. Needless to say, all work ceases in the summer in Livyánu, no one emerges during the day, shops are open only at night, and all but the most unfortunate citizens seek refuge in deep cellars dug beneath their houses. Ssorvá in Shényu (map 1) is even less pleasant, but the nonhuman Shén enjoy greater warmth than most humans can tolerate.

Winds swirling southwards off the Pentrúrtra Deeps (map 2) provide a "coastal" climate (in which marine influences predominate) for Ghatón, Pijéna, Yán Kór, and parts of Saá Allaqí (map 2). The average mean temperature range at Yán Kór City is between 9 degrees and 29 degrees C, with very hot days attaining 37 degrees C. The winds from the northern ocean drop their rain once they reach the great central east-west mountain range south of Milumanayá (map 2), and it is this moisture which fertilises the plains of northern Tsolyánu.

The Deeps of Chanayága produce a similar coastal climate for southern Tsolyánu and Salarvyá (maps 2-4). At Jakálla (map 2) the average mean temperature ranges from 26 degrees to 40 degrees C, with very hot summer days attaining 51 degrees C. Peléis (map 3) and Jaekánta (map 4) are much the same, although the latter is affected by the marine climate of the eastern ocean. As might be expected, Háida Pakála and the Nyémesel Isles to the south of the Deeps are still hotter, and the humidity makes their climates well-nigh insufferable.

Just north of the equator at 5-7 degrees north latitude (i.e. south of the terrain maps which extend from 12 degrees to 48 degrees N), a belt of trade winds blows at moderate speeds from the northeast. South of the equator another belt is encountered blowing in the opposite direction. The terrible equatorial heat (over 60 degrees C in some months) makes these winds accessible only to the ships of the Shén, however, and it is this heat which has made contact between the northern and the southern hemisphere so difficult over the centuries.

Seasonal shifts in pressure belts create monsoons throughout southern Tsolyánu (map 2) and all along the coastlands of Salarvyá (maps 2-4). The annual rainfall at Penom (map 2) is over 425 cm, while at Jakálla it is 380 cm. This contrasts with Béy Sú and other central cities to the north which have an annual rainfall of about 70 cm. Khirgár, in the area north of the monsoons but south of the ocean winds from the Pentrúrtra Deeps, gets about 22 cm annually, while Fasíltum receives about 15 cm. The marine climates of western Livyánu and Shényu (map 1) receive considerable rainfall: e.g. Sraón has an annual precipitation of 290 cm, while Tsámra in the east gets 252 cm. These contrast strongly with the northern regions of the interior of the continent, which lie beyond the reach of the moisture-bearing ocean winds. Rainfall is almost nil in the Dry Bay of Ssu'úm (map 2), the Sleeping Desert of Mihállu, etc., and the Plains of Glass (map 4) have had no rain at all for over 500 years.

1.200. Early History.

Tékumel was not visited by mankind until some 60,000 years after the Twentieth Century. By this time all of man's present, modern concerns — the dreaded atomic Armageddon, the destruction of Europe and much of North America, the slow recovery, the rise and fall of later empires, the spreading of mankind out into the stars, the thrill (and fear) of initial contacts with nonhuman races, the wars and invasions and the many establishments of "lasting peace" — all of these things were as remote to the starfarers who first landed on Tékumel as the pyramid of Khufu is to Twentieth Century man — indeed, much more so. "Even the voices of the mountains are muted by the Sea of Time," as the great Engsvanyáli epic poem, "Lament to the Wheel of Black," puts it.

The first explorers looked down upon a world almost uninhabitable by man. Poisonous purple vegetation covered the land from pole to pole; many-legged mucid monsters splashed in tidal pools of stinking slime; quaking seas of mud roiled with vermiform life; brooding, crumpled mountain peaks raked skies filled with clouds of yellow gas. The planet was indeed also inhabited: the continents by several subspecies of semi-subterranean beings called the Ssú, and the coasts and islands by a related race named the Hlüss. Both of these races were inimical to mankind. Both possessed enough technology to make any human conquest difficult at best, including rudimentary spaceflight and energy weapons.

Under other circumstances almost any other spacefaring race might have been happy to go their way and leave well enough alone. But Tékumel lay upon an important interstellar trade route, and the rulers of Humanspace were both ruthless and efficient. Mighty weapons cut swathes through the purplish jungles and defeated the Ssú and the Hlüss, driving them back into small enclaves which eventually became "reservations." The deadly flora and fauna were poisoned and replaced with the familiar life of Humanspace. The atmosphere was cleared, the seas emptied of much of their dangerous life. The planet itself was shifted in its orbit, and its day was made to conform to the standards of ancient Terra, now long lost and far away across the galaxy. Tékumel was larger than earth, but its core was composed of lighter elements, and the gravity had to be adjusted only slightly through the insertion of great eternal engines buried deep within the planet's core. All of this took over a century to achieve, of course, but in the end Tékumel was a place fit for mankind and his allies to live — hotter, perhaps, than one might wish, and spotted here and there with patches of the ancient purplish vegetation, but well within the limits of tolerance and even of comfort. Colonists came and settled, and soon men sang of Tékumel as "home."

As the centuries passed Tékumel became a residential planet. The wealthy and the powerful came down from the stars and shed their fatigue beside its lazy seas. Villas and palaces, parks and pavilions, domes and cupolas rose in place of the decaying alien cities of the Ssú and the Hlüss. Elegant aristocrats and their glittering companions feasted and danced and visited one another through a planet-wide network of undergound tubeway cars. The skies thundered with the mighty ships of interstellar commerce. Luxuries came from all of the worlds of Humanspace, and the sprawling estates were filled with interesting animals and exotic flora. Tékumel relaxed into being a graceful, somnolent pleasure world, a place to which every lesser man yearned someday to retire.

The allies of mankind came too, brought across unimaginable distances by the interstellar Three-Light Drive. The slender Pé Chói from Procyon brought their delicate technology. The reptilian Shén from Antares settled in the hottest equatorial regions in areas unwanted by their human colleagues. The stumpy Ahoggyá from Achernar built their soggy villages in the coastal swamplands. The

Pygmy Folk from Mirach, the little Tinalíya from Algol, the aerial Hláka from Ensis, the clever Urunen from Betelgeuze, the forest-dwelling Páchi Léi from Arcturus, and the Swamp Folk from Unukalhai arrived as well, and to each race a region was granted best fitted to its needs. Tékumel was a large planet, and there was room.

Certain of mankind's foes also came uninvited. The vicious amphibian Hlutrgú from Algenubi and the stinking Shunned Ones from Regulus set up secret observation outposts in remote areas of Tékumel (or perhaps they had been there all along since before the planet was terraformed?). The aquatic Nyaggá from Alhena and the translucent crystalloid Hokún from Markeb did the same. The strange and unpredictable Mihálli from Dorsum, a race endowed with interdimensional travel and objectives so unintelligible that commerce with them was forbidden, appeared without warning and proceeded to dig an underground city in the wilds of the northern hemisphere. Since they bothered no one and since they were of mild interest to the jaded masters of Tékumel, they were left unopposed.

In their ancient fastnesses the Ssú and the Hlüss brooded, waited, and bided their time. Patches of the Old Vegetation learned to adapt and to flourish in the untravelled depths of the remotest hinterlands.

Thus it remained until the Time of Darkness. No records exist of this catastrophic age. The few fragments of folk memory which do exist lament in mythic terms of a time when the hills rose up, the seas walked the land, flame spouted from the brazen mouths of the mountains, and the stars went out forever. This last is most significant: it must be assumed that Tékumel and its solar system fell — or were thrust — through a warp in the fabric of space-time itself, a "hole in the sky," into a pocket dimension in which no other matter existed. The reasons for this terrible calamity can only be guessed: natural forces, stresses created by the incessant use of the Three-Light Drive, the actions of a hostile race, interference from mighty interdimensional beings far beyond man and his allies on the evolutionary scale, the vengeance of God upon His arrogant and overweening Creation — ? No one knows. It may only be noted in passing that this same fate befell 772 other worlds of Humanspace within a century after the disappearance of Tékumel and its system. If these catastrophes are due to some unimaginable weapon, it is a terrible one indeed and one for which no known race has yet developed a counter.

The sudden cutting of the lines of magnetic and gravitic force which link star to star caused unimaginable strain upon the sun and planets of Tékumel's system. For a time the survival of life itself hung by the slenderest of threads. Dazed and shocked, the survivors of the cataclysm, man and non-man alike, looked up into the black emptiness of the new night sky and despaired. Communications and commerce were gone. The great ships stood idle because there was nowhere for them to go. Cities sprawled in ruins, new lands rose dripping from the oceans, while others sank beneath the waters. Food production and distribution came to a halt. Plagues once thought banished forever returned to stalk the land. Factories went silent as power sources failed. Raw materials once brought from the stars became unavailable —particularly iron which had never been common on Tékumel due to the planet's light core. The machines of former times became great prizes and assumed an air of wonder and of sanctity. As the centres of education were obliterated by earthquake, volcano, and the ravages of time, technicians could not be found to maintain the machines, and one by one the lights went out, bringing about a darkness which was not only of the skies or of the cities but also of the mind...

Some machines continued to run, of course, fueled by self-contained transfer devices which pulled raw energy through from other dimensions. Parts of the subterranean tubeway system survived since its tunnels and cars were powered by these forces. The seas roared into some of the tunnels, of course, while others were choked with lava or were folded into oblivion through the birth-agonies of the continents. Slowly Tékumel's survivors began to learn the techniques of agriculture and a less technological way of life. Mankind and his allies survived and eventually prospered once again in spite of all that the elements and an angry Fate could do to them. It is said — although it is not known for certain — that the Time of Darkness lasted for more than fifty centuries.

The Ssú and the Hlüss also suffered in the cataclysm, but as the planet stabilised once more they began to see it as a blessing. The weapons and force fields which had restricted them to their reservations ceased to operate. The Old Vegetation reappeared here and there, aggressively pushing back the alien greenery brought by the hated Conqueror. Mankind and his allies retreated here, gave way a little there. The Old Races exulted and dreamed dreams of reclaiming their world. But they did not reckon with mankind's more rapid birthrate or with his genius for military action. Although they were ferocious fighters, neither the Ssú nor the Hlüss were culturally oriented towards organised military campaigning, and though in the end they found themselves with more land then before the Time of Darkness, nevertheless mankind and his allies still held the greater part of the planet. Remote mountain ranges, distant island archipelagoes, expanses of windswept tundra — these became the domain of the Old Races; mankind and his allies still dwelt in the fertile plains, the rich seacoasts, and the verdant uplands.

Mankind's other foes prospered as well. The pallid Hlutrgú cooperated with no one. They, too, were rapid breeders, and when they spilled out into the coastal swamplands they had to be driven back in a long series of brutal and bloody wars. The sinuous Nyaggá built their undersea cities of coral and sea-wrack and troubled no one, except for an occasional raid or sly joke upon those who dwelt upon the land above. The Shunned Ones sealed themselves in domed cities filled with noxious gases more to their liking, emerging only to slay unwary travellers or to seek needed resources. The translucent, insect-like Hokún pretended to cooperate with mankind for a time, warred with him, enslaved him, ruled him as gods, and were eventually defeated by him. Sulking and filled with hate, the Hokún retreated to their great island in the southern seas, and no man (or any other of his allies) dares now to land upon those shores. The Mihálli went about their strange affairs as usual, keeping entirely to themselves. Eventually they fell prey to one of mankind's oldest and least agreeable traits: avarice. One of their neighbours, a "king" of one of the cities of the Latter Times, so lusted after the imagined treasures of their underground city that he unleashed one of the last great planetary bombs upon it, destroying not only the Mihálli but himself and his people as well. It is said that there are still a few Mihálli upon Tékumel, but if so, they no longer come openly into the cities of men.

Mankind's allies tended to drift more and more into enclaves of their own. The heatloving Shén spread along the equator, the Páchi Léi and the Pé Chói into forest regions which reminded them of their lost homes, the Tinalíya and the Pygmy Folk into mountainous areas similar to their original planets, the Swamp Folk and the Ahoggyá into the bogs and swamps along the coastal lowlands. The Urunén, a race of furred bipeds with heads reminiscent of an ancient terrestrial ram, betook themselves off to the cooler climes of the southern polar regions, and as the underground tubeways ceased to operate they found themselves in virtually complete isolation. The Hláka similarly went to dwell in high mountain eyries, but this gregarious race of flyers preferred to remain closer to mankind and his technology.

1.300. The Historical Empires

A detailed description of all of the peoples and nations of present-day Tékumel would require many more pages than can be allotted here. Indeed, one of the fascinations of Tékumel is the very unknowability of all of its mysteries, the excitement of exploration, and the thrill of adding another piece to its intricate jigsaw puzzles. It seems best, therefore, to focus upon only one major area: the great northern continent which extends from 12 degrees to 48 degrees north latitude and from an arbitrary 0 degrees to about 90 degrees east longitude. The terrain maps supplied with this game depict most of this region.

Tékumel has a circumference of some 65,464.5 km. Each of the four terrain maps shows about 1/14th of the globe's circumference at 12 degrees N. A map hexagon is 100 Tsolyani *Tsán* from side to side, and since one *Tsán* equals 1.33 km, a hexagon measures 133.33 km across. Each terrain map thus contains 4,533.33 km from east to west. It is harder to measure directly from north to south since the hexagons are offset from one another, but it may be noted that the maps depict a north-south distance of approximately 7,081 km. The maps are numbered from 1 (the westernmost) to 4 (easternmost).

1.310. THE EMPIRE OF LLYÁN OF TSÁMRA

Nothing of the world before the Time of Darkness now remains on

the surface of Tékumel. The earthquakes, tidal waves, volcanoes, and storms have had their way with the fragile cities of men, and the gentler forces of erosion, silting, forest growth, and the yearly wind and rain have completed the task. Some of the great shuttle ships still stand, perdurable towers of never rusting metal, half buried in the alluvia and debris of millenia. Here and there, too, buried beneath the many strata of later settlements, one finds the remains of the underpinnings of the cities of the ancients: metal corridors, twisted and buckled chambers, bits of corroded and unintelligible machines, fragments of plastic and the effluvia of technology, here and there a skeleton which crumbles into dust at the touch. A very few of the devices found in these labyrinths are still operable: some of the little tubeway cars still stand brightly lit in their stations, awaiting the richly clad passengers who come no more; here is a supply room (perhaps containing nothing more interesting than tins of inedible food), there an arsenal in which racks of enigmatic weapons loom in the darkness, many so decayed that they pose a greater threat to their user than to the target; caches of the Latter Times are filled with everything from toiletries to aircars, lovingly and jealously hoarded by those who feared the coming darkness. Most of these wondrous items are unusuable by the present inhabitants of Tékumel. They are both awesome and dangerous. Men have died from thinking ladies' perfume to be liquor, from the explosion of a defective power cell, from acids stored in rotting containers which need just a touch to burst open and spill their contents upon the unwary, from travelling in a tubeway car to a destination where the safety devices no longer work and the tunnel has collapsed, and from a thousand other simple, silly causes which could have been avoided if only the languages of the ancients were still known. But aeons have passed; the Time of Darkness and even the Latter Times are now farther in the past of Tékumel than the migrations of the Indo-European tribes are to Twentieth Century man. No one living can read the books, the instructions, the signs carefully posted upon the walls. The tapes and talking pictures which still officiously instruct tubeway passengers to watch the doors and fasten the seatbelts are only so much incomprehensible gabble. The cultures of modern Tékumel no longer have the technical ability or the cultural orientation to understand the manuals and the textbooks even if the grammars and vocabularies were available.

The oldest written records date back only some 25,000 years — and this dating is doubtful at best. Thanks to the industrious scholars of the Engsvanyáli Empire (see below), portions of a language now termed Llyáni are known. Working from sources now lost, these sages compiled a syllabary, a dictionary, and a partial grammar of the blocky, squarish glyphs found upon certain artifacts excavated from some of the oldest cities. The longest and most complete Llyáni text is the "Tablets of Llyán," written upon leaves of imperishable gold and now kept in the sanctuary of the temple of the Livyáni deity Qame'él in the city of Tsámra (map 1). These tablets speak of the foundation of a mighty empire by a soldieradventurer named Llyán "in the days which came after the Latter Times." Llyán's capital was apparently at Tsámra itself, and his tablets give a list of the cities and provinces which he ruled or subjugated. Most of these names, alas, are meaningless now since the places to which they refer are themselves long lost in the mists of history.

Nothing else much remains of Llyán's "mighty empire": fragments of walls (the stones fitted together without mortar so perfectly that the blade of a knife cannot be inserted between them), golden scrolls and small tablets, a few inscribed statuettes depicting unnamed gods, crumbing rings of monoliths set high upon knolls all across Livyánu and southern Mu'ugalavyá (map 1), still called "Llyán's Houses" by presentday peasants, shards of red-glazed pottery — these are all that is left upon the surface. Below, in the lightless catacombs which underlie many of the ancient cities, there is more: chambers and halls and sepulchres below Ch'óchi in Mu'ugalavyá (map 1), empty, dusty shrines beneath Tsámra itself, an intricate circular labyrinth with walls all carven with murals and glyphs under Khéiris in Mu'ugalavyá (map 1), and occasional hoards of curiously thick coins stamped with the image of a naked man bearing what seems to be a wand or a twohanded sword.

By Llyán's time the technology of otherdimensional power had become "magic" for all intents and purposes. Devices made before the Time of Darkness or during the Latter Times often contain Llyáni inscriptions and incantations. Some unknown sage during the Latter Times had also discovered that the mind alone can be trained as a tool to bring other-planar power through into this world and shape it into matter or energy, and the scholars of Llyán's age compiled voluminous compendia of "spells" and magical instructions detailing the mental and physical attitudes, gestures, actions, words of power and other means of utilising energy from the Planes Beyond. The "skin of reality," moreover, was found to be thinner in Tékumel's new pocket dimension than it had been in its previous universe, and it was therefore easier to open gateways — "nexus points" — between the Planes. Those who could master the techniques could travel or call the denizens of those dimensions into this world — sometimes with disastrous results. Llyán's wizards were fascinated by these phenomena, and many of their pandects deal with "demonology" and the topography of the Planes Beyond. It is unfortunate that so little of this wisdom has been preserved.

Even less is known of the political history of Llyán's empire. Various tablets and inscriptions mention kings, priests, generals and governors, but these are now only names. There are hints of wars with the Hlüss and with the other human states, whispers of religious strife, fragments of economic records and temple donations —but no more.

Those who wish to know more of this period should consult the following book: "Kabárikh hiLlyán lél Máisurmra Kolumébabàr" (The Story of Llyan and His Empire), by Messíliu Badárian, in Tsolyáni, preserved in manuscript in the Temple of Thúmis in Khéiris (map 1). Later copies of this standard but somewhat outdated work can be found in other collections also. A more recent study is Tetukél hiViridáma's "Tsa'kélikh hiTsáipamoguyal hiLlyándàlisa" (An Examination of the Artifacts [lit. things found] of Great and Mighty Llyán), in Tsolyáni, available in most temple and Imperial libraries throughout Tsolyánu (map 2). Many Livyáni and Mu'ugalavyáni sources exist as well.

1.320. THE THREE STATES OF THE TRIANGLE

Contemporary with or perhaps just subsequent to the Empire of Llyán, another human state arose in the plains of southern Tsolyanu (map 2). No material artifacts of this society have been identified for certain since the three capitals of this nation or confederation — Úrmish in the west, Jakálla in the south, and Thráya in the east — have been rebuilt many, many times, and any smaller sites now lie buried beneath metres of sediment in the Mssúma River delta. A handful of stone inscriptions in an unknown script have been recovered from the caverns beneath Penóm (map 2), and a stratum of black-on-red pottery from a site near Úrmish has been attributed to this culture.

Almost all of the evidence for the Three States of the Triangle comes from their enemies and conquerors, the Dragon Warriors who swept down from N'lüss in the far northwest. According to their records, the armies of the Three States did battle with the nonhuman Churstálli, a semi-intelligent species related to the Ssu, and also with the Mihálli. Both of these statements must either be erroneous — mere legend — or else the geographic spread of the Churstálli and the Mihálli must have been different from what can be inferred today. The nearest Churstálli habitat now lies far to the northwest, past Mu'ugalavya (map 1), while no Mihálli settlements are reported any nearer than eastern Jannu (map 3), many thousands of kilometres to the east! More certain is the alliance of the Three States of the Triangle with the reptilian Shén in a series of wars with the Hlüss; this is corroborated by Shén records.

For further information the student should consult "Savályal hiPáchuyal hiFánuldàli" (The Cities of the Lords of the Great Triangle), by Dumán Langshá, in Tsolyáni, preserved in manuscript in the Temple of Karakán in Jakálla (map 2).

1.330. THE DRAGON WARRIORS

Any discussion of the next great period of history must immediately involve the student in the controversy over the nature of the "dragons" which the ancient N'lüss rode into battle. The epics speak of the dragons as "flying upon brazen wings," "armoured as though with iron," and "slaying with tongues of flame." Scholars of many nations and times, from the Engsvanyáli to the present, have disputed whether these "dragons" were in fact aircars preserved since before the Time of Darkness or whether they were living

creatures, perhaps related to the great *Srō*, a species of huge flying reptile brought originally from one of the Shēn worlds. Since the *Srō* cannot be domesticated, the aircar theory drew the most support until recently, when an expedition returned from a land called Tanē, far beyond Mu'ugalavyā and the Unknown Forest (off map 1 to the west). The tribes of this distant region use a sub-species of *Srō* as an armoured mobile fortress in battle, and while the *Srō* of Tanē must have their wings clipped in order to prevent them from flying off, it is theorised that the Dragon Warriors may have had even more advanced techniques and could employ these huge beasts as flying attack vehicles. No pictorial or skeletal evidence of this has yet been found, however.

A note concerning the lack of riding beasts in this part of Tēkumel is appropriate here. By the time mankind reached the planet, he had outgrown the need for living steeds, and the horse of Terra, the six-legged *Bazhāq* of Deneb, and the delicate *Ngēkka* of the Rigellian worlds were imported by the magnates of the age before the Time of Darkness solely to add grace and beauty to their parks and animal preserves. Few in numbers and isolated here and there upon Tēkumel's many small continents and island archipelagoes, these beasts have never been much used for riding. Even when equestrian peoples are encountered, there is almost certain to be a cultural lag: for example, the Tanē expedition reported the employment of the *Bazhāq* as a sort of slow and lumbering "light cavalry" in Tanē warfare and presented the Tsolyāni Imperium with specimens of this animal. The Emperor and his councillors saw no real military potential in the *Bazhāq*, however, and relegated them to the zoological gardens of Avanthār (map 2). After all, it was over a thousand years from the introduction of the horse as a chariot animal in the ancient Middle East of Earth to the Companion Cavalry of Alexander — and a few hundred years more to the invention of the stirrup! There ARE horses and other riding animals on Tēkumel; it remains for some enterprising explorer to find them, bring them back, and then succeed in the more onerous task of convincing the formalised, conservative societies of the planet of their economic and military usefulness.

The only beast of burden, aside from man and the intelligent nonhumans themselves, in all of the vast regions shown on the terrain maps is the *Chlēn*, a gigantic, lumbering herbivore. A *Chlēn* stands 4 to 5 m high at the shoulder, is armoured like a dinosaur, has six legs (it, too, is a native of one of the Denebian worlds), and travels at the solemn rate of about 3 km per hour or 15 km per day. It is not ridden but is hitched to heavy carts, and its gentle and timorous nature makes it quite useless in war. The *Chlēn* is important for yet another reason: its thick hide can be repeatedly "peeled off" and fashioned into armour and weapons which are light but yet almost of the same hardness as iron. More will be said of *Chlēn*-hide later.

To return to the historical narrative, it must be pointed out that the Dragon Warriors were hardy barbarians, members of scattered tribes who eked out a meagre living in the harsh mountains of the far northwest. They were both stronger and taller than the peoples of the south, averaging about 2 m in height to the southerners' 1.56 m. (It is said that the N'lüss added almost 5 cm to the average height of those they conquered through intermarriage — and rape — within a hundred years of their coming.)

Thirty years after their first incursions the Dragon Warriors had overrun the many city-states of what is now Mu'ugalavyā (map 1) and sacked the mighty city of Ch'ōchi. Within 50 years they had destroyed the remnants of the Empire of Llyān and hurled themselves upon the fiercely defended frontiers of the Shēn states to the south. They made no further progress in that direction. Turning east, they plundered the coasts of what is now Yān Kōr (map 2) within another century and were locked in a death struggle with the Three States of the Triangle. When the latter fell, the Dragon Warriors rolled on eastwards, and by the end of the second century of their great adventure their banners of painted human skin flapped from the towers of Tsatsayāgga in Salarvyā (map 2). It was here that their empire reached its greatest extent. Frustrated in the north by the barren peaks of Jānnu and Kilalāmmu (map 2), blocked in the east by the dreaded Ssū enclave of Ssūyal, and confronted in the south by the rising vitality of the Salarvyāni feudal states, over-extended and too few to maintain their sprawling conquests — and perhaps simply tired of endless war — the Dragon Warriors set up their boundary stelae and swore to go no further.

The motive for the sudden incursion of the N'lüss into the southern lands lies partially in their character and culture. The ethos of N'lüss society is war. Their life revolves around an endless cycle of raiding, massacre, and revenge. The songs of the N'lüss are bitter, angry recitations of relatives and friends lost, foemen slain, and plunder taken. A boy becomes a man only when he mounts the skull of an enemy upon his housepost, and a girl becomes a woman only by donning the flayed skin of a foeman and dancing the Circle Dance at the winter solstice. The N'lüss are honest to a fault, loyal to their chiefs, and hospitable to those who claim guesting from them. Yet when they go upon a raid they take no prisoners, ask for no quarter, and give none. If the Dragon Warriors were anything like their modern descendents, one can well imagine the terror of the soft and civilised peoples of the south when confronted with serried wedges of these gigantic barbarians, each led by its war-chief, every man swinging a two-metre long two-handed sword, flanked by yelling, ululating hordes of women and youths hurling stones from slings, firing arrows, and running in like madmen to display their courage!

An even more compelling reason for the invasion of the Dragon Warriors seems to have been the establishment of the worship of Vimūhla, Lord of Fire. During the latter days of the Empire of Llyan some unknown scholar, perhaps a Llyāni wizard exiled to the wastes of N'lüss, made contact with certain of the mightiest beings of the Planes Beyond. Far transcending mankind's understanding, unimaginably powerful, yet willing to aid those who serve their enigmatic goals, these beings are for all intents and purposes "gods." Attempts to comprehend, propitiate, and gain the help of these "gods" form the basis of almost all subsequent religious thought upon Tēkumel.

It was soon discovered that rivalries and enmities exist between these "gods" themselves, doctrines of which mankind could only be dimly aware, stakes which involve whole galaxies and Planes. One "alignment" supports "Stability": a status quo, a tranquil and peaceful progression of time and space on towards a final amalgamation into a perfect and eternal "Light of Being." The other party of "gods" urges "Change": continual and endless ephemerality, with all Planes perpetually undergoing violent upheavals, birth, death, and renewal. The final destination of this latter group may be termed "Chaos," but in reality it is a state in which the only unchanging principle is Change itself. There are also interplanar beings — "gods" — who stand outside of these two parties, as well as whole hierarchies of lesser inhabitants of other dimensions who have greater or lesser talents and powers than does mankind. It is incorrect to speak of any of these "alignments" in human moral terms; they are neither "good" nor "evil" in man's ethical systems, except as how they effect man himself. "Stability" implies less pain and violence for the denizens of the Planes, while "Change" naturally implies more dislocation and personal unpleasantness. Yet even the boundaries which separate these two positions surpass mankind's understanding: for example, various aspects of a "god" who is a member of one "alignment" in one nation and period may be found in the opposite "alignment" elsewhere; two separate deities in one land are combined into one in another, etc. All that can be known with certainty is what the "gods" disclose — and even this can be only partial and beyond man's ability to grasp.

N'lüss culture is founded upon violence, and the chiefs and shamans of the Dragon Warriors quickly seized upon that "god" who best suited their ethos: mighty Vimūhla, Lord of Fire, Power of Destruction and Red Ruin, the All-Consuming One. His function in the pantheon of Change is violence, catharsis and rebirth through the cleansing transition of the Flame. The tribal shamans quickly became a red-robed hierarchy, and the squalid log huts of the village of Malchāiran (map 1) were transformed into the proud towers of the capital of a theocratic empire. Soon a thousand captives went to their deaths each day in the furnaces named "The Cupped Hands of the Flame" atop the truncated pyramids of Lord Vimūhla. The Red Robes sparked the greed of the tribes, united them, and led them out in a mighty wave upon the lands of the south, very much like the raging conflagration which they worshipped.

The Empire of the Dragon Warriors maintained its internal cohesion for only some 200 years after their invasion had shuddered to a halt in the east and south. By the year 500 of their dynasty, a number of remote regions had begun to splinter away: the Ghilráà of Salarvyá (map 2), the Chi Tonáà of southern Livyánu (map 1), the Ebraddáà of what is now Fasíltum in northeastern Tsolyánu (map 2), and a dozen smaller states, each ruled by one of the original conquering tribes. Local rulers arose who were only part-N'lüss, or who were not descended from the Dragon Warriors at all. The hotter climes and softer ways of the south took their toll. The history of the next 1,500 years then reads like a compendium of petty wars, personal intrigues, rivalries and vengeances, — and always endless, pointless, self-serving greed...

For further reading, Ménum Boródlya's standard work, "Gáchayayal"" (The Dragons), in Tsolyáni, may be recommended. The original manuscript is kept in the Temple of Thúmis in Khéiris (map 1), but copies may be had almost everywhere. The most recent theories about the nature of the Dragons are examined in "Thékudàlikh molTané" (The Great Expedition to Tane), in Tsolyáni, by Tsárnu hiFatlán and Koyón Bashànvísumkoi, available from most book-copyists in the Tsolyáni capital of Bey Sú (map 2).

1.340. THE FISHERMEN KINGS

During the last centuries of the Empire of the Dragon Warriors, the subject peoples of western Salarvyá (map 1) were united by a minor lordling from the city of Fénul in what is now the Chaigári Protectorate in Tsolyánu (map 2). This man, Gámulu by name, first obtained the allegiance of the lords of Khúm and Koylúgá (map 1), then drove the last of the decadent heirs of the Dragon Warriors from Tsatsayágga, Nrikakchné, and the other rich metropolises of the western plains of Salarvyá (map 2). The N'lüss were not Gámulu's most deadly foes, however. The nonhuman Ssú had come forth from their time-haunted wastelands to ravage what is now Pechánо (maps 2-3). Their first conquest was the ruins of Ssuganár, their own ancient capital before mankind had come to Tékumel. From thence they went on to sack the city of Benésh — and Benésh never rose again. It is now only a grass-grown mound near the present city of Mechanéno (map 2). Ssú expeditions also struck northward into Chaigári and Kilalámmu (map 2), threatening even the high eyries of the Hlákа. These latter promptly made alliance with Gámulu's human forces, and the Ssú Wars raged back and forth for the next 25 years. In the end Gámulu was victorious. The foe was driven back into the deep labyrinths below Ssuyál from whence they could not be expelled without a fearful cost in lives. Gámulu reigned for another decade. He did not die as he had wished — in battle against the jag-edged sword of the Ssú — but it was really they who slew him: he perished of a wasting disease contracted while holding a victory celebration in the whispering ruins of old Ssuganár. Even today whenever a person suffers from an unforeseen minor consequence of some great deed rather than from the deed itself, men speak of it as "dying the death of Gámulu."

Many of Gámulu's sons had fallen in the Ssú Wars. Others died in the struggle for the Ebon Helm once he was gone. Hó Etéhltu, his 12th son, slew his remaining brothers and lived to seize the throne. The remainder of his long life was spent in consolidating his domains. He it was who built the navy of small, fast galleys which give this dynasty the name of "The Fishermen Kings." With this weapon he struck south across the straits to take Háida Pakála (maps 2-3), eastward as far as Peléis (map 3), and northwestward to seize the Dragon Warrior strongholds on the isles of Gánga, Thayúri, and Vrá (map 2). To the east the last scion of the feudal lords of Tsa'avtúlgu (map 3) handed over his lands to Hó Etéhltu almost without a struggle. In the west the black ships landed to beseige mighty Jakálla (map 2), but this was too hard a nut to crack. The vicious Hlutrgú prevented any expansion along the coasts of Káija (map 2), and in the end the Fishermen Kings were largely contained within the borders of present-day western and central Salarvyá, plus the northern peninsula of Háida Pakála.

During the reign of the 22nd king of Gámulu's dynasty contact was made with another of the great interdimensional beings who function as Tékumel's "gods." This was Ksárul, the Ancient Lord of Secrets, Doomed Prince of the Blue Room, and Master of Magic and Sorcery. Aside from his role in the pantheon of Change as the Knower and the Worker of Transitions, Ksárul is famed as the Rebel of the Gods. The epics sing of a mighty Armageddon, the Battle of Dórmoron Plain, which occurred in some mythic Age of the Gods long before mankind had evolved upon distant Earth. In this battle the Lords of Change at first fought together against the Lords of Stability, but at last even Ksárul's allies came to see his overweening intellect as a threat to their own hegemony, and all turned against him. Defeated, he was imprisoned in an other-planar place (another pocket dimension?) called the Blue Room, where he is said to lie in eternal sleep upon a catafalque of deep azure-purple. Each of his ten opponents (the Engsvanyáli epics name the other nine modern Tsolyáni "gods," plus the mysterious "One Other") then constructed a "wall" around this place, ringed it with demon guardians, and sealed it with one Lock and two Wards. One concession was granted, however, for reasons not known: the Keys to these devices were duplicated and a set concealed upon each Plane in which Ksárul's allies and servitors dwelt. Three of these Keys are now known: one is in the High Temple of Ksárul in Bey Sú (map 2), another in the possession of a priest of Ksárul, and the third in the palace of Bássa, the ruler of the Black Ssu. Still others are rumoured to lie beneath the city of Ch'óchi in Mu'ugalavyá (map 1), in a sealed casket in the heart of a stone pyramid north of Khirgár in Milumanaya (map 2), in the treasury of the lords of Jaekánta in Salarvya (map 4), etc. The endless search for the Keys goes on.

Even asleep, the powers of Lord Ksárul are great. The mysteries and doctrines of his recondite faith spread throughout the realm of the Fisherman Kings. For a time there were religious persecutions and wars between the Red Robes of Vimúhla and the silver-masked Black Robes of the Doomed Prince. Only the passage of centuries has brought about a tentative reconciliation and peace.

Two side results of the establishment of the faith of Lord Ksárul may be noted: the first was the invention of a secret tongue, complete with its own complex hieroglyphic script, by the priests of the Doomed Prince for the transmission of their Inner and Outer Doctrines; the second was the gradual spread of the Salarvyáni language itself (then termed Bednálljan) as the medium of scholarship, literature and diplomacy. The courts of princes as remote as Tumíssa and Ke'ér (map 2) resounded with the harsh accents of the lords of Tsatsayágga, and there was considerable interchange of knowledge. The common folk, however, continued to speak the tongues of their ancestors; some of these had been old since before Llyán had arisen in Tsámra long ago.

Unfortunately, most of the sourcebooks for the Fishermen Kings are either in Salarvyáni or in Pechání. For students who can read these languages, one may recommend "Gupaggáli nga Shshí" (The Might of Our Ancestors), by Daggála Mukrotórr, in Salarvyáni, the manuscript of which is preserved in the Royal Dome of Glory in Tsatsayágga. "Nganjjá pa Ssú!" (Flee, Ye Ssu!), by Dráka Grállpa, in Pechání, kept in the House of Skulls in Mechanéno, is also excellent. In Tsolyáni there are only a few revelant passages in the Imperial compilation, "Balamtsánikh hiWísu" (The History of the World), available almost anywhere in the empire.

1.350. THE FIRST IMPERIUM

The surging wave of the Fishermen Kings took half a millenium to subside. The Red Robes dominated the west and the Black Robes the east. Secular power passed from ruler to ruler and dynasty to dynasty as a ball is tossed about in a game. In far Livyánu (map 1) the temples of Vimúhla gave way to faiths which had been old when Llyán's empire was yet unborn: the dark cults of the Shadow Gods. Some say that these are but other members of the race of beings known as "gods," while others assert that they are amalgams and combinations of deities already familiar elsewhere. Just as a man shows a different face to different companions and in different contexts, and just as he is called by one name by his children, another by his clansmen, and a third by outsiders, so may the deities display many aspects and guises and be summoned by many titles. The truth of this known only to the gods themselves.

Although the worship of the other Lords of Change began during this period, there is no record yet of their opponents, the Lords of Stability, nor does there seem to have been any attempt to codify the gods and fit them all into one pantheon. Mighty Sárku, the Lord of Worms and Master of the Undead, is seen for the first time on monuments from the Kráà Hills and Dó Cháka (map 2). Shrines to

Hrü'ü, the Supreme Principle of Change, are found in the now-ruined cities of Hmakuyál and Ngála (map 2). The sinuous goddess of pleasure, Dlamélish, rose to become the favourite deity of the lords of sybaritic Jakálla (map 2). Each of these deities, moreover, had many lesser servitors: demons and demigods and others, some greater and some lesser than mankind. Each of the great "gods" was always served by one sub-deity who stood at the head of the rest as a sort of steward: the Cohort of the god. There is always one Cohort for each of the gods, never more and never less. Thus, the Cohort of Vimúhla is cruel Chiténg; that of Ksárul is Grugánu, the Knower of Spells; Sárku is served by corpse-like Durritlámish; Hrü'ü's Cohort is Wurú, the Many-Legged Serpent of Gloom; and that of Dlamélish is fickle Hrihávyal, the Dancing Maiden of Temptation. Again, there are as many hypotheses concerning the natures and relationships of the Cohorts as there are scholars, and no one can say which is true — if any.

The First Imperium began with a very inconsequential event: the incursion of a band of nomads from the sand-drifted deserts of the Dry Bay of Ssu'úm (map 2) into the fertile southland. Such caravans are still common. With this one, however, was a 13-year-old girl, said by some historians to have been the daughter of a clan-chief and by others only a slave. In time these ragged wanderers entered the gates of great Purdánim, a metropolis now lost but thought to lie beneath the alluvial silt in the plain east of modern Usenánu (map 2). There the wild desert child soon learned the blandishments of the courtesan. Passed from hand to hand like a pretty toy, she rose to become the First Concubine and later the Chief Wife of the Clanmaster of Purdánim. Unlike so many, she was not satisfied. She took five years to lay her snares and establish her power: an official here, a priest there, a captain in this legion, and a eunuch in that palace. When all was ready, the pretty toy turned upon her owners and systematically destroyed them one by one. For her aging and innocuous husband she reserved a special fate: naked and alone, he was cast into the sealed shrine of the Goddess of the Pale Bone (today mentioned only as She Who Cannot Be Named) in the labyrinths beneath Jakálla. There are some deities — other interdimensional beings, apparently — who are anathema to the Lords of Change and the Lords of Stability alike; it would be monstrous to say more here of these "pariah gods."

Seven years transformed Nayári the child-courtesan into Queen Nayári of the Silken Thighs, Royal Mistress of Purdánim and Jakálla and the Myriad Jewelled Cities of the South. She was both beautiful and ruthless, always "a desert beast in search of water," as one chronicler puts it. She employed intrigue, war, poison, sorcery, the dagger, and the delights of her body all with consummate skill. A succession of alliances — and suddenly deceased husbands — gave her Fasíltum in the northeast, Tumíssa in the west, and Sokátis in the east (map 2). By amalgamating the motley legions and rag-tag militias of her city-states into one force, she laid the foundations for a systematic modern army, a model which has been copied ever since.

Within three more years Nayári's troops had entered Mu'ugalavyá through the Chákan Forests (maps 1-2) and were effecting a pincers movement with another force sent down from Tlálu in Pijéna (map 2). The last quarrelsome heirs to the Dragon Warriors' empire, the princelings of Mu'ugalavyá, were gobbled up like grain thrown before fowl. Some managed to retain a precarious independence, while others became her vassals outright. Smaller forces moved eastward from island to island along the coast of Yán Kór (map 2) as far as modern Dháru. (In those days much of the central plain of Yán Kór was still a shallow littoral sea flanked by an east-west archipelago of rocky islands to the north (previously ruled by the seakings of Ke'ér) and by the then-fertile highlands of the Thénu Thendráya Range to the south.)

Another year saw Nayári's legions tramping through the narrow streets of Khúm and Koyluga in Salarvyá to the far southeast (map 2). The gates of Tsatsayágga were thrown wide, and the simpering perfumed courtiers showed her generals the corpse of Gámulu's 55th descendent seated upon the Ebon Throne, transfixed with a hundred slender stilettoes. As their reward, they were promised "an ocean of treasure" — and all were pitched from the battlements into the sea.

"Nothing truly glorious is attained through moderation," the Bednálljan epics declaim, and Nayári of the Silken Thighs would have agreed readily. When Fasíltum revolted, she put 10,000 of its inhabitants to the garrote, and many a red-robed priest of Vimúhla became an ephemeral scarlet blossom of flame in his own fiery furnace. Her capital of Purdánim rose against her at the instigation of certain nobles of the old dynasty, and her troops built a mountain of skulls in the great square. Even today any terrible catastrophe is referred to as "Nayári's Hill," and her name is used to frighten children into obedience all across the Five Empires.

Nayári perished through the very arts of which she was the greatest exponent, kissed with poisoned lips by a young lover who himself died in the act. Her children warred briefly and bloodily, and when it was over her son by the murdered lord of Tumíssa ascended the throne under the title of Ssirandár I. He proceeded to renounce his mother's ruthless policies and spent the next 50 years building and unifying. The beginnings of the Sákbe Road system, the network of mighty fortified highways which spans the continent, are attributed to him, as are the looming walls of Jakálla. For some unknown reason — perhaps haunted by the ghosts of the dreadful past — he removed his capital from Purdánim to Jakálla. The "Old City," as men came to call Purdánim, lingered on for half a millenium more, but without its officials, courtiers, soldiers, and artisans it swiftly settled down into ruin and decay. There is no further record of Purdánim after the visit of the scholar-traveller Turshánmü in the 12th year of Ssirandár IX. This sage wrote, "Its halls are fallen in and filled with vermin, its towers topless and home only to the nightbirds, and its streets so choked with sediment and vegetation that even the spirits of the mournful dead cannot walk here."

This dynasty laid upon a foundation of blood slowly became an edifice of order and stability. Utékh Mssá, grandson of Ssirandár I, moved the capital a second time about a hundred years after Nayári's death. This time the site chosen was virgin ground with neither memories nor ghosts to disturb the sleep. This new city was meant to be the material manifestation of all men's dreams, a utopia and a monument for ages to come. Here were the broad avenues, the sky-reaching palaces, the noble houses. Here was the pavilion built entirely of fire-opals and named "Paradise in This Life"; here the lacy marble "Dome of All the Clans," set all over with flowers of gemmed mosiac so delicate that each petal and stamen can be seen if one looks closely; here were the high ramparts and the promenade of blue basalt called "Sky-Wind," from which the lords of the city might gaze down upon the sluggish Mssúma River and across to the tombs and obelisks of their ancestors in the "City of the Dead" on the eastern shore. Here, too, was the "Gateway of Glory" and the "Avenue of Ever-Living Victory," along which the massed phalanxes of trumpeteers marched, followed by a hundred caparisoned *Chlén*-carts bearing thundering wardrums thrice as tall as a man, followed again by the nodding plumes and the standards, and then by the tramping colmns of armoured soldiers. Hither were brought the produce and the tribute and the plunder of a thousand lands and a thousand years. This was Bey Sü, whose name means "Soul of the World" in Bednálljan.

The splendour of the First Imperium endured for well-nigh 3,000 years. There were good kings and bad, conquerors and cravens, sages and fools, but yet the dynasty lasted. There were no external foes capable of challenging it, and the military and administrative structures built by Nayári and her successors survived the disruptive forces which arose from time to time within. Trade was initiated with the yet independent nations of Livyánu and eastern Salarvyá (maps 1 and 3-4). Missionaries went forth to the unknown realms of the far northeast to preach the faiths of the Lord of Change, and caravans returned thence with jewels and furs and vessels of purple volcanic glass. For the first time men heard the names of Jánnu, Mihállu, Nuru'ún, and other nations which had not even been fables aforetime.

For the first time in millenia, too, the isolation of the nonhuman enclaves was broken. Men warred briefly with the Shén, but the great reptiles had no designs upon the cooler north, nor could mankind long endure the damp heat of the Shén domains. Soon there were battalions of the more adventurous Shén serving as mercenaries in the Bednálljan armies, and human traders dwelt (albeit miserably) in alien Ssorvá (map 1). Men grew accustomed to the barrel-like, shambling Ahoggyá, the graceful Pé Chói, and the knobby green-grey bodies of the Páchi Léi. The clever Pygmy Folk and the insatiably curious Tinalíya were seen again in the marketplaces of

mankind, as they had been long ago when the night skies were still scattered with stars. Of the inimical races, the Shunned Ones remained aloof within their domed cities, the Hlutrgú kept to their foetid swamps, and the Hlüss and the Ssú brooded, hated and waited.

Had there been more of certain raw materials, notably iron, and less reliance upon the "magic" of the Planes Beyond, perhaps Tékumel would have begun the long climb back up the ladder of technology. A printing press was invented once in Pagús in Mu'ugalavyá (map 1), but the intricate scripts of Tékumel do not easily lend themselves to the strictures of moveable type, and the Scribal Clans raised such vocal protests (and a few stones as well) that the project had to be abandoned. A scholar of Nimóllu in Salarvyá (map 3) discovered gunpowder but was laughed at by the sorcerers of his temple, who could call forth other-planar energies and make such explosions and pyrotechnics as to put his poor efforts to shame. Healing, too, was largely dependent upon other-planar "magic," and although each new expedition returned from unknown lands added to the pharmacoepia, little real theoretical progress was made. The absolute, demonstrable certainty of the existence of the "gods"and their immanence in mankind's affairs stifled intellectual curiousity and hampered the theologising, philosophising, and theorising which might have led to a Renaissance and an Age of Reason. The societies of the planet grew ever more formalised, structured, and conservative, borne down beneath the panoply of imperial glory and the weight of hoary tradition.

There are many sources for the First Imperium. Nayári herself is best depicted in Pagártra Nemandu's "Kolumélan Ssána hiPathái" (The Royal Courtesan of Love), in Tsolyáni, preserved in the Imperial Archives in Béy Sü and also in many other collections. Early Bednálljan political history and the shifting of the capital is described in the same author's "Bednállja lél Béy Sü" (Bednállja and Béy Sü), in Tsolyáni, the original manuscript of which is in the private collection of Sirukél hiTuritlánu, the renowned book collector and antiquarian of Béy Sú. Most libraries have shelves of scrolls and books devoted to various aspects of the First Imperium, and the student should seek the aid of a knowledgeable librarian.

1.360. THE GOLDEN AGE: ÉNGSVAN HLA GÁNGA

The First Imperium was finally swept away, but this was not achieved by the swords of armies or the machinations of princes. Instead, the cause was just one poor, crippled, middle-aged priest from the island of Gánga in the gulf south of Jakálla (map 2), a backwater so inconsequential that it had no governor but was ruled by the Master of the Shellfish-Gatherers' clan! This priest, Pavár by name, was originally devoted to mysterious Ksárul, but in the course of his meditations, somehow, he stumbled upon a means of contacting yet others of the race of "gods" and thus altered the flow of history for all time to come.

The "gods" summoned by Pavár were the Lords of Stability. First came gentle, grey Thúmis, the Sage of the Gods; then the coruscating white brilliance of mighty Hnálla himself, the Supreme Principle of Stability. Later there was Avánthe, the Mistress of Heaven; then golden Belkhánu, the Lord of the Excellent Dead and Master of the Paradises of Teretane which lie beyond the end of this life. At last came lordly Karakán, the Master of Heroes and the Ultimate Warrior, he who fights to uphold structure and order.

A flood of knowledge poured forth upon the lowly priest: information concerning the two "alignments" and the pantheons, the servitors and Cohorts of these new Lords of Stability, the topography of the many Planes, and the secrets of life after death (itself but a series of passings from Plane to Plane). All this Pavár set down in the cursive script of his island tongue.

The Scrolls of Pavár described the Tlomitlányal, the Five Lords of Stability, and contrasted them with the Tlokiriqáluyal, the Five Lords of Change. He seems to have realised that these were not "gods" in the theological sense but rather mighty entities farther along the scale of existence than mankind. Yet he also stated that for all practical purposes these were indeed "Gods" since man is too limited and transitory to comprehend their vast purposes. Pavár set forth the role and the relationships which each of these deities sees for his devotees in the many Planes: how each "god" must be served, and how life is to be lived. Unfortunately, the Scrolls of Pavár also put an end to man's anthropomorphic certainty that he alone is the highest being in the universe, the quintessential "reason for it all." Man can never comprehend these "gods," claims Pavár; he can never be their equal, nor can he defeat them, dupe them, or go counter to their enigmatic decrees. Thus, the Scrolls of Pavár cut short not only man's vaunting anthropoidal arrogance but also human attempts at speculation and analysis of the universe in which mankind lives. Pavár says:

> "We strive, and yet our imaginings bring forth nothing but glorified portraits of ourselves. We see naught but a mighty Father, the magnified image of our own fathers, or else a divine Mother, who will take us to her bosom and comfort our tears as did our own mothers. Everywhere we perceive the cosmos in terms of our own sexual organs and urges. When we tremble before the Unknown, we exalt the rain, the wind, the sun, and the darkness. Why? Because we are limited, and we do not understand. Yet think: why should the Gods — the Creators and Maintainers of universes — conform to these petty fancies? Can we even recognise the truly Divine when we encounter it? What can the lowly *Shqá*-beetle comprehend of the nature of the man who casually brushes it from its twig in passing? Should the man turn to the humble insect and somehow address it in terms it could understand, what else could it do but kneel in awe and obey?" Scroll III, Stanza 90

And again, in reference to what mankind can perceive of the gods:

> "The Gods are like stones seen through rippling water. They are neither of the shape we see, nor are They quite where we see Them. We know Their reality. The seeker can plunge his hand into the current and touch the stones. Thus it is with the Gods. Yet, like the boulders of the riverbed, They are elusive, slippery, cool and distant from our ken. They are the Gods." Scroll XXXIX, Stanza 76

Pavár's doctrines spread far and wide even during his lifetime. They mostly touched the hearts of the common folk, those who had been devastated in the wars, who had no part in the glory of the palaces, and who were weary of the rituals and bloody sacrifices of the temples of Change. Students and pilgrims came to sit at the feet of the crippled priest, and a monastery and then a school formed about him. In time a city arose on his island, and when at last he died and was entombed near his simple home, it became a great metropolis. Temples were erected to Pavár's new gods, and missionaries went forth to propound the doctrines of Stability with all of the zeal of the newly converted. Whole swathes of average people were brought into the fold overnight.

None of this was accomplished without turmoil. The priests of the old faiths waxed wroth, and the kings and princes sent forth soldiers and inquisitions. The land was laved in blood, and the skies were overcast with the stench of burning cities. In what is now Tsolyanu (map 2) some regions threw aside the Lords of Change almost immediately: e.g. the Mssúma River basin all the way up from Jakálla to Béy Sü, the central areas around modern Úrmish and Katalál, and the southeast near Thráya. Others clove to their familiar deities: fiery Vimúhla in the west and in Fasíltum in the east; grim Sárku in the Kraá Hills and the Chákan forests; mighty Hrü'ü in the central northwest where the ruins of Hmakuyál now lie and present-day Mekú stands; arcane Ksárul in the farther northwest in Mrelú and the secretive old city of Púrdimal; and sensuous Dlamélish in Jakálla and indeed wherever men and women sought the pleasures of the flesh without thought of the morrow.

Abroad, the Livyáni (map 1) clung to their Shadow Gods. The folk of Mu'ugalavyá (map 1) were too steeped in the doctrines of Vimúhla — or too cowed by his priests — to change. The Mu'ugalavyáni elite evolved another cult, however: the worship of Lord Hírsh, said by some to be another of the race of "gods," by others to be an amalgam of Ksárul and Vimúhla, and by still others to be one of the Lords of Stability garbed in the trappings of Change. The Salarvyáni (maps 2-4) went by quite a different path: they, too, produced an amalgam, this time of motherly Avánthe, one of whose aspects is the fertility of crops and beasts and mankind, and the orgiastic sexual rites of Dlamélish. Named Shiringgáyi and with her sanctuary on the shores of sacred Lake Mrissútl (map 2), this goddess soon held sway from the bustling port of Chame'él (map 2) all the way to Ssórmu on the eastern seaboard (map 4). Smaller nations also did not escape this religious upheaval: a deity popular here became anathema in the next

little state along the road. Even the nonhuman enclaves were affected. The Pé Chói "Father of Nests" arose to combat their "Black Old One," and the "One Who Rends" of the Shén was matched against their "One of Eggs." The gods of the Ssú, the Hlüss, and the other inimical races were alien to those of mankind — perhaps even alien to the entire race of "gods" which had contacted humanity and its allies — and they alone do not seem to have felt the tempest of the years when Pavár's Lords of Stability first entered the world.

Eventually, as all things must, the furor died away. The zealots became plump priestly bureaucrats. Temples of Stability stood side by side with those of Change. Certain deities still dominated some areas, to be sure, while others had their centres elsewhere. Matters began to stabilise. In the interests of peace most of the sects (even those of such distant lands as Livyánu) agreed to a great Concordat of the Temples. This prohibited any overt religious hostility: there was to be no fighting, no unfriendly use of "magic," no proselytising. Looking back over the years of blood and ruin, the kings and nobles saw the wisdom of this, and slowly, with many stops and starts and setbacks, society was brought under control, as a helmsman tames a yawing ship in a stormy sea. The Concordat could not prevent covert bigotry and violence, of course; what took place in the sanctuaries, the catacombs, and in remote wildernesses was known only to those present — and perhaps to the ever-watching Gods. The vessel was on course again, but the waters below still roiled with turbulence.

By the third century after Pavár's death, secular power began to shift away from the weakened kings of Bé'y Sü to the hierophants of his island of Gánga. In the ninth century there came a time when the last monarch of the Bednálljans stole away from his decaying capital to the islands north of Yán Kór (map 2). It is said that his flight continued northward through the tundras of the Lorún people (off map 2 to the north) and thence south to the other side of Tékumel, where he met a fate which might be interesting but is irrelevant here. The capital of the empire of the Priestkings was shifted from Bé'y Sü to Pavár's island, and thus was established Éngsvan hla Gánga: "the Kingdom of the Gods." (It may be noted that the very name of Pavár's island came to signify "religion, the pantheon, the totality of religious experience." In modern Tsolyáni the verb *gadál* "to worship" is derived from Engsvanyáli *gánga dlé'e* "the Great Religion."

Éngsvan hla Gánga endured for over ten millenia, so long that men forgot that there had ever been anything else before — and could not conceive of anything coming after. The exploration and conquest of most of the great continent was completed. Livyánu capitulated and became only another prefecture, though it held yet to its Shadow Gods. Engsvanyáli legates held court in Dlu'nír in the islands of Tsolé'i (map 1), in humid Gorulú in Háida Pakála (map 2), in cool Nenu'ú in the wild land of Nuru'ún (map 3), and in the storm-blown Ai'ís in the Farisé Isles (map 4). Of the friendly nonhumans, only the Shén kept their independence, while the inimical races were driven back and contained within preserves almost as they had been before. Tékumel's skies were emptied of stars. Brave sailors ventured into the great oceans, and a few returned with strange treasures and stranger tales. Trade prospered. The lords of Gánga drank the black wines of Salarvyá from red crystal Mu'ugalavyáni goblets and draped themselves in the silky grass-cloth of far-off Ngakú in Yán Kór (map 2). The Suór (a gold coin worth about 150 modern Tsolyáni Káitars) was eagerly accepted by merchants half round the world.

Éngsvan hla Gánga was the high-water-mark, the greatest flourishing of human culture since before the Time of Darkness. Art, architecture, music, literature, science (even to the repair of some of the simpler and less-damaged mechanisms of other-planar power), and a thousand other crafts and skills all throve mightily. One who has gazed upon Marya's exquisite sculpture, "Woman of Tsámra," heard the odes of the poet Yetíl, been moved by the "Lament to the Wheel of Black," or meditated in the Pale Jade Pavilion in Tsatsayágga (map 2) will bear witness to the glory of the Priestkings.

Social and economic affairs prospered as well. The Sákbe Roads grew into thick serpents of stone which wound across the continent bearing the commerce of a score of nations. Armies evolved first into standing garrisons and then into glorified police forces. Taxes were regularised, temple tithes restricted, and merchants protected. Laws were established, and the precedents set in one city might be studied by jurists 50,000 Tsán away.

It is not to be thought that Éngsvan hla Gánga was a utopia, a paradise. The Priestkings were theocrats. Their rule was based upon the power of the temples, the swords of their armies, and the ancient principle of the iron hand in the velvet glove. Those who opposed their laws were executed. If a town or province revolted, its people were uprooted and resettled a thousand *Tsán* away. The Tólek Kána Pits, the terrible prison constructed by the Bednálljan emperor Bashdis Mssá I (the great-great-grandson of Ssirandár I) in the marshes on the eastern bank of the Mssúma River just south of Bé'y Sü, was refurbished and expanded into the gloomy maze of cells and dungeons still in use today. Armies of naked slaves toiled to build the Sákbe Roads and to carve the mountain crag at the conflux of the two rivers north of Bé'y Sü into the fortress-palace which later became Avanthár, the capital of modern Tsolyánu (map 2). Religious and secular powers were combined into one, and with every facet of life (and, men said, of the Hereafter as well) controlled by the clergy, it was a rare individual who attempted to swim against the current. Society flowed on like a broad, somnolent river, as the Lords of Stability apparently had decreed.

Éngsvan hla Gánga perished suddenly, as a robust man is felled by a swift seizure of the brain. All of the causes are not fully known, although it is clear that vast seismic convulsions of the planet were initially to blame. The western end of Pavár's beloved island tilted up, and the eastern end tilted down beneath the waves, carrying the metropolis of the Priestkings and all its glories with it. (Visitors to modern Gánga can hire youths to row them out over the seaweed-bannered towers of the western suburbs of that city, now crusted with multihued corals and inhabited only by the silent denizens of the sea.) At the same time, the shallow inland sea of Yán Kór (map 2) rose up, spilling its waters north to drown the coastal islands and south to thunder against the bulwarks of the Thénu Thendráya Range. The towns of Sné Kokór, Eber, Go'ón Tikkú, and Rüllá (map 2) now stand where the rich galleys of the Priestkings had plied. In time the upper highlands dried up, and today the sands and dust-devils of the Desert of Sighs sometimes blows aside to reveal the quays, turrets, and crumbled walls of the Engsvanyali cities which had flourished there aforetime. The Spouting Mountains of the Shén domains (map 1) erupted to bury that region under grey volcanic ash, and many of the mighty reptiles fled northwestward into Mmátugual where their descendents still dwell. In the east, jagged Drichte Peak, the "Hag of Flame" (map 4) similarly vented its fury upon the forestland of Nuru'ún and the Plains of Glass. A whole new continent rose up like a leviathan of the sea south of Ssormu (map 4). It remained thus for a hundred years; then it sank again, and its place is marked only by the dangerous rocks of the White Water Shoals. Lesser cataclysms occurred in a hundred other locations as well.

No region escaped the economic, political, and psychological consequences of the disaster. Commerce faltered, crops failed, the Sákbe Roads fell into disrepair, and the cities emptied as frightened refugees sought safer ground. All unity of purpose and of spirit seems to have been drowned in the tidal waves which had swept over the capital of the Priestkings. Local loyalties and hatreds, long suppressed, re-emerged to divide mankind, and war was reborn. Province fought province, city battled city. Devotees of Stability clashed with those of Change, and mighty temples came crashing down all across the land. The N'lüss reappeared in the plains of Mu'ugalavyá, though without their "dragon" steeds. And as the shadows rise and gather substance at the end of the day, so did all of the ancient ills which had ever beset Tékumel come forth again at the setting of the sun of Engsvan hla Gánga. The Ssú and the Hlüss made exultant forays into human regions. The Hlutrgú seized much of Káija and the swampy shores of Msúmtel Bay (map 2). Even the Pé Chói, the Shén, the Ahoggyá, and other friendly races took the opportunity to expand their domains. Within two centuries after that first savage paroxysm, the corpse of the Kingdom of the Gods was picked apart by a thousand greedy scavengers. Another Time of Darkness overspread the land, and this was a darkness at least as total and as Stygian as that which had come to Tékumel long ago.

Some say that the "Time of No Kings," as the Tsolyáni historians name this period, lasted for six millenia. Others claim ten, basing their assertion upon the fragmentary archives of the High Priests of Khirgár (map 2). Seals, coins, stelae, and other artifacts cry the glories of this or that "Omnipotent Emperor of All the World" — and

naught else is known of most of these potentates beyond their names! History becomes a confused babble. For example, some records speak again of "great Purdánim"; yet it is not known whether this city had been rebuilt by the Engsvanyáli upon its original site, whether another town had adopted the name as part of a consciously archaising effort to revive past splendours, or whether the records themselves are erroneous. At one point over twenty independent principalities ruled in what is Tsolyánu (map 2) today. Some regions continued to employ a debased form of Engsvanyáli for their inscriptions and monuments; others chose to raise their own local dialects to the status of literary languages, thus giving birth to modern Tsolyáni, Mu'ugalavyáni, and a host of other tongues; in not a few areas the art of writing itself was lost, and men gazed in puzzled awe upon the scripts of their forefathers.

It is to the Time of No Kings that many of the folk legends of present-day Tékumel refer. There are innumerable tales of mighty and near-immortal sages, cities which appear and disappear, ships which move without oars, quests, enchantments, miracles, curses, monsters, and races of creatures dwelling in the ruined cities and the subterranean labyrinths. Tsolyáni peasants sing yet of the mighty warrior Hagárr of Paránta, who still wanders the world exchanging old wisdom for new. There is the necromancer Nyélmu, condemned by the gods for his arrogance to live forever in the timeless ennui of the Garden of the Weeping Snows beneath old Jakálla (map 2). There is Subadím the Sorceror, whose insatiable curiosity led him to seek the Egg of the World in the dizzy crags of Thénu Thendráya Peak, and who is later said to have visited the Home of the Gods themselves. There is serpent-headed Chirené of N'lüss, perhaps a memory from the earlier age of the Dragon Warriors, who guards the secrets of the Tlásht Heights in Livyánu (map 1) and who slays the paladins of Stability. Then there is great Thómar the Ever-Living, whose ensorcelled towers appear in the wastelands to provide weary travellers with hospitality — and the chance to gain wealth and magical power through performance of his quests. One hears of fumbling Turshánmü the Summoner of Demons, whose enchanted ship lies buried beneath the sands of Milumanayá. near Pelesár (map 2) and whose abilities, though great, are marred by occasional absentmindedness. There is Metállja of Salarvyá, who betook himself and his followers, a sect of ascetic sages called the Blasphemous Accelerators, upon a marvellous flight to the Unstraightened City, an enigmatic place where all time and space are one, never to return. The tale-spinners tell of Qiyór the Many-Tongued and how he duped the demon princes of the Planes Beyond until his cleverness led him to attempt one trick too many. The Mu'ugalavyáni relate the legends of brave Pendárte of Khéiris and his battle with the minions of She Who Cannot Be Named in the Citadel of Ebon Light below the city of Ch'óchi (map 1). There are stories, too, of the Company of the Less-Than-Men, the semi-intelligent animals of the hinterlands and the half-races of the Underworlds, who have banded together to resist mankind's domination and to live their lives apart from human interference. All of these tales, and many more besides, can be heard round the fires of the clanhouses in almost every town and village in the land.

The truth of these legends can only be conjectured. It is quite possible that some of the wisdom of Éngsvan hla Gánga — and even of the ages which went before — survived in the sanctuaries and hidden retreats of the ancient priesthoods. Such monasteries exist today, although the powers of their sages are certainly less than those of the heroes of the tales. There are many reports — and who can say whether they be fact or fable? — of encounters with some of these mythical protagonists: men who claim that they have met wistful Hagárr upon his endless quest, supped with the hideous Thúnru'u who serves as the affable nonhuman steward of Thomar's towers, seen fierce Chirené looming above the precipices of the Tlásht Heights, and watched the eldritch running lights of the ghost-ships sailing upon the now vanished inland sea of Yán Kór.

The library of the Governor of Tumíssa (map 2) is perhaps the best source for materials relating to Éngsvan hla Gánga. For a fee, the custodian will display the splendid "Book of Priestkings." Originally a duplicate of this work was sent to the capital of each province to proclaim the eternal grandeur of the Engsvanyáli empire, but this copy is the last known to exist. It was calligraphed by Aruchúe, the greatest scribe of his age, illuminated with gold-leaf and colours made of powdered gems, and bound in plates of electrum all set with sparkling jewels. It is also said that if one watches the miniature pictures upon its pages, that these will move and visually display the story written in the accompanying text. A good book for the beginner, however, is Dumán Langshá's "Shártokoi Guál Dáimi" (A Priest There Was), in Tsolyáni, the manuscript of which is kept in the Temple of Avánthe in Jakálla (map 2), although copies can be had almost anywhere. Another good source is "Éngsvan hla Gánga, Kolumébabàrdàlisa" (Éngsvan hla Gánga, the Mighty and Powerful Empire), by a group of authors, in Tsolyáni, the original of which is kept in the Temple of Karakán in Béy Sú (map 2). The fall of Éngsvan hla Gánga and the political events of the Time of No Kings are well covered in Kérulya Kettumridál's "Pogúrdikh hiKolumébabàrdàli" (The End of the Mighty Empire), in Tsolyáni, available in the library of the Temple of Avánthe in Jakálla (map 2). The legends of the Time of No Kings are nicely presented in "Bàsrimyal hiMazák" (Men of Power), by Tilékku Beshyené, in Tsolyáni, kept in the private collection of the Governor of Béy Sú. A more recent study is Mi'ira hiVeshúma's "Badrágadaliyal hiYagáishan" (Great Wizards of Antiquity), in Tsolyáni, which can be had from most book-copyists throughout Tsolyánu (map 2).

1.370. THE SECOND IMPERIUM*

By the time the histories began to be written again, the foundations of the Empire of the Petal Throne (which rules modern Tsolyánu) had already been laid — indeed, formalised and crystallised. The peoples of this part of Tékumel have a predilection for elaborate ceremonial, visual display, and the security brought about by knowing exactly where one stands in the social order. The earliest records of the Second Imperium (those of the fifth Emperor, named Trákonel I "the Blazing Light," whose reign lasted from 139 to 195 of the current era) already indicate that most of the apparatus of the modern Tsolyáni state was in existence. It has changed very little since.

The first Emperor is known only by his clan-name: "the Tlakotáni." There are no records of his antecedents, who he was, or how he came to subdue the other petty states then ruling in the region. All that is certain is that he had a considerable body of supporters, an army of sorts, and a base of operations somewhere near present Béy Sú. He also possessed an ancient technological device which struck awe into his contemporaries: this was the Seal of the Imperium, which produces impressions upon parchment, stone, or metal which cannot be counterfeited and which seem to contain — if one gazes deeply into its whorls and convolutions — hints of fearful other-planar power. The original purpose of this device is not known, but it serves to surround and enhance the Imperium with all of the power and mystery of the ancients and of the Gods. This Seal (Tsolyáni: *Kólumel*) is more than just an emblem; it stands for the organic, living persona of the State itself. *Kólumel* also denotes "Emperor," and a feminine form, *Kólumelra*, signifies "Empress." The dating system of the Second Imperium begins with the putative first regnal year of the first Tlakotáni, and all years thereafter are termed *tuKólumel* "after the Seal," abbreviated to "A.S." in this book. As of this writing, the year is 2,358 A.S.

Surviving legends indicate that even the first Tlakotáni may have practiced the royal seclusion which has become the hallmark of Tsolyáni government. Whether because of ritual untouchability of the Emperor's person, or whether the result of the paranoia of an absolute monarch (all too often justified, alas!), this custom has now become ironclad tradition (if not actually "law"). Once an heir is chosen to ascend the Petal Throne (see below), he or she is immured in the Golden Tower at Avanthár (map 2) for the rest of his or her life. Every Imperial word carries the voice of divine authority; the ruler is "the Envoy of Mankind unto the Courts of Heaven" and "the Speaker of the Will of the Gods Within the World." The monarch never appears in public again, nor does he leave Avanthár. Audiences are granted from behind a screen of translucent jade set high up in one wall of the Hall of Supernal Radiance just below the Golden Tower. There the ruler sits upon the Petal Throne, reputedly a great seat carved in the semblance of a delicate flower from the same green-grey

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The reader will by now be familiar with the map locations of the larger nations and some of the cities, and these directions will henceforth be omitted except in the case of a small city or place name *not* on map 2.

jade. The presence of the unseen monarch is announced by the lighting of a small lamp behind the screen. Even the ruler's voice is not heard. Instead, the First Prelate of the Court of Purple Robes, one of the high-ranking orders of courtiers at Avanthár, repeats the Imperial words to the kneeling nobles below. Even when private audiences are held in one of the secluded Cloisters of Divine Proximity just off the great hall of the Petal Throne, the *Kólumel* does not appear in person but participates from an adjoining chamber by means of a system of mirrors (in which he cannot be seen, but the supplicant can) and speaking tubes. The solemn and arcane nature of the Imperial presence is thus preserved; decisions can be made upon an objective basis, rather than because of personal or clan ties; and the ruler is protected both from foes and also from self-serving would-be "favourites." Only one sovereign broke with this tradition of Imperial seclusion: this was Hejjéka II "the Heretic" (1,325-1,340 A.S.), who left Avanthár to lead his armies against the Salarvyáni. The experiment caused such consternation, however, that it was never repeated — not even by Gyésmu "the Iron Fist" (2,015-2,065 A.S.), during whose reign the Mu'ugalavyáni invaded Tsolyánu and battered at the gates of Béy Sú itself.

Within the Golden Tower a corps of deaf mutes, "the Servitors of Silence," is charged with the Emperor's personal service, protection, and supply. This body actually forms one of three divisions of the feared "Omnipotent Azure Legion." The second portion of the Legion is purely military and is composed of the finest soldiers the Imperium can muster. The third is devoted to the gathering of intelligence, policing, and the coordination of the government and the society as a whole.

Only the Servitors of Silence and the highest officers of the other two arms of the Legions are deaf-mutes. New recruits for this service are usually obtained from amongst the children of the Servitors themselves, and if these are born normal, they are made deaf and mute at an early age. Women from every part of the Empire also bring their deaf-mute infants and offer them to the High Steward of the Golden Tower. If selected, these "Chosen of the Seal" are assured of a luxurious and eventful life.

The loyalty of the Servitors of Silence and also of many of the highest nobles and officials of the Imperium is guaranteed by another device of the ancients: "the Jade Arch." This is a monolithic truncated pyramid of dark green stone. A single short corridor passes completely through its base, and any person who traverses this has the patterns of his brain altered so that he cannot contemplate disloyalty to the Kólumel — the persona of the State. Although the Jade Arch is operated by the Servitors of Silence, they do not understand its technology, nor can they alter its settings. Its power, moreover, is very limited, and only a few of the most important officials of the Empire can be so treated. Its effects are permanent and unalterable — at least by any means known today. The persons or beings (?) who installed this device for the first Tlakotáni had the wisdom to set it to produce loyalty to the Imperium and the institution of the Kólumel as a whole, rather than to any specific individual, group, or sect. The Jade Arch does not alter or impair the powers of judgment; it does make it impossible to support a rebellion against the Tsolyáni state or against the current holder of the Seal of the Imperium.

The Servitors of Silence provide the monarch with every imaginable luxury within the Golden Tower. Each day they also bring in reports from the agents of the Omnipotent Azure Legion, files, dossiers, and other materials for the Imperial scrutiny. The resultant decrees are published on leaves of gold in the "Korúnkoi hiGardásisayal Kólumelan hiTirikéludàlidàlisa" (The Book of Mighty Imperial Deeds of the Great and Glorious Petal Throne). This may be inspected by persons of noble rank in the Hall of Blue Illumination in the Chancery at Avanthár. Matters of high policy are not so openly displayed, of course; these are recorded in a special Secret Book, and it is the duty of the High Provost of the Chancery to issue the appropriate commands.

Another function of the Servitors of Silence is the provision of sexual partners for the monarch. There is no concept of a permanent "queen" for the Emperor (or a "royal consort" for an Empress) with status and powers of his or her own. Instead, male or female concubines are selected from all over the Empire. This is considered to be a signal honour — although the ornate ceremonial and the constant surveillance of the deaf-mute attendants must make it somewhat less than a memorable erotic experience. Royal concubines remain in a separate section of the Golden Tower until summoned or until the ruler tires of them. In the latter case, they are returned to the outside world and are granted a stipend, servants, and an honorary post in one of the temples for the remainder of their days. A few of the more sanguine Tlakotánis have also had their playthings slain when these no longer amused them, but over the centuries this practice has fortunately not been frequent.

Children born to a prince or princess automatically become royal heirs themselves if their parent ascends the throne. Those born later in the Golden Tower may be given "the Gold" (a circular golden plaque impressed with the Seal of the Imperium, the symbol of princely status) at once. They are then brought up at Avanthar (though never within the Golden Tower) by nurses and tutors chosen by the Omnipotent Azure Legion. They are told only that they are the offspring of the sovereign, and the identity of their other parent is not divulged. In due course supporters collect around them, they are given Imperial posts to try their mettle, and they must study and train for the *Kólumejàlim* "the Choosing of Emperors," which may one day gain them the right to ascend the Petal Throne.

A certain percentage of Imperial births is also kept secret. The Omnipotent Azure Legion removes these infants from Avanthár and entrusts them to various patrons, usually the highest clans, the greatest religious orders. The exact process by which this is done is known only to the monarch and the Servitors of Silence. These patrons then raise their wards as they see fit. Some inform the child of its royal status as soon as it is old enough to understand; others reveal its true identity to it and to the world only when they deem the political time to be ripe. Chances of a strong alliance, the growing power of an opposing party, and the pressure of changing events may impel the patron to play this vital trump card. The Omnipotent Azure Legion is then summoned, records are produced, and the child is "given the Gold." The new heir or heiress, all dazed and unbelieving, is then borne off in high procession to Avanthár to receive the ceremonial acknowledgement of the sovereign and to receive all of the perquisites of princely rank.

As soon as an old monarch has died and the great sarcophagus sealed away in the black vaults below Avanthár all of those who possess the Gold (plus any remaining undeclared heirs or heiresses who must be hurriedly produced by their patrons) are summoned to Béy Sú for the Choosing of the Emperors. There they undergo a traditional roster of tests which cover every facet of character thought by the Tsolyáni to be needful for a ruler: bravery, endurance, cunning, physical prowess, judgment, knowledge of history and the arts, competence in "magic," and a dozen other fields. A candidate has the right to name champions to represent him or her in any three of these categories but must compete in person in all the others. Each event is carefully judged, and the strongest contenders are taken at last within the sacred precincts of the Temple of Hnálla where the Holy Adepts of all the temples and the High Princeps of the Omnipotent Azure Legion make the final selection according to ancient and secret ritual methods. The winner is then declared and conveyed to Avanthár. The losers are given over to the Temple of Karakán for sacrifice.

Should an Imperial heir or heiress not wish to compete, it is permitted to "renounce the Gold" at any time before the *Kólumejàlim* begins. This decision is quite final, and even if the new monarch dies or is never enthroned, a non-candidate can never enter the contest again. Instead, such persons must retire to private life. They are given posts in the Imperium and spend the rest of their days as ordinary members of the Tlakotáni clan. Only if the sovereign dies without issue may the children of such non-candidates be asked if they wish to compete in another *Kólumejàlim*. This privilege is, however, open to any Tlakotáni except one who has previously "renounced the Gold."

The principle of the Tsolyáni succession is thus partially based upon genetic kinship. If a royal heir dies and if the patron group is clever enough to substitute another child, then well and good. The Omnipotent Azure Legion acts to prevent this, of course, and the punishment for deception is extreme. But if it comes to light after the candidate is on the throne, it is taken as evidence of cleverness and is considered no great scandal. The Tsolyáni hold that the possessor of

the Seal must be the best possible contender — and "best" is not to be interpreted in any moralistic sense. Instead, it denotes being the strongest, cleverest, most cunning, most diplomatic, and most knowledgeable. Loyalty to the Imperium enters in, naturally, as does devotion to the prosperity of the Empire. If this demands draconian solutions, then so be it; the best Emperor will see that these are carried out.

As can be inferred, the Tsolyáni concept of "good" and "evil" is more utilitarian than spiritual. Abstract "moral" principles play little part. One may adhere to "Stability" or "Change," but these are by no means to be equated with the "Good" and "Evil" (or "Law" or "Chaos") of this world. It is only when one comes to the doctrines of "noble" versus "ignoble" action that it is possible to speak of "ethical" behaviour, although this, too, has little in common with present-day ideas of "good" and "evil." To quote from "The Book of Ebon Bindings" (translated and edited by M.A.R. Barker, Minneapolis, 1978, p.9):

> "... when a man acts 'nobly,' he behaves in accordance with his Skein of Destiny, as he perceives it. He serves his God; he is loyal to those who think as he does; he is staunch in his courage; and he is forthright in his deeds. Conversely, a man acts 'ignobly' when he ignores his own avowed principles, when he abandons his clan or his comrades, when he vacillates or is false or lazy, and when his deeds are small and niggling. The priestess of Lady Avánthe is 'noble' when she feeds the poor, assuages the pain of the aged and the sick, and supports the strictures of society. So also is the priest of Lord Vimúhla 'noble' when he goes forth to bloody battle, sacrifices the daily victims upon the altar of the Flame, and burns the cities of his enemies. The same is true of the devotee of Lord Sárku when he establishes the cities of the dead (the great graveyards and catacombs outside of most Tsolyáni cities), gives his offerings to the mouths of the Questing Worm, and strives ever to draw the living down into the eternal watchfulness of Death." (From the Introduction by Tsémel Qurén hiKétkolel, High Ritual Priest of Lord Ksárul.)

Even at its grandest, the Second Imperium never approached the vast territorial expanse of Éngsvan hla Gánga or the Empire of the Dragon Warriors. It remained largely a Tsolyáni phenomenon, bounded on the west by the Chákan forests, on the north by the central mountain range (the backbone of the continent), on the east by the jumbled crags of Kilalámmu and the fastnesses of the jungles of Gilráya, and on the south by the great ocean. Throughout this period Livyánu, Mu'ugalavyá, and Salarvyá all remained separate and independent. For a time the deserts of Milumanayá were ruled by the blue-armoured soldiers of the Petal Throne, and the armies of the Seal plundered the squabbling city-states of Yán Kór and Saá Allaqí with impunity. Milumanayá was eventually lost, and the situation in the north has now been completely altered by the emergence of a charismatic leader, of whom more will be said later. In the west the Chákas changed hands back and forth in a long tug-of-war with Mu'ugalavyá, and this culminated in the Great War of 2,020 A.S. which ended in a stalemate. Much the same occurred in the east, where the Imperium vied with Salarvyá (and with the vicious Hlutrgú) for control of Káija, Kerunán, and Chaigári. There were the usual internal problems: religious strife and persecutions in spite of the Concordat; difficulties with the nonhuman Pé Chói and Páchi Léi whose enclaves lie within the boundaries of Tsolyánu; a sharp but indecisive class struggle which gained some rights for the agricultural and mercantile clans and reduced the powers of the ancient Bednálljan-descended nobility; many economic ups and downs; and the expected quota of major and minor civil wars, insurrections, and anarchies. Nevertheless, the Five Empires (i.e. Tsolyánu, Mu'ugalavyá, Salarvyá, Livyánu, and Yán Kór) have tended to sink more and more into humdrum complacency over the centuries, as an old woman settles into her seat by the fire. The priestly hierarchies and the ponderous bureaucracies are firmly entrenched, and tradition, ritual, and obedience to authority are deeply ingrained. It would thus probably require more than just an upstart revolutionary or a dissident group to overturn the system. A leader or even a dynasty may be replaced, but this would be only a matter of subsituting one cog for another, and the great machine of society would continue to function as before. Real social change would demand a complete revolution in the foundations of these cultures, one which could shatter the smug citadels of political and economic power, but there are no harbingers of this as yet.

A few clouds are always present on the horizon, of course. The unification and growing power of Yán Kór have sent the other nations scrambling for alliances and advantages. The Ssú have recently made strong incursions into Chaigári and Kilalámmu again, and the Hlüss have increased their harassment of shipping and also appear to be plotting with certain others of the inimical races. Some sharp-eyed thinker may perceive the economic and military uses of the *Bazháq* (cf. Sec. 1.330) and bring about sweeping changes in the Five Empires. Religious and clan rivalries between the present heirs to the Petal Throne may bring about open civil war and give the Yan Koryáni the opportunity they have been awaiting. Current political matters will be discussed more fully below.

For those who would profit from a brief overview of Tsolyáni history it may be best to list the 61 Emperors of Tsolyánu and provide a salient detail or two of their reigns. Note that the dating of the early rulers is dubious.

No.	Name and Title	Dates	Events
1	the First Tlakotáni	1 - 85 (?)	Imperium founded
2	[Name unknown]	85 - 90 (?)	Evidence for the existence of the 2nd Emperor is scant.
3	Hórukel N'lén	90 - 135 (?)	Warred with the Hlutrgú
4	To... Miúna	135 - 139 (?)	First name partially missing on his one remaining stela
5	Trákonel I "the Blazing Light"	139 - 195	Battled with the cult of The One Other (c. 176)
6	Héshqu Miúna I	195 - 196	Died of the Plague of the White Spots which ravaged the Five Empires
[-]	Ashqó hiVrayússa	196 - 219	Regent for the children of the previous Emperor; High Princeps of the Omnipotent Azure Legion; Pé Chói revolt.
7	Trákonel II "the Victorious"	219 - 269 (?)	Defeated the Páchi Léi
8	Deshétl Miúna "the Stable Mountain"	269 - 327 (?)	Administrative reforms
9	Héshqu Miúna II "the Wind-Rider"	327 - 382 (?)	Raids into Milumanaya and Yan Kor
10	Trákonel III "the Godking"	382 - 384	Devoted to art and music; allowed the Empire to decay
11	Ashóretl Tikása "the Power Forever"	384 - 444 (?)	A strong ruler who made incursions into Mu'ugalavya
[-]	The Period of the Chancellor: there was no Emperor, and the Imperium was ruled by the High Chancellor of Avanthar from c. 444 to 446. In 445 the false Emperor, Ajjnái Teshkúma, was defeated and slain.		
12	Hórukel II	446 - 464 (?)	A scion of a distant branch of the Tlakotáni clan
13	Sriyésa "the Lady of the Palaces"	464 - 517 (?)	A whimsical and unstable ruler, much devoted to pleasure
14	Horkhúnen "the General"	517 - 580 (?)	A clever strategist whose troops raided Pán Chaka and Mu'ugalavyá; established the intelligence gathering arm of the Omnipotent Azure Legion
15	Kurshétl Nikuma I "Seizer of Cities"	580 - 641	Subjugation of the Kurt Hills in 590; put down local revolts and fought the Hlutrgú
16	Arodái Nikúma	641 - 709	Fought "the Shopkeepers' War" which gained some rights for the merchants and middle-class agricultural clans
17	Hehejállu "the Dark Moon"	709 - 801	Worshipped Sárku and established the hegemony of the Dark Trinity (Sárku, Hrú'ú, and Ksárul) in Avanthár;

			persecuted the temple of Vimúhla and also those of the Lords of Stabiljty; accession of Milumanayá in 730 and of the two Chákas in 780-1
18	Kurshétl Nikúma II "the Viewer of Night"	801 - 816	More religious strife between the Dark Trinity and the other temples; unexplained disappearance of the Emperor from Avanthár in 816 -- said to have been borne off by demons
[-]	The Time of No Emperor: a number of candidates competed for the throne while the realm was ruled by a coalition of the priesthoods of Change from 816 to 830. Formation of the Assassins' clans. Civil st rife and much unrest.		
19	Hrishmúna Néqo I	830 - 831	A distant relative of the last Emperor; a nonentity
20	Hrishmúna Néqo II	831 - 851	Another ineffectual ruler
21	Todukái Néqo "Pillar of the State"	851 - 905	Many administrative reforms; structuring of taxes, local and provincial administrative functions defined, etc.
22	Ngangmorél Néqo	905 - 916	A vapid and silly esthete
23	Vayúma Sú "Empress of All the Lands"	916 - 945	A devotee of both Thúmis and Avánthe, she persecuted the devotees of Change with a vengeance and brought about almost a religious civil war; thought to have been poisoned by the Servitors of Silence for the good of the realm (?)
24	Shájra Sú "Divine Daughter of Thúmis"	945 - 984	Even more of a fanatic for the Lord of Wisdom than her mother, this Empress continued the persecution of the followers of Change, besieged the City of Sárku, and engaged in civil war; she signed a treaty with the priesthoods in 975 under some duress
25	Nríga Gaqchiké "the Spider"	984 - 1,010	Intrigued against the power of the temples of Stability and pressed for the hegemony of the priesthood of Ksárul
[-]	Civil war: quarrels between the temples brought the nation into open war which lasted from 1,010 to 1,026. A number of provinces (e.g., Fasíltum, Tumíssa, and Chéne Hó) actually broke from the Empire for a short period and attempted to become independent states.		
26	Kánmi'yel Nikúma I "the Warrior"	1,026 - 1,031	Restored ord er after a long series of campaigns; later raided Salarvya and sent an expedition into Saá Allaqí
27	Kánmi'yel Nikúma II	1,031 - 1,057	Permitted the rise of the temple of Vimúhla in the west and northeast; much of the west ruled by Targholél Nikúma during 1,056-7
28	Targholél Nikúma "the Usurper"	1,057 - 1,062	Began as an ordinary member of the Tlakotáni clan in Tumíssa; became general and then governor of the western provinces; ascended the throne after a brief struggle and ruled ruthlessly in the name of Vimúhla
29	Nu'únka "the Pious"	1,062 - 1,062	Attempted to restore the power of the temples of Stability; said to have been sickly (?)
30	Kánmi'yel Nikúma III "the Scourge of Vimuhla"	1,062 - 1,074	Established the ascendancy of Vimúhla
31	Kánmi'yel Nikúma IV "Flattener of Peaks"	1,074 - 1,122	Another devotee of the Lord of Flame; conquered the island of Vrá in 1,115
32	Kánmi'yel Nasúndel	1,123 - 1,123	Apparently ruled only in Bey Sú and the east
33	Janulé "She of the Blue Goddess"	1,123 - 1,155	Ruled for one year in the west as a rival to her brother; when he died (or was somehow slain) she became sole ruler; a devotee of Avánthe, she worked to restore order in the Empire; a good but unimaginative Empress
34	Metlunél I "the Foolish"	1,155 - 1,202	This monarch began well but seems to have increasingly suffered from a form of paranoia which led him to fear everyone and to take the most ridiculous precautions for his safety; during the latter part of his reign the Empire was actually governed by his adult son, who later ascended the throne as Metlunél II
35	Metlunél II "the Builder"	1,202 - 1,251	Many great palaces and temples erected; the Sákbe Road system was improved; fought in Salarvyá in 1,218-9
36	Tariktánme "Expander of Temples"	1,251 - 1,279	Had a passion for temple architecture and constructed huge edifices for all of the 20 priesthoods equally; strengthened religious controls over the society and almost succeeded in establishing a theocracy
37	Sunún Drántike "the Mad"	1,279 - 1,279	His rule was limited to the Golden Tower only; slain by his sister at the invitation of the Omnipotent Azure Legion which became convinced that his c ontinued existence was a threat to the Imperium
38	Dashilúna "the Green-Eyed"	1,279 - 1,306	A devotee of Dlamélish, she attempted to emulate the ancient Bednálljan queen Nayári; renowned for her curious orgies and other habits
39	Tontikén Riruné "Slave of Demons"	1,306 - 1,318	A necromancer and sorcerer, it is whispered that this ruler studied the doctrines of She Who Cannot Be Named
40	Hejjéka I "the Replacer"	1,318 - 1,325	Restored the Empire to the rule of the Lords of Stability and re-established laws and traditional rights
41	Hejjéka II "the Heretic"	1,325 - 1,340	Abandoned the custom of royal seclusion and marched with his armies during the war with Salarvyá, which lasted throughout his reign; conquered much of northwestern Salarvyá
42	Nghárradu "the Ascetic"	1,340 - 1,355	Restored the custom of royal seclusion and devoted himself to the worship of the Lords of Stability; gave up his father's territorial gains in Salarvya
43	Hejjéka III "the Fat"	1,355 - 1,407	Reigned peacefully; said to have gained his nickname not because of his personal girth but because during his reign "the Empire was fat and well-fed"
44	Métlunel III "He Who Thirsts"	1,407 - 1,458	The reason for this monarch's sobriquet is not known; it is thought that he died of a wasting disease

45	Hejjéka IV "Restorer of Dignities"	1,458 - 1,517	Gave local autonomy back to the island of Vrá and other protectorates; restored ancient patents of nobility -- with resulting social chaos
46	Metlunel V "the Esthete"	1,517 - 1,574	Both Dó Cháka and Pán Cháka lost to Mu'ugalavyá in 1,565-6; the city of Páya Gupá also taken by the Mu'ugalavyáni, and other parts of the Empire weakened while the Emperor dallied with his slavegirls and artistic productions in Avanthár
47	Hejjéka V "the Openhanded"	1,574 - 1,623	Generous and cultured but naive about foreign affairs; gave away much of the ancient treasure stored in Avanthár at a series of magnificent fetes and ceremonie s
48	Métlunel VI "He Who is Lame"	1,623 - 1,699	Another pleasant nonentity
[-]	The Time of the Usurpers: the Empire was torn by sudden civil strife as ancie nt rivals saw an opportunity to seize power. Chrajúna "the Usurper of the North", Vriggétsu Dnásh "the Usurper of the South", Onusú hiBarúdla "the Priestking of Fasiltum", and Qenqólu hiVriddi "the General of the West" all vied for the throne during 1,699 and 1,700. These contenders only managed to weaken each other, however, and in the end the Omnipotent Azure Legion crowned a distant clan-cousin of the previous Emperor in Avanthár.		
49	Kánmi'yel Nikuma V "the Pretender"	1,699 - 1,747	After an inauspicious beginning as the puppet of the Omnipotent Azure Legion, this ruler became one of the more enlightened Emperors; Dó Cháka retaken from Mu'ugalavyá in 1,711
50	Durúmu "the Copper Blade of Sárku"	1,747 - 1,809	Repeated some of the excesses of Emperor Hehejállu, who also worshipped Sárku; put down a Pé Choi rebellion in the Protectorate of Dó Cháka with terrible bloodshed -- for which the Pé Choi have never forgiven the devotees of the Lord of Worms
51	Nrainué "the Iridescent Goddess"	1,809 - 1,872	Re-establishment of the power of the temples of Stability; Pán Cháka retaken from Mu'ugalavyá in 1,842
52	Aléya "the Damsel of Purity"	1,872 - 1,931	Worshipper of Avánthe and her Cohort, Dilinála; never married and apparently never took male concubines; died without issue
53	Ninué Jalésa "the Maiden of Beauty"	1,931 - 1,958	Younger sister of Empress Aléya but only an infant when the latter ascended to the throne and thus still eligible for the Choosing of Emperors; said to have been the Lesbian lover of Aléya; remained devoted to Dilinála and died without issue (although some say that Emperor Neshkiruma was her illegitimate son)
54	Neshkiruma "the Cloud-Spinner"	1,958 - 2,015	See above; totally disinterested in government; paid no attention when Milumanaya seceded and declared its independence in 1,976
[-]	Time of Many Emperors: during the year 2,015 many candidates vied for the throne. There were claims that the Choosing of Emperors had not been performed honestly, and eventually the Omnipotent Azure Legion stepped in and aided one of Emperor Neshkiruma's many sons to ascend the Petal Throne.		
55	Gyésmu "the Iron Fist"	2,015 - 2,065	Perceiving the Empire to be weakend by internal strife, the Mu'ugalavyáni invaded in 2,019 - 2,020. The Chákas and the central western regions of the country fell to them, but they overextended their su pply lines, and they had to fall back. The Imperium recovered much of its lost domains. Then in 2,029, while Salarvyá was embroiled in its own civil war, Tsolyánu seized the Káija Protectorate, then Kerunán in 2,031 and Chaigári in 2,041. The Tsolyáni might have continued on into Salarvyá proper, but the rising of the ancient Sárku-worshipping Yto clan in the Chákas in 2,045 caused the Emperor to turn his attention again to the west
56	Gyésmu Dálisan "the Magnificent and Ever-Living"	2,065 - 2,168	The new conquests were consolidated and order restored; balance between Change and Stability achieved; failure of attempt to recover Milumanayá; this Emperor is said to have lived to the age of 125 through the use of "magic" and drugs
57	Heshtú'atl "the Mighty"	2,168 - 2,234	A good and sensible ruler
58	Arshú'u "the Ever-Splendid"	2,234 - 2,291	Another excellent statesman; gave attention to trade and foreign relations a nd signed treaties with Livyánu and Pechánо
59	Hetkolainen "He Whose Glory Never Ends"	2,291 - 2,345	Repeated invasions of Yán Kór and Milumanayá; suppression of incipient revolt by the Vimúhla-worshipping Vriddi clan of Fasiltum in 2,340-1; rise to power of "Baron" Áld, the new leader of Yán Kór
60	Mursún Dlekkúmine "the Weak"	2,345 - 2,346	Said to have died of a strange plague. In reality, his death was due to the deadly drug Zu'úr supplied to mankind by the Hlúss
61	Hirkáne Tlakotáni "the Stone Upon Which the Universe Rests"	2,347 - to date	Defeat of Mu'ugalavyáni raiders at the Battle of Butrús early in 2,347; Battle of Rú in Salarvyá late in the same year; further invasions of Yán Kór and the north; war with Yán Kór accidentally started in 2,356; loss of Átkolel Heights and Yán Koryáni invasion halted at battles near Chéne Hó and Khirgár in 2,356-7

For further information concerning the Second Imperium, students are advised to consult "Balamtsányal hitùplanKólumeldàlidàlisayal hiKólumebabársasa" (The Histories of the Beloved, Very Great, and Powerful Emperors of the Most Mighty Imperium), by Heredáru hiMritlékka, in Tsolyáni, available in almost every library in the Empire. Although both voluminous and somewhat outdated, it is still preferable to the more recent work by Chórodu hiSsáinggela, "Balamtsánikh hiGardásisasayal Lúmimra hiWísu" (The History of the Mighty Deeds of Our Realm), also in Tsolyáni and procurable everywhere.

1.380. CURRENT HISTORY

A brief excursus on recent events and the present political situation of Tsolyánu will be of interest to those planning to reside there.

The present monarch, Hirkáne Tlakotáni, became Emperor after a distinguished career in his grandfather's army. As a young Prince, he served in Yán Kór and the north and was a boon companion of General Kettukel hiMraktiné (commander of the First Legion of Ever-Present Glory and now High General of All the Armies) and also of Baron Áld, the Saá Allaqiyáni mercenary who has now become the ruler of Yán Kór. When his father passed away, the Emperor was already in his late middle years. No other candidate came forward to challenge this powerful and clever man, and he ascended the Petal Throne unopposed. He is now approximately 75 years of age, still strong and in good health, but very conscious of his human frailty and thus eager to influence the succession for the good of the Imperium.

Prince Hirkáne Tlakotáni already had five acknowledged children when he attained the throne. He seems to have anticipated his ascendancy to the Golden Tower since he also had others of his offspring secretly given to various patrons by the Omnipotent Azure Legion — a step expected of a prudent Emperor but not of an uncrowned Prince. It is thought that not all of his heirs have been brought forth by their patrons to recieve the Gold by any means, and that there are more Imperial children awaiting their opportunities — or their patrons' perception of the political situation. As of this writing, only the following are known:

1. Rereshqála: son, aged 42, protege of the ancient and aristocratic Clan of Sea Blue, one of the pillars of the Royalist Party. Rumour has it that Rereshqála will wish to renounce the Gold and retire to his pretty villa on the seacoast near Jakálla. An urbane and cultured man, he is much given to opulent entertainments and the arts.
2. Eselné: son, aged 36, protege of the Military Party and the temple of the war-god Karakán, friend of General Kettukal, and an experienced soldier. He is bluff, forthright, decisive, and physically very strong. Many think that he lacks sufficient diplomatic ability and the cleverness to see the solution to a problem, however.
3. Surundáno: son, aged 34, protege of the Temple of Thúmis. He was trained as a scholar-priest of the Lord of Wisdom before being informed of his princely status, and he is still somewhat shy and retiring, although struggling to cope. The priesthood of Thúmis revealed him early in 2,356 A.S. in order to swing the support of the Temples of Hnálla, Avánthe, and Belkhánu away from Eselné and towards a less militaristic candidate.
4. Mridóbu: son, aged 33, protege of the Provost of the High Chancery and the exalted court circles at Avanthár. He has lived all his life at the centre of the Tsolyáni state and is familiar with every aspect of government. Smooth, polished, and yet somehow rather cold and unprepossessing, Mridóbu has all of the diplomatic skills which Eselné lacks, but he has no experience with the army, and his profession of the faith of Ksárul is seen as only lip-service and is not satisfying to the Priestly Party.
5. Mirusíya: son, aged 32, raised as an ordinary member of the Vríddi clan of Fasíltum and served in the Legion of the Lord of Red Devastation (18th Imperial Medium Infantry) in which he rose to the rank of *Dritlán* (roughly equivalent to Colonel). He was revealed by his patrons, the Temple of Vimúhla and the Vríddi clan late in 2,356 A.S. in order to counter an attempt by Eselné to ally the two war temples (Karakán and Vimúhla) into a single strong military party under his leadership. Mirusíya is an experienced soldier and also possesses some skill at diplomacy. He has also lived the day-to-day life of the Empire and is familiar with its problems. A major difficulty for him, however, is the ancient rivalry between the Vimúhla-worshipping clans of the west and the eastern-oriented Vríddi aristocracy.
6. Dhich'uné: son, aged 29, the protege of the Temple of Sárku. He is fanatically devoted to the Lord of Worms and has attained the rank of Lord Adept in this temple. He draws support from the priesthoods of the Dark Trinity and their Cohorts: Hrü'ü, Ksárul (whose more devout worshippers are not pleased with Mridóbu), Wurú, Grugánu, and of course, Durritlámish. Dhich'uné has no military abilities but is nevertheless attempting to raise legions loyal to his dark faith (including, it is whispered, undead troops reanimated by sorcery). The forces of Stability consider him anathema — a devious and dangerous fanatic — and their remaining temples of Change (Vimúhla and Dlamélish, plus their respective Cohorts) would prefer jaded Rareshqála (ostensibly a worshipper of Hnálla) or even mild Surundáno to him.
7. Ma'ín (nicknamed *Krüthain* "the Exquisite"): daughter,aged 24, originally the protege of the Temple of Avánthe but now devoted to her counterpart, Dlamélish, after a sudden and unexplained conversion. Ma'ín is spoiled, whimsical, and given to voluptuous entertainments which strain her Imperial stipend to the limit. She has the support only of the Temples of Dlamélish and Hrihávyal, plus the backing of certain factions within the Temples of Avánthe and Dilinála who still favor a woman over any of the male candidates. In any case, it is thought that Ma'ín will renounce the Gold or else marry one of her half-brothers (a common practice in Imperial circles). While this would not make her Empress, it would give her supporters some leverage with the backers of the future Emperor — if she chose correctly. Currently she is vacillating between Eselné, whom she has known since childhood, and the newly revealed Prince Mirusíya.

There are presently four major power blocs in the Imperium:

1. The Imperial Party: this group is centred at Avanthár under the leadership of the High Princeps of the Omnipotent Azure Legion, Lord Qoruma hiRi'inyússa, and the Provost of the High Chancery, Lord Chaimíra hiSsánmirin, and its supporters include some of the most influential courtiers, bureaucrats, and officials in the Empire. These are the men and women most loyal to the system and most resistant to change. Their objectives include expansion only through political and diplomatic means, an end to the present war with Yán Kór, and the perpetuation of the status quo. They have evinced a willingness to cooperate with the Priestly Party but find the Royalists too threatening and the Military Party too dangerous and likely to bring about unforeseeable consequences.
2. The Royalist Party : named because of its leaders' supposed descent from Bednálljan and Engsvanyáli nobility, the great clans which make up this bloc produce many of the upper-level administrators, bureaucrats, landholders, and functionaries. This group is led by Lord Khámiyal hiSayúncha, Govenor of Béy Sú; Lord Hísun hiTánkolel, Govenor of Jakálla; Lord Kharihávya hiBosúga of Tumíssa, and Lord Srúqu hiTankolel, Grand Legate of the Palace of the Realm in Béy Sú. This party also desires the status quo — but with themselves in Avanthár instead of the present coterie. They would be willing to strike a bargain with the Priestly Party if the latter would agree to curb its hunger for greater theocratic control of lands and villages. Some members have also urged support for the Military Party, particularly if the war with Yán Kór were successful. After all, administrators, scribes, and bureaucrats will be needed to rule any newly won domains, and some of these old noble clans have claims to fiefs in the north dating back to Engsvanyáli times.
3. The Priestly Party: this bloc is split, of course, between the devotees of Stability and Change, but cooperation is temporarily useful since the short term goals of the temples are the same: the expansion of the temples' power and the establishment of the theocratic control over the Empire (similar to that existing in Livyánu). Their leaders



The Wizard Nyélmu Gazing upon Princess Ma'íṅ in His Globe of Distant Discernment

include many of the senior clergy: e.g. Aknállu hiTikéshmu, High Priest of Hnálla in Béy Sü; Mirigga hiDulumésa, High Priest of Hrü'ü at Béy Sü; Chaturgha hiMraktiné, High Priestess of Avánthe at Avanthár; Dúrugen hiNáshomai, High Priest of Thúmis at Béy Sü; Korkumá hiVriyén, Senior Priest of Dlamélish at Tumíssa, etc. This bloc posseses immense power: the temples fund some of the Empire's best legions; they operate a communications network of telepathic relays which rivals that of the Omnipotent Azure Legion; they own vast lands, collect tithes, and receive the donations of the pious. If they could forget their doctrinal differences and unite, they would indeed be a force to be reckoned with. Most of this group's leaders prefer the status quo (or at most only cautious expansion), and they are most comfortable, therefore, with the Imperial Party. Rivalry over land control has kept them at odds with the Royalist Party, and their more conservative members are afraid of the aggressive stance of the Military Party. Many of the younger and more zealous rank and file are willing to take the risks offered by the militarists, however, and the great war-temples (Karakán and Vimúhla, plus their respective Cohorts, Chegárra and Chiténg) are already solidly in the Military Party's camp. The priesthoods do have one major problem, moreover: they have never managed to ally the suspicion of possible treasonous collaboration with the priests of other nations. The boundaries of religion are international: Vimúhla is worshipped in Mu'ugalavyá; Shiringgáyi of Salarvyá combines the attributes of Avánthe and Dlamélish; the Dark Trinity has allies amongst Livyánu's mysterious Shadow Gods; and the Tsolyáni dieties are found almost unchanged in Yán Kór and the north, though with different names. The clergy are distrusted, therefore. In addition, the temples are also wary of one another since an alliance with Mu'ugalavyá would aid the devotees of Vimúhla's Flame, while a swing towards Salarvyá would bring the followers of Avánthe and Dlamélish into the ascendancy. The ancient theocracies of the Bednálljans and Éngsvan hla Gánga still loom large in the memories of men, and too great an upsetting of the balance might well set vast uncontrollable forces in motion.

4. The Military Party: this bloc was originally united behind Prince Eselné and included such officers as General Kéttukal hiMraktiné (the First Legion of Ever-Present Glory, 1st Imperial Heavy Infantry); Znayáshu hiVazhímü (the Golden Sunburst Legion, 11th Imperial Medium Infantry); Sérqu hiChaishyáni (the Legion of Sérqu, Sword of the Empire, 14th Imperial Heavy Infantry); Mirkitáni vuMakkochá́qu (the Legion of Mirkitáni, Hero of Victories, 7th Imperial Heavy Infantry), Méshmuyel hiVu'urtésh (the Legion of the Portals of Death, 2nd Imperial Heavy Infantry); Girikteshmu hiKoyúga (the Legion of Girikteshmu, 23rd Imperial Archers); Hagárr hiChunmíyel (the Flotilla of Hagárr of Paránta, 1st Imperial Marines); Tlanéno hiVorodláyu (the Squadrons of Tlanéno the Steersman, 3rd Imperial Marines); Gúsha hiVordésa (the Legion of Gúsha the Khirgári, 7th Imperial Medium Infantry); and many others. The appearance of Prince Mirusíya has caused those units devoted to Vimúhla and his Cohort, Chiténg, to defect, however and Prince Eselné can no longer count on the support of such officers as Korikáda hiKurúshma (High Priest of Chiténg at Butrús and commander of the Legion of the Givers of Sorrow, 8th Imperial Infantry); Kuruktáshmu hiKétkolel (the Legion of the Lord of Red Devastation, 18th Imperial Medium Infantry); Tsúmikel hiTengetláku (the Legion of the Citadel of Glory, 13th Imperial Crossbowmen); and others. The Military Party has thus been split in two, and the problem is compounded by the growing strength of temple-funded legions espousing the causes of Prince Dhich'uné, Prince Mridóbu, or even Princess Ma'in. As a whole, the Military Party desires a quick and successful conclusion to the war with Yán Kór, even though this would mean gains for the Royalist Party, which would be called upon to provide the administrators and governors of any newly conquered lands. Any advance westward into Mu'ugalavyá would be costly and risky, but a strike eastward into Salarvyá might be easier and more profitable, particularly if the Salarvyáni were enmeshed in one of their periodic feudal internal struggles. Expansion into Salarvyá would also discomfit the followers of Avánthe and Dlamelish, who have ties with the Salarvyáni Temple of Shiringgáyi. The militarists believe that a bargain can be struck with the Imperial Party (General Kéttukal has been heard to say, "Let the sycophants sing the glories of the Emperor before the Petal Throne; leave the glory of the Imperium to us!"). A modus vivendi may also be worked out with the Royalists, but differences with the conservatives within the Priestly Party appear to be insurmountable.

External events may soon force the Tsolyáni to solve their internal affairs. The Yán Koryáni occupied the little state of Pijéna in 2,353, and the nomads of Milumanayá now regularly guide Baron Áld's green-clad troops south across the Desert of Sighs. Open war with Yán Kór flared up in 2,356, and the northerners quickly seized the Átkolel Heights, the cone of an extinct volcano, precipitous to the west, south, and east, but easily accessible from the north. The Yán Koryáni pressed southwards at once but were defeated north of Chéne Hó and again northwestwards from Khirgár. The Baron's armies were thus prevented from spilling out into the fertile plains south of the Átkolel Heights, and the war became a stalemate during the cold and rainy winter of 2,356. Several minor battles have been fought since, but neither side has been able to make any significant advances

In order to understand Yán Kór, one must know something of its leader, "Baron" Áld. Originally a young tribal chieftain from the Jánnu Range in Saá Allaqí, Áld wandered south to join the Tsolyáni army as a mercenary. He proved an excellent soldier and rose through the ranks to become General of the Legion of the Scarlet Plume, 19th Imperial Heavy Infantry, a unit devoted to Karakán and to General Kéttukal. Unfortunately, Áld became a pawn in the rivalry between the Military Party and the Royalists, and his unit was betrayed into an indefensible position at Káidrach Field in Yán Kór, where it was slain almost to the last man (and this legion has never been reactivated by the Imperium since). Áld was captured, but instead of sacrificing him as befitted a man of honour, his captors offered him "the peace of the mercenary": gold. Bitter over the chicanery of the Tsolyáni, he accepted and soon rose to become commander of the forces of Yán Kór City. At that time the north was a welter of little independent principalities, in Tsolyáni eyes fit only as a source for plunder and slaves. Áld's military experience convinced other states to join in an alliance against the Tsolyáni, and several Imperial expeditions were summarily repulsed. More allies came forward, and within a few short years Áld had welded much of Yán Kór into an incipient nation. Eventually even the king of Saá Allaqí did homage to this man who had once been one of the least of his vassals.

Áld adopted the Tsolyani title of *Arsékmekoi*, translatable as "Baron" but actually denoting a noble fiefholder of middle rank. He preferred this to any more exalted designation because he did not wish to offend the pride of certain of his subjects. He has since so consolidated his power, however, that he is now an absolute monarch in all but the name. Should Yán Kór survive the war intact, it is likely that his eldest daughter (the Yán Koryáni are matrilineal) will inherit an empire.

The Tsolyáni sent eight expeditions to defeat this man whom they had once considered their instrument. Each time the Emperor's blue-clad troops were either defeated or were out-manouevred and left with nothing. Yet during the last of the invasions an event occurred which has made Baron Ald the implacable foe of everything Tsolyáni — or perhaps of everything southern, since he hates the Mu'ugalavyáni with almost the same ferocity. Indeed, there are some who say that his mind is disordered and that his obsession with the destruction of Tsolyánu can only end in the extinction of all that he has achieved. This event was the slaughter by the Tsolyáni of his mistress, Yilrána.

The daughter of the High Clan of Ke'ér, a dynasty allegedly

founded in Bednálljan times, Yilrána was one of those women in whose honour young men sing love songs and older poets compose epics. Ald could not marry her (the caste laws of her people forbade it), but he took her as his mistress, and while she lived he took no other. When the Tsolyáni invaded Yán Kór for the eighth time, Ald left her in the citadel at Ke'ér, far behind his lines, and marched off to do battle at Srigásh Field. Thinking to outflank the foe, General Kéttukal detached a sizable force and set it off under the command of his aide, Qeqélmu hiViridáni. This unit encountered only light Yán Koryáni resistance. The Tsolyáni pushed on boldly (some say that they had become lost) and suddenly found themselves before the walls of Ke'ér. Qeqélmu left part of his contingent to besiege the citadel, which was only lightly defended, and hastened back to rejoin his General. He arrived just in time to share in the Tsolyáni defeat at Srigásh Field, where he was wounded and later died. The officer in charge of the siege, one Bazhán hiSayúncha, demanded the surrender of Ke'ér, but Yilrána refused to capitulate, believing that the Baron was nearby and would soon come back to take the besiegers in the rear. Ald, however, was still pursuing the defeated enemy and did not return in time. The efficient Tsolyáni sappers soon breached the walls, and the city fell. Bazhán's men proceeded to sack the place and also impaled Yilrána upon a stake before the gates — the usual Tsolyáni treatment for a recalcitrant defender. The Baron arrived to find only the blackened shell of his fortress and the body of the woman he loved hung up before it. He then vowed vengeance upon the altars of his fierce Saá Allaqiyáni gods, and this terrible grief and hatred has dwelt within him night and day ever since. Luckless Bazhán was captured by a party of Pygmy Folk, the nonhuman partisans of Yán Kór, and was brought back to face all of the cruelties the Baron could lavish upon him. The Baron, however, is not satisfied and has sworn the annilation of every city in the south.

Ever since the death of Yilrána the people and resources of the north have been marshalled for the invasion of Tsolyánu. The Baron realises that his nation is smaller, less populous, and possesses fewer trained soldiers than the Tsolyáni. He has thus hired mercenaries from the tundra of the Lorún and from the tribes of the distant northeastern realms. It is said that he also has a mighty engine of the ancients: a huge, shrouded oblong the size of a house which is being borne southward by a hundred teams of *Chlén*-beasts to assault the citadels of the Empire. Men say that even the mightiest fortifications and the thick Sákbe Roads cannot withstand the kiss of the Baron's new "Ebon Mistress." There are other rumours as well: hints of pacts made with the terrible Pariah Gods, stories of strange sailing ships from across the frigid and unexplored northern sea, and other tales of sorcery and dark magic. These days the Baron's advisor and constant companion is a thin, taciturn little man of no known antecedents, one Fú Shi'í, whom some call a Mihálli shape-changer. Others whisper that he is half human and half nonhuman Pygmy Folk. The Baron has entrusted one of his best legions to this being, the Valiant of Ke'ér, and it is Fú Shi'í also who supervises the "Ebon Mistress" in her inexorable journey south.

In the years since Yilrána's death the Baron has indeed taken other wives and concubines. Lady Mmír, clan-cousin of Yilrána and herself a Princess of the High Clan of Ke'ér, is chief amongst these, and she has given the Baron four children, three boys and a girl, all as yet under ten years of age. Another of the Baron's mistresses is Lady Sí Zíris Qáya, "the Princess of the North," leader of the Lorún tribes which have gathered under the Yán Koryáni banners. It is also said that he shows favour to Lady Deg Dimáni, ruler of the island of Vridu off the northern coast of Yán Kór. Her people are devoted to the Lord of Sacrifice, a particularly ferocious local form of Vimúhla, and she, too, has brought troops to swell the Baron's army of revenge. None of these, nor the dozens of casual concubines and slavegirls, compensates in the least for the lost Yilrána, and no one can dissuade the Baron from his bloody objective.

The Tsolyáni are well aware of the mobilisation of the north, and they have not been inactive. During the years just before the present war General Kéttukal's enemies in the other three political parties intrigued to bring his loyalty into question. For a time he lived in polite "house arrest" in Chéne Hó, and his disciplined First Legion was posted to Sokátis, far away across the Empire. Prince Eselné warned of the danger of a Yán Koryáni invasion and pleaded with his royal father to restore Kéttukal and strengthen the legions. The Emperor had been on the point of doing this when the war broke out. The tough old soldier, perhaps the finest fighting man produced by Tsolyánu in several centuries, is once again with his troops in Khirgár, and the Yán Koryáni advance has been halted just within the frontiers. All attempts to recapture the Átkolel Heights have failed, however, and rivers of men and supplies now pour northward. Chéne Hó, Khirgár, and the high mountain pass north of Thri'íl have been heavily reinforced. Bonuses are being offered to Shén, Ahoggyá, and good human mercenaries, and the Imperium is also attempting to entice N'lüss warbands to come and enter its service. Expeditions are being financed to seek iron and also any usable weapons of the ancients. The nation has been placed upon a war footing. The economy is thriving, the merchants are prosperous as never before, and the urban artisan clans are delighted. It is difficult to find slaves to till the fields, however, since many serfs have been taken away to transport supplies to the troops (but not to fight — the Imperium has seen its share of slave revolts and wants no more). The Priestly Party and the Royalists are both suffering from a dearth of agricultural workers, and in time this will cause political repercussions.

To the west, the Mu'ugalavyáni look with some apprehension upon the Baron's plans for war. They would indeed like to recover Dó Cháka and Pán Cháka, but the Baron is hostile to Mu'ugalavyá and an alliance to invade Tsolyánu simultaneously would be dubious at best. Many Mu'ugalavyáni renegades have fled the stifling bureaucracy and zeal for order of their homeland to take service with Yán Kór, and the latter's occupation of Pijéna was difficult for the Red Hats of Ssa'átis to swallow. The Baron has also hired many N'lüss bands — men considered criminals and rebels by the Mu'ugalavyáni — and there is also the matter of the fugitive Mu'ugalavyáni general, Mj'itlénish, who looted the armoury and treasury of the city of Pagús and then escaped to Yán Kór where it is said he now leads one of the Baron's legions. Nevertheless, the Red Hats do not want to see a great Tsolyáni victory, a mighty empire stretching from the southern ocean to the northern sea. Nor would a defeated Tsolyánu under Yán Koryáni hegemony be in their interest. The Yán Koryáni cannot hope to conquer and hold the south, and centrifugal forces of fragmentation might be set in motion which would threaten their own stability. Mu'ugalavyá might seize the Chákas in such an event, but they are themselves under pressure from the Livyáni in the south and the N'lüss in the north and cannot spare the troops to hold a shattered and chaotic conquest in the east together. Mu'ugalavyá is thus content to make both threats and overtures to both sides, while hoping for a turn of events which will provide some gain from the situation.

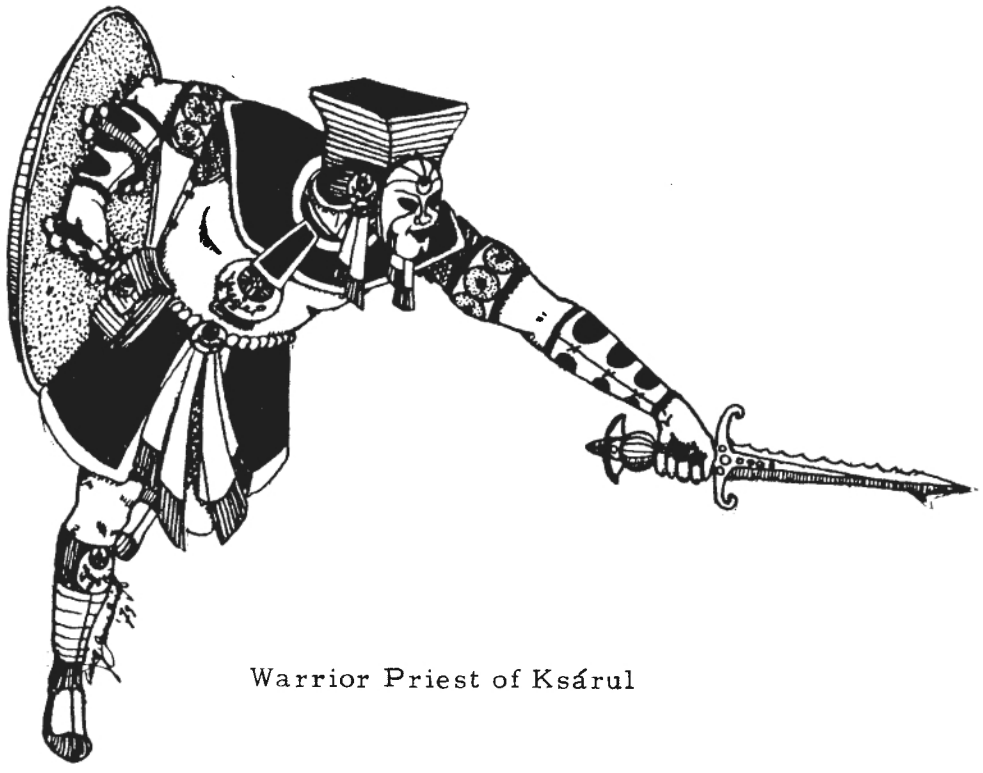
The Salarvyáni have more to gain from a Tsolyáni defeat: their lost protectorates of Káija, Kerunán, and Chaigári. They are too far away to aid Yán Kór directly with more than gold and a few contingents of Ahoggyá mercenaries sent up via the mountain passes of Kilalámmu. The Baron has pressured Salarvyá to invade Chaigári and thus draw troops away from the northern front, but the Imperium would still have sufficient legions in the south to repel anything less than a major invasion. The Salarvyáni, moreover, are busy with their own interminable feuding, most recently between the ruling families of Koylúga and Chame'él. The Tsolyáni have also increased their aid to the little state of Pecháno and have urged it to be ready to step into any gaps in the Salarvyáni defences. To make matters worse, the Ssú have lately raided out into neighboring human lands in strength, and no power in the area dares to weaken its bulwarks against these hated foes of mankind.

The Livyáni are also too distant to play an active role in the war. They do have a treaty with Tsolyánu and have been sending weapons, iron, and other items up by sea. They have strengthened their northern frontier with Mu'ugalavyá, pinning large numbers of Mu'ugalavyáni troops there. Livyánu, however, has meanwhile embarked upon a little conquest of its own: its forces have taken the southernmost isles of Tsolél (whose privateers have long been a thorn in Tsámra's side) and are advancing northward into Llürúra Isle in what seems to be a war of permanent conquest. This disturbs the Shén of both Mmátugual and Shényu, and the great reptiles have warned Livyánu against anything more than a temporary punitive and plundering expedition. The Shén have never been expansionists and dislike living in cooler northern climes, but they are not slow to respond to what they see as a threat to their hegemony over the

southwestern seas. They, like the Livyáni and the rulers of Tsoléi, have established small colonies on the unknown continent (southwestern corner of map 1), and they see this region as logically theirs to exploit. The situation is very fluid at present.

The other friendly nonhuman races are generally loyal to (or at least willing to serve) the human nations in which they dwell. Most of them play only minor roles in the great political game which occupies the rulers of the continent. The Swamp Folk are devoted to Mu'ugalavyá and staff much of its shipping. The Pygmy Folk are similarly satisfied with Yán Kór. The Tinaliya are more aloof but do provide Livyánu with a few legions — more out of distaste for the stolid Mu'ugalavyáni than because of any love for the hierarchs of Tsámra. Most of the Pé Chói are loyal to Tsolyánu, although some favor Mu'ugalavyá, and there are communities deep within the forests which will have no human masters and prey upon any who pass their way. The Páchi Léi are faithful to Tsolyánu as well, hating the Mu'ugalavyáni passionately because of the great massacre of 1,565. Both the Hláka and the Ahoggyá are neutral, though much sought after as mercenaries. The Hláka eyries are independent of human rule, while the stumpy Ahoggyá give grumbling allegiance to Salarvyá (or to Háida Pakála across the straits) but derive no pleasure from the company of men. The Mihálli, the aqueous Nyaggá, and the Urunén are not at all involved, while the inimical races (the Ssú, Hlüss, Hlutrgú, and the Shunned Ones) make no alliances with mankind and enjoy slaughtering the other races with evenhanded impartiality. The Ssu are allied with their cousins, the Hlüss, of course, and they sometimes aid the semi-intelligent lesser species against man and his confederates, but they are both hostile (or at best neutral) to the Shunned Ones and the Hlutrgú, and these last two species are foes to one another as well.

Of the smaller human nations, only a very few are of any political significance. The N'lüss compel the Mu'ugalavyáni to maintain large garrisons along their northern frontiers, and bands of these huge barbarians are welcome by both the armies of Yán Kór and Tsolyánu. The forest tribes of M'mórcha and Nmártusha are inconsequential, and the disunited, piratical sailors and fisherfolk of Tsoléi are of interest only as a bone of contention between Livyánu and the Shén states. On map 2, the Ghatóni dislike the "woman-ruled" Yán Koryáni but still grudgingly send a few contingents of troops and trained *Serudla*-beasts (which only the Ghatóni know how to domesticate). Occupied Pijéna and the bandy-legged hill people of Chayákku also provide the Baron with soldiers, but most of the northeastern peoples remain independent, protected by their mountains and their distance from the mighty empires of the south. This is the case with Jánnu, Kilalámmu, Mihállu, and the other eastern states on maps 3 and 4 as well. Returning to map 2, the desert buffer nation of Milumanaya is broadly split between support for Yán Kór and for Tsolyánu. There is no central government, and Lord Akurghá, the Warlord of Pelesár, favours the Baron, as does Lord Firáz Zhavéndu of Sunraya. The latter's son, Lord Firáz Mmulávu Zhavéndu, is a paid puppet of the Tsolyáni, however, and his ruffians occupy a series of small bandit fortresses just north of the Pass of Skulls beyond Thri'il. In the southeast, only Pechano has any political significance. Its rulers favour Tsolyánu, as has been noted, but the bulk of its resources must remain poised against the Ssú. The lands across the southern ocean — Háida Pakála, the Nyémesel Isles, and the Ahoggyá state of Onmu Tlé Hléktis — are disunited and are unconcerned with events to the north.



Warrior Priest of Ksárul

1.400 Physical Ethnology

The following Sections will present the details of racial types, health and disease, dwellings, cities, road systems, etc. The Five Empires will be the major focus, but notes on the other lands will also be included wherever relevant.

1.410. RACIAL TYPES, HEALTH AND ECONOMY

1.411. Humans

The original settlers of Tékumel were racially homogeneous. Ancient physical differences had been more or less eradicated and blended together during the centuries between the atomic Armageddon and man's expansion to the stars. A few relatively minor genetic modifications have occured since: e.g. the tallness of the N'lüss of the northwest, and the additional psychic talents developed since man came to Tékumel.

Tsolyáni males average 1.68 m in height. They are of slender-wiry or medium builds, generally. Complexions range from coppery brown to a golden tan. Noses are aquiline or straight; hair is fine and straight, always a glossy black; and there is relatively little body hair. Women are shorter: 1.57 m in height, a shade or two lighter in colouration, and with rather voluptuous figures. The Tsolyáni prefer their males to be muscular, square-jawed, and hawk-featured. A common standard of female beauty is Tanulé, one of the Aspects of Avánthe (Sec. 1.610): her images depict a slim girl with long black hair, triangular and piquant features, a retrousse nose, and wide cheekbones. Curly or brown-streaked hair is considered unbeautiful, and light-coloured eyes are thought to be a sign of inherent dishonesty.

The Mu'ugalavyáni and the people of Chákas are 1.5-2 cm shorter than the Tsolyáni norms. They are more brachiocephalic, with rather flattened hook noses, wide features, and coarse, straight black hair. Their eyes are sometimes grey, and their colouration is lighter. The Yán Koryáni are also 2-2.5 cm shorter than their southern neighbours. They are stockier, heavier, and sometimes bow-legged (a feature even more pronounced in Chayákku and the states of the far northeast). The Livyáni are taller and more graceful. Men average 1.70 m and women 1.63 m in height. They are frequently of a boyishly slender build, dolichocephalic, with straight or retrousse noses, wavy black or dark brown hair, a golden copper complexion, and little body hair. Livyáni females are often high-breasted and narrow-hipped. The Salarvyáni are quite distinctive: they are of the same average height as the Tsolyáni, but their complexions are more sallow, almost a pale yellowish tan, and they are generally more hirsute, with heavy body hair, curly or even kinky beards, and sickleshaped noses. The Salarvyáni tend towards obesity, especially after age 30. Much the same racial type is found in Háida Pakála, but the inhabitants of the Nyémesel Isles tend towards tallness (1.83 m on the average, with females being 1.69 m) and exaggerated slenderness. They suffer from premature baldness and have very little body hair.

The very tall and muscularly built N'lüss were mentioned above. They average 2.3 to 2.15 cm in height. There are other minor sub-types as well: e.g. the squat, half-human Fungus-Eaters of M'mórcha, the pale and almond-eyed inhabitants of Lost Bayársha, etc. There are, however, neither blonds nor very dark peoples in this part of Tékumel. Occasional albinoes are objects of curiosity and repugnance and may find themselves being sold as "special" slaves or else gracing a cage in some zoological garden.

1.412. Health and Disease

The average lifespan in the Five Empires is 43 years, including deaths at childbirth and other diseases of the newborn. Life expectancy in some of the minor states is less — perhaps 35 years — and it is even less in the tribal regions. Aside from warfare and accidents, the greatest causes of mortality include heart attacks, cancer, and certain diseases.

Most of mankinds's ancient scourges — typhoid, malaria, infantile paralysis, smallpox, measles, cholera, etc. — were either eliminated during the centuries after the atomic Armageddon or were eradicated later once man had expanded into the stars. Many other diseases (e.g. influenza, dengue, mumps, encephalitis, various venereal infections, etc.) continued to take their toll, while new maladies were contracted upon one or another of the worlds visited by space explorers. The occurrence of venereal disease was reduced almost to nil when the Páchi Léi were contacted, but from one of their worlds men first contracted the ghastly Mottled Plague, which ravaged southern Tsolyánu and Mu'ugalavyá in 1,046 A.S., and its relative, the Spotted Plague, which struck the same areas as recently as 2,195 A.S. These epidemics prefer hot and humid areas and are spread by touch or even by inhaling the breath of a victim. More widespread but less deadly is the Plague of the White Hand, which strikes with terrible effects in limited regions (usually only a few kilometres in diametre). It is not known how this malady is communicated, and after a month or two it disappears only to emerge again later in some completely different place. Another plague which affects mostly younger men and women is the Rotting Death, contracted from one of the Shén worlds (where it affects only animals) and spread through contaminated water. A milder variant, the Black Flux, causes painful diarrehea and vomiting and may be fatal to children and the aged. Much less common, fortunately, is the Ailment of Arkhúan Mssá, named after one of the Engsvanyáli Priestkings who perished of it. This ailment causes huge pustulent buboes and morbid lesions to appear all over the body, and chances of recovery are rated at about 20 percent at best.

Minor diseases include dysentery, various fevers, and the common cold — alas, still with mankind after so many centuries. Venereal infections such as syphilis and gonorrhea have been eradicated, but one still encounters cases of a disease contracted on one of the Pygmy Folk worlds which causes the male genitalia to swell up to great size (similar to the elephantiasis of ancient Earth). This malady is carried by females but does not affect them.

The nonhuman species suffer from diseases of their own, to which humans are largely immune. Many Pé Chói died in the Great Plague of 2,342 A.S., for example, a disease which causes their two sets of lungs to fill up with fluid so that they in effect drown. Shén communities are sometimes decimated, similarly, by the Scale Itch, the symptoms of which include the sloughing away of their scales, lassitude, and eventual death. The Páchi Léi are prey to a type of forest fungus, the Pygmy Folk to a vermin-spread pestilence much like the Bubonic Plague of old Earth, the Ahoggyá to a malady which paralyses their limbs, the Tinalíya to the Miasm of Needles (so named because victims report a sensation of being stabbed all over by a myriad tiny needles), the Urunén to Fur Rot, the Hlákа to a brain fever which makes them lose their equilibrium and flop about foaming at the mouth until they perish from exhaustion and desiccation, etc. The Mottled Plague and the Plague of the White Hand affect the Hlutrgú as well as humans. The Ssú and the Hlüss suffer from a pestilence which covers them all over with a whitish mould — there are reports of nest-ships upon which all of the crew are dead of this plague, and of groups of jumbled corpses found in the wilds of Kilalámmu and Pechánо as well. Nothing is known of the maladies of the Shunned Ones, the Mihálli, and the Nyagga.

The physicians of Tékumel possess a large pharmacoepia, and there are specifics for some of the above-mentioned ailments. For example, the buds of the *Tsúral* plant are said to be efficacious against the Mottled Plague and the Spotted Plague: a victim has about a 60 percent chance of recovery if fresh poultices are applied immediately and continuously until the crisis is past. The Rotting Death is treated with an infusion of bitter *Hmíss*-weed bark, a plant obtained from the Shén but sold in dried and powdered forms all over the Five Empires. A victim who drinks a dose of this two or three times daily has a 70 percent chance of recuperation. Most physicians also prescribe a meatless diet and exposure to sunlight and fresh air in order to allow the putrescent lesions to heal. There are no known remedies for the Plague of the White Hand. The first symptoms of this dread disease include a whitening of the nails and fingertips, followed by paralysis and loss of sensation in the extremities, and eventually death within 2-3 days. There is only a 15 percent chance of recovery through natural immunity. Neither age nor the state of one's health makes any difference; "The hand of Srúkárum (one of the great demons of Sárku) touches whom he wills." There are also no specifics against the Ailment of Arkhúan Mssá; cf. above.

The nonhumans similarly possess nostrums and medicaments for many of their maladies. These are known mainly to their own physicians, however, and only those human doctors who has resided for long periods in their lands may be aware of them. It is even difficult for a physician of one race to treat the wounds and physical

injuries of a member of another. There are too many physical differences. Most prefer, thus, to be treated by a doctor of their own species since unintentional mistakes can be tragic — as in the case of the Shén physician who bandaged a human trader's wounds with the pulverised leaves of the Blazing Ivy plant, a common enough Shén remedy, but one which affected the wretched patient like a bath in a pit of hot coals!

Sorcery (Sec. 1.620) is frequently employed to cure diseases, injuries, and even mental aberrations. Before the Time of Darkness scholars had developed both spells and devices utilising other-planar power to cleanse the body of poisons and bacteria. Unfortunately, during the ensuing millenia many micro-organisms have mutated sufficiently so that the magic intended to eradicate them is no longer effective. (The ancients designed their incantations and instruments to kill bacteria within narrow ranges so as not to harm the useful species needed for the body's functioning. A completely effective germicidal agent might perhaps do more harm than good.) Now, without microscopes, scientific instruments, or even any comprehension of the germ theory of disease, modern mages are at a loss to modify these spells and devices so that they will apply to present-day mutated bacteria and viruses. A spell which once cured the Mottled Plague, for instance, now produces little more than temporary amelioration, after which the symptoms return with even greater virulence than before. A device which annihilated the virus responsible for the Ailment of Arkhúan Mssá now has no effect at all! Magic is still quite useful against the Rotting Death; there is perhaps a 40 percent chance of a cure and a 60 percent chance of minor relief. Larger micro-organisms (e.g. the amoeba which cause some of the more serious forms of dysentery) are more susceptible to other-planar power than the smaller viruses. It is thus possible to cure the venereal infection mentioned above with magic, while the common cold yet remains immune. Cancer, heart ailments, epilepsy, diabetes, aging, and a host of other ancient maladies are not affected. Other-planar means can be employed to treat some kinds of mental disorders, and if used to "modify behaviour," sorcery can be most beneficial against such problems as alcoholism, many neuroses, and various sex-related abnormalities.

The human body has not mutated much over the centuries, and sorcery is still very effective in treating wounds and physical injuries. Even death itself can occasionally be reversed by magic, although only the most highly trained practitioners have the skill to do this, and the methods remain temple-guarded secrets.

Inorganic poisons cannot mutate, of course, and there are both spells and devices which will eliminate the simpler of these from a victim's body: e.g.arsenic, cyanide of potassium, etc. Alcohol and many pleasure drugs can similarly be voided: e.g. an inebriated person can be brought back to instant sobriety by the relevant spell. (Any debilitating effects of these substances remain, however, until healed by time, rest, and nourishment.) Most herbal toxins and insect or animal venoms respond well to magical treatment, but again there are a few which cannot be eradicated completely, leaving the patient weak and ill for some time thereafter. It may be noted, moreover, that radiation poisoning cannot be cured except by the most powerful sorceries. Those who delve into the ruins of the ancients can only hope that they do not stumble into areas still afflicted with the "City Sickness."

One drug which is almost immune to sorcerous alleviation is *Zu'úr*, a greenish powder manufactured by the Hlüss and supplied to mankind through certain nonhuman intermediaries. *Zu'úr* causes instant satyriasis or nymphomania, and after a month or two of prodigious feats of eroticism the victim lapses into a coma from which he or she can only be roused by further doses of the drug. Death invariably results within five or six months. It is said that the Temple of Thúmis has discovered a sorcerous antidote for *Zu'úr*, but the temple authorities have kept this a secret, intending to use it to gain leverage with the Imperium. There is no other remedy, and anything more than a tiny bit causes addiction. Possession or use of *Zu'úr* is a capital crime throughout the Five Empires, but there are always those who cannot resist its temptations.

Repeated applications of sorcery are either ineffective or even dangerous. If a spell or device does not benefit the victim immediately, it will not do so later, and a physician must resort to other methods.

The sages of the period before the Time of Darkness, and afterward during the Latter Times, also developed spells and devices which cause disease: dreadful plagues and contagions which kill within incredibly short times. Since these are created by the sorcery of the ancients, they can be cured by the same means. It is thus axiomatic that any magically-induced illness, poison, or other toxin can be eliminated by magic. So far as is known, there are no exceptions to this. Modern physicians therefore apply any magic at their disposal first (assuming the patient to be rich or important enough to warrant this) and only afterwards turn to more mundane treatments.

1.413. The Nonhumans

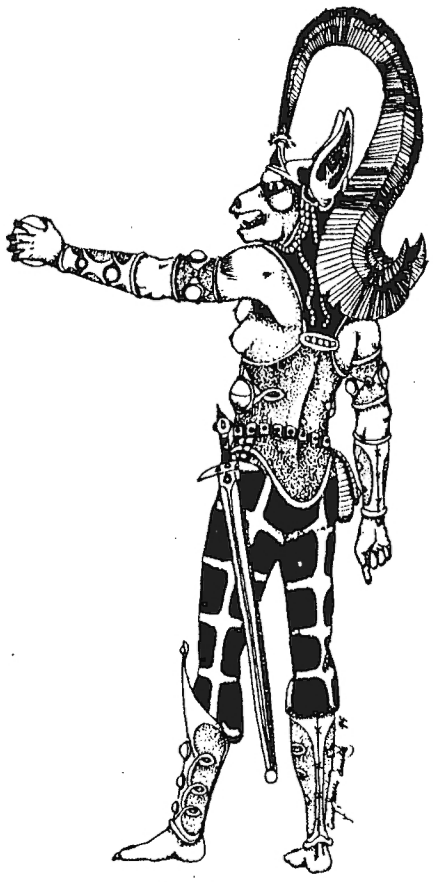
The intelligent nonhuman species which share Tékumel with mankind were mentioned briefly in Sec. 1.200. These are described physically below, while notes on their societies will be given later at appropriate points in the narrative.

1. Ahoggyá: these four-armed and four-legged, barrel-bodied creatures are bristly and knobbly. They are brown, grey, or dun in colour, sometimes parti-coloured, and are tremendously strong. Their four arms extend out at equidistant intervals from under a domed, thickly armoured carapace on top of the body. Between and below these arms, protected by a horny ring, are the eyes and other organs: two eyes and a fanged mouth on one side, and two eyes and other organs on each of the remaining three sides. Their thickly muscled legs extend out from the base of the body in a permanent crouch, and their hands and feet both possess three digits and a thumb. The excretory organs are centred up beneath the body out of harm's way. They range from 1.41 to 1.60 m in height, but their torso is perhaps 80 cm in diametre. The Ahoggyá have eight sexes, but their reproductive processes are largely unknown. They tend to be gruff, rude, boisterous, and insensitive, obeying their own alien customs but displaying little interest in man's concerns. Some Ahoggyá emerge from their swampy habitat to serve as mercenaries in human armies for two or three years, but they eventually return home. They have no curiosity about religious matters, only rarely join a human priesthood, and are abysmally poor sorcerers. Indeed, one in every 10 is a "psychic dampener" (Sec. 1.620). Enclaves of Ahoggyá are found along the southwestern coasts of Salarvyá, across the sea in Háida Pakála, and in a large and as yet unexplored region in the far southeast, called Ónmu Tlé Hléktis. The last of these is an autonomous state.

Ahoggyá



2. Hlá́ka: these slender, light-boned flyers have leathery wings and greyish or brownish short fur. The head is humanoid but somewhat flattened, with three close-set eyes (often bright blue) protected by nictitating membranes set beneath a heavy brow ridge. A furry ruff at the sides and back of the head conceals their hearing organs. Their arms and legs are relatively weak, and they hate walking for any distance. They also possess a powerful prehensile tail which ends in a rapier-like bony blade. (This they often poison before combat.) In height they range from 1.40 to 1.59 m. The flying talents of this species make them valuable as scouts, and they can sometimes be persuaded to drop rocks, javelins, and firepots upon enemy troops — but not if they are endangered by missile fire from below. They are very skittish and will fly off at the slighest pretext. The Hlá́ka are generally neutral to man's doings, talkative, curious, and a bit scatterbrained. Hlá́ka mercenaries may remain away from their mountain eyries in Kilalá́mmu for two or three years at a time, but they will then insist upon going home — often never to return. There are two sexes: males (55 percent of the population) and females (45 percent). See also Sec. 1.510.
3. Hlutrgú: these tough, rubbery, and violently inimical little beings have a rotund body, four limbs (each with a usable hand with six fingers), and a skull-like head with a mouth filled with needle-sharp fangs. They are totally hairless and are of a mottled greenish, greyish, or blackish hue. They range from 1.23 to 1.71 m in height. They are one of mankind's most implacable foes, fighting with vicious fanaticism in battle, and torturing any captives in ways too ghastly to describe. The Hlutrgú prefer the isolation of their bogs in Ká́ija Protectorate to conquest, however, venturing forth in occasional raids upon human villages, and harassing shipping from small coracles of skin. Were it not for the terrible losses which an army would suffer and the difficulty of invading their tidal swamps, the Tsolyá́nj might have exterminated them all long ago. The Hlutrgú have three sexes: males (95 percent), female spawners (4 percent), and asexual "leaders" (about 1 percent).
4. Hlúss: this species is indigenous to Tékumel. They have a rather insectoid appearance: a long, segmented, scorpion-like body, four high-arched legs, a prehensile tail fitted with a paralysing sting, two smaller forearms ending in three digits and a thumb, and a broad, flattish head with three eyes and a sharp proboscis extending out above a set of razor-sharp mandibles. They are covered all over with a light, chitinous appearing exoskeleton and range from greenish blue to shiny black in colour. They normally remain on all fours, but in battle they may rear up and use their central pair of "hands" as additional tearing weapons. They do not employ swords or other weapons with these limbs, however. In height they vary between 1.22 to 1.62 m when on four legs, gaining perhaps another metre if they rear up. The Hlúss are friendly to the Ssú and sometimes to the Shunned Ones. They are neutral to the Hlá́ka, provided that these are not accompanied by humans. They are inquisitive, greedy for magical devices and weapons, and love to set gems in a kind of cement (which they secrete) all over their bodies in intricate and beautiful patterns, making a great Hlúss warrior a fearsome and magnificent spectacle indeed. They prefer to dwell on their lonely island of Hlússuyal but frequently sail forth in their hive-shaped ships (made of the same bodily secretion) to seek items of interest and food for their young. Victims are paralysed by their stings and are then injected with eggs, a most agonising death. Each nest-ship and each settlement contain at least one of their huge breeder females: the "Hlúss-Mother." The young are brought forth in sac-like eggs and are inserted into a living host, where they remain for about 125 days before emerging to take their places in society. The Hlúss can be detected at sea by their constant buzzing, humming sound, and on land they may be smelled at a distance of 30-40 m: their bodies give off an acidic, sweetish odour. There are three sexes: the male fertilizers (5 percent), the female egg-layers (2 percent), and the neuter worker-fighters (93 percent).
5. Mihálli: this nonhuman race must be distinguished from the modern human inhabitants of Mihállu, their ancient homeland. The Mihálli are very alien, though humanoid. They possess two arms, two legs, and are essentially man-like (with four breasts). They have five fingers on each hand with a sixth functioning as a thumb. The head is reminiscent of a great cat with up-pointed ears and large opalescent red eyes. They are almost hairless but have a skin colouration varying fron dull green to reddish brown, the lower caste warriors being of the former hue and their leaders of the latter. The Mihálli are about as tall as a man, but they are of a more slender build. This race has the ability to change shape: a Mihálli can adopt the appearance of any other being of comparable size. They can use only four limbs, however, and if the imitated being has more than four (or a prehensile tail), these will appear to be paralysed. Another means of penetrating their disguise is to look into their eyes; these will remain a gleaming red. The Mihálli are more alien in character than in appearance, moreover. They are gifted with great sorcerous and interdimensional powers, and it is said that they may even exist on more than one plane at once, causing them to exhibit motives unintelligible to man. At one moment they may be friendly and helpful, at the next they are hostile, and at the next they may simply disappear — etc. The Mihálli are very rare now on



Mihálli

Tékumel, and they prefer to remain aloof from human affairs. So uncommon are they that most humans believe them to be only mythological creatures. It is thought that this species is hermaphroditic, but their reproductive processes are largely unknown.

6. Nyaggá: this aqueous race dwells beneath the waters of Lake Parunál to the east of Yán Kór and Saá Allaqí. They come ashore only for brief raids, and it is said that they cannot exist for more than an hour or two out of water. Dead specimens washed up on the beaches or speared by fishermen indicate that this race is warm-blooded and essentially mammalian. (There are rumors to the effect that the Nyaggá can interbreed with humans, moreover, as witness the vestigial gills and pallid appearance of certain of the folk living around cities of Ngakú and Prájnu.) In form, however, the Nyaggá are very alien indeed: the body is essentially a long, tapering cylinder some 3 m in length, without fins or scales, a sickly grey-white in colour, and ending in an eel-like tail. The head is round and bulbous, soft and segmented rather like a human brain. A central black-lipped mouth is surrounded by a ring of six great jet-black eyes. At the junction of the body and the head there is another ring of muscle from which six long tentacles emerge. These are retractable and are covered with tiny suckers and cilia, which this species employs for hands. Totally extended, a Nyaggá is about 5 m long. In their own element they swim with a sinuous quickness which can be deceptive to would-be hunters, while on land they employ a combination of their tentacles and a coiling motion of their bodies to pull themselves along, much like a serpent with forearms. The Nyaggá remain aloof and generally do not bother human shipping. They cannot — or do not — communicate with man and only react hostilely to incursions into their watery domains. The purpose of their infrequent nocturnal raids on shore is not known. Their reproductive processes are unascertainable.
7. Páchi Léi: these forest dwellers have four short legs, a soft, grey-green pear-shaped body covered with small knobs and pendulous protuberances, four slender upper arms (with four fingers on each hand, plus a thumb), and a heavy-jawed, toothy, animal-like head. Their huge, platter-shaped eyes permit them to see well in the dark, and an atrophied "sixth sense" gives them a good chance (perhaps 50 percent) of perceiving ambushes, secret doors, and physical dangers within a 3 m range. They range from 1.53 to 2.01 m in height. The Páchi Léi are friendly, loquacious, and active in human affairs. They enjoy politics and social interaction, and many of them have attained high posts in the army, priesthoods, and administration of the Tsolyáni Imperium. They hate and despise the Mu'ugalavyáni, their neighbours to the west of their homeland in the Pán Cháka Protectorate, because of certain massacres which the latter perpetuated upon them. For their curious reproductive processes, cf. Sec. 1.510.
8. Pé Chói: this race is most comfortable in a thickly forested habitat. They are slender and graceful, from 1.63 to 2.21 m tall, covered with a chitinous exoskeleton (jet black in the case of the males and a chalky white for the females), and they possess two powerful rear legs, four smaller upper limbs ending in bony three-digited hands with an opposable thumb, and a segmented prehensile tail (which is not used in combat, however). The head is long and slender, with two large green eyes, a tapering proboscis, and two fan-like "ears" at the rear of the skull. In some ways the Pe Choi resemble the little "sea-horse" of ancient Earth. They have excellent hearing and vision. A Pé Chói can perceive very faint sounds at a range of 60 m or more, and there is an 80 percent chance of detecting secret doors, traps, and other dangers within a 3 m range, even if he is just passing by. If he stops to search, the probability rises to 90 percent, depending upon the cleverness with which the door or object is hidden. The race also possesses a simple form of telepathy which can detect the presence (but not the specific thoughts) of other creatures within a 2 m radius of himself. Pé Chói know through this same sense whenever a member of their species has been killed within a range of up to 5 kilometres, and if they can ascertain who has done the deed, they are implacable and unforgiving enemies. (They do not apply this hostility, fortunately, to warfare. Pé Chói contingents may be found on both sides of some human conflicts, and they recognise the duties of soldiers.) One interesting feature is the Pé Chói's double set of lungs, one in the upper torso and the other in the lower abdomen; cf. Sec. 1.732. The Pé Chói are perhaps the most "human" of all of the nonhuman species in spite of their alien appearance. They enjoy human society, join human insitutions, and copy human dress and customs. They possess considerable psychic talent and are frequently found in the scholarly contingents of the temples. They may seem a little "delicate" or even effeminate (if this term can be applied to nonhumans!), and they often conceal their own cultural attitudes behind a smooth and sophisticated facade. They have two sexes, plus an asexual or "neuter" stage which can be adopted by either sex. Males make up about 40 percent, females 35 percent, and neuters approximately 25 percent of their population. Cf. also Sec. 1.510.
9. Pygmy Folk: (Tsolyáni: *Nininyal* "the Little Ones"; Yán Koryáni: *Nyénu*): these small beings vary between .43 and .91 m in height. Superficially they resemble rodents, with a sharp-featured face, large ears, greyish or blackish fur, two muscular rear legs, two upper arms with three-fingered claw-like hands (plus a thumb), and a vestigial tail. Their sight and hearing are excellent. They see easily in pitch darkness, and they can hear very faint sounds even through a stone wall 30 cm thick. They live in subterranean burrow-like towns in the northern plains of Yán Kór, and their communal life is both complex and intense. The Pygmy Folk are often capricious, sometimes cruel, and yet they are generally friendly to man. They are renowned for their greed and avarice, however. If attacked, they are ferocious opponents and will fight to the last. On the other hand, they will try to avoid battle with a larger party and may then resort to traps and ambushes. There are three sexes: males (55 percent), females (15 percent), and hermaphrodites (30 percent). The latter dwell in families with the others but produce no offspring of their own. Cf. Sec. 1.510.
10. Shén: these great reptiles stand between 1.83 and 2.31 m tall. They are armoured all over with shining black scales (which the fashionable amongst them paint in iridescent colours). The females and the "egg-fertilisers"(their third sex) tend to be more greyish, especially in the abdominal region and around the eyes. The aged of all three sexes also "fade" somewhat in hue. A few females are of a glistening bluish black colour, and this is considered a mark of beauty. The Shén are roughly humanoid, standing erect upon two powerful rear legs, with two forearms ending in three-fingered hands with an opposable thumb. There is also a thick, prehensile tail with a mace-like knob at the end, which is used as a secondary weapon in combat. Their curved , beak-like snouts, double rows of needle-sharp teeth, and crest of glittering spines (which normally lies flat upon the skull but rises when the owner is enraged) gives them a most ferocious appearance. The Shén are very strong but a little clumsy. Their psychic and magical talents are weak, and they are also temperamentally disdainful of sorcery. They dislike over-refinement and delicacy, and they value physical power, ferocity, and endurance instead. They are mildly friendly towards man, rather harsh and abrupt in manner, and laconic of speech. They perfer the heat of their great enclave south of Livyánu and come north only for brief periods to serve as mercenaries. They also never

forget an offence: e.g. they still hate the Ahoggyá because the latter once cooked and ate some Shén captives during the invasion of Salarvya by Emperor Hejéka II "the Heretic" (1,325-1,340 A.S.) — a perfectly natural act for the Ahoggya. Human generals still do not dare to place a contingent of Shén in the same army wing as a battalion of Ahoggyá. There is more chance of their battling one another than of attacking the foe. The Shén are divided into genetically determined lineages called "egg-groups." These are friendly, neutral, or dangerously hostile to one another, and it is this instinctive enmity which has prevented any concerted action by the species as a whole. The large Shén states of Shényu and Mmátugual are each organised around constellations of friendly or neutral egg-groups, while each of the little states — Gái, Rá, Qónu, etc. — is based upon a single egg-group too divergent from the others for any form of cooperation. There are three sexes: males ("egg-creators") who make up 40 percent of the population; females ("egg-layers") who comprise 35 percent; and "egg-fertilisers," who constitute the remaining 25 percent. For further details of the Shén family system, cf. Sec. 1.510.

11. Shunned Ones: these hideous, gangling beings are rarely seen outside of their sealed cities in the barren plains of northern Yán Kór. Small parties do range the underground labyrinths by means of the ancient tubeway system (Sec. 1.425), however. The Shunned Ones (Tsolyani: *Vléshgayal*; Yan Koryani: *Blúshagh*) are humanoid, very tall (ranging from 1.85 to 2.33 m in height), and possessed of extremely long, bony limbs. The face is puckered and wrinkled like a rotting fruit and has only a pair of round, black, pupilless eyes for features. The mouth lies hidden in a mass of wrinkles at the base of the throat. The Shunned Ones wrap themselves in voluminous, flapping robes of dust-brown or night-black. The most unpleasant thing about them, however, is their terrible stench, which can be detected by humans at a range of as much as 60 m, even in a mild contrary breeze! It is not uncommon for even the bravest of men to lose courage and flee rather than fight these stinking, gliding, slender monsters. The Shunned Ones are totally inimical to mankind and his allies. They are mighty sorcerers, and their objectives in searching the ruins of ancient Tékumel are focussed upon the acquisition of magical devices and equipment rather than treasures of gold or gems. The domed cities of this alien race are sealed to keep in their own noxious atmosphere: a corrosive, yellowish gas. A human can function at full strength within one of these cities for only about 30 minutes. Thereafter he begins to cough; his eyes become blinded with tears; he gasps for breath; and death come within another 30-45 minutes at most. Very little is known of the society of the Shunned Ones. Specimens exhibit at least five types of organs which may be reproductive in function. These may represent different sexes, or they may be only developmental stages in the life-cycle of one sex.
12. Ssú: this race was once master of the land masses of Tékumel, while their cousins, the Hlüss, ranged the coasts and the seas. There are two sub-species: the smaller Grey Ssú, whose enclave lies just north of Salarvyá and Pechánо, and the larger Black Ssú, who dwell on a biggish island far off in the western ocean. There are also enclaves on Tékumel's other continents. Both of these varieties have essentially the same appearance: a central torso is set upon a narrow abdomen from which four legs extend out at equidistant points. There are two upper arms, ending in three-digited hands (the largest "finger" functioning as a thumb). The head is superficially man-like: there are two eyes, nostril slits, and a mouth shaped like a vertical oval. Their outer integument is wrapped around their limbs like paper on a roll, and the loose ends of this "skin" keep pulling away in ragged fragments, giving a Ssú somewhat of the appearance of a tattered mummy. Like the Hlüss, they can rear up on their back legs to fight, but they differ from their cousins in that they sometimes use their middle pair of limbs to hold a shield or even a tertiary weapon (although only the Black Ssú are rarely adept at this). In height the Grey Ssú range between 1.71 and 1.90 m, while the Black Ssú vary between 1.83 and 2.41 m. The Ssú smell rather like musty cinnamon. Their language to humans sounds like a sweet, high chiming, rippling up and down the scale like a chorus of little bells. They see fairly well in darkness and prefer a dim blue light to work by. (The priesthood of Ksárul once thought to outwit robbers invading their shrines beneath the ruins of Hmakuyál by carrying blue glass lanterns. This worked well until they met an exploring party of real Ssú, come via the tubeways, who wanted to meet their "comrades.") The Ssú are excellent magic-users, and they also possess a limited hypnotic ability which can immobilise human warriors or cause them to turn and fight their friends. The Ssú have three sexes: males (15 percent); females (5 percent); and neuter worker-fighters (80 percent).
13. Swamp Folk (Tsolyáni: *Hegléthyal*; Mu'ugalavyáni; *A'láthish*): this species has its home in the watery bogs along the lower reaches of the Putuhénu River in Mu'ugalavyá. They are about as tall as men and have a rotound, rubbery, doughy white body; four slender legs (like the Ssú, to whom they are not related); two upper arms with four-digited hands and an opposable thumb; and a head with rather humanoid features. The skull, however, is long and backward-slanting, with a bony crest rising from the forehead and curving out over the back. A flexible "drapery" of skin depends from this crest and falls down behind the shoulders to join to the body again at the base of the spine. They cannot use other-planar magic at all (except for ancient technological devices), but they do have a natural ability to sense "wrongnessess": changes in direction, sloping passageways, and interdimensional nexus points. On any given occasion there is about a 70 percent chance of success in this. The Swamp Folk fit in very well with man's cultures, and their talents as sailors make them the mainstay of the Mu'ugalavyáni navy and commercial shipping industry. They are usually friendly, courteous, and eager to copy the ways of men, except in their own enclave where they preserve something of their ancient customs. There are two sexes: males (70 percent), and females (30 percent).
14. Tinalíya: these small beings dwell in the southern foothills of the Tlásh te Heights in Livyánu. They are quite small, varying between .56 and .75 m in height. They have four short, outward-bowed lower legs; a spherical abdomen upon which the torso is centrally placed; two long arms ending in claw-like three-fingered hands with an opposable thumb; and sloping heads with huge eyes and vaguely humanoid features. The body is divided into small, bulbous segments and is covered all over with a horny integument, usually tan, russet or deep brown in colour. The Tinalíya are intensely curious, learned, materialistic, often generous, and disturbingly literal-minded. They cannot comprehend exaggerations, jokes, idioms, and figures of speech, and this sometimes results in misunderstandings. They live in communal underground cities and emerge mostly to seek knowledge and "to see the world." They are good fighters, however, and the Livyáni permit several legions of Tinalíya to serve under their own leaders as a defence against the Mu'ugalavyáni, whom these beings despise as being too officious and insistent upon their formal bureaucratic procedures. They are noted for their magical talents and their skill with devices of the ancients. There are three sexes: males (10 pecent), females (5 percent), and neuters (85 percent). It is mostly the neuters and a few females who wander out into the Five Empires to explore, trade, and satisfy their curiosity for a few years before returning to the intricate social life of their subterranean cities.

15. Urunén: this race has its home in the sub-polar regions around the south pole. They have only recently come once more into contact with the inhabitants of the northern continent through the tubeways (Sec. 1.425) and certain interdimensional nexus points (Sec. 1.620). This race is a little taller than mankind (from 1.45 to 1.93 m), and is quite humanoid in appearance, with an erect, muscular body; two rear legs; and two man-like forearms ending in four-digited hands with an opposable thumb. The Urunén are covered with brownish fur as short as the nap of velvet, however, and there is a long tail which is not used in combat. The head is quite alien, moreover, being long-snouted, triangular (rather like a cross between a serpent and some bovine animal), and has the brain-case at the back. The eyes are set wide apart on each side of the head. Contact with the Urunén is so recent that not much is known about them. They seem to be intelligent, proud, jealous, and suspicious of other species. They knew of mankind and his allies from artifacts and inscriptions, but they are now along upon their great southern continent and have no significant natural enemies. Their society is thus homogeneous, complex, and inward-looking. They are good scholars and exhibit psychic talents about on a par with those of mankind. The Urunén show an ability to dissemble and play at diplomacy, and it is likely that their cleverness will make them difficult allies and dangerous foes. Although they are not exceptional sailors, they have offered to cooperate with mankind in an exploration of the southern seas. There are two sexes: males (35 percent), and females (65 percent).

It is difficult to determine the average lifespans of the nonhuman races. The Shén and the Pé Chói live only to about two thirds of the average human age: i.e. approximately 29-30 years. A few individuals do reach 60 or even 70, however. The Ahoggyá, Pachi Léi, Swamp Folk, Tinalíya, and the Urunén all live to about the same age as man does: 43-45 years. The Hláka and the Pygmy Folk live perhaps another quarter as long: 52-53 years. The Hlutrgú live half again as long as man (i.e. 60-62 years); the Hlüss and the Ssú to double man's age; the Shunned Ones thrice as long: and the Mihálli are reported (upon rather shaky evidence) to live as long as 200 years or more. Nothing is known of the lifespan of the Nyaggá.

In addition to the species listed above, there are further nonhuman races upon Tékumel. Most of these began as isolated families or groups of starfaring traders, tourists, etc. marooned on the planet during the Time of Darkness. A few have survived to found small enclaves here and there. The crystalloid Hokún, for example, were mentioned in Sec. 1.200. These gaunt, beetle-like translucent creatures ride upon steeds which are actually members of the Hokún race, especially mutated and bred for this purpose. The Hokún are contemptuous of men and hunt them with slim lances of a glassy substance, much as the nobility of Europe once hunted boars on ancient Earth. In the past the Hokún have cooperated with humans and have also ruled large communities of men as near demigods. When mankind eventually threw off the yoke of Hokún slavery, however, the latter retired to the island of Benré Sà on the other side of the planet and now dwell there in bitter isolation.

As a parenthetical digression, it may be noted that certain scholars before the Time of Darkness postulated the existence of two great proto-races which spread across the galaxy at some immeasurably ancient time in the past. From one of these came most of the bipedal species, including man, the Hláka, the Shén, the Pygmy Folk, the Urunén, and even possibly the Hlutrgú. From the other race arose the six-limbed species: the Ssú and the Hlüss, the Pé Chói, the Swamp Folk, and the Tinalíya. The Ahoggyá, the Nyaggá, the Páchi Léi, and probably the Shunned Ones (in spite of their bipedal form) are probably independently evolved, as may also be the Mihálli. The only alternative to this hypothesis is parallel evolution, based upon some kind of environmental determinism. The controversy between these two theories raged back and forth for centuries during the spacefaring age, but no definitive conclusion was ever reached.

There is also a wide spectrum of semi-intelligent nonhuman species on Tékumel. Most of these were brought as pets, servants, or curiosities by the early settlers, while others were evolved later from human (and nonhuman) stocks for particular purposes. During the period of the Fishermen Kings (Sec. 1.340) certain sages of the Temple of Ksárul had much to do with this artificial creation of living species. Utilising the wisdom and the devices of the Latter Times, they produced several viable and self-perpetuating races to serve as guards for their secret shrines and as decorations for the palaces of their secular masters. Even today some of these strange beings protect the sanctuaries, tombs, and treasure hoards of the Underworlds (Sec. 1.424) beneath the older cities. More will be said of these creatures below.

1.414. Terrain and Demography

Areas shown as "clear" on the large maps (Secs. 1.110 and 1.300) actually contain towns, villages, roads, hills, streams, lakes, woods, and a host of features too significant to be seen in this very big scale. The vast central agricultural plains of the Five Empires teem with inhabitants: from 50 to 190 persons per square kilometre. In and around the cities the population is even more dense. The most congested areas include the slums of such ancient cities as Tsamra in Livyánu (map 1) and Jakálla in Tsolyánu (map 2), said to have as many as 400-450 persons per square kilometre though no exact census has ever been taken.

"Clear" areas may also be relatively depopulated; e.g. the Plain of Towers on map 1, the most northerly regions of Yán Kór on map 2, and the northeastern part of Salarvyá around Fárishu on map 4.

Two types of forest are shown:

1. "Open": woods, timberlands, underbrush, and scrub jungle. These contain many species of deciduous trees (a few brought from old Earth, but many more acquired from other star worlds), large conifers, several ferns, fungi, grasses, shrubs, and vines. The population density is about 10-20 persons per square kilometre.
2. "Dense": thick forest, jungle, and wilderness. In the north these consist of thick stands of *Tíu* trees: slender, black-needled conifers much like Terran evergreens. Farther south these give way to the soaring *Ebzál* trees of Pan Chákа and the Forest of Gilráya. M'mórcha and Nmartúsha are covered with dense jungle consisting of over a thousand species of trees, lianas, gigantic cycads, and *Ká*-flowers a metre in diametre. Some of these species are poisonous, while a few are carnivorous. Around the city of Lost Bayársha the jungle is so dense as to almost preclude exploration. Only tiny habitations and occasional villages are found, and the population averages about 3-8 persons per square kilometre — if that.

Four varieties of wet lowlands are depicted:

1. Low-lying plains with occasional bogs, fens, and marshes (indicated by the "palmetto forest" symbol). On map 1 much of southern Shényu and its offshore islands are of this type. The Flats of Tsechélnu and the Flats of Gyógma in Háida Pakála exhibit this type of terrain on map 2. Vegetation consists of intertwined *Gsé* trees in Shényu (a plant brought from the home world of the Shén); various species of low trees, grasses, reeds, etc. in Tsolyánu; and the sprawling, spiny Water Cactus (an import from one of the Ahoggyá planets) in the Háida Pakálan area. Population densities vary widely since both the Shén and the Tsolyáni grow certain crops in such environments, while the Ahoggyá do not utilise the Flats of Gyógma to the same extent. Perhaps 10-20 persons per square kilometre may be found in the former, while the latter may support only 5-10 individuals in the same area.
2. Swamps: areas which are largely water interspersed with small islets, stands of reeds, thickets, and occasional quicksands. On map 1 examples include southerwestern Shényu and the Púru ab Sharár Swamps of Mu'ugalavyá (the home of the Swamp Folk). On map 2 one finds the Swamps of Ksárul around the city of Púrdimal, the Qéqash Swamps of Háida Pakála, and the Sharúna Lowlands of Salarvyá. The Shén grow a number of food crops in their bogs, while the Swamps of Ksárul are inhabited by the Hehecháru, "the First Ones," a humanoid sub-race (perhaps mutated — or interbred with some older, aqueous species?), who trade *Ssár* wood and

basketry to the Tsolyáni and otherwise remain aloof. The Hehecháru are closely related to the subterranean-dwelling Hehegánu, who dwell in the Underworld below Púrdimal itself and who occasionally mingle with men. The population density of the Shén is perhaps 20-30 individuals per square kilometre, of the Hehecháru no more than 5-10, and of the Ahoggyá of the Sharúna Lowlands perhaps as many as 20-30. No census of any of these areas has ever been attempted.

3. Dense coastal swamps: tangled, stinking masses of creepers and vegetation, with no firm ground at all, rife with animal and insect life, and also blotched here and there with patches of the purulent "Old Life," the purplish vegetation of pre-human Tékumel, called "the Food of the Ssú." These regions are indicated by the "mangrove swamp" symbol. Súchel Head on map 1 is of this type, and on map 2 one encounters a similarly unpleasant area along the southern shore of Msúmtel Bay. The population densities of such regions are nil: even the Shén and the Hlutrgú avoid them. The Hlúss occasionally enter such regions to harvest the swollen tubers and excrescences of the "Old Life" to use as food.
4. The Ahoggyá swamps of Ónmu Tlé Hléktis on map 4: these marshes and bogs are filled with the pulpy, bulbous, grey-green vegetation of the Ahoggyá home world. Although not often poisonous, these plants have an unpleasantly slimy feel and a noxious odour. Men rarely visit this region. There may be about 15-25 Ahoggyá per square kilometre resident in this area, however.

There are two types of mountain areas:

1. "Low": foothills and lower peaks ranging up to 2 or 3 kilometres in height. These are marked by short diagonal lines. They are not differentiated for forested versus barren slopes, though both types occur. There are many hardy plants which grow at fairly high altitudes, including two or three varieties of wheat, the basis of the economy of the mountain peoples. Only the lower reaches are regularly inhabitied, of course, with a population density of at most 5-10 persons per square kilometre.
2. "High": the tallest peaks and most inaccessible crags, reachable only by experienced climbers and mountaineers. These are indicated by jumbled zigzag lines in the midst of lower mountain symbols. In the far north such peaks are permanently covered with ice and snow. In Tsolyánu the slender spire of Thénu Thendráya Peak is famous, for example, while the summits of Mount Pátra Lisház in N'lúss on map 1 and High Mitlánte Peak in Nuru'ún on map 3 are equally renowned. The population density of such areas is, of course, nil.

Deserts are shown by a pattern of disconnected dots. Such areas range from the stony wastelands of Chúru Peak on map 1, the home of the semi-intelligent and very dangerous *Chürstálli* (distant cousins of the Ssu and the Hluss), to the fine powdery sands of the Desert of Sighs on map 2, to the windblown and forlorn expanses of the Plains of Glass on map 4. The population density of such regions averages at most only 1-2 persons per square kilometre, and there are vast tracts rarely penetrated even by the hardiest of nomads.

Relatively shallow seas are shown by the "tidal flats" symbol: e.g. the area around the Tsolél archipelago on map 1. These do not necessarily imply dangerous rocks and shoals, although such features are indeed to be found inshore along the coasts. Since most shipping depends upon "coasting," a good knowledge of the waters of a region is needed for safe navigation.

The great deeps of the oceans are not marked. These are inhabited only by the mighty predators of the sea, and the sailors of Tékumel make every effort to avoid them.

It may be noted that the "Old Life," "the Food of the Ssú," is not limited to the miasmic swamps mentioned above. Windblown spores are carried everywhere, and one may come upon patches of this blighted-appearing vegetation almost anywhere in out-of-the-way areas of the forests of Tékumel. In the Five Empires the law requires that farmers and landowners eradicate these plants as they are found, almost always by burning them. They are invariably poisonous to man (and even to races with exoskeletons, such as the Pé Chói); touching such a plant may bring about anything from a painful blister to sudden death.

1.415. Economy

The staple of much of the continent consists of a large reddish grain called *Dná*, from which bread and porridge are made. *Dná* is not of Terran origin but is from one of the worlds encountered during man's exploration of space. This cereal grass has a short growing period, is resistant to disease and blights, produces an abundant harvest, and is rich in food value. Using slave labour (or tenant serfs), crop rotation, and fairly intensive irrigation and cultivation techniques, the great landowners of the "Breadbasket of the Empire" (the regions around Mrelú, Katalál, down to Urmish, and over to Usenánu) can garner two or even three good crops per year. The same is true of the rich riverine plains of Mu'ugalavyá, Salarvyá, and Livyánu.

The north, including N'lúss, Yán Kór, Saá Allaqí, and the mountainous realms of the northeast, subsists upon two or three varieties of hardy wheat, called *Gáin* in Tsolyani. More temperate regions produce two crops per year, though only one is obtained in the higher mountains. Rice, called *Yáfa* in Tsolyáni, is grown in the southern wetlands of Tsolyánu, parts of Livyánu, and along the southern coasts of Salarvyá. Several other minor cereals are utilised as well, but maize (American "corn") is not known in this part of Tékumel.

Over a thousand species of vegetables — legumes, tubers, leafy plants, herbs, nuts, fungi, etc. — are employed for food, far too many to be discussed here. Fruits are similarly varied. Sugar is made from the *Dmí* root.

Alcoholic beverages are produced from several fruits. The grape-like *Nálum* vines give the excellent red *Ngálu* wine characteristic of the central Tsolyáni and Mu'ugalavyáni plains. Much of the north prefers a dark purple wine fermented from the plum-like blue *Dlél* fruit, while the Salarvyáni are partial to their *Drónu*, a thick, black, sweetish wine prepared from the *Urtsé* berry. The *Dlél* fruit is also distilled to make a brandy called *Dátsu*, but an even better brandy is produced from the yellow, thin-skinned fruit of the *Másh* tree. This fruit tastes like a cross between a citrus fruit and an apple. It grows to the size of a man's head. *Másh* brandy has a flavour rather like the apricot brandy of old Earth, as near as can be compared, and the best varieties come from Tsolyánu's western highlands just north and south of Tumíssa. For the true connoiseur there are many sub-varieties of *Tsuhóridu*: delicate liqueurs made from herbs and essences. Distilled grain beverages (such as *A'ásh*, a raw whiskey-like potation made from *Dna* or wheat) are known but are not very popular. Slaves and the lower classes drink beer (Tsolyani: *Hengka*) brewed from both *Dná* and wheat, and the Livyáni drink a type of rice beer (called *Faóz*), which is also common in Tsolyánu's southern wetlands and in Háida Pakála.

Of the peoples of the Five Empires, only the Salarvyáni drink alcoholic beverages with their everyday meals. The other nations drink water, *Chumétl* (*Hmélu* buttermilk prepared with salt and hot spices), *Tuór* (various sugary sherbets made from water and herbal essences), or *Lás* (a hot tea-like decoction brewed from the needle-like leaves of the *Tíu* tree). This last is more popular in the north, and the Tsolyáni refer to it disparagingly as "the northern's black piss." Neither the coffee nor the tea of ancient Earth was ever imported to Tékumel.

Meat animals include the huge, herbivorous *Tsi'íl*, a fearsome-looking but mild-mannered beast which resembles a horned and spiked dinosaur. This animal cannot be domesticated but is kept on preserves owned by the butchers' clans. Wild *Tsi'íl* are often met with in the forests as well, and these are harmless unless attacked. A single roasted *Tsi'il* will feed perhaps 30 people. Domesticated meat sources include the succulent *Hmélu* and the *Hmá*, both six-legged but otherwise rather sheep-like in appearance and behavior. Wool is obtained from the *Hmá*, giving it additional economic importance. Several forest animals are also hunted for food, the tastiest being the *Jakkóhl*, another six-legged species rather resembling a fox. Neither the cow nor the pig were ever brought to Tékumel. Dogs and cats are common, however, and are kept as pets. There are a number of species of poultry, the most prevalent being the *Káika*, a fat, waddling, duck-like "bird" obtained from one of the Pachi Léi worlds. Birds of prey (such as the *Kúni*, which can also be trained to speak and to repeat

simple messages) are used to hunt game birds for food. Of the latter, the most delicious are the *Sahelún*, the Fern-Wing of Salaryyá, and the rare and beautiful *U'áb* of the Tláshte Range in Livyánu.

Fish and shellfish are another important food supply. There are innumerable varieties — some so large as to be dangerous (e.g. the crab-like *Haqél* of the southern seacoasts). Nine species of seaweed, two dozen types of sea-vegetables, and two floating sea-fungi are eaten, and the Livyáni and the people of Tsolái drink a thick, greenish soup made from an algae found in shallow tidal pools. Many types of insects are also consumed, although only a few of these are true "insects," the rest being creatures obtained from other worlds during man's sojourn in space.

The nonhuman races can eat most of mankind's foodstuffs, although they each have their own preferences. The markets of the foreigners' quarters in the larger human cities offer a variety of specifically nonhuman comestibles. The Shén, for example, enjoy a thick, bitter cake made from the *Chír* melon; although men can eat this, it is certainly not considered a delicacy! The Ahoggyá have their own smelly, unsavoury vegetables; the Pé Choí their tubers and tree-bark porridge; the Páchi Léi their round, juicy *Dmóz* fruit which is nauseating to humans; the Tinaliya their underground crops of fungi; and so forth. Neither the Shén nor the Ahoggyá drink alcoholic beverages since these are harmful to their systems.

Most cloth is manufactured from plant fibres. The commonest variety is *Firyá*, made from a reed-like plant grown all over the continent (and also used to make a kind of paper). Another plant produces the silky *Gúdru* cloth favoured by the upper classes, and the delicate *Thésun* gauze used for the most elegant garments of both sexes comes from the spinnings of an insect. The best *Gúdru* cloth is made in Salaryyá, though some prefer the thicker variety woven in Khéiris and Pagús in Mu'ugalavyá. The finest *Thésun* gauze comes from Katalál, Mekú, and Úrmish in central Tsolyánu. Furs are not much worn because of the heat, but leather is common, the best being the hide of the flying, snake-like *Vringálu*, a wild and dangerous creature found only in the denser forests.

Another important economic resource is the hide of the *Chlén* beast (cf. Sec. 1.330). This animal is regularly "peeled" every six months or so, with no harmful consequences to the beast. The tanner clans use secret techniques to soften this material and then harden it again. *Chlén*-hide is employed for articles of clothing, arms and armour, implements, and many other items. It can be made slightly flexible or hardened to the durability of soft iron or bronze, and it has the advantage of being as light as some plastics.

Many metals are mined: e.g. copper, lead, zinc, tin, silver, gold, and even a little platinum. Such alloys as bronze, brass, and electrum are common. Iron is very rare, as has been said above, and its place is largely taken by *Chlén*-hide.

Almost all of the gemstones known to ancient Terra are found on Tekumel. Certain sea and river creatures produce types of "pearls," and there are also gems obtained from non-Terran plants: e.g. the smoky dark-red Flame Opal, the secretion of a globular tree found in the Páchi Lei forests of Pán Cháka, which is much desired by the priesthoods of Vimúhla and Chiténg. Another sea creature produces a type of "ivory," which also has some of the qualities of mother-of-pearl and is thus popular for inlays and mosaics.

Some fifteen species of trees are commonly employed for timber. Special varieties include the iron-hard *Tíu* tree, the pure white *Ssár* tree (whose wood is used for staffs, arrowshafts, etc.), the *Séresh* tree (from which the best bows are made), the *Balúr* tree (which burns for a long time and is thus valuable for torches — and the bark of which is burned to keep off night insects), the *Vrés* tree (from which incense if manufactured), etc.

Mats and baskets are woven of several grasses and reeds. The best bowstrings are made from the *Rúqqa* plant of eastern Yán Kór and Saá Allaqí. The *Dáichu* tree of the Chákan forests and the Kúrt Hills provides the best rope and cable, and *Dáichu* bark is also pounded into a thin, durable cloth which is preferred by the women of western Tsolyánu and Mu'ugalavyá. Special notice may be taken of the *Vráoz* rushes of southern Livyánu: these are plaited into a cord so strong that it cannot be broken or bitten through even by a Shén, and only a fine steel knife will cut it. *Vráoz* fibre has the unpleasant peculiarity of contracting when exposed to salt, however. The priest-lords of Livyánu thus punish criminals by wrapping them in a net of *Vráoz* fibre, staking them out in the sun, and literally allowing the wretch's own perspiration to squeeze him to death.

Most Terran stones and minerals are found on Tékumel, although not all are known or used. Basalt, granite, sandstone, limestone, and several good marbles are used for construction. Slate is available for roofs. Other economically important minerals include rocksalt, alabaster, flint and obsidian, sulphur, chalk, quartz, talc, natron, tar and natural petroleum, lime, coal, and peat (in the bogs bordering the northern sea in Ghatón). The poorer classes of the Five Empires utilize baked mud bricks for building, and their houses are roofed with thatch, slate, wooden shingles, or clay tiles, depending upon the tradition of the region. Clay is universally used for pottery and storage vessels. Hundreds of types of glass are manufactured by the glassblowers' clans, and the most prized glassware includes the red cut-crystal of Mu'ugalavyá, the dim and cloudy purple glass of the old city of Púrdimal, and the pure and transparent wares of Farshá in Livyánu. Glass-coral, produced by an underwater creature in Lake Parunál in eastern Yán Kór, is highly esteemed and is more costly than gold.

It is not possible to provide further details of the economically important products of this part of Tékumel. This would require an encyclopaedia — indeed, the pharmacopoeia of the physicians of Tsámra alone would run to over twenty bulky volumes. Further items will be mentioned *passim*, of course, in the pages which follow.

1.420. DWELLINGS AND SETTLEMENTS

1.421. House Types

Dwellings vary according to the climate, materials, economy, social complexity, and local traditions of each region. The following table can thus provide only brief and incomplete characterisations. "" Same" "'the same as the next column to the left."

Region/Nation	Locale and social class distinctions: Rural/tribal	Village/small town	Large town/city
M'mórcha, Nmartúsha, Gilráya Forests	Lean-tos and huts of boughs and leaves	Same	-----
Kilalámmu, Mihállu, Jánnu, etc.	Wattle-and-daub huts, 1-storey, 2-5 rooms	Same; wealthier people live in 1-storey wooden or stone 2-8 room houses with pitched thatch roofs	Same; richer inhabitants have brick or masonry 5-15 room clan-houses; rulers live in stone castle-like citadels, often consisting of a single squat tower with outer palisades of noncombustible Nlé wood
Northern realms on maps 2-3	Log-roofed, semi-sbterranean house-pits, 1 large room; log palisades	Same; townspeople live in 1-storey log houses with shingled pitched roofs, 2-10 rooms	Same; upper classes are as for Kilalámmu above
Milumanayá, desert tribes	Leather tents, often partitioned by leather or Hmélu-wool blankets	Mud-brick, 1-storey, 2-10 room houses in Pelesár and Sunráya, flat slate roofs, outer enclosure and out-buildings for animals	Same; upper classes have 1-2 storey mud brick or masonry mansions, 5-20 rooms; rulers dwell in low rambling stone palaces, usually walled and turreted
Livyánu, Nyémesel Isles	Adobe 1-storey farmhouses, 2-10 rooms, enclosed by outer mud brick wall with out-buildings against it, flat tiled roofs	Same; larger 2-3 storeyed houses, some stone construction, open pillared porches, outer house walls are windowless	Same; richer people live in elaborate 2-3 storeyed stone houses, much use of decoration, many pillars and porticoes, often a central court surrounded by private

			apartments; rulers dwell within the vast temple compounds; temples are squat pyramidal platforms on top of which the shrines, apartments, etc., are erected; outer temple walls are blank or decorated with images and script; inside are open courts and colonnades; temples are set within lush gardens, and their outer walls are fortified
Mu'ugalavyá	Neat 1-storey houses of baked brick, 2-8 rooms, separate storehouses and out-buildings all enclosed within a walled compound; low-pitched thatch or tile roofs	Same; 2-3 storeyed brick or stone houses, low-pitched tile roofs, a central open court surrounded by private apartments; usually a separate wing or sub-building for entertainments and guests; fronted by a wood-pillared porch and gardens	Same; larger brick or masonry buildings, low-pitched tile roofs, many pillars and open colonnades, 5-30 rooms, a complex floor plan centering around an open court; city slums are tall tenements 3-5 storeys, many small, cramped rooms, common bath and latrine; rulers dwell in 3-5 storey palaces, much use of heavy masonry, intaglio, mosaic, coloured tiles; low-pitched tile roofs; many pillars and porticoes, often set in a geometrical garden; fortresses are separate from residential palaces; temples are open series of pillared halls around a central shrine, usually walled but not fortified; priestly apartments and workrooms, etc., are built in a separate block or area
N'lúss, Ghatón	Rough stone 1-storey huts, steep-gabled wooden roofs, 2-5 rooms, outer palisade of logs; storage chambers usually subterranean	Same; wealthier people live in 2-3 storey wood or stone houses, round floor plan with central firepit and common room, steep-gabled roofs, separated communal town buildings for storage and animals	Same; tribal chieftains live in round 2-3 storey stone towers, 5-10 rooms, high-gabled slate roofs; wooden outbuildings surrounded by rammed earth ramparts and log palisade, possibly an outer fosse or moat -- or built on a high and inaccessible crag
Yán Kór, Pijéna, Saá Allaqí	Square wooden 1-storey clanhouses, 5-20 rooms, a central common room with rambling sub-sections for different clan lineages, low-pitched thatch, tile or slate roofs; outer palisade with out-buildings flush against it	Same; stone and wood construction, 2-3 storeys, 10-30 rooms, low-pitched slate or tile roofs; separate dormitories for young men and young women; central dining hall and kitchen; often surrounded by vegetable gardens and outer stone or brick wall	Same; wealthier live in larger and more complex clanhouses, 2-3 storeys, 20-50 rooms; common gathering room, kitchens, baths, etc.; guest-rooms in a separate wing; outer walls sometimes fortified; city tenements are low, squalid warrens; rulers dwell in large clanhouses, one part of which may be a separate fortified citadel reached by a covered passage; Tsolyáni-style administrative buildings found only in Yán Kór City and other large urban centres; temples are large, cathedral-like halls surrounded by small shrines, with the major shrine at the north end of a central nave; temple outbuildings, dormitories, storage rooms, etc., are in a separate wing
Tsolyánu	Rambling 1-storey mud-brick clan-houses, 2-15 rooms, flat roof of slate or packed clay; complex floor plans with an enclosed outer court leading to a reception hall; guestrooms are set off to one side, and the clan's private apartments are at the back; kitchens, baths and latrines are communal; outbuildings are set within a low outer wall (higher and lightly fortified in more remote regions)	Same; better brick or masonry construction; 2-3 storeys, 10-20 rooms; reception and guest rooms are separate; the apartments for various clan lineages are individually separated and placed at the back of the house; town houses usually contain the clan's workshops, storage areas and sales rooms	Same; 2-3 storeys, 20-50 rooms, ornate reception and guest rooms; private apartments are again at the back, with separate suites for the families of senior clansmen; kitchens and dining halls are communal, but private apartments have their own baths and latrines; workshops, storage areas and sales rooms (if any) are placed in a separate wing, and the whole is surrounded by a high windowless wall with heavy outer gates; city slums are mazes -- 3-5 storeys in height, irregular floor plans, tiny rooms, a common bath and latrine; merchants often sleep in their shops (which are just raised open stalls by day and are closed off from the street by wooden shutters at night; the wealthy aristocracy live in vast, complex palaces surrounded by gardens and high walls, 2-5 storeys and 30-200 rooms, separate wings for guests, storage and workshops, private apartments, etc.; high pavilions and airy gardens are placed upon the flat roofs to avoid the heat; Tsolyáni administrative buildings are also large and intricate, with public halls filled with ascending tiers of daises upon which the scribes and officials sit according to their ranks and functions; the temples are vast, sometimes as much as 75-100 hectares in area, great truncated pyramidal foundations crowned with massive stone walls, pylons, towers, cloisters, colonnades, halls, etc., decorated and embellished with images and panels of script; roofs are usually high and pitched with up-curving gables, gilded domes, and carven roof combs; inside are labyrinths of small shrines surrounding the main altar chambers, offering rooms, chambers for special rituals, robing rooms, living quarters, schools, libraries, workrooms, storerooms, barracks, administrative offices, and small cities of slaves and artisans; temple styles differ from period to period, region to region, and also deity to deity; a temple is usually surrounded by

			gardens and outbuildings all enclosed within a high stone wall, in one corner of which is the ponderous tower for the great *Tunkul* gong which announces the times of prayer and certain ceremonies
Salarvyá, Pechánо	Low adobe, mud-brick or stone one family huts, 1-storey, 1-3 rooms, thatched or tiled roofs, outbuildings, barns and granaries are enclosed within a high wall of prickly shrubs	Same; larger buildings of stone, 1-2 storeys, 8-15 rooms; often a U-shaped outer courtyard with the dining chamber and private family rooms at the back, guestrooms to the left and work and storage areas to the right, a well or fountain is found in the centre of the courtyard with gardens and benches all around; in towns the front of the courtyard is usually closed by a high wall; roofs are often brick or stone domes or barrel vaults	Same; wealthier dwellings use massive, square architecture, low, solid columns, and have high ceilings to keep out the heat; 10-30 rooms, 2-3 storeys, domed and vaulted roofs are common; work and storage areas are enclosed within the residence, but shops and and business buildings are kept apart and may be located in another quarter of the city; only one family or lineage inhabits a dwelling; Salarvyáni tenements are similar to those of Tsolyánu: 3-5 storeys, many small chambers, and a maze of interlocking alleys and streets; each building has its own latrines, but baths are public and are run by the municipality; the great feudal overlords live in domed and turreted stone castles in the centre of their cities, 3-5 storeys, 50-200 rooms, with thick outer walls; floor plans are irregular, with many apartments, columned halls, and chambers centring around a domed ceremonial room (rather like a "throneroom"); family rooms and the women's quarters are at the back or in the upper storeys, and guestrooms are situated in the left front section of the building; apart from these palace-fortresses there are no administrative edifices --scribes and officials have separate apartments and offices within the ruler's "castle"; Salarvyáni temples are 1-storey, monolithic, square or oval buildings, featureless from the outside except for a single great gate; within is a single large hall with the altar in the centre; there are always subterannean inner shrines, however; the priesthoods live in their private houses elsewhere in the city, and only the guards and duty priests occupy the building when public rituals are not in progress; a temple may have an outer compound enclosed by thick walls, and within this are the libraries, merchants' shops for images, talismans, and sacrificial animals and objects, etc.; some temples also have schools and academies on their grounds
Tsoléi, Háida Pakála	Open circles of rough stone walls roofed with a canvas-like cloth when it rains; people, animals, etc., live within these	Same, except that town houses are roofed with tile or thatch, a central courtyard is kept open, and this is where food is cooked, people congregate, and work is done	Same; round or oval stone houses with an open central courtyard; partitions divide the quarters of individual families of the clan, and areas are set off for storage, animals, and workrooms, etc.; wealthier houses in Tsoléi follow the Livyáni plan, while those of Háida Pakála copy the Salarvyáni

The house types of the nonhuman races also deserve brief comment. When residing in mankind's cities the friendly species make no attempt to erect their own kinds of architecture.

Species	Locale and social class distinction: Rural/tribal	Village/small town	Large town/city
Ahoggyá	Single-storey, 1-room wattle-and-daub huts built up on stilts above the bog, pitched thatch roof; the center of the floor is open so that a stout ladder can be let down to permit ingress and egress	Same; larger huts around a central dance ground; a village is usually surrounded by quagmires, poisonous plants, and a fence of venomous hooked spines	[Only in Ómnu Tlé Hléktis] : large, round one-room log huts, plank floors, conical thatched roofs; there is no market or a business area; all commerce is done from workshops in private homes; there are also no temples -- no one has yet discovered even whether the Ahoggyá have gods – but the ceremonial dance ground is prominent; towns are walled with log palisades and guarded by moats filled with deadly serpents and other creatures
Hlaká	-- [Hláka families do not live in isolation; they are found only in communal eyries]	High caverns in the face of a vertical cliff, open at the front and possessing several internal chambers dug into the mountain at the rear; food is cooked at the front of the eyrie, and this is where the inhabitants congregate; the young are raised in the small rear chambers; the Hláka excavate and burrow but build nothing of stone or wood	Same, except larger and still more complex; there are no shops or administrative areas or caves in the eyrie-city, and there are also no temples; the Hláka religion revolves around the placing of coloured stones in geometric patterns in a flat space on top of a high mountain at fixed times of the year; Hláka cities can only be approached by flying creatures or expert mountaineers
Hluss	-- [the Hlúss do not live in isolation or in "single family" units]	Egg-shaped domes made of a nacreous bodily secretion and interconnected by	Same, except larger; two or more "Hlúss-mothers" may occupy the same city, but they

		tunnels and passageways; each community centres around a larger dome occupied by one great breeder female and her attendants, "the Hlűss-mother"; surrounding domes and semi-subterranean dormitories are used as quarters by the worker fighters; a Hlűss village is always walled with a mixture of stone and secretion cement, and this is set with traps, jagged glass, and poisoned spikes	reside in different sections, and these are walled off from one another; Hlűss architecture -- what little men have seen and lived to report -- tends to be curved, domed and inset all over with coloured stones, gems, glass, metals, etc., in alien patterns; this race makes little or no use of brick or wood for building; internal partition walls are built up of their translucent bodily secretion or else are just curtains of woven seaweed; there are no shops or temples, although it is thought that the Hlűss do indeed have deities
Hlutrgú	-- [the Hlutrgú live only in communal dens]	Low, interconnected warrens of interwoven sticks and mud; the floor is either underwater or at least spongy with moisture; the upper dens are occupied by the males and lower burrows -- completely underwater -- are reserved for the females and the aquatic young; a village or town is surrounded by floating masses of poisonous plants, trained *Qáqtla* (swamp snakes), etc.	Same; larger "cities" are complex: a maze of tunnels and low-ceilinged chambers all interconnected and filled with these vicious beings; larger "halls" are used for communal gatherings of some kind, but the purpose of these is unknown; there are no temples since the Hlutrgú deities are worshipped in secret swampy glens at night; cities are walled with impenetrable spiny plants and surrounded by moats; the paths between towns and cities are kept secret
Mihálli	-- [no settlements are known: ?]	-- [possibly subterranean?]	-- [?]
Nyaggá	Roofless underwater chambers are sometimes visible when the waters of Lake Parunál are low in the hot season; these seem to be built of stone and certain bonding corals, but very little is known	Same: larger aggregates of underwater buildings of some size and complexity can be seen off the city of Prajnú in Yán Kór, but the reclusive Nyaggá cannot be contacted (they do barter glass-coral by leaving it on a beach in return for pottery and other items)	Same: [?]
Páchi Léi	One-room chambers skillfully "grown" into the boles of the great *Ebzál* trees of the Pán Chákan forests; large "houses" are grown down near the forest floor, while the smaller dwellings of younger adults are created higher up in the trees; ladders of woven vines connect these dwellings aerially	Same; larger congregations of tree-dwellings are built around an open grassy knoll which is used as a temple	Same; copying human models, an area on the floor of the forest is set apart for an open-air marketplace; in such human cities as Butrús the Páchi Léi actually build houses of polished and carved wood along human lines; these have one storey and several chambers but no particular floor plan; after the Mu'ugalavyáni massacre of the Páchi Léi in 1,565 this species has taken to walling their towns with log palisades and surrounding them with ditches filled with the "Food of the Ssu"
Pé Chói	Small, grey-green, dome-shaped one-room houses made of a bodily secretion mixed with chewed leaves, twigs, etc.; a house contains only a clay hearth and wood or clay platforms for sleeping	Same; villages consist of clusters of houses connected by hidden forest paths; there are no shops or markets, and commerce is done by a sort of barter; there are also no temples; in their own areas the Pe Choi do not build temples in their towns, although there are certain shrines hidden back in the forests	-- [The Pé Chói do not build larger towns or cities; enclaves in Páya Gupá prefer human-built houses]
Pygmy Folk	Low subterranean burrows beneath the grassy plains of eastern Yán Kór; a burrow has several concealed upper entrances, and there is always a large chamber near the surface in which human guests (or prisoners) can be accomodated; other arrangements are unknown	Same; such "cities" as Á Tòh are inhabited by many hundreds of individuals; little or nothing of these is visible on the surface; Guards are posted on high knolls, and an intruder is met at once by a party of armed inhabitants who appear from the earth as if by magic	Same: [?]
Shén	Oval-shaped houses of stone and wood, 1-storey, 2-5 rooms, flat or low-pitched roofs of beams and packed clay; all surfaces are curved, and any windows are irregular ovals; houses are surrounded by gardens of *Chŕ* melons and other plants, and there may also be a low stone perimeter wall	Same; villages consist of several clusters of houses, each sector separately walled with high, featureless stone; there are market-places and squat, square or softly rounded temples to the Shén deities	Same; houses in the town tend to be much larger with complex and irregular floor plans, and all enclosed within windowless high walls; no decoration is used, and the heavy roofs and blank surfaces create a rather ominous air; the Shén are divided into "egg-groups", and while some of these are genetically allied and thus friendly or neutral to one another, others are natural enemies and cannot live within the same region (hence the proliferation of small Shén states to the north); the wealthier egg-groups live in "palaces": vast and intricate one- or two-storey mansions of stone; there are separate rooms for the egg-laying females, the young, the males, and the egg-fertilisers who are needed to activiate the eggs produced by the two other "sexes"; Shén cities are usually walled, and there are separate markets, barracks, temples, administrative buildings, and even "foreigners' quarters" for traders and visitors of other species
Shunned Ones	-- [this species does not live in small isolated groups]	Same	The cities of this fearsome race were domed over completely in ancient times, and nothing is known of their internal arrangements; there are usually four, eight, or sixteen round gates, plus a number of subterranean sally ports and tunnels; the material of the dome is cloudily translucent and lets in light, but its substance cannot be identified or duplicated;

			daring travellers who have peered within claim that the air is clouded with yellowish gas and that there are many strange and alien edifices
Ssú	Many-chambered subterranean burrows are excavated in rocky slopes; nothing is known about the internal plan of these; all that appears on the surface are triangular stone pyramids with a single sliding stone door in the west face; these lead to the tunnels below	Same; larger towns are found in Ssuyál, and the few humans who have managed to escape tell of high, spacious chambers, galleries, massive pillared supports, winding, circular passages, and mazes of rooms and apartments used by the fighter-workers, the males, and the breeder females; storage areas and work-rooms are separate, but there are no indications of markets or temples; entrances again are through triangular pyramids on the surface	Same, but larger and more complex; the ancient ruins of Ssuganár indicate that this race once dwelt at least partially on the surface; 3-sided triangular pyramids are interspersed with fallen and crumbling colonnades of squat, alien pillars, open-roofed halls of unknown purpose, obelisks carved all over with ugly, squirming runes, and strange stepped plazas crowned by tall pointed monoliths; the cities of the Black Ssú (on their distant island) are probably of this type
Swamp Folk	-- [single families do not live in isolated households]	Small 1-storey, 2-3 room wooden huts, tall conical thatched roofs; 5-10 huts are built on platforms on stilts over the water; no shops, temples, or marketplaces; all inter-village travel is done by swimming or in skin coracles; fast galleys may be moored to a piling	Same, but larger; 20-30 huts are found on a single platform, and there are open areas which are used for marketplaces; temples consist only of a simple image kept within a special hut; village and regional chiefs live in larger huts with several side-additions and separate outbuildings; ladders lead down to docks where the town's boats are kept; there are no large cities
Tinalíya	-- [isolated single families are rare]	Subterranean communal dwellings consisting of a maze of entrance tunnels which lead to an upper common room; below are layers of chambers in which food is cooked and stored, work is done, etc.; beneath these are the living quarters of the neuters, and deepest of all are the private chambers of the relatively few males and females who govern the community; men are entertained only in the upper common room since Tinalíya passageways are only 1-1.5 m. high; on the surface one finds only a massive stone tower or stepped pyramid-like structure which guards the entrances to the community below	Same, except larger, deeper, and more complex; Tinalíya cities often have high, spacious rooms and galleries which are used as common rooms, "marketplaces", and workshops; there are no temples, although every city has one or more library of curious tubular metal scrolls and even human books; areas are set apart for schools, administrative offices and infirmaries (this race has almost a superstitious fear of disease); there are side chambers in which neuter dead are fed to a species of flesh-eating fungus, but males and females are entombed in deep catacombs surrounded by all of the articles they enjoyed in life; entrances to a tinaliya city are fortified with massive castle-like structures; guestrooms and trading areas for other races are built within these
Urunén	One-storey, one-room square stone houses, pitched wooden-shingled roofs, square windows and doors, always surrounded by orchards and vegetable gardens; houses are usually whitewashed or painted in pastel colours; there are no defences -- the Urunén have no major natural enemies	One-storey, 2-10 room square stone houses; villages contain 10-100 dwellings and are built in a neatly oriented square plan with no outer walls; in the centre of each town is a plaza with a temple to each of the Urunén's three deities in the middle; a village headman resides in a larger house at one side of this square	Same; larger cities have a variety of buildings, all square and rather neatly plain; covered pillared plazas are used as markets, and large blocky, cube-like temples occupy the centre of each city; government buildings face these across an open square; only the headquarters of the city guard (established to maintain local order) is fortified in any way; schools and libraries are entirely secular

1.422. Town and City Plans

Of all the Five Empires, only Mu'ugalavyá does not regularly wall its towns and cities, although the residence of the administrator (which includes any army barracks) is fortified. In Livyánu even the smallest hamlet has its defensive wall, and within a Livyáni city each temple may be surrounded by its own perimeter of massive battlements. The Tsolyáni wall most towns with populations of more than 5,000 persons. Such great cities as Béy Sú, Tumíssa, Jakálla, Khirgár, etc. possess multiple rings of walls and towers, with stronger fortresses built within these at strategic points. The practice is much the same in southern Yán Kór, but in the far north one again encounters towns which have no permanent outer defences: e.g. Krél, Khárcha Sárk, and Greggeésa. The metropolises of western Salarvyá are again heavily fortified, with the citadel of the ruling family forming a powerful centre. In the east, however, only the coastal cities (often victims of pirate raids) are provided with ramparts, while the inland towns are unwalled.

The maps employ the following symbols for urban centres:

SYMBOL	CITY TYPE, POPULATION RANGE, ETC.
◎	Large metropolis: population 600,000 or more
⊙	Large city: population 200,000 - 600,000
○	Small city: population 100,000 - 200,000
◎	Large town: population 50,000 - 100,000
☼	Town: population 10,000 - 50,000
⊙	Small town: population 5,000 - 10,000
★	Ruins, important isolated temple, monastery, etc.

City planning is rudimentary except in Mu'ugalavyá (and also amongst the Urunén). Most cities just expand willy-nilly. Beginning from a natural centre (a marketplace at a crossroads, an important shrine for pilgrimage, a lake or other natural feature, a military fortress, etc.), cities tend to spread outward along the lines of least resistance: up and down a riverbank, into an available plain, etc. In Tsolyánu the temples of the twenty deities are usually erected close to one another, creating a natural focus; the places and offices of the Imperial administration form another, and the most prestigious mercantile section a third. Favoured clans may have residences near these nuclei, or they may choose to escape the crowded city and build newer clanhouses in outlying suburbs. The occupational clans often congregate according to their spheres of activity, and one thus finds "streets" of tanners and leatherworkers, "lanes" of smiths and armourers, "districts" of weavers and tailors, etc. According to Tsolyáni tradition, the workshops, sales facilities, warehouses, and storage depots of a clan's business are located within the clanhouse. Lower class labourers dwell in sprawling, congested slums. A neighbourhood may develop into a slum for various economic reasons, and there is thus no particular pattern for the occurence of tenement sections within a city.

Livyáni life revolves around their omnipresent Shadow Gods. Each temple functions almost as a city in itself, with its own marketplaces, shops, and other services clustered close around the temple walls. The worshippers of a deity tend to live near their shrine, and this creates separate districts of people who follow this god or that. This practice is not followed in the other empis' authorities. The towns of the smaller nations are much less structured, and there are too many

Water and sanitation are perennial problems. Mu'ugalavyá and Tsolyánu take pride in their running water. Certain streams are kept clean by law, and bucket-chains, great bronze pumps, and armies of slaves are employed to keep the water supply in operation. The Livyáni employ the same methods, but many city houses also have their own deep wells. Yán Kór and Salarvyá are less organised, and their water systems are sometimes polluted. Boiling water to purify it is known, however, although not always practiced. Sewage disposal is universally primitive; dumping into convenient rivers is common, with unpleasant results for those who live downstream. The Livyáni have gangs of slaves — the lowest of the low — who collect refuse each day, load it into *Chlén* carts, and transport it far outside the city walls. The Salarvyáni are the least neat about their arrangements, and one of the first things one notices about their metropolises is the heady effluvium which hangs over all like a cloud.

Most of the nations of the continent are parochial and xenophobic. The Livyáni are the most prone to this, and the Yán Koryáni the least. This has given rise to the "foreigners' quarter": a separately walled and guarded district where aliens, traders, clanless persons, social outcasts, and other peripheral people can reside — temporarily or even permanently. In Tsolyánu it is dangerous for one unfamiliar with the niceties of etiquette to venture outside of the foreigners' quarter without a local guide. Only the most powerful and prestigious foreigners (e.g. members of foreign missions, priests, and wealthy merchants) have any legal rights, and if a proud Tsolyáni noble takes offence at the language, behavior, or even the sight of an outlander, he may order the latter beaten, imprisoned, or removed. The Livyáni are even more strict: strangers must remain within the foreigners' quarter and can only travel outside in the company of one of the Vrű'uneb, the omniscient Livyáni secret police. Even then some areas and even some cities (e.g. Dlásh) are off-limits, and strangers found there are likely to be sacrificed. The Mu'ugalavyáni allow aliens to travel about their land, but they demand much tedious registration, permission-taking, and paperwork which discourages all but the most patient of travellers. In Salarvyá the foreigners' quarter is more for convenience than for restriction, and outsiders may move with relative freedom there. Some Yán Koryáni cities have no such segregated districts at all, and if one has contacts and is willing to use bribery, the Baron's officials will allow almost unrestricted travel. The smaller nations are again too variegated to permit a generalisation. One should perhaps single out Ghatón, however, where women never appear in public from the cradle to the grave. Any who does so is likely to be slain by an enraged mob. Foreign travellers thus either do not bring their womenfolk to Ghatón, or else they keep them secluded in encampments outside the towns. The Ghatóni generously extend this custom to include female nonhumans, but they have never quite known what to do about such species as Ahoggyá, who have eight sexes. Their usual response is to resort to violence first and then to debate the matter later.

The sexual mores of the south are very different. There are no "red light districts" in Tsolyánu, Livyánu, or Salarvyá because public courtesans are usually priestesses (or priests) of the relevant deities. The Temple of Dlamélish operates the House of the Pleasant Hour in Jakálla, renowned for its opulence and imaginative services, for example, and similiar functions are performed by the devotees of the goddess Kírrineb in Livyánu and of the goddess Shiringgáyi in Salarvyá. The Mu'ugalavyáni do have prostitution districts (again mainly served by priestesses), but this is due more to their mania for compelling the practitioners of each profession to reside together in one locale than to any attitude concerning sex. Prostitutes are rare in Yán Kór and Saá Allaqí: casual cohabitation is considered a part of every young person's education, and the clan matriarchs often assign temporary partners to their guests. In the far northeast (Jánnu Mudállu, etc.) extramarital sex is punished by public humiliation — much to the astonishment of travellers from the more permissive south. Indeed, truly secular brothels are found only in Háida Pakála and other lands across the southern ocean.

There are also no "thieves' quarters." Theft and other crimes are barbarically punished in all of the Five Empires. There are still thieves, of course, but any attempt to organise or institutionalise theft is ruthlessly stamped out. On the other hand, the profession of assassin is recognised, and clans devoted to this occupation may be found in the cities of Tsolyánu, Mu'ugalavyá, Yán Kór, and Salarvyá. Assassins are a part of the formal code of "nobility of action" mentioned in Sec. 1.370. One resorts to an assassins' clan in order to redress an "ignoble deed," and a commission which is itself "ignoble" or dangerous to public order is likely to be refused. The heads of such clans are often wealthy, prestigious, and active in affairs, although those members charged with the carrying out of missions must conceal their identities, of course. Assassins' clanhouses may be found almost any place within a city, but there is no special "quarter" for these groups except in Mu'ugalavyá, where they are required to reside close to the roads leading out of the city "in order to facilitate their travel unobserved."

A feature of Tsolyáni cities not much found in the other four empires is the *Hirilákte* Arena. This is a huge open stadium in which games and gladiatorial contests are held, Imperial ceremonials are staged, and individuals may settle their personal differences according to the ancient "Manifesto of Noble Deliverance." More will be said of these activities later.

In Tsolyánu, Mu'ugalavyá, and Livyánu the dead are buried in necropolises: "Cities of the Dead," located to the east or south of a city outside its walls. In Béy Sú, for example, the City of the Dead lies on the eastern shore of the Mssúma River across from the City of the Living. Except for a few temples, monasteries, and the grim Tólek Kána Pits (Sec. 1.360), there are no residences or other buildings on the eastern bank. The Yán Koryáni inter corpses in winding catacombs excavated directly beneath their cities. The Salarvyáni cremate commoners but dig deep and elaborate tombs for their rulers. Amongst the nonhumans, the Shén entomb their dead in clay urns; the Pé Chói bury theirs with no ceremony in little forest plots outside their villages; the Páchi Léi tie their corpses high up in certain trees for the birds to feed upon; the Hláka eat their dead with great enjoyment and reverence, and to be offered a share of one of these macabre feasts is the highest honour a human friend can receive. The Ahoggyá simply toss their deceased comrades out upon the refuse heaps at the back of their village. The customs of the Tinalíya have been mentioned in Sec. 1.421, and the other species either bury or cremate their dead with more or less ceremony. Only the Urunén raise great square tombs for their departed colleagues, as men do. Of the hostile races, the Hlúss and the Ssú are said to feed their dead to their breeder females, and when one of the latter dies, she is encased in a membraneous sac and hung in an underground cavern to be venerated there by those who come after. The Hlutrgú float their corpses out into the swamps upon little reed boats. Nothing whatever is known of the funerary customs of the Shunned Ones, the Nyaggá, or the mysterious Mihálli.

Every city has its own individuality, of course, and it is hard to leave the topic of cities without inserting some of this "colour" into the narrative.

Mighty Béy Sú is perhaps the largest metropolis, a sprawl of blue slate edifices, slums, houses, and mosaic-inlaid palaces lying beside the dun-hued Mssúma River. From the heights of Berenánga Plain to the west one looks eastward to Patyél's Walls, which halted the Mu'ugalavyáni sappers in 2,020, the bustling quays, the congested towers and gilded gables of the temples, the lesser spires and roof-combs of the mercantile clanhouses, and across to the truncated pyramids of the City of the Dead. To the north, the governor's palace is set within its ring of walls and gardens like the gem of a ring. Here indeed, the Tsolyáni say with pride, is the capital of an Empire.

Far to the south, ancient Jakálla slumbers in luxurious, decadent splendour above the yellowish tidal flats, cut in two from east to west by the darker waters of the Eqúnoyel River. Tumíssa sits upon the shores of a volcanic crater lake, its impregnable High Fortress rising to the west like a defiant ship's prow towards hostile Mu'ugalavyá, its reddish sandstone palaces and temples lining the southern shore opposite to the busy clanhouses of its merchants on the northern and eastern banks, and the awesome facade of the Temple of Vimúhla, Lord of Flame, overtopping all on the southern bank. Khirgár, the bastion of north-western Tsolyánu, consists of three concentric rings of walls crowning a hill. Within the outer circle are its residential areas, markets, slums, and the foreigners' quarter. The clanhouses and palaces of the aristocracy are jammed within the second wall, many rising five or six storeys in an effort to reach the open sky. The third and highest perimeter of battlements surround the temples, the palaces of the old noble clans, and the citadel of the Governor of the

North.

To the south of Khirgár, old Púrdimal huddles within its swamps beneath the slender needle of Thénu Thendráya Peak. This is "The Black Toad of the Empire," an ancient dusk-grey maze of riddled and porous stone. Púrdimal's nickname may be undeserved — due, perhaps to its grim hue and the all-pervading stench of the marshes — but there is a dark and secretive air to this city as well, an intangible essence of something silent, alien, and brooding.

The western cities of Chéne Hó, Páya Gupá, and Butrús are typical of the Chákas: pretty, tile-roofed, tan wood and white limestone hill towns, always with the green forest curtain and the smoke-blue mountains of the inner Chákas in the background. Eastward, the bustling cities of the central plains — Mrelú, Mekú, Katalál, Úrmish, Usenánu, and others — are devoted to the agricultural bounty of their regions — and to the making of money. They are flat, neat, solid, and a little pompous. In contrast, Penóm on the southern coast is an ugly town, insect-ridden, smelling of fish and the sea, and splotched with the pallid fungi of the bogs. It is a place in which everything one touches is damp, the air is like a breath of fetid steam, and men are more likely to die of bog-plagues and dysentery than of old age.



Two Shén

In the far north, the City of Sárku squats upon its five hilltops like a spiny dinosaur, its high-pinnacled, sepulchre-hued Temple of the Worm-Lord overtopping the arched and buttressed ramparts which defied the legions of Empress Sháira Sú, "the Divine Daughter of Thúmis," in 973 A.S. Farther east, the town of Thri'íl guards the mountain pass to the north. This pleasant, pastel-hued, slate-roofed little city nestles amongst its powerful battlements between two high peaks, giving it the name of "The Pendant Between Avánthe's Breasts." In the northeastern corner of the Empire the ancient desert city of Fasíltum stands, a mirage-like vision of red sandstone battlements over which white marble Classical Tsolyáni glyphs march in serried rows upon bands of black diorite. This is "The City of the Chiming Skulls," so named because of the grisly custom of hanging heads of executed felons from silver chains from the ramparts, where they dance together in the arid breezes with wind-bells of glass and metal, a funereal and wistful music in which the city's hawk-faced Vríddi overlords take much pride.

One more northern centre must be described: this is Avanthár, the capital of the Tsolyáni Imperium (cf. Sec. 1.370). Avanthár is not strictly a city but rather a mighty fortress-palace, a great upthrust crag of dark sandstone rising out of the mists where two rivers join together. It is roughly triangular, like the prow of a ship in front, and laboriously cut down in back into a dizzy escarpment which stretches from one river gorge to the other. There is only one known entrance: the watergate in its western side, through which visitors pass into an echoing dock chamber and are there greeted by troops of the Omnipotent Azure Legion. Avanthár's promontory has been hollowed out into a labyrinth of halls, apartments, galleries, and passages. It is largely self-contained and almost self-sufficient. There are sleeping rooms, kitchens, workshops, storage vaults, dining halls, barracks, offices, and all of the essentials of a city. Each of the temples has its shrine and suite of rooms, as do also the great clans and the delegations of foreign states. The lower reaches contain the administrative offices of the central government: hordes of bureaucrats, scribes, functionaries, servants, and functionaries, heaps of scrolls and files and documents, soldiers, chamberlains, and crowds of litigants and supplicants from all over the Empire. The middle tiers are occupied by private lodgings, public halls, and other facilities, and the upper levels house the temples, the apartments of the highest courtiers and officials, the suites reserved for the Imperial heirs and their entourages, the great library, an academy of scholars, and innumerable council rooms and audience chambers. Beyond these, up a staircase encrusted with gold and gems enough to buy a kingdom, lie the blue-veined marble antechambers of the Hall of the Petal Throne itself. Hither come the noblest and most powerful men and women of the Empire, a sea of resplendent *Khéshchal* plumes, glittering armour, iridescent robes of *Thésun* gauze sewn with gems, the tall ceremonial helmets of the priests, human and nonhuman, a thousand radiant hues, a babble of languages, the fragrance of incense and a myriad perfumes. Yet upon passing through the filagreed golden Gates of the Sublime Visitation, all is dim and hushed and majestic. High up, in a gallery in the wall behind the visitor, a choir of ancient priests drones the praises of the God-Emperor in perpetual and perfect unison. When one of these singers grows tired, a signal is given, and he is replaced by another without the loss of a syllable. Thus it has been throughout each day and each night for the last two thousand years. Clouds of *Vrés* incense coil up from the censers; the high, sweet voice of the Speaker of the Seal, the First Prelate of the Court of Purple Robes (Sec. 1.370), rings out; and in the far wall a tiny lamp shines through the translucent glory of the jade lattice screen of the Petal Throne: the Emperor is present.

Doors lead out from the antechambers of the Petal Throne onto the mountain top. Here there are gardens, parks, and promenades. Beyond the gilded cupolas and pavilions of these pleasaunces looms the impregnable might of the Golden Tower, sealed off within its forbidden precincts and glittering in the sun. One may well wonder who envies the most: the lesser folk who gaze curiously up at the blank walls and upturned gables of the Emperor's residence, or the Emperor himself, in all his lonely glory, as he looks down upon the colourful, chattering throngs in the gardens upon the summit of his citadel.

To return to the lesser cities of Tsolyánu, one must go southeastward to Sokátis. This is "The Roofed City," so named because one can cross it in any direction without ever emerging from beneath some portico, colonnade, or gallery into the sunlight. In many respects, Sokátis is more typical of a Salarvyáni city: carven gargoyles, ornate parapets, intricate bas-reliefs, and walls which slope up to the ponderous vaults and domes of its roofs. Thráya in the far southeast is similar but is much more of a non-entity: a flat, faceless town of shops, clacking cloth-looms, and the redolence of timber cut fresh from the Forest of Gilráya. Jaikalór is much like Thráya, except that its defences are stronger: the Salarvyáni covet it, and the Hlutrgú to the south desire nothing so much as its annihilation.

The cities of other lands must be characterised in a word or two. The towns of Mu'ugalavyá are neat and orderly: great Ssa'átis with its tiers of painted columns, wall scenes of coloured tilework, and its red-tiled roofs; busy Khéiris, a city of docks and ships but crowned with several ancient and important libraries and temples; the Chákan-style towns of Kúrdis and Pagús; dusty Tlár and sand-brown Khú; forested Neiháí, more Livyáni than Mu'ugalavyáni; ruined Ch'óchi, lost in its memories of past glories; and the outpost town of Gashchné, raw and harsh, accurately named "The City at the Edge of Nothingness."

The metropolises of Livyánu are ornate and cultured but somehow inward-looking: old, wise Tsámra, above whose high walls the temples of the Shadow Gods peer down like watching giants; Kakársh and Nufersh, harbour cities which spill down their hills to the azure sea in a riot of tiled roofs and dazzlingly white walls; proud and stolid Tsúpil Hláya, monumental, massive, and arrogant because of its wealthy harvests; the orchards and flowering pavilions of hilly Hráis, half human and half Tinalíya; Sraón, a city of shrines and wharves, all green-grey granite and gilded spires; Farshá, Fálli, and Foshaá, busy agricultural cities; and forbidden Dlásh, into whose mud-hued sandstone gates no outsider may venture and live.

In contrast, Yán Kór appears dark and dull, a medley of grey stone, dark polished wood, and the ever-present Tlú trees, slender green-black sentinels beside the leaden northern seas: Yán Kór City, the Baron's capital, all sombre basalt and dusky slate roofs; the grim fortress of Ke'ér, turreted, crenellated, and topped with the emerald banners of Yán Kór; the irregular, curving walls and brown brickwork of Hlíkku, open only to the devotees of its strange Mad God; the rambling wooden clanhouses and clattering smithies of Dháru, "The Workshop of the North"; secretive Ngakú and Prajnú, blind walls and windowless turrets hinting at some monstrous commerce with the hidden denizens of Lake Parunál; and the squared buttresses and bastions of Mákhis which look down upon a forest of sails and masts and black-hulled ships. The cities of Saá Allaqí are similar: many-towered Saá Allaqiyár, sprawling down its barren mountain slope into the open plain; Grái and Krú Sékka, wealthy farming centres of dull brown stone; and the gaily painted wooden palaces of Trú, more a city of Jannu than of the west.

The cities of Salarvyá are ornate and elegant — too much so for western tastes: Khúm and Koylúga, their walls peopled with writhing friezes of heroes and mythological beasts, domed and vaulted, and dominated by the citadels of their feudal masters; the populous ports of Héru and Chame'él, embellished with a myriad demon faces carven of agate and chrysoberyl; prosperous Nrikakchné, the mistress of the western plains; Tsatsayágga itself, the capital, a forest of high domes and gilded cupolas beside the sea; the even more ornate central cities of Jéggeth, Tsa'avtúlgu, Shretsáya, and Nimóllu, where every surface is sculpted and painted and inlaid with creamy marble; the fortified harbours of Ajján, Shíggath, Peléis, and Naggás, all buff sandstone and red porphyry, upon whose parapets stand tall black obelisks — stone charms to protect against the pirates of the sea; lonely Retsúllu, clustered about the base of a single high sugarloaf crag upon which one of Shiringgáyi's square temples stands watch; old Jgrésh, its worn grey walls crumbling slowly into dignified ruin, where men plough up artifacts of imperishable steel from their fields; the coastal cities of Fort Ormichash, Fort Vrusággu, Chichúvu, and Khirré, confections of rococo parapets and sculpted walls, again defenders of the southern shores; dust-blown, windy Fárishu, solitary in the empty plain; beautiful and dainty Jaekánta, a wonder of intricate marbled screens, mosaics of semi-precious stones, and red and black polygonal towers; and the eastern ports of Ssórmu, Élelun, and Mimoré, pretty, peaceful cities of graceful columns and muralled halls, where scholars sit beneath mullioned windows of ochre and rust-hued stained glass to debate the wisdom of their forefathers — and where all of the portentous affairs of Tsolyánu and the west are but fanciful travellers' tales, of little relevance to life.

1.423. The Sákbe Roads

Begun by the Bednálljans and extended to its greatest range by the Engsvanyáli, the *Sákbe* Road system is one of the marvels of Tékumel. Abundant resources and armies of slave labour have combined to make these highways into "Great Walls of China," fortified lines of communication stretching many thousands of kilometres across the Five Empires.

A *Sákbe* Road is no ordinary highway. It is a complex feat of engineering, made of solid stone in some regions, rubble faced with masonry elsewhere, and baked brick in still other areas. A *Sákbe* Road consists of three ascending tiers (like a three-step staircase), with the highest level facing towards the nearest possibly hostile frontier. The innermost, lowest tier of the roadway is raised 3-5 m above the surrounding countryside. It has a low parapet on its open side and is anywhere from 8 to 15 m in width. The second tier is 3-4 m higher, 6-8 m wide, and also has a parapet on its open side. The third and highest level rises another 3-5 m, is 4-6 m in breadth, and has crenellated battlements along both sides. At intervals of half a *Tsán* or so (about 600 m) there are guard towers. These are spaced more closely together near potentially hostile borders and farther apart in remote or centrally located, peaceful regions. Tower types range from simple bastions (usually containing a room or two, often unused and empty) to complex fortifications which stand astride the roadways and block access to the thoroughfare beyond. From some of these towers ramps and staircases lead down to the villages below, or to secondary dirt or stone-paved roads, and at appropriate distances low platforms have been constructed where travellers can unroll their sleeping mats, set up tents, find merchants selling food and other necessities, and even arrange for rather rustic entertainment.

The step structure of the *Sákbe* Road is another indication of the Tekumeláni penchant for the elaborate visual display of social class insignia. The lowest level is open to common travellers, caravans of transport slaves, and the plodding *Chlén* carts. The second tier is reserved for the upper classes: nobles in their litters, officials with their entourages, priests of the higher Circles, and senior clansmen or clanswomen of obvious social quality. No wheeled traffic is permitted, although small, light, slave-born litters may be used. Travel on the third and highest is restricted to the most exalted dignitaries, the highest of the aristocracy or clergy, and messengers of the Imperium. Troops usually march on the lowest level (or even down on the ground beside the roadway, if there are too many), with their officers keeping pace on foot or in litters on the second tier. The *Sákbe* Roads are patrolled by contingents of special guards, and the larger and more important towers may also have permanent garrisons. Theft and violence are rare while journeying upon these highways, but important travellers may nevertheless wish to ask permission to sleep within one of the occupied towers. The resident guard captain will usually grant this for a fee of a *Káitar* or two.

The *Sákbe* Roads wended their way across the continent in the wake of the conquering Bednálljan and later Engsvanyáli armies — a stupendous achievement. From Livyánu in the southwest to Nuru'ún in the northeast, and from N'lüss to the sybaritic cities of eastern Salarvyá, the Priestkings built their network. The Shén were never subdued, but those in Mmátugual built similar highways in imitation of their neighbours. The Shén of Shényu, however, did not erect *Sákbe* Roads but only ground-level highways paved with black basalt, guarded here and there by watchtowers and fortresses. The present-day masters of the Five Empires keep their *Sákbe* Roads in good repair and sometimes construct new ones. They are an excellent means of moving masses of troops and supplies, and they also possess great defensive value: an invader who breaks through at one point must breach still further *Sákbe* Roads as he advances. Otherwise he runs the risk of being outflanked by still unsubdued garrisons behind him.

The roads of the smaller regions — Tsolél, N'lüss, the Shén states, Ghatón, Pijéna, Pecháno, all of the countries of the far northeast, and the principalities across the southern ocean — are much less developed. They are often poorly maintained or even non-existent. In these remote regions, the *Sákbe* Roads of the Engsvanyáli may be in ruins: crumbling heaps of masonry, overgrown mounds of vegetation, muddy tracks running alongside shattered roadbeds, and hollow shells of what once were proud towers.

The *Sákbe* Roads which pass through the swamps around the city of Púrdimal are interesting enough to warrant mention. They are made of wooden beams and planking, and they cross the dismal marshes upon rows of fungus-splotched pilings. Rest platforms are also of wood here, built out to the side of the roadway and occupied by the squalid huts of the local merchants and the woven mat tents of the Hehegánu (Sec. 1.414), who trade baskets, *Ssár* wood staffs, and edible swamp crustaceans for cloth, metal, salt, and other needs.

It may also be noticed that certain *Sákbe* Roads end without reaching any destination. Some of these were abandoned out of economic infeasibility or because of insurmountable engineering problems. Others somehow gained the reputation of being accursed or too dangerous (because of beasts, natives, etc.) to be worth finishing. For example, in 2,194 A.S. the Emperor Heshtú'atl "the Mighty" (2,168-2,234 A.S.) commanded the completion of the ancient Engsvanyáli project to link the town of Haumá with the great Urmish-Jakálla road. The work had to be given up, however, because no labourer would remain on the site, and even educated engineers ran away. Men reported that at the dark of the two moons the ruins of the old Engsvanyáli causeway were transformed into a gleaming black highway upon which red-eyed demons marched in glittering spectral armour. The project was accordingly shelved.

Sákbe Roads are indicated upon the terrain maps by lines of dots. As stated above, not all of these are constructed on the same grand scale, and in more remote areas they may be only rutted tracks, ruins, or simply non-existent. The scale of these maps precludes the inclusion of secondary roads and highways.

1.424. The Underworlds

The great antiquity of life on Tékumel makes it a veritable planet of ruins. Some of these have been mentioned previously: the alien cities of the Ssú and the Hlüss, where bitter hatred drifts in the air like smoke; the twisted, melted tunnels of steel and glass and stone constructed during the centuries of mankind's glory; and hundreds — perhaps thousands — of catacombs, labyrinths, dungeons, shrines, caches, and even whole lost cities by the later dynasties and now ruined, buried, and forgotten in the wake of history. These are the *Tsuru'úm* "the Underworld."

An important factor in the development of these subterranean mazes is the custom of *Ditlána* (lit. "the renewing"). According to the precepts of the Bednálljan kings, later adopted by both the Engsvanyáli and the nations of the modern world, every city should undergo a ritual purification and a renewal at intervals of 500 years or so, depending upon the city's mundane horoscope, the positions of the transiting moons and the planets, and economic feasibility. The city's inhabitants are either drafted as labour or are moved out; the buildings are razed and their materials are used to fill in the foundations; and a new and more splendid metropolis is erected upon the site of the old. "Thus is the land made pure," as the Bednálljan Calendar of Difficult Immortality puts it. *Ditlána* requires many millions of man-hours and the expenditure of incredible wealth; yet the peoples of the Five Empires are fond of visual symbols, ceremonial, and punctilious splendour. "Ditlána must be done," a Tsolyáni might say, "or else we are no more noble than beasts." None of this prevents a parsimonious or impoverished monarch from fudging a bit on the horoscope or the due-date of an expensive *Ditlána*, of course. Modern Béy Sü is some 378 years overdue, its last *Ditlána* having occured in 1,480 A.S. during the reign of Hejjéka IV "Restorer of Dignities." Jakálla's renewal is even farther in arrears. The War of 2,020, military and political problems, recent poor crops, etc. etc. are put forward as excuses, but the clergy are now importunate.

The rubble-filled foundations of *Ditlána*-razed cities are often tunneled out again by various human (and nonhuman) inhabitants — and also by the predators and parasites which subsist upon man's leavings. The temples, too, refuse to abandon ancient and sacred shrines buried by this process. Conservativism and hoary tradition demand that certain rituals be performed in these original holy places, rather than in the newer temples on the surface. The priests thus descend in chanting, torchlit processions to consummate rituals which were old when the first Tlakotáni ascended the Petal Throne in Avanthár. Such subterranean sanctuaries are always guarded by human troops and detachments of priests — and also by creatures and devices set there by the temples to serve as sentinels.

There are *Tsuru'úmyal* (Underworlds) beneath the Cities of the Dead as well. The sovereigns of antiquity sleep in their stony tombs under the protection of the creations of their sorcerers. These sepulchres are rich with the wealth and artistry of their ages: golden sarcophagi, begemmed images of the gods, tomb furniture of precious woods and metals. They are also the most perilous, however, and the wise thief may prefer to invade the more easily accessible resting places of the nobility or devote himself to the pitiful graves of the poor, from whence he may glean the occasional bits of jewellery provided to the dead for their journey onwards to the Paradises of Teretané. Tomb robbery is a minor but lucrative "cottage industry" in many cities. It is usually organised and run by such clans as The Nighted Tower, which resents trespass by amateurs who have not paid their dues. There are also the Tomb Police to be eluded or bribed. The punishment for a tomb robber who has not "paid up" is drastic: in Tsolyánu culprits are stripped and tossed down into the corpse-pits reserved for slaves and the indigent, where the great *Dlaqó* beetles soon make a meal of them.

Information about the Underworlds is scanty. Those who know the most tell the least, as the Livyáni proverb puts it. Each temple is aware of its own shrines, dungeons, and storehouses, and this is imparted only to higher-ranking clergy and to those with a need to know. Slaves, labourers (those who repair and restock looted shrines and tombs, etc.), guardsmen and lower priests are blindfolded before being taken below, and some of the harsher sects retain a contingent of slaves in their catacombs and work them until they are no longer of use, whereupon they are sacrificed. The Omnipotent Azure Legion in Tsolyánu and the Vrü'uneb in Livyánu possess many of the details of these subterranean labyrinths, but even they are ignorant of their totality.

The *Tsuru'úm* below the city of Jakálla may be taken as an example. This is said to be one of the most extensive of any in the Five Empires, exceeded only by the Underworlds below Ch'óchi in Mu'ugalavyá, Tsámra in Livyánu, Jgrésh in Salarvyá, and Púrdimal and the City of Sárku in the Tsolyáni Imperium. There are entrances to Jakálla's Underworld both through the City of the Dead (outside its walls to the northeast) and through the drainage tunnels and sewers of the city proper. Immediately below the modern sewage system lies a layer of passageways which meanders hither and yon across several square kilometres. Two important subterranean shrines are maintained here: those of Hrü'ü, the Supreme Principle of Change, and Dlamélish, the Green-Eyed Lady of Fleshly Joys. Hru ü's temple rambles for many hundreds of metres through mighty halls, apartments, barracks, refectories, dungeons, robing rooms, libraries, outer sanctuaries of his various Aspects, ceremonial chambers, etc. before finally reaching the Y-shaped twin inner shrines peculiar to this sect. Here, in a welter of gleaming gold, purple amethysts, indigo star sapphires, eddying blue clouds of *Vres* incense, and the tremulous shimmer of a thousand candles, the demon-masked hierophants of this mighty god celebrate the ritual of The Coming Forth of Universal Diversification.

The temple of Lady Dlamélish is smaller but has several vertical levels, each appropriately guarded. On those nights when the moon Gayél is full her orgiasts come to dance before their goddess, while farther down in the maze her priestesses call forth the demon Ru'utlánesh, "The One of Mouths," and make appropriate sacrifice. These rituals cannot be described to the squeamish — or to the uninitiated.

Most of the temples of the other Tsolyáni deities also have subterranean sanctuaries below Jakálla, although these are smaller and of less importance. For example, there is a priestly academy and a library of the Temple of Thúmis, a strange circular temple to Chiténg, the Cohort of Vimúhla, and several others of note. Also on this upper level is an underground branch of the Equnoyel River: the River of Silence, in the midst of which is a misty island where it is said

that the demon Srúkarum, master of dread Sárku's undead legions, dwells — or perhaps it is Missúm, great Death himself. No one knows, and few return to speak of it.

The lower layers of Jakálla's *Tsuru'um* do not lie directly below the uppermost level but are displaced to one side or the other due to the city's changing patterns of habitation over the aeons. There are several Engsvanyáli levels, others of the Bednálljan period, still lower regions built by earlier dynasties, and eventually a ruined, twisted level of metal passages datable to the age before the Time of Darkness. All are interconnected, and as one approaches the nethermost one feels a current of cold air which blows up from the caverns within the very bowels of the planet. No mortal has ever ventured so deep — or returned to speak thereof.

One of the strangest sections of the Engsvanyáli levels is the Garden of the Weeping Snows, said to be the ensorcelled prison of the wizard Nyélmu, who offended the Lords of Stability by his too successful search for certain secrets from Tékumel's past. Through their magic this sage was condemned to dwell forever within the Palace of the Frost within the Garden, changeless and immortal, surrounded by luxury, and accompanied by his sycophants in a perpetual orgy of jaded debauchery which knows no joy. The poisonous snow-hued grass, the shrubs like sprays of frozen foam, the alabaster pathways, the milky marble palace, and the Pale Legion of silent guardsmen in white surcoats and silvery helmets — all combine to create a terrible colourless sameness, a boredom beyond any imagining of pain, and a desperate yearning for anything novel or changeable. For this reason Nyélmu welcomes all who discover the Garden. If they please him, he adds them to his coterie of followers — permanently. If they anger or bore him, he may have them tormented, and then in the moment of their most severe agony he freezes them in stasis with that device of the ancients called the Excellent Ruby Eye (of which more later). They are then placed here and there about the Garden in his whimsical Tableaux of Torments. Occasionally he may lay a geas upon a party of adventurers and send them forth to find and bring back some tool of sorcery or other item needed for his interests. Those who are successful may find themselves released — or since the wizard is fickle and more than a little mad with his enforced solitude, they may be punished or again made to join his companions at the feast. There are those who claim to have escaped with treasures beyond belief, while others are never seen again. The Garden of the Weeping Snows is not for the faint of heart.

Most of the Engsvanyáli levels are dark and empty, peopled only by the creatures which haunt the depths and feast off one another. There is the curious shrine to the demon Hés, "He Who Laughs Forever": he causes those who are ignorant of the rituals to laugh and play pranks upon one another until they drop from weariness or even perish from breathless exhaustion. On a still lower level is the tomb of the Engsvanyáli Prefect of the South, Rekmílish III, whose sepulchre is encircled by a curved passage in which a mighty juggernaut car rolls around and around, crushing any who have entered there. The car cannot be stopped or avoided; the entrance to the passage closes and becomes indistinguishable; and the victims can only escape if they manage to discover the secret door which leads on into the tomb. This place, too, has its guardians: powerful bronze-hued automatons who must be defeated before the chests of gold and gems may be opened. This part of the Underworld is also haunted by the demoness Lelmiyáni, "the Sweet Singer of Doom," who manifests herself as a little girl playing upon a flute. If her music mesmerises a party, she will lead the explorers on willy-nilly through the massive bronze gates of the Garden of the Weeping Snows, and what transpires there has been described above.

Still farther down and somewhat off to the north of the present city, the Bednálljan levels of the Underworld are said to contain the rich tomb of Mnekshétra, the Lesbian mistress of Queen Nayári of the Silken Thighs. Upon emerging from the labyrinth into the tomb area, one first encounters the Hall of One Thousand Columns. These are carven with the likenesses of the Queen's casual male lovers — and are said to contain the bodies of those unfortunates themselves. Beyond this is another intricate labyrinth which eventually leads into an elegant chamber made to look like an open courtyard, the sort of opulent place of dalliance which the Queen and her lover enjoyed in life. In the midst of this is a bathing pool into which it is perilous to look. There are sleeping apartments, furnishings, all of the trappings of a princess — and beyond again, concealed by secret doorways and trapped with devices of stone and bronze, is the tomb itself: a crystal sarcophagus in which the beautiful Mnekshétra sleeps attired in all of her regalia and her insignia of power. This tomb can only be opened safely by one who knows the Pandects of Impunity. Some say that this tract may be available elsewhere in the tomb or in the labyrinth. Others claim that the only copy exists in a lost and insignificant-appearing manuscript once contained within the great library at Tumíssa. In any case, attempting to open the tomb incorrectly is said to result in the party's being transported back through time to stand face to face with wrathful Nayári herself, surrounded by her guards, her sages, and her nonhuman minions. Any return to the present — or even the continuation of life itself — then depends upon the party's ability to flatter and cozen the Queen and assuage her anger.

The Bednálljan levels give entrance to a still lower region constructed by the Dragon Lords. Here stands the shrine of Vimuhla, a blackened tower of monolithic stones surrounded by a moat of leaping flames. The only access is a rail-less bridge less than a metre wide high above the roiling inferno. Men tell tales of a treasure of fire opals within this temple — enough to buy a man a kingdom — but guarded by the demon Jnekshá'a, "the Scythe of Flame," and thus inaccessible to any but the cleverest and bravest of thieves. As the Tsolyáni proverb has it, "Sweet is the harbour, but Death is the ferryman."

It is not to be inferred from the above that treasures and mysteries are to be met at every step of the way in an Underworld. There are vast empty sections, lost in dusty Stygian darkness: square rooms, round rooms, irregularly shaped rooms, winding corridors, intricate halls with many niches and bays, wide vestibules, tiny and tortuous burrows, pits, holes, and much, much more. The priesthood of Ksárul, for example, excavates circuitous and featureless mazes to confuse would-be despoilers of their shrines. The Ssú dig convoluted, cramped access-ways. Certain sections are kept in repair, while others are tumbled, blocked heaps of rubble, ever in danger of collapse. Most of these places are walled with stone blocks, packed rubble, ancient bricks, and even chiselled solid rock. There are also natural caves. Some sections are well-nigh airless or filled with deadly earth-gases; others are underwater. There are areas of pallid fungus and curious underground vegetation. There are also nests and dens of the many species which dwell below the earth. Exploring a *Tsuru'úm* is thus not a pleasant afternoon's jaunt; it is dirty, demanding, and perilous — something done by only the most daring (or desperate) of men.

Only those sections which were once part of some ancient temple or palace are embellished with murals or carvings. An experienced explorer or scholar can then quickly identify the period in which the place was built: the smooth, graceful, sophisticated, and rather effete styles of the Engsvanyáli; the grotesquely baroque murals and bas-reliefs of the Bednálljans; the Dragon Warriors' leaping flame-and-dragon motif; the crude, monumental angularity of the Llyáni; and the myriad fashions of the many lesser periods and dynasties. Only the most intrepid of adventurers will have seen the geometric metal embellishments of the ages before the Time of Darkness or the Latter Times, and fewer still have lived to tell of the alien caverns which date from the first inhabitants of Tékumel.

Inscriptions are another means of determining the period of a given *Tsuru'úm* construction, of course: the intricate glyphs of Classical Tsolyáni, the elegant cursive delicacy of Engsvanyáli, the curliques and awkward shapes of the Bednálljan syllabary; the squat squareness of old Llyáni — etc. The Ssú inscribe their walls with rows of perfect circles of different sizes, depths, and patterns, but no human can read them. Nor can any living scholar decipher the angular scripts of the ages before the Time of Darkness or the Latter Times. For this, one needs a "Rosetta Stone," but on Tekumel the time-span is too great, and too much has been lost during the millenia.

Whenever one enters one of the subterranean temple complexes, the inscriptions and wall decorations will at once indicate the deity's identity: e.g. a shrine to Hrihávyal may be illustrated with some of that goddess' Thirty-Two Unspeakable Acts; a sanctuary dedicated to Sárku contains statues or murals of his 108 hideous Aspects; a temple of Karakán usually has wall paintings or reliefs showing heroes, warriors, and martial deeds; etc. Sanctums which predate the

discoveries of the priest Pavár are harder to recognise, however, and only a scholar of that particular period can identify the deity of an older temple with any certainty.

It is impossible to do more than mention a few of the most important ruins and sites to be found on the continent. Some of these are indicated by stars on the terrain maps, while others are not marked. On map 1 the following may be noted: the abandoned cities of the Unknown Forest and the Plain of Towers (hexes 5404, 5001, 3803, and 3506) built by some unknown people during the Latter Times; the Plain of Towers itself, upon which the remnants of the great starships stand empty and forlorn here and there, intermingled with stone towers which are imitations of these ships, constructed in the hope of luring the "Lords of the Sky" back again to Tekumel; the caves of Chŭru Peak (hex 5116), where the Dwellers of the Mount keep watch over a mighty treasure — and the surrounding deserts are patrolled by the semi-intelligent *Churstálli*, cousins of the Hlüss and the Ssú; the Tower of Silent Cries (hex 4313), buried in the jungles of M'mórcha and defended by the tribe of the Fungus-Eaters, half-humans fanatically loyal to Hrsh, the cult deity of Mu'ugalavyá; the overgrown mounds of Old Ch'óchi (hex 4319), whose Underworld is said to "reach the centre of the world"; the metropolis of Lost Bayársha (hex 3412), surrounded by impenetrable jungles and occupied by a mutated human group which is slightly telepathic and thus able to recognise an intruder instantly no matter how clever his disguise — the Bayárshans kill or enslave male explorers and add any women to their breeding stock; the High Eyrie of Subadím the Sorcerer (hex 3024), from whence he set out to seek the Egg of the World, and where his creations still await his return; the secret temple of the Shadow God Ru'ungkáno (hex 2624), a place of sacrifices — and the hoarded wealth of aeons; the ever-ambient tower of Thómar the Wizard (hex 1907), in which his nonhuman Thúnru'u steward entertains travellers — and where immortal Thómar himself sometimes acts as host and makes his guests pay with quests or missions; the site of the earliest Shén city of Kgá-Rü (hex 0720), where all of this race's history is stored; the Squared Monolith of Kushi'il Isle (hex 0428), which sits in a noxious swamp and is said to be the gateway to many of the Demon Planes; and the remains of the City of the One Other (hex 0116), where the lords of the Latter Times sowed the earth with salt so that nothing might flourish there again. In addition, there are Underworlds below most of the modern cities: old Tsámra, Dlásh, Tsúpil Hlaya, Khéiris, Ssa'átis, Mu'úgalla, Malcháiran (from whence men say that the Petal Throne was brought to Tsolyánu long ago), and a score of others.

Map 2 is also rich in antiquity. It includes: the walled ruins of the Mad City of Du'ún (hex 6129), from which no explorer has ever emerged, at least in his present form; the submerged capital of the Nyaggá (hex 5532), which is accessible to swimmers when the waters of Lake Parunál are low; the empty husk of one of the Shunned Ones' cities (hex 5425), its dome fallen in and its strange buildings full of eddying sand; the Great Wall of the Desert of Sighs (hexes 4711-4713), possibly the remains of a *Sákbe* Road or a fortification built when the area formed the shore of the northern sea; the remnants of Hrikâ (hex 4502), constructed by the Pé Chói during the Latter Times; the hidden academy of Ksárul (hex 4332), in the mountains east of Thri'il; the Hauninngákte Monastery (hex 4227) and the Monastery of the Grey Cloak (hex 4204), both devoted to Thúmis, the Lord of Wisdom; the gloomy Temple of Sárku (hex 4013), filled with its undead servitors and storehouses of ancient artifacts and knowledge; the fallen towers of old Hmakuyál (hex 3708) where lives the demon called "The Beast Without A Tail," and where the sects of Hrü'ú and Ksárul maintain secret headquarters for the initiates of their Inner Doctrines; the eery strong-hold of the Old Hlâka (hex 3530), where no living Hlâka now dares to fly; the First Temple of Vimúhla (hex 3503), partially upon this Plane and partially upon some other; the city of Ngála (hex 2913), in which seductive Hrihayal comes to meet her demon lover; the alien walls of Ssuganár (hex 2831), the capital of the Ssú before mankind had come to Tékumel; the Fortress of the hero Hrúgga (hex 2713), mighty walls 15 m thick, vast towers of stone, and crumbled columned halls all slowly sinking into the marshes on the shore of the southern ocean; the drowned capital of Éngsvan hla Gánga (hexes 2015-2016), the most glorious city of the Golden Age, home now only to the fish and the denizens of the deep; and the perilous ruins of the Hlüss city of Ss-Rsă , as nearly as a human mouth can form the name, (hex 1802), said to hold the keys to more than one of Tékumel's mysteries, were anyone foolhardy enouth to land on the island. Again, there are Underworlds beneath most of the modern cities as well.

Map 3 contains fewer sites — or perhaps fewer are known, since so much of the northeast is forested, mountainous, and unexplored. Only the following are certain: the moldering halls and fallen obelisks of the two Mihálli cities (hexes 5032 and 3313); the Shaft Which Transfixes the World (hex 4206) on a lonely and unnamed peak in Jánnu; a strange surface labyrinth of windworn red sandstone near the city of Tkémar (hex 4121) in which many corridors lead to courtyards where gigantic human heads stand upon pedestals, blind-eyed and mouths agape in anger (or fear?); the caverns below Shiringgáyi's temple on its crag in the city of Retsúllu (hex 2930), which are said to house gigantic silent engines of some golden metal; and the Monastery of Mretten, "the Goddess Who Walks Upon the Sea," on Rusú Isle (hex 0620). Aside from these, the modern towns of Jéggeth, Nimóllu, and Pakála all have catacombs, tombs, and subterranean constructions, and the city of Tsa'avtúlgu is renowned for its underground shrine to Shiringgáyi (said to have belonged previously to some other, less pleasant deity), its pyramidal mausoleums which date to Engsvanyáli times, its high observatory towers, and the skill of its astronomers and astrologers.

Even less is known about map 4. Notable are: two ruined cities (hexes 5508 and 4803), which may be Mihálli, Ssú, or possibly something other; the Temple of the Eye of the World (hex 4805), a sprawling roofless maze of columns and platforms and altars carven all over with innumerable staring human eyes; and the city of Jgrésh (hex 2801), which possesses a sizeable underground labyrinth, and where many artifacts of the ages before the Time of Darkness are found. One should also mention the Crater of the Unstraightened City, where all places, times, and Planes are rumoured to mingle and be as one; the Walking Lake of eastern Rannálu, which changes its location from year to year (as much as 20 *Tsán*, some say), and where tribesmen report seeing the dim outlines of black walls and topless towers beneath its bubbling, sulphurous waters; and finally the unsubstantiated tales of an entire island covered with prehuman ruins somewhere near Drássa Isle in the far northeast (perhaps one of the little islets in hexes 5927, 5929, 5732, 5632-5633, or 5630). Of the modern cities, Jaekánta and Ssórmu are known to have extensive Underworlds, and there is also some sort of maze below the City of the Dead near Chichúvu.

1.425. The Tubeways

The planet-wide system of underground tubeways has been mentioned above. Most of these are inoperable, but here and there in the depths of the oldest Underworlds — or occasionally in remote regions on the surface — working vehicles may still be encountered.

Suspended at no gravity in the centre of a circular tunnel, these cars travel at great speeds through the planetary crust. A few important arteries were also driven directly through Tékumel's core and were then maintained by forcefields. The routes and destinations of each machine were programmed for it before the Time of Darkness, and these cannot be altered by even the most learned modern scholars: the languages of their builders are lost; their technology has been forgotten; and even were a manual of operations to be found, its diagrammes would be as unintelligible to a Tsolyáni as the instructions of an airplane would be to an ancient Roman.

Cars vary from small 5-passenger vehicles to very large machines which can hold 20-30 persons, plus a cargo. The littlest are egg-shaped ovoids, while the bigger varieties are cylindrical. The outer door opens to the pressure of a clearly marked stud. Within are passenger seats, a rear area for luggage, and a forward control panel. The latter contains the ten buttons which send the car on its pre-programmed destinations and also a vision screen showing what lies ahead. To the left and right of the control panel are further boards of dials, lights, and switches. These indicate the status of various systems and perform certain technical functions (e.g. turn on the lights within the car). Beyond, to the operator's left, are three smaller vision screens which — if they work — show other views around the vehicle. These screens can also be used to contact other stations along the car's route. The control areas of larger vehicles are more complex, and the biggest possess an upper deck for the operators, a middle deck for passengers, and a lower area for storage and cargo.

The most valuable contents of one of these cars are their steel tools, stored in one of the rear compartments. Some do contain the skeletons of their passengers and crew, but the most that can be gleaned from these is a quantity of buckles, buttons, and other pitiful mementoes. Weapons are rare, although other-planar-powered lights are fairly common. The circuits of many devices may have decayed over the centuries, however, and they may be more than a little dangerous to use. Cargoes can consist of almost anything: tinned food and delicacies, machine parts, chemicals — the whole gamut of products of technological civilisation.

The stations of the tubeway system were originally built on the surface or in underground areas below the cities of the ages before the Time of Darkness. Sedimentation, city-building, and the changes wrought by earthquakes, floods, and volcanic action have buried some of these far underground, while others are choked with rubble, earth, and vegetation. Most stations are easily recogniseable: a low building upon a platform, a single staircase leading up to a handsome metal door (sometimes sealed by corrosion), and signs in the thorny-looking angular script of the ancients. Inside, a central hallway leads past control rooms, freight bays, and facilities for the operators to the vehicle chamber. This has a large, round, tunnel mouth in its floor, and nearby there is a floor-plaque consisting of three glass slabs: one red, one yellow, and one blue. By stepping upon the red area a car is summoned (if one is not already standing ready); the yellow panel lights up when the car is on its way; and the blue plaque is illuminated when it arrives. If the red plaque is lit and no car is visible, the station is out of order. There is no way by which one can cancel a vehicle once it has been summoned.

When the passengers are inside, a button on the righthand panel must be pressed to close the door. The operator then touches one of the ten destination buttons to send it on its way. The car then rises, moves over to the centre of its tunnel, and accellerates to an incredible speed within seconds (not felt by the occupants because of an internal forcefield — if this is working). The vehicle cannot then be halted or its course changed until it reaches its destination.

The terminals of the system may lie anywhere upon Tékumel. Some journeys thus take only minutes, while others last for hours or even days. A few of the more interesting destinations are as follows: the vast, echoing, central "garages," where tubeway cars stand awaiting a summons which rarely comes, like rows of silvery eggs; the City of the Red-Tiled Roofs, a deserted metropolis on an island in the northwestern seas, inhabited only by the *Vriyágga* (a gigantic tentacled beast which rolls about on a pair of horny natural wheels — a curiosity brought to stock the zoological preserve of some early spacefarer) and the *Qu'úni* (a pale, translucent, shrimp-like aquatic species of similar origins); the automated robot city of the southern ocean, whither the soldiers of the space age were sent for "rest and relaxation" and where every physical desire may be freely satisfied — but from whence no one may depart without "authorisation from his unit commander," now unfortunately dead these last fifty millenia; the ice-temple far to the north of present-day Ghatón, said to contain the rich cache of one of the lords of the Latter Times; the huge undergound spaceport, sealed off from above by volcanic dust and partially filled with lava; the arsenals of the ancients, their enigmatic weapons decayed but still filled with live ammunition — and guarded by imperturbably strict robot sentries; the ruins of the city of Ayó, constructed during the Latter Times in the tangled forests of southern Tané and bathed in a permanent wash of deadly radiation; the mournful island of Bénre Sà on the other side of Tékumel, where the cities are filled with human bones, and the crystalloid Hokún ride out on their strange steeds to hunt men and beasts alike with lances of glass; the curious city of Dzóvath, tilted upon its side by the folding of the planet's crust, where ceilings and floors have become walls and vice-versa; and the ozone-smelling black chambers at Tékumel's core in which the mighty gravity engines still hammer in rhythm with the pulse of the planet. Only a few cars are programmed to traverse the complex network of tunnels and exchanges leading to the lands of the nonhuman Urunén, to the Plains of Glass, or to the human enclaves on the other side of Tékumel. Some stations, moreover lie in regions inhabited by the inimical races — pity the poor explorer who emerges from his car to see the twinkling blue lights, smell the redolence of cinnamon, and hear the high, sweet chiming of the Ssú! Indeed, one of these terminals is to be found below the citadel of Bássa, "King" of the Black Ssú. Still other stations are underwater, airless, collapsed, or filled with noxious gases. Although every car originally possessed safety devices to halt and return it automatically from a fallen tunnel, some of these mechanisms no longer function, and the consequences of hitting a collapsed passage at these vehicles' tremendous speeds can well be imagined.

1.426. Other Buildings

It is impossible to provide all the details of other types of edifices: the bridges, aqueducts, irrigation canals, harbours, etc. A word or two should be devoted nevertheless to two important categories of buildings: fortifications and administrative offices.

All of the Five Empires build well-organised military camps. As soon as a contingent has halted for the night, its accompanying engineers and slave labourers begin their tasks, and these are usually accomplished within a few hours. The quartermasters mark off areas for supplies, kitchens, latrines, and barracks; tents are erected; units are deputed as perimeter guards; and outer defensive ditches and palisades are constructed — all according to the precepts laid down in the ancient Bednálljan and Engsvanyáli military manuals. The Mu'ugalavyáni prefer a square plan for such an encampment, the Tsolyáni a square or rectangular one, the Livyáni a circular arrangement, and the Yán Koryáni a series of smaller camps strategically placed to provide mutual defense while forcing a foe to overwhelm each individually. The Salarvyáni are somewhat backward in this art: their camps tend to be irregular, poorly organised, and ill-equipped with proper latrines and water facilities.

All armies utilise fieldworks. Trenches and redoubts are quickly dug, and if time permits, these are made semi-permanent with rammed earth, logs, and bricks or stone torn from neighbouring buildings. Pits and traps are constructed in strategic areas, and bronze caltrops or spiked planks are set out to discourage organised assaults. A higher site is chosen for an observation-cum-command post, and this is defended with palisades or earthern walls.

Fortification styles differ from region and also historically from one period to another. The military architects of the Five Empires are thoroughly conversant with the various facets of siege warfare: enfilading fire and the placement of towers, ditches and moats, sapping and mining, artillery (ballistae, onagers, and trebuchets), crenellation, machicolation, drawbridges, portcullises, and much else. The Mu'ugalavyáni follow the later Engsvanyáli design: concentric rings of walls and towers around an open central plaza which contains undefended palaces and other buildings. The cities of northwestern Tsolyánu are built along much the same lines: e.g. Khirgár and Chéne Hó. Yán Koryáni fortresses differ only in that their centres are occupied by separately bridged and moated citadels built upon a knoll. Sometimes these are just huge round or polygonal towers, but occasionally they possess their own outworks as well. Although concentric ring fortresses do occur in southern Tsolyánu (e.g. the legion fortress at Sokátis), the older Bednálljan model is more frequent there. This comprises a series of irregular wards and baileys which lead up to the summit of a hill or out onto a promontory. This latter strong point is then occupied by a rectangular, ponderous donjon, its roof tiled and ornately gabled, high out of reach for the incendiary missiles of the foe. A good example of this style is Tumíssa. The military architecture of western Salarvyá is similar, though frequently cramped by being built in the midst of a crowded walled city. Sieges are rather rare in eastern Salarvyá, and the fine points of siege warfare are less needed. Citadels there are low and massive, therefore, with sloping walls and squat, domed keeps. In Livyánu each of the temples of the Shadow Gods is a fortress by itself; there are no "secular" constructions. As was said in Sec. 1.421, these shrines are erected upon solid, truncated pyramids which make mining next to impossible. In spite of their essentially religious purpose, the Livyáni architects crenellate their temples' parapets and consider the needs of enfilading fire and internal defense most carefully. The fortifications of the smaller nations have been briefly noted in Sec. 1.421.

Administrative buildings are quite different, except in Salarvyá where all governmental activity is done within the ruler's citadel. The bureaucracies of the other four Empires are separately housed. A village may have nothing more than a single hall, perhaps part of some clanhouse. Towns exhibit larger edifices of varying sizes and complexities. In cities one encounters whole districts of rambling

palace-like structures, some quite beautiful. These last contain many halls, corridors, courtyards, and galleries. Though they may be walled, they are rarely fortified, and one passes through a lightly guarded gate into an outer plaza where there may be gardens in which petitioners may squat or stroll while awaiting the dispostion of their business. Here there are food vendors, sellers of beverages, petition-writers for the illiterate, chamberlains, guides, guards, servants, minor bureaucrats, and officious persons who offer to use their "intimate friendships" with the functionaries within for a fee.

Once a client has passed through this outer courtyard, he is directed into the hall or colonnade most relevant to his case. Here he is confronted by ascending tiers of daises which rise up toward the high, shadowy ceilings in a haze of lamp smoke and the fragrance of sealing wax. Some of these daises are interconnected by little staircases or even by wooden bridges. Again this illustrates these peoples' love of visual display: an analysis of the organisation of these daises and their connections will at once provide a "flow-chart" for the chain of command. The lowest daises are filled with scribes, seated crosslegged upon once-white mats, surrounded by inkpots, pens, and heaps of files and scrolls — and also by moisture-beaded waterjugs, mugs for beer or *Chumétl*, plates of half-eaten food, and a thousand other items. The client first hands his petition to one of these scribes, and it is then passed up to the appropriate middle-level official on the tiers above. Difficult or important matters wend their way up this human pyramid, across one of the little bridges, and eventually into the hands of some senior bureau chief — who then makes his decision, scribbles on the document, and sends it on its laborious way back down again. Fees (and "gifts") change hands, and at last the supplicant is free to leave this busy, noisy, clamouring hall for the hot sunlight outside once more.

Important personages rarely have to face this maelstrom of noise and humanity, of course. Nobles, senior priests, military officers, ranking clansmen, administrators, influential foreigners, and other "persons of class" may pass through side entrances into smaller chambers. These, too, are filled with scribes and functionaries, but they are nevertheless far more bearable than the crowded common halls outside. Indeed, if a client of truly high station appears — or if a person comes with a matter of the utmost urgency and interest — he may be conducted into the private apartments of the Senior Prefect of the bureau, there to be luxuriously wined and dined while discussing his business.

1.500. Family, Lineage and Clan

1.510. KINSHIP STRUCTURES

The family systems of the Five Empires differ from one another only in minor details. All are descended from earlier Bednálljan and Engsvanyáli models, and these have not changed much over the centuries.

Actual physical parentage does not much matter. Not only is one's genetic father a "father," but one's father's brothers, and one's mother's sisters' husbands are one's "fathers" as well. One's mother, her sisters, and one's father's brothers' wives are all similarly one's "mothers." All of the children of these persons are one's "brothers" and "sisters."

One's mother's brothers and one's father's sisters' husbands are one's "uncles," and one's father's sisters and one's mother's brothers' wives are one's "aunts." Their offspring are one's "cousins."

An individual may thus have several "clan-fathers" and "clan-mothers," as well as a large number of "brothers" and "sisters" who do not share the same genetic parentage. Within the clanhouse a child may be brought up by this set of "parents" or that, and although one does indeed usually know one's genetic parents, this is not given any great importance. The peoples of the Five Empires claim that this makes for a close-knit familial relationship, provides more parental care and affection for the children, and leaves some adults free of child-rearing and able to go about other affairs.

A number of minor ethnic groups do not follow the foregoing model. The N'lúss, the Ghatóni, the Lorún of northern Yán Kór, and the various states of the far northeast (from Chayákku and Jánnu over through Nuru'ún but excluding Kilalámmu and Mihállu, which do adhere to the Engsvanyáli pattern) are all conscious of their genetic parents and have separate kinship terms for each type of "uncle," "aunt," etc. The N'lúss and the Ghatóni are strongly father-oriented, and their languages possess special honorific pronouns and verb forms to be used when speaking of one's father. The islanders of Tsolêi are very different: they practice a form of loose and rather casual group-marriage, and any adult member of the group may serve as a temporary parent. Younger children are often cared for by older adolescents, and the peer-group assumes great importance. Indeed, it is one's place of residence which is central to the Tsolêini world-view and not one's family. This is reflected in their personal names: e.g. "Vrú of the Red Rock House," "Bêi of the High Walls," "Nsô of Silver Bay Beach," etc. Conversely, the tribes of M'mórcha and Nmartúsha exhibit incredibly complex kinship systems and have individual terms for relatives so distant that they might not even be considered members of the extended family in other lands. The nomads of Rannálu are probably the most interesting of all: they do not recognise genetic fatherhood in any way. One's only parent is one's mother; there is no connection between sexual intercourse and conception; and children are created through the magical intervention of the gods! There is no parental bond, thus, in a Rannálan marriage, and both men and women drift into or out of these unions purely on the basis of physical attraction. Children are then brought up by the mother, her sisters, and any current menfolk in the group.

Only a few of the nonhuman races have identifiable human-like family structures. The closest are the Hláka and the Swamp Folk, both of whom are monogamous, and who care for their young until they are able to establish families of their own. The Urunén also have strongly distinguished family patterns, but this race produces a preponderance of females, and Urunén unions are thus largely polygamous.

The Pygmy Folk, the Pé Chói, and the Shén likewise have clearly delineated familes, but these are complicated by the existence of a "third sex." In the case of the Pygmy Folk, this is an hermaphroditic individual, indistinguishable from a female except for its sexual organs, who participates in the family's sex life with both of the other partners but who produces no offspring of its own.

Pé Chói males are a gleaming black, and their females are correspondingly a pure white. Their third sex consists of a neuter: a male or female who temporarily or permanently ceases all sexual activity and undergoes certain other minor physical changes as well. The reasons for this are unknown, and it can apparently happen to any individual at any time. Neuters continue to live in their households and participate in all activities — except sex. Curiously enough, some Pé Chói communities display a different pattern: only one female remains fertile and serves as a sort of "village mother"; the males act as her consorts; and all other females become neuters. Again, the causes for this are not understood, although some Pé Chói theorise that this may represent a different stage of the race's evolutionary development.

A Shén family consists of a (usually) monogamous union of one male and one female. A third sex, the "egg-fertiliser," is needed to activate the eggs produced by this pair, however. These individuals are slightly smaller, a little more greyish than the usual black, but otherwise hard to tell from a male. Egg-fertilisers do not belong to any one family and move from couple to couple as needed. The most important unit of Shén society is not the family, however, but rather the "egg-group": a lineage of individuals all descended from the same ancestors. Most offspring are genetically born into their parents' egg-group, but occasionally a clutch of eggs produces infants who do not "smell right" (the Shén word is untranslatable). Most of these are killed and eaten by their mothers, but if they manage to escape, they may form the nucleus of another egg-group. (This is the origin of the many small Shén states to the north of Shényu: each consists of one or more allied egg-groups). Some egg-groups are mutually friendly or neutral, but others are genetically hostile to one another and can never cooperate or interact: "The smell is too wrong." During the mating season, which lasts about a month during the hottest part of the year, Shén males from unfriendly egg-groups will fight on sight if there is a female with either party (and often even if there is not). A Shén does this instinctively, using only his teeth, claws, and his great knobbed tail. Needless to say, this complicates matters for those human nations which employ these powerful reptiles as mercenaries, and legions made up of different egg-groups must be posted far from one another.

The other friendly races lack anything resembling the human family. The Tinalíya posses three sexes again: males, females, and a disproportionately large number of neuter worker-fighters. These live in communal dens, as was stated in Sec. 1.421. The Páchi Léi reproduce by budding: at certain times during a four-year cycle each individual exudes spore-like spermatozoa which fertilise the "egg-buds" on the bodies of others. The latter soon become pod-like extrusions, and each of these bursts open to release a viable infant in about 250 days. The Páchi Léi have no families as such, although they do tend to live in small groupings of between two and eight individuals. The Ahoggyá are the strangest of all. Nothing much is known of their reproduction system, although it is said that they have eight sexes. The interrelationships of these are a source of puzzlement (and considerable humour) to their human colleagues.

The Hlutrgú, Hlüss, and Ssú all likewise exhibit three sexes. The Hlutrgú have a great preponderancy of males, a small percentage of female spawners, and a very few asexual "leaders," whose role is not clear. The Hlüss and the Ssú are similar to one another: both have a small number of males, very few females, and a majority of neuter worker-fighters. The Mihálli are said to be completely hermaphroditic, the same individual functioning as a male at one time and as an infant-producing female at another. Nothing whatsoever is known of the sexes or groupings of the Shunned Ones.

1.520. THE STATUS OF WOMEN

In four of the five Empires (Tsolyánu, Mu'ugalavyá, Salarvyá, and Livyánu) women are handicapped by male-oriented traditions. A "good clan-girl" remains obedient to her clan's wishes, marrying whomever and whenever the elders choose, performing the duties of wife and mother, and sharing the housework and the child-rearing with her clan-sisters. In return, the clan protects her completely (e.g. a clanswoman cannot be sued, and any legal action involving her must be directed against her clan instead); it houses and feeds her; it provides a suitable environment for her children; and it surrounds her from birth to death with an atmosphere of familial love, sharing, and respect. Clanswomen also share in the work of their menfolk: peasant women labour in the fields alongside their sons and husbands; townswomen perform many of the tasks of their clans' crafts or professions; and only highborn noble ladies are likely to suffer from inactivity and boredom. Even these last may find outlets through scholarship, religion, literature, the arts, certain sports, and other pursuits — and in this they are not too different from many of their aristocractic male counterparts.

All four of these societies do provide a means for women to participate more fully in spheres which are traditionally the province of the male. This is possible through the institution of the *Aridani* (lit. "independent"). A female has only to declare before witnesses that she has become an *Aridáni* in order to receive all of the perquisites of a man. She is then "a person in the eyes of the law." Although an *Aridáni* woman still belongs to her clan, it has no more control over her than it does over its masculine members, and she may participate in its affairs just as her male relatives do. She may own property, marry as she pleases (indeed, more than one husband — a polyandrous union — if she desires), join a priesthood or a military organisation, enter into business on her own, be appointed to a government post, receive an equal share of an inheritance, and be legally responsible for her own decisions. *Aridáni* status is not without its drawbacks, of course. An *Aridáni* woman is not automatically protected by her clan, and she may be sued or challenged. If she joins an army, she may have to fight in battle. If she commits a crime, she is liable to the same drastic penalties imposed upon men. It is also true that many of the more traditional men will not marry an *Aridáni* woman, preferring the presumedly greater domesticity of the "good clan-girl." This status does not appeal to every woman, therefore, and it is estimated that only 15-20 percent of the female population is *Aridáni*. Becoming an *Aridáni* is not an irrevocable step, moreover; some women adopt this role for a few years during late adolescence but give it up (again by another public declaration) in later life.

Aridani status is commonest in Tsolyánu, less frequent in Mu'ugalavyá and Livyánu, and rather uncommon in Salarvyá, where such a woman is looked upon as something of an eccentric. In Yán Kór, Saá Allaqí, and parts of Milumanayá there is no need for this legal institution. The matriarchal traditions of the north are strong: all property is inherited through the female line; marriages are made by the senior women of the clan (and the menfolk have only a little to say in the matter); and clan councils have a higher proportion of women than men. Yán Koryáni women regularly serve in the army alongside their menfolk, and one might note such units as the *Gurék* (Legion) of Dáiche Hetrudákte; this regiment recruits only married couples, and if one partner is slain or incapacitated, the other must remarry at once or leave the legion! The adolescent children of these male and female soldiers also serve as light infantry skirmishers — but this is true of many other Yan Koryáni legions as well.

Male-female equality exists in varying degrees in Tsolái, Háida Pakála, and in Mihállu. In Rannálu the men rule all village-external matters: e.g. war, the hunt, etc. Women, on the other hand, control the policies and decisions of the village. The nomads of the Desert of Sighs of Milumanayá display complete male-female parity as well, but this extends also to children — anyone able to speak at a tribal meeting — and these fanatically democratic people solemnly count every vote before taking any action. ("This," say the Tsolyani, "is the reason why the Milumanayáni never get anything done!")

Total male dominance is found in Ghatón, where women are owned as chattels and are bartered about much like a tunic or a pair of boots. The N'lüss, the tribes of M'mórcha and Nmartúsha, and the peoples of the far northeast also favour the male at the expense of the female, treating women much like the "good clan-girl" of Tsolyánu and the south.

Of the nonhuman species, the Pé Chói, the Hláka, and the Shén are dominated by males; the Pygmy Folk and the Urunén are female-oriented; and the Swamp Folk practice near-equality but do have a number of sex-specific tasks and roles. The very alienness of the remaining races renders any discussion of the status of their sexes either irrelevant or impossible.

1.530. SEX AND MARRIAGE

Women are able to avoid unwanted pregnancies through a cheap and easily available means of contraception: the chewing of the root of the ubiquitous *Lisútl* plant. The nonhumans have their methods as well — all except the Hlutrgú, who must rid themselves of surplus offspring either by sending them off to fight their human neighbours, or by putting them out to sea in a flotilla of little reed rafts, apparently an instinctive attempt to found new colonies. Only a few of these latter ever reach land again — Tékumel's oceans tend to be filled with large, numerous, and voracious predators to whom even a rubbery Hlutrgú tastes good!

Premarital sexual activity is considered normal by most of the human cultures of the continent. The only "Puritans" are the Ghatóni, who preach continence but actually permit great liberties to a man while slaying an erring female out of hand. Sex holds no connotations of "sin." Male celibacy is practically unknown, and only two or three sects require abstinence from their priestesses: e.g. the virgin clergywomen of Dilinála, the Cohort of Avánthe. Indeed, sexual rituals play an important part in the temples of such deities as Avánthe herself, Dlamélish, Hrihávyal, Shiringgáyi of Salarvyá, and certain of the Livyáni Shadow Gods. Some of these festivities would make a Roman orgy appear tame by comparison. Attitudes towards prostitution were mentioned in Sec. 1.422.

Four of the five great Empires are also tolerant of other sexual life-styles. Homosexuality and bisexuality are accepted as an individual's personal choice everywhere but in Yán Kór and Saá Allaqí, where they are said to be "bad for the society" and hence topics for censure and ridicule. The Tsolyáni, who love to put things into neatly visible categories, even have army legions composed solely of homosexuals: e.g. the Legion of Káikama (36th Imperial Medium Infantry), which contains both male and female homosexuals; the Legion of Lady Mríssa (19th Imperial Medium Infantry), made up of *Aridáni* Lesbian women; and the Legion of the Sapphire Kirtle (12th Imperial Light Infantry), whose members are virgins dedicated to Dilinála or Avánthe and who are mostly also Lesbians. Other forms of sexuality have their places as well. Sadomasochism and other practices are found in the rituals of Dlamélish, Hrihávyal, Chiténg (the Cohort of Vimúhla), and in the temples of one or two of the Shadow Gods of Livyánu, for instance, and it is rumoured that some of the secret rites of Sárku involve necrophilia. None of this need concern those who are not so inclined,

and the only thing which is not tolerated is intolerance itself.

These cultures also see nothing "shameful" or "sinful" about nudity. The body is considered to be a thing of beauty in the Five Empires, and both sexes wear whatever they think may enhance its appeal. Slave, peasants, and the lower classes don only such garments as are needed for protection from the sun or from the hazards of their crafts. The most important function of clothing, however, is neither protection nor "as a cloak for one's nakedness": costume serves as the visible insignia of the wearer's social class, religion, clan, nationality, regional provenience, and much more. A Tsolyáni may go about totally nude at home or in the company of informal friends, but outside he or she will wear those garments and accessories which indicate membership in the appropriate social groups.

Some of the peripheral societies do not subscribe to the mores of the Five Empires, of course. The N'lüss — both male and female — rarely cover their torsos but invariably wear a waist-to-knee kilt, and their womenfolk also cover their legs with leggings or boots. The Ghatóni conceal their bodies under several layers of complex garments, and it is said that they even sleep fully clothed — a custom abhorrent to the Tsolyáni. Conversely, the peoples of M'mórcha and Nmartüsha rarely wear any clothing, but they consider themselves naked without a coating of intricate designs painted in the colours of their tribes. The inhabitants of Hlíkku in Yán Kór allow no raiment of any kind within their city (except for golden earrings, which they say their Mad God has commanded them to wear at all times), but when they go abroad they must wrap themselves in voluminous desert cloaks of leather. The peoples of the states of the far northeast are partial to fuller costumes; their womenfolk wear light veils before strangers and look with disdain and pity upon their "naked southern sisters." — And so on through an almost infinite variety of fashions, styles, and associated mores.

Most of the nonhuman species have never shared mankind's penchant for apparel, being satisfied with belts, baldrics, and harnesses for tools and weapons. The Pé Chói, the Swamp Folk, and to a lesser extent the Páchi Léi copy human costumes while residing in the cities of mankind, and one thus sees members of these races attired in kilts, vests, capes, and the whole gamut of man's sartorial foibles. The Pygmy Folk and the Tinalíya adorn themselves with painted designs. The Pé Chói incise their chitin with traceries of lines and fill these with lacquer. The Shén, too lacquer their scales with bright colours. The Mihálli, the Urunén, and the Shunned Ones, however, do wear clothing of various sorts. The H!üss cover their carapaces with gems and bits of metal set in a cement secreted by their bodies (Sec. 1.413.). It must be emphasised, however, that none of these customs has anything to do with attitudes related to sex.

Throughout the Five Empires marriage is a social and legal contract. It is used to link two families, two lineages within a clan, or even two clans together and only incidentally may involve "love" or even "marital bliss." In the south marriages are arranged by the male elders of the clan, while in the north it is the old women who act as matchmakers. The protagonists themselves have little to say about it, although a bride or a groom may voice any strenuous objections and pray that his or her elders will agree. Betrothals are often finalised before the nuptial pair is five years old — and in some cases even before they are born. If a prospective groom dies in childhood or refuses the match, his clan may offer another candidate in his place. The same is true of the girl who foils her clan's plans by becoming an *Aridáni*. Needless to say, social pressure is strong, and it is easier to give in than to fight. Many such arranged marriages are thus consummated. To be unmarried and childless by age 30 is something of an oddity and an embarrassment, although, interestingly enough, one has only to declare oneself a homosexual (or join the Temple of Dilinála if one is female) in order to stop all peer pressure. Alternative life-styles and unusual behavior can be tolerated, as said above, as long as the categories and their boundaries are made meticulously sharp and clear.

An *Aridáni* woman may reject a match proposed for her by her kinsmen. She may then take a husband of her choice, provided either that his clan is willing or that he himself is independent enough to stand on his own feet. Even so, clan pressure is powerful, and an *Aridáni* may still marry her pre-arranged mate "just to keep the family happy." If the match proves incompatible, she can always divorce him later.

Marriage does not demand constant togetherness and "total commitment" by any means. In the great clanhouses males tend to socialise with males, and women with women. Married men (and *Aridáni* women) perform their conjugal duties, spend some time with their families, go to work, and then relax with peers of their choice. A "good clan-girl" who is temperamentally suited to the housewifely role need never be lonely; she is surrounded by her clan-sisters, children, and other kinsmen of both sexes. The clanhouse provides her with companionship and support, just as it does for the young, for the aged, and for members who are weak or otherwise incapable of functioning in the world outside. The attitude of the "good clan-girl" is exemplified by Nalitha, one of the protagonists of the Tsolyáni tale of "The Four Flowers of the Stream"; she says, "Let my husband be whatever he may be, so long as he is not a drunkard and does not stink. It is his clan which concerns me, for it is with his mothers, sisters, aunts, and other kinfolk that my children and I must live out our lives."

Polygamy carries high prestige in the Five Empires. A well-to-do youth may first marry the bride arranged for him in childhood by his clan, then another wife who is a "good match" politically and socially, then another of a lower clan to whom he has taken a fancy, and so on to the limits of his budget and his stamina. As he grows wealthier, he may purchase slave concubines, and in addition he may also form temporary liaisons with *Aridáni* colleagues, unmarried clan-girls, and courtesans. The larger his entourage, the greater his influence and standing.

An *Aridáni* woman may have difficulty in finding husbands of high status, but if she is of good clan, has political or social prestige, is cultured and beautiful, or is rich (and this is the *sine qua non*), she should face no real problem. She may also marry husbands of lower clan status (this benefits them socially and gives their clans more repute), and she, too, may surround herself with male consorts and slaves.

Some jealousy exists between co-wives or co-husbands, of course, but this is alleviated by the overall attitude: a total commitment to any one person for life is just not basic to the culture. An affair between two unmarried people, a man and an unmarried clan-girl, a man and an *Aridáni*, or between either of the latter two and a slave or courtesan is hardly more than table-gossip. Sexual fidelity is demanded only of the married clanswoman. If she commits adultery and her husband objects (and there are some who would wink at an affair between a wife and a colleague of equal or superior status), he may challenge the adulterer to a duel. More commonly he may ask for financial compensation (Tsolyani: *Shámtla*). The husband of an *Aridáni* has the same right to challenge his wife's lover, but he cannot claim *Shámtla*. An *Aridáni* woman may similarly challenge a husband's *Aridáni* mistress, but if the lady-friend is not *Aridáni* (i.e. only a clanswoman), the wife must content herself with getting the mistress' clan to take action. An affair with another person's slave is again cause for the payment of *Shámtla*, however. The fact is that sexual fidelity is not really that important. Unless it has been specifically included in the marriage contract, it cannot be required of a man or an *Aridáni* woman. The only person who has no legal recourse is the clanswoman whose husband has strayed, and even she can usually get the clan to intervene if she is being denied her conjugal rights or if her husband fails to support her or mistreats her. In extreme cases where a husband has acted "ignobly" (Sec. 1.370), a wronged wife may even resort to one of the assassins' clans (Sec. 1.422) and have the miscreant soundly thrashed (having him killed is very rare). In fact, however, all of these expedients are quite uncommon. The prevalent attitude is: "Observe the formalities and the letter of the law — then do as you please."

Marriage carries religious connotations only in Livyánu, where nearly everything occurs under the baleful gaze of the Shadow Gods. In other lands a priest or priestess may be asked to bless the match, but this is only incidental. The wedding itself consists of a feast and a public declaration, plus innumerable minor customs which differ from place to place and class to class. Since marriage is only a legal contract, it can be dissolved with relative ease, and divorce is common — particularly amongst the upper classes. In the north a man must pay a bride-price to the girl's clan, and if there is a divorce this has to be returned. Throughout the south the reverse is true: a girl

brings a dowry to her husband's clan, and this is repaid if the marriage is terminated. The bride's clan in the north and the husband's in the south are responsible for the costs of the wedding and also provide gifts to the prospective spouse and his or her relations.

Marriage usually takes place within the clan but across lineage boundaries (see below). Unions between two clans are also found, however. A beautiful girl of lower clan status may be wed to a boy of a higher clan, particularly if she is to be a second, third, etc. wife, since this gives her a better life and increased prestige, and in the patriarchal south her children will belong to the boy's clan and lineage — a step up. Conversely, it is difficult for a youth of a lower clan to marry a bride from a higher one. This is possible only when the marriage is a true "love match," and both clans are willing — or when the bride is too ugly or shrewish to find a husband within her own group.

In the south children belong to the father's clan, as just said, but in the north they take the mother's lineage and clan-name. The status of the offspring of a marriage between a man and an *Aridáni* woman must be settled before the wedding and written into the marriage contract. There is no stigma attached to an illegitimate child, moreover; such children belong to the father's clan in the south and to the mother's in the north (and also, strangely enough, in Salarvya). The children of an owner and a slave remain legally slaves unless the owner wishes to free them and adopt them into his or her clan.

A bride and groom who dwelt in the same clanhouse before marriage continue to live there afterwards. If they come from two houses of the same clan, or from two different clans, then one must go to reside with the other. In the patrilocal south the bride is brought by her kinsmen in an elaborate procession to the groom's clanhouse, while in the north it is the groom who goes to live with his wife. It is rare for a couple to set up indepedent housekeeping. This is done only when the pair moves to a city in which neither's clan has a house, or when there is family enmity or tension involved. In the matrilocal north a boy may take his choice between the clanhouses of his various wives, and he usually chooses the most prestigious — and most compatible — as his main residence. His other wives may then come to live with him, or they may remain in their own clanhouses and demand that he spend a portion of his time there with them.

Amongst the smaller nations, Jánnu, Kilalámmu, and Mihállu follow the general patterns of the northerners of the Five Empires. The Lorún, Pijenáni, Saa Allaqiyáni, Mílumanayáni, the tribes of Rannálu, the Pygmy Folk, and the Urunén are also matriarchal and matrilocal. The N'lúss, most of the states of the far northeast, the Pé Chói, the Shén, and the Swamp Folk are all patriarchal and patrilocal. The peoples of Tsolái, M'mórcha, Nmartúsha, and Háida Pakála display both patterns and are indifferent to a nuptial pair's place of residence. The Hláka never marry outside their own eyrie, and within this they are strongly male-oriented. The Ghatóni have no concept of marriage; their nearest equivalent is *Mzúbsesh*, which denotes something like "transfer of valuable property." A girl obtained through *Mzúbsesh* is taken to live within her husband's clanhouse with little ceremony, and there she remains for the rest of her life. The idea of marriage is alien and hence irrelevant to the remaining nonhuman species.

1.540. LINEAGE

Within the Five Empires families are grouped into "lineages": extended bloodlines derived from a common ancestor, invariably some ancient leader, hero, or legendary personality. A few clans (e.g. the proud Vríddi of Fasíltum) have only one lineage, while most possess anywhere from a dozen to several hundred. A clanhouse may contain a single family of a given lineage, or there may be over a score of households of the same lineage-name, all intricately interrelated.

It is considered good to marry across lineage boundaries but within the same clan. Marriages within a lineage (and indeed within the incestuous degrees: brother-sister, father-daughter, etc.) are occasionally found, due to special circumstances. Marriage between two clans is thought to be less good than inter-lineage unions within the same clan. A first marriage is thus normally of the inter-lineage type, and only later will a man or an *Aridáni* woman take further mates from other clans, as described in Sec. 1.530.

In four of the Five Empires the lineage-name is added directly as a surname to the individual's personal name: e.g. the Yán Koryáni nobleman Zhú Kriyór bears the personal name Zhú (given to him at birth by his clan-mothers) and the lineage-name of Kriyór, one of the great governors of the north during the Engsvanyáli dynasty. In Tsolyánu, however, the lineage-name is prefixed with *hi-* "of" (much like the German *von*): e.g. Kalusú hiViridáme consists of the common woman's name Kalusú, plus "of-Viridáme" — Viridáme being one of the followers of Ksárul at the mythical Battle of Dormorón Plain. Slaves and members of the lowest clans have no lineage-names, of course, but as these move up in social status they may be adopted — or made up.

In the north one sometimes encounters persons with two lineage-names: e.g. Sí Zíris Qáya, i.e. Sí, who traces her descent back matrilineally to two important chieftainesses of the Lorún: Zíris and Qáya.

Lineages are unknown, strictly speaking, outside of the Five Empires. The N'lúss employ only a personal name but can add their father's name or that of the band to which they belong: e.g. Byókt GriMnérr (Byókt, son of Mnérr) or Byókt VagMnérr (Byókt, of the Band of Mnérr). The Ghatóni simply add the father's personal name to their own: e.g. Chgá Njú (Chgá, (son of) Njú). The peoples of the far northeast possess the personal name by that of the town or village in which they live: e.g. Míu Shirgrázai (Míu of (the town of) Shigráz). A similar usage is found in Háida Pakála. The jungle dwellers of M'mórcha and Nmartúsha have no surnames but may append the name of their tribe: e.g. Dóri Konilání (Dóri (of the sub-tribe of) Konilání). The nomads of Rannálu begin with the tribal name, then give the name of the individuals's mother, and end with the personal name, all in a long genitive construction: e.g. Vúr Khúzir Júrshu (i.e. Khúzi's (boy) Júrshu of (the tribe of) Vú). The naming customs of the islanders of Tsolái were mentioned in Sec. 1.510.)

Nonhuman names are varied and complex. The Shén use either a personal name alone, or else this plus the appellation of their egg-group: e.g. Mrgág Ss-shrsá (Mrgág (of the egg-group) Ss-shrsá). The Páchi Léi have no real personal names but call themselves after the forest tree-house in which they were born: e.g. Ffsá Brúgshmú (as nearly as can be rendered phonetically — meaning something like "One-of-the-Upper-House High-Bole-Tree"). The Pé Chói prefer rather poetic names in their clacking, clattering language: e.g. Tk-étk-dsà (lit. "Green-Timber-like-Warrior"). Hláka personal names are also fanciful and sometimes melodious and humourous: e.g. Iwáu Ae-ayá (lit. "One-Whose-Flight-Is-Higher-Than-the-Sun"). Tinalíya names efficiently indicate the owner's sex, function, place of residence, and some salient personal trait: e.g. Tí Sá Qó (lit. "Neuter-Warrior Dark-Speckled-One-of-the-Place of Qó"). The Urunén employ only a personal name; these are traditional and have no meanings: e.g. Aiché. The names of the Pygmy Folk, Swamp Folk, and the Ahoggyá are both untranslatable and unpronounceable. (Indeed, the Tsolyáni say that Ahoggyá names sound like sewage gurgling down a drain!) The practices of the inimical races, the Mihálli, etc. are unknown.

1.550. CLAN

As has been adumbrated previously, the most important social unit in the Five Empires is neither the basic family nor the lineage but rather the clan. To know an individual's clan is to have a good idea of his class status, his profession, his provenience, sometimes his religion, and even his likely political leanings. Clan activities are central to most people's lives, and only the most peripheral persons — itinerant wanderers, pariahs, eccentrics, etc. — can or would wish to exist without being a member of a clan. To be totally clanless (Tsolyani: *Nakomé*) is to be helpless and without trustworthy friends or legal recourse. One of the most deadly insults one can utter, therefore, is to call another person *"Nakomé."*

Clans provide innumerable services and benefits to their members. A man expects his clan to feed him and his family from birth to death; it will house him at no cost in any city in which it has a clanhouse; it will care for his family if he travels, becomes incapacitated, or dies; it will arrange for his marriage and those of his children; it will grant him sanctuary if he has not broken the law (or, in unusual cases, even if he has), protect him from unwarranted arrest, mediate with any accuser, defend him in court, and pay financial compensation (*Shámtla*; cf. Sec. 1.530) to anyone he has wronged; it will loan him items from the clan stores (e.g. weapons), invest funds in his projects, if it thinks these to be appropriate and profitable, and hold his

possessions in safekeeping while he is away; it will issue him letters of credit which he can cash at its clanhouses in other cities or even abroad through its reciprocal connections; it will use its influence on his behalf (e.g. to obtain a post or a promotion for him); and it will see to a host of further matters which would otherwise require him to expend time, effort, and money. The clan will do the same for an *Aridáni* woman member, and for a non-*Aridáni* clanswoman it will provide lifelong security and care.

In return, the clan demands the cooperation and support of its members, obedience to its decisions and counsel (within reason), and a monetary contribution averaging about 10 percent of a member's monthly gross income. In emergencies the clan may require still greater sacrifices. Wealthy members are expected to add occasional large gifts and endowments, aid indigent fellow clansmen and clanswomen, and find ways of advancing the clan's causes in the social and political spheres.

Clan membership is normally determined by birth. A foreigner who displays good prospects may be invited to join a clan, however. The lower clans are often eager to acquire "new blood," the medium clans less so, and the old aristocratic clans are practically impossible to join except in very unusual circumstances. It costs between 1,000 and 6,000 *Káitars* to join one of the very low or low-ranking professional clans in Tsolyánu (25 percent more in Mu'ugalavyá and perhaps 10 percent less elsewhere). Initiation into a medium-level clan requires from 7,000 to 12,000 *Káitars*, and the fee for membership in a high clan ranges between 25,000 to 45,000 *Káitars* — if the opportunity ever presents itself! No amount of money will bring an invitation to join a noble clan (such as the Clan of Sea Blue, Golden Sunburst, or the Vríddi), and only the sponsorship — or direct command — of an Imperial Prince will cause these doors to open. The Tlakotáni clan is permanently and unalterably closed to all outsiders.

Changing from one clan to another costs about half again as much as the amounts given above. This is due to the fact that one must compensate the clan one is leaving in addition to paying the membership fee of the clan one is joining.

A foreigner is clanless, of course, although some clans do extend beyond national boundaries: e.g. the Vimúhla-worshipping clans of the west, such as Red Sword, Red Sun, and Red Mountain, all of which have branches in Mu'ugalavyá. A person who decides to reside permanently abroad soon finds that his clan status in his homeland is only slightly useful in his new surroundings. The clans function like a trade union's "closed shop": a Mu'ugalavyáni smith who moves to Tsolyánu is only allowed to practice his craft if he joins the appropriate Tsolyáni smithing clan. Previous membership in a good Mu'ugalavyáni smithing clan is helpful, naturally, since the clans of different lands are well aware of one another's qualifications. A clanless smith (or one who comes from a place so distant that its clans are unknown to their local counterparts) will find that joining a Tsolyáni smithing clan is more difficult: he will probably have to demonstrate his skill to his prospective clan-brothers' satisfaction, and he will be charged a higher initiation fee because he comes with little or no prestige.

Another factor in accepting a foreign member is religion: e.g. a Salarvyáni worshipper of Shiringgáyi is likely to be invited to join a Tsolyáni clan which contains a high percentage of devotees of Avánthe and/or Dlamélish. Joining a Sárku-oriented clan will be almost impossible for him, however, no matter how good he may be professionally.

Clan governance is performed by a council consisting of the eldest and most highly respected members of the local clanhouse. One of these persons is elected as Chief Elder (or perhaps his lineage is traditionally charged with this duty), and he then acts as spokesman to the government, to other clans, and also to the representatives of other clanhouses at the infrequent "grand councils" of the clan. Each clanhouse is semi-autonomous and pursues its own local policies. Only if there is an inter-clanhouse dispute or a major question of policy affecting the body as a whole will a "grand council" be summoned.

Clan names are based upon some ancient totem: an object, an animal, an ancestor, or even an historical or mythological event. The majority of Tsolyánu's present 500 major clans and over 1,000 minor ones developed during Engsvanyáli times, although a few date back to the Bednálljans and even the Dragon Warriors, while others were created during the Second Imperium. A new clan may arise because of some quarrel or split between the factions of an old one, or because of other political, religious, or economic factors. Only rarely can a charismatic individual found a new clan, and it must then go through a long period of being considered a parvenu before it achieves acceptance. It is far easier for a clan to become extinct. War, famine, plague, etc. may decimate its membership, or economic forces may cause it to amalgamate with another more powerful clan. A chain of misfortunes may cause a clan to gain the reputation of being unlucky or accursed, and then its members desert it in droves. A case in point is the old Engsvanyáli Clan of the Stone Hill, once a prosperous carters' clan in Penóm; many of its menfolk died in the War of 2,020, and its clanhouses were almost emptied by the Spotted Plague of 2,195. It is said that there are now only two old women left of this clan!

Some clans are occupationally based (e.g. winemakers, goldsmiths, scribes, etc.); some are powerful in one area but have only a few scattered members elsewhere (e.g. the Vríddi of Fasiltum); others are widespread with clanhouses all over the Empire and even abroad; many represent class divisions (e.g. "noble" clans, "wealthy"clans, "very poor" clans, etc.); some are devoted to the worship of one deity or a group of related deities, while others are eclectic and contain members of many faiths and walks of life; some specialise in producing clergy for the temples, while others have a preponderancy of their membership in the administration or in the military; and so forth. Many clans contain both rich and poor members: e.g. several thousand clansmens of the ancient and aristocratic Clan of Sea Blue are little more than impoverished peasants in the agricultural plains just south of Bé́y Sú. Such "poor relations" are welcome — to an extent — in the gilded mansions of their more fortunate clan-brothers, although they must "know their place" and not presume too much upon clan fraternalism. A poorer clansman may approach a wealthier brother for money for his daughter's dowry, funds for his children's education, aid in legal problems, and the use of influence in obtaining a post. The richer member then gains prestige and status for "acting nobly" and providing such assistance. In return, the peasant gives what he can — a basket of fruits, a sack of *Dná* grain — and he may send his children to serve in the rich man's palace. The system is as reciprocal as possible within its limits.

The above pattern obtains throughout southern Tsolyanu and Mu'ugalavyá. As has been said, the clans of the north are matrilineal and matrilocal. This includes the Tsolyáni cities of Chéne Hó, Khirgár, Púrdimal, and over to Thri'íl, as well as the nations of Yán Kór, Pijéna, Milumanayá, Saá Allaqí, and parts of Chayákku. In these regions the clan elders are predominantly women. Yán Koryáni clans tend to be more localised: each city has its own clans, and these are rarely represented elsewhere, although reciprocal guesting arrangements with similar clans in other cities are found. In Livyánu the clans are also divided according to city-of-origin, but the whole system is overshadowed by the religious distinctions between the temples. Each of these has its own assortment of member-clans, and those adhering to one sect do not intermarry with the followers of another. The clan systems of Salarvyá and Pechánо are something else again. In these two nations the clans have become a feudal hierarchy. Seven great clan-families in Salarvyá and two in Pechánо rule over vast areas with more or less specific boundaries — almost states within a state — and all lesser clans act as clients and support for these dominant groups. While it is relatively easy for a foreign artisan to join the relevant Salarvyáni professional clan, it is much harder to move upward in the social hierarchy — or laterally into another professional clan in a different part of Salarvyá.

Outside of the Five Empires the societies of Jánnu, Kilalámmu, and Mihállu all have clans based upon the same Engsvanyáli and Bednálljan patterns. The N'lúss bands and the men-only fraternities of Ghatón are also somewhat clan-like, but the states of the far northeast are divided into territorially based ethnic groups within which wealth, property, and other types of power play the major roles. There are hereditary "kings," oligarchies, warrior societies, priesthoods, and a host of other social forces too numerous to be described here.

Clans are unknown in Tsolél, Háida Pakála, Rannálu, and the tribal areas of M'mórcha and Nmartúsha. None of the nonhuman species possesses a true clan system, although the egg-groups of the Shén share similar functions (cf. Sec. 1.510). Occasionally a

nonhuman who lives in one of the Five Empires may join a human clan for purely pragmatic reasons (e.g. he wishes to practice the clan's profession). These, however, are limited to the Pé Chói, the Páchi Léi, the Swamp Folk, and rarely the Pygmy Folk. The other races do not seek clan membership. If they wish to work at a craft, they restrict their sales to others of their own species, and this is winked at by the human clans.

The following sampling of the major Tsolyáni clans will provide an idea of what the system is like. In addition to the 1,500 or so Tsolyáni clans, there are perhaps another 1,000 in Mu'ugalavyá, 850 in Yán Kór and Saá Allaqí, 700-900 in Livyánu, and 1,200 in Salarvyá. The clans of Jánnu, Kilalámmu, etc. have never been surveyed. Clans are listed below in a rough order of prestige and importance within each class-category. There is little difference between many of them, however, as far as relative status is concerned.

Imperial:

Tlakotáni: the clan to which the Tsolyáni royal family belongs; some well-to-do farmers and middle-class urban merchants are members as well; found around Béy Sú, Haumá, and Usenánu.

Very high:

Sea Blue: descended from the royal families of the Bednálljans — and correspondingly proud and arrogant even when poor; includes many members of various faiths and professions, although courtiers, bureaucrats, and administrators predominate.

Golden Sunburst: descendants of the nobility of the Engsvanyáli Empire; aristocratic and exclusive; mostly devoted to Karakán, Chegárra, and Hnálla, with a sprinkling of other sects of Stability; most members are nobles, high bureaucrats, and military officers; found throughout the Imperium.

Vríddi: the original semi-autonomous rulers of Fasíltum; fierce and haughty; totally devoted to Vimúhla and Chiténg; almost entirely limited to Fasíltum, although a few clanhouses are found in the predominantly Vimúhla-worshipping cities of the west (e.g. Khirgár and Tumíssa); not trusted by the Imperium because of separatist tendencies, and some younger hotheads are now languishing in prison.

Might of Gánga: derived from Engsvanyáli royalty; composed of priests and warriors of the sects of Avánthe, Thúmis, Hnálla, Belkhánu, and their Cohorts; largely limited to the island of Gánga and the southern coastal cities of Tsolyánu.

Íto: the ancient lords of the Chákan Protectorates; worshippers of Sárku and his Cohort, Durritlámish; limited to the Chákas but with clanhouses in the City of Sárku, Mekú, and Púrdimal; also looked upon as a source of trouble by the Imperium.

Golden Bough: traceable to the Engsvanyáli governors of the south; eclectic with no particular religious or professional affiliations; contains many officials and military personnel; powerful all over the Imperium but with main centres in Jakálla, Thráya, and Jaikalór.

Sword of Fire: a small and very ancient clan descended from the Dragon Warriors; totally devoted to Vimúhla; aloof and disinterested in politics; centred in Béy Sú but with clanhouses in Tumíssa, Khirgár, and Chéne Hó; this clan has many mercantile ventures in the west and in Mu'ugalavyá, and its contacts in the latter country make it suspect in Imperial eyes.

Cloak of Azure Gems: supposedly servitors of Ksárul at the Battle of Dormorón Plain but probably Bednálljan; followers of Ksárul and Hrü'ü and their Cohorts; mostly priests and administrators; based in Mekú and Mrelú but with clanhouses in Sokátis, Béy Sú, and other cities.

Jade Diadem: origins unknown; devotees of Dlamélish and her Cohort, Hriháyal; largely city administrators and landed nobility; found throughout the Imperium.

Blade Raised High: descended from the palace guard of the Engsvanyáli priestkings; devoted to Karakán and Chegárra; primarily soldiers and military administrators; found throughout the Empire but centred in Katalál and Usenánu.

High:

White Stone: an eclectic clan devoted to Avánthe, Dlamélish, and their Cohorts (but also containing members of other sects); many administrators and military personnel; found throughout the Empire but centred at Béy Sú and Sokátis.

White Crystal: an old and respectable clan; includes many high- and medium-level officials and bureaucrats as well as priests of several sects (but no specific religious affiliation); originally from Jakálla but now widespread throughout the centre of the Empire.

Red Sword, Red Sun, Red Mountain, and Red Stone: these "Red" clans belong to the west and worship Vimúhla and Chiténg, with a sprinkling of followers of Karakán and Chegárra as well; includes warriors, priests of these deities, and medium-level officials; based around Tumíssa and Butrús but extends into Mu'ugalavyá also.

Purple Gem: originally scribes and book-makers in the Engsvanyáli Empire; many medium- and high-level court officials at Avanthár are members; no religious affiliation; based at Avanthár but has clanhouses throughout the Empire.

High Pinnacle: many medium-level military personnel and high- and medium-level bureaucrats are members; no religious affiliation; based around Haumá, Mrelú, and Si'ís but has clanhouses throughout the west and centre of the Empire.

Emerald Girdle: mostly worshippers of Hnálla, Thúmis, and Avánthe and their Cohorts; many rural landowners belong to this clan; found throughout the Empire.

Great Stone: originally a northern matrilineal clan based at Khirgár; many followers of Ksárul, Hrü'ü, and their Cohorts, but not exclusively so; members often involved in trade, shipping, caravans, and mercantile ventures, but also contains a number of priests, bureaucrats, and a few soldiers; found largely in the northwest of the Empire but has clanhouses elsewhere also.

Domed Tomb: the ancient nobility of the City of Sárku and totally devoted to Sárku and Durritlámish; wealthy farmers, priests, administrators, and soldiers of the Worm Lord's sect; mainly based in the Kraa hills and around the City of Sárku but has clanhouses in Béy Sú, Púrdimal, Sokátis, etc.

Dark Fear, Dark Water, Dark Moon, and Dark Flame: these "Dark" clans are devoted to Hrü'ü; Ksárul, Sárku, and their Cohorts; many medium-level officials, priests and soldiers; found in the midwest and the north.

Amber Cloak: devoted to Belkhánu, Thúmis, and their Cohorts; composed of priests, scholars, apothecaries, physicians, and professional people; found throughout the Empire.

Sweet Singers of Nakomé: descended from an ancient hero who was given this strange nickname; devoted to Vimúhla and Chiténg; members are agriculturalists and soldiers in the Vimúhla-worshipping legions; found only around Fasíltum.

Standing Stone: comprised of priests and officials, plus many middle-class agriculturalists; no religious affiliation; centred around Ormish but has clanhouses in most major cities.

Rising Sun: includes minor nobles and upper-class merchants of the eastern Empire; no religious affiliation; based at Jaikalór with houses at Sokátis, Thráya, Jakálla, etc.

Joyous of Vrá: descended from the old Vrayáni nobility; mostly worshippers of Belkhánu, Thúmis, Hnálla, and Avánthe and their Cohorts; originally established on the island of Vrá but now found throughout the Empire.

Iron Helm: the lords of Mekú are hereditarily members of

this clan; usually devotees of Ksárul and Grugánu, although others are worshippers of Hrú'ü, Wurú, etc.; widespread throughout the Empire.

Staff of Beneficence: mostly wealthy physicians and apothecaries devoted to Thúmis and his Cohort, Keténgku; found throughout the Empire.

Grey Cloak and Grey Wand: these two clans are composed of devotees of Thúmis and Keténgku with a scattering of members worshipping others of the Lords of Stability; most are upper and middle-class administrators, landholders, merchants, etc.; based around Páya Gupá and Chéne Hó but with clanhouses in most of the large cities of the Empire.

Medium:

Green Bough: prosperous agriculturalists; no religious affiliation; found throughout the Empire but has its largest clanhouse at Katalál.

Blue Kirtle: members are devoted to Avánthe and her Cohort, Dilinála; originally potters, winemakers, and builders but now includes medium-level priests and administrators as well; based at Béy Sü but has clanhouses throughout the Empire.

Black Stone: comprised of medium-level bureaucrats, scribes, professional people, and priests in the service of the Lords of Change; found throughout the Empire.

Green Malachite: a southern agricultural and maritime clan; includes farmers, sailors, fishermen, etc.; mostly devoted to the Lords of Stability; based in Penóm but has houses all along the southern coast and as far north as Usenánu on the Mssúma River.

Red Sky and Red Star: two more Vimúhla-worshipping western "Red" clans, agriculturalists and breeders of *Hmélu* and *Hmá* but also some lower-level bureaucrats, soldiers, and priests; found throughout the western and central regions of the Empire.

Ripened Sheaf: a prosperous agriculturalists' and artisans' clan; no religious affiliation; centres at Úrmish, Penóm, Katalál, and Jakálla with smaller clanhouses in almost every village in this area.

Green Kirtle: an offshoot of the Blue Kirtle clan which turned to the worship of Dlamélish and Hrihávyal; follows a variety of middle-class occupations; based in Béy Sü and the west but has clanhouses all across the Empire.

Golden Dawn, Golden Sphere, Golden Sheaf, and Golden Sapphire: these "Golden" clans all follow the Lords of Stability and contain medium-level business people, soldiers, priests, agriculturalists, etc.; found throughout the Empire.

Glory of the Worm: mountain people from the City of Sarku and the Kraá Hills; devoted to Sárku and Durritlámish; medium-level agriculturalists, growers of *Dlél*-fruit trees, and landowners; found largely in the northwest but has clanhouses in Béy Sü and Jakálla.

Blue Shadow and Blue Stream: rural agriculturalists and landowners; devoted to Avánthe and Dilinála with a sprinkling of worshippers of others of the Lords of Stability; found throughout the Empire.

Black Pinnacle: agriculturalists, craftsmen, and artisans; no religious affiliation; based at Hekéllu in the far northeast but with clanhouses at Fasíltum, Sokátis, and Thráya.

Copper Door: merchants and moneylenders; usually followers of Sárku but some are devotees of others of the Lords of Change; centred at Béy Sü and along the Mssúma River.

First Moon and Moon of Evening: these two clans contain merchants and artisans, plus a few bureaucrats and priests; no religious affiliation; largely southern clans with houses at Jakálla, Thráya, Jaikalór, and Penóm.

Golden Lintel: comprised of moneylenders from Béy Sü; no religious affiliation; clanhouses and members found in all of the cities of the Empire and abroad as well.

Silver Lightning and Silver Collar: these two clans contain many artists, jewellers, and workers in the ornamental crafts; mostly devoted to Avánthe and Hnálla and their Cohorts; found throughout the Empire.

Red Flower: an old Vrayáni mercantile clan with sailing, shipping, and foreign trading interests; mostly devoted to Karakán and Chegárra but with followers of both the Lords of Change and the Lords of Stability as well; centred on the island of Vrá but has clanhouses at Jakálla, Thráya, Penóm, and even at Béy Sü.

Scroll of Wisdom: comprised of jurists and scholars; no religious affiliation; found throughout the Empire.

Red Eye of Dawn: the best jewellers' clan in the Empire; largely made up of worshippers of Avánthe and Dilinála in spite of the "red" of its name; centred in Béy Sü but has clanhouses in almost every major city.

Weeping Stone: manufacturers of liquor and wines; no religious affiliation; found throughout the Empire.

Victorious Globe: makers of paper, inks, paints, and scribal materials; mostly devotees of Thúmis, Hnálla, and their Cohorts; found in every major city of the Empire.

Standing Pinnacle: originally from the tribal areas of the Kúrt Hills but now urbanised; dealers in woods and forest products; largely worshippers of Avánthe and Dilinála with a sprinkling of followers of most other faiths; centred at Haumá and Tsuru but has clanhouses throughout the western Empire.

Black Hood, Black Mountain, and Black Monolith: these "Black" clans contain middle-class merchants, artisans, and labourers; most members follow Hrú'ü, Ksárul, Sárku, and their Cohorts; found throughout the Empire.

Blazoned Sail: sea-captains, shippers, sailors, and maritime artisans; no religious affiliation; found in almost every city with access to the sea.

Broken Reed: a large clan of agriculturalists, warriors, lower-class artisans; and a variety of other occupations; no religious affiliation; found throughout the Empire.

Broken Bough: again these are agriculturalists; mostly worshippers of the Lords of Stability, although some devotees of Vimúhla and Chiténg are encountered around Fasíltum; based at Usenánu but with clanhouses throughout the centre and eastern regions of the Empire.

Iron Fist and Iron Hand: these two clans contain mainly smiths and armourers; worshippers of Vimúhla, Karakán, and their Cohorts; originally western clans but now spread throughout the Empire.

Low:

Open Sepulchre: embalmers, tomb guards, and professional mourners; devoted to Belkhánu, Sárku, and their Cohorts; found all over the Empire.

Plume of White: scribes, accountants, clerks, and administrators; mostly devoted to the Lords of Stability, although members of other sects are also found; centred at Jakálla but with clanhouses throughout the Empire.

Open Hand: peasants, labourers, and tenant farmers; no religious affiliation; encountered throughout the rural areas of the Empire.

Ivory Staff: peasants and labourers, *Dlél*-fruit and *Mash*-fruit pickers; largely devoted to the Lords of Stability, although members of other sects are occasionally found; a northern clan centred at Si'ís and Khirgár with a few clanhouses in other major cities.

Green Forest and Green Reed: these two clans are comprised of peasants and rural craftsmen; mostly worshippers of Avánthe, Dlamélish, and their Cohorts; based at Sokátis but with clanhouses throughout the east and along the Mssúma River.

High Tower: *Chlén*-raisers, tanners, and leatherworkers, plus a few officials and administrators; no religious affiliation; based at Usenánu but with clanhouses throughout the centre of the Empire.

Green Stone, Green Emerald, and Green Opal: these

"Green" clans are dyers, weavers, tailors, and a few priests and warriors; primarily worshippers of Dlamélish and Hriháyal; found throughout the centre and eastern part of the Empire.

Flowering Life: rope and net-markers, fishermen, and shellfish gatherers; the majority is devoted to Avánthe and Dilinála with a large percentage of worshippers of Hnálla and his Cohort, Drá, as well; found all along the southern seacoast.

Eye of Flame: originally barbers but now includes many low-level soldiers and hired bodyguards; worshippers of Vimúhla and Chiténg; based at Tumíssa but with clanhouses throughout the west and north.

Deep Flowing Water: an old and respectable agricultural clan; largely devoted to Hrü'ü, Ksárul and their Cohorts; based at Mrelú but with clanhouses at Púrdimal, Mekú, etc.

Flat Peak: lower-class artisans, usually carpenters, bricklayers, masons, furniture-makers, etc.; no religious affiliation; encountered throughout the Empire.

Sapphire Bird: peasants, *Hmélu* and *Hmá* raisers and herdsmen, and tanners; devoted to Avánthe, Dlamélish, and their Cohorts; centred at Thráya and found throughout the east and southeast — and also across the border in Salarvyá.

Blue Water: peasants, foresters, woodworkers, pitch and tar-makers, and fletchers; mostly worshippers of Hnálla and Avánthe, with a scattering of other faiths as well; centred at Jaikalór but now found throughout the eastern Empire.

Black Stone Tomb: once the bodyguards of the Íto family of the Chákas, this clan specialises in gravedigging, emblaming, and the guarding of tombs; devoted to Sárku and Durritlámish; based at Chéne Hó, Páya Gupá, and Tumíssa but with clanhouses at Mrelú, Mekú, Púrdimal and the City of Sárku.

Black Hand: miners and glassblowers; devoted to Hrü'ü, Ksárul, Sárku, and their Cohorts; found throughout the north and west, this clan is responsible for the elegant purple glassware of Púrdimal.

Woven Whip: leatherworkers and tanners; no religious affiliation; centred at Tsurú and Haumá with clanhouses throughout the centre of the Empire.

Round Rock: agriculturalists, weavers, dyers, and cloth-makers; no strong religious affiliation, although many do worship Hnálla and Drá; based along the Equnoyel River in the southeast with clanhouses throughout the eastern Empire.

Very low:

Woven Mat: weavers, mat-makers, and builders of cheap furniture; no religious affiliation, found throughout the Empire.

Red Moon: impoverished peasants, labourers, woodcutters, etc.; mostly worshippers of Vimúhla and Chiténg; based at Béy Sü and encountered throughout the centre of the Empire.

Scarlet Mantle: professional servants and domestics; usually devoted to Karakán or Chegárra and claim to have once been a warrior clan; found throughout the Empire.

Arch of Heaven: brewers of beer, distillers of the cheaper liquours, and vineyard workers; no religious affiliation; found throughout the Empire.

Nighted Tower: tomb guards, makers of various chemicals — and often accused of being tomb robbers; followers of all of the Lords of Change except for Vimúhla and his Cohort, Chiténg; based at Purdimal but found throughout the northwest.

Bright Sword: musicians, singers of epic poems, panderers, courtesans, and hostel-keepers; no religious affiliation; based at Jakálla but found all across the Empire.

Green Pyramid: labourers, peasants, and poor urban merchants; usually devoted to Dlamélish and Hriháyal but with members of other sects as well; common throughout the Empire.

Flat Rock: poor labourers and peasants; no religious affiliation; found throughout the western regions of the Empire.

Scarlet Planet of Knives: butchers, hunters, and lower-class warriors; devoted to Karakán and Chegárra; based at Katalál but encountered in every major city.

Granite Lintel: cooks, body-servants, and kitchen workers; devoted to Hnálla, Thúmis, Avánthe, and their Cohorts; based at Úrmish but found all across the Empire.

Black Earth: peasants, artisans, fishermen, and swamp workers; followers of Hrü'ü and Wurú although other sects are found as well; based at Púrdimal but also numerous around Penóm.

Glass Spear: potters, bricklayers, cement-workers, layers of mosaics, etc.; no religious affiliation; clanhouses exist all over the Empire.

Sinking Land: peasants, producers of swamp products, and fishermen; devoted to Belkhánu and his Cohort, Qón; based in the water-logged lowlands around Penóm but with clanhouses at Jakálla, Úrmish, Usenánu, and Katalál also.

Artificers of Iron: village smiths, although some have become prosperous urban armourers and manufacturers of metal tools; worshippers of Vimúhla, Karakán, and their Cohorts; especially strong in Tumíssa and Butrús but encountered all across the Empire.

Turning Wheel: carters, suttlers, wheelwrights, and transporters of goods; no religious affiliation; encountered all over the Empire.

Standing Reed: mostly N'lüss who settled long ago in the Empire; professional soldiers, gladiators, bodyguards, fletchers, and makers of leather armour; devoted to Vimúhla and Chiténg; based in the rural areas around Khirgár but with clanhouses throughout the Empire.

Collar of Bronze: professional slavers, many of whom are wealthy but are without social prestige because of their work; no religious affiliation; small clanhouses exist in every major city.

Hand of Compassion: professional prison guards and warders; devoted to Belkhánu and Qón; based at Jakálla but with representation in every large city and many towns.

Wicker Image: latrine-cleaners, sewer workers, bathers of corpses, and house-sweepers; no religious affiliation, except that those who bathe corpses are likely to be followers of Belkhánu and Qón; clanhouses are found everywhere in the Empire.

Emerald Circlet: panderers, prostitutes, dancers, jugglers, roadside entertainers, etc.; followers of Dlamélish and Hriháyal with a sprinkling of other faiths; often thought to be thieves and purveyors of poisons, aphrodisiacs, etc.; found all over the Empire.

The foregoing list by no means exhausts the possibilities. There are dozens of small, localised clans devoted to minor professions (e.g. the Sweet Breeze clan, which manufactures perfumes and essences), and there are also many more generalised clans.

The status of the assassins' clans was mentioned in Sec. 1.422. These stand a little outside the usual patterns just described. Such clans as the Black Y Society, the Association of Relievers from Life, and the Clan of Whispered Fear have clanhouses in all of the major cities, and their leaders are respected members of society (and are often prominent contributors to the temples of the Lords of Change — and even to the temple of Karakán and his Cohort, Chegárra), but their inner membership is secret, and they do not intermarry with other clans. Their clanhouses are walled, and clients are allowed only to enter small cubicles within the outer gates, where business is transacted.

There are no thieves' clans in any of the Five Empires except Salarvyá (again cf. Sec. 1.422). In the last-named nation one finds the

Den of Profitable Joy, a client-clan of the Thirreqummu lords of Koylúga. This organisation is permitted to operate only outside of Thirreqummu territories, however, and its activities are often as much political as economic. Throughout the other nations of the continent stealing is punished by harsh and painful means: impalement, maiming, long imprisonment, or enslavement, if the victim refuses financial compensation; cf. Sec. 1.740. Only a very foolish individual would thus adopt thievery as a profession. Bandits exist, of course, in the more remote regions of Tékumel, as do pirates along the coasts. There are also certain areas in which the robbing and slaying of foreigners (or one's fellow citizens, if this can be managed) are considered useful, normal, and proper: e.g. Hâida Pakála (Sec. 1.930). Professional thieves are very rare — and have short life expectancies — within the Five Empires, however.

1.560. LIFE-EVENTS

The milestones of a person's life include birth, naming, induction into the clan, puberty, betrothal and marriage, the births of children, further marriages, and eventually death.

In the south the birth the birth of a boy is celebrated by feasting, the giving of gifts by the parents to their clansmen and friends, and gifts by the latter to the infant in return. All births are registered at the Palace of the Realm in Tsolyánu (Sec. 1.810), or at its counterparts in other lands. If the family belongs to the upper classes or the aristocracy, the infant's astrological chart is drawn up, and the parents' clansmen begin to consider possible marriages for the child almost before the mother is out of labour. Birth festivities are elaborate, lavish, and as costly as the family's budget will permit — anywhere from 10 *Káitars* for a poor peasant to 10,000 or more for a scion of the nobility.

A girl born to a southern clan is given a less luxurious welcome into the world. Still, she will provide her parents with the occasion to spend some money, give a small feast, and give and receive gifts from relatives and friends.

The middle and lower classes emulate the customs of the wealthy so far as they are able. The birth of a slave child is nothing more than another entry in the owner's record-book, however — and perhaps cause for a visit from the tax-collector.

Throughout Yán Kór and the matriarchal north the situation is reversed, it is the birth of a girl which causes jubilation, while the arrival of a boy is taken in stride. Amongst the Mu'ugalavyáni, births are treated much as in Tsolyánu. In Salarvyá an infant born to one of the great feudal families will have a horoscope prepared and a genealogy plotted out to determine its place in the hierarchy and the succession. The parents legitimise the baby at a public feast, but gift-giving is not as much a custom as in the west. The Livyáni associate births with religion — as they do nearly everything else — and a lengthly ceremony at the parents' temple is required. A poor family will have the ritual performed by a bored acolyte for a few coppers, while a rich Livyáni infant receives the attention of a whole squad of priests, litany-singers, dancers, and functionaries.

As a generalisation, it may be said that most of the smaller nations welcome a birth with feasting and some form of public acceptance and recognition. The only exceptions are the Ghatóni, who keep their children's existence and parentage a secret within the clanhouse until the infant is three or four years of age and can be "named." Of the nonhuman races, the Pé Chói, Páchi Léi, Swamp Folk, and the Urunén hold small dinners and give gifts to the parents of a newborn infant. So far as is known, the other species accept births with little or no fanfare.

The Tsolyáni, Mu'ugalavyáni, and Yan Koryáni all circumcise male children at birth or shortly thereafter. In Livyánu the rite is performed at age 5, while the Salarvyáni leave the question of circumcision up to the child himself, to be decided at puberty. Priests of Shiringgáyi must be circumcised, however. The smaller nations vary in their attitudes: N'lüss and the Ghatóni speak of circumcision with horrified repugnance, whereas it is an absolute necessity and is performed at puberty upon every male in the states of the northeast. Hâida Pakála is now tending towards the Salarvyáni custom, but the clergy of Mrettén consider circumcision "an insult to the body of Mrettén" and do not allow it. The islanders of Tsoléi take no interest in this issue.

Naming is very important throughout the Five Empires and in Mihállu. Following the Engsvanyali custom, a child receives only a "pet name" until puberty, whereupon it is inducted into the clan and is given a name. The Tsolyáni consider the peoples of the northeast very odd since the latter bestow a life-long name upon an infant at birth. In Tsoléi naming is very informal; a baby "grows into a name": the parents, an elder relative, or a friend suggests a name for the newborn baby, and this may be changed by events during childhood or because of some salient personal characteristic (one occasionally meets Tsoléini who still retain their childhood names, and some of these are comical if translated: "Rascal," "Mischievous," "Spills-a-Lot," "Pukey," "He-Who-Bites," etc.) A Tsoléini changes his or her name whenever it seems appropriate. Even adults may abandon a name as "unlucky" and select another. In the Nyémesel Isles a commoner is given only one name, often no more than the appellation of his or her profession: e.g. "Fisherman," "Cook," "Potter," etc. The offspring of a priestly family are granted a long string of names: a "religious" title, a "public" name for everyday use, and a "secret" name to be employed during the rituals of the Goddess. This practice is similar to that of Livyánu, where every person has a "mundane" name and another "holy" name to be spoken only within the temple precincts.

Puberty is another occasion for feasting, rituals, and rites of passage. Adolescents are usually inducted in the clans of the Five Empires, their client states, and Mihállu at this time. Children are encouraged also to decide upon their future professions; betrothals are finalised (if this has not already been done); and acceptance into the various religious sects as full members also takes place. In M'mórcha and Nmartúsha boys undergo long and painful initiations in secret huts deep within the forests, while girls are transformed similarly into women within the confines of special huts in taboo areas of the villages. The N'lüss and the Lorún require youths and maidens to prove their adulthood by going upon quests, fasting, and the endurance of hardships in the forests. The nomads of the Desert of Sighs practice a simulated "rebirth": the child is made to re-enact the process of birth, lying in its mother's lap, pretending to feed upon her breasts, and crying. At dawn the young person emerges from the parents' tent carrying the weapons of a warrior or the ceremonial *Hmá*-wool spindle of the adult woman. The clergy of Mrettén hold yearly initiations for all adolescents who have come of age. These are solemn and awesome, with much ritual, chanting, and opulent display. The islanders of Tsoléi hold festivities at which each new adult is expected to prove his or her sexual maturity publicly with a partner chosen from amongst the group family. The peoples of the northeast require all-night vigils, proofs of a boy's warrior abilities, ordeals, and the swearing of stern oaths to uphold the honour and glory of the clan. Girls are ceremonially bathed, oiled, perfumed, and received as "newcomers" into the women's quarters of the clanhouse. Of the nonhuman species, only the Urunén and the Hláka take formal notice of puberty. The former celebrate the event with a torchlit procession to the temple of Diulé (Sec. 1.610), where the new adult receives fresh garments and gifts. The latter ritually hurl all pubescent males and females out of the eyrie. Those who can fly return after demontrating their aerial skill, while those who cannot fall to their deaths (a rare occurrence — most Hláka begin to fly when they are 6-8 years of age). When all of the new adults have thus been "proved," a feast is held.

Betrothals and weddings were mentioned in Sec. 1.530. These are occasions of rejoicing, feasting, gift-giving, and innumerable social rituals. Although marriage is not connected with religion, except in Livyánu, many secular ceremonies and "practices" have developed over the centuries, and the clans adhere to these with some enthusiasm. In Tumíssa the bride and groom drink wine together from the same vessel; in Fasíltum the nuptial pair walks around a glyph on the floor — done in coloured chalk, the symbol stands for the security of the household and the clan; in Bé'y Sú the bride ritually feeds the groom from a golden plate, and he then does the same for her — etc. Most of the smaller nations have their own rosters of customs which must be performed — and endured — before the marriage can be consummated. Even so, the process may not be complete: in the Nyémesel Isles, for example, one encounters post-marital feasts, rituals, and practices which continue for as much as a year after the original wedding.

Nonhuman "weddings" range from none at all (e.g. the Ahoggyá,

who do not even live with their supposed spouses — indeed, it is hard to know who is "married" to whom due to their unintelligible sexual system; cf. Sec. 1.413) to the lengthly and solemn procedures obtaining amongst the Urunén, whose nuptials require many delicately formal meetings between the two families concerned, dinners, gifts, etc. The Pé Chói custom is simple and elegant: the bride and groom visit the homes of their relatives and friends and quietly announce that they are now wed. (Divorce is handled by this species in the same fashion.) The Shén proclaim their choice of mates and challenge others of their sex to dispute them, resulting in frequent fights in which one or the other competitor may be slain. The females of the Swamp Folk choose their husbands-to-be at a great yearly ceremony held at night. If the groom accepts, he helps his bride into his personal boat and rows her off into the darkness of the reedy waterways for a one-night "honeymoon." The Pachi Léi have no division into males and females, but individuals do live together, and the addition of a member to a living-group is an occasion for feasting. The Pygmy Folk also hold a dinner when a new mate (or a hermaphroditic individual) is added to the family. The Hláka celebrate their matings with a raucous party, aerial acrobatics, and rowdy humour (which may sometimes end in a screeching battle). The remaining species have nothing comparable to the human idea of a "wedding."

Second, third, etc. marriages are occasions for celebration also, but these are treated with less pomp and ceremony. The lower classes again try to copy the practices of the social strata above them. Slaves may be given permission to marry by their masters — although they may also be separated, sold, or forced to mate with those whom their owners decree.

Funerary customs were touched upon in Sec. 1.422. The priests of Belkhánu (Sec. 1.610) are charged with the interment of almost all followers of the Lords of Stability (although a priest of an individual's particular sect may also join in the rituals if desired by the family). Each temple of the Lords of Change has its own death rituals, however. These range from immolation in the Purifying Flame for devotees of Vimúhla and Chiténg, through burial in deep and labyrinthine sepulchres for worshippers of Hrū'ū, Ksárul, Dlamélish, and their Cohorts, to secret necromantic rites for those who serve Sárku and Durritlámish in the catacombs beneath the Cities of the Dead.

Devotees of Vimúhla and Chiténg hold that a deceased's belongings must perish with him or her in the Flame, ensuring that these possessions will be ready to hand in these deities' special paradises (Sec. 1.620). The same concept is encountered amongst the followers of the Mu'ugalavyáni deity, Hrsh. Most of the remaining sects believe that the dead must be provided with their personal belongings in the grave itself: clothing, jewellery, weapons, furniture, money, books — all are laid beside the corpse in the inner tomb chambers. Even the poor may have a copper or silver bracelet, a bit of pottery, etc. placed beside them in their humble graves. The followers of Dlamélish and her Cohort, Hrihályal, carry the idea farther: they often add the deceased's concubines and slaves to the rest of the tomb furnishings, slaying these wretched persons and laying the bodies around the bier just as the deceased would have enjoyed seeing them in life.

The N'lúss bury only a man's great sword in his grave. A ceremonial pot of food is placed beside a woman. In the states of the northeast the corpses of both sexes are stripped, bathed, wound in plain cloth sheets, and buried with no personal possessions whatsoever. Mihállu follows the elaborate customs of the Five Empires, while the inhabitants of Háida Pakála and the Nyémesel Isles dress their dead in special costumes of yellow cloth. A single coin (usually gold) is placed in each corpse's right hand to bribe the Demons of the Way to permit the soul to pass unscathed. In Tsoléi a sailor or warrior is set adrift in a small boat heaped with his possessions and food. A woman is buried ashore with no more than she customarily wore in life. The funerary practices of the nonhumans were mentioned in Sec. 1.422.

These, then are the events common in every person's life. In addition, an individual may set aside his or her own "special days": anniversaries, birthdays (not everyone cares to commemorate these), days of great joy, and days when some terrible catastrophe occurred. The nature of the celebration is left to the individual: fasting or feasting, mourning or rejoicing.

1.600. Religion and "Magic"

1.610. THE GODS

The basis of the religious systems of the Five Empires has already been described in Secs. 1.330, 1.340, 1.350, and 1.360. To recapitulate: there are two "alignments" ("Stability" and "Change"), each represented in the Engsvanyáli pantheon by five major "Gods" and five "Cohorts." These deities are really vastly powerful interdimensional beings, but for all practical purposes they are "gods" to such a limited and tiny being as man. The Gods express not so much human objectives, thus, as their own viewpoints of existence and the eventual destiny of the cosmos. The Lords of Stability urge a slow and gentle progress towards a final glorious stasis which will endure for all time to come. The Lords of Change preach violent and constant mutability, unceasing, always ephemeral, and resulting only in ever more change. The Gods are immanent and omnipresent. There are innumerable documented instances of "miracles and manifestations," and only a fool is an "atheist" on Tekumel.

It may appear difficult for two such antithetical alignments to exist side by side within the same society, particularly when one of them preaches egotistical aggrandisement and violent upheaval. Yet this is how it is. Most people are not "fanatics," and religion is acquired from one's parents, family, clan, and surroundings much more often than through conscious conversion or active belief. Most worshippers live out their lives without ever experiencing a God directly: they go to the temples, celebrate the rituals, pay the tithes, and give lip-service — yet never face any real demands upon the depth and strength of their faiths. There is thus no real attempt by the devotees of Change to bring society crashing down around their own ears, although this is the logical end of the doctrines of Change. There are proper channels for the expression of fanaticism: e.g. the devotee of Vimúhla can join a legion and expend his energies burning the cities of the enemies of his nation; the worshipper of Dlamélish is permitted to practice her sensual hedonism within the walls of her temples; and the follower of Ksárul may obtain satisfaction in acquiring and using knowledge for his own selfish ends without ever really shaking the foundations of society. There are societal outlets available within all cultures, and whether the Gods approve or not they must nevertheless put up with the abilities, instincts, and foibles of mankind. Limited beings can only be used for limited objectives.

The twenty deities (five Gods and their five Cohorts for Stability, and the same for Change) each represent an aspect of their alignment's philosophy and purpose in the universe. Whether these attributes are innate within the natures of the Gods or whether they are in response to human needs and expectations cannot be determined. The fact is that one can speak of Avánthe as a "Goddess of Fertility," Karakán as the "God of Glorious War," Thúmis as "Wisdom Incarnate," etc.

Each deity, moreover, displays a number of "Aspects": particularised facets of the God's identity. For instance, Avánthe has 93 Aspects, one of which is the personification of maidenly beauty, another a fierce *Aridáni* warrioress, another a mother with a child in her arms, another an old woman wise in her years, etc. Each Aspect has a name, rituals, shrines, a contingent of clergy, and an iconography and a mythology. On the average, the Gods display more Aspects than do the Cohorts, and the total number of these facets is 953 in Tsolyanu alone. In addition, certain Aspects are worshipped in other lands, some are enshrined only in one city or in one temple, and there are some which have fallen into disuse and no longer are worshipped at all. A devotee may thus proceed directly to the central shrine of a temple and worship the deity as a single unified being, or he or she may stop outside at one or more of the smaller shrines of those Aspects relevant to the purpose of the visit — or both. It must be emphasised again that these Aspects are not separate deities but only specific manifestations of the twenty Gods and Cohorts.

As stated in Sec. 1.370, the deities of Tékumel are only peripherally involved with "ethics" or "morality." Stability is "good," of course to those who follow it, but the adherents of Change would claim the same for their doctrines. The Temple of Karakán holds regular sacrifices of foemen captured in battle in order to uphold the glory of victorious war and hence to maintain the structure of organised society. The Temple of Avánthe commemorates the coming of spring

and the sowing of the fields with joyful sexual orgies. The temples of the "gentle" deities — Hnálla, Belkhánu, and Thúmis — have neither blood sacrifices nor carousals, but even so many of their doctrines and ceremonials might appear strange and even "immoral" to an outsider. The temples of Change are also not all concerned with violence and sex. Fierce transition, selfish power, and personal hedonism are indeed central to their doctrines, but the Temple of Hrü'ü, for example, has no blood sacrifices, and those of Ksárul and Vimúhla no sexual rituals (although the latter's Cohort, Chiténg, does). "Goodness" revolves around the dichotomy between "noble" and "ignoble" action, as mentioned in Sec. 1.370.

Pure whites and blacks are hard to find on Tékumel (as also on other worlds), and most people and deeds are of varying shades of grey. Politics, economics, and personal factors motivate most actions — and sometimes these are given religious overtones in order to gain support, as one can see from the constant struggles of the various sects to gain control over the Petal Throne (cf. the list of emperors in Sec. 1.370) — yet most average people live together in relative harmony. Indeed, the occasional fanatic may be ostracised, ignored, or rebuffed. Followers of one alignment must naturally be a little careful in dealing with adherents of the other, but strict and punctilious etiquette and the concept of "noble" behavior make a reasonable amount of cooperation possible. The love of external display — costume, jewellery, and personal adornment — provides easy clues to a stranger's religious affiliation. One may thus choose not to make close friends with a devout follower of an antithetical sect, and one may prefer not to shop at his establishment, but there is no real harm or danger in doing so. The closest ties exist within the clan, and if a clan-brother or sister is devoted to a deity of the opposite alignment this is still not grounds for hostility or the breaking of clan solidarity. Open strife is prohibited by the Concordat (Sec. 1.360). Rivalry between the two alignments must be kept covert. A person who publicly insults or harms a member of another sect out of religious hostility will soon find himself hauled up before the Great Council of the Priesthoods for punishment. If the same provocation is committed in a remote wilderness or in one of the Underworlds, however, it is condoned, and the victim must take what personal vengeance he can. Indeed, the sanctuaries of the Underworlds may be profaned, tombs looted, and explorers killed or carried off for sacrifice, and all of this is perfectly "legal" so long as it is not done in the open.

The same applies to a much lesser degree even to sects of the same alignment. Real trust is found first within one's clan and then amongst co-members of one's temple — anything beyond this is providential. Members of different sects — even across alignment boundaries — often cooperate in business ventures and other activities. One expects some good-natured rivalry, but the tradition of "noble" action prevents much appreciable knavery. When the stakes are high, however, and particularly if the temples and/or political factions are involved, more skullduggery is likely to occur. In such cases, members of different sects within the same alignment may each have their objectives and instructions from their superiors — to be attained not through violence, perhaps, but by means of cleverness, close-mouthed caution, and even a little sleight-of-hand. Most such inter-faith missions make a compact in advance to decide what each party will get out of the endeavour. This is not easily possible when the group is composed of followers of opposite alignments. Such ventures are undertaken only when the stakes are very high or when all are threatened equally. Each faction is given safeguards, and each watches the others warily. Even this does not prevent frequent double-dealing and trickery; successful operations are thus uncommon.

The twenty deities of Pavár's pantheon (Sec. 1.360) will now be described in some detail. The Tlomitlányal, the Five Lords of Stability, are as follows:

1. Hnálla: the Supreme Principle of Stability, the Lord Whose True Name May Not Be Known, Master of Light, and Foe of Change. He seeks light without darkness and the ultimate presence of Changeless Radiance throughout the cosmos. He is the final goal towards which the other Lords of Stability strive, each in his or her own fashion. Hnálla is depicted as an abstract symbol: a double joined circle (like the "infinity" symbol). He aids those who serve Stability, rewards those who establish and maintain the order of things, and provides for those who are industrious, pious, temperate, and of dignified mien. He has 51 known Aspects. His priests and priestesses wear white robes and silver skullcaps.
2. Karakán: the Lord of War, Master of Heroes, and the Ultimate Warrior on the Final Day. He is shown as a youthful champion with a head rather like that of a hawk, winged, and armed with shield and sword. He serves Stability through active change, but change always towards a more stable social order, war for the expression of courage, war for the destruction of the Dark and the victory of Light. His emblem is a stylised lightning bolt. He aids those who are valorous. He has 56 Aspects. Priests and *Aridáni* warrior women of his sect wear red robes, armour, and tall golden helmets with fanciful scarlet crests. Other devotees attire themselves in scarlet garments and bear Karakán's emblem upon a breast amulet.
3. Thúmis: Lord of Wisdom, Knower of Arts, Hidden Seeker of Eternal Knowledge, Sage of the Gods. His commonest depiction is as a seated scholarly man with a golden halo and a book-roll in his hand. He seeks total wisdom, cognition without the limitations of the ego, and an understanding of the universe in order to serve the eventuation of Hnálla's Changeless Radiance. Some of his Aspects bear the traditional Staff of Power of the Bednálljan kings (although Thúmis was not worshipped until Engsvanyáli times), and the hem of his robe is blazoned with stylised eyes, signifying omniscience and wisdom. His sign is a square in which the Tsolyáni letter for *th* is centred. Thúmis aids those who seek knowledge for the benefit of society. He helps those who heal, teach, and study. He has 47 common Aspects, and his clergy (both males and females) wear grey robes and simple black skullcaps.
4. Avánthe: Mistress of Heaven, Maid of Beauty, Mother of Devotion, Wife (in a nonphysical sense) to Hnálla. She seeks a smooth-running and well-ordered world, one in which all things flow gently along towards Hnálla's final Perfect Light. She stresses a patterned rhythm of cooperation and symbiosis, and her ceremonies commemorate the cycles of nature: the spring, sowing, the rains, and the harvests. Avánthe has 93 Aspects, a few of which have been mentioned above. Her symbol is a circle with rays descending from it. She aids women in all circumstances, those who maintain the clan and the community, men and women who are devout pillars of society, the supporters of justice, and those who struggle against Change. Her priests wear sky-blue robes and chaplets of gold, while her priestesses wear similar robes but have headdresses of blue-lacquered *Chlén*-hide and golden bracelets and armbands.
5. Belkhánu: Lord of the Excellent Dead, Master of the Paradises of Teretáne, Opener of the Gates of Heaven. His sphere is not of this world but of the life after death: the journey onward to the farther Planes and the eventual goal of Hnálla's Perfect Light. His commonest form is that of a four-armed human being with a round, featureless head. In each hand he bears one of the insignia of Paradise: a yellow gem, a staff, a bowl, and an orb of gold. His symbol is a golden "V" resting upon three stylised waves. He aids those who are close to death, those who mourn, those who would contact the dead, those who fight against Change, and those who are attacked by Sárku's undead minions, an abomination to him. He has 67 known Aspects. Priests of Belkhánu wear yellow robes and tall yellow headdresses with a coif of gauze to mask the face. His priestesses are attired in a similar costume, although the details differ.

The Tlokiriqálluyal, the Five Lords of Change, are as follows:

1. Hrü'ü: the Supreme Principle of Change, Master of Negation and Non-Being, Opponent of Permanence, and

Dispenser of Calamities. He seeks the Dark, an end to choate form, a negation of this world of phenomena, and a return to the Nullity which existed when time was not. When this Nullity is achieved, he will then bring forth a new and chaotic beginning, and this in turn must be brought down, destroyed, and replaced with another Being, and so again and again for all time to come. He glories in Change without cessation, neverending, random and unpatterned, always roiling and shifting. He is usually depicted as a bulbous, featureless circle of purple from which eight slender arms extend outward like the rays of the sun. In each of these hands he holds the insignia and devices of his power: swords, lamps, a barbed hook, a scroll, etc. His symbol is a cicle of purple with a scarlet slash running down across it from left to right. He aids those who fight for Change, those who attempt to undo the social order, those who bring about their own glory with no thought of others, and those who are of a secretive and yet grasping nature. The Aspects of Hrü'ŭ number 78. His priests and priestesses conceal themselves beneath purple robes and go masked in velvet and *Chlén*-hide shaped into the likenesses of his demon servitors.

2. Vimúhla: Lord of Fire, Power of Destruction and Red Ruin, Maker of Thunders, All-Consuming One. He is the catharsis and the cleanser through the Flame. He would thus annihilate all matter and bring about the Final Conflagration, after which the cosmos must be reborn in the heart of the Flame, as Hrü'ŭ decrees. True victory is to be but an ephemeral, scintillating spark in the heart of the Inferno, then to know no more save the terrible burning joy of unity through annihilation. His usual depiction is as a coneshaped being with stylised flames in place of arms and legs, surrounded by black clouds shot through with orange-red lightnings. His symbol is a stylised flame. He aids those who fight heroically and fanatically for Change, those who start conflagrations, and those who revel in destruction and pillage. Vimúhla posseses 87 Aspects. His priests wear flame-orange robes, armour, and headdresses crowned with lacquered *Chlén*-hide flames. His priestesses are garbed in flame-orange skirts, collars of garnets and gold, and lighter coronets of gold with flame symbols engraved upon them. Both males and females leave their hair loose and unbound.
3. Ksárul: Ancient Lord of Secrets, Doomed Prince of the Blue Room, Master of Magic and Sorcery. The central legend of this deity was given in Sec. 1.340. Ksárul seeks knowledge, like Thúmis, but for the Doomed Prince wisdom has no meaning in the abstract, nor is it to be used for the benefit of society. Knowledge is power, and power is the individual's greatest instinctive goal. Indeed, if a society is to exist at all it must be for reasons of individual aggrandisement, and the ultimate final "good" is the victory of Ksárul. His godhead must continue even after the Final Change to be wrought by Hrü'ŭ. Magic, science, technology, and wisdom are all means to this end. Ksárul is shown as a young man of slender build with a smiling, yet emotionless face, dressed in black velvet and carrying a staff topped by an azure beetle. His emblem is this same beetle over a pale crescent moon. He aids those who would learn forbidden secrets , those who would contact the dwellers on other Planes, seekers of knowledge, and those who would serve him against the forces of Stability. He has 62 Aspects. Priests of Ksárul wear black robes, smiling masks of silver, and squarish mortarboard-shaped headdresses of black velvet. His priestesses are similarly attired, but their masks are of black wood for doctrinal reasons which cannot be gone into here.
4. Sárku: the Five-Headed Lord of Worms, Master of the Undead, Guide into Darkness, the Demon-Lord of Decay. Sárku seeks a slower, colder winding down in Hrü'ŭ's final Nullity: the low and certain transition of life and death. To the Worm-Lord, life is but a brief orgasmic spasm before the long, dusty eternity of the tomb. Yet life and death are only two aspects of the same being, and the latter is the more perfect because it endures. The one condition of Sárku's faith is the survival of the conscious intellect — the ego — which must continue to live and have awareness even in the sepulchre. The other demands of the body do not persist after death, but if the intellect has cognition throughout all eternity, it can witness and savour the final victory of the Dark. Sárku is represented as a mighty serpentine form having five vermiform heads, each with a gaping, suckered maw. A mass of coiling tentacles hangs beneath each head, and these bear some symbol of the grave: bones, rotted cerements, skulls, and corpse-candles. His emblem is a wavy black or copper line (Sárku loves copper and dislikes iron) with a red circle at one end, signifying the Eternal Victory of the Worm. His realm is the necropolis, and there he aids those who serve his undead legions, those who worship the intellect and care little for the needs of the body, and those who send the living down to him in the unutterable stillness of death. He has 108 Aspects. Priests and priestesses of Sárku wear earth-brown robes, whitened armour (females don a bodice of grave-hued cloth), and headdresses of skulls. His clergy (and also his ordinary worshippers on festival days) also paint their faces with white pigment in the form of grinning skulls.
5. Dlamélish: Greed-Eyed Lady of Fleshly Joys, Mistress of Demons, and Obsidian Princess of the Damned. In many ways this Goddess is the antithesis of Sárku. She seeks the existential reality of the Now — changes as they occur at every moment, and the pleasures and pains of sense perception. She desires to attain the heights of ecstasy, the depths of sensuality, and the purely egotistic joy of perceived experience. She is the ultimate hedonist who cares nothing for others or for the "good" of society. Only the self matters, and although she follows Hrü'ŭ in seeking ultimate Change, yet she must savour every moment along the way. Her depictions are varied: a wanton maiden, an *Aridáni* warrioress glorying in the sensual pleasures of carnage, a bestial, obese human female with a head like a sort of monstrous crocodile, etc. Her insignia consist of an emerald green drop falling into a silver oval. Dlamélish aids those who seek sensual pleasure and immediate gratification, those who engage in her orgies and her ceremonies in the service of the Demons of the Dark, and those who are hedonistic, selfish, and uncaring of others. She has 101 Aspects, plus some others which are known only to the inner Circles of her temple, it is said. Her priestesses dress in revealing and lascivious robes of emerald green, wear tiaras of silver, and hang tiny silver bells from their wrists and ankles. Her priests defy description: dissolute youths, depraved old men, capering legions of the perverted, ox-like young men who serve at her orgies, etc., all in some version of her emerald and silver livery.

The ten Cohorts of the Gods are called Hlimékluyal. The five who serve the Lords of Stability are:

1. Dráthe Uncaring, Cohort of Hnálla, Singer of the Hymns of the Gods. This deity is perhaps the most difficult to comprehend. He represents the total disinterest of the Perfect Light in the phenomenal things of this universe. What occurs here, says Drá, has no relevance to Reality, and the true goal must not be obscured by the tawdry veils of sense perception. Drá is thus the closest thing to a "mystical" deity to be found on Tekumel. His followers affect complete indifference to this world, and while this may be only an affectation on the part of most of his adherents, the "perfect ones" of this sect train themselves to care nothing for their surroundings or even for their lives. They sit or lie as they are placed by the priests within the temples, are force-fed, and ignore hunger, thirst, pain, and all of the sensations of this existence. Drá is shown as a lumpish, unkempt, and unremarkable man of middle years, dresses in a tattered and dirty robe. His emblem is a

pair of circles connected horizontally by a wavy line, symbolising the transitory nature of the universe and the briefness of existence from one end of time to the other. Aside from his one task of singing the Hymns of Hnálla in the Halls of Paradise, Drá has no part to play. He does not even care enough to aid his worshippers, and if he does so, it is done carelessly and sloppily. The Engsvanyáli world-view seems to require this deity as a counterbalance to the glorious and ever-advancing Perfection of his supernal Master. He has no known Aspects. His priests and priestesses wear particoloured robes of white and tan, a variety of turban-like headdresses. The true ascetics of Drá's sect wear nothing at all.

2. Chegárra: the Hero-King, Swordsman of Glory, Victorious Lord, and Cohort of Karakán. He is "Courage Applied": the experienced warrior of many battles, the resourceful ruler, the sagacious statesman, and the patron of armies. Chegárra is shown as a bearded soldier of early middle years, fully armoured, and often seen striding forth over the bodies of slain demons. His emblem is a doubleheaded silver axe. He aids warriors in battle, generals who marshal the forces of Stability, those who face the Dark courageously, and those who rule justly and well. He has 33 Aspects. Priests of Chegárra wear red and white chequered robes over silver armour and helmets of bronze or gold. He accepts as priestesses only those women who fight as *Aridáni* warriors, and these dress much like the priests of their sect, although there are differences of detail.
3. Keténgku: the Many-Eyed, Knower of All, Master of Scrolls, Cohort of Thúmis. He is "Wisdom Applied": the patron of scholars, physicians, apothecaries, scribes, architects, engineers, and all those who use knowledge for the benefit of society. He is represented as a bald, seated scribe holding a book-scroll open upon his knee. He has four faces, however, one looking in each of the four cardinal directions, symbolising his omniscience. His emblem is a stylised silver eye. He aids those who study the mysteries, who use technology and the arts for the purpose of Stability, those who learn languages and travel abroad, and those who combat the egotistical doctrines of Ksárul. He has 27 Aspects. Keténgku's priests wear grey and white robes and skullcaps of cerulean blue. His priestesses are similarly garbed but have blue girdles of stiffened cloth or leather studded all over with many little silver eyes.
4. Dilinála: the Lovely Maiden of the Turquoise Crown, Aid of Lovers, Solace to the Weary, Handmaiden of Avánthe and Spiritual Daughter of Hnálla. She is "Woman as Woman Alone": femininity without the polarity of male versus female. She is the innocent virgin, the beloved daughter, the loyal sister, the platonic confidante to whom a lover may tell his yearnings, the wise woman of many years, and even woman in love with woman. She is woman looking inward into herself. Dilinála is represented as a demure maiden of great beauty and chaste purity holding out her hands to comfort the worshipper. Her emblem is a hand extended, palm down, worked in silver and blue upon a ligther blue field. She has only 9 known Aspects. Her priestesses wear blue and white robes and small tiaras of emeralds, turquoises, or other blue gems. She accepts no priests into her order, and her rituals are barred to males.
5. Qón: the Ancient One of Pleasures, Guardian of the Gates of Hell Against Those Who Would Come Forth, and Cohort of Belkhánu. Qón protects the soul against the perils of the Hereafter, and he also aids those who are attacked by the powers of the Dark. He is depicted as a six-legged beast-like creature, with a canine head and an open mouth filled with fangs. In his forepaws he bears two carved maces, and on his brow shines the double circle emblem of Hnálla. His symbol is a stylised mace set vertically to ward off the Dark. He has 19 Aspects. Priests and priestesses of Qón wear yellow and white robes, *Chlén*-hide masks representing the deity's long canine jaws, and a thin gauze veil which conceals their faces.

The five Hlimékluyal of the Lords of Change are:

1. Wurú: the Unnameable, He Who Appears Where Evil Dwells, the Many-Legged Serpent of Gloom, and Cohort of Hrü'ü. He is the active antagonist of Stability, and he aids those who promote Change and overturn permanency. He is pictured as a great serpent with many centipedal legs, antenna, and six great staring eyes. His symbol is a stylised serpent's head with the tongue protruding. He aids those who combat the minions of Stability, sending his serpent-like minions to help his devotees or creating darknesses to blind the foe. He has 18 Aspects. Both priests and priestesses of Wurú wear particoloured mauve and purple robes and hoods of black velvet. His priests carry slender stiletto-like daggers which are frequently poisoned.
2. Chiténg: Lord of Red Spouting Flame, Drinker of Blood, Reaper of Cities, and Cohort of Vimúhla. This deity spreads death by the Flame, as does his Master, but he is more oriented towards group action: he is the patron of the armies of Change, the besieger of cities, and the overseer of torments. Chiténg is depicted as a mighty warrior covered with lizard-like scales and with a lizard's head. He has two huge opalescent eyes, and flames pour from his maw. He is often shown in battle wielding his terrible two-handed sword, "Bloodsong." His emblem is also a stylised two-handed sword. Chiténg aids those who combat Stability, those who besiege and devastate and plunder, and those who inflict atrocities. His devotees are often employed by the Five Empires as professional torturers and executioners. His has 20 Aspects. His priests wear orange and purple robes, full armour, and helmets of iron. He accepts as priestesses only those women who are hardened *Aridáni* warriors and who are lovers of cruelty and bloodlust. These dress in costumes similar to their male counterparts.
3. Grugánu: the Knower of Spells, Black Sword of Doom, Reader of the Incantations of the Dark, and Cohort of Ksárul. He combs the Planes for knowledge and sorcery which may aid his Lord, and he aids Ksárul's followers in their quests for personal knowledge. He may provide his special devotees with magical devices and spells. He is shown as a hulking anthropoidal half-human figure, mostly concealed in black draperies, and with a head like a small, vicious, buzzard-like bird or serpent. His emblem is an open hand with claw-like fingers outspread as if to seize or strike. He has 27 Aspects. Priests and Priestesses of Grugánu wear black and purple robes and tall headdresses of soft black velvet with his symbol worked upon them in silver.
4. Durritlámish: the Black Angel of the Putrescent Hand, He of the Rotted Face, Opener of Catacombs, and Cohort of Sárku. It is he who marshals the undead and serves his Master in the places of the Dark. He is depicted as a rotted corpse seated upon a throne of bones, holding a bowl in one hand from which smoke rises. His emblem is a stylised image of this bowl, the legendary Vessel of the Vision of the World in which all of the Skeins of Destiny of every creature in the universe throughout all time and space may be seen. He aids those who serve the undead, those who join with the dwellers of the Dark, those who protect the tombs and necropolises, and those who sacrifice their victims to him in the Orgy of Inimitable Demise. He has 16 Aspects. His priests and priestesses wear brown and purple robes, brown lacquered armour (or leather bodices in the case of the females), and skullfaced headdresses. His clergy also paint their faces grey to resemble corpses.
5. Hrihávyal: the Dancing Maiden of Temptation, Harlot of the Five Worlds, Mistress of the Thirty-Two Unspeakable Acts, and Cohort of Dlamélish. Hrihávyal outdoes even her Mistress as the supreme orgiast. She is the patroness of the ancient Mysteries (which date back to Bednálljan

times but were made part of her rituals during the Engsvanyáli period), and members of her Inner Temple may witness — or join, not always willingly — performances of her Unspeakable Acts in her secret shrines in certain of the Underworlds. The last of these Acts is said to be a sacrifice of the celebrants to a demon while at the heights of sexual ecstasy. Outsiders are prohibited from these rituals, however. Hrihávyal is also the patroness of gambling, and one of her Aspects is Niyunén, the Giver of Unlooked-For Wealth. She is pictured as a voluptuous dancing maiden holding a curved dagger. Her emblem is a vertical silver oval with a wavy emerald line drawn horizontally through it. Hrihayal aids those who engage in public debauchery, those who are given to greed and avarice, and those who serve her Mysteries. She has 34 known Aspects, but it is said that her Inner Temple venerates several more. Her priestesses wear diaphanous robes of green and purple, anklets and bracelets of silver chain, and headdresses of silver shaped liked coiled serpents. Her priests, like those of Dlamélish, are a motley lot. They go garbed in green and purple robes, tunics, or kilts, wear silver headdresses carven in a variety of fantastic conceits, and bear obscenely decorated staffs of power.

Every city, town, and larger village in Tsolyánu, Mu'ugalavyá, and Yán Kór possesses temples to all twenty of the deities. Certain Gods and Cohorts are more popular in some regions than in others, however. In Tsolyánu, Hnálla and Karakán are esteemed throughout the land but are strongest in the central regions along the Ms súma River. Avánthe is similar. Thúmis is especially powerful in Páya Gupá, Béy Sú, and in Sokátis. The shrines of Belkhánu are everywhere since his clergy are encharged with the funerals of the devotees of the Lords of Stability. The Temple of Hrü'ü is mightiest in Púrdimal, Mekú, and Mrelú but has strengths elsewhere as well. Ksárul is venerated in Purdimal and Mrelú also. Important shrines to Ksárul are found in Urmish, Jakálla, Penóm, and Sokátis. Sárku is almost sole master of the Kraá hills and the City of Sárku. He is also patron deity of the Ito family of the Chakas, and he has lesser centres in Sokátis, Jaikalór, and in Urmish. Vimúhla has two very powerful foci: the west, particularly Tumíssa, Chéne Hó, and Khirgár; and the east around the city of Fasíltum. He is also the most powerful deity of Mu'ugalavyá. Worshippers of Dlamélish are found all along the Ms súma River from aboveBéy Sú down to her great sanctuaries at Jakálla and Thráya. The temples of the Cohorts tend to be powerful in the same centres as the Gods they serve.

One more feature must be discussed before turning to the temples of other lands. Within each Tsolyáni priesthood there are many factions. They are not monumental, unified, and homogeneous organisations by any means. There are liberal and conservative factions, secret societies, political groups, and parties which follow this or that charismatic leader. Only a few examples can be given here. The Temple of Thúmis, for example, is dominated by the Brotherhood of Supernal Wisdom, which holds that Stability must triumph through the acquisition of knowledge, strong political action, and even missionary zeal -- but not through violence. Smaller factions within Thúmis clergy argue that the temple should adopt a more militant stance, while still others urge no involvement in political life whatsoever. The Pure Light Society of the Temple of Hnálla supports Thumis' more pacifistic factions, while the Girdle of Purity Society of the Temple of Avánthe and the Sword of Righteousness Clan of the Temple of Karakán both desire stronger measures and an active role. The Temple of Belkhánu is split between the Sect of the Golden Sphere of Eventual Transcendancy, which presses for a middle course between activism and pacifism, and the Group of the Amber Glow, which devotes itself to theological and doctrinal studies and has little to do with the concerns of this world.

The temples of Change exhibit similarly various views. The Temple of Ksárul has three major factions: the dreaded Ndálu Clan, which seeks power through political intrigue; the Society of the Blue Light, which gathers knowledge for its personal and collective power; and the Refulgent Blue Curtain Society, which keeps its wisdom secret until it can be used to return Ksárul to supreme authority over the Gods. The Temple of Hrü'ü is dominated by the Cusp of Night Society, which supports the Ndálu Clan. Sárku's priesthood is split between the Copper Tomb Society, another ally of the Ndálu Clan, and the Brotherhood of the Victory of the Worm, which cares little for this world and devotes itself to the rituals of the catacombs. The Temple of Vimúhla is partially controlled by the Incandescent Blaze Society, which urges violent action and intrigue but has little in common with the activists of the "Dark Trinity" (Hrü'ü, Ksárul, and Sárku) and instead sometimes collaborates with Karakán's Sword of Righteousness Clan since both support military expansionism. The Temple of Dlamélish is divided into several small factions: some are devoted to her rituals and the service of the Demons (e.g. the Order of Argent); others desire only to practice her hedonistic sensualism (e.g. the Society of the Emerald Radiance); and a few (e.g. the Society of the Emerald and Silver Crown) are activists who work with their counterparts in the other temples of the Change -- or even with Avánthe's Girdle of Purity Society. The temples of the Cohorts contain brances of most of these factions, as well as a few special organisations of their own (e.g. Chiténg's Company of the Orange Band, which joins with the Temple of Hrihávyal in sadistic orgies; Ketengku's Staff of Mercy Society, which is comprised of healers, physicians, and apothecaries; and Dilinála's Sisters of the Cerulean Flower, an activist group which collaborates with Karakán's more militant elements and is made up of *Aridáni* warrior women).

The temples of Yán Kór, Milumanayá, and Saá Allaqí are more evenly distributed, smaller, more autonomous from city to city, and less wealthy. They thus command less power and influence. Only Pijéna has anything like a "state religion": the priesthood of She Who Is Not Seen, a local variant of Avánthe, has supplanted the old secular rulers. Other important religious centres include: the ancient temple of the Lord of Sacrifice, a form of Vimúhla, on Vridu Isle (hex 5714); the sanctuary of the Priests of Light in Saá Allaqí (hex 4734), a secretive sect which reveres a manifestation of Hnálla (perhaps with admixtures of Thúmis and Karakán?) but which permits no outsiders to attend its rituals or join its ranks; the Temple of the Sea-God in the town of Ashékka (metathesised to Aqésha by Tsolyáni geographers; hex 4908), a deity who is possibly a counterpart of Karakán but who holds sway over ships and the sea; and, of course, the Mad One of Hlíkku, who may be an amalgam of Hrü'ü and Ksárul, one of the "Great Demons" and not an Engsvanyáli deity at all, or even a "Pariah God" (see below). Otherwise the Gods of the north are almost identical to those of the Tsolyani pantheon, although their names and rituals do vary somewhat.

The religion of Mu'ugalavyá is much the same as that of Tsolyánu. Vimúhla is predominant amongst the Gods, however. His temples are wealthier, and his clergy receive certain preferences. Aside from Pavár's twenty deities, the noble clans of Mu'ugalavayá venerate another divinity: the beast-headed Hrsh, whose primary shrine lies on the forbidden island of Mu'úgalla (hex 5024). Some believe Hrsh to be yet another great inerdimensional being, while others hold that he is an amalgam of Vimúhla, Karakán, and possibly Ksárul. The priests of Hrsh keep their theology to themselves.

The Goddess Shiringgáyi dominates all others in Salarvyá. She is apparently a combination of Avánthe and Dlamélish, and her temples are found all the way from Chamél out to Mimoré on the eastern ocean. Shrines to Pavár's other deities are indeed present in every town and city, and there are a few localised divinities as well: e.g. Black Qárqa, a particularly repellent form of Sárku venerated by the lords of Tsa'avtúlgu (map 3, hex 2510). The priesthoods of Salarvyá are powerful but perhaps not as all-pervasive and wealthy as those of the other four Empires. Only the Mreshshél-Átl family, the hereditary guardian of Shiringgáyi's sanctuary on the shores of Lake Mrissútl (hex 2430), exhibit a fanaticism equal to that of the inhabitants of the City of Sárku or the Vriddi of Fasíltum.

The most divergent pantheon of all of the Five Empires is found in theocratic Livyánu. The Livyáni Shadow Gods are kept shrouded in mystery; their attributes are often deliberately misrepresented to foreigners; and their hierarchies are only distantly polite to the priesthoods of other lands. Whether these deities are the same as or different brom the Gods of Tsolyanu is thus a moot point. All that is certain is that interplanar magic and the summoning of "Demons" make up a large part of their rituals. The Livyáni never expound their tenets to outsiders, and this has gained them the reputation of being devious, secretive, and untrustworthy -- a name which many may not

deserve. Nevertheless, it is commonly believed a Livyáni first serves his cunning Shadow Gods and only then gives his loyalty to any other master.

Only the following Shadow Gods are known:

1. Qame'él: the chief deity of the pantheon, according to the priests at Tsámra. In form, he is said to be a huge, lumpish, beast-like entity, horned and with a long proboscis. He is worshipped by the noble classes in and around Tsámra but is not popular elsewhere in Livyánu. He is said to be an amalgam of Thúmis and Ksárul.

Shadowed One: he (it?) is revered all over Livyánu and his gigantic temples at Tsámra and Tsúpil Hláya. His form is unknown, and fragmentary information indicates that he is a combination of Hnálla and possibly Hrü'ü.

3. Kirrinéb: this Goddess is the counterpart of both Avánthe and Dlamélish (and is thus very like the Salarvyáni Shiringgáyi). She has a violent side, however, since she favours human sacrifices and is the patroness of several Livyáni army units.
4. Vrusáemaz: A many-limbed dark being akin to Wurú, he is the wanderer of the many hells of the Livyáni Afterworld, a deity of darkness and sorcery.
5. Guodái: he is human in form, a martial divinity similar to Chegárra and possibly Chité. Guodái is the patron of soldiers, administrators, and the nobility.
6. Ru'ungkáno: this deity is probably the counterpart of Vimúhla (with aspects of Karakán and Ksárul). His rituals involve fire, and his devotees exhibit tiny burn scars all over their bodies. He is most influential at Sraón and also in the Tlashte Range where his great temple stands.
7. The Horned One of Secrets: probably another variant of Hrü'ü with an admixture of Ksárul, this deity's ceremonies centre around sorcery and interplanar travel. His temple at Laigás is extremely powerful, and his priests officiate the annual New Year's festival in Tsámra (called "the Opening of the Sun").
8. The Lost One of the Sea: this deity (whose gender is uncertain) combines the attributes of Dlamélish, Avánthe, and Thúmis (!) with a tradition of association with the things of the sea. This divinity also has an extensive temple complex at Laigás.
9. Quyó: this Goddess is similar to Sárku. She is the Walker of the Demon Planes and the Mistress of the Grave. Her shrine at Heméktu is very ancient and much revered. The "rituals below" of most Livyáni funerals are celebrated by her clergy.
10. Ndárka: this God is a combination of Belkhánu and Qón. His powers relate to the Afterlife, rebirth, and also to funerals (where his priests perform the "rituals above" (cf. Quyo). Interestingly enough, Ndárka is also the patron of crop fertility and "the Resurrected One" whose return to life is commemorated each year at harvest time. He is very popular with farmers and peasants, and little clay images of this four-armed humanoid deity are buried in every field at the time of sowing. He has major temples at Farshá and Hráis.
11. The Sea-Goddess of Kakársha: she is possibily related to Avánthe but has special control over the sea and its creatures. She is the patroness of sailors, travellers, and the inhabitants of Kakársh and Sraón. Livyáni ship captains always propitiate her with a sacrifice of wine, blood, and water before setting sail.
12. Kikumársha: a close counterpart of Ksárul, this deity's doctrines involve both sorcery and the use of knowledge. He is also the patron of music, art, the dance — and strangely enough, of archery. Kikumársha is called "the Trickster of the Gods," and his exploits are the subjects of innumerable legends. Most of his tricks are anything but humorous, however. There is a large temple to him at Sraón, others at Nufersh, Falli, and also at Tsamra.
13. The One of Fears: nothing is known of the attributes of this deity, who is the patron of the forbidden city of Dlásh. It is said he (she? it?) is akin to both Hrü'ü and Vimúhla.

Temples to the twenty Tsolyáni deities, to Hrsh, and to the other Gods of the Five Empires are permitted only within the foreigners' quarters in Livyánu. No foreigners are allowed to witness the ceremonies of the Shadow Gods, and no Livyáni enters the shrines in the foreigners' quarter. When travelling abroad, however, a Livyáni may adopt the faith of a close counterpart of his own deity.

The smaller nations display a wide range of religious tenets and organisations. The N'lüss worship Vimúhla and Chiténg, being descendants of the Dragon Warriors. The Ghatóni have a host of "nature gods" (e.g. the winds, the rain, the sun, etc.) which they sometimes identify with likely counterparts in the Tsolyáni pantheon. The islanders of Tsolei worship local spirits inherent in rocks, caves, odd-shaped stones, and the sea; they are also heavily missionised by Livyáni and Mu'ugalavyáni priests. The Pechéni revere the Seven Deities of the Rising Peaks: Thúmis, Karakán-Vimúhla, Avánthe-Dlamélish, Ksárul, Sárku-Belkhánu, and two unidentified gods: Quóth the Many-Eyed, and the warrior-hero, Nyésset of the Pinnacle. The sailors and merchant princes of Háida Pakála raise obelisks to She Who Strides the Wind (a form of Avánthe-Dlamélish), and this same Goddess is called Mrettén, the Goddess Who Walks Upon the Sea, in the Nyémesel Isles. The villagers of Jánnu and Kilalámmu make yearly pilgrimages to squat hilltop shrines (said to contain variants of the Engsvanyáli deities) — and refuse to speak to anyone they meet on the way, no matter how great the provocation. The faiths of the far northeast tend to be full of patriarchal father-gods, heroes, champions, and fertility goddesses — but these are underlaid with a darker, older, and more morbid strain which may date back to the pre-Engsvanyáli deities of Mihállu and the Plains of Glass. From Chayákku over through Nuru'ún one finds variants of the Two Brothers, Aridzó and Heshuél. These deities fought over their father's patrimony, and one was killed. But here the traditions diverge: the peoples of Chayákku, Péncha Nagál, Píltu Dasáru, and Ssrá Áb Tsáya all hold that it was Aridzó, the brother who was faithful to his father's commands, who died, while farther east it is Heshuél who was slain. This schism has resulted in much political and religious friction over the millenia. The scholars of Engsvan hla Ganga took Aridzó to be a form of Hnálla-Karakán and Héshuel as Hrü'ü-Vimúhla, but neither identification fits completely. Many related myths cannot be accomodated within Pavár's theology at all: e.g. Váris, the logical counterpart of Avánthe-Dlamélish, is first married to Aridzó; after his death (or Heshuél's in the other version), she is espoused to the other brother and bears him three children (the ancestors of the nobility, the warrior class, and the common folk, respectively). But she later leaves him to marry Sún, the Lord of Death, who may correspond to Sárku-Belkhánu, and gives birth to offspring who become the animals, the semi-intelilgent races, and the mysterious Tlónu, who are non-physical demonic beings (perhaps a dim memory of the Mihálli?). All of this tends to leave the Tsolyáni theologians quite confused. It can only be noted that natives of the western states of the northeast (those in which it is Aridzo who was killed) tend to join the temples of Hnálla, Karakán, and Avánthe when settling in Tsolyánu, while those who come from Mudállu and Nuru'ún prefer the sects of Hrü'ü, Vimúhla, and Dlamélish. Very few become members of the other Engsvanyáli faiths.

The people of Mihállu follow Pavár's twenty deities much as do the Tsolyáni since this region was an old Engsvanyáli colony. The tribal folk of Rannálu, however, venerate a single mother-goddess, roughly equivalent to the Salarvyáni cult of Shiringgáyi. In the far west, the tribes of M'mórcha andNmartúsha also worship an archaic mother-goddess, but her role is largely passive, and supernatural action occurs through the agencies of the ancestor-spirits, certain "nature deities," and a variety of mythological figures. The half-human Fungus Eaters of northern M'mórcha (Sec. 1.424) are totally devoted to the Mu'ugalavyáni cult-deity, Hrsh.

The religions of the nonhumans are another matter. The Pé Chói, the Shén, the Páchi Léi, the Pygmy Folk, and the Swamp Folk all quickly select one of Pavár's deities if they reside in a human enclave. The Pé Chói are most easily able to do this since their "Father of Nests" includes the whole range of the Lords of Stability, and their "Black Old One" similarly encompasses the Lords of Change. A Pé Chói may thus join any of the human priesthoods. The Shén are much

the same: amongst their many deities, "the One of Eggs" and "the One Who Rends" are predominant, and these can be identified with Stability and Change, respectively. The Pá́chi Lé́i are also dualistic, but their N'r̃g exhibits the attributes only of Hnálla and Thúmis, while his (its?) counterpart, Á'lsh, is an amalgam of Hrü'ű and Ksárul. A Pá́chi Lé́i who resides in a human land thus usually joins one of just these four temples. Both the Pygmy Folk and the Swamp Folk possess complex pantheons of their own, but they join almost any of the human sects if they live abroad for any length of time.

The Tinalíya say that their monotheistic deity has no interest whatsoever in this world. They are well aware of the powers of the beings humans call "Gods," however, and they thus join human sects occasionally for purely cynical and pragmatic reasons. The religion of the Hlá́ka is incomprehensible to man: it involves the placement of coloured stones in elaborate geometric patterns upon a flat mountain top at certain astronomically predicted times. A Hlá́ka may also adopt the faith of a human comrade while abroad, but many temples bar the Hlá́ka from their services because of this race's habit of constant chattering and badinage. Indeed, the Hlá́ka consider human solemnity about religious matters to be funny! The Urunén have three deities: a male-female procreator, named Diulé́, corresponds to Avánthe-Dlamélish and is the most popular; another, called Almílo, is the counterpart of all of the other Lords of Stability; and the third, Wasúro, includes all of the attributes of the remaining Lords of Change. The Urunén also have a variety of "small gods": house spirits, nature spirits, etc.

The Ahoggyá are unique in that they seem to have to religion at all. Emperor Durúmu "the Copper Blade of Sárku" (1,747-1,809 A.S.) once sent a party of scholars to investigate the deities of this species, but their conclusion was that the Ahoggyá had none whatsoever. The Emperor then classed the Ahoggyá as "animals" for citizenship and census purposes, a step which did not endear him to these pugnacious creatures.

The religions of the Mihálli and the Nyaggá are not recorded. The same is true of the faiths (if any) of the inimical species (the Hlutrgú, Hlüss, Shunned Ones, and Ssú), although it is certain that whatever or whoever their gods may be, they are uniformly and unalterably opposed to man and his allies.

There are also a few deities who are not part of any of the theologies of Tékumel — human or nonhuman. These are the "Pariah Gods." Their tenets are said to be inimical to BOTH Stability and Change, and they are feared as much by the hostile races as by mankind. Records indicate that they desire either total domination — the enslavement of every atom and every being, no matter how small — over this Plane, or that they wish to annihilate this Plane entirely from the fabric of space-time. The Lords of Stability work towards the ultimate stasis of Hnálla's Perfect Light; the Lords of Change seek a cosmos in which all remains transient and ephemeral; the goals of the Pariah Gods are opposed to both of these objectives: complete and eternal mastery, or else the extirpation of all being.

The Pariah Gods have had access to Tékumel's Plane throughout historical times (cf. Secs. 1.330, 1.340, 1.350, and 1.370). Their worship has been put down, however, with a zeal unparalleled elsewhere in history: their temples have been razed, their names hacked from the inscriptions, and their worshippers converted or exterminated. There are thus no traces of the Pariah Gods anywhere in the Five Empires or even in the remotest wildernesses of the continent (although one sometimes wonders about the legends of Bayársha . . . ?). Artifacts of these deities are occasionally turned up here and there: a coin with the circle-and-dot of the One Other, an inlaid bone knife covered with squirming runes, a steatite seal carven with grotesque, capering figures, etc. With their shrines destroyed, there are only a few entrance points for them into this Plane. It is said that a temple exists to the Goddess of the Pale Bone (now superstitiously referred to only as "She Who Cannot Be Named") below gloomy Pá́rdimal, and there is another beneath Ch'ó́chi in Mu'ugalavyá. Smaller shrines have also been reported in others of the ancient Underworlds. The cult of "The One Other" plays a rather obscure part in the legend of Ksárul (Sec. 1.340). A great temple complex devoted to this deity once existed in the lands south of Shényu (Sec. 1.424) and his (its?) worship apparently continued down into the Second Imperium, as is attested by the records of Emperor Trákonel I "the Blazing Light" (139-195 A.S.), whose inscriptions speak of the obliteration of "The One Other's" followers and shrines near the ruins of Hmákuyal in 176 A.S. Much less is known of the curious deity called "The One Who Is," a being said to lie in eternal imprisonment in a place with the intriguing name of "The Darkness Below the World." It is said that if this being is unchained, "the skies will crumple like a cloth crushed within a fist, the day will become night forever, and even the earth will cry out in anguish as it witnesses the toppling of the vertiable thrones of the mighty Gods." Needless to say, if there be any devotees of these alien and fearsome beings still extant, they must remain concealed and keep their doctrines as secret as the tomb.

1.620. THE NATURE OF "MAGIC"

Almost all magic on Tekumel is based upon the drawing of power from the Planes Beyond and the shaping of this force into either matter or energy by the powers of the mind or through the aid of certain devices (cf. Sec. 1.320). The "skin of reality" which separates one Plane from another is rather thin over much of the planet, and it is much easier on Tekumel to "reach through" and tap this inchoate, primal power than elsewhere in the cosmos.

Any discussion of magic first requires a brief disquisition on the ontological and eschatological nature of life itself. The Engsvanyáli theologians state that every living entity consists of five parts or "selves," each of which has a separate identity and a certain degree of independence from the rest. The first of these "selves" is the *Bákte*, the physical body. This is that part of a being which is born, lives, grows, dies, and returns to dust. The second "self" is the *Chusétl*, the Shadow-Self: this is the sleeping counterpart of the waking person, the wanderer in dreams and illusions, and the far-traveller of astral projection. When the individual dies, the Shadow-Self perishes as well. The third of these parts is the *Hlákme*, the conscious mind, the intellect, the "I-ness" of the being. After death, the *Hlákme* remains in the tomb, hovering near its bodily shell forever in a dreamless sleep unless returned to the corpse by necromancy. The fourth "self" is the *Pedhétl*, the "Enemy." This is a mindless, inchoate bundle of raw instincts, lusts, fears, and desires. It is the source of all emotion and passion and the motivating energy behind all action and ambition. The *Pedhétl* has been likened to a vessel which holds the individual's measure of other-planar power; it is the reservoir which one taps when one casts a spell. When the being dies, the *Pedhétl* returns to the "sea" of force which lies between the Planes. The fifth "self" is the *Báletl*, the Spirit-Soul. It is this part of a being which journeys on after death to the Isles of the Excellent Dead and thence to the Farther Shores of the Paradises of Teretané. As it travels, the Spirit-Soul sheds its burden of identity and memory in order to be born anew upon ever more distant planes of consciousness. The spells of the medium are thus not efficacious if the Spirit-Soul has been too long upon its pilgrimage: it is impossible to contact one who has been dead for more than six months, although some notable exceptions are recorded.

Of all of the five "selves," only the last has any final goal or destination. There are those who claim that the Spirit-Soul undergoes a spiral or a cycle of rebirths before emerging again as an entity upon this Plane. Others hold that the Paradises of Teretané are the final haven, while yet others speak of an eventual amalgamation into the Perfect Light of Hnálla or the Ultimate Dark of Hrü'ű — whatever the Spirit-Soul sought in life. Note that there is no concept of "sin" or "damnation" in this system. The priests of Belkhánu (the most reliable authorities on the Afterlife) do state, however, that the many stages of the Afterlife are but further "bubble-universes" within the sea of Being, and that not only the Isles and the Paradises but also the special heavens and hells established by the Gods for those devotees who have exceptionally pleased or offended them are but Planes like this one. The eventual destination is unknown. Further details of these concepts may be found in "The Book of Ebon Bindings" (Barker, op. cit., pp. 14-16).

Each of the twenty deities (as well as the pantheons of other lands and of the nonhuman races) lays stress upon certain of the "selves" and their combinations. Hnálla and Hrü'ű share an interest in the Spirit-Soul and the Shadow-Self. The eventual destination of the former is what matters, however, and not the journey itself. It is Belkhánu who is concerned with the many stages experienced by each Spirit-Soul along the way. Sárku focusses upon the Mind here in this Plane, and he lays no claim upon the Spirit-Soul. For the devotees of the Lord of Worms, thus, the rejoining of the Mind and the Body in

the tomb is nothing horrid or grisly but rather a necessary means of preserving the personality and intellect in a conscious state throughout all time. Dlamélish stresses the combination of the Body and the *Pedhétl*: her concern is not with eternity at all, but with the existential, hedonistic Now, the attainment of immediate and personal gratification. Avánthe seeks a smooth flow of being from birth to death, the joy of companionship, symbiosis with nature, and an end to selfish individualism. She thus prefers a gentler, milder focus upon the Body and the *Pedhétl*, with a leavening of the powers of the Mind. The Lords of War, heroic Karakán and fierce Vimúhla, again combine the Body and the *Pedhétl*, the former in order to establish the goals of a courageous society, and the latter to attain the matchless ecstasy of self-immolation in the purifying Flame. Both Thúmis and Ksárul emphasise the combination of the Mind with the Shadow-Self; the former preaches wisdom, knowledge, and far-ranging experience for the cohesion and development of society, and the latter commands these same things for personal, egotistic goals. The doctrines of the Cohorts are invariably quite close to those of the Gods they serve.

All of the above provides a background for an understanding of the link between the *Pedhétl* and the practice of "magic." The *Pedhétl* is the beaker into which the energies of the Planes Beyond are distilled. Each being — indeed, every physical object — is created with a certain capacity, and this neither increases nor decreases (except under such unusual circumstances as the application of certain spells or the "draining" of the *Pedhétl* by various parasitical, vampirish creatures). Both the casting of spells and the ability to resist hostile magic depend upon an entity's congenital capacity to utilise the "psychic force" contained within his *Pedhétl*. Those whose *Pedhétl* is too small cannot employ sorcery: a certain modicum of other-planar power is needed to spark any spell. A being with a more capacious *Pedhétl* can fill this with energy and create "magical" effects. This, however, demands a considerable degree of development of certain other faculties as well.

There are two branches of "magic" on Tekumel: psychic and ritual. Psychic powers have long been recognised by mankind, but they have only been developed to their present high level during the millenia which followed the Time of Darkness. This was partially due to minor mutations, natural selection, and some help from those nonhuman races more psychically inclined than man. It was further aided by institutionalised study and practice over the centuries. Mental exercises are taught in all of the temple schools, and promising students are encouraged to use their abilities. Psychic magic relies mainly upon the talents of the user himself, and teachers speak of "using another set of muscles." In order to work, however, a psychic spell still requires a little power from the Planes Beyond as a sort of "catalytic booster." Without this, psychic results are weak and erratic, if the practitioner manages to get off a spell at all.

Ritual magic, on the other hand, is mostly powered by the forces of the Planes Beyond. The ritual sorcerer employs his knowledge, his intelligence, and certain material aids to open a channel and bring other-planar power into this dimension. The form of the spell itself shapes this raw energy and manifests it as either matter or force. A ritual spell is thus an indivisible Gestalt: a combination of a unique mind-set, gestures, vocables, attitudes, and physical augmentations (e.g. substances, diagrammes, sacrifices, etc.). A ritual spell always produces the same effect: the mage who masters a spell which produces light cannot "retune" it to bring forth water instead; for the latter he must learn a different spell.

It is important to note that a ritual spell also requires a spark of psychic energy as a catalyst. Without this, the mage's Words of Power and his ceremonies are not efficacious. (The devices of the ancients, however, do not demand any appreciable psychic talent.) Psychic magic is thus primarily a mental ability, plus a little energy from the Planes Beyond to create the effect. Ritual magic is just the reverse: it is largely other-planar power "brought through" with the aid of a modicum of psychic talent. Both the psychic spell-caster and the ritual sorcerer require a capacious *Pedhétl*. The former must also possess a strongly developed innate psychic ability, while the latter must have a powerful intellect. It is relatively common to find persons who are able to practice one branch or the other, but it is more difficult to come across individuals who have the *Pedhétl*, psychic talent, and the intellect to employ both branches. One may also occasionally meet an "idiot savant": a person with a capacious *Pedhetl* but whose meagre psychic ability and/or intellect precludes him from practicing any form of sorcery. Such individuals are often inducted into a temple and are used as "batteries" to fuel the efforts of other sorcerers operating as a group. This requires very specialised training.

The *Pedhétl*, furthermore, may become temporarily depleted through the excessive use of magic. Rest or sleep is then needed to permit more other-planar power to seep through from the Planes Beyond and replenish the vessel. Four hours of sleep or six of relaxation are recommended, although certain extremely taxing spells (e.g. the evocation of Demons) may demand as much as a week in order to bring one's *Pedhétl* back to a level where further sorcery may be attempted.

Both ritual and psychic magic have become traditionalised through centuries of trial and error. Priestly institutionalism, conservativism, and obscurantism have served to stultify the development of new and different spells. There is no "spirit of scientific investigation." Easy spells are taught first, using standard ancient textbooks, and difficult spells come later as the student gains experience. Experimentation with new or different spells is only permitted to adepts of the highest priestly or scholarly Circles. This is due not only to the crushing weight of orthodoxy but also to the very real danger of making a muddle: bringing through uncontrollable forces, inimical substances, or even hostile beings of unknown powers. Members of lower Circles who attempt innovations are severely punished, or are at the very least expelled from their orders.

The corpus of sorcery must be divided in yet another way. Many psychic and ritual spells are known to all of the temples alike. Such "old familiars" are termed "universal" spells. Some thaumaturgical procedures are restricted to certain sects, however, either because of theological doctrine or as a result of philosophical predilection. These are the "generic" spells, and they are limited to those priesthoods which have an affinity for them. For instance, the explosive Doomkill spell is taught and used only by the Temples of Karakán and Vimúhla (and their Cohorts, Chegarra and Chiténg) — and also, strangely enough, by the Temple of Hnálla. The War Gods delight in such blasting violence and it may be that Hnálla's adepts are partial to the Doomkill, perhaps, because of their association with things which create brilliant light. In contrast, a spell such as Necromantic Domination (the control of the undead) is limited to the Temples of Sárku and Ksárul, who have the most to do with such matters. "Generic" spells are not taught to the devotees of other deities, even within the same alignment of Stability or Change. It would thus be almost impossible for a worshipper of Sárku or Ksárul to be taught the Doomkill spell, or for a follower of Vimúhla to be given instruction in Necromantic Domination. The temples are jealous, conservative, and inordinately secretive about such powers.

Even more recondite are the special "temple" spells which are each priesthood's most zealously guarded treasures. Some of these are shared by the priesthoods of a God and his Cohort, but there are a few inner secrets which even this association is not enough to unlock. For example, only high adepts of the Temple of Wurú know the deadly spell called the Grey Hand. They steadfastly refuse to teach this even to adherents of the temple of their Cohort's master, Hrü'ü, in spite of all the blandishments, pressures, and inducements which the latter have brought to bear upon them. The only means of learning such a forbidden "temple" spell is to seek out a renegade priest. Such persons are both uncommon and also dangerous. Many unfrocked clergy are charlatans or possessed of imperfect knowledge, and only the most unprincipled would dare to teach an outsider a secret so potent as a high-level "temple" spell — and one so likely to deliver them over to the mercies of the ecclesiastical executioner!

The Planes Beyond contain much besides raw, malleable power. Some scholars liken the multi-dimensional space-time continuum to a mighty sea. The "water" itself is formless energy, the stuff from which Gods create universes. This is what a sorcerer taps when he casts a spell. Within this endless ocean, however, there are also other "bubbles" of three-dimensional reality much like Tékumel's own Plane. A skilled mage can sometimes open a "door," called a Nexus Point, from one bubble into another and thereby enter a new "reality." A few of these Nexus Points are relatively stable and always give access to the same other-dimensional world. Some open

onto other parts of Tékumel itself, onto Tékumel's sister planets and moons, upon other Planes where men may dwell, into other times, and even into the Planes inhabited by the dead (the Afterlife being but a series of farther Planes, as mentioned above). Most Nexus Points are impermanent and perilous to use. Some give entrance into airless voids; others roil with blazing heat or frigid cold; still others possess atmospheres deadly to man; and not a few are inhabited by beings greater or lesser than mankind. Some open into one Plane at one time and into quite a different world the next. This is perhaps due to Tékumel's rotation and its movement around its sun (which give rise to the astronomical and astrological requirements included in some spells). It is also possible that Tékumel's entire bubble universe is drifting through the multi-dimensional sea at an unknowable rate in an unguessable direction. Only the mightiest mage can thus enter a Nexus Point and be at all confident of his destination — or of his return therefrom.

The inhabitants of other bubble universes are termed *Sharétlkoi* (lit. "Demon"). Some of the lesser races of these entities are compatible with man and can be dealt with as equals. Others are inferior: semi-intelligent beings, animals, or even lower forms of life. Many are superior to mankind in certain ways, however, and others are far beyond human understanding. Each temple knows of Demon races friendly to its tenets and amenable to aid if the situation and the remuneration warrant. Each priesthood is similarly aware of races hostile to its doctrines in the Planes Beyond. The ancient texts also speak of the "Great Demons": beings of such inconceivable power that they approach the "Gods" in Pavár's sense of the word. Only a few of these latter are unequivocally friendly to mankind. To open a Nexus Point into a Plane where a hostile Great Demon dwells is to court annihilation — or, worse, to provide access to this Plane and thus to bring about terrible consequences. One can indeed evoke such Demon Lords as flaming Jnekshá'a, subtle and voracious Rü'ütlánesh, Srükárum who rules over the minions of Death, clever Tkél, and even the Lord of Lords, puissant Origób of the Tentacled Mouth. Such an evocation can only be attempted by sorcerers of the highest Circles — and then only for a reason important enough to overturn a world! Not only are such entities difficult to control, but the incantations used in summoning them demand incredible stamina, deep knowledge, rare substances, numerous sacrifices, and the joint participation of several expert evocators. Demonology is thus not taught to the rank and file, and no mere tyro will ever be permitted access to the operative texts. For further details, see "The Book of Ebon Bindings" (Barker, *op. cit., passim*).

Another feature of the network of Nexus Points is the presence of "fertile" and "barren" magical areas. The "skin of reality" is thicker in some parts of Tékumel than in others. Spells work easily in a "fertile" region, and an adept can almost feel the energies of the Planes Beyond tingling just beyond the range of sense-perception. In contrast, a "barren" area gives an impression of dead emptiness. No spell operates in such a place, and even ancient technological devices work there only once and then cannot be used again until they are returned to a more "fertile" locale. Some authors describe the "fertile" areas as "rich river valleys, in which a system of canals carries water into every field" and the "barren" regions as "deserts, wildernesses, and wastelands where no water flows." "Fertile" regions include the eastern coast of Livyánu (Tsámra is exceptionally rich in other-planar power and Nexus Points), eerie Ch'óchi in Mu'ugalavyá, the ruined city of Hmakuyál in Tsolyánu, Púrdimal, the fog-shrouded tombs of the City of Sárku, mighty Avanthár itself, the city of Hlíkku and the port of Ngakü in Yán Kór, Lake Mrissútl in Salarvyá, the Mihálli ruins of the northeast, the crumbling streets of old Jgrésh, and of course, the Crater of the Unstraightened City. As instances of "barren" areas, one may cite the Tsolél archipelago (a particularly "dead" area, magically), the Unknown Forest and the Plain of Towers to the west of Mu'ugalavyá, the mountains of northern N'lüss, the tundras of the Lorún, the Dry Bay of Ssu'úm (though not the peaks surrounding it), the coastal Protectorate of Chadara in Salarvyá, Rancháka Head on the eastern coast of the continent, the White Water Shoals, and the Ahogyyá enclave of Önmu Tlé Hlektis. All of the far northeast — from Chayákku over through Nuru'ún — is somewhat less "fertile" than average, and more energy and psychic talent are needed to cast spells there.

The metaphor of "river systems" versus "barren deserts" becomes inadequate, however, when it is seen that there are also "wandering" Nexus Points. These drift unpredictably across the face of the planet like errant gusts of wind. Although rare, they may be encountered anyplace, even in such "deserts" as Tsolél. An experienced mage can detect their presence and their proximity (within a narrow range), but even the wisest scholar cannot foretell their comings and goings. Nor can he guess their destinations.

Just as certain individuals possess the *Pedhétl*, psychic talent, and ritual skill to be good at sorcery, so are there persons who are so poor as to be "psychic dampeners." Not only are these unfortunates devoid of magical qualifications themselves, but they block the abilities of others (usually within a 3 m circle). Even an expert mage cannot cast a spell while within 1.5 m of an anti-psychic individual, and those devices of the ancients which are powered by other-planar energy either work poorly or not at all.

There are also magically "fertile" and "barren" races. The Pé Chói and the Tinalíya are exceptionally good at sorcery. The former possess a rudimentary racial telepathy which gives them a chance of detecting another intelligent entity within a 3 m range. They cannot read its thoughts, however. A Pé Chói also knows when one of his own species has died within about 5 km of himself. The Páchi Léi and the Urunén are slightly more psychic than mankind, while the Hlíaka and the Pygmy Folk are approximately man's equals. The Swamp Folk are genetically incapable of using sorcery of any kind (they may lack the *Pedhétl* — ?), although they can employ technological devices powered by other-planar energy. One individual in 50, moreover, is a "psychic dampener." The least magically-gifted are the Ahoggyá. Although this race does occasionally produce sorcerers of mediocre quality, the Ahoggyá are generally very poor magicians, and one in every 10 is a "psychic dampener." Amongest the inimical races the Hlutrgú are roughly equivalent to mankind, while the Hlüss, the Ssú, and the Shunned Ones are fearsome sorcerers. The most talented magic-users are probably the Mihálli, but their alienness and perverse whimsicality make it hard to assess the extent of their skills.

All humans are homogeneous so far as sorcery is concerned, even if they hail from a magically "barren" region. There is nothing to prevent a N'lüss or a native of Tsolél from studying sorcery in one of the Five Empires, although this art cannot be learned or taught in his own country. Relatively "fertile" regions outside the Five Empires also produce "shamans": tribal priests and sorcerers whose powers vary somewhat from those of their counterparts in the great temples of Tsolyánu, etc. The basis for shamanistic magic is the same as for the "high culture" priesthoods: other-planar power. The process of diffusion has carried the fundamentals of sorcery out to the remotest corners of the great continent over the millenia — and beyond, to lands across the seas. Young tribal shamans often come to study the institutionalised magic of the Five Empires, moreover, since the most organised and advanced knowledge can be had there. They usually join a temple close to their own personal beliefs and become priests or lay-priests. Many choose to remain in their new homes and are eventually accepted into the society. A few return to their own lands to practice their skills amongst their peoples. The flow of knowledge is not entirely in one direction, of course: tribal shamans occasionally bring adaptations or modifications of known spells and, very rarely, completely new ones. The priesthoods of the Five Empires are thus not averse to teaching them.

The technological devices of the ancients have been alluded to above. These come in many forms: mechanical, electrical, electronic, gravitronic, etc. Most such instruments are broken, corroded, or decayed and hence useless. Some types which operate upon other-planar power contain less perishable materials and fewer moving parts, however, and many are still operative. Commonest are the "Eyes," non-metallic oval spheroids very much like a human eye in size and shape, which gives them their name. On one side of an eye is an iris-like aperture from which the effect emerges, and on the other is the firing stud, sometimes a counter which indicates the charges remaining (all Eyes contain a tiny eternal battery which can activate the other-planar mechanism about 100 times before going dead — these can be recharged), and occasionally the traditional name of the Eye (e.g. "the Eye of Raging Power") inscribed on its casing by some later owner in one or another tongue. Eyes were the usual means of performing most common daily tasks before the Time of Darkness,

and a number of them have survived. They were still being manufactured in a few clandestine workshops down into the Latter Times, and simple repairs could be effected as late as the Engsvanyáli period. Indeed, there may still be a few scholars who can tinker with an Eye with some success. Eyes employ other-planar power, but they are self-contained and require no *Pedhétl*, psychic talent, or ritual skill on the part of the operator. Essentially Eyes are pre-programmed spell-producing devices. Some give forth a beam of destructive force; others create light, cold, heat, etc.; and some shape the forces of the Planes Beyond into substances and objects of varying degrees of complexity. It is dangerous to tamper with an Eye or to attempt to retune it to produce other effects. One is reminded of the mage who tried to modify an Eye which created simple nutriment so that it would produce gold. Instead, he got a thick, pallid, dingy-white goo which stuck to everything — literally and permanently. His bones, together with the section of flooring to which he remained cemented for the rest of his life, are still shown to beginners in the Temple of Thúmis in Jakálla. Many further instructive instances could be adduced.

It is also possible to imbue certain natural objects with "spells": i.e. with other-planar energy which is triggered to produce magical effects. Some are made to function only once (e.g. a sorcerously trapped lock or door set to explode if opened), while others perform over and over (e.g. amulets, talismans, staffs of power, enchanted weapons and armour, etc.). Many larger machines combine other-planar devices with different forms of technology: e.g. the aircars, the tubeways, and various ancient instrments and weapons which may still be found here and there.

Another common use of other-planar power is the writing of spells: the impregnation of paper, parchment, metal, stone, etc. with spell-producing diagrammes and texts. These are in effect the "circuitry," and the spell is activated by the psychic spark of the person who reads it with understanding (or who reads it improperly!). All intelligent entities (except "psychic dampeners" and the Swamp Folk) can trigger the spells contained in a book, scroll, metal plaque, or wall inscription. One of the most advanced arts taught in the temple academies is that of spell writing, and again there are many pitfalls for the tyro or the careless person.



Priest of Ksárul

1.700. Social Groups and Institutions

1.710. ETHNICITY, NATIONALISM AND LANGUAGE

An ethnic group is a perception of shared identity. Members usually speak the same language and participate in traditions, customs, and institutions which may differ in detail but which are essentially alike and are traceable back to the same origins. If an inhabitant of the Five Empires were to be asked to list his loyalties in descending order of their priorities, he might reply, "My immediate family, my lineage, my clan, my friends outside my clan, my religion, my social class, my nation, speakers of my language, and others of my race (i.e. human, Pé Chói, etc.)." Beyond this he would be nonplussed. A tribal person's response would be different: "My family, my friends, my band or village, my chieftain, my religion, my tribe, speakers of my language, and my race."A Shén would place his egg-group very high in the inventory, while a Tinaliya might give precedence to his subterranean city. A Hlutrgú, on the other hand, might not include his family at all but would stress his nest-village and his race as a whole. An Ahoggyá would find only a few of the above loyalties of interest and instead would emphasise his village and his co-participants in the frenzied, hooting, screeching ritual dances of his species (these being possibly connected with sexual rites...?).

As can be seen, "nationalism" appears rather far down in these lists or not at all. A Tsolyáni does feel loyalty to the Imperium, a Yán Koryáni to his Baron, Mu'ugalavyáni to the Four Palaces of the Square, a Livyáni to his theocratic state, and a Salarvyáni to his feudal overlord (and perhaps a little to the central government in Tsatsayágga — such as it is), but there is very little political theorising. Such concepts as "democracy," "communism," or "socialism" would leave a native of Tékumel both puzzled and bored. Loyality is to an institution or a person, not to an abstract "fatherland," "flag," or political "ism." A Tsolyáni fights to defend his Empire's borders because he is faithful to the Petal Throne and the *Kólumel* in Avanthár — and because of the likelihood of harm to his loved ones and to his way of life. Indeed, trade often continues between two nation-states at war. Merchants take other routes to circumvent the fighting and are permitted to sell their wares without any greater hindrance than increased bureaucratic pressures and a few rude jibes. Let those who are concerned fight the battles; the rest should go about their business as usual. Overt treason is not tolerated, of course, and spies are summarily given the "high ride" on the impalement stake. Yet there is considerable freedom of movement and action for those not directly involved. In peacetime one finds that clan loyalties and religious affiliations often supersede "national" allegiances: priests of a deity in one country may cooperate and even connive with their co-religionists in other lands in spite of political tensions. Scholars, lay-priests, and persons seeking employment cross the borders with impunity, and even warriors and soldiers may travel within a foreign nation, providing that they engage in no warlike acts and display no overt hostility. The concept of "noble" action and the love of external visual display make it easily possible to identify invading foreign troops. The idea of disguising soldiers in enemy uniforms or in mufti and infiltrating them behind enemy lines is "ignoble," and this strategem has thus been rarely used. Somewhat inconsistently, however, spies and intelligence agents are looked upon as "noble." This is justified as being part of the difference between "glorious war" and the "acquisition of knowledge."

Freedom of foreign travel implies punctilious obedience to local practices and customs, of course. The phenomenon of the "foreigners' quarter" was discussed in Sec. 1.422.

While on the topic of national differences, it may be interesting to note some of the more prevalent ethnic stereotypes. The Tsolyani characterise the Yán Koryáni as rustic imitations of their southern betters, peripheral upstarts, and crude barbarians. The Mu'ugalavyáni are seen as humourless blockheads, hopelessly stolid and unimaginative, set in their bureaucratic ways. The Salarvyáni are perceived as feudal hotheads, "greasy men with beards like woven rugs," who have nothing better to do than squabble over trifles. The Livyáni appear as sophisticated, devious, smugly pious poseurs, aloof and full of airy conceits. All of the other four Empires join in describing the Tsolyáni as arrogant, officious, and overrefined, a nation always striving to live up to the unattainable standard of its Engsvanyáli ancestors.

On the positive side, the Yán Koryáni have a reputation for courage and loyalty. The Mu'ugalavyáni are stiffly correct, honest, and "noble." The Salarvyáni are boisterous, jolly, friendly, and generous. The Livyáni are considered to be law-abiding and cultured, and the Tsolyáni are famed for their dignity, energy, and adherence to their beliefs.

The smaller nations are similarly stereotyped. The N'lüss are rowdy, pugnacious, brutal, and honourable to a fault. The Ghatóni and the Lorún are much the same in spite of their differences over the status of women. The Pijenáni are weaklings, greedy, and untruthful. The nomads of Milumanayá, conversely, display great tribal dignity and a fierce commitment to honour, but their predilection for "total democracy" makes them the butt of many jests. The inhabitants of Tsoléi are carefree, amiable, hispitable, and disorganised; they also are given to frequent acts of brutal piracy. The tribal peoples of M'mórcha and Nmartúsha are unpredictable, fearful of strangers but dangerous when crossed, and curious about everything (sometimes to their own detriment). The merchants and sailors of Háida Pakála are known as "urbane robbers": sophisticated, decadent, unprincipled, avaricious, and malicious. The mountain folk of Jánnu and Kilalámmu are thought to be rustic, naive, rather stupid, and easily incited. The Pechání are similar to the Salarvyáni but are grimly serious men, powerful warriors, and dedicated to the eternal war against the Ssú. The ancient feuds of the little states of the far northeast are legendary: "Men act not because of themselves but because of some slight to their great-grandfather's pisspot," the Tsolyáni say. From Chayakku over through Nuru'un, men have the reputation of being loyal, proud, and interested mainly in hunting and war — and their women are known as shrewish, passionate, and more inclined to stab a man than reason with him! The inhabitants of Mihállu are quite the contrary: passive, lazy, easy-going, uninterested in events outside their long river valley, and much given to quoting the proverbs of their Engsvanyáli ancestors. To the south, the tribes of Rannálu are considered to be savages, aloof, laconic, untrustworthy, and given to bursts of uncontrollable anger. The islanders of the Nyémesel archipelago are gentle and peaceful, committed to their Sea Goddess, and only violent when attacked. Within each of these stereotypes there are sub-characterisations too numerous to be included here.

Amongst the nonhuman species, the Ahoggyá have a name for bumptious rudeness, constant peevishness, and a lack of sophistication bordering upon intolerable vulgarity. The Hlíka are frivolous, fickle, garrulous, and easily frightened. The Páchi Léi are dignified, friendly, and generous: "Better than humans," their Tsolyáni neighbours claim. The Pé Chói, however, are considered to be the closest to man in nature: intelligent, sophisticated, and very adaptable. They live in the cities of mankind and imitate humans in many ways, although they follow their own traditions within their own enclaves. The Pygmy Folk are similarly clever, but this species is often capricious and sometimes mockingly cruel. They are also very greedy, and one should note the Tsolyáni proverb: "To bargain with one of the Pygmy Folk is to throw away one's purse." The Shén command great respect as warriors. These creatures dislike delicacy and overrefinement, valuing strength, violence, and endurance instead. The Swamp Folk are amiable and eager to copy human ways. They abhor figthing (except at sea, where they excel at it) and sorcery. The Tinaliya are intensely curious, learned, materialistic, often generous, and distressingly literal-minded. They always speak precisely and cannot comprehend human similes, metaphors, and figures of speech. They have absolutely no idea of what is meant by a joke. The Urunén are proud, jealous, and not very cooperative with other species. They can dissemble and play at diplomacy when need be, however, and their cleverness makes them difficult allies and dangerous foes.

The Hlutrgú are feared because of their fanatic zeal in battle and their fiendish tortures of human captives. The Hlüss are similarly implacable but also exhibit a lively inquisitiveness, greed for power and possessions (particularly ancient devices and gems), and a love of bodily adornment. The Ssú resemble the Hlüss except that they are more industrious and care nothing for beauty or decoration. Little is known of the Nyaggá or the terrible Shunned Ones except for their hatred and avoidance of mankind. The Mihálli are famed in legend for their unpredictable and incomprehensible behaviour, but aside from their skill as sorcerers, nothing more can be said of them with certainty.

1.711. Language

All of the major languages of the continent belong to the Khishan linguistic family. Modern Tsolyáni, Mu'ugalavyáni, Salarvyáni, and Livyáni are fairly closely related, while Yán Koryáni, Ghatóni, Pechání, Hijajái (spoken in Háida Pakála), Tsoléi'i, and Milumanayáni are more distantly connected. All of these trace their descent back through Engsvanyáli and Bednálljan Salarvyáni to Llyáni and the rather dubiously identified tongue of the Three States of the Triangle. Linguistic history before the Empire of Llyán of Tsámra is conjectural. All of the language families of present-day Tékumel must somehow be derived from the Tamil-Mayan-Arabic argot which served as the lingua franca of Humanspace after the atomic Armageddon, but their precise relationships are lost in the unrecorded millenia which passed during the Latter Times.

Unrelated to the Khishan languages is the Nlu'árshtock, which contains Pijenáni and the tribal dialects of N'lüss. These are both descended from Ancient N'lüssa, the tongue of the Dragon Warriors. Bednálljan Salarvyáni, the language of both the Fishermen Kings and the First Imperium, borrowed heavily from Ancient N'lüssa but remained fundamentally distinct.

Another group unconnected with either of the above is the Aom family. Prominent members include Saá Allaqiyáni, Aòmórh (the tongue of Chayákku and several of the northeastern states), Jannuyáni (spoken in a yariety of dialects throughout Jánnu, Kilalámmu, and the Chaigári Protectorate), and Nuru'ún Sí (used in eastern Mudállu, Nuru'ún, and Hrgá Lorúnje). The inhabitants of Mihállu claim that their speech is a direct descendant of the language of the Éngsvan hla Gánga Empire, but in reality it is probably an Aòm tongue with a large admixture of Engsvanyáli vocabulary. There is also a controversy about the many dialects of the Rantiké group, spoken by the tribes of Rannálu. Some consider these to be forms of Salarvyáni (and hence of Khíshan origin), while others hold that they are also Aòm languages. A few scholars (e.g. Primú'esh of Jaekánta) claim that Rantiké comprises a separate stock by itself.

Two isolated families stand apart from all the rest. The first of these is Qùótl, which includes, Qùó, Rú, and Hásà, the major tribal tongues of M'mórcha and Nmartúsha. The second is Pe'é, the language of the Nyémesel Isles. Pe'é has several relatives, however, on the great continent off the maps to the south.

All nonhumans are able to master something of the tongues of mankind. The reverse is not true: the phonetics, grammar, and semantics of these alien languages simply cannot be learned by men. (There are a few rare instances of children raised in a nonhuman enclave who can make themselves understood in the tongues of the Shén, the Swamp Folk, the Pé Chói, or the Páchi Léi, but they can never gain real control of the nuances and more advanced details.) It is known that there are currently three Pé Chói dialects, several closely related Shén languages used by different egg-groups, and three sex-related varieties of the Tinaliya tongue (one spoken by males, another by females, and the third by the neuters). There has not yet been sufficient contact with the Urunén to know whether men can learn their language or not, but first impressions appear promising.

Major ancient and modern languages are listed below.

Modern:

Aòmórh: the language of the small northeastern states from Chayákku over through western Mudállu; there are many dialects; the ideographic Kázhra Vé Ngakóme script is used.

Ghatóni: the difficult tongue of Ghatón; it is not a written language.

Hijajái: the language of Háida Pakála and several other nations across the southern ocean; several scripts are employed, all derived from Salaryváni.

Jannuyáni: spoken in Jánnu, Kilalámmu, and the Chaigári Protectorate; there are many dialects; the Kázhra Vé Ngakóme script is used.

Livyáni: the language of Livyánu; its elaborate curlique script is close to that employed for Engsvanyáli.

Lo'orúnankh: the dialects of the Lorún peoples of northern

Yán Kór; it is considered simply "bad speech" by the Yán Koryáni; the squarish, blocky Yán Koryáni script is used.

Milumanayáni: several mutually intelligible dialects; written either in the Tsolyáni or the Yan Koryáni scripts.

Mu'ugalavyáni: the tongue of Mu'ugalavyá; its script is descended from Engsvanyáli but has undergone some significant changes.

N'lüssa: the intricate tribal dialects of N'lüss; written in the Mu'ugalavyáni script but not very successfully since their phonology differs greatly from that of Mu'ugalavyáni. The ancient script of the Dragon Warriors is not employed in N'lüss today.

Nuru'ún Sí: spoken in eastern Mudállu, Nuru'ún, and Hrgá Lorúnje; possesses its own complex syllabary.

Pechání: spoken in Pechána and originally a dialect of Salarvyáni; employs a variant of the Salarvyáni script.

Pe'é: the tongue of the Nyémesel Isles and several regions farther south; written in a rounded, flowery alphabet unrelated to anything in the north.

Pijenáni: the language of Pijéna; a modified form of the Yán Koryáni script is employed for this tongue.

Qüó: the most widespread tribal language of M'mórcha and Nmartúsha; none of the Qüótl languages is written; cf. above.

Rantiké: spoken in many disparate dialects by the nomads of Rannálu; none of these is written.

Saa Allaqiyáni: the tongue of the mountainous land of Saá Allaqí; written in a variant of the Yán Koryáni script.

Salarvyáni: spoken in several major dialects in Salaryvá; written in an Engsvanyáli-derived with Bednálljan influences.

Tká Mihálli: spoken in Mihállu; unrelated to the tongue of the non-human Mihálli; written in a variant of the Engsvanyáli script.

Tsolé'i: includes several closely related languages (or widely differing dialects) of the Tsolé archipelago; there are five localised scripts, all derived from Livyáni.

Tsolyáni: the language of the Imperium of Tsolyánu; several script variants occur: classical, cursive, manuscript, and monumental.

Yán Koryáni: the tongue of Yán Kór; there are two major dialects (eastern and western); it has its own script, derived through Engsvanyáli from Llyáni. Cf. Lo'orúnankh, above.

Ancient (no longer spoken):

Ái Chè: found on monoliths, cave walls, and inscriptions at the Temple of the Eye of the World in the northeast; most examples are from Mudállu and Nuru'ún; there are historical and magical texts in this language, which appears to be the ancestor of the Aòm group. It is thought that some speakers of Ái Chè were worshippers of the One Other. A grammar and a lexicon of this tongue were prepared by Engsvanyáli scholars, but much work remains to be done.

Ancient N'lüssa: the tongue of the Dragon Warriors and hence important to the worship of Vimúhla; written in a Llyáni-derived script — because of which earlier scholars thought these two languages to be more closely related.

Bednálljan Salarvyáni: the languages of the Fishermen Kings and the First Imperium; written in an elaborate florid hieroglyphic script; innumerable texts exist.

Classical Mu'ugalavyáni: the ancestor of modern M'ugalavyáni and rather closely related to Engsvanyáli; written in a script similar to its modern descendant; valuable for the history of the western lands and for sorcerous texts (particularly dealing with demonology, the worship of Vimúhla, and the cult of Hrsh).

Classical Tsolyáni: another Engsvanyáli daughter-language and the precursor of modern Tsolyáni; written in the monumental syllabic script sometimes also employed for the oldest forms of modern Tsolyáni; thousands of texts and inscriptions are found, and it is even still "spoken" by a few pedants.

Duruob: ancient Livyáni; closely related to Engsvanyáli but written in a deliberately obscure hieroglyphic script; used in rituals and said to be still spoken by the priests of the forbidden city of Dlásh.

Engsvanyáli: the major language of the Golden Age; written in a delicate and elegant script from which many modern writing systems are derived; vast numbers of texts in this language are found, and several priesthoods still employ it for ritual purposes, litanies, legends, and epic poetry.

Llyáni: the tongue of the Empire of Llyán of Tsámra; its blocky, clumsy-looking script has both cursive and monumental variants; many magical texts, astronomical treatises, and other documents in this language still survive.

Mihálli: the only nonhuman language which can be read (but not spoken) by humans; its script is alphabetical, but the exact phonetic values of the "letters" are unknown; several monuments, a few manuscripts (mostly later copies), and plaques of clay or gold are found, and there are great libraries of these clay tablets in the ruined Mihálli cities of the far northeast; grammars and dictionaries of Mihálli were preserved by Llyáni and Bednálljan scholars, and a number of important texts on sorcery and the Planes Beyond were written in it; unfortunately the meanings of many lexemes and grammatical affixes have been lost.

Sunúz: an artificial secret language devised by the priests of The One Other; written in what amounts to a carefully constructed cipher and very difficult to learn; several manuscripts and histories of the sect of The One Other are extant, mostly preserved in the Temple of Shiringgáyi in Jgrésh; this language has been officially banned throughout the Five Empires, but a few of the more senior temple scholars in most cities know it.

Thu'úsa: this language was originally spoken by a semi-tribal society in the Kürt Hills in Tsolyánu during the Time of No Kings, and it has since been resurrected and made to serve as an argot for the temples of Stability; its peculiar script is written vertically and is called "Ladder-Writing" by outsiders; Thu'úsa has been employed for innumerable religious and magical texts, and knowledge of it is limited to the higher clergy of the priesthoods of Stability.

Tongue of the Lord of Worms: this is possibly the tongue of some ancient people of the Chákas, and a few inscriptions in it have been discovered in Dó Cháka and the Kraá Hills; its script contains approximately 2,000 ideographic symbols; it is used only by the priesthoods of Sárku and Durritlámish for ritual purposes and for the transmission of necromantic sorcery, and no outsider or priest of the lower Circles is permitted to learn it.

Tongue of the Priests of Ksárul: the scholars of the sect of the Doomed Prince constructed this artificial argot during the period of the Fishermen Kings, and it has remained the private property of the Temple of Ksárul ever since; its script consists of three separate symbolic systems used simultaneously: a phonemic alphabet to aid in pronunciation, a corpus of ideographs which carry the root-meanings of the lexicon, and an inventory of symbols which represent grammatical elements (prefixes, suffixes, infixes, etc.); a "word" thus is made up of an ideograph, several phonemic letters (one can insert as few or as many as one thinks necessary — less in the case of a common lexeme and more in the case of a rare one), and further grammatical elements in an outer ring to indicate the usage of the word in the snytactic matrix, there are thousands of magical, historical, scientific, etc. texts in this "language."

Tsáqw: ancient Yán Koryáni; this language is important

for the history of the north and the northeast; it is written in a unique alphabetical script which is perhaps a stimulus-borrowing from Engsvanyáli but not otherwise directly related; Tsáqw has been used for historical, astronomical-nautical, and magical texts, and it is still spoken by the priests of the Mad One of Hlíkku; it can be learned in many temples in the larger cities of any of the Five Empires, however.

1.720. SOCIAL CLASSES

The xenophobic societies of the Five Empires are vertically divided between "natives" and "foreigners." Members of the more powerful nation-states look with considerable disdain upon the smaller, poorer countries and the tribes. Indeed, they tend to be scornful even of one another. One must be a citizen in order to be taken seriously. A foreigner may be respected (particularly if he is wealthy and/or powerful), but he must be a permanent resident (and so approved by the local government) before he can participate fully in the life of the society. The difficulties and dangers of foreign travel were outlined in Sec. 1.422.

Inhabitants of the nations look upon outsiders with the same suspicion and mild contempt, although these emotions will certainly be coloured with envy if the travellers in question happen to be wealthy citizens of one of the great Empires. Even amongst the tribes there is a "pecking order" of prestige: e.g. the large Quǒ tribe of M'mórcha and Nmartúsha spurn their neighbours, the Rǔ, and the Rǔ in turn sneer at the Hásà. Whom the Hásà scorn is not recorded. Almost all ethnic groups thus have some degree of self-respect and at the same time misgivings and distrust towards outsiders. Only the wretched Dlǒ tribe of the Salt Lake region of eastern Rannálu seems to lack any pride whatsoever in itself. This little band of some 200 persons ekes out a bare subsistence eating mud-worms and salt-berries, and it is said that its members look up to every foreigner with a mixture of humility, jealousy, frustration, and awe. "A Dlǒ kisses the foot that steps on his face," the Salarvyáni say.

Within the Five Empires the most important demarcation is between slaves (of whom more will be said below) and freemen. The latter are divided "vertically" by provenience, clan, lineage, and occupation, and "horizontally" by wealth. The rural peasantry (self-employed agriculturalists, tentant farmers, village craftsmen, etc.) makes up about 85 percent of the population. Townspeople (artisans, labourers, merchants, and others) comprise another 10 percent, and the remainder is composed of the wealthy nobility and high functionaries. It must be emphasised that wealth is only one factor contributing to social prestige: a slaver, for example, may have enough money to buy himself a good-sized town, but he will still be snubbed by the aristocracy. An impecunious peasant of the Tlakotáni clan will be welcome, however, within at least the outer precincts of any respectable clanhouse. Priests, soldiers, and administrators of lower clans who have worked their way up through the ranks are still more socially desirable than richer merchants or artisans of the same or even higher clans. Connections with the temples, the armies, or the governments are the rungs of the ladder of success.

Most professions are not internally united and provide little basis for social action. There are no "guilds." The various tanners' clans, for example, see one another as competitors: allies, perhaps, when confronted by a threat to all, but friendly rivals otherwise. Religion, on the other hand, does offer a slightly stronger foundation for cohesion. Devotees of the same deity share the same overall objectives and tend to be mutually sympathetic. Nevertheless, outside of the rigid hierarchies of the priesthoods there is no real unity amongst the laity: no "League of Lovers of Avánthe" or "Young Men's Kśarul Association," for instance. The clan is the major "spike" which is driven down through the layers of wealth-based classes to hold society together.

Although one can indeed inherit social prestige, wealth, family standing, religion, and sometimes a profession through the clan, the system is by no means inflexible. The person who has the will to persevere against clan pressures may join the faith of his choice or take up an occupation different from that of his clan-brothers. The only truly hereditary social class is that of the nobility. There is thus scope for an enterprising individual to climb quite far up the social ladder — or to fall down it similarly. Almost all priestly, military, and administrative offices in the Five Empires are appointive. Clan, family, wealth, influence, religion, and other factors may influence the authorities in their choice of an appointee, but a promising candidate of lower standing does have a chance. Every functionary — from a village Headman all the way up to the Provost of the High Chancery in Avanthár — serves at the pleasure of the Petal Throne. Officials are thus assigned, promoted, demoted, or transferred as the Imperium commands. The usual route is to assign likely graduates of the temple schools as assistants in one of the bureaucracies. The best of these are then sent out to administer rural "fiefs" or counties — perhaps only a handful of villages. Those who do well there can expect promotions to ever more grandiose offices and may end their careers as Governors of Provinces or even as court functionaries in Avanthár. This long and arduous path can be much shortened, naturally, by the judicious application of the factors just mentioned above: i.e. clan, wealth, influence, etc.

The hereditary nobility of the Five Empires is descended from the aristocracy of the Bednálljan and Engsvanyáli periods. A noble title now carries no necessary concomitant of politcal power or wealth, but there is still a correlation: the high clans which bear these appellations are the same clans which have remained close to the centres of authority the longest. Thus, while one may sometimes encounter a "High Lord" who has neither money nor an Imperial office, it is much more common to find such a person at the helm of affairs. As examples, one may cite the Tsolyáni titles of *Arsékmekoi* "Baron, a fiefholder of middle rank" (*-koi* is a suffix added to most "noble" nouns), *Hehéllukoi* "Count," *Páchukoi* "Lord," and *Mríngukoi* "High Lord." The first of these was once a Bednálljan military rank — the commander of a city garrison; the second denoted a class of provincial courtiers in the Empire of Éngsvan hla Gánga; the third was used for the kinsmen of the Bednálljan rulers; and the fourth signified the family members of the Engsvanyáli Priestkings. These titles are only very rarely conferred today, and they serve only as marks of Imperial favour. In the south they pass from eldest son to eldest son, while in the north they descend through the female line: a woman's husband holds the title only so long as she lives and/or the marriage lasts. Her sons are still "noble" but have no right to the title itself.

The class structures of Yán Kór and Mu'ugalavyá are essentially similar to that of the Tsolyáni Empire. In Livyánu temple membership and priestly rank take precedence over the clan, family, and wealth-status, and the old hereditary aristocracy has been all but abolished. The Salarvyáni, conversely, stress hereditary family position, and noble titles (cognates of those above, as well as half a dozen others) are accompanied by both political power and wealth.

The class structures of the smaller societies are variegated. The inhabitants of Tsolél have hereditary ruling families (except for Llürúra Isle, where a "king" is elected at the beginning of each year and then slain at the end of it as an offering to the sea), but social prestige in Tsolél depends more upon one's place of residence (cf. Sec. 1.510) and one's material possessions. The N'lüss distinguish between "nobles" (i.e. lineages from which chiefs are hereditarily selected) and "commoners." Within each of these two groups wealth then plays a part. The tribes of M'mórcha and Nmartúsha have no significant class divisions, although there is indeed an incipient rich-poor dichotomy since village chiefs are always chosen from just one or two prestigious and wealthy families in the band. The Ghatóni are similar to the N'lüss, while the Pijenáni, the Saá Allaqiyáni, and the Lorún follow patterns like those of Yán Kór. There are two distinct cultural areas in Milumanayá: the "democratic" nomads of the Desert of Sighs (who elect a leader from amongst the entire population every time an important decision is to be made), and the urbanised inhabitants of Pelesár and Sunráya, who imitate the structures of Yán Kór and Tsolyánu, respectively. The states of the far northeast are hereditarily segregated into warrior lineages, priestly lineages, and commoners, and again wealth is significant within each of these groups. There are hereditary rulers also in the cities of Jánnu and Kilalámmu, but in the rural areas there are no fixed social classes: one's prestige depends upon one's ability to convince one's fellows of a point of view. Pechâno is quite different: the Salarvyáni feudal system prevails, and an individual's position depends upon his family and its standing in the ranked tiers of the society. Mihállu is very much a copy of the old Engsvanyáli system, and in this ancient land the titles of the Priestkings' aristocracy still

carry very real social and political content. The tribes of Rannálu base social prestige upon age and sex: the oldest and most revered females govern the village, while the seniormost warriors rule all activities beyond the village boundaries. In Háida Pakála social classes are thoroughly materialistic: one's position is dependent upon the number of one's retainers, the excellence of one's ships, and the wealth one possesses. The Nyémesel Isles, on the other hand, display two rigid classes: priests and commoners. The priests own all of the major economic resources (e.g. nets, fishing boats, seaweed-drying racks, shops, gardens, and orchards), while the common folk work as employees or serfs. It is apparently impossible for a commoner to become a priest.

Of the nonhuman races, only the Shén and the Urunén exhibit anything like a stratified human class system. The Shén power structure is based upon the domination of the smaller, weaker egg-groups by the larger ones. This is best seen in meetings of the *Hrg Ssa*, the council of senior males which governs every Shén city. Representatives of the more powerful egg-groups are given precedence, prerogatives, and authority denied to their less-prestiged colleagues. Amongst the Shén an individual's status depends largely upon his age, size, strength, and ferocity, but this species is also strongly wealth-oriented. The Shén are great traders, own slaves (often humans), maintain entourages of retainers, and display their standing in the community through personal adornment.

The Urunén, on the other hand, are divided into occupational classes. Agriculturalists, artisans, and merchants are highly esteemed, while priests are considered to be weaklings or those too lazy to do a good day's work. Soldiers, too, have no prestige. The Urunén believe the military to be a necessary evil and treat professional soldiers with contempt.

1.721. Slavery

The major portion of the labour force of the Five Empires consists of free peasants who are either self-employed clansmen or who work as tenants on the estates of the nobility, the temples, or the governments. Slaves make up a relatively small percentage of all workers: 10 to 15 percent in Tsolyánu, which possesses the highest number of slaves of any of the Five Empires, and less elsewhere. In Mu'ugalavyá most slaves are state-owned or clan-owned, while the Salarvyáni system is based upon personal possession: individuals maintain contingents of slaves to work their holdings and to perform household duties. Yán Kór has the fewest slaves. These are mostly chattels of the great clanhouses, although the state, the temples, and certain wealthy individuals do own small numbers. The Livyáni similarly are not great slaveholders, and aside from clan-owned galley crews, mine workers, and agricultural labourers (and also occasional retinues of personal servants), most slaves in Livyánu belong to the temples of the Shadow Gods and are employed to work the vast ecclesiastic estates.

Many of the smaller societies display some type of forced servitude. This ranges from the rudimentary enslavement of the M'mórchan and Nmartúshan tribes, which keep war prisoners and unlucky travellers to gather fruit and dig roots (and may eventually adopt them into the tribe), to the cruel bondage practiced by the pirate princes of Háida Pakála, who forcibly breed their human chattels, work them until they are exhausted, and then slay them as casually as one might kill a meat-animal. Slavery is rather uncommon in Tsolei and the states of the far northeast. The N'lüss treat their thralls like minor family members. The same is true for male slaves in Ghatón, but women — Ghatóni and non-Ghatóni alike — are owned as absolute personal property. Pijéna and Saá Allaqí follow the Yán Koryáni system, and slavery in Jánnu, Kilalámmu, and Mihállu is also similar to that of the Five Empires. The practice is restricted to war captives amonst the tribes of Rannálu, and it is non-existent in the encampments of the nomads of Milumanaya. Of the nonhuman species, only the Shén keep slaves in any large numbers, these being mostly employed to man their black-hulled galleys. Those Pé Chói and Páchi Léi who reside in human lands may keep slaves in imitation of their neighbours, but within their own enclaves the custom is unknown. Two of the inimical races, the Hlüss and the Ssú, may keep human prisoners alive and work them for a time, but these unfortunates are eventually given as food to the breeder females. Slavery is infrequent in Urunén society, being limited to criminals condemned to work off their sentences, and it is not found amongst the other nonhuman species. Indeed, the Hláka have a horror of slavery, consider it barbaric, and attempt to thwart it whenever they can. A Hláka bought as a slave will usually die in captivity if he cannot escape.

In the Five Empires the usual cause of slavery is debt. A family head who cannot pay his creditors, and whose clan either cannot or will not redeem him, is commonly imprisoned for a few months and if his debts remain unpaid, he is sold as a slave. His sale price is divided between his creditors, the slaver clan which sells him, the prison commandant, and the state. Once purchased, a slave remains in bondage for the rest of his life. He can buy his freedom only if his owner gives him permission to do so. The debtor's family is not enslaved with him unless he has put them up as collateral for his debts — or unless he has absconded, in which case his wife and children may be seized and held liable for the sum owed. If his family remains free, the debtor's clan usually accepts responsibility for its upkeep. The clan may then urge the wife to divorce her slave husband and remarry. It may also try to find work for her and her children, or it may turn her out to go back to her own kinsmen — or to go and live with her slave husband, if the latter's owner permits. In this last case, she remains a free woman, as do any children born before he was enslaved, but offspring born afterwards are themselves slaves and become the property of the husband's owner. Slaveholders are tempted, of course, to allow a free wife to come and live with her spouse since any resultant children will increase their work force for nothing. Such families are usually provided with food and lodging in return for some household and/or field work.

An *Aridáni* woman cannot be held liable for her husband's debts, although she is indeed responsible for her own — and she may be enslaved herself if she or her husband does not pay them. Her children remain free, even if they were born after her husband was enslaved, but if she herself becomes a slave, her progeny belong to her owner.

Other types of slaves include prisoners of war, minor criminals, clanless persons and foreigners who have broken some petty law, and children kidnapped by slaver gangs. Parents too poor to support their offspring may also sell their children into slavery to ensure them of at least a subsistence living.

Although it is possible to purchase warriors and ex-soldiers as slaves, it is not wise to use them as such. All of the Five Empires forbid the arming of slaves, and there have been many cases of slaves killing their masters for profit or revenge. Disgraced soldiers are thus often sold to those temples which practice human sacrifice, or they may have the fingers of their right hands severed to prevent them from using weapons. Unpleasant experience (e.g. the recent slave revolt in the fief of Ferinára in Fasíltum Province in Tsolyánu) has shown how dangerous it is to trust an army of slave warriors, no matter how well they are treated. Most slaves are debtors, criminals, prisoners of war, or themselves children of slaves, and none of these groups is likely to engender confidence.

This is even more true of slaves with training in sorcery. Such persons are usually cashiered priests, ne'er-do-well students who have fallen into debt or crime, etc. A trained sorcerer is dangerous, and such an individual must have committed a very serious offense in deed to cause his temple to refuse to redeem him from bondage. Many priesthoods prefer to sacrifice a corrupt member rather than face the disgrace of seeing him sold publicly.

Noble slaves are also very rare. An aristocratic debtor is almost certain to be redeemed by his clan to prevent dishonour, and a noble who has committed a crime may similarly be rescued by his clan-brothers through the use of bribery and influence — unless his transgression be serious enough to warrant impalement or a long term in prison.

Nonhuman slaves are not common but may still be found in the markets of the larger cities. Members of these species are as liable to fall prey to debt or crime as men are, and the laws of the Five Empires apply implacably to all. As said above, the Hláka have an abhorrence of slavery, and it is thus rare to find these delicate flying creatures in the slavers' pavilions. The frequency of the other races depends upon geography: e.g. Tinalíya are common in Livyánu and Ahoggyá almost non-existent, while the opposite is true in Salarvyá. Members of the inimical species can never be kept as slaves; they will either slay their human captors at the first opportunity, commit suicide, or

pine away and die. It may be noted that there are a few Hlüss, Ssü, and Hlutrgú (but no Shunned Ones) on display in cages in the zoological gardens at Avanthár, Ssa'átis, Jakálla, Tsámra, and Tsatsayágga. These wretched creatures have been subjected to advanced mind-domination techniques, but even so they frequently die and have to be replenished by "hunting expeditions."

Contact with the Urunén is so recent, and the distance to their territory so great, that no members of this race have ever been seen as slaves in the northern continent. There are also no recorded instances of a Mihálli slave; the other-planar talents of this race make it almost impossible to hold a Mihálli against his will for any length of time.

The assassins' clans never permit their members to become slaves (except as a disguise during a mission). An assassin who falls into debt or who is enslaved for a criminal offence is immediately purchased from his owner by his clan-brothers. If he repeats his mistake, or if he cannot be re-purchased, his clan will almost invariably have him slain.

In the larger cities the slave markets are located within walled compounds well away from the bazaars in which other commodities are sold. Slavers temporarily rent stalls, pens, and sleeping quarters in these places upon arrival in the city. The great Siridlánu Slave Market of old Jakálla, for example, lies in the run-down northern section of the city just behind the barracks of the Legion of Kétl (Sec. 1.740), far from the bustling lanes of the foreigners' quarter or the better shops of the middle and upper-class mercantile districts. In smaller towns and villages there are no regular slave markets, and slavers set up their tents wherever the authorities permit. Due to the low status of the slaving profession in the Five Empires, markets for these wretched chattels are not allowed close to the temples or the government buildings, and no clan with any pretensions of status would accept a slaver as a guest.

New and unreliable slaves are often linked together by neck-chains while travelling from one city to another. This is not necessary with those already habituated to slavery. A bronze collar is used to mark a slave in Tsolyánu, Mu'ugalavyá, Yán Kór, and the rest of the north. This may be supplemented by a tattooed owner's glyph on the sole of the left foot. A slave's right ear is notched in Livyánu and Shényu, while the lords of Háida Pakála insert a silver ring into the septum of the nose. Castration — the creation of eunuchs — is practiced in Pijéna and Háida Pakála. Elsewhere this is only done as a punishment or for special (possibly religion-related) reasons. Wives and concubines are thus served not by emasculated males but by female serfs and bondswomen.

The slave markets are busy places. Common field workers sit or stand idly in the dusty pens waiting for someone to ask to inspect them. Educated slaves, nonhumans, and those with professional skills are segregated within the gaudy pavilions or the dingy stone buildings of an urban market. True "specials" — young girls and boys, trained dancing girls and courtesans, unusual nonhumans, freaks and curiosities — are kept within the slaver's private quarters. These will be sold at semi-private auctions. Boys are hired to go round to the residences of likely customers to announce the nature of the merchandise and the date of the sale. Purchasers — or their agents — are conducted into a semi-dark room containing a lighted area in which the slave must stand. Clients then signal their bids silently with tiny mirrors, and no word is spoken. There is no socialising — who would eat or drink with a slaver? — and the auction is accomplished quickly and without publicity.

Slaves are not usually mistreated except in Háida Pakála (cf. above). Their lives do not differ much from those of other lower-class citizens: hard work, a poor diet, and permanent poverty. Slaves who misbehave or try to escape are punished, of course, and penalties can be quite stringent. Nevertheless, the ancient conservatism of the Five Empires pressures slaves to remain docile and accept their fate. Manumission is not common, but an owner may sometimes permit a slave to buy his freedom, or the master may leave a will freeing his slaves upon his demise. Freedom may appear a desirable goal, but it must be remembered that a slave who has been expelled from his clan (or who is clanless to begin with) has no place to go, no resources, no honour in the society, and no easy way of climbing the social ladder. He may thus be reduced to mendicancy or to crime, and the security of a good master's household may thus appear more appealing than the dubious benefits of liberty.

1.730. COMMERCE AND TAXATION

Business in the Five Empires is founded upon clan-capitalism. Agriculturalists and artisans produce the commodities traditional to their clans and sell these either directly to consumers or to merchant clans which ship them to other cities or to foreign lands. The merchant clans may own their own bearer-slaves, *Chlén* carts, or ships, but it is more usual to find them dealing in turn with clans specialising in the transportation of goods.

Commerce demands great skill in bargaining. This practice is universal. Everything must be dickered for, from a tidbit of roasted *Hmélu* meat all the way to huge shipments of merchandise. Chaffering is friendly but rapacious: "Let the buyer beware!" The vendor may begin with a price five — or 50! — times higher than he expects to get, and it is the purchaser's task to haggle him down. Everyone bargains — indeed, it is thought rather discourteous and brusque not to do so. Only through bitter experience can one come to know the best prices, the most reliable and reasonable dealers, and the various qualities of vendibles. An expert and well-travelled merchant is thus a respected and valued individual.

1.731. Mediums of Exchange

Most of the monetary systems of the continent are based upon the gold standard. The Tsolyáni goldpiece is called the *Káitar*. It is a very small, delicate, and thin little coin, weighing about 3 grammes. Each *Káitar* contains 20 silver *Hlásh*, and each *Hlásh* is divided into 20 copper *Qirgál*.

Many of the other nations have their own currencies. The Mu'ugalavyáni *Alótish* is a larger gold coin worth 1.5 *Káitars*. It is divided into 100 copper *Qúra*. The big and heavy gold *Chzá* of Yan Kor is valued at 30 *Káitars*. Each *Chzá* contains 100 silver *Múrz*, and each *Múrz* is made up of 25 brass *Ekhór*. The Salarvyáni *Nzúggesh* is a gold piece worth 5 *Káitars*. It is divided into four silver *Nzái*, and each *Nzai* contains 50 copper *Vrél*. The Livyáni use the *Shí'idok*, an elegantly carven gold coin worth 2 *Káitars*. It has four subdivisions, each worth one half of the preceding one: the *Fayáz*, the *Anáz*, the *Neyób*, and the *Khíya*. These four are all copper coins.

A number of the smaller states mint their own currencies as well, but these are usually based on the standards of the nearest great Empire. The N'lüss thus use coins similar to those of Mu'ugalavyá; the Ghatóni, Pijenáni, and the Saá Allaqiyáni follow the practices of Yán Kór; the Milumanayáni have adopted the Tsolyáni system; and the Pechán̈i divide their currency as the Salarvyáni do. The states of the far northeast mint crude, square coins which must each be weighed in order to ascertain its value. The peoples of Jánnu and Kilalámmu make no coins of their own and use only those brought in by traders. The inhabitants of Mihállu employ the great *Suor* of old Éngsvan hla Gánga but have so debased the metal that it is worth no more than a Tsolyáni *Káitar*. The islanders of Tsolél have no gold of their own and thus circulate small gems (usually garnets, carnelian, and agates), each of which has to be tediously assessed whenever a transaction is made. The merchants of Háida Pakála employ gold and silver bars in much the same way. The people of the Nyémese Isles utilise tiny scarlet shells (called *U'unóm*) for money and care little for gold. The tribesmen of M'mórcha, Nmartúsha, Rannálu, and the Lorún regions of northern Yán Kór have no currency at all and do all of their trading through a barter system.

Of the nonhuman races, only the Shén and the Urunén mint true coins. The Shén states mine gold but trade most of this to their human neighbours. Their coinage is all of copper, a metal which pleases them more. The Shén *Ksír* is a large copper disc weighing half a kilogramme. It is valued at 1.5 *Káitars*, and it is divided into 7 *Nssá*. Each *Nssá* then contains 7 *Pésh*. The Urunén use only one coin: a small gold piece called the *Eché*, worth about 2 Tsolyáni *Káitars*. The Ahoggyá of Ónmu Tlé Hlé́ktis do not mint coins, but they do manufacture heavy gold tubes of a standard size, each worth approximately 150 Tsolyani *Káitars*. These they string on leather thongs about their persons, and they can then be used as a kind of primitive currency. The remaining friendly races use the coinage of the nation in which they reside. None of the inimical species seem to use currency, at least in a form which humans can recognise as such.

There are also a few ancient coins still in circulation, although all of the Five Empires discourage their use in daily business: e.g. the great *Suór* of Éngsvan hla Gánga, worth 150 modern Tsolyáni *Káitars*; the silver *Rachár* of the First Imperium, valued at 10 *Káitars*; the little

copper *Árdz* of Queen Nayári's period, worth almost nothing intrinsically but often purchased for 70 *Kâitars* or more by collectors; the very rare silver *Giu* of the Dragon Warriors, again valuable to numismatists — as much as 1,500 *Kâitars* if the coin is in good condition; the old Salarvyani *Mirúzh*, sometimes found in the markets of the far northeast and worth 10-20 *Kâitars*, etc. The Mihálli ruins of the northeast also contain strange cruciform "coins" of electrum, sometimes with a small diamond set in the centre, and these are highly prized by collectors: perhaps 700-2,000 *Kâitars* apiece.

There are no banks in the business systems of the Five Empires. Their place is taken by the clan (cf. Sec. 1.550), which loans money to its members at no interest but with expectations of receiving a share of any profits plus a large contribution from a successful clan-brother. There are also the money-lending clans, which fund enterprises which cannot be clan-financed and advance money to those in debt. The interest charged by these clans is usurious, however: as much as 5 percent compounded per month. Those who cannot pay are seized as slaves (Sec. 1.721), and it is best to have no dealings with them.

The usual repository for a person's wealth and possessions is his clan-house. One would be a fool to go about laden down with gold and gems, and a clan will keep a member's property safe until he asks for it or sends a properly witnessed document asking that it be forwarded to another of the clan's houses elsewhere (cf. Sec. 1.550). A temple will also store the money and goods of its priests and devotees, but a fee of 1-2 percent per month is charged on the value of the deposited items. A soldier's legion headquarters will do the same, as will a money-lender. The latter will demand 5-10 percent per month for this service, however, and one must bargain him down to a minimum of 3-4 percent. If one must stay in a hostelry or resthouse while abroad, one can leave one's belongings with the innkeeper. This is not a safe practice, and it is better to deposit them with a clan or temple to which one has a letter of introduction from one's organisation at home.

By far the most secure means of transporting wealth over long distances is to pay the money to one's clan, temple, legion, or to a moneylending clan and obtain a "letter of credit." This can then be converted into the local currency at one's destination. Travellers often carry several of these documents in varying denominations for use along the way. The moneylending clans and the larger mercantile clans have networks of contacts in foreign lands, and it is thus possible to cash a letter of credit in a city where one's clan, etc. have no direct representation. Identification — letters of introduction, etc. — is required, of course.

1.732. Land and Sea Trade

More goods are transported over land than by sea. Long columns of bearers are a frequent sight on the *Sákbe* Roads, each man with a high-laden basket strapped to his back and a tumpline across his forehead. A healthy porter can carry a load weighing 35-45 kilogrammes in this fashion, and a caravan is able to cover some 40-60 km per day. As long as the merchant remains on the *Sákbe* Roads or on the more-travelled secondary highways, he is assured of food and water for his men at the regular way-stations (Sec. 1.423). Very few traders are venturesome enough to attempt journeys outside of the Five Empires, although the profits from gemstones, spices, rare woods, works of art, and handicrafts can be most lucrative.

Another common means of transport is the *Chlén* cart. Wherever the roadway is reasonably passable one can see these powerful beasts pulling their lurching two-wheeled vehicles heaped high with goods and produce. There are two types of cart: a smaller one drawn by one *Chlén* which can carry 600-900 kilogrammes of cargo, and a larger variety pulled by two animals which holds perhaps three times this amount. *Chlén* carts are slower than bearer slaves, moving at a rate of about 3 km per hour for about 5 hours a day — a total distance of only 15 km.

Litters and palanquins are not used to carry cargo, but they are extensively employed for passenger transport. For short distances in town, a light one-person litter requires 2 porters, and a slightly larger variety is borne by 4 men. Heavier palanquins made for inter-city travel must have 8 bearers, with at least another 8 men trotting along behind as a relief shift. Wealthy and aristocractic travellers prefer still larger conveyances holding two, three, or even four passengers, and these are carried by 16, 24, or 30 men, again with suitable relief shifts. The elaborate gilded palanquin of a Prince of the Tsolyáni Imperium may be borne by as many as 200 slaves when he pays a state visit to another city. A small, lightweight litter can more or less keep up with pedestrian traffic, covering an average of 45 km per day.

Sea travel is perilous, and most vessels are thus "coasters" which follow regular routes and never lose sight of shore. Most captains prefer short voyages, and if a cargo is destined for a distant port, it may be necessary to tranship it to other vessels, each of which will take it another "leg" along its journey.

There are several types of commercial vessels. Most of these use sails for power, although the Shén prefer oared galleys, and the Livyáni employ combinations of rowers and ancillary sails. There are both lateen-rigged and square-rigged sails, depending upon local and personal preferences. Two common varieties of merchant ships may be described below as examples:

1. The *Hrú*: single-masted with a triangular lateen sail (the Livyáni prefer a square sail); length: 15-25 m; beam: 6-9 m; displacement: 30-135 metric tonnes; cargo capacity: 15-70 tonnes; crew: 10-35 sailors; 1-3 officers; and 6-12 fighting men.
2. The *Tnék*: two-masted with square sails (a few vessels of this type still employ the older lateen-rigged sails); length: 30-40 m; beam: 10-13 m; displacement: 450-1,350 tonnes; cargo capacity: 200-650 tonnes; crew: 40-80 sailors (or 15-20 sailors and 70-150 rowers if the ship is also rigged as a galley), 5-10 officers, and 12-24 fighting men.

Larger varieties are also encountered, and along the coasts one finds innumerable smaller types used for local transport, fishing, etc. Ship speeds and the various kinds of military craft will be discussed in later Sections.

Of the nonhuman races, the Shén are the most inclined towards the sea. Their great black-hulled galleys are seen everywhere from Tsolái all the way out to Jaekánta in Salarvyá. The details of their *Gsá-Hr*, a bireme-like galley with a single mast and ancillary lateen-rigged sails, are as follows: length: 45-50 m; beam: 6-9 m; displacement: 100-180 tonnes; cargo capacity: 40-85 tonnes; crew: 50-75 sailors, 200-250 rowers (many of whom are human slaves), 7 officers, and 49-63 marines (the Shén divide their military units into sevens).

The Ahoggyá produce only a single kind of small, round-bottomed, single-masted ship with a crude square-rigged sail. Its statistics are: length: 15-16 m; beam: 6-7 m; displacement: 20-25 tonnes; cargo capacity: 10-12 tonnes; crew: 15-20 sailors and 1-4 officers. All crew members are fighters.

The Urunén also have seagoing vessels, but nothing much is known of their maritime trade. It may be assumed that their craft are roughly equivalent to the *Hrú* and the *Tnék*, described above.

The Swamp Folk are great seafarers, but they have no ships of their own and use those built by the human shipwrights of Mu'ugalavyá.

Amongst the inimical species, only the Hlüss are sailors. Their nest-shops are not merchantmen, however, and will be described later. The Hlutrgú use small leather coracles, log rafts, and dugout canoes but have no sea trade or larger vessels.

The remaining races are not interested in the sea. The Hlaka dislike long journeys over water, and the Pé Chói are positively terrified of ocean voyages. This latter species has two sets of lungs: one in the upper torso and another in the lower abdomen, with the breathing vents spaced between the overlapping ventral plates of the tail. A Pé Chói cannot swim and may drown in only a metre or so of water!

1.733. Customs Duties and Tolls

All of the Five Empires impose customs tariffs on goods imported for sale. As soon as one crosses a border or enters a port, a horde of officious inspectors, guards, and scribes appears to demand their due. This procedure can be both costly and time-consuming if the proper "inducements" are not tendered. The Tsolyáni and the Livyáni demand 1 percent of the merchant's purchase price for his cargo (as proved by his receipts and manifests), plus another 1-2 percent as "gifts." The Mu'ugalavyáni charge a flat 2 percent and accept no bribes. The Salarváyni are more greedy, requiring 2 percent for the state and as much as 3 percent "for their time and trouble." The Yán Koryáni are quite reasonable: half a percent goes to the Baron's treasury, and another half a percent is taken by his officials. The pirate princes of Háida Pakála are the most avaricious of all: they begin by demanding 10-15 percent, and one can rarely haggle them

down below 7 or 8. The Ghatóni, Pijenáni, Saá Allaqiyáni, and the Chayakkuyáni all follow the practice of Yán Kór, while the rulers of Milumanayá charge as the Tsolyáni do. Pechano collects duty only from Salarvyáni merchants (5-9 percent!) but permits all others to enter without restriction. Of the nonhumans, only the Shén states have a border tariff: 2 percent on any profits made in their lands, paid as one leaves. The Shén may also ask for another half a percent or so in bribes.

Other nations have no organised customs systems, although almost every city imposes gate-tolls, market-fees, and other petty exactions whenever a merchant sets up shop there. These, including gratuities to municipal officials, all total about a tenth of 1 percent (again of the merchant's purchase price) in each new locale. The Livyáni and the Shén alone make no such assessments. Once permission to trade has been granted, a trader may sell his wares in any city in their countries without further impositions.

1.734. Marketplaces

Most of the artisan clans maintain permanent sales premises within a section of their clanhouses. Clans which produce the same general type of merchandise tend to be grouped together in "streets" or "districts," as said in Sec. 1.422. In addition, however, every town and city worthy of the name has one or more marketplaces: open plazas surrounded by better class stalls set up under pillared colonnades. Hither come traders from other cities and nations, peasants with produce from the countryside, itinerant peddlars, food vendors, purveyors of amulets and love potions, musicians and mountebanks, grain dealers, and a myriad other kinds of merchants. Markets are held perhaps once a week in a small town and daily in a great city. The poorest traders pay a copper *Qirgál* or so per day for a space on the dusty, baking pavement in which to pile up their meagre goods on a dirty mat. The more affluent give a *Káitar* or two to the market authorities for room to erect an awning of gaudy cloth to protect their wares — and themselves — from the sun. The wealthiest rent a stall under one of the side porticoes for 3-4 *Káitars* per diem.

These bustling, crowded bazaars are maelstroms of colour, noise, and smell. Merchants cry their wares in stentorian tones and bang upon pots or metal gongs to draw attention; peddlars rattle small finger-drums or blow shrieking bone whistles; old peasant women bellow their vegetables' virtues over and over; children howl; dogs bark; and there is the constant babbling roar of a score of tongues. The air is redolent of dust, sweat, smoke from cookfires, and fresh produce, all mingled with the cloying stench of rotting fruit and flowers, sweet-smelling grain, perfumes, incense, spices, sawn wood, old straw, manure, and human excrement. Heaps of dun-brown pottery lie next to dark red haunches of fly-buzzing meat ("brought fresh from my village this morning"). Orange-red *Dná* grain, yellow *Másh* fruits, vegetables in a dozen hues of brown and green, all vie for the eye's attention. Women with squalling infants in tow squat crosslegged amidst bolts of cloth in all the brilliant colours of a *Khéshchal* bird. Soldiers in lacquered armour poke through heaps of grev-green *Chlén*-hide spearpoints and swords. Hawkers dangle tall poles hung like many-branched trees with buckles, laces, combs, and ribbons in the faces of pretty, half-naked adolescent clangirls — who may be too preoccupied with a jeweller's stock of cheap red-glass bangles from Mu'ugalavyá to notice. Plump housewives solemnly pick over every fruit in the merchants' stalls before making their purchases. Moneylenders weigh this coin or that in their miniature scales and lay out their "wares" in shining stacks on scarlet scarves before them. Young boys munch upon *Qó* — balls of deep-fried *Dná* flour dipped in syrup — and wipe their fingers surreptitiously upon the cloak of a passing scribe. Bumpkins from the villages slump or sprawl in bemused intoxication upon reed mats in front of the stalls of bearded Salarvyáni wine-merchants. ("Our best advertisments," say the latter). Somewhere there is the skirling music of flutes and the rhythmic thutter of drums. Girls — and others not so young — in the emerald and silver of Dlamélish and Hrihávyal offer their invitations to nervous peasant lads. By evening, when the city gates are shut, all of this will be gone, and the marketplace will stand silent and empty to await the rebirth of the morning.

The purveyors of more elegant and exclusive merchandise may not open stalls in the public marketplace at all. Instead, they hire small boys to go about announcing their arrival in the city at the gates of every wealthy clanhouse and noble residence. Interested customers then call upon the trader at his lodgings or invite him to come and display his goods in the privacy of their households. The costs of such "advertising" come to a *Káitar* or less in a town and perhaps 5 *Káitars* in a major city. Signboards, posters, broadsides, etc. are not used. In the states of the far northeast, however, foreign merchants hang paper pictures of their wares upon poles in front of their quarters. In Salarvyá, Pechano, and Hálda Pakála the practice is to employ criers to go through the streets calling out the trader's name, residence, and the quality of his merchandise. There is no concept of advertising aside from these simple expedients. There is no need for local merchants to proclaim their products at all, of course, since every city-dweller knows where the artisans' clanhouses are and what can be obtained there.

Commerce in the Five Empires is supervised by the market police. These are members of the city militia under the authority of the Municipal Prefect (or the Governor, if the city happens to be the headquarters of a Province). They go armed and armoured much like the medium infantry of their nation's army, and they are charged with the apprehension of cutpurses and pilferers, keeping the peace, watching for counterfeit coinage, checking weights and measures, and seeing to it that neither sellers nor buyers are too badly cheated. "Cheating," by the bye, has nothing to do with outrageous pricing — "fair" is whatever the seller can get and the purchaser is willing to give. The marker police will take interest only if the merchandise is not delivered at all, if an item of lower quality is substituted for one of higher value after the bargain has been struck, or if there has been some other sort of duplicity or swindling. Most disputes are settled through judicious threats (or even a bit of head-thumping with a spear-butt), while more serious cases are brought before the market magistrate. This worthy then imposes a settlement, often in favour of the litigant who provides him with the greatest "inducement." Altercations which involve violence (and heaven help the foreigner who assaults one of the market police!) may be sent on to the criminal courts. The result can be anything from a stiff lecture to a fine, imprisonment, slavery, or even the impalement stake. Justice is swift — and hardly ever equitable. There is no appeal, unless the culprit's clan, temple, or comrades can manage to soothe frayed tempers, pay compensation, or bribe the judge before sentence is imposed.

Several smaller nations also have market police, but these tend to be shabbier, less disciplined, and more inclined to abrupt and capricious settlements. There are no such safeguards at all in N'lúss, Ghatón, the states of the far northeast, Jánnu, Kilalámmu, Tsolél, or in the tribal areas. In these regions one must have recourse to the local ruler — or to force.

The Shén and the Urunén do supervise their markets carefully, and their officials are probably fairer and less venal than their counterparts in many human lands, although they are naturally biased in favour of their own species. Those races whose enclaves lie within one of the great Empires follow the laws of their lands. The Ahoggyá of Ónmu Tlé Hlétis have no market police, but they do have the complex code of mercantile honour and they make no exceptions for human ignorance. The trader who attempts any chicanery there may be set upon by every Ahoggyá in the marketplace — with predictable results.

1.735. Ownership and Investment

All property in Tsolyánu is theoretically owned by the Imperium. In practice, however, the clans hold title to about 40 percent of all resources, the state to some 30 percent, the temples to another 20 percent, and private individuals the rest. Any of these entities may buy, sell, rent, loan, mortgage, or otherwise dispose of their property without hindrance — unless the matter is perceived to be important to the state, in which case the Emperor's agents may confiscate the assets with or without compensation. (Again, "inducements," the universal means of smoothing the way, may incline an Imperial officer to be generous.)

Any person or organisation can invest funds in a commercial project without actually owning it. A member of a tailors' clan, for example, may buy a share in a merchant clan's caravan to Mu'ugalavyá. If the caravan returns with a profit, he gains accordingly. If it loses money or does not return at all, the tailor suffers the consequences. It must be noted that the tailor cannot own and operate caravans of his own; this falls within the purview of the mercantile clans, and they will take umbrage — and legal action — if

he is not one of their members.

All legal entities subcontract parts of their operations to other clans. An agricultural estate owned by a temple employs tenant farmers to till the fields (and pays them with a share of the produce); carters' clans are brought in to carry the grain to market or to a temple storehouse; carpenters' clans construct the buildings; herders' clans see to the meat animals; scribal clans keep the accounts (although temple scribes are also employed for this directly); and a dozen other clans may be called in from time to time to perform their traditional duties. The system often works through reciprocal obligations, rather than through cash payments: e.g. clan A does something for clan B, and the latter will do some work to pay back the favour at a later time. If all parties agree, these obligations can even be transferred to a third party: e.g. clan A does not immediately require clan B's services but instead owes an obligation to clan C; clan A may then ask clan B to perform some task needed by clan C. The complexities of these arrangements are the meat and drink of the lawyers who throng the civil courts.

The government itself frequently subcontracts its necessities to the occupational clans, paying for its obligations with money collected through taxes. The Imperium also has the right to co-opt labour without payment if it wishes, and this is what is usually done when the project is a very large one: e.g. the rebuilding of a city through *Ditlána* (Sec. 1.424), construction of *Sákbe* Roads, the erection of Imperial tombs and monuments, etc. The clans, temples, and private individuals usually cooperate with the Imperium in these endeavours, but there is much haggling over the political and economic benefits each contractor will receive in return. Poor peasants and artisans may find themselves part of a corvee on an Imperial project, thus, if their clan-elders or temple superiors have made an agreement with Avanthár.

Individuals may engage in any enterprise they desire, so long as this does not tread too heavily upon the prerogatives of the occupational clans. Free enterprise is welcome, provided that it is limited to the traditional business of one's clan or to "cottage industry." A tailor can sell his own creations — or take them himself to another city and market them there — without raising the ire of the mercantile and transport clans. The old peasant woman may sell her fruits and vegetables in the marketplace, although she might save herself time and trouble (but get a few *Qirgál* less) by wholesaling them to a grocers' clan which deals in fresh produce. An archer who can make excellent arrows may sell a few to his comrades without hindrance. Only if he attempts to set up a regular shop or factory will he receive a visit from the fletchers' clans.

Lending money at fixed rates of interest is the province of the money-lending clans, and amateurs who engage in this without being members may find themselves in legal — or physical — difficulties. There are no concepts of securities, stocks, bonds, insurance, or any of the other more complex trappings of advanced capitalism.

Mu'ugalavyá and Yán Kór display much the same system as that found in Tsolyánu. The state owns 45 percent of the resources in the former country, the clans another 30 percent, the temples about 15 percent, and individuals only 10 percent. In Yán Kór it is the localised clans which are more powerful; these possess 50 percent of all economic production, the state 15 percent, the temples 20 percent, and private persons own the remainder.

Almost 80 percent of all resources is vested in the temples of the Shadow Gods in Livyánu. The state owns 15 percent, and the clans and individuals the rest. The clans belong to the theocratic temple structure, and it is thus hard to distinguish their ownership from that of the priesthood with which they are allied. Temple monopolies upon many products are also found: e.g. the fisheries, ships, and algae ponds (Sec. 1.415) are operated by the Temple of the Lost One of the Sea on the eastern coast, while on the western shores these are the monopoly of the Temple of the Sea Goddess of Kakársha. The priests of the One of Fears of Dlásh own the bogs from which the *Vraóz* reed comes (Sec. 1.415), while the growing of grain belongs jointly to the Temples of Qame'él, Kirrineb, and Ndárka, the mines of the north to Ru'ungkáno, the orchards of Kikumársha, etc.

Ninety percent of all arable land in Salarvyá is held by the seven great feudal dynasties which rule the country. This is farmed by lesser clans in a complex system of fiefs, feudal duties, and reciprocal responsibilities. The mercantile and artisan clans are theoretically independent of the regional overlords, although they must pay rental for land, shop premises, etc., and there is a host of petty taxes and tolls. Each of the seven families also owns one or more monopoly: the Chruggilléshmu family of Tsatsayágga has charge of the sea and shipping along the southern coast and also holds the reins of the central government at Tsatsayágga; the Hrüchchâqsha family of Chame'el has a monopoly upon the *Vrélq*, the crustacean which produces the black dye used for clothing and dyeing armour; the Thirreqúmmu family of Koylúga sees to grain, transport, and produce in the western regions; the Khekhkhéssa Clan of Héru deals in timber, forest products, and metals (particularly iron from the ancient pits of the Tamkáde Bay area); the Mreshshél-Átl Lineage of Lake Mrissútl controls the Inner Shrine of the Goddess Shiringgáyi (and hence much of the religious life of the country); the laconic Gürrüshyúgga Clan of Tsa'avtúlgu deals in grain, wines, rare woods, and spices in the east central region; and the Shiggashko'ónmu family of Jaekánta trades in gems, pearls, stone carvings, and silky *Gúdru* cloth. Other less-prestigious families rule the smaller cities and towns. Each of these has its own local monopolies, but all are vassals of the seven great lineages mentioned above.

Most of the smaller nations follow business patterns similar to those of the Five Empires. The Ghatóni, Pijenáni, and Saá Allaqiyáni fall within the orbit of Yán Kór, while Milumanayá is split between the unprincipled free enterprise of Pelesár and the Tsolyánu-like patterns of Sunráya. Pechâno resembles Salarvyá: the Beneshchán lineage of Mechanéno holds the reins of the central government and deals in forest products, while the Rekhmél family, based at Teshkóa in the east, has interests in iron mines, sulphur, and smithing. Competitive individual capitalism is the rule in Tsolél and in Háida Pakála. Local rulers, clans, and families own most of the resources in the states of the far northeast, Jánnu, and Kilalámmu. Individuals and cities hold title to much of the land in Mihállu, and the inhabitants of the Nyémesel Isles work as employees of their authoritarian priesthood. Amongst the N'lüss arable land is communally operated by the band as a whole, although this ancient system is breaking down into loose private enterprise in the Mu'ugalavyáni-influenced cities. There is no concept of land ownership at all in the tribal territories of M'mórcha, Nmartúsha, Rannálu, and the Lorún areas of Yán Kór. In these regions each tribe and village has vaguely defined boundaries within which its members farm, hunt, and gather food, but the idea of a person or a group "owning" a piece of real estate is quite alien.

Throughout the Shén states all land and resources belong to the egg-group, and individuals own only their personal possessions. The subterranean nest-cities of the Tinalíya and the Pygmy Folk are communally run, as are the villages of the Swamp Folk, the Pé Chói, and the Páchi Léi (within their own enclaves — those living in human lands follow the practices of their neighbours). The Hláka eyries are also group-property, although each family has its traditional sleeping area and may barter this to another family in return for food, weapons, and other prerogatives. The village owns the land amongst the Ahoggyá, but there is also a complex code of individual ownership and business procedures. This is little understood by humans, even those traders who have dealt with these creatures for years. The Urunén have the most developed idea of private property of any of the nonhuman races; individuals and families hold title to the land and to most businesses, and state and temple property is kept to a minimum. Nothing is known of the economic structures of the inimical societies, although it is assumed that these are communally based.

1.736. Taxation

Much of the revenue of the state in the Five Empires is derived from a simple form of income tax. Every resident, citizen and non-citizen alike, pays a percentage of his gross income each year. This includes wages, business profits, interest, "inducements," treasure finds, spoils of war, loans, gifts, and bequests — in short, everything. In Tsolyánu, Mu'ugalavyá, and Yán Kór the rate is 1 percent per month, in Livyánu it is 2 percent, and in Salarvyá it is 1.5 percent. The practices of the smaller nations vary greatly, ranging from no tax at all in Tsolél, N'lüss, the states of the far northeast, Jánnu, Kilalámmu, Háida Pakála, and the various tribal territories, to an outrageous 3 percent in Pijéna, Saá Allaqí, Ghatón, Milumanayá,

and Mihállu all charge 1 percent, while Pecháno taxes its residents 1.5 percent — but charges any resident Salarvyáni 4 percent!

The reason for such high rates is that the governments rarely bother with low-level earners. Instead, they assess the clans according to the census, the reports of their agents, and a process of bargaining. Clanless persons, foreigners, and many poor people in remote areas thus manage to slip by unless they have the misfortune to encounter one of the tax-collecting gangs which periodically sweep the countryside. Individuals who suddenly come into a great deal of money and spend it heavily in the marketplaces are naturally scrutinised by the ever-present informers of the state, and a subsequent visit from a revenue officer is as certain as the rising of the moons.

One who defaults upon his tax payment is usually made to pay up and is let off with a lecture the first time. A second offense brings a fine of 75-100 percent of the unpaid tax (or enslavement if it cannot be paid). Imprisonment of anywhere from a month to a year is added to the fine for a third attempt, while a fourth-time offender is enslaved and all of his personal property is confiscated. A culprit who manages to gain his freedom and is still foolish enough to try tax evasion a fifth time is summarily impaled.

Technically, non-monetary income — works of art, weapons, jewellery, magical devices, land, etc. — is also liable to tax, no matter how acquired. The base used is the likely price were the item to be sold at once, and this amount is added to the individual's gross income. Again, this is usually only imposed upon acquisitions worth over 1,000 *Káitars*, and most tax collectors accept a rough estimate rather than go to the trouble of having things appraised. There is thus considerable room for bargaining.

Tax collectors are among the most venal people on the planet. "Inducements" are commonly offered by the temples, the clans, and private individuals. Many revenue officers deliberately exaggerate the amount owed and pocket the difference. The officials of Salarvyá, Pecháno, and Pijéna are the most oppressive; the naive and the illiterate are frequently hoodwinked into paying as much as five times the correct tax. All too many tax gatherers treat their assigned areas as fruitful farms which can be joyously harvested over and over. It is hard to get one of these scoundrels removed; witnesses and evidence are needed, and a tax collector is invariably accompanied by an entourage of scribes, guards, assessors, etc., all of whom are in his pay. Occasionally a powerful clan or temple can have a particularly highhanded official transferred or arrested, but most average folk simply pay up and remain silent. The governments are satisfied as long as they receive their revenues and the economic base is not depressed to the point of ruination. The post of tax collector is therefore much sought after, although it carries strongly negative social prestige.

It may be added that the best way to dispose of an unpopular tax collector legally is to see that he cannot collect what the state has estimated for his region. A few years ago the population of a town in Katalál Province in Tsolyánu conspired to produce no income and to conceal their accumulated wealth. The tax collector's men impaled several people (including some leading clansmen). The clans complained en masse to Avanthár, and an Imperial commission was sent out. The tax collector was then himself impaled — not because of his oppression but because he failed to transmit the sum which the government had estimated should come from the area. The citizenry then promptly paid their back taxes to the commission (plus "inducements"), and another official was duly appointed. This man distinguished himself for his leniency and probity.

None of the nonhuman races has this type of income tax (except those whose enclaves lie within one of the great Empires and are thus subject to its laws). The Shén states assess their component egg-groups for funds to operate their governments, and the city councils (Sec. 1.720) do the same for local projects. The Urunén have a more complex schedule of taxes upon various types of businesses, etc., and no human understands the system of the Ahoggyá of Ónmu Tlé Hléktis.

1.740. LAW, THE POLICE, PUNISHMENTS AND THE ARENAS

The legal systems of the Five Empires (and many of the minor nations as well) are founded upon the principles laid down by the Priestkings of Éngsvan hla Gánga. These provide for a monolithic, nationwide hierarchy which stretches from the village Headmen all the way up to the highest courts in the land. There are no "local" laws or ordinances: what is legal in Chéne Hó is also legal in Thráya. The police forces are technically members of the army, and judges are appointed by the state (as are other officials; cf. Sec. 1.720). Lawyers, however, are not Imperial functionaries but are members of certain clans which have made the law their occupation.

There are three types of courts: Imperial, civil, and ecclesiastical. The first of these tries cases in which the state itself is the aggrieved party: treason, spying, peculation with Imperial monies or property, dishonesty in an Imperial post, cowardice or disobedience by soldiers, and a variety of other offences.

The civil courts deal with altercations between clans, temples (if the issue is non-religious), individuals, and other legal entities. Assault, robbery, rape, murder, kidnapping, brawling, and other crimes of violence fall into this category, as do suits involving breaches of contract (including marriage agreements), divorce, clan rights, disputes over land or water ownership or usage, embezzlement, fraud, imposture, inheritence, personal slander, and many other kinds of illegalities.

Whenever a civil offence is committed, the complainant has three means of redress: (1) he can demand *Shamtla* "bloodmoney" (Secs. 1.530 and 1.550) from the offender; (2) he may take the case to a civil court, which will hold a hearing and impose a settlement and/or penalties; or (3) he may resort to the ancient duelling code, "The Manifesto of Noble Deliverance," mentioned in Sec. 1.422. If the matter is such that he feels he cannot gain satisfaction through any of these methods, there is a fourth course open to him: the assassins' clans (Secs. 1.422 and 1.550).

Shámtla "bloodmoney" is in a sense an "out-of-court settlement." The plaintiff or his representative (usually a clan-elder) approaches the accused party, states the case, and names an appropriate figure. The latter then sets forth his side of the story, and both parties haggle until an agreement is reached. Even cases of extreme violence can be settled in this way; the Imperium does not become a plaintiff unless the act was committed against an Imperial official or resulted in loss to Imperial property. The amount of *Shámtla* varies with the nature of the issue and the status of the persons involved: e.g. a very low clan might be happy to get 100 *Káitars* for a slain member, a low clan may settle for 500-1,000, a medium clan for 2,000-10,000, a high clan for 5,000-20,000, and a very high clan (including the Tlakotáni) for 30,000-100,000. Foreigners and clanless persons may also demand *Shámtla*, but what they get depends upon their influence in the society and their visible prestige. The family of a destitute foreign adventurer, for instance, may be handed a purse containing 5 to 30 *Káitars* and be told to depart.

In cases not involving injury or death, the amount of *Shámtla* may range from the restitution of damaged property to a sum 15 or 20 times its worth. If the issue centres upon intangibles (e.g. infringements of clan prerogatives, breaches of contract, slander, etc.), the plaintiff may demand whatever he thinks appropriate — and likely. Again, the status of the parties strongly affects the settlement: e.g. a foreigner, a clanless person, or a member of a lower clan who has been insulted by a more prestiged individual will get nothing, while an aristocrat who slanders another nobleman publicly may have to pay anywhere from 1,000 to 20,000 *Káitars*, depending upon the circumstances. It does not matter whether the slander is true or not. People are jealous of their honour. One must thus be careful of one's speech and never attribute "ignobility" to another person. For example, one must never imply that a merchant is dishonest while haggling with him over a price; to do so in the hearing of other customers is libel and will result in an immediate demand for *Shámtla* (often only a few *Káitars*, agreed to and paid on the spot) or a trip to civil court, which can be much more expensive. (It is assumed here that the merchant and the customer are both of about the same social status; a noble can insult a merchant with impunity). Even if the trader is proved to be fraudulent, the slander still stands and must be compensated. The question of the merchant's chicanery then becomes a separate case, and the customer may demand *Shámtla* in turn for this or enter a countersuit against the businessman in a civil court.

Parties not directly involved in the original matter may also ask for *Shámtla* if their interests are harmed. A widow whose husband has been incapacitated or slain through the negligence or deliberate

action of an employer may turn up on his doorstep demanding either a lump sum or permanent support. If she has a clan and kinsmen willing to aid her, she may be awarded only a small amount, but if she has no resources a judge may order the employer to maintain her in her accustomed lifestyle until she remarries or finds other means of subsistence. As an example, one may cite the case of a Tsolyani ship-captain who hired a crew without warning them that he planned a dangerous raid on the island of the Hlüss. When he got back to Jakálla with all but five of his company dead, the families of his slain crew members are demanded *Shámtla*: 20 *Káitars* per month to each of 42 plaintiffs for life! The wretched captain was expelled from his clan for his stupidity. (Clans may indeed eject a member who has become a serious economic or political liability.) His assets were confiscated and divided amongst the complainants, and he himself was enslaved for nonpayment of debts. Employers usually proclaim the perils of a job in advance, and some also obtain a prior agreement from a prospective employee's family and clan that no *Shámtla* will be asked. The courts do not always honour such contracts, however, since there is always the possibility of further undue negligence or deliberate criminal action on the part of an employer. Fortunately for the economy, certain jobs are commonly known to be hazardous, and those who apply for them are willing to forego their rights to *Shámtla* — and to persuade their families and clans to do the same.

Shámtla is asked and given only for acts of deliberate injury (tangible or intangible) and for omissions which lead directly to harm. In the latter case the negligence must be at least partially intentional. True accidents — even if they result from carelessness — are not causes for *Shámtla*: e.g. the unfortunate who slips on a fruit peel in front of a grocer's stall has no claim ("It was woven into his Skein of Destiny"), nor does the man whose foot has been mashed by a carter's *Chlén*-beast, nor the merchant whose goods have been broken through poor cargo-handling. A judge would have to be certain that these acts were purposeful — or were the result of a deliberate failure to warn the victim — in order to award *Shámtla*.

Slaves have no right to *Shámtla* under any circumstances, nor do free members of a slave's family (Sec. 1.721) if he is harmed. The state, moreover, can never be held responsible — after all, the residents of one of the Five Empires, their possessions and chattels, etc. are theoretically the property of the state and can be treated in any way the state wishes. It is therefore impossible for the family of a soldier or of a person injured by an Imperial official in the course of his duty to obtain *Shámtla*.

If *Shámtla* is refused or cannot be agreed upon, either party may take the case to a civil court. These tribunals will attempt to negotiate the matter. Should this fail, the matter becomes a criminal case, the two sides call in legal counsel, the lawbooks and the scrolls of precedents are consulted, and the judge hands down a decision. There are no jury trials, and more than one magistrate will be assigned to a case only in special circumstances (cf. the matter of the townsmen versus the tax collector in Sec. 1.736).

A fine, plus the enforced payment of *Shámtla*, is the usual result of being found guilty by a civil court without sufficient ameliorating circumstances. It is to everyone's benefit to settle disputes out-of-court through the *Shámtla* system since more serious cases (e.g. violent crimes, large-scale swindling, etc.) are often punished with very harsh sentences: imprisonment, maiming, confiscation, enslavement, and impalement (the dreaded "high ride"), at the judge's discretion. Exile is used as a penalty only in Yán Kór, Saá Allaqí, and Pijéna. Judicial torture is frequently applied to gain confessions, and in important cases an expert in psychic magic may be called in to ascertain the truth. There is no plea-bargaining (although "inducements" to both the judge and the plaintiff may serve the same purpose), and an appeal to a higher court is allowed only if the culprit can bring powerful pressures to bear upon the court through his clan, temple, or friends high in Imperial service. Sentences are carried out at once.

The Imperium itself does not accept *Shámtla*, although it collects fines (including those imposed by civil courts). The punishments imposed in cases where the state is the plaintiff (cf. above) are extremely severe: long imprisonment (the duration of which may be kept secret), slavery in the mines or galleys, and various unpleasant forms of execution are common. The impalement stakes which line certain boulevards in every great city are thus all too frequently occupied.

The law always demands satisfaction, especially in Imperial cases. If an accused person flees — or even if he dies before sentence is imposed — his family, clan, and even his friends may be punished in his place. A murderer, for example, who manages to escape arrest but is recognised will be tried in absentia. If he is found guilty, a strict order of precedence will be followed: if he has a wife, she will be punished; if she is unavailable, one or more of his children (as determined by the judge in consultation with the plaintiff) will be sentenced; if he has no immediate family, the penalty will be imposed upon a clan-brother (or a clan-sister in the case of an *Aridáni* woman) selected by the clan and the court; and if none of these can be produced, a close friend will be chosen at random from reports supplied by police agents to be punished in his stead. Should the original perpetrator later be apprehended, he will still be made to pay the full penalty just as though he had been caught in the first place. The theory behind this custom is that a criminal's kinsmen and friends will think twice about helping him if they know that they themselves may have to suffer the punishment meant for him.

The assassins' clans (Secs. 1.422 and 1.550) are not part of the judicial process but rather a "last resort" for those whose grievances cannot be redressed in any other way. These clans have the right to kill, commit violence, or destroy property — but only against private persons and not the state or its officials in their professional capacities. In return for this privilege they must remain above suspicion and accept commissions which result in the requital of "ignoble" actions which cannot be managed in any other way. They thus do not accept "grudge" cases; they cannot be hired to participate in long-standing feuds in which the two parties go on harming one another alternately for generations; they refuse to steal objects for themselves or their customers; and they do not spy or obtain information which is to be used for financial gain. Should an individual approach one of these clans, he will be asked to describe his grievance in detail and state the reasons why it cannot be settled through *Shámtla* or a court of law. If the cause is "noble," the clan may accept the commission. As examples, one may cite such cases as the carter's clan which was cheated by a merchant of Mrelu through a complicated bookkeeping system and hence could not be solved by the courts; the sister who was cleverly deprived of her inheritance by her brothers; the elderly nobleman who was repeatedly insulted by another in the presence of a small coterie of friends who refused to testify — and who could not challenge his tormentor to a duel because of his age; the priest whose superior lied about his knowledge of the rituals and thus deprived him of a promotion; etc. The services of the assassins' clans are expensive: e.g. having an enemy beaten may cost anywhere from 50 to 10,000 *Káitars*, depending upon his status and the difficulties of the job; the price of a murder ranges from 1,000 to 100,000 *Káitars* similarly; and various forms of mayhem, property damage, and humiliation must be negotiated. An assassin always leaves a token with the victim to indicate who has committed the act, and no claims for *Shámtla*, legal suits, or other retaliation are permitted against these clans or their customers. It is assumed that if an assassins' clan has accepted a mission, the cause is "noble" and hence not legally actionable.

Unfortunately, the assassins' clans are composed of human beings, and everyone is susceptible to both error and avarice. A very large fee may thus make a commission seem more "noble" than it really is. Moreover, these clans must give way before powerful pressures. Their members are often devotees of Hrü'ú, Ksárul, or Wurú (and occasionally of Sárku), and they thus may become embroiled in the elaborate intrigues of the heirs of the Petal Throne, the political parties, the temples, the great clans, and other forces in the society. The intelligence arm of the Omnipotent Azure Legion (Sec. 1.370) therefore maintains careful surveillance of their activities.

The ecclesiastical courts are less important. They try only cases involving the clergy (e.g. a priest who steals from his temple's coffers, a hierophant who disobeys his superior's commands), or which centre upon inter-temple disputes (e.g. breaches of the Concordat; Sec. 1.360). Heresy and heterodoxy are not culpable offences under the laws of any of the Five Empires except Livyánu, and an apostate or a heretic will not be tried but will be expelled from his orders. Only if a defrocked priest later reveals temple secrets to outsiders will he be

hailed before an ecclesiastical tribunal. The punishments imposed by these courts are as harsh (or harsher) as those prescribed by the Imperial courts, and again *Shâmtla* is not accepted.

The custom of settling differences through a personal duel also stands outside the main legal system. "The Manifesto of Noble Deliverance" predates the Engsvanyáli period and is probably traceable to the time of the Dragon Warriors. It is still frequently used by warriors, soldiers, and others with some skill with weapons (or will spells; see below).

No one can be forced to fight. It is perfectly correct for a priest or a merchant to refuse a challenge from a warrior. Duelling is very much a part of the warrior image, however, and a trained fighting man who rejects a fair match will probably have to endure the stigma of cowardice. On the other hand, an inexperienced fighter will not be blamed if he declines a duel with an acknowledged master.

Both parties must also be of approximately the same social status: i.e. both nobles, both townsmen, both peasants, both clanless, etc. A young aristocrat may feel some compulsion to fight a member of his own clan, but he will reject a challenge from a peasant or a townsman out of hand. Indeed, if he takes umbrage at the fellow's impertinence, he may ask his retainers to beat the upstart or even slay him — and then toss down a purse containing a few *Kâitars* as *Shâmtla*. No court in the Five Empires will award any greater redress than this.

The rules of duelling are very strict. The weapons and armour used (or the magical spells in the case of priests and sorcerers) must be as identical as possible; the time and place of the duel must be specified in advance; the fight must be refereed and publicly witnessed; its outcome has to be reported to the authorities; and the limits to which the combat is to be taken must be accepted by both sides: i.e. to the shedding of first blood, to surrender, to incapacitation, or to the death. The person challenged does not automatically have the right to the choice of weapons; this must be worked out by the duellists' seconds. If neither has any competence in the weapons favoured by the other, then the seconds (and the referee) may suggest others which are not known to either party. Any amount of armour may be worn, and this may be of any quality; again, however, the defences of the combatants must be equal, and a richer person is thus not allowed to profit from access to finer armour.

A duel is considered to be the final settlement of a dispute. No further litigation may arise from it: e.g. the loser's family cannot claim *Shâmtla* from the winner. A criminal case may only be registered if there was cheating or if the combat was deliberately carried beyond its agreed-upon boundaries: e.g. if a supposedly non-fatal duel results in a death which the witnesses say was not just an accident.

Further conditions cannot be attached to the outcome of the duel. One cannot say, "If I win, you will pay me what you owe me," or "If you are victorious, I will hand over my villa in Tumíssa," etc. The duel itself is the end of the matter. If it is later found that there was secret conditions, the duel will be declared illegal, both participancipants be punished by long imprisonment (and if one is dead, the other will be tried for murder). The willful break of the "Manifesto" is an Imperial offence and will be tried in an Imperial court.

The only material items gained by the winner are the loser's weapons, armour, and personal effects (i.e. items he is carrying at the time of the duel and not properly kept elsewhere, real estate, slaves, etc.). More importantly, the winner acquires the person of his vanquished opponent himself. If alive, the latter becomes the victor's personal slave. His family is not enslaved with him, and his property (other than the personal effects just mentioned) reverts to his heirs. The winner usually permits the loser to buy himself back for a reasonable sum. This is the "noble" course of action, and a victor who refuses to allow this or who sets too high a price upon his new acquisition may find himself challenged by his opponent's seconds, friends, and even the referee! There is no regular scale for this type of "ransom"; it depends upon the combatants' social status and the gravity of the grievance which lay between them. As a rule of thumb, however, a commoner may be bought back for 100-500 *Kâitars*, an experienced soldier or a priest of the lower Circles for 600-1,000, a military officer or a higher Circle priest for 2,000-20,000, and an aristocrat for 5,000-50,000 *Kâitars*. If the loser was fighting for someone else (cf. above), it is still he who is enslaved and not the person for whom he acted as champion.

If the vanquished opponent is dead, his body likewise belongs to the victor. This is invariably sold back to the slain man's clan or kinsmen for perhaps a tenth to a third of the amounts listed above.

Duels between priests and sorcerers are not common. They are usually fought with physical weapons (e.g. cudgels, maces, daggers), but occasionally spells and even ancient technological devices may be employed. Several adepts in sorcery may be summoned to see that the spells used are of identical or at least near-equivalent ranges and powers. It is cheating to use any other spell, even to save one's life, and the referees punish violators with instant death.

Amongst the nonhumans, only the Shén and the Ahoggyá ever resort to duels while resident in the lands of mankind. Battles between a man and a nonhuman or between two species of nonhumans are prohibited because of the difficulty of ensuring equality. (Matches of this sort between nonhuman and human slaves or criminals are sometimes held, however).

Casual street duels (or even combats on private premises) are illegal and may result in demands of *Shâmtla* or a court case. In Tsolyánu, the *Hirilâkte* Arenas (Sec. 1.422) are the usual sites for duelling. These huge stadiums are found in every city and town of any size. They belong to the Imperium, which operates them for profit with the aid of a few traditional entrepreneurial clans of very low status. The arenas provide the *Charukélkoi* "referee" for each legal duel, although the temples are called upon to send the referees for a duel involving magic. The main purpose of the *Hirilâkte* Arenas is not the solution of disputes, however, but entertainment. To this end, their managers bring in slaves, beasts, nonhumans, prisoners of war, criminals, and professional gladiators. Private persons, clans, some military legions, and the war temples also sponsor gladiators, and teams of champions come from other nations as well to earn glory. Aside from combats, there are also games and athletic contests, and the governments, the temples, the legions, and the major clans hold annual ceremonials in these arenas. Duels between private parties thus form a very small part of their offerings, and only in the case of important or highly skilled duellists will they be listed on the programme. Combats between unimportant litigants may be held in a corner away from the main events, or they may be scheduled for the early morning before the daily crowd arrives. Magical duels are popular, however, and always command a good audience.

The basic framework of the legal system has now been outlined, and it only remains to add a few details on topics of interest.

Inheritance is a source of constant litigation. The laws of the north differ from those of the south (Secs. 1.530 and 1.550). Economic resources (e.g. land, buildings, tools, merchandise, etc.) all descend through the female line in the former region, and a male can only bequeath a few personal effects to his sons, clan-brothers, or friends. This is carefully specified in every northern marriage contract. The situation is reversed in the south: there, clanswomen who are not *Aridâni* (Secs. 1.520 and 1.530) are legally almost non-persons, and property of any importance goes to a man's sons (but note the extended meaning of "son" in Sec. 1.510). Except for noble titles, there is no law of primogeniture, and one can leave whatever one wishes to any of one's "sons." It is legal to bequeath one's entire estate to just one son and leave the others nothing, but it is more customary to provide each with a roughly equal percentage. It is not possible in the south to will land or economic resources to one's daughters, although a bequest of a little money and a few mementoes will not be objectionable.

Inheritance is strongly clan-oriented. One can indeed will all of one's goods to a friend who is not a clan-brother, to a temple, or even to the state, but such a testament may not be honoured by the courts. The decedent's clan will almost certainly lay claim to any important assets, and this may extend to valuable personal effects as well (e.g. weapons, jewellery, ancient technological devices, garments, etc.) The theory is that the individual's clan has aided him throughout his life, and he therefore owes it a responsibility in death. A clan has only to demonstrate that it provided the deceased with money, resources, and assistance (and add a few "inducements") in order to overturn a will, and the testator's intended beneficiary will find himself deprived of the bequest unless he can counter with even more effective persuasions in return.

Foreigners, nonhumans, and clanless persons can bequeath their goods to whomsoever they wish. This must be done through a written

will, properly witnessed by at least four adults, however, and an executor of as high a status as the testator can manage should be appointed. The Imperium often confiscates the property of those who die intestate — or at least of those who have no clan or executor to see to the carrying out of their wishes. Persons who are in physical possession of a decedent's effects may also conceal these and refuse to give them up (claiming that these items were gifts or were their own property) unless all is made legal and correct in advance.

A note on the disposition of disturbances of the peace may be appropriate. If the perpetrators are noble, wealthy, or of high clans, the city watch will restrain them and escort them politely home. (A claim for *Shámtla* to cover any damaged property may arrive later.) Inebriants of lesser status can except to be tossed unceremoniously into the nearest gaol where they will languish in the company of petty criminals and innumerable insects until they can arrange for a few *Káitars* (10-100) as "inducements" for the watch officers. The watch is empowered to use force or even execute offenders who offer too much resistance. Needless to say, a clanless wanderer or an impoverished foreigner will be lucky to get off with only a short sojourn in prison. Gaolers are easily "induced," and they all too frequently will permit slavers, managers of the *Hirilákte* Arenas, or Imperial officials looking for labourers for their work-gangs to whisk a defenceless lower-class prisoner away to spend the rest of his life in unhappy surroundings.

In the villages, the constabulary consists of a village Headman (Tsolyani: *Laithturúnkoi*) plus a posse of bucolic deputies drafted into temporary service. The powers of a Headman include keeping the peace, arresting male-factors, solving minor disputes (usually with the help of the council of clan-elders, etc.) He can only punish petty offences with a few days' imprisonment in a storeroom, root-cellar, or, if he is in a bad mood, the basement storey of the village latrine. Those accused of more grievous felonies are kept until the Headman can have a squad of constables sent out from the nearest town to transport them thither for trial.

The police forces of larger towns and cities are members of the army: troopers who are organised, trained, and armed much like the medium infantry of their nations. In Tsolyánu, half a *Semétl* (10 men) under a junior subaltern (Tsolyáni: *Tirrikámukoi*) may be assigned to protect a small town, while a large metropolis may have a force equivalent to a full Legion (8,000 men) or more. The highest municipal official also functions as commandant of the police, and if the city is also the capital of a Province, this will be the Imperial Governor.

Most members of these police militia units live in the city where they work. They sleep at home, unlike the soldiers of the military Legions who are bivouacked in special barracks. (Every police post does have some sleeping accommodations, however, and a percentage of its force is always maintained there.) In spite of their military structure and theoretical integration into the armed forces, thus, there are real differences between policemen and soldiers, and only in a time of all-out war would these units be fully coordinated with the army. There is also less prestige associated with being a policeman than with being a soldier.

A single small building is sufficient to house the constabulary of a minor town. This contains the above-mentioned barracks, an office or two, and a few cells for petty malefactors and those who are to be transferred to a larger centre for trial. Bigger towns and cities may have several such watchposts, plus a central headquaters in or near the Palace of the Realm (see below), the administrative hub of the community. A headquaters building may be almost a fortress in itself, containing suites of offices, records, armouries, refectories, barracks, and more cells. There may be further cell blocks within the Palace of the Realm itself for suspects undergoing trial. None of these are true penal institutions, and prisoners kept in them are either very minor offenders or persons awaiting their hearings. A little "inducement" may persuade the police to allow a prisoner's counsel and friends to see him, and if the case is a civil one, a representative of the plaintiff may pay him a visit as well to see if *Shámtla* can be arranged. Should this be paid, a few further "inducements" to the watch officers and the gaolers will cause the case to be stricken from the records, and the culprit will be freed. Bureaucratic delays can be interminable if the police are not satisfied with their bribes. "Inducements" also affect one's treatment in prison: a prisoner's clan and friends can pay to see that he is comfortable — and the plaintiff can offer "inducements" in return to guarantee that he is made miserable and even physically maltreated. Indeed, there have been cases in which the two parties have engaged in competitive bidding — almost an auction — to ensure the comfort or discomfort of a prisoner! Police officials are naturally pleased by such demonstrations of emotion.

A person condemned by an ecclesiastical court will be confined in the gloomy dungeons below his temple. Those sentenced by both the civil and Imperial courts are incarcerated in one of the terrible state prisons: e.g. the Tólek Kána Pits in Bey Sú, Torunal Island outside Jakálla, the Halls of Inevitable Woe in Púrdimal, etc. These places are mighty citadels, heavily garrisoned, fortified to prevent escape from within or intrusion from without, and fitted with some of the least pleasant accommodations imaginable. There are blocks and tiers of cells (some quite pleasant, for those who can afford them), barracks-like halls for common felons, deep oubliettes, winding subterranean tunnels lined with barred gratings behind which forgotten captives languish in miserable solitude, grisly chambers of horror, and a thousand other evidences of man's ingenuity and his inhumanity towards his own species. Of special note are the Ultimate Labyrinth below the Tólek Kána Pits, in which existence consists of eating lichen scraped from the rocks and licking moisture from the stones in perpetual darkness; the Lower Catacomb of Silent Waiting beneath Avanthár, where prisoners are frozen in timeless stasis by one of the devices of the ancients and are then sealed into blocks of adamantine; and the Five Palaces of the Worm in the City of Sárku, a place so grim as to defy description.

Imperial prison guards and warders belong to the Legion of Kétl, another quasi-military unit which has rarely been called upon to fight. Many of these men belong to the Hand of Compassion (Sec. 1.550) and are devoted to Belkhánu and Qón, the deities most concerned with the ending of this life and the transition to the next. The uniform of this Legion consists of dun leather and brown-lacquered armour, but in this case the hue has nothing to do with religion (the colour of Sárku also being brown). The superstitious Tsolyani give the troopers of this Legion wide berth.

Professional tormentors and executioners are not members of the Legion of Kétl but of the Company of the Edification of the Soul, a small and tightly knit clan devoted to Chiténg (and containing some worshippers of Hrihávyal as well). Although this clan is amongst the lowest in social prestige, its members are jealous of their prerogatives and permit no outsider to perform their unpleasant tasks. Whenever a formal interrogation or execution is to be held, therefore, it is mandatory to summon representatives of this clan (always a *Mrikh* — a party of four — who wear orange-red robes and *Chlén*-hide masks shaped like the stylised lizard's head of their deity), even though this may entail a delay of days or even weeks. The only other groups which may question prisoners and inflict legal punishments are the Omnipotent Azure Legion and the temples, although any military or police unit is permitted to use force in apprehending or subduing suspects.

The Imperium also maintains several more private prisons for political opponents and those whose crimes merit the direct attention of the Petal Throne. These are operated by the Onmipotent Azure Legion, and their locations are secret. It is said that there is even a dungeon below the Golden Tower at Avanthár, built by Emperor Durumu "the Copper Blade of Sárku," (1,747-1,809 A.S.), but the present monarch is not given to cruelty, and it thus remains unused.

A few other types of police units deserve notice. The most important of these is the *Sákbe* Road Guard force. These troops are organised like the military Legions and are armed as medium infantry. Their uniforms are nondescript, however: kilts of every colour, unlacquered grey-green *Chlén*-hide armour, and blue-painted helmets in a variety of styles. Their duties include the garrisoning of the watch-towers and roadside fortresses, keeping the peace along the highways and at the way-stations, and border patrol. Contingents of 20-60 men (1-3 *Semétlyal*) traverse the major roads at intervals of about 2-4 hours apart, but less-frequented routes may receive only minimal protection. Units posted along the national frontiers are better trained and disciplined and are occasionally called upon to serve as regular military Legions.

The precincts of the Cities of the Dead (Secs. 1.422 and 1.424) are

protected by the Tomb Police. During the day these black-and-brown-liveried officers direct mourners and sightseers, apprehend cutpurses and swindlers, and keep the peace amongst the thronging flower-sellers, incense-vendors, salesmen of "Guides to the Afterlife," peddlars of talismans and amulets, priests, and labourers in the necropolises. When night comes, companies of a *Semétl* or two (20-40 men) tramp between the looming pyramids and shadowy monuments bearing flaring torches in order to keep away those who would despoil the dead — human or otherwise. In the larger cities these patrols may be accompanied by Pé Chói mercenaries since this species has better night vision than does mankind.

Temple guard units are not affiliated with the army. Every large shrine maintains two or three *Semétlyal* (40-60 men) of semi-trained soldiers. Some of these are more decorative than useful, of course: gatekeepers, watchmen, guides, escorts for higher Circle priests, etc. Others are good fighting men, and they are employed to protect the Holy of Holies, take parties of worshippers and priests down into the Underworlds to do homage at the most ancient sanctuaries (Sec. 1.424), etc. These men are technically priests and can only be drafted into the regular army in the event of serious need. Most temples encourage their more martially-inclined young devotees to enlist in one of the temple-sponsored Legions, which are indeed part of the Imperial armed forces. Such Legions are not housed within the temples, however, but are bivouacked at military encampments.

The great clans also maintain bodies of clansmen and hired mercenaries to protect their property. This is especially true of the mercantile, shipping, and slaving clans, which must have guards for their caravans and ships. Noble families also employ private bodyguards consistent with their status. None of these groups has police powers, but the courts are lenient in cases of self-defense and the safeguarding of goods and trade.

Space prevents the giving of any but the most general characteristics of the legal systems of other nations. These are as follows.

Differences between the laws of Mu'ugalavyá and those of Tsolyánu are largely matters of emphasis. More offences (particularly those involving violence) are considered crimes against the state, and *Shámtla* is awarded mainly in non-violent disputes: e.g. breaches of contract, marriage and divorce problems, slander, and inter-clan quarrels. The duelling code is legally available, but only the young bravoes of the aristocracy ever resort to it.

The urban police forces are not part of the Mu'ugalavyáni army, nor are the Tomb Police. City Prefects are allowed to raise just sufficient men to safeguard the lives and property of the citizenry. The *Sákbe* Roads, however, are patrolled by regular military units. As can be seen, the Mu'ugalavyáni believe that real power should lie in the hands of a strong central government alone.

The Mu'ugalavyani counterpart of the Omnipotent Azure Legion is a military-religious body called the Company of the Mourners in Sable. These troops form the special guard of the shrine of Hrésh on the island of Mu'ugalla. Although essentially religious in nature, they are excellently trained soldiers. Their duties include the administration of the rigid state penal code, and they also provide the nucleus of the intelligence arm as well. Certain of their members are skilled assassins, spies, and undercover agents, and these have built a network which reaches into every aspect of Mu'ugalavyáni life. The higher officers of this body never leave their island, however.

Baron Áld of Yán Kór has had to struggle with a plethora of localised laws and customs which predate his unification of the north. The clans and petty rulers of his northern land have now agreed that there shall be certain state crimes (e.g. treason, spying, military disobedience, etc.), but the rest is confusion. The western cities settle most disputes through *Shámtla*, while those in the east rely upon clan-councils, municipal oligarchs, and various other methods. The temples have comparatively little secular power, except in the City of Hlíkku and on the island of Vridu. Warriors and the nobility occasionally have recourse to the duelling code, but other classes rarely use it. Urban police forces are usually supported by a coalition of the major clans or through taxes raised nationally (Sec. 1.736) and handed back to local rulers. The *Sákbe* Roads are guarded by detachments of the regular army. There are almost no Tomb Police since the dead are interred in mausolea beneath the cities (Sec. 1.422), and these are accessible only through the temples and the palaces of the city governors themselves.

Yán Kór's equivalent of the Omnipotent Azure Legion is called the *Surgéth*. It is less efficient and depends upon agents from many walks of life: merchants, scholars, mercenaries, members of the assassin clans of Yán Kór, etc. The Baron's nonhuman advisor, Fú Shi'í, has been actively engaged in improving this network, and it is thought that his efforts are meeting with some success.

Like Yán Kór, the legal structures of Salarvyá display considerable local variation. This is due to the division of the country into semi-autonomous principalities: an act acceptable to the lords of Koylúga may be against the law in Jaékáta and vice-versa. In general the Salarvyáni rely more upon the courts than upon *Shámtla*. Cases involving violence are almost always settled through a court hearing and subsequent punishment (which can include a fine or imprisonment *plus Shámtla*). A large percentage of court time is taken up with disputes over feudal rights, inheritance, and the ownership of land. *Shámtla* alone may be assessed against the offending party in such cases. The hotheaded nobility, however, prefers the niceties of duelling to any other means of settlement.

Each feudal family in Salarvyá is responsible for protection and maintenance of the *Sákbe* Roads within its domain. The road guards of one area may not be more efficient and less venal than in other regions: e.g. a merchant can feel comparatively safe in the domain of the Chruggilléshmu family of Tsatsayágga, but he should avoid the guardsmen of the Gürrüshyúgga lineage of Tsa'avtúlgu as he would a party of Ssú — and many might add that he can expect to receive better treatment at the hands of the latter! The city police forces are similarly poorly organised, consisting of the retainers and hired bravoes of the resident overlord. Tomb guards are practically non-existent, except around Lake Mrissútl and in Tsatsayágga, where the monarchs of Salarvyá lie entombed in deep rock-cut sepulchres.

There are no ecclesiastical courts in Salarvyá; inter-temple disputes are settled by the criminal courts, like any other crimes. Executions and the interrogation of prisoners do have religious associations, however. These duties are performed by members of a particular "military" legion, the *Nchésh* (i.e. "legion") of the Loving Hand, supported by the Mreshshél-Átl clan of Lake Mrissútl. The ceremonial taking of life is forbidden to males by the doctrines of Shiringgáyi, and this body is thus composed only of priestesses. Small contingents of this legion are found in every temple of the Goddess all across the land, and these are summoned by the local rulers whenever their services are required.

A small and rather ineffectual intelligence arm is maintained by the Chruggilléshmu family of Tsatsayágga, which currently has the upper hand in the central government of Salarvyá. This organisation sometimes cooperates with — and is sometimes opposed by — similar groups in the pay of the other six great feudal families. Only in matters of national importance or mutual profit do these forces work together in anything like harmony.

The Livyáni legal system is almost the exact opposite of that of Salarvyá. A coalition of the temples of the Shadow Gods runs the government and dominates almost every facet of life. Almost all offences are thus ecclesiastical crimes, and every case is heard by a tribunal of three magistrates chosen by lot from the various priesthoods. *Shámtla* is rarely used, and duelling is forbidden (though still practiced by some of the younger nobility and members of the army). Confessions are extracted through psychic rather than physical means, but penalties are just as severe as those in Tsolyánu. Impalement is the punishment for many "minor" crimes (e.g. theft, brawling, assault), while more "serious cases" (e.g. treason, heresy, defiance of the temples, murder, blasphemy, incitement to riot) merit more imaginative and painful penalties (cf. the mention of *Vraóz* fibre in Sec. 1.415.) Non-violent interpersonal or inter-clan offences may result in fines or imprisonment.

The urban police forces of Livyánu are efficiently managed by the temples: each sect supplies a contingent of men, the number of which depends upon the tally of its worshippers living in the area. The *Sákbe* Roads are similarly patrolled by temple guard units. Each priesthood protects the graves in its own sections of the necropolises with its own Tomb Police, moreover, and the safeguarding of the ancient shrines of the Underworlds is entrusted to special elite companies of troops. These latter can be recognised by their pallor, the result of many years underground, and they are looked upon by

the populace with a mixture of fear and esteem.

The higher policies of the theocracy are enforced by the *Vru'uneb*, a religious society resembling the Omnipotent Azure Legion but with fewer military functions. Some members are indeed trained as soldiers; these serve in the army, guard the high priests and officials of the government, etc. Others watch over the city police, the customs, and the foreigners' quarters. These are the visible branches of the *Vrú'uneb*, easily distinguished by their dark purple and green cloaks and tall, gilt-crested helmets encrusted with mother-of-pearl. Others, however, conceal their identities and act as undercover agents. These are organised in "cells," the members of each of which know only one another, plus one member of a higher cell who remains in contact with their leader. The smaller the cell, the more important it is in the system. An officer of the *Vrú'uneb* thus establishes his rank by stating his place in his cell's hierarchy plus the number of its members: e.g. "I am the fourth of fifteen," "I am the third of five," etc. The biggest cells contain no more than 50 members, while the most exalted are composed of as few as three.

The *Hirilákte* Arenas are largely a Tsolyáni phenomenon, at least so far as their "circus" functions are concerned. The Salarvyáni hold feudal duels and tournaments (involving as many as 50 combatants) in their stadiums, but fights between beasts, slaves, and gladiators are rare. The Mu'ugalavyáni and the Yán Koryáni use their arenas for athletic contests, games, and state ceremonials, as well as for mock battles between army units and temple guard contingents — more training exercises than entertainments. Duels in Mu'ugalavyá are conducted in small, special arenas near the courts, while the Yán Koryáni provide secluded duelling grounds just outside their cities. Neither of these nations is much given to gladiatorial spectacles, although prisoners of war are sometimes allowed to "attain glory" by dying in battle against ferocious animals or captured members of the inimical races. Winners of these combats may be set free.

In Livyánu the arenas have been reduced almost to exhibition grounds for sacrifices and rituals too large to be celebrated in the temples. Duels must be fought in secret on private premises, witnessed only by the participants' seconds and a few friends.

Of the smaller nations, only Pijéna, Háida Pakála, Pechánо, and Saá Allaqí possess arenas. The priests of She Who Is Not Seen take delight in all sorts of violence and degraded spectacles, and every Pijenáni town of any size thus contains a stadium. The same is true of the pirate lords of Háida Pakála, who breed slaves especially for their sports and attempt to outdo one another in the lavishness of their cruel diversions. The nobles of Pechánо hold duels and tourneys much like those of Salarvyá. The Saá Allaqiyáni, on the other hand, prefer displays of martial skill, archery, dexterous dancing, athletics, wrestling and quarterstaves (called *Kichána*). Combats are rarely to the death, and "grudge matches" are rare.

None of the above prevents the governments, temples, clans, armies, and even private citizens of these other nations from sending teams of champions to compete against their equals in the *Hirilákte* Arenas of Tsolyánu. The desire to "attain glory" is widespread, and Tsolyánu is recognised as the centre for heroic contests and combats of all types. Only the Livyáni, of all of the major nations, rarely participate in this.

The legal systems of the minor nations vary greatly. Pijéna and Saá Allaqí follow the traditions of western and eastern Yán Kór, respectively, while Pechání laws are much like those of Salarvyáni. The islanders of Tsolél look to the complex precedents of their ancestors, and a foreigner can hardly ever be certain of what is being done or why. The N'lúss and the Ghatóni settle most disputes through duels, but, unlike Tsolyánu, any litigant may be represented by a champion. This substitute must be of the same approximate social class and wealth status as the person he is replacing, however. Both of these nations frequently resort to public oaths and ordeals to establish the truth of an issue: e.g. swearing upon a red-hot iron. Supreme authority resides in the chief of a war-band, and inter-tribal disputes may be settled by recourse to a third party or by warfare.

The urbanised peoples of Milumánayá are divided between the tyranny of the Warlord of Pelesár, whose retainers enforce whatever "law" he wishes, and a more Tsolyáni-like system in Sunráya and the east. The nomads of the Desert of Sighs bring every branch of tribal custom to a vote of their entire band, with predictably anarchic results.

The states of the far northeast display class-oriented legal structures: one code for the warrior lineages, another for the priesthoods, and a third for the common folk. Difficult decisions are left to the ruler or to a council of his senior advisers. These rulings are not always accepted, however, and redress may be obtained through violent revenge — possibly beginning a feud which may last for centuries. Jánnu and Kilalámmu are fragmented into a multitude of localised, clan-based systems. In the rural areas cases are tried by councils of clan-elders, but larger towns have more permanent ruling lineages or oligarchies, and these are responsible for governance and law within their vaguely-defined domains. Most offences are punished by an assessment of *Shámtla*, and if this is not paid, the culprit may be handed over to the plaintiff to do with as the latter pleases. Mihállu obeys the pandects of Engsvan hla Gánga in every punctilious detail, and the system is therefore much like that of Tsolyánu. Duelling is forbidden, however, since this was never a part of the Engsvanyáli code, and duellists are severely punished: both persons are deprived of one hand and one eye each, the choice of which being left to them.

The masters of Háida Pakála display a cheerfully corrupt despotism: "whoever commands the men and the money has the right." Local princelings make the "laws," and their hired bravoes enforce them. Family, wealth, and influence all play major roles in determing the outcome of a given case. The Nyémesel Isles are very different. The priests of Mretténmaintain a code of divinely inspired precepts which favours their temples to the exclusion of all else. Commoners are lucky to be given any rights at all, even to choosing where and for whom they will work, or whom they will marry. "We," say the priests, "are the head of Mretténall others her limbs. It is only right that the body should obey the dictates of the head." Needless to say, the Isles are not popular with sailors and traders.

The tribes of M'mórcha and Nmartúsha have a complex code of unwritten traditions. Violators are made to give up valued personal possessions for minor offences. More serious breaches may result in exile, hamstringing, or being thrown into a puff-spider pit. The nomads of Rannálu have two distinct systems: a rather mild one administered by the women, which applies only within village boundaries; and a much harsher set of laws imposed by the male war-chiefs outside of the villages. Amongst the Lorún it is the clan matriarchs who set the standards. Minor breaches are punished by public humiliation or by flogging, while crimes of violence invariably are followed by permanent exile. The Lorún never impose a death penalty.

Of all of the minor states, only Pijéna, Saá Allaqí, Pechánо, and Chayákku have urban police forces, *Sákbe* Road guards, and — here and there — tomb police. In other lands social controls are enforced by a ruler's private retainers, the priests of a sect (e.g. in the Nyémesel Isles), an informal posse raised by local clans, the war-chief of a band, a consensus of senior tribesmen, etc. Even these resources may not exist in more remote regions, however, and there travellers must arrange for their safety themselves.

The incidence of what humans term "crime" is very low amongst many of the nonhuman races. In Tinalíya society personal rivalries sometimes lead to conflict, and the participants are then left to fight it out or settle the matter through negotiation, as they wish. The Tinalíya have no concept of a "fair fight," and if violence ensues, they utilise any means which come to hand. They are mystified by human references to "justice," the duelling code, and the strictures of the law courts.

The Swamp Folk have almost no violent crimes at all. They do recognise transgressions against property (e.g. theft, fraud, infringements of water and fishing rights, etc.), and there are also intangible infractions (e.g. breaking one's word, breaches of etiquette, and other forms of dishonesty). Their "punishments" consist only of a tongue-lashing by the aggrieved party, and this almost always prevents the offence from being repeated.

Racial empathy and an inborn sense of "appropriate action" serve to reduce incidents of violence among the Pé Chói. There are no judges or courts within their enclaves, and only rarely does mate-stealing bring two of the tall black males into a brief but ferocious battle. This species is quite impressionable, however, and those who live in human lands fall prey to all of the vices of mankind. A Pé Chói thief is unknown, however.

The Pǎchi Lěi do have occasional murders, thefts, and other violent outbursts within their society, but these are much less common than in human territories. Minor transgressions are redressed by making the offender suffer exactly the same loss or injury which he had attempted to cause his victim: e.g. a thief must not only restore a stolen article to its owner, but he must give the latter another identical article as well. Murder not in self-defense is punished by exile into the forests, and a Pǎchi Lěi condemned to such perpetual solitude soon pines away and dies. One curious feature of Pǎchi Lěi behaviour is *Biyŭrh*, a term translatable as "running berserk." This may happen to any individual at any time and for reasons unknown. A Pǎchi Lěi suffering from *Biyŭrh* begins to quiver, shriek, and then runs amok killing everything in his path with whatever weapon is handy. Once an individual has returned to normal (usually within a few minutes), however, he is not punished, and nothing more is said of the incident. This phenomenon naturally leaves human judges in a quandary: some treat the offender as "not guilty by reason of insanity," while others impose *Shǎmtla* and even criminal penalties.

The Pygmy Folk exhibit a rather high incidence of violent crimes. The only means of redress is personal revenge. The aggrieved individual and his friends confront the offender and his party and engage in a fierce melee which can rage up and down through the underground burrow-city for hours until all members of one side or the other are slain. Those not involved stand ready to protect their own lives and property but do not otherwise interfere. Minor transgressions lead to vociferous disputes, and these in turn may bring about this sort of deadly violence.

The Hlǎka recognise various kinds of interpersonal crimes: e.g. mate-stealing and adultery, theft, sleeping in a part of the eyrie assigned to another, cheating, etc. First offenders receive a scolding (in which all present may join), but repeated infractions result in having one's wing membranes torn away making it impossible to fly. Such criminals are reduced to the status of slaves. They are given offal to eat, are forbidden to mate or to participate in the religious rituals, and must eke out a wretched existence until they die.

The Shěn states have a complex legal system with written laws, judges, and courts. This is not imposed upon humans living in their foreigners' quarters, however, and resident traders must make whatever compromises they can among themselves. Interpersonal offences include insult, the eating of another's eggs or young, mate-stealing, theft, fraud, etc. These acts result in an immediate duel to the death, with the only weapons being teeth, claws, and tails. Infractions against the polity of the egg-group or the state are punished by the *Hŕg-Ssǎ*, the communal council, with death: violators are torn limb from limb by several volunteer executioners at once.

The Urunén exhibit perhaps the mildest and most reasoned judicial system. They recognise a variety of personal crimes, non-violent civil offences, and transgressions against the good of the state and the race. Punishments range from ostracism and public obloquy to fining and imprisonment. The death penalty is imposed only for the killing or injuring of pregnant females, children, the aged, or the handicapped. All Urunén judges are females.

The Ahoggyǎ enclaves in Salarvyǎ, Háida Pakála, and Ónmu Tlé Hléktis follow a unique code of their own. Violence and killing are not crimes and are redressed only through personal revenge. Insults and slander, moreover, are a part of normal Ahoggyǎ communication, a custom which offends the more courteous societies of the Five Empires. One who is cursed or reviled simply returns the abuse with even greater verve and panache. Theft, fraud, cheating, and breaches of promise are taken as serious offences, however, and any who witness such an infraction may take violent action against the perpetrator. The punishments inflicted by the Ahoggyǎ often appear strange and ridiculous to humans. One may cite the case of a Salarvyáni trader who cheated an Ahoggyǎ on a shipment of *Dlél* fruit. After being thoroughly beaten, this person was painted blue and made to walk about in the marketplace daily carrying a heavy prickly melon in each hand for a period of five years. The Ahoggyǎ either cannot or will not explain the rationale behind such actions, and the principles of their legal code thus remain largely a mystery.

The judicial systems of the inimical races are unknown. Many of these species are strongly communally-oriented, and it is estimated that there is a very low incidence of interpersonal "crimes." The Hlŭss and the Ssŭ do seem to recognise property rights, however, and there may be strictures against theft and fraud. The laws of the Shunned Ones, the Mihálli, and the Nyaggá are unascertainable.

1.800. Organisational Structures

It remains to present the hierarchies and patterns of the administrations, armies, and priesthoods of the nations of the continent.

1.810. ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNMENT

The principles underlying the Tsolyáni Imperium were set forth in Sec. 1.370. Further aspects were added in subsequent Sections, and it is only necessary to touch upon the structures and titles of the four great bureaus which carry out the day to day tasks of governance.

1. The Palace of the Realm: this office is in charge of all domestic affairs, public works, taxes, the judicial system, trade, transport, the *Sǎkbe* Roads, the necropolises, and labour. Every town with a population of more than 5,000 persons possesses a branch of this Palace.
2. The Palace of Ever-Glorious War: this department deals with all military matters: recruitment, supply, training, deployment, fortifications, the *Sǎkbe* Road guards and the Tomb Police, and strategic issues. Offices exist in major cities only.
3. The Palace of the Priesthoods of the Gods: this bureau maintains surveillance over relations between the temples and their interactions with the government. It collects taxes from temple lands, organises public ceremonies, and sees to religious issues affecting the state. Branches of this Palace are found in all large cities and in some of the smaller towns as well.
4. The Palace of Foreign Lands: this office has charge of external relations, foreign trade and shipping, customs, diplomacy, and the Imperium's embassies abroad. This Palace is represented only in border towns and cities, ports, Bé́y Sŭ, and, of course, Avanthár.

All of the Palaces follow a similar chain of command: local officials forward their reports and requests to the Governors of the Provinces. The latter are responsible for coordination and regional planning,and they must also keep Avanthár informed. Routine decisions may be made at various points along the way, but a digest of all information is presented to the Petal Throne daily, and the Emperor may order reversals and changes as he sees fit.

Tsolyáni administrators are organised in "Circles." There are innumerable posts and titles, but a person's overall rank in the hierarchy can be estimated from his Circle membership. The first four Circles contain the lower echelons of clerks, scribes, and petty functionaries. Supervisors, overseers, and middle-level clerks occupy the Fifth through the Eighth. Local department heads, rural fief-administrators, District Prefects, and higher aides and attaches belong to the Ninth through the Twelfth. District Palace Chiefs, majors of the larger cities and towns, and members of the Governor's suite are included in the Thirteenth through the Fifteenth. Provincial Palace heads, legates and ambassadors, and senior advisors at Provincial headquarters are members of the Sixteenth through the Eighteenth. Governors, high functionaries at Avanthár, and members of the Court of Purple Robes (Sec. 1.370) belong to the Ninteeth through the Twenty-First, and still higher ranks exist within the chanceries near the Petal Throne. Lord Chaimíra hiSsánmirin, the current Provost of the High Chancery and Prefact of the Servitors of the Exalted, holds membership in the Twenty-Fifth Circle, the highest known administrative rank. Some Circle memberships are kept concealed, of course, particularly by the Omnipotent Azure Legion.

A rural Headman (Tsolyáni: *Laithturúnkoi*) is chosen from amongst the clan-elders of his village. He technically has no Circle affiliation but is part of the administrative services nevertheless. A junior candidate who wishes to join the bureaucracy approaches the Palace of his choice in a town or city and applies. Depending upon performance (plus clan, family, temple, etc. influence — and appropriate "inducements"), he then ascends the ladder, remaining for anywhere from six months to two years in each post. Those who have better connections can sometimes bypass some of the rungs of the ladder and gain higher posts within a shorter time, but most are

expected to prove themselves at lower levels first.

It would require another volume to detail all of the possible routes up through the hierarchies of the four Palaces, and just one sample model must suffice. A young person who has put in his time in the lower tiers may expect to be appointed a rural fief-holder or county-ruler (Tsolyáni: *Lumèharétokoi*), with anywhere from a handful of villages to several hundred square kilometres (i.e. one or two hexagons on the large terrain map) under his control. If he does well, he will be transferred to a larger fief. Alternatively, he may be assigned to the mayorship of a town (Tsolyáni: *Mradùharétokoi* "town mayor"), or he may become an administrator in a Palace in a city (Tsolyáni: *Dhiyáltokoi*). The next step is that of the mayorship of a large city (Tsolyáni: *Savàlharétokoi* "city mayor") or District Palace Chief (Tsolyáni: *Mayàharétokoi*). An administrator then advances to become a Provincial Palace Head (Tsolyáni: *Muniharetokoi*), or, if he is a member of the Palace of Foreign Lands, he may be sent as an ambassador (Tsolyáni: *Thagamúsekoi*) to another country. Eventually, if he is industrious and has the proper connections, he may reach the post of Provincial Governor (Tsolyáni: *Jaithulénkoi*). Beyond this lie the rich and auspicious posts of Béy Sú and Avanthár itself, where besides one's regular stipend there are endless vistas of "inducements," perquisites, and personal power.

County fief-holders, town mayors, city mayors, District Prefects, and Governors all have various degrees of judicial authority within their domains, although they are not expected to act as judges themselves. Magistrates of both the civil and the Imperial courts (Sec. 1.740) are members of the Palace of the Realm. A rural judge (Tsolyáni: *Tugrúnmokoi*) may be of only the Seventh or Eighth Circle, while a senior magistrate of the Governor's court (Tsolyáni: *Tugrúnmodàlikoi*) may belong to the Sixteenth Circle or higher.

The ancient noble titles listed in Sec. 1.720 carry no political or judicial powers, unless they are coupled with a Circle rank in one of the four Palaces.

As has been seen, the Palaces of Tsolyáni are divided according to the services they perform. In Mu'ugalavyá, on the other hand, each of the four Palaces governs all aspects of life within a specified geographical area. The boundaries of these "Provinces" are as follows:

1. The First Palace runs from the N'lüss border in the north to the Tsolyáni frontier in the east, to the great *Sákbe* Road which travels from Pagús to Ssa'átis in the south, to the eastern bank of the Putuhénu River (and the east bank of Lake Mu'úgalla) in the west.
2. The Second Palace lies south of the Pagús-Ssa'átis *Sákbe* Road, to the Tsolyáni frontier in the east, to the east bank of the Putuhénu River in the west, and to the sea in the south.
3. The Third Palace stretches from the west bank of the Putuhénu River in the east, to the winding Livyáni frontier in the south, to Ch'óchi in the west, thence northward to Tlár, and from Tlár back along the *Sákbe* Road to Ssa'átis.
4. The Fourth Palace extends from the Tlár-Ssa'átis *Sákbe* Road in the south, to the west bank of the Putuhénu River in the east, along the N'lüss frontier in the north, southward along the ill-defined border of the sandy hinterlands of the Chürstálli region, west out to the lonely city of Gashchné, south to the marches of the M'mórchan jungles, and finally back to Ch'óchi.

The provincial capitals of the four Palaces are Kúrdis, Khéiris, Tráhlu, and Tlár, respectively. The Mu'ugalavyáni speak of their government as "The Four Palaces of the Square," however, because each of these divisions maintains a large headquarters complex in Ssa'átis, where they face one another with geometrical precision across the broad expanse of the Plaza of the Scarlet Banner.

The central government is ruled by an oligarchy composed of the Princes (Mu'ugalavyáni: *Dü'ümúnish*) of the Four Palaces, representatives of the priesthoods of Hrúsh and Vimúhla (but not of the other deities at this level), and certain senior clan-heads. Each Palace contains descending tiers of officials (organised in "Circles," as in Tsolyanu), with priestly and clan representation at all levels. Military power is not allocated as it is in Tsolyánu, however: the Prince of each Palace is commander in chief of those Legions raised and posted in his region. Actual command is usually delegated to professional soldiers on the Prince's staff (often his clan-brothers), and he himself is not expected to act as a field general.

Although the Mu'ugalavyáni system is strongly clan-based and regionally oriented, a monolithic central government is the keystone of their political thinking. To this effect, each of the four Princes is required to maintain a legion of heavy infantry in Ssa'átis, to be used by the oligarchy in putting down any local plays for power. These battalions are named after various shades of red, the color of the national standards (and also of the vestments of the clergy of both Hrúsh and Vimúhla): viz. Crimson, Scarlet, Vermilion, and Maroon. The religious-military organisation called the Company of the Mourners in Sable has been mentioned in Sec. 1.740; it also acts as a centralising and stabilising force.

Before the emergence of Baron Álđ (Sec. 1.370) as a national leader, Yán Kór was little more than a loosely allied jumble of city-states, clan-matriarchies, and petty principalities. Regional administrations varied greatly and were almost completely localised: an official from Ngakú had no authority whatsoever in Mákhis — and was as much of a foreigner outside his native city as any traveller from Tsolyáni! Administrative systems were simple, often little more than extensions of a clan-council, the retainers of a ruler, or the supporters of an oligarchy. The clergy played a part in secular government only in two locales: the city of Hlíkku and the Isle of Vrídu (Sec. 1.610).

The Baron has managed to impose a degree of uniformity upon his diverse subjects during his short reign. There are no "Palaces," but functionaries of the national government are now organised in "Circles," as in Tsolyánu. (This is due to the fact that the Baron received his training in the south, although he is of Saá Allaqiyáni origin.) The old regional rulers and important clan-heads have been allowed to retain some of their previous status, but all areas now pay their taxes into the coffers of the central government in Yán Kór City. It is still hard to imagine the sort of "rule from above" which prevails in Tsolyánu, but Baron Álđ has now laid the foundations for this, and the barriers of provincialism and parochialism are slowly giving way before his determination. He has the support of the high clans of Ke'ér, Yán Kór City, Dhárru, Mákhis, and Tléku Miriyá; the oligarchies of Rúllá, Ngakú, and other smaller cities are less pleased but still willing to cooperate; the clergy of Hlíkku and of the Isle of Vrídu are not really happy under any rule but their own, but they, too, realise that they cannot survive against repeated Tsolyáni onslaughts, and they thus go along as well. For the first time in recent history the Lorún tribes of the far north have decided to join their southern cousins (more in hopes of plunder, perhaps, than out of any political loyalty). The Baron's diplomacy has added Saá Allaqi, Chayákku, and certain of the rulers of the urbanised areas of Milumanayá to his alliance. The clans of Ghatón provide aid with less enthusiasm, and the cooperation of Pijéna was obtained through outright conquest. Foreigners — N'lüss, Mu'ugalavyáni fleeing the stern discipline of their overly-ordered society, a few Tsolyáni malcontents, and mercenaries from all over the continent — are joining Yán Kór's army and administrative services in increasing numbers. There is scope for advancement, thus, although the situation is by no means stable, and it is easy to run afoul of local prejudices and jealousies. It may be noted that women have more opportunities for political success in this matriarchal land than elsewhere.

The Baron has established "Circles" and the skeleton of an administrative hierarchy, but as yet there is less bureaucracy than in the Tsolyáni Imperium. Decisions can be made with greater celerity, resulting in less delay in getting things done. The Baron and his councils of advisors have a slight edge in this over the slower-reacting Tsolyáni and the stolid "rulebook bureaucrats" of Mu'ugalavyá.

The seven great feudal families of Salarvyá were listed in Sec. 1.735. The Chruggilléshmu family of Tsatsayágga holds the reins of the weak central government by hereditary right, and the other six lineages owe it fealty. There are few nationally recognised "Circles" or administrative ranks, and the senior offices of each "Province" are held by members of the ruling lineage. These "Provinces" are parcelled out in smaller fiefs to vassal clans, and these in turn may have clients of their own. Certain traditional professional clans in

each region have charge of records, accounts, tax-gathering, and other civil duties. The right to maintain troops is limited, however, to the seven great lineages, and lesser vassals are allowed only a fixed number of retainers and personal bodyguards, depending upon their status.

In theory the Salarvyáni hold to the divine right of kings, tracing their monarch's pedigree back to Gamulu, the founder of the dynasty of the Fishermen Kings (Sec. 1.340). In actuality, however, the authority of the king (Salarvyani: *Chgéshsha*) is limited, and real power is vested in the Council of Nobles, a body composed of the senior members of the Chruggilleshmu family, delegations from the other six major lineages, a few clergy from the temple of Shiringgáyi, and representatives from the more important subsidiary vassal clans. The king is permitted to rule only so long as he remains healthy, moreover: i.e. he must suffer no wound, injury, serious illness, or senility. Should he become unfit, it is the Council's duty to depose him and have him sacrificially impaled to the greater glory of Shiringgáyi. His family then chooses another candidate from its ranks, and if this person is acceptable to the Council, he (or she) will be crowned.

Unfortunately, mental aberration is not one of the causes which can bring about the dethronement of a king. The present monarch, King Griggatsétsa, is quite mad. His duties have been delegated to his clan-cousin, Prince Zhurrilúgga, who governs the land like a spider in its web. The Prince's rivals have set elaborate wards and guards to protect the crazed sovereign (who spends his time riding through his gardens in a palanquin carried by naked children), and the Council is divided between those who support the Prince and a smaller group which favours a rival, Prince Tleggáshmu. Of the six great families, the Hrúchchâqsha, Khekhkhéssa, and Mreshshél-Atl prefer Prince Zhurrilúgga; the Gürrüshyúgga and Thirreqummu back Prince Tleggáshmu, and the Shiggashko'ónmu remain uncommitted.

In addition to clan and family membership, wealth plays an important role in obtaining offices and promotions in Salarvyá. The great families appoint their own members to whatever posts they wish, and the rest are "sold" to favourites, vassals, and even foreigners who are willing to fit into the system. One may cite the case of the Tsolyáni rebel, Erésu hiZhnáyu, who "bought" himself a fief in the Shiggashko'ónmu domain for half a million *Káitars* — stolen from the coffers of his brother's legion (the Legion of Lord Káingmra of Béy Sú, 8th Imperial Artillery). It took ten years for the Omnipotent Azure Legion to accomplish his assassination, but the money was never recovered.

The society of Livyánu is completely dominated by the priesthoods of the Shadow Gods (Sec. 1.610). Civil, military, and religious affairs are handled by functionaries detached from temple service, and there is thus no distinction between administrative Circles and the priestly ranks. Scribes, clerks, and officials are transferred from the temples to the central government, where they work for a time before being brought back again into their priesthoods. The details of the system are not revealed to outsiders, and it is almost impossible for a foreigner to attain a government post in Livyánu. Many Circle memberships are deliberately concealed. An individual may hold high rank in his temple hierarchy, but for reasons known only to his superiors, he may be transferred to an apparently lowly post in the central administration for periods ranging from a few months to several years.

So far as can be discovered, the current highest official in Livyánu is one Ásqar Gyardánaz, whose public title is "Principal Staff of the Glory of Qame'él." His likeness first appeared on the Livyáni gold coin (the *Shí'idok*; cf. Sec. 1.731) in 2,345 A.S. The few foreigners who have met him say that he is rather young, nondescript, and taciturn. His tattooes indicate that he comes from a high clan, however. This person maintains an unpretentious and almost Spartan lifestyle and introduces himself only with the title *Dumúz*, which signifies something like "Brother-in-the-Faith."

Dumúz Ásqar presides over the central Council of the Priesthoods. Each of the twelve temples (minus the One of Fears, whose devotees wish no part in government) sends four representatives to this body. Ten of these are retained by *Dumúz* Ásqar as his advisors; ten are appointed to command the ten *Chároneb* (a term denoting "army" or "division") of the military forces; ten more are assigned as Governors of the ten Prefectures (Provinces); and another ten are each given charge of one of the Ministries: Trade, Foreign Relations, Roads and Communications, Temple Education, Procurement of Sacrifices, Public Works, Dealings with Nonhuman Races, Collection and Disbursement of Taxes and Tithes, Food and Agriculture, and the Glorification of the Temples. The remaining eight members of the Council are termed the *Duru'úba Shirudanáz* ("The Brothers of the Shadow"), and their functions are not known. The dreaded *Vrú'uneb* (Sec. 1.740) is also represented, but the number and nature of its delegation cannot be ascertained.

Turning to the smaller nations, it has been mentioned that Pijéna is now occupied by the green-armoured troops of Yán Kór. Previously the country was divided into several petty clan-based principalities, just as Yán Kór was before the emergence of the Baron. These were all subservient to the Priestking of the sect of She Who Is Not Named (Sec. 1.610), but the government's strength rested upon two temple-sponsored "legions" and a horde of corrupt clerks and scribes who dealt most unconscientiously with civil affairs. The Baron's soldiers have left the Priestking his crumbling palace in Pijnár, his symbols of authority, and his harem of little girls and boys, but they have deprived him of any real power. The Yán Koryáni are attempting — with indifferent success — to reform the administration, establish "Circles" and persuade more Pijenáni to take an interest in a national government.

Saá Allaqí displays another version of the clan-based matriarchal society so prevalent in the north. Its king (Saá Allaqiyáni: *Ssáo*) is always male, but his is elected for life by the elder women of the major clans, and the post is not hereditary. Posts are apportioned to the clans according to their economic and political strengths, and each sends a delegation to the semi-annual High Court held at Saá Allaqiyár. There were no "Circles" or any uniform hierarchy, however, before the Baron's rise to power, and these institutions are just beginning to be built up in imitation of the Yán Koryáni. The sect of the Priests of Light (Sec. 1.610) prefers the old ways, however, and this has led to a schism in Saá Allaqiyáni society which may yet end in a religious war.

Milumanayá is in fact almost three separate nations. The Warlord of Pelesár, a one-time Mu'ugalavyáni renegade named Akurghá, rules the west through a wild and undisciplined "army" of personal retainers. The east lies under the sway of Lord Firáz Zhavéndu, whose hatred for his son, Lord Firáz Mmulávu Zhavéndu, is fast becoming legendary (Sec. 1.380). The third and largest region — though politically the least important — is the Desert of Sighs itself. The fanatic "democracy" of the nomads who dwell there has been alluded to several time above. There is thus only an illusion of a national government and a rather sketchy administration, army, and civil service in and around Sunráya. The primary reason for Milumanayá's continued independence is its usefulness as a buffer zone — and the uncongeniality of its windswept sandy deserts.

Pechâno is similar to Salarvyá, except that its king (Pechâni: *Chaegosh*) is both sane and more fully in control of his subjects. The king is actually the seniormost oligarch of the Beneshchán lineage of Mechanéno (cf. Sec. 1.735), and he presides over the Assembly of High Lords in which the Beneshchán and their rivals, the Rekhmél family of Teshkóa, predominate. Lands belonging to these two ruling houses are divided into smaller and smaller fiefs amongst descending tiers of vassals. The system is carried even farther than it is in Salaryvá: every landowner, no matter how minor, is someone's vassal, and if he sells (technically "enfeoffs") a piece of his land to another, he then becomes that person's feudal overlord. Even the priests of the Seven Deities of the Rising Peaks (Sec. 1.610) are vassals because they own the land upon which their temples stand and must thus be responsible to some higher suzerain. The same is true of professional clans which own their shops and clanhouses. Only those who are not landholders — i.e. clerks, employees, retainers, etc. — are not vassals and hence have fewer rights under the system. It may be noted that the prieshoods have comparatively little power in Pechâno.

The government of Ghatón consists of a loose confederacy of clan-chiefs (Ghatóni: *Sréq*) under a High Chief (Ghatóni: *Sá Sréq*). The latter is responsible for the national army, customs and tax services, and the *Sákbe* Roads (which are nevertheless in very poor condition). There is clear hierarchy, however, and each clan keeps the peace within its domains, settles internal disputes, and watches over its larger interests. National cohesion seems to be based more upon fear

of the Mu'ugalavyáni (and now the Yán Koryáni) than anything else, and the army (including the battalions of the huge *Sérudla* beasts which only the Ghatóni know how to tame) receives the greatest share of the national income.

An essentially similar but simpler pattern prevails amongst the N'lúss. Each band consists of several extended families of commoners, plus one or two "noble" lineages, from which the hereditary chief (N'lúss: *Sárq*) is chosen. The word of the chief is law for his subjects. This applies even to such towns as N'lússa and Malcháiran, but the lords of these places have had to employ foreign scribes, clerks, and functionaries to deal with the complexities of an incipient urban society. The old traditions still persist, however, and the wishes of the *Sárq* of Malcháiran carry all the force of an Imperial edict in Tsolyánu.

Each of the islands of the Tsoléi archipelago forms a weak city-state by itself. These are ruled by petty princelings, but the system is easygoing, vague, and chaotic. The curious custom of the "Year-King" of Llürúra Isle was mentioned in Sec. 1.720, but it may be added that this unfortunate has no power; his only task is to live a luxurious and pleasurable life until the day of his sacrifice. There is no system of taxation, no national army, and little cooperation between the various islands. Only the semi-annual raids on the coasts of Livyánu bring about a joint effort, but in these, too, every ship is privately owned, and plunder is not shared with the crews of other vessels. The recent Livyáni conquests of the southernmost island and parts of Llürúra Isle itself (Sec. 1.380) have raised cries for some sort of mutual defence pact, but the other islands have provided little or no assistance as yet for their beleaguered fellow Tsoléini.

The same pattern is followed on a larger scale by the masters of Háida Pakála. The king (Háida Pakálan: *Híu*) of the city of Gorulú is recognised as the supreme suzerain, but in reality his power extends no further than the spears of his ruffians. Each town has its own *Híu*, and indeed there may be several such brigand leaders within the same city, allied to one another by mutual concerns, yet ready to fall upon any of their number who manifests weakness. Each *Híu* maintains his own scruffy troops, builds his own galleys, and manages his farms, workshops, and fishing fleets through his immediate family and retainers. There is little sense of "nation" — or even much personal loyalty — and the system is founded upon wealth and not always enlightened self-interest.

Chayákku resembles Saá Allaqí. There is a monarch (Chayákkuyáni: *Tsóù*), who is the senior elder of one of the most powerful clans. This post is frequently held by a woman (unlike Saá Allaqí), and it is not hereditary. Chayákku maintains a small national army, a few bodies of urban police, two or three companies of *Sákbe* Road Guards, and even a squad of tomb police at the ancient burial grounds at Nyá. These are supported by clan contributions and customs duties (Sec. 1.733). Chayakkuyáni administration is simple, consisting of local clan-elders in the rural areas and a body of permanent officials residing at the *Tsóù's* court at Pechná.

The governments of the states of the northeast are founded upon the dichotomy between warrior (or "noble"), priestly, and plebeian lineages. Rulers traditionally belong to one of the warrior families, while the others remain vassals. Power may pass from one lineage to another, however, through lack of an heir, political intrigue, or even a palace revolution. The priesthoods (cf. Sec. 1.610) take little part in secular matters; their functions are restricted to rituals, healing, the taking of omens, and the making of talismans to protect against lurking evil spirits. The common folks are also denied much of a role in politics, although one does find rare instances of a plebian lineage which is elevated to the warrior class for one reason or another.

Taking these little countries from west to east, one begins with Péncha Nagál. This state has a king (Penchání: *Tséi*), who governs from his capital at Bámisu. Most administrative posts are held by the king's clansmen (the Lineage of the Mourning Goddess), and his household troops (i.e. the totality of his armed forces) are commanded by his younger brother. He is opposed by the Family of the Mace of Irons, which has its stronghold at Isitl. Diltu is governed by an oligarchy of twelve war-chiefs (rather grandiosely termed *Khigé* "general"): six from the People of the Bright Sword, based at Punkáz; four from the Company of Heroes, centred just south of Nyá (a city now in Chayakkuyáni hands); and two from the forest-dwelling Clan of the Green Hill. Ssrá Áb Tsáya again has a king (Ssrayáni: *Tsá'é*), who governs unopposed from Tkú. This lack of rivals is due to the fact that the monarch recently exterminated his competitors, the Sun Blaze Clan of Láya. It is said that two children of the latter lineage were on a visit at the time of the massacre and thus escaped. They have since been granted asylum in Chayákku and are doubtless awaiting a suitable opportunity to gain revenge. To the east, Mudállu is divided between the Aomorh-speaking clans of Dehím and the lineages of Shigráz, which speak Nuru'ún Sí (Sec. 1.711). The causes of this hostility are economic and ethnic, as well as linguistic, but the immediate bone of contention is the missing Sword of Aridzó (Sec. 1.610), the symbol of the Mudállan *Náhè* ("king"). Each party accuses the other of stealing this weapon from the Shrine of the Red Hand at Shigráz. The priesthoods, too, are not above suspicion — dreams of secular power are heady wine indeed. A civil war is currently in progress, and both factions welcome inexpensive mercenaries. There is a king (Nuru'ún Sí: *Ngákhè*) at Nenú'u in Nuru'ún also, but his ruler claims that he is only a subject of a greater overlord who dwells in a city called Jásht, far away to the northeast. There are no roads to Jásht, and the Nuru'úni discourage and mislead any who would travel thither (even to using forcible restraint). The reason for this is a mystery since these northern peoples are otherwise friendly enough to traders and visitors. The "king" of Nenú'u is again the hereditary chief of a powerful warrior lineage. His government consists of a disorganised band of clansmen and retainers, and his palisaded log-built citadel hardly qualifies as a palace. Nothing is known of the inhabitants of Hrgá Lorúnje except that they are nomadic and supposedly dangerously xenophobic.

Jánnu possesses a national government of sorts: a council of clan-elders called the Assembly of Spears, which meets at Jánnu Peidáho. This body has little more than advisory powers, however, and the tasks of governance are performed by each local clan within its own domain. The king (Jannuyáni: *Sháù*) is little more than a figurehead. The mountainous land of Kilalámmu lacks even this dim figment of an administrative system: the clans exercise supreme authority in their own territories. Somewhat more complex structures do exist in the towns, of course: e.g. a hereditary clan-chief (Kilalámmuyani: *Dzéù*) in Tnalúm, a Supreme Swordsman in Disunár, a Hall of Righteous Elders in Sirsúm, etc. Yet there is almost no formal apparatus of government; there are no armies except for the clan levies, no tax collectors, no officials or clerks, and all matters of import are referred to the clans for action.

For the ancient realm of Mihállu the Empire of Éngsvan hla Gánga never perished. The modern Mihálli still speak of their land as a Province of the Engsvanyáli Imperium. Reports are duly prepared but never forwarded to Gánga, sunk these many centuries beneath the distant seas. Incense is burned daily on the altars of Pavár's twenty deities in the name of the Priestking. A Governer (Mihálli: *Gáichun* — from Engsvanyali *Zhaitolán*) still holds audience in Ninué, awaiting the commands from the Lords of Gánga which never come. The titles of the old nobility are flaunted, as is the fiction of an Imperial administration. There are Exalted Scribes who can neither read nor write, Illustrious Chamberlains whose duties are limited to helping with the ploughing, Sublime Generals whose troops exist only in musty documents, Valorous Captains who have never handled a sword, etc. Men still speak of administrative and priestly Circles, but there is little to do beyond the humdrum tasks of daily life. The standing army, glorious in its gilded helmets and glittering armour, has been called out only twice in the past twenty years, once to repel an incursion by the retainers of the ambitious monarch of Ssrá Áb Tsáya, and again to drive away a tribe of Rannálan nomads. Mihállu exists as though frozen in time, protected by the crags of the Moringána Massif to the north and the Sleeping Desert to the south. Nothing changes along the great, slow, muddy river, and no one seems to care.

The Nyémesel Isles exhibit a theocracy reminiscent of Livyánu, though neither so complex nor so secretive. The priesthood of Mrettén , the Goddess Who Walks Upon the Sea, rules all things. There are only three "Circles" or ranks, however: the Acolytes, who handle much of the sect's secular business; the Initiates, who perform the rituals and supervise the lower tier; and the Ecclesiarchs, who govern the Isles through a council called the *K'áini P'ára* ("The Eyes of the Immortal One"). The head of this assemblage (Pe'é: *T'káv*) is elected by his peers for a single term of four years. He governs through a series of committees, each of which is charged with the

management of one sphere of activity: e.g. Trade, Fishing, Astrology, Employment of Common Persons, etc. A small standing army of commoners commanded by Acolytes — really an expanded temple guard corps — is maintained to repel pirate raids from neighbouring Háida Pakála. This same force is called upon to act as police — and, when no danger threatens, to sweep the streets and carry off refuse.

There are no organised governments at all in M'mórcha, Nmartúsha, Rannálu, or amongst the Lorún. The practices of these tribal peoples have been sufficiently described in preceding Sections.

The *Hŕg-Ssá*, the communal councils of the Shén, have been mentioned above. Every Shén city is organised around a dominant egg-group or several friendly and/or neutral egg groups (Sec. 1.510). This pattern is followed also at the national level. The supreme *Hŕg-Ssá* of Shényu, which meets in Ssorvá, assigns tasks of national importance to the municipal assemblies: the running of the army and navy, highway protection, supervision of commerce and the overall economy, customs and taxes, etc. There are "Circles" or ranks, permanent functionaries, and recognised posts in the Shén system, but the details and ramifications are not always clear to humans. All of the smaller Shén states possess similar structures.

The Urunén have a sort of parliament and a body of elected officers. The leader, who is often female, serves for life and is called the *Alól*, a word which also signifies "parent." Amongst this species politics and government service are considered somewhat distasteful, and the brightest individuals specialise in agriculture, commerce, and the crafts. Urunén attitudes towards the military and the clergy were mentioned in Sec. 1.720.

The Pé Chói have no visible administrators at all. A visitor to a village within their enclaves is met by a *Nìpw-nchópk* ("provider"), who arranges for *Hték-Nà* "guesting." Should an action or a decision be required from the community, the *Tü-pétk* "Chief-Person" steps forward. This post is said to be hereditary, but the reasons for selecting a given individual are not always clear to humans. The responsibilities of the *Tü-pétk* include some activities which men would not class as "governmental": e.g. lighting the cooking fires of the aged, catching and exterminating the *Chrí* flies which light upon the food of guests, directing the placement of fungus beds, building pathways between domiciles, etc. Should a need for action involving several villages arise, the *Tü-pétk* of all of the participating settlements cooperate together effortlessly. This again relates to the inborn Pé Chói sense of "appropriate action." After communing together briefly, a consensus is reached, and all individuals join in without hesitation or confusion. The Pé Chói do not have a standing army, but their reaction to an external threat is swift and concerted, almost as though their response had been planned in advance. Some of this quality is retained by those Pé Chói living in human areas, but it tends to become lost under the pressures of man's societies. Pé Chói legions have generals, officers, and subalterns; Pé Chói become priests and administrators and rise in the Circles accordingly; Pé Chói merchants and artisans join clans and business associations, etc. Pé Chói groups within human cities do retain a modified form of the *Tü-pétk*, however, to act as their joint representatives to the authorities.

Many of the governmental structures of the Páchi Léi, Swamp Folk, and the Pygmy Folk have been replaced by human institutions. The Páchi Léi, for example, no longer have the all-powerful "Tree Lords," which were a salient feature of their culture on their native Arcturan worlds. Instead, they exhibit the same Circles, practices, and posts prevalent in Tsolyáni society. Each Swamp Folk village has a council of family heads, which elects a First Speaker. This individual keeps the records and collects the taxes required by the Mu'ugalavyáni authorities. The Pygmy Folk are ruled by an oligarchy of elders (called something like *Éh Mhür*), many of whom are females. The system is said to be similar to the matriarchal clans of their human neighbors, but the details are not known.

The Tinalíya display a complex governmental structure. Only males and females participate in this, however, while neuters are excluded. Every subterranean city has a *Hõõ Sü Té* "Commanding Nest-Master" (or "Mistress"). Under this individual there are several hereditary, appointive, and elected posts: e.g. Senior Scholar, First Food Supplier, Chief of Dwellings, Entomber of the Dead, Leader of Armies, Digger of Tunnels, and High Priest (who has little to do since the Tinalíya believe that their single monotheistic deity has no interest in their affairs; cf. Sec. 1.610).

Every Hláka eyrie is ruled by a hereditary king (Hláka: *Aòì Elá*), who is invariably a male. He is served by an advisory council, also entirely male, and he appoints the best flyer of the eyrie as his *Iwáu Où* "Flight of Death," a post equivalent to "general" or "war-chief." The Hláka say that in the old days they had a supreme king who ruled over all the eyries, but that "people got tired of listening to his chatter and drove him away." Whatever the truth of this, the fact is that now the Hláka evince no interest in an overall central government.

The Ahoggyá of Salarvyá and Háida Pakála also have no administration higher than the village level. Each settlement is ruled by an individual with an unpronounceable title euphemistically translated as "Beloved of All Eight Sexes." There is also a "Dance Master," but beyond this there are no traces of administrative structures. In Ónmu Tlé Hléktis, however, there is a "king" (called "The Loudest Grumbler"), but the powers of this functionary, the methods of his (its?) selection, etc. are vague. It is known that there are also other officials: assemblages of several Ahoggyá which act as magistrates, military commanders (distinguished by copper bands riveted to their carapaces), record-keepers (who cannot write but keep their accounts by means of a system of knots tied in cords), overseers of labourers, etc.

It is believed that there is a supreme Hlüss-Mother who governs all of the domains of this species from her capital at Hlüssá. Each community, and indeed each nest-ship, has its own female regent, however, under whom the males and the neuter worker-fighters serve in various capacities. The senior warriors (recogniseable by their jewel-inset body patterns) command their younger comrades, but the details of the military hierarchy (if any) are unknown. Parties are frequently accompanied by "scholars" (for want of a better term) who utilise the magic of other-planar power. These individuals appear to hold a high position in Hlüss society, and even the most powerful warriors defer to their guidance. Escaped human prisoners report that each Hlüss seems to be born knowing his (her, its) duties and place within the social order. The males attend the Hlüss-Mother and act as her advisors; certain neuters work to obtain food; others are specialised as soldiers; still others work with magic; some produce the substance used to build the nest-ships and their dome-shaped dwellings; others act as craftsmen; and various individuals serve as sailors. There is no choice or volition involved, and should any one category become decimated, the Hlüss-Mother produces the young needed to fill up its ranks again.

The Ssú also display a communal organisation. Males govern Ssú society, while females have little to say. The neuters (who form the vast majority) possess the same innate knowledge of their responsibilities found amongst their cousins, the Hlüss. The "warrior"-"scholar" dichotomy also applies: the former command Ssú parties but appear to accept the advice of the latter. There may even be recognised military ranks; this is indicated by various types of harness and weapons recovered from slain Ssú raiders. Tsolyáni experts claim that a gold skullcap helmet denotes a senior commander, a copper-studded leather baldric a junior officer, a round, targe-shaped bronze breastplate a subaltern, etc. None of this is certain.

The larger Black Ssú apparently possess an even more complex social structure. The Mu'ugalavyáni navigator Tremúnish Srá (died 1,983 A.S.), who claimed to have been a captive of these creatures for over ten years, described a society ruled by a "king" (who always bears the name "Bássa" — perhaps really a title?), a "court" of officials and underlings, elaborately armoured "generals" and "captains," sages attired in distinctive harnesses of coloured leather and cloth, serfs, artisans, labourers, etc. These interpretations are likely to be at least partially erroneous, of course, due to the author's natural tendency to see everything in human terms. Yet it is clear that the governmental patterns of the Black Ssú are far from simple. For those who are interested, Tremúnish' narrative has been translated into Tsolyáni under the title of "Várchekh hikorùssPedhúrayal hiBásrimyal" (A Prisoner of the Hated and Despised Foes of Men). His logbook (presumably containing his sailing instructions) is written in Mu'ugalavyáni and is preserved in the library of the Temple of Vimúhla in his native city of Khéiris.

The Hlutrgú are governed (if this term really applies) by a genetically distinct group of asexual "leaders." These can be

recognised by their lighter grey colouration and yellow-mottled wattles. They also wear a complicated leather harness (often made of human skin). There seem to be no other ranks or offices: a raiding party attacks at the command of its leader, fights fanatically as a raging mob, and then withdraws upon his signal (an ululating, mournful, hoarse shriek). Nothing is known of Hlutrgú civil administration within their swampy nest-cities.

The Shunned Ones and the Mihálli also have leaders in battle. A group of the former is invariably commanded by a taller individual who stands well back and issues orders in their hissing language (which sounds to Tsolyáni ears "like corpse-fat crackling in a fire"). This being is also the senior magic-user of the party. The Mihálli follow a similar practice: the leader of a Mihálli party is always that individual who carries this species' favourite weapon: the Ball of Immediate Eventuation (of which more will be said later). These devices come in several colours which indicate their powers. The weakest is pale purple, then silver, then gold, and finally translucent blue. The importance of the expedition is indicated by which of these instruments the leader bears — there is never more than one to a party. Nothing whatsoever can be ascertained concerning the society of the aqueous Nyaggá.

1.820. MILITARY FORCES AND WARFARE

1.821. The Armies

Any free, legal entity (i.e. excluding slaves and non-*Aridáni* clanswomen) may join one of the armies of the Five Empires. Age limitations are elastic: from 14 to over 50. Sex, too, is no problem in Tsolyánu, Mu'ugalavyá, and especially Yán Kór (Sec. 1.520). Women soldiers are less common, however, in the armies of Livyánu and Salarvyá. Pijéna, Saá Allaqí, and Chayákku follow the Yán Koryáni pattern, while Milumanayá's poor and ill-disciplined troops are structured like those of Tsolyánu in the east — and like a band of brigands in Pelesár. Pechánо mostly recruits males into its small and efficient army, as do the temple guard units of Mrettén in the Nyémesel Isles. Mihállu proudly obeys the laws of Éngsvan hla Gánga, which freely permitted women to serve in the Priestkings' legions — but in practice very few modern Mihálli females apply. Of those nations which maintain standing armies, only Ghatón is staunchly and irrevocably male-chauvinistic.

Non-regular armies — war-bands, clan militias, and personal retainers — are another matter. The main body of a N'lüss raiding party is composed of men only, but women, girls, and adolescent boys are employed as "light infantry," skirmishing on the flanks with javelins, slings, bows, and clubs. The ships of Tsoléi are mostly staffed by males, but again one occasionally encounters female warriors — and even vessels entirely owned and crewed by women. Men alone make up the warrior classes of the states of the far northeast, Jánnu and Kilalámmu, and the pirate princes of Háida Pakála. Practices vary from tribe to tribe in M'mórcha and Nmartúsha, although men-only war-bands predomainte. The tribes of Rannálu allow only male warriors and hunters, while the Lorún permit both men and women to fight — with women leaders often in command.

There is no military sex discrimination amongst the Shén, Pé Choi, Páchi Léi, Hláka, or the Ahoggyá. Only Pygmy Folk males fight, however, and this is also true of the Swamp Folk. Neuters are the only soldiers in Tinalíya society, although males (and occasionally females) serve as officers. The armies of the Urunén are largely made up of females, although there is no prohibition against male soldiers.

The practices of the inimical races — what little is known — were described in Sec. 1.810.

Returning to the forces of the Five Empires, it is noteworthy that the Tsolyáni, Mu'ugalavyáni, and Livyáni divide their armies according to troop-types: heavy infantry, medium infantry, light infantry, archers, cross-bowmen, slingers, artillerymen, sappers, and marines. Sub-units of these legions may be detached and joined to an expeditionary force to provide the "mix" he desires. The localised, clan-based legions of Yán Kór, and the feudal levies of Salarvyá, on the other hand, include all troop-types within one and the same legion, although each group has its own sub-commander and can be assigned to fight separately.

The Tsolyáni count only exceptional units of light infantry as true legions. Skirmishers are mostly obtained by drafting peasants, helots, and townsmen into temporary service. Such conscripts are handed a cheap *Chlén*-hide helmet and a spear. Those who know how to use hunting bows or slings are allowed to retain these. The group — really a mob — is then placed under the command of a captain (Tsolyani: *Kásikoi*) and a few subalterns who bring it to the field of battle. Such units are intended only to harass an enemy's flanks and prevent him from moving freely. Recognised light infantry units, on the other hand, are those with long traditions of service, regular officers, and good discipline. The Imperium has only two of these at the moment: the Legion of the Sapphire Kirtle (Sec. 1.530), and the Legion of the Clan of the Inverted Hand (27th Imperial Light Infantry), which is made up of the excellent archers and scouts of the Kürt Hills. The Mu'ugalavyáni have no formal light infantry legions at all, raising all their skirmishers through the conscription method. Yán Kór and Salarvyá treat their light infantry as sub-units of their regular legions, while the Livyáni establish their light troops as separate legions.

Nonhuman troops are almost always segregated into units of their own: e.g. Tinalíya legions in Livyánu, Swamp Folk and Pé Choi legions in Mu'ugalavyá, etc. etc. Racial mixing is found only in such "miscellaneous" units as the Mu'ugalavyáni 13th Legion of the Fourth Palace, nicknamed "Sword in Hand," or the Yán Koryáni Legion of Foreign Persons, which is composed of a potpourri of mercenaries, rebels, and adventurers come to serve Baron Áld. Shen legions must be further separated according to their component egg-groups (cf. Sec. 1.510). This principle is also applied to the mercenary war-bands of the N'lüss; very few of these tall barbarians are welcome in legions containing other ethnic groups.

All of the Five Empires maintain a roster of reserves and trainees. These may amount to a fourth or even to a third of a legion's current battle strength. Every Palace of Ever-Glorious War (Sec. 1.810) has a recruitment hall: a huge chamber filled with daises upon which officers (usually older men retired from active service) stand and proclaim the virtues of their units like hucksters at a fair. Young men and women wander from speaker to speaker, ask questions, haggle over terms, and sign the rolls held out to them by busy scribes. In due course an enlistee is told to report to his legion's barracks for basic training. If the unit needs replacements, he will be given the legions' regulation arms and armour and will be sent off to its present location. Otherwise he will be sent back home but must remain "on call" for the duration of his enlistment (5 years in Tsolyánu, Mu'ugalavyá, and Yán Kór, four in Salarvyá, and seven in Livyánu). Reserve troops receive one fifth of the pay of soldiers on active duty.

Of all of the major nations, only Mu'ugalavyá organises its support troops into formal legions. Each Palace has its units of quartermasters, suttlers, carters, and foragers. In Tsolyánu and Yán Kór these operations are carried out by the troops themselves, by professional clans hired by the Imperium or the Yán Koryáni high command, etc. Livyáni armies are serviced by contingents of temple helots, while in Salarvyá each feudal lord is responsbile for his men's upkeep but expects to receive compensation from any overlord who has called them up.

Another important feature is the contingent of priests and magic-users assigned to every legion: 50-100 persons in the case of an elite unit, but fewer for less-prestiged legions, missile troops, sappers, etc. In Livyánu these sorcerers are organised into separate bodies, called *Díodaz*, but the other four Empires either recruit magic-users directly for each legion or else command the appropriate temples to provide them. These specialists are always comparatively young since the rigours of campaigning would be too much for senior priests and sorcerers. They must be trained in the use of group magic, furthermore, which demands special discipline and constant practice with one's colleagues. An individual who has not previously undergone this training (which may require anywhere from six months to two years) cannot fit into the joint psychic consciousness, even if he is quite talented otherwise. Group magic is crude, but it can be very powerful, almost like an artillery barrage: crackling lightning bolts, miasmas of fear, sweeping fogs of death. The party thus stands together upon an eminence or an artificially raised platform at the rear of the battle together with the army commanders, and half join in hurling offensive spells at the foe, while the rest throw up protective shields to counter the sorcery of the enemy.

The armies of Tsolyánu are financed through tax revenues. Many

temples also support legions since this may gain glory and prestige — and curry favour with the Imperium. Wealthy clans provide a few legions, and one or two are financed privately by individual noblemen. All are supervised and coordinated by the high command at Avanthár, and none is allowed to acquire independence or even a hint of autonomy.

Each legion tends to become "personified." Its deeds are recorded, and bards and epic poets sing of the heroism of its officers and men. Its great standards (the *Káing*) and its battle trophies are housed in its central headquarters to be objects of veneration for succeeding generations. Its victories are celebrated annually. Elaborate ceremonies accompany the creation of a new legion, much like those performed for the birth of a child. Men are advised "to be joyous and feast the coming forth." When a legion is deactivated its "persona" dies with it. Its standards are sheathed in lead and are placed in the Hall of Domes in Avanthár, and its books are sealed in the High Chancery. Its number (e.g. 12th Imperial Light Infantry) is not given to another unit but is left as a blank in the roster of Imperial forces. Occasionally a defunct legion is reactivated due to renewed clan support, changes in temple policy, the emergence of a new patron (e.g. Prince Mirusíya, who has just revived the Legion of the Searing Flame; cf. Sec. 1.380), etc., and then it is as though an old friend, long thought dead, had suddenly reappeared. Clan patriarchs hold great feasts; the temple *Túnkul* gongs roar out their jubiliation from brazen throats; and proclamations are issued in every city across the land. Supporters come forward with gifts: arms and armour, supplies, materials, money, and recruits. The ancient standards are unveiled and ceremonially given into the hands of the proud new general, and the legion lives again.

Each Tsolyáni legion is organised into 20 Cohorts of 400 men each. These, plus 25 officers, give a maximum strength of 8,025 troops, although very few units ever maintain this number of battle-ready soldiers. Reserves are not included in this figure but may be called up to replace losses or to build new Cohorts as needed. The only "regular" unit which may have more than 20 Cohorts is the Legion of Kétl (Sec. 1.740), the prison guards, who rarely fight. *Sákbe* Road guards, city police, and the Tomb Police are not included as regular legions, but their structures are similar.

Mu'ugalavyá divides its legions into 10 Cohorts of 500 men apiece (in which officers are included), for a standard maximum strength of 5,000 troops. Again, only a few legions keep their full quotas under arms. The legions of the remaining three Empires vary greatly in size: from as few as 1,000 to almost 10,000 men, depending upon financing, need, and availability of recruits. The armies of the smaller nations are similarly irregularly structured.

The military hierarchies of the Five Empires are divided into "soldiers," "subalterns," "captains," "majors" and "colonels," "generals," and "senior generals." The following table gives the name and number of men in each unit above and the title of the unit's commanding officer below. The horizontal lines divide the ranks into categories just mentioned: e.g. "soldiers," "subalterns," etc.

TSOLYÁNU	MU'UGALAVYÁ	SALARVYÁ	YÁN KÓR	LIVYÁNU
Changadésha* Kuruthúni**	Asúmish	Bakkárzh	Átl	Srez
	O'ísh (5) Purélish	Olégh (10) Olmég		
Semétl (20) Tirrikámu	Bálish (20) Balkétlish	Gruségh (20) Grumég	Tlúsém (25) Uténg	Sikúab (25) Ni'úz
Karéng (100) Hereksa	Di'ibáish (100) Dibkétlish	Arégh (100) Qúmech	Halór (50) Númur Ghámrik (250) Shuggétl	Viluneb (100) Eshu'úz
Tsurúm (400) Kási	Émish (500) Emkétlish	Doqmugh (500) Achméq	Tlúmrik (500) Ghitáa	Dlaineb (500) Úoz
Molkár***		Qímmu (1,000) Kekkérja	Tókhn (1,000) Kérdh	Ssáoneb (1,000) Khuaz****
Dritlán***				
Niqómi (8,025) Kérdu	Sraish (5,000) Hakkúmish	Nchésh***** Sreddéq	Gurék***** Ochúr	Llúneb***** Qáqqodaz
Kenéng****** Kérdudali	Omrimúnish Dú'úmúnish	Tsélhqu Mbeggéshmu		Charoneb Rúozhuz

*Of the Tsolyani terms, *Tsurúm* and *Niqómi* are grammatically ignoble and thus end in *-ikh* and *-kh*, according to the rules given in THE TSOLYÁNI LANGUAGE (by M.A.R. Barker, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1978, vol. 1, pp. 4-10). The rest are grammatically noble and should end in *-koi*, but this suffix has been omitted for reasons of space. Grammatical categories of "nobility" and "ignobility" are somewhat irregular in their memberships, and no reason can be given as to why the above-mentioned two terms should be classed as "ignoble". The Mu'ugalavyáni masculine ending *-ish/-sh* is included above, as are the Livyáni masculine and feminine endings *-az/-z* and *-eb/-b*. Salarvyáni and Yán Kóyani grammatical classes and affixes are complicated and are omitted here.

**In the Tsolyáni army the troops of the elite heavy infantry legions are considered to outrank other troop-types; hence the division into *Changadésha* and *Kuruthúni*. The latter have no command authority over the former, however.

***The Tsolyani *Molkár* is a field officer; he commands roughly half a legion -- or as many Cohorts as his general may assign to him. A *Dritlan* is the *Molkár*'s counterpart and direct superior at staff headquarters. Two of each of these ranks are thus active in every legion, although there may be several more such officers who serve as liaison officers, recruiters, barracks commanders, representatives of the legion at Imperial headquarters, etc. Only a *Molkár* leads troops in battle; the *Dritlán* of that half of the legion remains with the army commanders on an eminence behind the lines. Of course, if a *Molkár* is slain, his *Dritlán* may sometimes be sent down to replace him. Mu'ugalavyà alone has no ranks between "captain" and "legion general".

****In Livyanu every officer of the rank of *Khúaz* and above is also a priest of one of the Shadow Gods. In addition, these higher ranks are members of the legion's magic-using unit, the *Díodaz* (cf. above).

*****As previously stated, the numbers of Tsolyani and Mu'ugalavyani legions are fixed, while those of the other three Empires vary.

******Each Tsolyani *Kenéng* ("army") is commanded by a senior general chosen by the Imperium from amongst the commanders of its component legions. This may change from campaign to campaign and even from battle to battle. The Mu'ugalavyani *Omrimúnish* is synonymous with one of the four Palaces (Sec. 1.810), and its commander is the Prince of that Palace. The Salarvyani *Tséhlqu* is the total force fielded by one of the seven great feudal families (Sec. 1.810), and the *Mbeggéshmu* is thus either the overlord himself or someone appointed by him. The Yán Koryáni have no such larger formal units; the generals of each expeditionary force elect one of their number to head a headquarters council, and this person reports to Baron Áld directly. The Livyani *Charoneb* is regionally based; the temples of each area field varying numbers of legions, and each such force is officered by a priest-general appointed by the governing council (Sec. 1.810).

Pijéna, Saá Allaqí, Ghatón, and Chayákku organise their troops along Yán Koryáni lines. Pechánо adheres to the Salarvyáni structure, and eastern Milumanayá follows the Tsolyáni system. The temple guard corps of the Nyémesel Isles divide their troops into *Fái* of fifty men each, commanded by an *Onón*; ten such companies make up a *K'é*, officered by a *T'úmu* "priest-lord." There are only two *K'é*, however: one at Rusú and the other based at Ha'ilór. Some of the other minor nations possess "captains of the guards," "palace commandants," "war-chiefs," etc., but their units lack much formal structure.

The military ranks of the Shén are founded upon a division into sevens. A *Tá-Kr* of 7 is commanded by a *Ká-Tsa*; seven *Tá-Kr* make up a *Chá-Ss* of 49, commanded by a *Ká-Cha*; seven *Chá-Ss* comprise a *Shr-Gú*, officered by a *Ká-Shr*; and seven *Shr-Gú* constitute a *Gá-Hr* of 2,401 troops under the generalship of a *Tr-Hss*. The forces of each region are in turn commanded by the national council, the *Hrg-Ssá*. Shényu and Mmátugual both follow this pattern, but the organisations of the smaller Shén states are simpler.

Urunén units are based upon fours. A squad of four is a *Heilé*, commanded by a *Heilé'u*; 16 soldiers make up a *Bésha*, controlled by a *Bésha'u*; 64 comprise a *Ninóa*, captained by a *Ninóa'u*; and 4,096 Urunén make up a *Vaimé*, generalled by a *Vaime'u*. All of these together are supervised by the *Alól*, mentioned in Sec. 1.810.



Hláka

Within their own enclaves the Pé Chói organise themselves into *Tmékt* of six individuals, each guided ("commanded" is too strong a word) by a *Chk-tsé*. All of these work together under the direction of their *Tú-pétk* (Sec. 1.810).

The Tinalíya system is divided into tens, hundreds, and thousands. A *Qé* of 10 is commanded by a *Tsá-Qé*; a *Néu* of 100 is officered by a *Tsá Néu*; and a *Rsáe* of 1,000 serves under a *Tsá Rsáe*. Each subterranean community usually maintains only one *Rsae*, but a few larger settlements have two or even three such units, and in these cases the *Hóó Rsáe* ("Leader of Armies") acts as supreme general.

The Ahoggyá of Onmu Tlé Hlektis divide their forces into both fifteens and twenties. Nothing is known of their command structure.

The remaining races either have no traditional military divisions or else adhere to those of their human neighbors. The practices of the inimical races are not ascertainable.

The armies supported by the Five Empires are very large indeed. Vast territories, abundant food, huge populations, cultural conservativism, and political and economic stability all combine to allow standing armies which might be impossible elsewhere. In 2,354 A.S. (the last year for which figures are available), Tsolyánu had over 397,000 men under arms, Mu'ugalavyá almost 300,000, the seven great families of Salarvyá 338,000, Livyánu 216,000, and Yán Kór 376,000. Of Yán Kór's allies, Pijéna fielded nearly 20,000 troops, Saa Allaqí 71,500, Ghatón perhaps 15,000, and Chayákku 10,000. (Only 5,000 Ghatóni and 2,000 Chayakkuyáni were provided to the Baron, however.) Milumanayá listed 39,000 men in its army, but these were divided between the west and the east (Pelesár and Sunráya), and the latter region was again split between the forces of Lord Firáz Zhavéndu and those of his son. These statistics include all reserves but not *Sákbe* Road guards, urban police, tomb police, or Mu'ugalavyá quartermaster corps — possibly another 30 percent of the above totals. The light infantry conscripts employed by Tsolyánu and Mu'ugalavyá are also omitted. In the past four years there has been a considerable increase in the armies of Yán Kór and Tsolyánu, and a smaller development of the forces of Mu'ugalavyá. The other Empires have remained about the same.

The armies, militia, war-bands, etc. of the minor states are smaller, though still often formidable. Pechánо maintains over 30,000 troops to defend against the Ssú (or Salarvyá). The Nyémesel Isles have about 10,000 temple soldiers, but these are indifferently trained, and one wonders whether they could repel an invasion by the 5,000 or so warriors which Háida Pakála could throw against them — if the latter ever managed to unite under one leader. All of the islands of Tsolél together may be able to raise 5,000-8,000 men, while some of the states of the far northeast have no more than a few hundred apiece in their palace guards and militias. Mihállu lists a proud force of over 100,000 soldiers, but of these perhaps no more than 5,000-7,000 have ever held a sword. The N'lüss could probably produce 80,000 warriors, but these are divided into dozens of little war-bands, many hostile to one another.

The army of Shényu contains about 75,000 troops. Mmátugual has another 45,000, and the smaller Shén states each maintain armies ranging from 4,000 to perhaps 15,000 individuals. The Urunén have no major natural enemies and thus keep only some 20,000 troops under arms to guard their domains. Their main fear is regional rebellions. Were an external threat to materialise, however, they could raise another 100,000 or more within a few months. The Tinalíya have a little over 25,000 soldiers, but of these some 12,000 serve Livyánu as part of the *Chároneb* of the Prefecture of Hráis. The Ahoggyá of Onmu Tlé Hlektis claim that they have more than 75,000 warriors, but in their society every individual is a fighter from childhood to old age, and it is not certain just what is meant by their statement. The other species either have no armies of their own, or else these are included in the totals for the armies of the human nations in which they dwell.

Statistics for the inimical races are only guesses. The Pechání estimate that Ssuyál contains about 150,000 Ssú, of whom perhaps 25,000-50,000 can function as fighters. The Black Ssú are rumoured to be even more powerful, while the Hlüss are limited to what their

island can sustain and thus have no more than about 15,000 warriors — a force still deadly enough to deter all but a massive human invasion. Difficulties of logistics and sea travel — plus the need to guard against incursions from one's neighbors — in turn make it unfeasible for the Livyáni or the Mu'ugalavyáni to attempt this. The Hlutrgú are more prolific; their total strength may lie in the neighbourhood of 60,000-80,000 fighters. Nothing is known of the Shunned Ones or the Nyaggá, and the Mihálli are so few as to be militarily negligible — indeed, they are thought to be mythological beings in many parts of Tékumel.

1.822. Warfare

Warfare on Tékumel has a character uniquely its own. Large standing armies guard the frontiers, and the *Sákbe* Road networks not only ensure supplies and reinforcements but also make it hard for an invading force to strike directly through to an important base or a centre of government. Hláka aerial scouts, telepathic communication links, and a lack of fast-moving cavalry make reconnaissance easy and major ambushes rare. Logistics are more important than personal heroism: how many slaves and *Chlén* carts are needed to support an army of such and such a size for so many days in enemy territory before a chosen objective can be gained? Is food locally available? Can supply routes be kept open? Can the foe make a counterattack which may leave the invasion force cut off or surrounded? And, of course, is the goal worth the possibility of irreplaceable losses and the commitment of troops required to hold any newly conquered ground? Battles become matters of jockeying for position, marching and countermarching, weighing the strengths and weaknesses of the enemy's forces against one's own, and trying to outguess the foe. When all political and social factors are added into the deliberations, it can be seen that an all-out war — a *Qádardàlikoi* — between two or more of the great Empires is an earth-shaking cataclysm indeed.

The War of 2,020 can be taken as a case in point. Tsolyáni home rule had been seriously weakened during the Time of Many Emperors (2,015 A.S.; cf. Sec. 1.370). The Mu'ugalavyáni probed the western defenses and found them disorganised and more concerned with the struggle for the Petal Throne than with external invasions. The Princes of the Four Palaces thus planned a major offensive but delayed it until late in 2,018 A.S. both out of innate caution and also in order to mass sufficient forces against two points: a northern strike through the forests of Dó Cháka to Chéne Hó, and a southern attact aimed at Tumíssa. Both of these efforts were successful: the First Battle of Chéne Hó ended in a Tsolyáni rout, and the efficient Mu'ugalavyáni sappers smashed through Tumíssa's defences to clear the way there as well. The northern army then bypassed Si'ís and Khirgár to besiege and take Mrelú and invest Purdimal. At the same time the southern force made a forced march through open terrain just north of the *Sákbe* Road to seize Katalál. Mekú fell, as did Haumá, and the two victorious commanders met before the walls of Béy Sú. Had the capital fallen at once the outcome would have been very different, but Patyél's Walls held, and the armies of the Four Palaces were compelled to sit down for a long siege. By this time the new Emperor, Gyésmu "the Iron Fist" (2,015-2,065 A.S.) had managed to pacify the clans and the temples and consolidate his hold upon the Petal Throne. The Mu'ugalavyáni besieged Avanthár but soon had to abandon the attempt, although a force detached from their southern army succeeded in sacking Úrmish. The Tsolyáni had by now recovered from their initial disorganisation — discipline acquired over 2,000 years is not easily dispelled — and the south and the east still could send many legions. Soon a new Tsolyáni army was advancing northwestward from Jakálla, with another, smaller contingent moving up from Penóm to attack near Úrmish. The Battle of the Temple of Chánis (hex 3312) ended any hopes of a Mu'ugalavyáni victory in the south, and the onset of the rainy season made their positions even more untenable. Their supply lines were over-extended, and the Princes of the Four Palaces called for an orderly retreat, thinking to hold a line stretching from Chéne Hó to Mrelú, thence to Katalál, to Úrmish, and back to Tumíssa. This plan was foiled, however, by a second, northern Tsolyáni army consisting of legions from Khirgár, the City of Sárku, Thri'íl, Fasiltum, and Avanthár itself. The Second Battle of Chéne Hó was a crushing defeat for the Mu'ugalavyáni, and they realised that they could now be caught between the two Tsolyáni armies. Retreat turned in disordered flight, the Tsolyáni pursued, and one after another the cities of the plain were retaken. Exhausted but still determined, the red-clad legions turned to make another stand before the shattered gates of Tumíssa. Tsolyáni morale was high, however, and the Second Battle of Tumíssa saw yet another defeat for Mu'ugalavyá. They now withdrew precipitously into their own territory, abandoning not only their conquests in Tsolyánu but the Chákas as well. Only a long rainy season — and the urgent counsel of his tired troops and officers — prevented Emperor Gyésmu from ordering further pursuit through the Chakan forests into Mu'ugalavyá itself. The Four Palaces had gambled upon a double-pronged strike directly into the heart of the Tsolyáni Imperium, and they had lost. Their mistakes, both strategic and tactical, are still topics for discussion in the military headquarters of all of the Five Empires.

Military thinking relies heavily upon ancient tradition. Strategy and tactics are taught not only through manoeuvres and battle experience but by perusal of standard military manuals: e.g. those of Ssamirén of Khéiris and Sa'alúr of Jakálla, both of whom lived during the Bednálljan period, and the later works of Liyurán of Tsámra and Hirkkulmèshmru the Dwarf, who date from the Engsvanyáli empire. The principles of naval warfare can be culled similarly from the texts of Khuoláz of Laigás and Mshúruish "the Killer of *Akhó*," who were admirals in the service of the Priestkings of Gánga. Logistics, the science of military movements and supply, can be acquired from the Scrolls of Ma'áz Khólu, an Engsvanyáli minister whose works on economics and trade are also renowned. There are even textbooks for the study of grand strategy, statecraft, and "how to be a monarch": e.g. the Two Hundred Stanzas of Tukkolén hiViridáme, a recent work.

All of this gives warfare a formal and ceremonial quality. Centuries of tradition have produced good and well-disciplined professional soldiers, men who can perform complex manoeuvres under stress, who respond to orders and signals, and who are generally of high morale. Every man knows the formations prefered by his commanders (described in the works mentioned above). The Tsolyáni employ trumpets to order a shift from one of these patterns to another, to command the advance of this unit or that, and to coordinate movements on the battlefield. (Telepaths are too rare to be endangered in combat, and their efforts can also be "jammed" by the defensive magic of the foe). The Salarvyáni use another kind of horn; the Livyáni and the Mu'ugalavyáni prefer various types of drums; and the Yán Koryáni give their orders with booming gongs.

Once two opposing armies are on the battlefield, there are still ceremonial preliminaries to be performed: omens are taken, religious rites are administered, etc. The army commanders and their magic-using contingents take their places upon a hill or platform, and orders are passed down to field officers. Of the latter, those who fancy themselves orators strut about haranguing their men on the glories to come. Lines are ordered and straightened, and last minute changes in formation are effected.

This lull is followed by individual ritual challenges. As the tension builds, men from both sides become more and more excited by the rumbling drums and shrieking trumpets, the dust and the noise, and the panoply of war. Here and there a brave trooper breaks ranks to run towards the foe shouting insults, and he will be met by an opponent from the other side. These single combats resemble the legal duels detailed in Sec. 1.740: chivalry demands equal weapons, and a combatant may even exchange his arms for those of his enemy to demonstrate his courage. A winner tries not to slay a loser but instead drags him back to his own lines for ritual sacrifice. These affairs are highly ceremonial, and it is thought shameful for others to interfere. Eight to ten of these matches may be held, with predictable effects upon the watching armies' morale, before the commanders signal the general advance.

The victors of a battle are usually permitted by their officers to pursue the fleeing foe. Again the purpose is not so much to massacre the enemy as it is to capture prisoners for ransom (if they are of high station and appear to be wealthy), enslavement, or sacrifice. Once all resistance has ended, further signals are given to allow the troops to loot the enemy's camp and baggage. All plunder is supposed to be brought before the army generals, who apportion it according to their units' bravery and involvement in the victory.

This, at any rate, is the way a battle is supposed to proceed. In

reality the armies of Tékumel are plagued by the same problems which have beset military actions since time immemorial. Shén and Ahoggyá mercenaries may continue pursuing and slaying fleeing foemen in spite of the signals and imprecations of the generals; Hláka scouts may vanish when they are most needed (this species is not known for its bravery under fire), only to be found later picking over the choicest items from the enemy's baggage; skirmishers may refuse to attack a powerful unit even from the flanks or rear; even excellent line troops may occasionally give in to avarice and stop to loot the slain before the battle is won; and individual soldiers return from pursuit with suspicious bulges beneath their cloaks: items which are not handed over to an officer for the common pile of plunder.

Even more ritualised are the battles of the *Qadárnikoi* "little war." These are really challenge duels between individual legions, cohorts, or still smaller contingents. Such matches are frequent even in peacetime. A unit desirous of "attaining glory" obtains permission from its superiors, marches to the frontier of a neighbouring land (usually one which is semi-hostile), and proclaims its presence. A force is then sent out to meet the challenge. Like the legal duel, a *Qadárnikoi* is fought with equal numbers of troops and equivalent weapons. Again, the two sides may even exchange arms in order to prove their heroism. The commanders agree upon a wager on the outcome: heaps of arms and armour, money, and other valuables. The battle then proceeds like the *Qadárdàlikoi* described above: rituals are performed, individual matches are fought, and the two parties then close for a general melee. The *Qadárnikoi* is bound up with the code of chivalry: magic is not used, ruses and ambushes are thought dishonourable, casualties are usually light, and each man's goal is to display his courage and to obtain captives for ransom, enslavement, or sacrifice — as well as a share of the booty. When one side signals that it has had enough, it is allowed to withdraw, leaving its wager and any prisoners behind. The victors do not pursue beyond the demarcated boundaries of the battlefield. If both sides have taken captives, these may be exchanged later according to their status. A subaltern is worth two or three troopers, a captain five, and a higher officer ten or even twenty. Standards and trophies won in a *Qadárnikoi* are enshrined in the victor's legion headquarters, and exceptional bravery is rewarded both with money (perhaps 500 *Káitars* for a soldier and 5,000 or so for the unit's commander) and with citations and decorations. The Tsolyáni Imperium often bestows the "Gold of Glory" upon a valorous leader; the Mu'ugalavyáni the "Wreath of Hrsh"; the Salarvyáni the "Ebon Wand"; the Yan Koryáni the "Opal Pendant of Ke'ér"; and the Livyáni the "Jewelled Collar of Mighty Qame'él." There are lesser awards for subordinates and common troopers as well.

Pijéna, Saá Allaqí, Pechán̄o, Mihállu, Milumanayá (at least the eastern regions), Ghatón, and even Chayákku are all heirs to the culture of Éngsvan hlà Gánga along with the Five Empires, and these minor states thus make war similarly and adhere to the code of chivalry described above. Others, however, consider these traditions to be little more than decadent foppery. The islanders of Tsolél, the petty princelings of Háida Pakála, the tribes of M'mórcha and Nmartúsha, the nomads of Rannálu and the Desert of Sighs, and the Lorún all employ any means, fair or foul, to win a battle. Individual challenges may not be honoured, and prisoners may be treated well or barbarously, according to the victors' whims. The N'lüss do encourage personal combats between chieftains (but not lesser warriors), but once melee is joined, no quarter is given until all of the foe are dead or beyond the reach of pursuit. The practices of the states of the northeast are more complex: those who have a blood-feud with one another fight first in a series of challenge duels. The concept of equal weapons is absent, and fighters employ any arms they may possess. When these matches are finished the two sides parley. If it is decided that an insoluble quarrel still exists, they withdraw, form up in a rather simple line or phalanx, and charge. Should one party turn to flee, it is pursued until all of its members are either slain or captured — or until the pursuers themselves have become exhausted. Prisoners who are members of warrior lineages may be released as a mark of *Körghàà* "nobility," but foemen of lesser status are killed, castrated, or deprived of their sight. Those known to be bards, poets, or singers are invariably freed, however, "so that they may bear warning of our prowess to their people." Any code of chivalry is inconceivable to the priests of the Nyémesel Isles, and battles there are fought with any means available until one side or the other surrenders. Captives are then either enslaved or are fed to the Servitors of Mretteén, the great, tentacled *Akhó*-creatures of the sea.

The Shén attempt to follow the laws of chivalry while serving as mercenaries in human lands, but the ferocity of these reptiles is famous, and they often lose control, rending and tearing any enemy within reach. This is even more true of the infrequent wars fought between hostile egg-groups within the Shén domains themselves. The Ahoggyá are still less amenable to command. About all a human general can do is to point out a target and turn these creatures loose — and hope that none of his own men gets in the way. It is also an easy matter to turn a unit of Pygmy Folk into a snarling mob, but the other species allied with mankind tend to be more reasonable, less likely to disobey, and even rather gentle with captured foemen. The Tinalíya, for example, never harm prisoners and have been known to release them rather than turn them over to the tender mercies of the temples of the Shadow Gods or the *Vrú'uneb*. The Urunén have little experience of organised warfare. With no external natural enemies, this species has seen only two mild civil wars, five or six regional rebellions, and a handful of lesser actions within the past millenium. The Urunén fight with great tenacity and courage, but once a battle is won they treat prisoners with courtesy and frequently free them upon a promise to engage in no further violence.

Pacifism is not the forte of the inimical races. Fortunately for man and his allies none of these species' societies is oriented towards sustained warfare or open field engagements. Had it been so, the better organised and more prolific human states would long since have had to make a concerted effort to exterminate them. As it is, the Ssú, Hlüss, Hlurtgú, and the Shunned Ones are dangerous enough to require constant surveillance and suppression.

The Ssú are the most vexatious, making continual incursions into Salarvyá, Pechanó, Kilalámmu, and Tsolyánu's Chaigári Protectorate. They prefer quick, nocturnal raids and will only rarely fight massed human troops in daylight. (The last such major engagement was in 1,976 A.S. against the Pechán̄i general, Tuhéshmu Rekhmél; the Ssú won but were so badly mauled that they withdrew into their subterranean tunnels.) It is said that Ssú attacks have increased in ferocity and numbers of late; parties have been sighted as far north as the Hláka enclave, throughout Chaigári, and even in the foothills of western Kerunán. Rumour also has it that the Black Ssú are not averse to open field battles, and a few have been seen with Grey Ssú forces near the Salarvyáni border south of the city of Fenal. It must be assumed that the Black Ssú have now discovered a tubeway route (Sec. 1.425) which gives them access to Ssuyál. Were this larger sub-species ever to find its way to the continent in any numbers, it would go badly with mankind.

The Hlüss are not numerous enough to do more than mount occasional raids upon the coasts of Livyánu and the Shén states. They fight in relatively small groups from the decks of their nest-ships, making trade along the Mu'ugalavyá-Livyánu-Shényu sea route a perilous venture indeed. The Shén have consistently repelled the infrequent Hlüss attempts to establish colonies on the inhospitable shores of Point Alhajjár or Point Sarír, and a naval force from Shényu succeeded in retaking Ssrú-Gátl Isle in 1,989 A.S. (lost to the Hluss in 1,377 A.S.). These creatures are thus not a serious military threat in themselves, but they are allied with their cousins, the Ssú, and it is thought that they are also behind the traffic in the deadly drug *Zu'úr*, utilising certain semi-intelligent species as their intermediaries.

The Hlutrgú often engage in pitched battles with Tsolyáni forces in the coastal lowlands of Káija Protectorate. They also make shipping in Msúmtel Bay a near impossibility, and at times they have even raided the eastern shores of Thayúri Isle, Burrú Isle, and Gangá itself. It is theorised that population pressures periodically drive the Hlutrgú to come pouring out of their bogs to do battle. The arms and armour of the Tsolyáni are superior to the Hlutrgú javelins, darts, and clubs, and there is thus no real difficulty in repelling their sudden, vicious assaults. Yet any real attempt at genocide would require human troops to fight in the shallow, vermin-infested waters and oozing marshes of the Hlutrgú homeland, and this would cost more lives and materiel than the objective might be worth. The Tsolyáni therefore fortify their towns and villages in the region and endure the occasional massed attacks launched by this species. The

Hlutrgú seem to make no effort to consolidate any territorial gains, and it must be assumed that they cannot — or do not — wish to dwell outside of their swampy habitat.

The Shunned Ones range the rocky wastelands of eastern Yán Kór and the Jánnu Range of Saá Allaqí in small parties. They prefer ambushes and brief forays, and no large battle with this species has ever been recorded. The Shunned Ones are even less suited to Tékumel's present atmosphere and climate than the Hlutrgú, and they must return to their sealed cities after each short excursion outside.

The Mihálli are far too few to be of any military importance, nor do they appear to be interested in conquests — indeed, all of their objectives are enigmatic to mankind and his allies. The aqueous Nyaggá can only live on land for short periods and must remain always within reach of deep water. There are reports of ships disappearing beneath the waves of Lake Parunál, however, and the fisherfolk around Prájnu build exceptionally strong — and defensible — sea-walls.

Little has been said of naval warfare above. The long coastlines, frequent bad weather, and voracious predators make any invasion by sea a serious gamble. In order to cut a trade route or blockade an enemy port, a base must be established on land nearby, and this demands a force sufficiently large to hold the beachhead. The most successful such attempt was the Mu'ugalavyáni naval attack on Penóm during the War of 2,020. The Tsolyáni garrison had gone off to join the force attacking Úrmish, and the Swamp Folk and marines of the Four Palaces captured all but the Governor's citadel. This was besieged, but the investment had to be abandoned after the Tsolyáni victory at the Battle of the Temple of Chánis. The Mu'ugalavyáni fleet sailed out of Penóm Harbour just ahead of a Tsolyáni relieving squadron sent over from Jakalla.

True sea battles are recorded between the Mu'ugalavyáni and the Livyáni, the Livyáni and the brigands of Tsoléi, and the fleets of the various islands of Tsoléi themselves. Naval engagements between the Shén states are fairly common, and Shén armadas have also fought against Livyáni and Tsoleini flotillas. The southern oceans have seen even more military actions: the pirate princes of Háida Pakála often raid the coasts of Salaryvá across the straits, and vice-versa. The Nyémesel Isles are also a target for intermittent Háida Pakálan forays, and the priests of Mretten have built a fleet of small but very fast galleys which have achieved a fair degree of success against the larger pirate vessels. The Ahoggyá of Ónmu Tlé Hlé́ktis possess a good-sized navy of stout, crude ships, but it is not known who their opponents might be. In the north, the Yán Koryáni have engaged the fleets of Ghatón and Pijéna from time to time, mostly due to quarrels over fishing rights. None of these nations mantain much of a navy, however, because of the storms and rough waters of the Pentrúrtra Deeps. The small states bordering Lake Parunál suppport small fleets to protect their fishing and trading interests. A sea battle (of rather Lilliputian proportions) is said to have occured between the "navies" of Jánnu and Péncha Nagál as recently as 2,357 A.S.

The details of a few of the more common commercial vessels were given in Sec. 1.732. Military craft are as follows:

1. The *Séscha*: a small, fast galley with a single mast and ancillary sail (lateen-rigged everywhere except in Livyánu, where a square sail is preferred); length: 20 m; beam: 4 m; displacement: 20 metric tonnes; crew: 50-60 rowers; 15-20 marines; and 3 officers.
2. The *Srügánta*: a type of bireme, again with an ancillary sail, as above; length: 30 m; beam: 4-5 m; displacement: 55-60 tonnes; crew: 70-100 oarsmen; 30 marines; and 5 officers.
3. The *Qél*: a larger trieme, also with a mast and sail, as above; length: 40-45 m; beam: 5-6 m; displacement: 100-120 tonnes; crew: 170-180 rowers; 40-50 marines (including archers); and 8-10 officers.
4. The *Zírunel*: a type of cataphract-decked quinquereme, often with two or three masts and (usually) square-rigged sails; length: 50-60 m; beam: 8 m; displacement: 200 tonnes; crew: 280-300 oarsmen; 100-150 marines (including contingents of archers, crossbowmen, and artillerists); and 10 officers.

Even larger vessels with three and four masts are found: e.g. the Livyáni four-masted *Chúosaz*, the three-masted Mu'ugalavyáni *Nu'utlá*, the Tsolyáni four masted *Mrishurén*, etc. These behemoths are huge and unwieldy, ranging up to 80 metres in length and displacing as much as 1,000 tonnes.

The Shén produce vessels equivalent to all four of the above types. Their favourite is a large, sleek trireme-like galley almost identical to the *Qél* called the *Gè-Gsá*. The military ships of the Ahoggyá are much like their commercial craft, though constructed of thicker planks and sometimes decked over to provide cover for their warriors. Tsoléi, Háida Pakála, and the Nyémesel Isles all have motley navies of *Sésha*, *Srügánta*, and *Qél*-type ships but build nothing larger. The little states around Lake Parunál maintain only *Séscha*-class vessels.

Of especial interest are the great nest-ships of the Hlüss. These range from 30 to over 90 metres in length, have broad beams (10-20 metres), and are deep-drafted (and hence rather unsuitable for shallow water). They have several internal decks but very little superstructure, being completely roofed over. There are external parapets and hoardings, from behind which their crews fire cross bows before closing in to board an enemy vessel. Larger varieties may also have squat, dome-shaped towers which mount ballistae and even small onagers. These craft have neither oars not sails, and reports of escaped captives indicate that they are powered by some application of other-planar energy unknown to man and his allies. Sailors say that the presence of a Hlüss ship is announced by an eery humming or buzzing which mingles with the wind to produce terror in the hearts of human mariners. Some years ago one of these strange vessels was cast up in a storm on the reefs of Ngéshtu Head in Pán Cháka, and an examination revealed a chamber in the lowest part of the hull which still had a "feel" of sorcerous power about it. There were no engines or other devices, however, and it may be that the Hlüss use some form of group magic (see above) to drive these ponderous vessels. Those who have seen them say that Hlüss ships are quite manoeuvrable even against winds and currents, and their speeds are comparable with those of the *Srügánta* or *Qél*. The complement of a Hlüss nest-ship includes a breeder female, several males, and anywhere from 50-200 worker-fighters, of whom at least some are also sorcerers.

(It may be noted in passing that the legends of the Time of No Kings (Sec. 1.360) contain references to human ships similarly propelled by other-planar magic. Subadím the Sorcerer and Turshánmü the Summoner of Demons are said to have had such craft, and a sand-scoured hull was discovered some fifty years ago in the Desert of Sighs west of Pelesár. Fisherfolk still claim that such vessels exist and can be seen silently cruising the deeper waters off the island of Vrá. These may be only sailors' tales, but if true, this method of propulsion is not known to the rest of mankind.)

All larger warships (including the Hlüss' nest-ships) carry small dinghies and pinnaces, and every nation has several types of minor military craft as well.

1.830. THE PRIESTHOODS

1.831. Education

Any discussion of the structures of the hierarchies of the temples must begin with a statement of the educational systems of the Five Empires since almost all formal learning is in the hands of the priesthoods. Clans do hold informal classes (taught by one or another more learned elder), but the children are given only a little reading and writing and some arithmetic before they go off to become apprentices in their clan's profession. Indeed, most peasants and lower-class townsmen are denied even this rudimentary education. Estimates of literacy range from 10-15 percent for Livyánu, 10-12 percent for Tsolyánu and Mu'ugalavyá, 9-10 percent for Pijéna, Pechánu, and Yán Kór, 5-8 percent for Salarvyá, to less than one percent for some of the more remote states.

In the Five Empires a formal education is the prerogative only of those who can afford it. Wealthy individuals, high officials, and the priesthoods (for whose children a temple education is free) provide for their offspring. A clan, too, may finance a bright student who has prospects of going on to do the clan some good. Slaves are rarely educated, although the noble households do train their clerks, scribes, and such "specialties" as dancers, singers, reciters of epic poetry, etc. A scion of an aristocratic family may be taught first by such slave

tutors before going off to study at a prestigious temple academy. The lower ranks of the military are largely illiterate, but a man who has worked his way to the level of subaltern or captain must certainly set aside part of his pay for an education. If he is exceptional, his legion may pay part of this.

Followers of Stability may send their children either to a school run by the priesthoods of Thúmis or Keténgku, or, if they wish, directly to a more doctrinaire seminary operated by their own sects in which their specific tenets will be stressed. Advocates of Change have a similar choice between schools staffed by priests of Ksárul or Grugánu, or an institution provided by their own denominations. All of these begin alike with reading, writing, and arithmetic, followed by religious dogma, history, and a modern language. This instruction lasts some 8-10 years, after which most pupils return to their clans and professions. Most of those who remain to acquire furhter learning intend to become priests, although a few scions of the nobility, children of officials, and wealthy clansmen continue as well. The second stage lasts another 3-5 years, and subjects include theology, philosophy, calligraphy, art, music, the recitation of epics, divine ritual, etiquette, versification, mathematics, classical languages, astrology and astronomy, law, geography, further history, medicine, alchemy, etc. The basics of magic and other-planar power are taught, but actual spells and methods are not. Most students begin to specialise during the latter years of this phase, and some become accomplished amateurs by the end of it.

Physical education, games, athletics, and combat techiniques are not part of most temples' curricula. The war-temples (Sec. 1.610) do inculcate military discipline, swordsmanship, tactics, and archery, but those who wish to become really proficient must attend a duelling master's academy in the marketplace, join a military legion, or, if they are wealthy, hire an instructor to come to their clanhouses. The martial arts are emphasised by the temples of Vimúhla and Hŕsh in Mu'ugalavyá, by most of the priesthoods of Saá Allaqí and Pechánо, by the Shén, and in Livyánu by the temples of Guodái, Kirrinéb, Ru'ungkáno, Kikumársha, and Qame'él.

More esoteric disciplines are imparted only to those who are favoured by their temples. No purpose is served by teaching students who are not going to benefit the hierarchy. Outsiders, dilettantes, and those of dubious loyalties are thus discouraged. The third phase of an education in the Five Empires thus takes place within the student's own temple. Advanced classes continue the subjects listed above, plus engineering and architecture, navigation, the composition of odes in praise of the Emperor and the Gods, high cartography (which has nothing to do with the making of paper maps!), the casting of horoscopes and the taking of omens, further rituals and ceremonies, scribal and administrative procedures, and the spells and practical applications of the sorceror.

During this period, which may last anywhere from 4-5 years to the rest of one's life, students attend classes taught by the more learned preceptors of the temples. Small groups sit here and there upon mats beneath the pillared colonnades. The teachers lecture, and their pupils memorise every word. Questions and discussion are not considered good form, and rote learning and obedience are rewarded. There are no examinations: a student who is not progressing will be bluntly told to weave his Skein of Destiny elsewhere. Although advanced teachers are paid by their hierarchies, it is also customary to provide one's professor with gifts, the amount of which varies with the student's ability to pay — and his teacher's liking for him. Most pupils at this stage are already junior priests, but there is still a sprinkling of outsiders.

Every temple has its Inner Doctrines, its anagogical enigmas, its recondite lore of demonology, and its compendia of secret spells and knowledge. These things are revealed only to those who have proved their fidelity to the temple and who have attained a high rank in its hierarchy. These advanced classes are open only to initiates, and outsiders caught there may be slain or condemned to a living death by an ecclesiastical court. In the temples of Ksárul and Grugánu there are Inner Doctrines within Inner Doctrines; the process of learning never ends, and only the High Adepts at the summit of the pyramid are aware of all of the ramifications. In these two temples — as in all of the priesthoods of the Livyáni Shadow Gods — Circle memberships are often concealed, and even the principles and theology of the sect may be misrepresented to those lower down in the hierarchy.

It is indeed possible to acquire a "secular" education outside the precincts of the temple academies. Enterprising instructors are to be found in every marketplace, and the rich sometimes hire tutors for their children (particularly for non-*Aridáni* clan-girls) from the ranks of their temple's junior priests and priestesses, who are themselves students. There are many charlatans, however, and students should beware of "Exalted Scholars" and "High Adepts" who claim to be able to impart the mysteries of sorcery, demonology, and other erudite topics. Studying with a lay-priest (see below) who is authorised by his temple is one thing, but it is something else entirely to put one's money — and perhaps one's life — into the hands of a "bazaar magician." The teaching of any but "universal" spells to outsiders is strictly forbidden, but fraud is nevertheless common and gullible pupils are to be found everywhere. The same is true of "savants" who purport to have talismans, amulets, scrolls, and "mighty devices of the ancients" for sale. If such mountebanks are apprehended, a civil case (Sec. 1.740) can be entered against them, but it is frequently hard to obtain evidence and witnesses.

The educational systems of Pijéna, Saá Allaqí, Milmanayá (in Sunráya only), Pechánо, and Mihállu are similar to those of the Five Empires, though generally less advanced. The humans of modern Mihállu are renowned, however, for their expertise in archaeology and ancient history. Sorcery is taught only in those areas which are not magically "barren" (cf. Sec. 1.620), but nowhere are these arts as well developed as in the Five Empires. In Ghatón, Chayákku, Jánnu, and Kilalámmu the clanhouses take the place of the temples in providing whatever meagre education is to be had. The states of the far northeast have even less interest in "book learning," although an occasional enlightened ruler or warrior lineage may import tutors for their offspring from outside. Some of the princelings of Háida Pakála welcome itinerant scholars at their "courts," while others hold learning in contempt. Sages in Tsoléi wander about, join one or another of the group-families (Sec. 1.510), and are given food and lodging in return for instructing the young. Education is the monopoly of the priests of Mrettén in the Nyémesel Isles, and it is a crime to teach a commoner how to read. It is said that this sect has great knowledge of navigation and the geography of the lands and seas to the south of their islands, but it is difficult for a foreigner to acquire this information. The N'lúss are almost entirely illiterate; reading and writing can only be acquired at the "palaces" of the urbanised chieftains of Malcháiran, N'lússa, and Nrétlu, and even this is rudimentary. The era of the great sages of the Dragon Warriors (Sec. 1.330) is long past, although it is said that certain of the oldest citadels yet contain sealed libraries with the modern N'lúss look upon with almost religious reverence, permitting no foreigner to enter. Literacy is unknown amongst the tribal peoples of M'mórcha, Nmartúsha, Rannálu, the Desert of Sighs, Hrgá Lorúnje, and the Lorún regions of Yán Kór. These peoples all maintain lively oral traditions, however.

The Shén are comparatively well educated. Those progeny who survive their infancy are taught reading and writing in the strange Shén scripts by the egg-fertilisers of their egg-groups. A few individuals, always those who are smaller and physically weaker than their peers, go on to study at the libraries maintained by the communal council of each city. Some of these become good scholars, excelling in such fields as botany, mineralogy, and oceanography. Sorcery, mathematics, history, and philosophy do not appeal to the Shén. The Urunén, on the other hand, have a broader educational system based upon secular schools run by entrepreneurs. Every individual is expected to be literate, and Urunén institutions contain such practical subjects as agronomy, business, a complicated form of accounting, medicine, etc., as well as some fields which would seem odd to humans (e.g. tooth-sharpening — Urunén females sharpen their incisors as a mark of beauty). The Tinalíya are also fond of learning. The Senior Scholar of each subterranean community has charge of its schools, libraries, and study facilities. All males and females and perhaps fifty percent of the neuters learn how to read the difficult Tinalíya dot-and-circle script, and various members of this species are famed for their expertise in sorcery, other-planar power, and the devices of the ancients.

The Pé Chói also have their own script (a series of indentations pressed into soft wood, read both with the eyes and with the skeletal

fingertips), but this has now fallen into desuetude. Most Pe Choi now come to study in the temples of Tsolyánu or Mu'ugalavyá, where they excel in certain of the more abstract branches of knowledge. The same is true of the Páchi Léi, the Swamp Folk, the Pygmy Folk, and the Hláka, none of whom have formal schools of their own. Very few Ahoggyá ever bother to learn to read or write. They do have a method of record-keeping (Sec. 1.810), and the inhabitants of Ónmu Tlé Hléktis also send "symbolic" messages to one another: small leather bags filled with common objects (e.g. leaves, sticks, pebbles, bits of bone or rotting meat, etc.). These can be "read" by the recipient but are incomprehensible to mankind. Only comparatively simple instructions or information can be communicated in this fashion. There seems to be no pattern of organised education, and most Ahoggyá acquire a knowledge of their culture only through the frequently violent tuition of their elders.

No schools or academies of the Mihálli have ever been found. That they are — or were — outstanding scholars is undoubted. It is unfortunate that this species is so alien to mankind and so uncooperative. The ruins of their cities show that they once had great skill in architecture, engineering, mining, and irrigation. Their crafts, too, were unparalleled. Glassware, textiles, pottery, stoneworking, and metallurgy (much of the so-called "enchanted" steel used today was recovered from Mihálli sites) were all highly developed. Their art is interesting as well, though rather grotesque and disturbing to human eyes. Their libraries and manuscripts (Sec. 1.711) indicate that they held learning in high esteem, but the methods by which this was imparted to their young are a matter of conjecture.

One can only guess at the educational systems of the inimical races. Hlüss texts inscribed upon plaques made of metal or from their bodily secretions (the same substance used to construct their cities and nest-ships) have been found, but no one can read them. The Ssú also cover delicate little cylinders of gold or copper with patterns of incised holes, and it is thought that these are their "books." Leaders of the Shunned Ones have been seen consulting scrolls made of some paper-like substance. The Hlutrgú, however, are apparently not literate, while the practices of the Nyaggá are quite unascertainable.

1.832. The Priesthoods

The physical appearances of the temples of the Five Empires were briefly described in Sec. 1.421. A large urban sanctuary may be staffed by hundreds of priests, priestesses, guards, servants, artisans, and slaves, and even a village chapel (consisting of little more than a single room with a stone altar and a crude clay image or two) must have its curate. The hierarchies of the temples thus rival those of the governments in complexity.

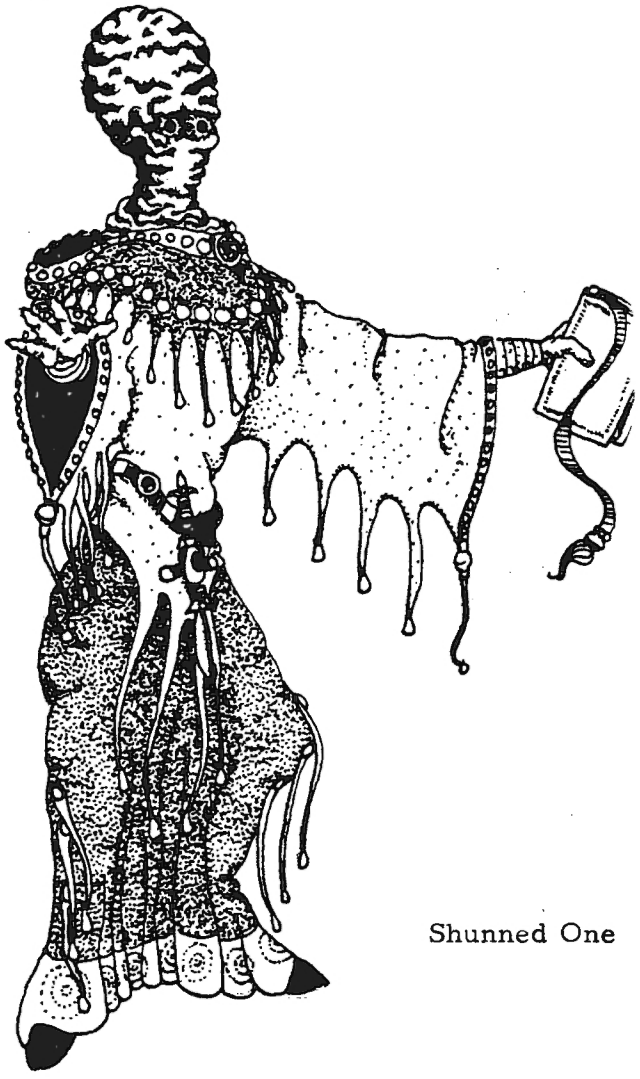
It is convenient to speak of ecclesiastical ranks in terms of "Circles" (Tsolyani: *Kartu'ün*). This ancient Engsvanyáli classification still persists throughout the Five Empires, their client states, and Mihállu, and it will be understood in other lands as well. Knowledge of a cleric's Circle membership immediately reveals his position vis-a-vis his own hierarchy and clarifies his status in the social order.

Recruits join a temple as Acolytes during the second phase of their education (Sec. 1.831) — or, in some cases, at the end of the first phase. Most sects waive the fees of their brighter Acolytes, and it is not uncommon for a temple to pay the living expenses of very gifted pupils and even offer compensation to their clans in return for their services. Recruits for a temple guard corps are usually given Acolyte training and status, and a few sects (e.g. those of Vimúhla, Karakán, and their Cohorts) require that every soldier in their legions belong to the First Circle at least. Those planning to go into the military arm of their sect are thus quickly segregated from the rest, and they then progress along the lines given for the military in Sec. 1.821.

After six months to a year of study, Acolytes are either initiated into the First Circle or are told to return home. It is at this point that each recruit must consider which branch of temple service to enter: the ritual priesthood, the administrative division, or the scholarly contingent. A final decision must be made within a year or so of achieving the First Circle, and thereafter it is very difficult to obtain permission to change. All further training progresses rigidly within one of these three divisions, and no one may pursue two at once.

First Circle membership lasts for perhaps a year to three years. Slow, uncooperative, or dubiously eccentric candidates can still be weeded out during this period. Young ritual priests and priestesses learn their practical duties, the incantations and sacraments, the temple's theology and dogma, and assist their seniors in the performance of the rituals. Those in the administrative branch are taught the details of record-keeping, tithe-accounting, the supervision of temple lands and property, the procurement of vestments and ceremonial accoutrements, the organisation of the kitchens and refectories, and the thousand and one bureaucratic particulars of the vast networks of the hierarchy. Scholarly priests continue their studies, specialise in one (or at most two) fields under the tutelage of a master, and learn the fundamentals of research.

Satisfactory progress results in promotion. A candidate whose work is not so acceptable may find himself sent off to serve the rest of his days as the curate of a village shrine, or he may simply be shunted aside into a minor post within an urban temple. From the Second through the Sixth Circles each of the three branches has a multitude of petty functions and titles, and a list of these in one's dossier provides the temple authorities with an idea of one's abilities and experience. For example, ritual priests of the Second through the Sixth Circle may be assigned functions in specific ceremonials: e.g. "Holder of the Emerald Censer" (Dlamélish), "Opener of the Way of Bones" (Sárku), "Bearer of the Raiment of the Blue Room" (Ksárul), "Opener of the Eye of Dawn" (Thúmis), "Flame-Keeper" (Vimúhla), "Guide of Those Who Are Sent to the God" (Chiténg), "Standardbearer of the Golden Legions" (Karakán and Chegárra), "Singer of Purity" (Avánthe and Dilinála), "Illuminator of the Face of Light" (Hnálla), "Utterer of the Litanies of the Isles" (Belkhánu), "Attendant in Purple" (Hrü'ü), etc. etc. Similar (though less ornately titled) posts are found in the administrative and scholarly branches as well.



Shunned One

It may take anywhere from a year to ten years to ascend from the Second to the Sixth Circle. Thereafter most higher posts relate more and more to temple governance and the supervision of one's juniors. Clerics of the most exalted echelons tend to become little more than bureaucrats, whatever their branch, with duties revolving around administrative functions, attendance at temple conferences and ceremonials, the ecclesiastical judiciary, and serving as representatives of the sect to the government or to other external bodies.

The higher one progresses the less direct correlation there is between the Circles and specific temple posts. Any number of clergy may belong to a given Circle, but the number of official positions is limited. Rivalry is thus often fierce between ambitious candidates, and experience, ability, and seniority are frequently subordinated to "influence" and to blatant "inducements." There may be only one or two vacancies open for a pool of over a hundred likely applicants, and an individual's progress upward through the ranks may come to a dead end at any point along the way, even though he may continue to be initiated into ever higher Circles. Real talent, wisdom, and proficiency are thus more clearly indicated by membership in a high Circle than they are by incumbency in a temple post. A respected scholar, for example, may belong to the Eighteenth or Twentieth Circle but hold no office in the hierarchy at all! Circle membership does depend to some dègree upon influence and inducements, of course, but the pressure is less.

The following table presents the English translations of the titles of the posts of the three branches of the priestly hierarchies. Each is followed by the minimum Circle at which the post is usually bestowed (although junior persons may sometimes attain these offices if they are precocious, ambitious, influential and generous enough). There is no maximum Circle rank for a post. A priest who has been passed over and since achieved higher Circle status may still apply for a post, even though he must now compete with younger persons of more junior levels. For instance, an urban High Priest is generally selected from a pool of Tenth Circle candidates, but a priest of the Fifteenth Circle who has not held this office before may put his name in for it as well. If his qualifications are better — and if no more influential juniors have applied — he may get it.

	Acolyte Priest: 1st Circle	
Ritual Branch	**Administrative Branch**	**Scholarly Branch**
Junior Priest: 2nd	Junior Priest: 2nd	Scholar: 2nd Senior Scholar: 5th
Chief Ritual Priest: 8th	Temple Commandant: 8th	Ranking Scholar: 7th
High Priest: 10th	District Commandant: 10th	Licentiate: 9th
Grand High Priest: 12th	Senior Commandant: 12th	Proctor: 11th
Ritual Preceptor: 15th	Administrative Preceptor: 15th	Great Proctor: 16th
	Patriarch: 16th - 17th	
	Lord Adept: 19th - 20th	
	Grand Adept: 20th - up*	

*The highest Circle known in any temple is the Thirtieth.

Each sect is governed by a High Council (Tsolyáni: *Hesnuchéldálikoi*), composed of its Ritual and Administrative Preceptors, the Great Proctors, and those senior Lay-Priests (see below) who wish to join it. This body then elects an Inner Synod (Tsolyáni: *Qotlashánkoi*) of anywhere from 10 to 50 Patriarchs. These in turn choose 3-5 of their number to act as an Advisory Curia (Tsolyáni: *Vurtléshkoi*), plus a Grand Adept for the entire sect. In most temples these posts are held for life, although those of Sárku and Durritlámish elect their Patriarchs and Lord Adepts for five year terms and their Grand Adepts for ten. Occasionally a sect may have more than one Grand Adept (perhaps for internal political reasons), but there are no recorded instances of more than three of these functionaries serving at one time.

This, then, is the structure of the formal priestly hierarchies. All of these persons are technically Priests: they are paid by the temple, live in its dormitories and apartments, are subject to its regimen, attend its rituals, fulfill a multitude of duties, and are bound by their superiors' commands.

Quite apart from these Priests, however, are the "Lay-Priests" of the temple. These are also devotees of the sect, educated in its schools, and participants in its overall perspectives. They are usually scholars, physicians, and practitioners of sorcery and other arts. They perform their skills for pay in the marketplace, hire out as apprentices to more senior Lay-Priests, or serve as "house-priests" (and sometimes as "magical bodyguards") in the entourages of the noble families and high clans. Lay-Priests receive no salary from the temple; they do not live within its precincts (though they may stay in a temple dormitory for a week or two while visiting another city); they have no ritual or other specific duties; and they take little part in their temple's governance or politics. They are given access to the temple's libraries and research facilities, and they frequently cooperate with their colleagues in the formal hierarchy. It is theorised that the institution of "Lay-Priest" provides more direct interaction between the temples and other sectors of the society. A Lay-Priest is independent of the strictures and "ivory-tower quality" inherent in temple life, and he (or she) can carry the temple's influence into parts of the culture which the busy clergy of the temple itself cannot reach.

There are no "guilds" in the Five Empires (cf. Sec. 1.550), nor are there specific "astronomers' clans," "historians clans," or other such organisations. The Priests of the scholarly branches of the temples, plus their associated groups of Lay-Priests, take the place of such institutions. There is frequently collaboration or cooperation between the scholars of one temple with those of "friendly" temples (Sec. 1.610), but between "neutral" or "hostile" sects one encounters secrecy, rivalry, and sometimes actual enmity. Every sect, moreover, has its Inner Doctrines and arcana which it reveals to no other (Sec. 1.831).

Lay-Priests may be of any Circle from the Second through the Thirtieth. The highest Circles may join the temple's High Council, if they wish, but they are rarely elected as Patriarchs, Lord Adepts, or Grand Adepts — after all, it is the Lay-Priest's unwillingness to join in the tasks of temple governance which makes him opt to become a Lay-Priest in the first place!

Although Lay-Priests progress upward in Circle membership, there are no official titles for most of them. They are known, rather by their disciplines: e.g. "Historian" (Tsolyáni: *Balamtsanérkoi*), "Physician" (Tsolyáni: *Kichengúrkoi*), "Astronomer" (Tsolyáni: *Hirtlamongérkoi*), etc.

Priests and Lay-Priests who practice sorcery have their own classifications, based upon the kind and complexity of their enchantments they use. One can thus refer to a regular Priest by his title within the scholarly branch (see above), or, if one wishes to specify his magical experience, by one of the appellations given below. A Lay-Priest, who is not a member of the formal hierarchy, employes only the latter. English translations of these sorcerous titles, together with the minimum Circles at which they are normally granted, are as follows:

TITLE	MINIMUM CIRCLE
Minor Spell-Caster	2nd
Illusionist	3rd
Seer	5th
Higher Spell-Caster	7th
Caster of Enchantments and Controls	9th
Commander of Energies and Powers	11th
Great Wizard	16th
Necromancer and Master of Demons	21st
High Adept of the Powers	26th - up

Although the hierarchies of the Five Empires are by no means identical in every detail, it is possible to give equivalents for the titles listed above in each language. Abbreviations include: "T" equals "Tsolyáni"; "M" equals "Mu'ugalavyáni"; "S" equals "Salarvyáni"; "Y" equals "Yán Koryáni"; and "L" equals "Livyáni." Horizontal dividing lines are employed for ease of reference.

ENGLISH TITLE	EQUIVALENTS IN THE LANGUAGES OF THE FIVE EMPIRES
Acolyte	T: Kengyél*; M: Khangálish**; S: Vrér; Y: Múcheg; L: Luvréz***
Priest	T: Shárto; M: Shardúish; S: Eshír; Y: E shmír; L: Jagáz
Ritual Priests	
Junior Priest	T: Su'umél; M: So'ómish; S: Knér; Y: Sómreg; L: Anchaz
Chief Ritual Priest	T: Rashángto; M: Jrélish; S: Jrár; Y: Jnéleg; L: Jaralúz
High Priest	T: Qusúnchu; M: Qosónish; S: Ghusán; Y: Aghúsn; L: Qashánaz
Grand High Priest	T: Hrúgash; M: Hrgsish; S: Hárzh; Y: Khirásh; L: Régaz
Preceptor	T: Mriyan; M: Mre'edish; S: Mrun; Y: Mnar; L: Mranaz
Administrative Priests	
Junior Priest	As above in T, M, and Y; S: Büchűr; L: Alaz
Temple Commandant	T: Njáshte; M: Néjdish; S: Kúmur; Y: Nájatl; L: Nejéz
District Commandant	T: Hrúgash; M: Hrgsish; S: Qurdlár; Y: Khírash; L: Narégaz
Senior Commandant	T: Otlú; M: O'ótlash; S and Y lack this rank; L has two ranks: Nchálaz and Viyunggáz
Administrative Preceptor	T: Mriyan; M: Mre'edish; S: Mrun; Y: Mnar; L: Namranaz
Scholarly Priests	
Scholar	T: Kusijákto; M: Khűsmúnish; S: Gsér; Y: Dileg; L: Omrúz
Senior Scholar	T: Kusijáktosa; M, S, and Y lack this rank; L: Tomrúz
Ranking Scholar	T: Kusijáktodali; M: Khűsmúndlé'èsh; S: Menggsér; Y: Udileg; L: Totomrúz
Licentiate	T: Jokálto; M: Ebe'énguish; S: Érzh; Y: Khákh; L: Tarégaz
Proctor	T: Qúrupengáto; M: Ebe'énguzash; S: O'érzh; Y: Agghákh; L: Tatrégaz
Great Proctor	T: Qúrupengátodàli; M: Ebe'engudlé'èsh; S: Menérzh; Y: Ukhákh; L: Tamranáz
Higher Administrators	
Patriarch	T: Tsémel; M: She'emlish; S: Tsommul; Y: Shamatl; L: Shamluz
Lord Adept	T: Jáshten; M: Dzashlanish; S: Jazhzhar; Y: Jashleneg; L: Jashlanaz****
Grand Adept	T: Tiritlén; M: Thirrutlanish; S: Tirrular; Y: Tretleneg; L: Tarlanaz
Magic-using Priests and Lay-Priests	
Minor Spell-Caster	T: Shátun; M: Sha'adúish; S: Zdán; Y: Shádleg; L: Sha'ánaz
Illusionist	T: Nyélme; M: Nálmaish; S: Eshshú; Y: Ngétl; L: Nyalmáz
Seer	T: Rusalá; M: Rzálish; S: O'eshshú; Y: Irzőleg; L: Arzaráz
Higher Spell-Caster	T: Bálash; M: Va'álzish; S: Mene shshú; Y: Válsh; L: Walaz
Caster of Enchantments and Controls	T: Durún; M: Dru'únish; S: Jún; Y: Járn; L: Zarnaz
Commander of Energies and Powers	T: Chagún; M: Cha'ánish; S: Tságga; Y: Chigó'eg; L: Chanaz
Great Wizard	T: Tselinál; M: Shale'énish; S: Uchchúr; Y: Shátl; L: Shalnaz
Necromancer and Master of Demons	T: Hnéshtu; M: Hnashátish; S: Nashshéggu; Y: Nshétlu; L: Nazhadáz
High Adept of the Powers	T: Badrágu; M: Vadárgish; S: Bajjógmu; Y: Va'dír; L: Wadráz

* The Tsolyani "noble" suffix *-koi* is omitted here for reasons of space. All of the above priestly titles occur with this ending in the appropriate grammatical circumstances; cf. Sec. 1.810. Females holding these posts use the same titles, but the ending is then *-rakh* if the speaker considers the person "ignoble" or *-rakoi* if she is thought to be "noble": e.g., *Shártorakh* or *Shártorakoi* "Priestess".

** The Mu'ugalavyáni masculine ending *-ish/-sh* is included above. The feminine ending is *-a* (or "zero" – nothing -- after a stem ending in *-a*): e.g., *Shardúa* "Priestess", *O'ótla* "Senior Commandant".

*** The Livyáni masculine ending *-az/-z* is also shown in the foregoing lists. The feminine ending is *-eb/-b*: e.g., *Jagéb* "Priestess", *Tatrégeb* "Proctor", *Omrúb* "Scholar". Salarvyáni and Yán Koryáni affixes are complex and are hence not inserted here.

**** There are several prie stly-administrative ranks between Patriarch and Grand Adept in Livyánu. Those known are: *Neshénez* "High Patriarch"; *Dolmúnéz* "Administrative Lord Adept"; *Dyardesház* "Lord Adept of the Rituals"; *Jashlanáz* "Lord Adept of the Prefecture"; *Chálaz* "Grand Adept of the Mysteries"; and *Nokunáz* "Grand Adept of the Council". The last three of these, plus the Grand Adept of the entire sect (i.e., the *Tartlanáz*) serve on the Council of the Priesthoods (Sec. 1.810).

Pijéna, Saá Allaqí, Pecháno, Milumanayá (mostly in and around Sunráya), Mihállu, and Chayákku (to some extent) all share the same Engsvanyáli dual system of Circles and hierarchical ranks. Even where the deities are different (as in Pechání; cf. Sec. 1.610), the structures are similar enough that a priest from one of the Five Empires can gain an idea of us of a counterpart from another through the latter's Circle membership.

The N'lűss have little formal religious structure. Each war-band (and even each tribal village) has a shaman or two. These almost invariably worship some aspect of Vimúhla or Chiténg, and their duties involve healing and "battle-magic": i.e. the sending of fear upon a foe, enhancing the bravery of one's own warriors, etc.). Only in larger towns and cities are priests of Hrsh or others of the twenty Engsvanyáli deities to be found. Temples are small, mean, and usually staffed only by one or two priests. Ghatón is similar, but most shrines are dedicated to the local "nature gods" (Sec. 1.610), and Pavár's pantheon is rarely represented. Each Ghatóni clan has its own "nature god," and every clanhouse thus possesses a priest or two, whom the clan supports in return for performance of the rituals, prayers, sacrifices, and healing magic. The training of the *Sérudla* beasts is also in the hands of special priests (devoted to the sun-god, Ghé), who dwell apart from the rest of the community in monasteries hidden in the forests.

There are no real priests in the indigenous religion of Tsolei. The "place gods" (Sec. 1.610) are propitiated by any adult of the resident group-family (Sec. 1.510). Missionaries of Pavár's twenty deities, of Hrsh, and of a few of the Livyáni Shadow Gods are found in the cities, but since Tsolei is magically "barren" one of the most convincing arguments of these priesthoods cannot be employed. There are more complex hierarchies in a few of the larger centres: e.g. the Priests of the Sea Goddess on Llűrúra Isle (to whom the "Year King" is annually sacrificed; cf. Sec. 1.720), the Temple of the Two Moons at Hőlis, which enjoins a code of rules and personal behavior which is both complex and somewhat ridiculous, etc.

Each of the pirate princelings of Háida Pakála maintains a priest or two to serve the goddess called She Who Strides the Wind. Whenever there is a great storm, when a ship feared lost returns safely, when a son is born to the master, etc., it is the duty of these priests to oversee the raising of a stone monolith on the seashore. Such monuments are inscribed with protective runes, and offerings of

animals, sea creatures, and occasionally slaves are made to them. (A similar custom is followed along the coasts of Salarvyá, except that there the runes are designed to protect again the sleek galleys of the princes of Háida Pakála and their rapacious underlings). Small temples to Shiringgáyi and to most of Pavár's deities are encountered in the cities of Háida Pakála as well, though these are small, poor, and lack any local patronage.

The clergy of Mrettén in the Nyemésel Isles is divided into three ranks: Acolyte (Pe'é: *Onón*), Initiate (Pe'é: *Sunón*), and Ecclesiarch (Pe'é: *K'a'ón*). A recruit usually works as an Acolyte for 1-3 years and as an Initiate for a further 4-10 years before being inducted into the Ecclesiarchy. Sorcery, Astrology, and certain advanced doctrines are taught only to Initiates of two or three years' experience, and one does not become proficient until one has been an Ecclesiarch for 7-10 years. Foreign Lay-Priests and scholars must be careful to practice their arts only with the approval of the Ecclesiarchs since all learning is a monopoly of the clergy of Mrettén. Missionaries of other faiths are strictly forbidden. See also Sec. 1.810.

Small temples to Aridzó, Heshuél, Súr, Váris, and other deities are to be found scattered throughout the states of the far northeast (cf. Sec. 1.610), but these edifices usually consist of little more than a circular chamber built of logs or crude stone masonry. There is little formal hierarchy. A priest (Adómrh: *Bánè*; Nuru'ún Sí: *Syó*) performs ceremonial dances, heals the sick, initiates the youths of the community into their respective clans at puberty, etc. More elderly priests are respected, but a charismatic younger person can often persuade his colleagues to adopt a course of action through oratory alone. Priestesses (Adómrh: *Zhèvànè*; Nuru'ún Sí: *Syó Lí*) are common only in the service of the Goddess Váris and are extremely rare in the sects of the warrior deities, Aridzó and Heshuél. Larger shrines and groups of hierophants exist in the towns and cities of the region, and certain more pious rulers and oligarchs also maintain personal "house-priests" in their palaces. Yet even the most elaborate of these establishments would appear primitive and paltry to a traveller from the Five Empires.

One phenomenon common to all of the states of the northeast from Péncha Nagál over through Hrgá Lorúnge is the institution of the forest ascetic (Adómrh: *Gréshù*; Nuru'ún Sí: *Rnó*). These persons dress only in woven moss, practice self-flagellation and fasting, and go upon "quests" to attain mystic communion with archetypal animal and forest spirits. They are famed for their healing, control of natural phenomena, and power over wild beasts. They are also said to be experts in "sword-touching" (the enchantment of steel weapons), but it is difficult to find these individuals and even harder to cozen them into employing their arts since they are not interested in personal gain and care little for the sophisticated sorcery of the southern lands. They eschew all human society and dwell alone (or rarely in small groups of two or three) in the remote fastnesses of the forests.

Every major clanhouse in Jánnu and Kilalámmu has its "house-priest," who is responsible for the daily worship of the clan's chosen deity. These are separate from the keepers of the hilltop fanes (Sec. 1.610). The latter are staffed by anywhere from 5 to 20 permanent priests and priestesses (Jannuyáni: *Hwán* and Kilalammuyáni *Vàán "Priest"; Shwán* and *Zhavàán* "Priestess"). There is no formal hierarchy, although age and seniority do play important roles. It is said that certain of these clergy possess great sorcerous knowledge and have access to copies of Engsvanyáli texts now lost in the Five Empires. The gods of these two states are derived from Pavár's pantheon, but their servitors are not friendly with their counterparts in the Five Empires. Nor is there any contact with the decadent hierophants of Mihállu to the east. As long as they are left alone, the priesthoods of Jánnu and Kilalámmu do not bother caravans and travellers, but any attempt to visit their remote and inaccessible temples may result in an attack from the priests and also from those clans living nearby.

Most shamans in Rannálu are women. Men who adopt this occupation are usually the weak, the crippled, the eccentric, the visionary, and the insane — i.e. those unsuited to hunting or warfare. The situation is similar amongst the Lorún of northern Yán Kór. As in the states of the northeast, these mages specialise in animal control, healing, and power over natural phenomena. Each shaman selects (or is selected by?) an animal archetype, and it is from this spiritual source that he or she learns the craft. There are no ranks or titles, and a young person may opt to become a shaman after having experienced dreams or supernatural visitations. He or she then seeks out a senior shaman of the tribe with whom to study. Scholars of the Five Empires theorise that these powerful animal spirits are really only Aspects of their own deities simplified to appeal to these tribal cultures, and that the sometimes astonishing effects which these shamans can achieve are due to the unrecognised use of other-planar power.

Both males and females can become shamans in Nmartúsha, M'mórcha, and in the Desert of Sighs in Milumanayá. Their powers and abilities are otherwise similar to those just described for Rannálu and the Lorún. One major difference lies in the sources of shamanistic power: the Rannálan and Lorún mages believe only in the existence of animal archetypes, while their counterparts in M'mórcha and Nmartúsha hold that aside from animal spirits, there are others who dwell in hills, rocks, caves, and other natural features. Again, these tribal magicians possess some spells and techniques which cannot be duplicated in the Five Empires: e.g. the "Echoing Cavern" spell of the Qúó tribe of M'mórcha. This psychic enchantment can be sent upon a target from a distance of a kilometre or more. The victim believes that he is lost in an echoing pitch-dark cave. He cannot see or hear his friends or his surroundings, and he stumbles, falls, cries out, and then claps his hands to his ears to keep out the lonely reverberations of his own voice. He cannot eat or drink, even if this is forced upon him, and after a time he either starves to death or imagines that he has fallen to his death in some subterranean shaft, even though his physical body lies in his own bed amongst his kinsmen and comrades. It is said that only another M'mórchan shaman can dispel this terrible curse.

Of the nonhuman races, only the Urunén and the Shén possess anything which humans would recognise as being comparable to their temples, priesthoods, and rituals. Every Urunén town and city has a central square in which stand shrines to each of the three principal deities (Sec. 1.610). These temples are staffed by professional priests and priestesses (Urunén: *Allába*), who choose one of their number to serve as High Priest (Urunén: *Allábe Nyé*). There are no further ranks or titles. Temples are painted with murals,



Urunén Officer

and floors are done in brilliant mosaics. There are no internal images or furniture, however, and the rituals involve only recitations of litanies before a single square-cut stone altar block in the geometrical centre of the temple's inner chamber. The use of other-planar power is taught in the Urunén secular schools, and sorcery plays almost no part in their religion.

Every Shén settlement contains two temples: one to the One of Eggs, and the other to the One Who Rends (Sec. 1.610). These edifices are maintained by the communal council, the *Hŕg-Ssá* (Sec. 1.810), and there are no priests. Any Shén who wishes may enter, clap two flat wooden blocks together before an altar fire, and state his (or its) supplication to the deity. No offerings are made to these two gods, but the Shén say that their minor deities, demons, and other figures of their pantheon are more greedy: for example, sailors propitiate Hú-Shrá, the Lord of Winds, with a bit of *Chŕ* melon cake and an oblation of water before setting sail. A small altar to the One Who Rends or the One of Eggs is to be found in every Shén household as well. Females may also lay offerings of meat or fruits before abstract wooden or pottery images of their localised house-gods. Neither live sacrifices nor sorcery plays much part in the Shén religion. Although these powerful reptiles may tear a foe apart with teeth, claws, and knobbed tail, they lack the patience and the sense of organised ritual needed for ceremonial sacrifices. They are too clumsy to be very good sorcerers (except for occasional rare exceptions), and they thus do not present the displays and fetes of illusions and "miracles" which are used to awe worshippers in the Five Empires.

Within their own enclaves the Pé Choí have neither priests nor temples. There is little interest in theological speculation, although this species does produce excellent logicians, philosophers, and sorcerers. Adherence to their two deities (the Black Old One and the Father of Nests; cf. Sec. 1.610) is governed more by family and village tradition than by any religious conviction. Only in Pé Choí settlements in human cities does one find real temples to their dualistic gods. A shrine consists of a single oblong hall in which stands a stylised stone image of a male Pé Choi. If the temple is devoted to the Black Old One, the image holds a writhing serpent, a lightning bolt of iron, a purple circle with a diagonal scarlet slash (borrowed from the icons of Hrú'ű), and a black mace or sword of obsidian in its four hands. If the shrine is dedicated to the Father of Nests, the idol grasps a golden sphere, a stylised green branch, the double circle of Hnálla, and a crystal chalice. There are no rituals. Worshippers enter, squat down before the image, and silently meditate or commune with themselves. When they are finished, they rise and glide away again with not a word to anyone.

The temples of the Páchi Léi consist of small chambers hollowed out high up in the boles of the tallest trees in the Pán Chákan forests. These are the "exalted shrines." Each is just large enough to admit one individual at a time, and there are no altars or furnishings. A shrine to N'fg is distinguished by vertical fluting carved into its walls, while a temple to Á'lsh is graven all over with a delicate herringbone pattern. There are no priests or rituals, and each individual comes as he (really "it") wishes to lay flowers, fruit, boughs, and small glittering objects against the walls of the chamber. When these objects begin to take up too much space, a Páchi Léi may simply sweep the place out, scattering all previous offerings down into the leaves and detritus at the foot of the tree. These "sacrifices" may include gold coins, gems, and even precious fire opals, and the space around the base of a temple-tree may be littered with a veritable fortune. The Páchi Léi do not pick up these items, saying that "their value in this world has been rendered null by the god." Unfortunately, they also forbid humans from collecting this wealth, and a Páchi Léi who sees humans near a temple-tree may go into the state of *Biyűrh* (Sec. 1.740). Only the most daring thieves thus venture into the forest in search of these hidden shrines.

Aside from the "exalted shrines" just described, every Páchi Léi village utilises some nearby knoll or hillock as a "low temple." Here beautifully carved abstract images of wood are set up, and all adults join in complex dances and gyrations about the base of the hill. Aside from an individual or two who may go into the state of *Biyűrh*, there is no violence, nor are there any rituals or ceremonies. When dawn comes the exhausted dancers retire to their homes to feast upon tubers and the pith of the *Kuátl* tree and thence to sleep in their hammocks of woven vines.

The holy places of the Swamp Folk consist of a single hut built upon stilts like the others of their swampy villages. Each shrine has a single image carved of polished dark wood, but the chamber is otherwise spotlessly bare. This species makes religion a constant and inseparable part of every act of daily life. There are innumerable minor rituals to be performed at every step: short prayers to be said before eating, sleeping, or going out of the house; taboo foods and special dishes to be eaten upon specific occasions; gestures which must be made as one speaks to ward off evil; sequences in which acts must be carried out; etc. etc. Each village appoints a priest (the term actually translates better as "the One Who Reminds Others") to see that all are aware of their duties. This individual also performs more formal rituals: the consecration of ships, the blessing of nets and fishing gear, the "joyous sending forth" of warriors and sailors, and other maritime affairs. Mu'ugalavyáni officials say that these ceremonies are lengthy, tedious, and quite unintelligible.

All Hláka males participate in the mountaintop rituals mentioned in Sec. 1.610. There are no priests or officiants, and the geometrical placement of the ritual stones is accompanied by much chatter, laughter, and badinage. When all of the stones are in position and the astronomical moment has passed, eveyone descends to the eyrie to feast, gossip, and play at acrobatic games in midair. As long as the stones are of the correct size and colour the Hláka care little whether they possess any intrinsic value or not. The story is told of the Tsolyáni traveller who was invited to witness one of these curious rituals. During the ceremony he noted that one of the stone "markers" was in fact a rough diamond as big as a man's head! Afterward he asked his hosts if he could purchase the stone. The Hláka replied that he could have it for nothing, but when one went to get it for him it was found that one of the children had carelessly kicked it over the edge of the precipice. The poor man spent the next month searching the base of the cliff, but neither did he find the gem nor could the Hláka recall from whence they had obtained it.

The temples of the Pygmy Folk lie beneath the Yán Koryáni plains in the lowest levels of their warrens. Humans are barred from witnessing the ceremonies of this species, although Tinaliya and Pe Choi visitors have been admitted. The latter report that the rituals of the Pygmy Folk are hair-raising and bloodthirsty indeed: human captives (or Pygmy Folk criminals) are taunted, tormented, harried, and driven through the tortuous burrows by snarling hordes of females and young until they are cornered in a huge, circular cavern hung all about with strange emblems, banners, and ribands. There they are offered freedom, wealth, and ancient magical devices. This is all cynical deception, however, and the mob eventually falls upon them to rend them limb from limb before the images of the many gods. There are apparently no priests, and young and old alike participate in these horrid rites.

Every subterranean nest-city of the Tinalíya contains a temple to the single deity of this race (Sec. 1.610). This consists of a large, square, empty chamber, the north wall of which is decorated with a huge white circle divided vertically by a black line. There are no rituals, and the High Priest of the community is usually to be found asleep in his temple, or else in the company of secular scholars in the workrooms or libraries of the settlement.

The Ahoggyá posses neither temples nor priests. This species evinces no signs of anything humans would classify as "religious behaviour."

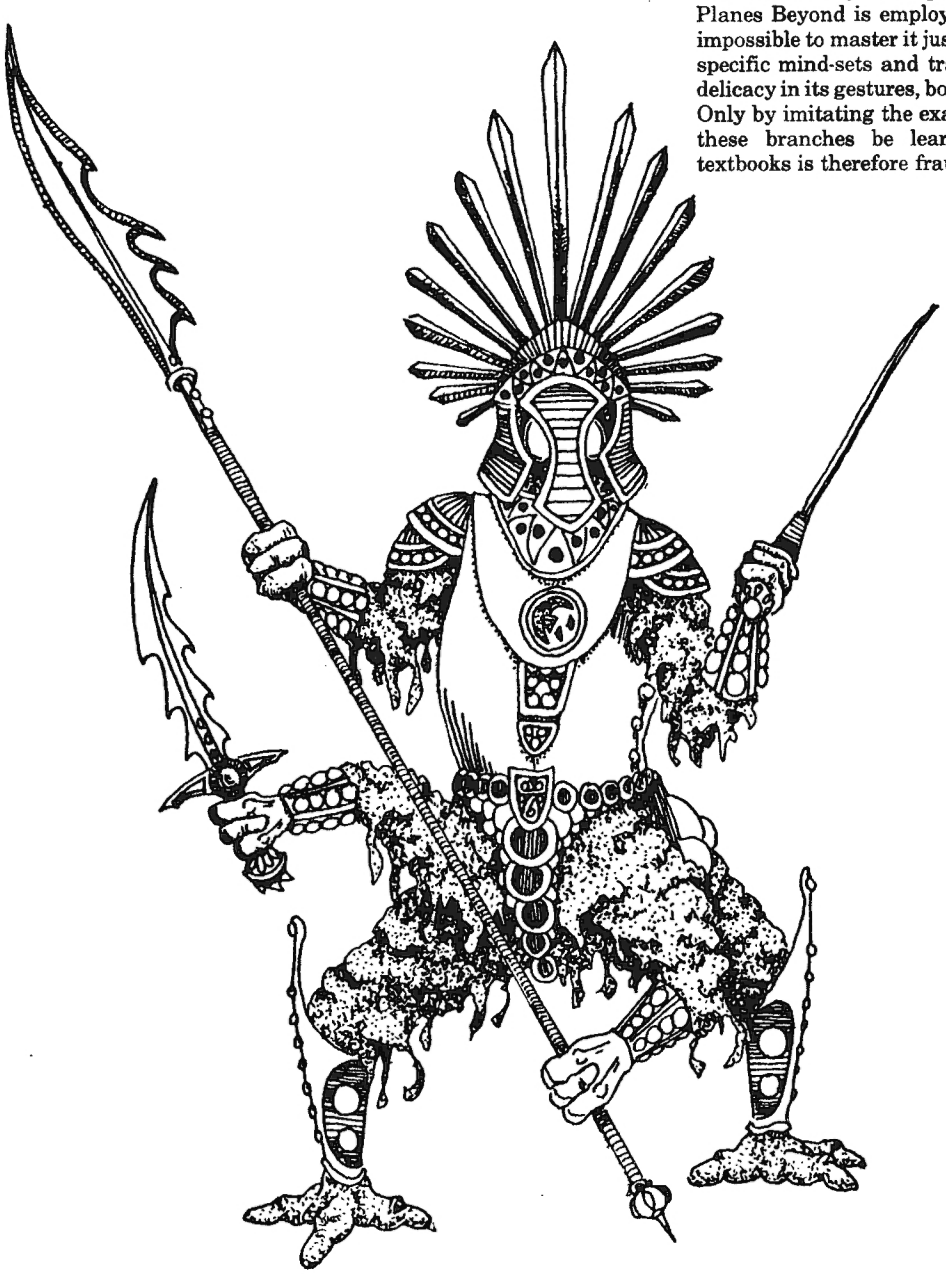
The Hlűss and the Ssű are said to have deities, but temples, icons, and priesthoods appear to be absent. The narrative of Tremúnish Srá (Sec. 1.810) mentions "temples" of the Black Ssű — great chambers filled with images, treasures, and incomprehensible ritual implements — but these may have been treasuries or storage rooms rather than religious edifices. The nest-ships of the Hlűss contain similar repositories, always placed next to the chamber in which the Hlűss-Mother resides, but these clearly have no religious significance. Some of the asexual "leaders" of the Hlutrgű function as priests. The details are unascertainable, but Tsolyáni scouts have reported seeing rituals far out in the swamps of Káija led by capering figures attired in complex masks of gold, bone, and greenish *Chém* wood. Two or three of these individuals accompany every raid upon human settlements, and one of these demonic masks may be seen in the Carnelian Conservatory of the Governor of Jakálla. The practices of the Shunned Ones have never been discovered — at least, no

adventurers have ever returned to tell of them. The ancient Mihálli built monumental shrines to some deity or power, as is attested by the ruins of their cities in present-day Mihállu, but these are still so shrouded in magical power that it is dangerous to explore them. If the modern members of this species erect temples, they are not upon this plane. As for the Nyaggá, sailors say that there are vast unroofed halls below the waters of Lake Parunál in which the dim and monstrous forms of many of this race congregate, but whether these be temples, palaces, or edifices of other purposes is not known.

As was stated in Sec. 1.610, nonhumans resident in the lands of mankind often join the local priesthoods. Those races which have no organised religions or hierarchies of their own may thus participate in the sects of the Five Empires while they are abroad, but they almost always revert to their own cultural patterns when they return to their own enclaves. The Pé Choi, Páchi Léi, and the Swamp Folk are especially susceptible to human influence, while the Shén and the Pygmy Folk are less so. The Tinalíya join human sects for purely scholarly and pragmatic reasons (and are hence not looked upon with favour by the clergy of the Shadow Gods), while the Hlá́ka show little concern for human faiths and practices. The Ahoggyá display the least interest of all. A few of this species serve as priestly bodyguards, and rare instances of Ahoggyá Lay-Priests can be cited — invariably those who wish to study one of the technical sciences — but their religiosity is dubious at best. Those individuals who are "psychic dampeners" (Sec. 1.620) are not permitted within the temple precincts at all. Since contact with the Urunén is so recent it is impossible to assess their reactions, but preliminary information suggests that they are as adaptable as the Pé Chói, although they cannot comprehend the importance which humans give to formal religious rites and organisations.

Generally speaking, Priests and Lay-Priests may acquire sorcerous training only through their own temples. A mage who travels to a place where his sect is unrepresented can only rarely persuade the local clergy to teach him new spells. Of course, if he lives there long enough to gain acceptance and is initiated into the indigenous hierarchy, he may be able to continue his studies. He may also seek out "bazaar magicians," itinerant scholars, or ascetics, but, as said in Sec. 1.620, a sizeable percentage of such persons will be found to be fraudulent, while others may be imperfectly versed in their arts and hence dangerous.

Another source for magical knowledge is the great number of ancient texts and manuals of previous eras still to be found on Tékumel. Some of these are sorcerously imbued with other-planar power and thus contain spells usable by anyone who can read them. Others are only descriptive or didactic. Unless energy from the Planes Beyond is employed in the writing of an incantation, it is impossible to master it just through reading. Psychic magic requires specific mind-sets and training, and ritual sorcery demands great delicacy in its gestures, bodily attitudes, and the uttering of vocables. Only by imitating the example of a living tutor, thus, can either of these branches be learned. "Cookbook sorcery" available in textbooks is therefore fraught with peril.



Black Ssú

1.840. PROFESSIONAL AND CLAN ORGANIZATIONS

As an individual becomes more and more proficient in his craft or profession, he is granted titles which reflect his status by his clan and by a consensus of others in his occupation. These appellations range from "apprentice" to "senior master-craftsman." The orderly cultures of the Five Empires even have a term for one who possesses only a smattering of the skill, equivalent to "hobbyist" or "dilettante." These rankings and their names in the languages of the Five Empires are as follows:

ENGLISH TITLE	EQUIVALENTS IN THE LANGUAGES OF THE FIVE EMPIRES*
Hobbyist	T: Yarsúr**; M: Ersárish; S: Úrs; Y: Írzh; L: Arsáz
Apprentice	T: Tiyótl; M: Theyólish; S: Chét; Y: Tlãe; L: Tayaláz
Journeyman	T: Msínu; M: Msánish; S: Máshn; Y: Vrékn; L: Masanáz
Craftsman	T: Gámra; M: Ghmárish; S: Omáshn; Y: Aghvrékn; L: Mamsanáz
Master-Craftsman	T: Huáthu; M: Wothúish; S: Menmáshn; Y: Uvrékn; L: Athúaz***
High Master-Craftsman	T: Huáthudàlj; M: Wothúdlé'èsh; S: Menmáshn Jáhl; Y: Uthú; L: Diyathuáz
Senior Master-Craftsman	T: Huáthudálisa; M: Wothúzash; S: Menmáshn Jajáhl; Y: Aghuthú; L: Siyathúaz

* For the abbreviations, see Sec. 1.832.

** The first three Tsolyáni terms are considered "ignoble" and thus grammatically end in *-ikh/-kh*; the last three are "noble" nouns and take the suffix *-koi* in appropriate contexts. For Mu'ugalavyáni and Livyáni endings see Sec. 1.832.

*** The three highest Livyáni titles given in the table denote both professional competence and also rank in the craft-contingents of the priesthoods of the Shadow Gods. A *Siyathúaz*, for example, has about the same prestige as a *Nejéz* "Temple Commandant"; cf. Sec. 1.832. The ministry which governs a clan is determined by the latter's occupation: e.g., a mercantile clan has its superiors in the Ministry of Trade, a farming clan in the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, etc. See Sec. 1.810.

Clan organisations are comparatively simple. In Tsolyánu, Mu'ugalavyá, and Yán Kór one is born a Clan-Brother or Clan-Sister, and only a few ever progress beyond this status. An ambitious person with the requisite seniority, charisma, professional competence, and reputation for leadership may be chosen as a Clan-Elder by his clanhouse. In some clans religion is a factor in obtaining such a post: a clan devoted to one deity or to a group of related deities will only rarely select a person who follows some other faith. Sex is also important: in the south it is uncommon to find even senior *Aridáni* women being elected Clan-Elders, while in the north the reverse is true.

Traditions vary from clan to clan, but most clanhouse councils are composed of from 5 to 20 Clan-Elders, depending upon the size of the group. This body meets about once a week on the average, and its duties include the formulation of policies, the settlement of minor disputes, allocations of funds to various projects and needs, etc. The council selects one of its number to serve as head of the clanhouse. Clan-Elders and Clan-Heads serve for five years in Tsolyánu, Mu'ugalavyá, and Milumanayá, and for four years in Yán Kór, Pijéna, and Saá Allaqí. A Clan-Head represents his clanhouse at the infrequent regional and national meetings of the clan, but aside from a permanent representative appointed to act as liaison with the central government, there is no broader national organisation, nor is there a single leader for the entire clan. Each clanhouse is thus semi-autonomous.

Clan-Elders and Clan-Heads are chosen for life in Livyánu. These functionaries are also invariably priests of the Shadow God worshipped by their clan. Piety and devotion to the temple thus outweigh seniority, professional competence, and other factors in this theocratic land.

Status within the clans of Salarvyá and Pechánо depends more upon heredity than anything else. Clan-Elders and Clan-Heads are usually those who belong to the ruling lineage within a clan. There are no elections, and these posts are held for life. They are then passed on to one's children (cf. Sec. 1.510). In the aristocractic lineages a post in the clan hierarchy often accompanies — and is subordinate to — a noble title: e.g. "High Lord and Elder of the Clan of..." A "Clan-Elder" may thus be a newborn babe!

Clan titles are as follows:

ENGLISH TITLE	EQUIVALENTS IN THE LANGUAGES OF THE FIVE EMPIRES*
[Clanless person	T: Nakomé**; M: Nakhómish; S: Hágh; Y: Khám; L: Kamáz]
Clan-Brother	T: Nurtsáhlu***; M: Narzúish; S: Dréng; Y: Nráchu; L: Nerzáz
Clan-Elder	T: Nurtsáhludàli; M: Vanrédhish; S: Odréng; Y: Anggrachu; L: Tenerzáz
Clan-Head	T: Dlántü; M: Dlathúish; S: Mendréng; Y: Unráchu; L: Tetnerzáz

* For the abbreviations, see Sec. 1.832.

** This Tsolyáni noun is "too ignoble" to take even *-ikh/-kh*; it is employed without a grammatical ending. Mu'ugalavyáni and Livyáni endings were discussed in Sec. 1.832.

*** The remaining three Tsolyáni terms are all "noble" and hence take *-koi*. It may be noted that the word for "Clan-Sister" is irregular in that the final *-u* of the stem is omitted: *Nurtsáhlrakh*.

Professional and clan titles are found in certain of the smaller states. The former are often given only on the basis of one's reputation amongst one's peers, and there is no formal hierarchy. They may be a difference between "apprentice" and "craftsman," while any higher appellations are lacking (e.g. in Ghatón and the states of the far northeast). In Jánnu and Kilalámmu professional competence is tied to posts of authority within the clan: e.g. only a Master-Craftsman may be a Clan-Elder, and only a Senior Master-Craftsman may head a clanhouse. Mihállu follows the Engsvanyáli model. The titles employed there are structured much like those of Tsolyánu, although the terms themselves are different. Clans are either weak or non-existent in the remaining regions. Various means of recognising professional competence are found, of course.

Of the nonhuman races, the Urunén alone possess a clearly defined hierarchy of skill levels. There are 15 degrees of these, and a practitioner must demonstrate his abilities publicly before his peers before being allowed to progress to the next higher level.



Páchi Léi

1.900. Customs, Entertainments, Costumes and Weapons

The following Sections will touch upon a number of features which are culturally prominent in the societies of the continent.

1.910. ETIQUETTE

The folk of the Five Empires tend to be formal, circumspect, and somewhat overly florid in their dealings with one another. Differences in social class (Sec. 1.720) are extremely important, and there is no concept of equality. Status is indicated by a person's speech, costume, mannerisms, and a thousand more subtle clues. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine a "non-descript" individual, and the languages of the Five Empires lack a term for this.

Relationships between the classes are rigidly structured. A peasant who is too familiar with a townsman or a noble will be rebuffed as "impertinent." Conversely, an upper class individual who behaves in too comradely a way towards a subordinate will probably make the latter suspicious, rather than endear himself to him. Not only would such an overly-amiable aristocrat become the target for ridicule by his own peers, he would leave himself open and vulnerable to exploitation, flattery, and self-serving social climbing on the part of the lower-class person so favoured.

Amongst equals there are also class-related standards of behaviour. Tribal people, slaves, peasants, and lower-class townsmen are relatively informal with one another; the middle classes employ more courtesy and circumspection; and the upper strata delight in a code of etiquette as elaborate as any ever devised. In Tsolyáni, for example, there are 6 different terms for the pronoun "I", depending upon one's perceived status in a given social situation. There are 34 words for "you", similarly, which are employed according to the status and relationship of the speaker to the addressee. (Cf. "The Tsolyáni Language", *op. cit.*, pp. 15-18).

Nothing will demonstrate the Tsolyáni love for visual displays of social intangibles as well as a description of the *Méshqu* plaques. These small squares of painted *Chlén*-hide (about 125-150mm on a side) are hung upon a hook outside their owner's door. Different colours and designs indicate the person's moods and willingness to receive visitors, and guests are expected to respond accordingly. For example, a yellow *Méshqu* ("the Plaque of Grievous Mourning") signifies a death in the house or of someone dear to the owner; a white plaque ("the Badge of Prayerful Indisposition") indicates that the owner or others in the house are sick; "the Plaque of Haughty Indignation" is red in colour and shows that the owner is in a generally grumpy or angry mood; "the Badge of Immediate Availability", a leafy green, denotes a willingness to receive guests or customers; a moss-green square with two neat rows of four white ovals each ("the Signifer of Inaccessability") means that the owner is out or in no mood to have visitors.

Middle-class people use no more than a dozen or two *Méshqu* plagues, but more sophisticated persons employ a greater variety indicating complex nuances of mood and feeling. For instance, a green plaque with horizontal red stripes ("the Badge of Solemn Contemplation") signifies that the owner is in a relaxed mood and would appreciate visitors who have come for a leisurely chat; "the Plaque of the Fist of Stern Retribution", a chequered pattern of red and black, shows that its owner is violently angry about something specific and guests should think twice before entering; "the Badge of Interminable Repose," which is brown with grey diagonal stripes from upper left to lower right, denotes an owner who is asleep and unwilling to be disturbed for trifles; "the Plaque of Serene Alimentation" (the Tsolyani word is *Palkék* "to eat with dignity and honour") is red with gold-dotted vertical green stripes, indicating that the owner is dining alone or with intimates; the deep purplish-blue "Plaque of Indefinable Sorrow" shows a mood of strange and ambiguous melancholy, while "the Plaque of Understandable Depressions", a series of red and blue vertical stripes, displays grief or regret over some specific event; "the Plaque of Joyous Conviviality", green with gold rings arranged in rows connected with vertical and horizontal gold lines, signifies a feast and invites all of equal or greater status to enter and participate; "the Badge of Instant Bravery", a chequered pattern of gold and white, reveals a mood of derring-do and a desire to go forth to perform some noble deed or adventure; "the Indicant of Ebullient Delight", light blue with a central green circle, warns visitors that the owner is erotically engaged and is available only to those who have previously received permission; "the Insignia of Cheerful Caprice", beige with three horizontal white stripes, signifies a fey mood of whimsy, jollity, and good humour; "the Symbol of Inspired Creation", white with two concentric blue circles, shows an owner who is busy with some artistic or literary project and cannot be interrupted — etc. All told, there are about 180 *Méshqu*. An ordinary set costs about 10 *Kaítars* in the marketplace, while more elegant confections of glass, enamel, gold, and precious stones may be purchased for anywhere from 100 to 5,000 *Kaítars*. Of the Five Empires, only Tsolyánu and Mu'ugalavyá employ *Méshqu* plaques; other nations are not familiar with this custom.

Greetings in Tsolyánu, Mu'ugalavyá, and Yán Kór consist of placing the right hand before one's mouth, palm inward and fingers pointing up — rather as if one were kissing one's palm — and bowing slightly. Slaves and lower-class persons genuflect deeply before their betters. One kneels to a very high superior, and in the case of an Imperial heir or the Petal Throne itself one falls flat upon one's face. In Livyánu one keeps one's hands at one's sides and bows from the waist, while in Salarvyá a man raises his right arm palm outward, and a woman clasps her hands before her breasts and nods her head. Throughout the Five Empires physical contact with someone who is not an intimate is an insult, unless prior permission has been obtained or there is a clear emergency.

Tsolyáni and Yán Koryáni soldiers salute by striking the left breast with the clenched right fist. Mu'ugalavyáni and Livyáni troopers bow, and the Salarvyáni employ the same raised-arm greeting used by civilians. In all of these countries an officer may return the salute with a wave of his hand — or not at all.

Many temples have special greeting gestures for fellow devotees: e.g. priests of Vimúhla lay the first three fingers of the left hand across the right forearm, signifying the Flame; followers of Sárku trace an undulating worm in the air with the right forefinger; Hnálla's clergy make a figure 8 similarly, etc.

Applause is indicated by finger-snapping. Clapping the hands is unknown, except to summon a slave. Cheering and a sort of ululating wordless yell are used to urge on one's champions in the *Hirilákte* Arenas. Approval is shown by a palm-up gesture with the right hand, while disapproval is signified by moving the left hand back and forth palm down at breast-high level. One calls a slave, servant, or lower-class person by holding out either hand palm down and wiggling all of the fingers together toward oneself. A deadly insult which implies that the other person is clanless (Sec. 1.550) — never used lightly or in jest — is signalled by making a circle of one's left thumb and forefinger and looking through it at the other person. An insultingly obscene gesture is made by raising the index finger and the little finger simultaneously toward the other person, keeping the middle and ring fingers bent down into the palm. Two lovers, however, may make this gesture to one another and touch the tips of the extended fingers together; this denotes affection and mutual sexual desire. Examples could be multiplied.

The Livyáni have what is probably the most complex social code of any of the nations of the continent. A person always refers to himself as humble and of no account, whatever his real rank, while elaborate compliments and fulsome, flowery praise are heaped upon the one addressed. In social situations the Livyáni are famed for their gift-giving: guests at a feast must present their host with items commensurate with their status, for example, and the latter reciprocates accordingly.

Care must be exercised in all social dealings in the Five Empires. To imply — even as a joke — that a comrade is ignoble, dishonest, foolish, weak, or otherwise less than magnificent may result in an immediate demand for *Shámtla* (Sec. 1.740) or a challenge to a duel. Jests about a person's clan, religion, nationality, or sexual proclivities will bring about similarly dire consequences. Only among intimates is any ribaldry permitted, and this status usually requires a prior formal declaration of friendship. In Tsolyánu, for example, it is customary for two men to say, "Now we are friends," before "intimate" status is achieved. Males do not enter into this camaraderie with women, however; although both sexes may joke with children, juniors, and subordinates, a man never teases or ridicules an adult woman of his own status, even if she be his wife or

lover — and vice-versa. Joking with an intimate must be limited to those occasions when no outsider can hear, moreover; otherwise the victim will lose face. Many a friendship has been ruined by a thoughtless jibe or sarcastic comment.

In Tsolyánu impromptu humour is limited to the peoples of the periphery: the natives of the island of Vrá, for example, are famous for their jokes and clever wit, the folk of the Chákas for their dry sarcasm, and the inhabitants of the Kúrt Hills for their crude sexual jests. Such customs offend the fastidious citizens of the Five Empires, but allowances are made for the gaucherie of the "less-civilised." Nevertheless, these ethnic sub-groups must learn to obey the code of etiquette if they wish to be accepted in "high society."

The client states of the Five Empires (Pijéna, Saá Allaqí, Pechánо, western Chayákku, and the area in and around Sunráya in Milumanayá) follow patterns similar to those just described. Mihállu and the Nyémesel Isles are also very formal. Indeed the latter are renowned for their complex gestures of greeting, their signs drawn in the air whenever the name of the Goddess Mrettén is mentioned, and their great inventory of social traditions and tabooes.

The remaining regions are not so punctilious. The islanders of Tsolél greet one another with a casual wave of the hand; a N'lüss clasps the right forearm of a comrade with his own right hand (a custom distasteful to the folk of the Five Empires); a Háida Pakaláni holds out both hands palms up to show that he conceals no weapons; in the states of the far northeast a man greets another by raising his right hand palm outward to ear level and crying, "Okhú!"; a woman of the northeast only touches her lips with the fingers of her right hand; the Lorún and the nomads of the Desert of Sighs do no more than incline the head slightly; the tribesman of M'mórcha and Nmartúsha clap their hands before their faces when they meet; a Ghatóni slaps his chest with his open right hand; the clans of Jánnu and Kilalámmu trace a circle in the air with the right forefinger; and the aborigines of Rannálu simply lean upon their spears and begin the conversation without greeting or preamble.

In most of these cultures there are fewer honorifics and flowery compliments, less resort to hyperbole and circumspection, and more freedom to engage in jests and by-play than in the Five Empires, but one must still learn the limits. In Ghatón, for instance, it is legal to slay a person who asks after the health of one's wife or daughters; in the far northeast one does not speak to a woman until her menfolk have indicated that they do not object; in Jannu one must hint and employ fanciful euphemisms to indicate a call of nature, whereas the more "delicate" Tsolyáni are quire frank about such human necessities; in M'mórcha it is rude to recognise the presence of a man's sister, but he may offer a wife or daughter to a traveller for the night. Amongst the male-oriented N'lüss, the warrior lineages of the far northeast, and the folk of Háida Pakála men speak only of male-related tasks and concerns: warfare, arms and armour, hunting, fishing, etc. In Tsolél and the matriarchal areas of Yán Kór and the north one finds children everywhere, and men feel no shame in discussing household matters and "woman's work." The permutations and complexities of these societies are well-nigh infinite, and one must reside in a culture and observe it carefully for some time before entering into any deep social relationship.

No human has ever mastered the finer points of nonhuman etiquette. The graceful four-handed gestures of the Pé Chói; the barely restrained aggression of the Shen; the embarrassingly blunt curiosity of the Tinalíya; the smooth and crafty pleasantries of the Pygmy Folk which conceal their avarice as a film of oil covers water; the windmill gesticulations and hooting rudenesses of the Ahoggyá — all are beyond man's ability to imitate to any significant extent. It is possible, of course, to master some of the more obvious mannerisms: the swift touching of nose, lips, and breast which comprises a Pé Chói greeting; the ceremonial fur-stroking which denotes respect amongst the Pygmy Folk; the gasping belch with which polite Swamp Folk begin a conversation; the raised, clenched fists which symbolise not anger but friendship to the Páchi Léi; the waving of the arms above the head which signifies pleasure and agreement to the Tinalíya; the vertical slashing gesture which means "yes" and the horizontal wave which stands for "no" to the Shén, etc.

Men can and do live for extended periods in nonhuman societies, and vice-versa, but some tinge of alienness always remains, no matter how deep the superficial friendship. Both parties may think that they understand one another. Yet it only requires the emergence of some new and unfamiliar situation or a little probing into the emotions which lie below the surface to demonstrate that neither side can ever really empathise with the other. To take only one example, no human can comprehend the Pé Chói concept of *Ntk-dqékt*, an emotion (senitment, yearning, philosophical stance — none of man's languages contains an exact counterpart) felt by every Pé Chói from birth to death. *Ntk-dqékt* contains elements of loneliness, solitude, pain, endurance, patience, oneness and yet separation, desire, and many, many other nuances which no human has ever experienced. The core of *Ntk-dqékt* is a deep and restless melancholy, a yearning for something which cannot even be named and can never be attained — perhaps racial oneness, perhaps a return to the days of greatness which are still remembered poignantly within the Pé Chói soul. In some ways *Ntk-dqékt* approaches the old German ideas of *Angst* or *Weltschmerz*, but these, too, fail to embrace the totality of the Pé Chói term.

1.920. EATING, DRINKING AND FEASTING

Dining customs in the Five Empires differ considerably from place to place and also from class to class. Slaves are given only bread and water (or *Dná* porridge and *Chumétl*; cf. Sec. 1.415) in the morning and a more extensive supper at night, while the upper classes may partake of as many as six small repasts during the course of the day, each with its own traditional dishes. Dinner, served just after sunset, is the most important meal in Tsolyánu and Mu'ugalavyá. The Livyáni prefer a large lunch and eat only a little at night — except for formal feasts. The Yán Koryáni enjoy an early breakfast and an extensive supper in the late afternoon. The Salarvyáni space their four meals out at equal intervals throughout the day, the last being served some two to three hours after the sun has gone down.

Clanhouses, temples, and army barracks all contain messhalls in which members of the group eat in common. The Tsolyáni, Mu'ugalavyáni, and Salarvyáni sit crosslegged upon mats and eat from individual plates. Serving dishes are either set in the midst of the group upon low tables, or they may be offered to each person in order of seniority and rank by slaves, servants, or the older children of a clan. In Livyánu everyone, men and women alike, eats separately, a little table being set in front of each diner. This contains not only covered dishes of food but also small bowls of condiments, a jug of water, *Chumétl*, or other beverage, etc. The Livyáni never pass anything from one table to another, and there is no conversation until the meal is over. Silent servants move between the tables offering second helpings and clearing away the dishes. The Yán Koryáni, Pijenáni, and Saá Allaqiyáni sit upon low stools around a central table big enough to accommodate 8 to 10 persons.

Very large dining tables are encountered only amongst the N'lüss and the Ghatóni. All of the males of a N'lüss war-band dine together, and the cheif is distinguished only by better quality utensils and a white cloth upon which his repast is set out. The women and children act as servants in a N'lüss household, while in Ghatón the junior clansmen perform this duty, and the womenfolk are fed like animals from a common trough in the rear rooms of the clanhouse. In Jánnu, Kilalámmu, and states of the northeast the warriors dine together in a central communal hall seated upon cushions; priests eat apart in another chamber; children, commoners, and minor retainers are fed from great cauldrons outside; and women and girls of high station kneel daintily before small individual tables in an inner apartment where they are waited upon by female servants.

The islanders of Tsolél are informal: there are no distinctions of rank, age, or sex; eating times are not fixed; and one who is hungry dips up a bowl of food from the bubbling pots in the central cooking area and squats down wherever he or she pleases. Matters are different in Háida Pakála and the Nyémesel Isles. In the former the master of the house dines alone, seated high upon a square stone platform surrounded by his bodyguards and food-tasters, while his family and entourage (including any guests, no matter what their status) sit crosslegged in rows beneath. In the latter the Ecclesiarchs, Initiates, and Acolytes of Mrettén sit in three tiers and are ceremoniously served by commoners. Every meal in the Nyémesel Isles is thus something akin to a religious rite, and foreigners are not invited to participate. Each Ecclesiarch has his personal eating-chair, the arm of which curves around to form an individual table. The lower ranks do not use chairs but instead squat or recline upon

mats to eat from common platters. The masters of old Mihállu follow what they think to be the Engsvanyáli tradition, reclining upon couches with their wives, concubines, and children. In M'mórcha and Nmartúsha each family unit dines around the cooking fires in its own hut. The Lorún eat communally, but the matriarchs are fed first and others are allowed to pitch in later without regard to status. The nomads of the Desert of Sighs obey a policy of "first come, first served," and this is applied to all alike without exception. The women of the tribes of Rannálu are fed first. Men do the serving — and even the chewing for those ladies too elderly and toothless to manage for themselves.

The Pé Chói, Páchi Léi, and the Swamp Folk eat informally in small family units. Male Shén dine together in an "outer" apartment of the egg-group's residence; females eat apart in an "inner" chamber; and the third sex, the "egg-fertiliser," may participate in either group. Shén children take their meals with the males until they reach adulthood, whereupon females join the others of their sex within. The Hláka have communal cooks and kitchens near the front of the eyrie, but each family customarily takes its food back to its assigned living area to eat. The Pygmy Folk and the Tinalíya both eat in large public halls. The former congregate in extended family groups with squaling young, quarreling adolescents, and querulous elders all competing for the food at once — and occasionally fighting with other families nearby over some disputed morsel. The Tinalíya, on the other hand, squat in orderly rows to receive a metal tray of food from workers especially bred for the task; there is no conversation, and when an individual has finished he simply rises and departs. The Urunén are unique in that they eat standing up, taking their food from a serving table in the household dining area and strolling about in groups of two or three while consuming it. This, they say, aids the digestion. Nothing much is known of the customs of the Mihálli and the inimical races, although it is thought that the latter are all communal in pattern.

The human nations of the continent are unanimous in using only the right hand to touch food. The left is reserved for unpleasant and "unclean" functions, such as cleansing oneself after a call of nature, wiping one's nose, swabbing away perspiration, etc. One may employ the left hand to hold a drinking vessel or to aid in tearing bread into smaller pieces, however. The Tsolyáni, Mu'ugalavyáni, and Livyáni all eat with the fingers, using a bit of bread to handle vegetables, grasps morsels of meat, and wipe the plate. One scoops up rice, porridge, and grain-like dishes with the fingers, and it is thought indelicate to allow grease to touch anything beyond the first two finger-joints. Soups and sauces are eaten from bowls with a spoon of pottery, glass, wood, or metal. After the meal fingerbowls and small towels are distributed to the diners, and most people also rinse their mouths with water, spitting this back into the bowl.

The Salarvyáni and the Yán Koryáni make considerable use of eating implements. In the former country the lower classes eat with their fingers, but those of more exalted status prefer a knife and three-tined fork for firm-textured foods, while liquids are drunk from little bowls or else are sopped up with a piece of bread. The Yán Koryáni, Pijenáni, Saá Allaqiyáni (and to some extent the more "sophisticated" folk of Gháton and Chayákku) employ a two-tined fork, a small broadbladed knife, and a metal spoon. Every individual receives a set of these items at puberty from his or her clan-mother, and no one else is allowed to eat with them. A host thus offers cutlery only to foreign guests and to those who may have forgotten their own implements at home.

The N'lüss and most Ghatóni employ both hands to eat, tearing the food into pieces or carving it with a miniature "chopper" which has its own special sheath in the scabbard of the larger belt-dagger. In the far northeast knives, spoons, and small tongs are set forth before each diner. The islanders of Tsolél eat only with the fingers, sipping any liquid dish noisily from bowls made of pottery or seashell. The Nyémesel Isles are unique in that their inhabitants prefer a single-pronged barbed fork (which requires practice to use if one is to avoid injury), a large spoon of shell, pottery, or metal for liquids, and a flat spatula-like scoop with which to eat stews and sea-worm "porridge." The customs of Jánnu and Kilalámmu are similar to those of Tsolyanu, but the effete folk of Mihállu lay out some 27 pieces of cutlery beside each plate, and one must know the use of each if one does not wish to commit a social gaffe. The Lorún, the nomads of the Desert of Sighs, and the people of Háida Pakála utilise daggers to cut their meat, but everything is then eaten with the fingers or sipped from small bowls. In Rannálu, however, the men cut the meat into bite-sized portions for the women, but once the latter have eaten the males fall upon the remainder with informal gusto. The tribesman of M'mórcha and Nmartúsha eat with their fingers from platters made of the fronds of the *Yáü* tree, while liquids are served in cups consisting of sewn leaves.

Nonhumans in human lands follow the local traditions as best they can. Only the Urunén and the Pygmy Folk employ eating implements when in their own enclaves. The former have curiously wrought knives, spoons, and skewer-like single-pronged forks, while the latter use a single tool of metal which has two projecting tines to serve as both knife and fork, and a hollow central area which functions as a spoon. All of the other species eat with fingers or claws. Some have restrictions upon when and how various dishes are to be eaten. The Tinalíya, for example, consume all "hard" foods (i.e. meats, breads, and firm-fleshed vegetables) first, saving liquids for last. The Swamp Folk begin each meal with a sticky-sweet paste of *Chló* fruit and follow this with other dishes. The Shén are considered to be "messy eaters," but even they are not to be compared with the Ahoggyá. The latter squat down upon the floor, the ground, a log, or in Ónmu Tlé Hléktis upon low wooden table-like seats and devour their unappetising dinners with delirious frenzy.

Som peoples of the continent observe formal food tabooes. Human flesh is not consumed, of course, and only the nomads of the Desert of Sighs and the tribesmen of M'mórcha, Nmartúsha, and Rannálu eat dogs and cats. Devotees of the war-temples (Karakán, Chegárra, Vimúhla, and Chiténg) eat fish only when necessity demands, while priests of Qón are ordered to avoid onions for obscure doctrinal reasons. Fasting is ordained as a penance for "ignoble" actions by the temples of Hnálla and Thúmis, but worshippers of Belkhánu, Qón, Sárku, and Durritlámish (as well as some of the Livyáni Shadow Gods: e.g. Kirrinéb and Qame'él) consider it to be an excellent means of purifying the body and "clarifying" the Spirit-Soul (Sec. 1.620). Priestesses of Avánthe and Dilinála are forbidden to eat red meat while the moon Kásh is in the sky, and many of the worshippers of these two deities are vegetarians who eschew not only meat but fish and eggs as well. Followers of the Salarvyáni Goddess Shiringgáyi eat no cooked foods on Daunél, the sixth and last day of the week. The ascetics of the states of the northeast (Sec. 1.832) practice both vegetarianism and lengthy fasting, while the clergy of the Nyémesel Isles aver that it is an insult "to the body of Mretten" to deny oneself food. In Mu'ugalavyá the priests of Hrsh abstain from alcoholic beverages. Many more examples could be adduced.

Most of the nonhuman species can subsist upon mankind's foods. Only the Shunned Ones and the Hlutrgú experience any real difficulty, although the Pé Chói, the Ahoggyá, and the Swamp Folk develop dietary deficiencies if kept away from their customary foods for too long. For this reason these species maintain special markets in the foreigners' quarter of every major human city and carry pouches of necessary condiments while travelling. It is said — though it is not known with certainty — that the same is true of the Mihálli. See also Sec. 1.415.

Neither the Shén nor the Ahoggyá can drink alcoholic beverages to any extent (Sec. 1.415). The former become ill after imbibing just a glass or two of weak wine (which they may do in order to be "sociable"). For the latter alcohol acts as a mild poison, causing severe cramps, nausea, and diarrhea. The Hláka and the Pygmy Folk, on the other hand, are great topers. A Hláka can often drink a N'lüss chieftain under the table, while anything weaker than the strongest distilled spirits leaves the Pygmy Folk quite unaffected. Liquor is distasteful to the Swamp Folk. Within their own enclaves the Pé Chói and the Páchi Léi drink nothing more potent than the lightly fermented juices of certain tree-fruits, but once in human society both of these races develop a taste for wines (though brandies and other distilled beverages are too strong for them). Pé Chói wine connoiseurs are much sought after by the aristocracies of the Five Empires because of the great delicacy of their palates. Casks of some thick, brownish alcoholic liquid have been recovered from the nest-ships of the Hlüss, and it is reported that the Ssú also possess some means of making liquor, though the components of this are not known. Anything eaten or drunk by the inimical races will almost

invariably prove poisonous for man, however.

Human travellers in the Shén states should be warned that these reptiles consume the flesh of their own young — those who are too weak to survive the rough fighting between the children of the egg-group. Although this meat is dark and slightly greenish in colour, it is not harmful, and only the fact that it is taken from the body of an intelligent being may make it repugnant. The Shén are also given to sardonic jokes. If they dislike a human guest, they may feed him the flesh of a human slave, carefully disguised with spices and sauces. This is not to be anticipated, however, from a Shén who evinces open friendship. The Hláka custom of eating their own dead "out of respect" was mentioned in Sec. 1.422. The Ahoggyá consume the corpses of their own kind only when threatened by starvation, but they have no compunctions about eating the bodies of other species. They consider human flesh to be a delicacy and cannot understand why anyone would deny them a few steaks or a small roast. Needless to say, these barrel-bodied creatures are barred from the precincts of the Cities of the Dead (Sec. 1.422), and no Ahoggyá is permitted to join the priesthoods of Sárku or Durritlámish. Of the inimical races, only the Hlüss utilise humans directly as food, paralysing them and injecting them with the eggs of their young. The Hlutrgú are known to have eaten human captives alive, but this was done more probably out of motives of inflicting pain than to obtain nourishment.

There are no public restaurants in the Five Empires or any of their client states. Most people would be uncomfortable eating in proximity to others who might be of higher or lower social status. One usually eats in one's clanhouse, temple refectory, army messhall, or at the clanhouse of a friend who is a social equal. If a special meal is wanted, one sends out to a professional food-preparing clan. Members of such a clan cook the meal on their own premises and then bring it and serve it at the customer's residence. If one has to stay in a hostel while on a journey, food is ordered through the hostel-keeper, whose servants cater it in the privacy of the guest's room. Many persons of higher status dislike even this concession to commonality and take their own cooks, small stoves of metal or clay, and special condiments with them when they go upon a trip.

Public eateries are indeed encountered in the states of the far northeast, Háida Pakála, and the Nyémesel Isles. In the first of these regions the establishment is divided into three sections: one for warriors, the second for priests, and the third for all others (including foreigners). There are no private rooms and no sleeping accommodations, these being available only at the mean little hostels of the area. In Háida Pakála food, lodging, and entertainment are all provided under one roof. Such hostels are perilous, however. Even very large parties have sometimes disappeared, and tales are told of beds which open to drop unwary sleepers into viper-filled pits, ceilings with tiny apertures for the firing of poisoned darts, and other inhospitable devices. Upon arriving at a port in Háida Pakála one should engage a wharf-agent to rent an empty house for one's party before ever setting foot on shore. Once these premises have been thoroughly searched for traps and secret entrances, one can begin the arduous task of finding local servants. There is no guarantee that these will not rob or slay their erstwhile employers. At the very least one must expect cheating and pilferage. Nevertheless, it is better to hire locals rather than to try to survive the bazaars of Háida Pakála on one's own. The best method of visiting this dangerous land is to have clan-brothers, friends, or reputable contacts with fellow countrymen who are already established there. The situation in Pelesár and Sunráya in Milumanayá is similar. These cities have hostels, poor and insect-ridden though they may be. Their proprietors are often venal, moreover, and it is not uncommon for them to connive with the authorities to rob travellers and turn them out naked into the desert. There are no restaurants or professional cooking clans. Visitors must either buy food from the market and cook it themselves or else trust their digestions to the greasy and highly-spiced wares of the vendors in the bazaar. The Nyémesel Isles are quite the opposite. Travellers will find inns and hostels which offer both lodging and excellent public dining facilities. Those frequented by the clergy of Mrettén are not open to foreigners, but the priesthood permits commoners to operate establishments suited to every purse. The cleanliness of these places and the honesty of their proprietors are proverbial.

Elsewhere travellers must ask for "guesting" with the local chieftain, clan-head, or tribal elder. This is usually granted for a fee or a gift. Only in M'mórcha and Nmartusha are the tribes too fearful of strangers to allow residence within the village, and one should set up one's tents no closer to a settlement than 300 metres. If dealt with openly and honourably, even these tribes will provide food in return for cloth, tools, and articles of adornment. Money or unset gems mean little in their regions. The "democractic" nomads of the Desert of Sighs expect everyone — slaves and lords alike — to help with the preparation of food and the cleansing of utensils if they wish to eat. It is considered a hostile act to cook one's own food and dine privately. Grave and silent tribesmen, curious women, and big-eyed children may simply enter a stranger's tent and help themselves. These people are not thieves and will do no more than inspect personal property, but food and water are considered to belong to any who desire nourishment and who are willing to work. These practices are the bane of the Yán Koryáni and Tsolyáni military expeditions which are currently jockeying for control of the caravan routes.

Parties travelling through Rannálu should feed any women members first, if they do not wish to anger the inhabitants. This is true of the Lorún, too, though to a lesser extent. In Ghatón, on the other hand, visitors must erect special tents for their womenfolk and keep them completely out of sight of the locals; to do otherwise is to invite stoning and a riot.

Most of the friendly or neutral nonhuman races are relatively hospitable. Hostels in the foreigners' quarters of the Shen cities or in Ónmu Tlé Hléktis are operated by natives of many lands, and one can usually find facilities which will be familiar. Inland, however, the Shen stay with a friendly or neutral egg-group through a system of reciprocal guesting, while the Ahoggyá sleep under open pavilions provided by the village, town, or city for travellers. Both of these species do make an attempt to offer humans food which they can eat, but accommodations are strange and primitive at best. The Tinaliya and the Pygmy Folk have special chambers for guests in the upper levels of their subterranean cities. The Pé Chói, the Páchi Léi, and the Swamp Folk usually offer travellers an empty house at no cost for short periods, but humans are not encouraged to stay long in their enclaves. The Hláka feed human visitors from the communal cooking pots and allow them to sleep on the ground near the front of the eyrie. The Urunén are unique in having public restaurants. These consist of little kiosks surrounded by gardens. Customers buy food from the proprietors and stroll about while consuming it. (As said above, this species eats standing up, and it is considered rude or indicative of illness to sit down while eating.)

Differences in social status also preclude the existence of "taverns" anywhere within the Five Empires or their client states. One does not eat or drink with others of higher or lower levels unless appropriate arrangements are made to display these distinctions. Even prisoners expect to be segregated according to their positions in society, and it is "ignoble" for a captor to ignore this. Should need arise, those of more exalted status will be seated upon a higher eminence — a bed, a pile of cloaks, an impromptu "dais" built of wood or earth, etc. — and if even this is not possible, an area will be marked out on the ground as a "place of honour," and those of lower status will not sit within this. Anyone who does not know the custom will be admonished, and a person who wilfully violates it will be punished by his peers.

Most socialising is thus done in the privacy of one's clanhouse, temple quarters, army barracks, or other suitable premises. The winemakers' clans sell most of their wares "over the counter" in bottles, jugs, or small kegs, and customers take these away to drink in the company of their clansmen and social equals. Should one lack a proper place for a party, however, both the winemakers' clanhouses and the hostels have rooms and suites which can be hired for the occasion. A cheap room can be rented for as little as a *Káitar* per night, a better chamber for 5-10 *Káitars*, and a suite fit for a noble party for between 50 and 100 *Káitars*. Food and entertainment can be arranged through the Clan-Head or hostel-keeper, in addition to potables, and the discretion of these establishments can be counted upon. If the party wishes to gamble, the house usually demands a "cut" of 2 percent of all money wagered.

There are indeed public drinking rooms in many lower-class hostels. The clientele of such places of composed of slaves, servants, criminals, itinerant adventurers, and others who in effect have no status to lose. Persons with any claim to honour at all avoid them. To

do otherwise is not only socially degrading but also risky.

Alcoholic beverages are available as well as food in the ramshackle wooden eateries of the states of the far northeast. The same obtains in Háida Pakála (in whose dark and labyrinthine grogshops one can also purchase drugs, *Zu'úr*, and many other commodities), and in the pleasant inns of the Nyemesel Isles. The proprietors of the little kiosk-restaurants of the Urunén offer bitter-salty black beer and the odd-tasting liqueurs popular amongst their species, but none of the other nonhuman races has anything remotely resembling a "tavern."

The inhabitants of old Mihállu carry the status-consciousness of the Five Empires to extremes. Within each clanhouse the couches of the elders are set high above the rest, with persons of junior rank being seated upon progressively lower tiers. Nobles and aristocrats must eat and drink behind carved wooden screens and emerge only later to socialise because of the difficulty of assessing "peer status." The floors of the halls, apartments, corridors, and even the balconies of the ancient viceregal palace at Ninué are built in steps of variously coloured tiles and marbles so that each individual can know his or her place. Indeed, the highest praise one can offer a nobleman of Mihállu is to say that "he has never strayed from his colour."

Greater social mobility prevails outside of the Engsvanyali-descended culture sphere. The chieftains of the N'lüss, the Ghatóni, the Chayakkuyáni, the clansmen of Jánnu and Kilalámmu, the nondescript residents of Pelesár (but not of Sunráya, which follows the Tsolyáni pattern), the islanders of Tsolél, the tribesmen of M'mórcha and Nmartúsha, the Lorún, most of the nonhuman races — all are willing to socialise across a broader spectrum of society. Slaves are excluded in most cultures, women in some, children in others, and even nonhumans in one or two places (e.g. Chayákku, where members of different species are not encouraged to mix), but freemen of some means (i.e. those who are not servants or minor retainers) can expect to be invited to share in the conviviality. This dismays visitors from the Five Empires and gives rise to awkward situations, as when, for example, the soldiers of a Mu'ugalavyáni lord's entourage are given places beside him in the citadel of a N'lüss warband.

In Tsolyánu and Mu'ugalavyá the feasts of the high clans and noble houses are open to all who wish to attend. Marriages, births, funerals, religious holidays, etc. are all occasions for entertainments and revels, and it is considered "noble" to feed not only one's clan-brothers, friends, and peers but hordes of the common folk as well. The latter are accomodated outside the palace or clanhouse in an open courtyard, where huge roasts of *Tsi'íl* (Sec. 1.415), cauldrons of stews and savories, heaps of bread loaves, baskets of fruit, and casks of beer are served to all. Only those of a status equal to or higher than the host are permitted by the doorkeepers to enter the feasting hall itself. Here one finds the tiers of ascending daises demanded by the etiquette of old Éngsvan hla Gánga. Every large clanhouse has such a formal "dining room," some of them seating several hundred guests. Chamberlains seat everyone according to his or her rank on the appropriate dais, and serfs carry dishes of the proper variety and quality to each level. The topmost dais is always empty except for a representation of the Seal of the Imperium (the *Kólumel*, cf. Sec. 1.370) in Tsolyánu or the symbols of Hísh and/or Vimúhla in Mu'ugalavyá. Guests are free to move up or down these tiers to chat or pay respects. Those of lower status are not invited to sit down and eat with a party at a higher level, of course, nor does a higher person join a group of social inferiors. Guests on a lower tier stand to greet a visitor from a higher one. The latter may sit down for a few moments of conversation but can accept nothing to eat or drink. Conversely,a social inferior who climbs up the tiers to pay his respects to superiors must remain standing while the latter sit, and no food or beverage is offered to him. The entertainments provided at feasts will be described below.

Livyáni feasts differ in that ascending tiers of daises are provided only for those of higher status than the host himself. All those of inferior position are seated below on a common level at individual small tables. Only after the meal is finished do all rise, move about, and socialise. The Salarvyáni and Pechání usually have a single dais for the upper classes. Guests of lesser station sit in small groups below this, more or less wherever they please. The Pijenáni follow the Tsolyáni-Mu'ugalavyáni pattern, but in Yán Kór and Saá Allaqí one encounters no daises at all. The tables of the feasting hall are instead arranged so that lower class persons eat close to the outer doors, while the host and his special guests are seated on the same level but against the north wall, that farthest from the entrance to the chamber.

The feasting customs of the smaller nations and the nonhuman enclaves are less complex and can largely be inferred from what has been said of their eating practices above. Attitudes and traditions range all the way from the stilted formalism of Mihállu to the casual atmosphere of the group-families of Tsolél and the anarchic "equality" of the nomads of the Desert of Sighs.

In connection with feasting it is important to note the use of drugs. Man abandoned most of the dangerous narcotics of old Earth during the early centuries of his expansion into the galaxy, and the new drugs he acquired from the worlds of space were treated with all of the resources of high technology to produce interesting effects with a modicum of unpleasant consequences. Aside from deadly *Zu'úr*, perhaps the most deleterious drug in use on Tékumel today is alcohol itself. A goodly percentage of the population of the Five Empires chews *Hnéqu* weed, a reddish-brown grassy plant brought originally from the home world of the Swamp Folk. This produces a mild euphoria and is neither addictive nor physically harmful. The best variety of *Hnéqu* weed is grown around Sokátis in eastern Tsolyánu, although that sold in Nufésh in Livyánu is also highly prized. The drugs served at feasts are more powerful and create different effects, but in the main they are equally innocuous and non-toxic unless used in excess. *Chümaz*, a bluish-white powder obtained from a species of berry in Livyánu, heightens perceptions and acts as an aphrodisiac; *Drársha*, a clear crystalline substance got from a type of shellfish along the coasts of Salarvyá and Háida Pakála, causes amusing visions and distortions of the time sense; *Ntó*, a fine white dust shaken from the leaves of the *Vé-Ntó* tree of M'mórcha and Nmartúsha, creates volubility and a giddy joy; *Mághz*, a brownish powder produced from the bark of the *Ghái* tree in the states of the far northeast, softens the mood to a drowsy peacefulness; *Osí*, a thick greyish mucus-like substance scraped from the bones of the *Ft'á* fish of the Nyémesel Isles, reduces tensions and arouses the libido — etc. The effects of all of these wear off after an hour or two, and there is no "hang-over."

At most feasts in Tsolyánu and Livyánu servants carry trays of "the powders" around to guests after the meal, just as tea and coffee were once served after dinner on ancient Earth. Adults see this as no more harmful than drinking alcoholic beverages. (Neither drugs nor liquor are offered to chidren, however. It is considered gauche and declasse to become intoxicated or overcome with the effects of drugs, of course, although this is expected at feasts held by the worshippers of Dlamélish and Hriháyal, by soldiers in an army barracks, or by parties expressly gathered for the purpose.

Drugs are less commonly provided at feasts in Mu'ugalavyá, Salarvyá, and Pechánu. The Yán Koryáni, Saá Allaqiyáni, and Chayakkuyáni rarely use them, and the N'lüss and the Ghatóni consider them decadent and effete. (These latter peoples are not above consuming several kegs of beer or other liquor at a feast, however.) The warriors of the states of the northeast take *Mághz* (cf. above) on occasion and the priesthoods of this region also eat the yellow berries of the *Shrá* plant to produce strange mystical visions and "meetings with the Gods." Too large a dosage of these may result in death, and the peoples of the Five Empires avoid them. The islanders of Tsolél eschew drugs entirely, as also do the inhabitants of the Nyémesel Isles (who sell their *Osí* to foreigners but never take it themselves.) The Lorún use no narcotics and can only obtain liquor in trade from the Yán Koryáni and Saá Allaqiyáni. The heaviest users of drugs of all types are the Pijenáni, who even indulge in these substances after a daily meal, and the residents of Háida Pakála. The latter know and use some fifty different varieties, not all of them as harmless as those mentioned above. Even children in Haida Pakala may be addicted to *Vípu*, a mind-deadening narcotic which turns the lips and the whites of the eyes a purplish blue.

The nonhuman races employ stimulants and depressants of their own. The Shén chew the greasy black roots of the *Fssá* plant, causing a reeling drunken stupor, for example. This only nauseates humans. Conversely, a Shén who is given *Chümaz* (cf. above) goes into convulsions and may die, while *Ntó* brings on a terrible and insensate rage during which the individual may slay his friends and remember

nothing of it the next day. The Pygmy Folk and the Hlaka are alone amongst the nonhuman races in being able to take human-produced drugs and medicines with essentially the same effects. The Ahoggyá know of several narcotics but utilise these only as medicines. The Pé Choi, the Swamp Folk, and the Urunén all have one or two species-specific pleasure drugs which are acceptable within the proper contexts in their societies. The Páchi Léi employ only one drug: the bark of the *Mmuókh* tree, which sends them into a catatonic sleep from which they awaken rested and refreshed. The Tinalíya are masters of the pharmacological art, producing over a hundred substances which delicately alter moods and attitudes but cause no intoxication. Unfortunately, most of these are either injurious or deadly to humans.

1.930. ENTERTAINMENT

Professional singers, dancers, instrumental musicians, and courtesans are often hired even for a relatively small dinner party. If the group wishes to gamble, the host may also summon a gaming-judge; cf. below.

Singers of popular songs are much in demand. There are dozens of national, regional, and class-oriented styles and schools. The sensuous rhythms of Jakálla and the lilting, pensive melodies of old Tsámra are perhaps the most admired, while the pentatonic scale and the wailing cadences of Salarvyá and Háida Pakálla demand much prior familiarisation in order to be appreciated. For some reason the nature-songs of the Ghatóni (which contain a great deal of erotic symbolism) are currently fashionable, as are the love songs of Vrá and the complex harmonies of the Chákas. The latter are said to contain something of the delicate syncopation of the Pé Choi log-xylophones. A singer may be accompanied upon the pot-bellied little *Sra'úr*, a 6-stringed cello-like instrument played with a bow; the great *Tenturén*, which has 12 strings, two resonance chambers, and requires one person to finger the strings and another to pluck them with metal finger-picks; flutes; horns; several kinds of drums; gongs; harps; tambourines; and xylophones of wood and metal (some of which are played by as many as five musicians in chorus).

Dancers, both male and female, are similarly greatly prized. Again, one finds that it is the schools of Jakálla and Tsámra which are the most admired. In her amusing satire, "The Illusion of Life," the poetess Elué says, "A street-girl of Jakálla can charm a Mu'ugalvyáni bureaucrat out from under his files, a Salarvyáni merchant away from his coins, or even a Páchi Léi down from his tree..."

Even the most erotic dancers are not necessarily courtesans or prostitutes, although many of "the oldest profession" do call themselves "singers" or "dancers" to enhance their prestige. A popular performer may command hundreds of *Káitars* for an evening's performance, and he or she will be surrounded day and night by jealous admirers, among whom one may find the scions of some of the highest and noblest clans in the land. Romantic affairs are not infrequent, as might be expected, and the great families encourage these liaisons since a young person can acquire etiquette, aesthetics, and the fine arts from a sophisticated courtesan or entertainer. Marriage with such a person is unthinkable in view of the difference in clan status, of course, and the few instances which do occur from time to time provide embarrassment for the noble clan, gossip for its rivals, and plots for the dramas acted out in the marketplace for the amusement of the general public. A great lord (or an *Aridáni* woman of the upper classes) may take an entertainer as a concubine with no loss of face, however. See also Sec. 1.530.

There is no "social dancing" anywhere in the Five Empires except in the folk dances of the villages. These are despised by the cosmopolitan epicures of the cities. Various religious rites require men to perform one dance part and women another, but this is different in purpose. Of course, erotic dances in which both males and females participate are presented to (and by) the devotees of Dlamélish, Hriháyal, Avánthe, and Shiringgáyi, as well as by the personnel of the more elaborate "houses" operated by these temples.

The most prestigious form of entertainment in the Five Empires and its client states (including Mihállu) is the recitation of epic poetry (Tsolyáni: *Kashkérukoi*). Some of these long poems are in Bednálljan Salarvyáni, others in Engsvanyáli or Classical Tsolyáni, and not a few are composed in the modern tongues of the continent as well. Most of them deal with mythological or semi-historical subjects, and their heroes, heroines, villains, events, and even individual lines are familiar to everyone with any education all across the continent. Schoolchildren can recite passages from the Engsvanyáli "Lament to the Wheel of Black," which describes the Battle of Dormoron Plain (Sec. 1.340); peasants tell tales based upon "The Legend of Lord Hrugga"; "The Song of the Reaper of Sighs" is almost as well-known, and "The Vindication of the Swathe of Red" and "The Hymn to Na-Iverge" are only marginally less famous. These compositions are very lengthy: e.g. the Kheiris recension of "The Lament to the Wheel of Black" contains over 125,000 couplets. A performer may begin with two or three favourite scenes or passages from one of these epics before going on to lighter music. In larger gatherings groups of singers are accompanied by several instrumentalists in the presentation of popular sections, and at the great feasts described above one finds combinations of music and dance, with masked actors, soloists, a chorus, and elaborate orchestras. Epic poetry is perhaps too intellectual for the popular taste, but it commands a wide audience amongst the nobility and the upper classes, and simplified versions are sung and acted for the populace in the marketplaces and in temple courtyards on religious holidays.

There are also circles of poets, artists, and writers on various subjects (prose fiction is unknown in the Five Empires, its place being taken by the epics; cf. above). Displays and recitations are common. In the larger cities one also encounters societies of collectors, connoiseurs of wines and foods, and experts in this or that scholarly field (usually under the aegis of a temple or the patronage of some noble dilettante). At gatherings of these groups one will find a lecture or discussion, hopefully a good meal, perhaps some drinking, and much socialising.

Many types of entertainment are provided at the large semi-public feasts mentioned above. Besides troupes of singers, dancers, and courtesans, there are rooms set aside for the presentation of splendidly costumed epic poetry dance-dramas. Jugglers, acrobats, illusionists, and tellers of fables wander from group to group. Musicians stroll amongst the guests. On tiny stages placed in niches high up along the walls of the feasting chamber itself silent tableaux are displayed. These depict incidents from the epics, historical and mythical scenes, and erotic diversions. Smaller rooms are given over to conversation, serious drinking, and love-making. It is considered a high art to be able to weave all of these strands of entertainment into pleasing harmonies and delightful oppositions, and the status of a host and hostess rises or falls according to the success of the occasion.

No upper-class feast in the Five Empires would be complete without puppets. These simulacra of wood, metal, bone, and other materials are animated through other-planar magic. They strut about upon their tiny stage, act out episodes from the epics, sing, recite scurrilous verses, dance, and fight mock battles. Some puppetmasters specialise in "duels": each onlooker wagers money upon the "gladiator" of his or her choice, and the small combatants then join in battle, bleed realistically, and "live" or "die" as real heroes should. Characters from the epics are the most popular, but historical figures, monsters, and representations of the nonhuman races (all no more than 10 cm high) are also in demand. The puppetmasters swear that they have no control over a match once it has begun and cannot predict the winner; the truth of this is not ascertainable. There are only two puppetmaster clans in all of the Five Empires: the Society of the Hands Which Are Not Seen and the Clan of the Striding Incantation. Only those who are born into these clans can be initiated into the secret of the puppets' "life," and assassins have been hired to keep it from falling into unauthorised hands. Puppetmasters wander freely from country to country, are highly paid, and are never allowed to be sold as slaves. They can never attain high social status, but their lives and property are sacrosanct.

Gambling is an important component at many feasts. Rooms are allocated for this purpose, and after the meal is finished those who wish to risk their money wander in and out. Knowing how to behave properly at the gaming tables is part of the "social graces." In Tsolyanu the ideal gambler is polished and urbane; he has courage but is not foolhardy; he is generous but not ostentatious; and he is neither a "poor loser" nor a "poor winner." "Noble" action is the keynote. The model is the epic hero, Hrúgga, who "won the world, the two moons, and half as much again" from the Goddess Avánthe — yet graciously continued to stake everything he had on each play

until he had lost it all back again "because it is not seemly for a mere mortal to overmaster the everliving Gods."

Gamblers differ from country to country. The Salarvyáni and Pechâni are reckless, boisterous, and quick to take offense or to cry foul. The Yán Koryáni, the N'lüss, the Ghatóni, the Lorún, the Milumanayáni, and the peoples of the far-northeast are even more unrestrained. The Mu'ugalavyáni gamble with a fierce and icy concentration. The Livyáni are refined, cool, and secretive, displaying no emotion. The natives of Tsolêi and Háida Pakála lay our their wagers with verve and bravado. The inhabitants of the Nyémesel Isles, the Saá Allaqiyáni, and most of the tribes of M'mórcha and Nmartúsha do not gamble at all, while the Pijenáni and the natives of Mihállu may remain at the tables all night. The nonhuman species are similarly diverse. The Pé'Choí rarely gamble, but when they do they are clever and cautious. The Ahoggyá refuse to wager, saying that anyone who deprives them of their money for nothing is cheating them. The Shén are quite the reverse: they are easily addicted but quickly become enraged or discouraged. The Páchi Lei and the Urunén are taciturn and calm, while the nervous little Hláka chatter too much. The Swamp Folk and the Pygmy Folk love to wager but are both given to wild elation if they win and furious depression if they lose. The Tinalíya are excellent at odds and calculations and are often quietly excluded from human gaming parties.

The inventory of games is well-nigh inexhaustible. The elderly and least adventurous prefer *Daqú*, a kind of draughts for two players. Four to six persons may play at *Dénden*, a game which uses a polygonal board, several sets of ranked coloured sticks and counters, and dice. Those who desire to gamble may choose *Kévuk*, in which two 6-sided dice are employed, or the more popular *Tsahltén*, a game of Mu'ugalavyáni origin, which involves tossing a handful of coloured sticks into the air and "making the pattern" one has called. A professional judge (Tsolyani: *Tugrúntokoi* — the root is the same as that of the term for a legal judge; cf. Sec. 1.810) is usually required to determine whether the figure has been "made," "not made," or "neither made nor not made" according to rules too complex to be described here. A thrower who makes his pattern wins any wagers he has ventured according to the odds for each figure. Those who have bet on his success also win. There is no "house" percentage or "bank," and all bets must be covered by other players. One may also cover only part of a bet, leaving the rest to be covered by other players. One may also cover only part of a bet, leaving the rest to be covered by others or withdrawn by its better. If the throw is adjudged "neither made nor not made," no one wins or loses. The sticks are passed around the table in counter-clockwise direction after each throw (i.e. the winning thrower does not throw them again), and a player may opt not to throw but to hand them on to the next person without penalty. The patterns of *Tsahltén* differ in complexity and difficulty, and the odds of success can be increased — though only slightly — by throwing more than the minimum number of stick needed for the figure. Each pattern has a maximum number, however. It is considered "daring" to use only the minimum number of sticks, but many persons prefer to employ the additional ones since these do raise the odds of winning somewhat. Once the thrower has called the figure and stated how many sticks he will use, he sets out his wager, and all or parts of this are covered by other players. Side bets are common. The rate of return is not fixed, and players may offer one another different odds according to their perceptions of the thrower's luck and skill. The names of the seven most frequent patterns, the minimum number of sticks, the percentage chance of making the figure using this number, the amount of additional sticks permitted, the usual (but not fixed; cf. just above) rate of return, and the sum needed to cover a bet of 100 *Káitars* at the odds given for each pattern are given below. (Naturally, if one bets against the success of the throw, the odds are reversed.)

Name of the pattern and minimum number of sticks required	Basic percentage chance of success	Number of additional sticks allowed*	Average odds or rate of return	Sum needed to cover a bet of 100 at these odds
Single Square; 4	80	3	1:5	25
Double Square; 5	60	3	2:3	60
Single Peak; 5	50	3	1:1	100
Double Peak; 6	30	3	7:3	230
Triple Peak; 6	20	2	4:1	400
High Forest; 6	10	2	10:1	1,000
Dragon; 7	5	2	20:1	2,000

* Each additional stick

* Each additional stick improves the thrower's chance of success by about 2 percent. The rate of return diminishes slightly accordingly, and players "bargain" with one another for the best wager they can obtain.

The judge for a high-stakes game of *Tsahltén* must be well-trained and skillful. Such a person is an expensive employee indeed, commanding between 100 and 500 *Káitars* for an evening's work. It takes over a year to learn this art. Most *Tsahltén* judges in Tsolyánu and Mu'ugalavyá are members of the Clan of the Balanced Stone, which is based in Ssa'átis but has clanhouses all across the continent. Although this clan will train slaves in the art of judging *Tsahltén* for a fee of perhaps 5,000-10,000 *Káitars*, no outsiders are formally permitted to join. This clan is also famous as a source of reliable body servants, major-domos, chamberlains, accountants, and judges of sporting events. For those who wish to know more about this game, the rules and criteria for judgment, etc. one may recommend Dhilmánish Chréya's "Tolünglukh hiTlu'úmrazh" (Scales of Happy Destiny), in Tsolyáni, available in most larger cities.

There are many other games. The N'lüss and the Ghatóni play *Fiyásh*, a guessing game in which one team must correctly identify the carved wooden symbols hidden in the hands of three members of the opposing side. Each plaque represents one of the planets or moon (but not the sun or Tékumel itself), and there is also an unnamed "black planet," making a total of seven. Since there are only six possible locations for concealment (i.e. the hands of the three persons selected by the team captain to hide the pieces), one symbol is always discarded each turn. The number of correct guesses determines the sums paid, and onlookers back one team or the other but not both. The Livyáni and the islanders of Tsolêi enjoy a card game, called *Ao'áb*, which used 60 circular leather cards: four suits of 13 apiece, four "low gods" which function as a sort of trump, and four "high gods" which negate the powers of the "low gods." A variant of this game is called *Nárku* in Tsolyánu. In Salarvyá, Pechâno, and Háida Pakála the popular pastime is *Glágsha*, a gambling game consisting of a board pierced with holes into which players knock small stone marbles with miniature bats. In Mihallu one finds *Here'úl*, a chess-like war game played on a board provided into 20 rows of 20 squares. Pieces travel at different rates and in different patterns, and each has unique powers of slaying or capturing enemy pieces. The Yán Koryáni, Saá Allaqiyáni, and Chayakkuyáni delight in *Daghórr*, a complex board game whose pieces represent the Gods and their minions at the mythical Battle of Dórmoron Plain (Sec. 1.340). Double-ended oblong dice of wood or bone are used in the states of the northeast, while *Hmelu* knucklebones are employed in Jánnu, Kilalámmu, the Lorún areas, and some tribal regions. The nomads of the Desert of Sighs roll spherical ball-dice into a hole in the sand. The inhabitants of the Nyémesel Isles amuse themselves with *Ek'é*, a game which combines a board, cards, and dice made of seashell. This is now becoming fashionable in eastern Salarvyá and in Háida Pakála.

The Shén play a kind of draughts and several dice games, but their favourite is the strenuous *Á-Gs-Hr*, which involves the tossing of a small wooden or sand-filled leather ball past an opponent into a target basket. The opponent gains points by deflecting the ball with a pair of short, curved sticks. He may shout, dance back and forth, feign attack, and otherwise try to disconcert the thrower, but he must not

allow himself to be hit by the ball. The Pé Chói possess an intricate board game called *Mṅtk-Tṅ*, played with black and white pebbles, bone rings, and one 6-sided die. The Pachi Léi have a game which resembles chequers, and another, called *Tréng*, which is played with figured wooden blocks and demands great powers of memory and concentration. The Urunén enjoy a wide variety of games, puzzles, riddles, and other diversions, but serious gambling is done with four 4-sided pyramidal dice of bone. The most avid gamblers of all are the Swamp Folk. Families often spend the evening gambling for small stakes with dice or laying out the domino-like wooden plaques of *Ovánsh*, an old game once popular in Mu'ugalavyá and the Chákas. The Hlaka have no parlour games other than knucklebone dice and prefer physical sports and tests of flying skill. The Ahoggyá appear to lack games entirely, their one "sport" being the curious leaping, screeching village dances with which they while away their leisure time.

Aside from gaming, aristocratic feasts in the Five Empires may also present exhibitions of fighting by professional wrestlers, duelling masters, and gladiators brought from the *Hirilákte* Arenas. These men (and *Aridáni* women) are matched against each other, but they may also accept challenges from any "young bloods" among the guests who wish to try their skill. Such duels are fought with padded weapons and rarely end in death, although certain nobles are famous for their penchant for crueller and more sadistic displays. Wagering is spirited, and there is much good-natured raillery. Mock battles between clowns, dwarves, and slaves costumed as mythical characters are also common. A few noble clans are known for their presentations of races and combats between small animals (e.g. the *Jakkóhl*, dogs, certain species of birds, etc.)

The *Hirilákte* Arenas were noted in Secs. 1.422 and 1.740. Programmes are presented daily during the cooler months and once a week or so in the autumn and spring. They are closed during the hot summers. Such arenas are often very large, seating thousands of people. The areas occupied by the "boxes" of the higher clans and the temple priesthoods are roofed over, but the general public must be satisfied with stone benches under the blazing sun. A columned porch is erected at one end for the city-ruler, his entourage, and any important guests. The floor of the arena itself is invariably sand, with central pillars, obelisks, and platforms crowned with the insignia of Imperial glory. Hawkers and peddlars clamber up and down amongst the tiers of seats. This is the one place where the intense status-consciousness of the Five Empires does not prevail: high clansmen and slaves alike vie for wine, *Chumétl*, hot and spicy meat-patties (Tsolyani: *Gegrésa*), roasted nuts, and other tidbits while cheering on their champions.

Most of the offerings of the Arenas are violent. Gladiators and wrestlers must obtain approval from the city-ruler or presiding officer (and the crowd) to slay a fallen opponent, but this is all too often given. Teams come to "seek glory" prefer to take their foes alive in order to ransom them back to their patrons; yet these matches, too, frequently result in injury and death. The legal duels mentioned in Sec. 1.740 are similarly bloody. Indeed, the entrepreneurial clans which operate the Arenas — the Clan of the Scarlet Sash, the Band of Noble Diversion, the Bright Victory Clan, etc. — are well aware of the bloodthirstiness which lies just beneath the surface within even the most "cultured" of their customers, and they cater to this with cynical avarice. The more blood, the more coins are showered down into the sand.

Non-violent games and athletic contests are interspersed between more sanguine offerings as "light relief." Footraces, archery and javelin-throwing competitions, displays of acrobatic skill (often with a component of danger: e.g. tightrope walking above a field of spearpoints), and clowns are popular. The Arena game which draws the largest crowds in Tsolyánu is *Marotlán*, in which four teams of five players each struggle for possession of a golden sceptre which must be borne back to the team's home "colour." Only body-blocking is allowed; no weapons or grappling are permitted. Two or three of the teams may ally together against the others, and it is not illegal to bribe players from an opposing team to change sides during the game with promises (sometimes kept) of wealth afterwards. Only one team can eventually win, and the losers forfeit not only their wager but even their clothes. In Mu'ugalavyá, Yán Kór, Saá Allaqí, and Pijéna a variety of this game, called *Me'éra*, is played. In this the sceptre is replaced by a large leather ball which is kicked about the field. This must be kept out of a team's "colour" area at all costs, and it is illegal to touch it with the hands. Again, teams may join together to defeat the others, and players may change sides if the inducements are high enough. This game carries religious connotations in Pijéna, and a team which loses by too large a margin may be sacrificed to She Who Is Not Seen. The Saá Allaqiyáni are quite the opposite: the game is played mostly for enjoyment, and there is not even much wagering.

Betting at a *Hirilákte* Arena is done much as was described above for *Tsahltén*. Each person shouts out his bet, and all or parts of this are covered by other spectators. The number of previous matches won by each combatant is announced by the *Charukélkoi* (cf. Sec. 1.740) in advance, and odds vary accordingly. Opponents are equally matched in the gladiatorial and wrestling events, but captives, criminals, and slaves may be made to face powerful fighters and beasts in unequal battles. It then becomes a matter of wagering who will last the longest or who will perish first.

Although it is possible for an outsider to join one of the entrepreneurial clans mentioned above, these are ranked in the social order even below slavers, and the returns are not as great as might be imagined. The costs of upkeep are great, and fees must be paid to the authorities. The professional gladiators who fight in the Arenas are not permitted to retain the money showered upon them from the stands, but they may place their own wagers through friends and hangers-on. In addition, they receive such perquisites as gifts from admirers, favours from noble women (or men), and invitations to perform at the great feasts described above. A gladiator's life may thus be a short but happy one. Amateur gladiators and wrestlers are also permitted to try their hand, either against the professionals or



Swamp Folk

with one another. The Chief Referee (Tsolyáni: *Charukéldállikoi*) of the Arena must be informed first in order to get one's name included in the programme, and one must use the carefully matched arms and armour provided by the Arena. Foreign adventurers, indigent city youths, and even daring young nobles may thus display their skill and take their chances, although it is sometimes hard to find equal matches for rank beginners, and they can hardly expect to be listed on the programme. A few such amateurs do become popular, however, and these may either go on to take up the Arena as their profession or else retire upon their laurels to the plaudits of the mob.

In Salarvyá and Pechánо the Arenas are largely given over to feudal tourneys in which many younger nobles participate almost as a matter of course. These may turn into bloody battles, and wagering is both fierce and heavy. Professional gladiators are employed only to provide entertainment at feasts and are not persons of any status. Combats between beasts and slaves are rare. In Háida Pakála, on the other hand, most Arena fighting is done by slaves who have been groomed and trained for the purpose like prize animals. The obscene and sadistic spectacles of Pijéna need not be described here. See also Sec. 1.740.

Hunting is popular amongst the upper classes and aristocracies of the Five Empires and many of the smaller nations as well. The Yán Koryáni and Saá Allaqiyáni are especially avid hunters, while the Mu'ugalavyáni and Livyáni are much less interested in this sport. Many of the wealthy nobles of Tsolyánu, Yán Kór, Salarvyá, and Saá Allaqí maintain villas and game preserves in remote areas and spend a good part of their time engaged in the chase. Such hunters are usually accompanied by large entourages of servants and retainers, and both dogs and the canine-like, semi-intelligent *Rényu* are employed to flush out prey. Tékumel's wild life can be deadly. Physicians and sorcerers skilled in healing spells are thus frequently taken along as well.

Hawking, using the somewhat intelligent talking *Küni* birds, is practiced in all of the northern nations, Tsolyanu, Salarvya, and occasionally in Livyánu. Noble women often indulge in this sport, as do those too old for the hardships of a hunting party. Only the wealthiest can afford to maintain these rare and expensive birds, and in Salarvyá it is illegal for a non-noble to own one.

1.940. RESIDENCE AND FURNISHINGS

Most citizens of the Five Empires and their client states live in their clanhouses. These were briefly characterised in Sec. 1.421, but any discussion of residence patterns requires a more detailed description. In remote regions a village clanhouse may consist of little more than two or three rooms: an outer hall in which people sit, eat, socialise, and occasionally sleep; a sleeping room large enough to accomodate everybody — men, women, and children; and one or more inner chambers for the clan-elders, storage of tools and valuables, etc. Cellars, clay ovens for bread, ricks for fodder, small chambers for foodstuffs, a cistern for water, sheds for animals and slaves, and other outbuildings line the inside of the wall which surrounds such a clanhouse. Guests are usually given sleeping space in the large outer sitting room mentioned above.

An urban clanhouse, on the other hand, may be very large, housing several hundred individuals. Upon entering the walled outer courtyard from the street, one is faced with guestrooms, colonnades, sitting rooms, and public apartments along both sides. If the clan is an occupational one, the sales areas, workrooms, and storage chambers of its profession may be located along one wall of the courtyard, although the more affluent clans often have separate entrances and "business" courtyards elsewhere within the compound. The gate-wall itself contains rooms for porters and guards, wardrobes, and storage sheds for the litters and palanquins of the more prestigious members. Directly opposite the outer entrance are the doors to the clan's more private sitting rooms, feasting hall, and other semi-public chambers. Behind these (or in an upper storey) lie the dormitories for children, adolescents, and unmarried men and women. A maze of small rooms and passages provide semi-private living spaces for married couples, while the more senior and prestigious clan-elders are assigned larger suites at the back of the house or on the upper floors. There is little or no privacy in the poorer clans, a single room being shared by several couples and their infant children. The latter usually live with their parents and close relatives (Sec. 1.510) until they are 7 or 8 years old, whereupon they are transferred into one of the dormitories. Boys and girls are housed separately (except in those clans devoted to Dlamélish, Hrihályal, Shiringgáyi, and similar deities) until they reach puberty and are able to form sexual liaisons; thereafter considerable nocturnal running back and forth ensues between the dormitories, and this is winked at by the adults (Sec. 1.530). More spacious accommodations are provided by the wealthier clans: small suites of rooms to married couples, sometimes with private baths and even running water. The apartments of senior clansmen (and those who have achieved high positions in society) may resemble palaces in their opulence and elegant appointments.

Common bathing rooms and toilets are located towards the back of the clanhouse. In Yán Kór and the north one bathes in a sunken tub or pool. The other four Empires, Pechánо, and Mihállu prefer a "shower": the bather squats upon a flat stone block while slaves pour hot, cold, and perfumed water over him. Some of the more affluent houses also possess elaborate bathing facilities, with shallow pools, steamrooms, drying rooms, and areas for massage and relaxation. These are available to guests of the appropriate status, but guestrooms (located at the front of the house, as said above) normally have their own baths and toilet facilities.

Kitchens, workrooms, slave quarters, and storage areas are usually located at the back of an urban clanhouse, often with a separate entrance. Subterranean cellars are used to keep perishable foods, wines, and less-needed goods. The clan's money and valuables are hidden in an underground vault accessible only by a secret stairway from the apartments of the Clan-Elder above. Poor and rural urban clans, however, must conceal their wealth beneath a hearthstone or in a cache in a wall in one of the inner rooms.

The temples provide dormitories for lower-ranking clergy. Higher functionaries share a room with one or two colleagues of the same status, and temple officials receive a private chamber for themselves. The most exalted — High Priests, Temple Commandants, Licentiates, etc. (Sec. 1.832) — have suites of opulent apartments, private baths, and personal dining-sitting rooms. Married priests and priestesses are usually given private rooms, but space within the temples is limited, and those with children are strongly encouraged to reside in their clanhouses and come to the temple daily to perform their duties. All temple personnel (except labourers and slaves, of course) eat together in a common refectory. This is fitted out with tiers of daises much like a feasting hall (Sec. 1.920) so that status divisions can be maintained.

Lay-Priests (Sec. 1.832) live not in their temples but in their own clanhouses or other quarters. If one of these scholars visits another city, however, he may be given a room or sleeping space in the temple dormitory for a few days, and he will also be permitted to eat in the refectory at no cost. Should he stay longer than 5 or 10 days, he will be aided by the local clergy in finding accommodations elsewhere.

Soldiers, temple guards, *Sákbe* Road guards, the city and tomb police, etc. are all housed in barracks. More prestigious legions provide quarters (usually just a single room with a clay stove for cooking) to their married troopers. One section of a barracks is always set aside for larger rooms to be shared by 2 or 3 subalterns, small suites for higher officers, and a more palatial residence for the general and his entourage. Many generals prefer their own clanhouses, however.

As has been seen above, almost everyone of any status resides in the clanhouse. It is thought eccentric to want to dwell alone. Indeed, it is difficult for a single person to live in isolation; there are no "conveniences," no single-stop shopping, and no quick transportation. One thus needs a family — or two or three slaves or servants — to help with the mundane work of cooking, cleaning, and other household tasks. Hostels are expensive, sometimes dirty, and even unsafe, and "bachelor flats" are uncommon and likely to be frequented by disreputable persons. The best solution, therefore, is the clanhouse, or if one is a priest or a soldier, the temples or the barracks.

It is always possible, of course, to rent or buy a house if one has the money. Many clans, temples, individuals, and even governments own residential property which they cannot use themselves and upon which they would be happy to turn a profit. There are no formal "real estate agents," but one may inquire from colleagues and also ask about in the marketplace. In Tsolyánu and Mu'ugalavyá one may

hire a professional "searcher" (Tsolyani: *Mératokoi*): a tout who is familiar with the city and who will look for almost anything one desires for a fee of about one percent of the sale price. A "searcher" also expects to receive an "inducement" of half a percent or so from the seller for helping him to dispose of his property successfully.

Constructing a new house is more complex. The land must be bought, of course, and any present structures demolished. One then consults the architectural and building clans, has plans drawn up, obtains estimates, pays "inducements" to the authorities, arranges for materials, and hopefully manages to get the building started within a month or two. A small dwelling takes a month or so to build, a larger residence four to five months, and a palatial mansion a year or more. In rural areas — and often in the less reputable sections of the older cities as well — a dilapidated house can be acquired cheaply and refinished. The local overlords of the smaller nations and more remote areas within the Five Empires can frequently be "induced" to allow a ruined building to be acquired through nothing more formal than "squatter's rights." Restoration costs are naturally higher in these regions due to the scarcity of labour and materials. It should be noted that it is illegal to fortify dwellings within the Five Empires. This may be done in remote or rural areas, however, providing one can reach an agreement with the indigenous rulers. This may require "inducements" or an oath of fealty — or both.

Agricultural lands are usually obtained through sale rather than rental. The recognised unit is the square *Tsán* (1.78 square kilometres), but smaller parcels may be had if the seller is willing. Buildings and other immoveable property are included in the sale unless otherwise noted in the deed. Tenants and villages usually go with the land as well. These are not "slaves," and a new owner must be informed of their obligations to him: e.g. the payment of a portion of their annual crop (as much as 10 percent) for the use of the land, the provision of labourers to the owner to aid in harvesting his fields, the supply of servants to his household, etc. Ordering tenants off one's newly acquired land will raise local hostilities, of course, and if these people have lived on the property for any length of time and belong to good and respectable clans, it may be difficult to evict them.

Much of what has been said above applies to Tsolyánu, Mu'ugalavyá, Sunráya in Milumanayá, and to Yán Kór and its satellites — all with minor regional variations. In Livyánu it is difficult even for natives to buy houses or land because so much is owned by the temples of the Shadow Gods and is fixed by ancient tradition. Within the foreigners' quarters, however, houses may be purchased or rented as elsewhere. One who buys land in Salarvyá — and especially in Pechánо — may become a vassal to the feudal master to whom the previous owner had owed service (Sec. 1.810). Houses are rarely sold in Tsolei, and former residents may still claim a right to reside in the place because of their name-associations (Sec. 1.510). In the states of the northeast one obtains permission from the ruling warrior lineage to buy or build a house, to rent, and even to live in the area. Clan lands are infrequently sold in Jánnu and Kilalámmu, but it is easy to rent. Foreigners are allowed to build and own residences in the towns, but the land upon which these stand continues to belong to the clan, and an annual rental must be paid. Should a dispute arise, the unfortunate renter may be told to go elsewhere and take his building with him — or else abandon it! The clans are also strong in Mihállu, but one can rent or buy property much as one can in Tsolyánu. The economy of Háida Pakálla is an unrestricted form of raw capitalism, and almost any kind of transaction can be accomplished there. On the other hand, the priests of Mrettén do not allow foreigners to settle in the Nyémesel Isles (though short-term leases of six months or less are available), and every local transfer of property must also be approved by the temple. The Shén and the Ahoggyá forbid humans from buying land or buildings within their domains, even in the foreigners' quarters, but again rentals are possible. The other nonhuman races similarly discourage human ownership and investment within their enclaves. Since the Urunén have only recently become known to the northern continent it is too early to make any generalisations about them, but it appears that they may be willing to permit at least the rental of houses and business properties. See also Secs. 1.735 and 1.810.

A person who has to travel can usually arrange to stay at another house of his clan at his destination. If his clan is not represented there, he may get a letter of introduction from a friend and stay as a guest at the latter's clanhouse. Priests and Lay-Priests experience difficulty only if their sect has no temple in the city. If none of these expedients is available, one must resort to a hostel. These establishments are ranked throughout the Five Empires in order to maintain status differences, but even so most people do not prefer to live apart from their clans and friends. In the Tsolyáni city of Jakálla, for example, the poorest must endure the insects, bad food, and human riffraff of the Tower of the Red Dome; the Hostel of Birrukú the Allaqiyáni is appropriate for those of lower-middle station; the Court of the Fourth Emperor serves guests of upper-middle rank; the Palace of Mrúthri offers suitable accommodations to those of the upper class; and the opulent Lordly Domicile of the Hand of Hrúgga is patronised by the wealthy and aristocratic. Nonhumans will find premises fitted to their needs in their own sectors of the foreigners' quarter. Outside of this area there are no guesthouses or hostels even for Tsolyáni citizens.

The same obtains throughout the Five Empires. Those who break their journey in a town or small village must put up with whatever is available or else set up a tent on the platform below the *Sákbe* Road (Sec. 1.423).

Those who can afford an upper-class hostel will find themselves well served in most cities. In Tsolyánu, the House of Unmarred Repose in Bey Sú is renowned for its elegant appointments and also for the cuisine obtained from the professional cooking clans; in Tumíssa the Halls of Cooler Air are popular, as is the Resort of the Ten Heroes in Fasiltum; Khirgár offers the Mansion of Divine Dignity; Púrdimal the Inn of Grey Clouds; Sokátis the Chambers of Arrúthu of Fénul; Usenánu the Warm Apartments of Peace; Mrelú the Superbly Finished House of Jaimurú; Katalál the Kiosk of the Five Clans; Urmish the Manor of Chirrukú (though this is not really of the same stature as the others listed here); Penóm the rather mediocre Dome of the Sweeping Sea; the City of Sárku the old and curiously decorated Hospice of the Russet Master; Mekú the Villa of the Iron Helm; Thri'íl the small but delightful High Hospice of the North; Thráya the fading and dilapidated glories of the Great Inn of Detkomé hiMéshmu; and Avanthár (i.e. really the small city located on the western riverbank opposite the great fortress; cf. Sec. 1.422) the splendid Abode of Imperial Blue, run by Gyésmu hiVerudái of the Clan of Sea Blue (Sec. 1.550). None of these establishments will accept guests of the lower or middle classes, nor even upstarts and parvenus who have amassed recent wealth. A Tlakotáni or a Vriddi of even modest means may be shown to a suite with some deference, but the richest merchants, slavers, moneylenders, and other such folk will be urged to seek accommodations elsewhere.

Abroad, one can recommend the Pentagonal Palace at Tsámra; the Humble House of Tsenámmu in Yán Kór City, although this is a mite expensive; the Porticoes of the Four Palaces in Ssa'átis (the proprietor of which, one Vrétlish Barrága of Kúrdis, has recently opened branches in Ch'óchi, Khéiris, Kúrdis, and Pagús); and in Salarvyá the House of the Gleaming Dome in Koylúga, the Ebon Chambers in Tsatsayágga, or the Monument of Excellence in Jaekánta. One must be accustomed to the rather greasy cuisine of the Salarvyáni in order to appreciate these hostels, however. It is harder to suggest good accommodations in the smaller cities and in the less-developed nations. One may note the Healthful Tower of the Lords of Gánga in old Ninué in Mihállu; the Gables of Dhání of Hólis in Llú'úr on Llúrúra Isle in Tsolei; the Hostel of the Victory of Light in Saá Allaqiyár in Saá Allaqí; and the Apartments of the Feet of the Goddess in Rusú in the Nyémesel Isles. The Abode of Nektu'únish in the Shén capital of Ssorvá is passable if one likes Mu'ugalavyáni food, and the Pastel Pillars of the Second Moon in Sraón in Livyánu is also good, though somewhat marred by the noise and smells from the harbour. Nothing much can be recommended with any certainty elsewhere.

The poorer folk of the nations of the continent have comparatively little in the way of furnishings. Sitting, eating, sleeping, and socialising are all done on the bare floor, on mats of woven reeds, or in some areas upon sheets of coarse *Firyá* cloth. A lower- or middle-class clanhouse is thus fairly Spartan in its appointments. A few chests for storage, baskets, clay pots, tools and implements of wood, stone, or *Chlén*-hide — this is the extent of a poor clan's belongings.

Throughout Tsolyánu, Mu'ugalavyá, Livyánu, and Salarvyá the fittings of a wealthier clanhouse are basically the same as those of

one which is less favoured, except that they are made of finer materials. The woven reed floor coverings are more elegantly designed, and when these become soiled they are thrown away and replaced. There are no chairs, but backrests of wood, stone, or brick are built into the walls of a sitting room. These are covered with fabrics and are accompanied by cushions and bolsters. Portable backrests are also used, some inlaid with precious stones and metals, others enamelled or lacquered with lacy designs, still others worked with mosaics of "ivory" (Sec. 1.415) or upholstered with brocades. Low tables (about 40 cm in height) are common; these are adorned with many types of workmanship. A room may also contain candelabra and lampstands of brass, bronze, or more valuable materials; squat cabinets for small objects; racks for scrolls; stands for armour and weapons; pedestals for sculpture; trays of wood, pottery, or metal to hold goblets and ewers; and gaily painted wooden chests for garments and other goods.

Floors are finished in mosaic work or parquetry of tiles or marble. Wall decorations consist of tapestries depicting mythological or historical scenes, brocaded hangings, and heavy arrases ornamented with silver and gold thread. Painted murals, sculptured panels in bas-relief, niches in which statues of alabaster, marble, porphyry, and other fine stones are placed, and friezes of carved scrollwork are found in the palaces of the mighty. Calligraphy is considered a high art, and wall-paintings of religious subjects, vignettes from the epics, and erotic portrayals are frequently accompanied by verses or texts in or another modern or classical language. Works of famous muralists and calligraphers are highly prized, and people have been known to exclude specific wall masterpieces from the sale of the rest of the house — and have the whole wall carefully removed and transferred into their new residence.

Beds are unknown in most of the hot southern regions. Everyone sleeps upon reed mats, thick pads of *Firyá* cloth, or carpets. Pillows consist of cylinders of cloth stuffed with *Firyá* fibre or *Hmá* wool. The Livyáni prefer wooden headrests carved to fit their owners' heads. These are always decorated with clan and religious symbols and are not loaned to anyone else. Bedding is scarcely needed, but some prefer a thin sheet "to keep away the night." In Jakálla, Penóm, the marshy coasts of Salarvyá, etc. a sleeping room is frequently hung all about with fine netting to thwart the persistent insect population.

Cooking is usually done with charcoal upon stoves of clay, stone, or tiles. There is no need for heating, of course, and large hearths and fireplaces are therefore found only in kitchens. Wood is burned by those who live in forested regions, but the peasantry of the great agricultural plains are limited to dried *Chlén* dung to use as fuel. Coal is mined in Pechálno, parts of Saá Allaqí, and in Mudállu, where outcroppings lie close beneath the surface of the earth. Peat is burned in the wet lowlands of southern Tsolyánu but is unknown elsewhere.

The north differs in several respects. Low stools, 30 cm or so high and broad enough to allow one to sit crosslegged, are employed in Yán Kór, Pijéna, and Saá Allaqí. Tables (about 60 cm in height) are preferred for dining (Sec. 1.920) and for other tasks. The light and easily portable sleeping mats of the south are replaced by thicker carpets (the best of which are woven in Dhárru, Trú, and Jáinnu Peidáho). Blankets of soft *Hmá* wool are required in the cooler regions, and furs are used for bedding in the states of the far northeast. Wall decorations are not as elaborate in the north. Murals, sculpture, and mosaic work are rare, although thick floor-to-ceiling curtains and drapes are common enough.

Large chairs and tables are the custom only among the N'lüss and the Ghatóni. A chieftain's ceremonial seat is often a superb work of art, being studded with golden bosses, upholstered in *Vringálu* leather (Sec. 1.415), and inset with plaques of beaten gold depicting heroes, monsters, and tribal symbols. Massive eight-legged wooden beds are also the rule in these two nations. Bedding consists of *Hmá* wool blankets, furs, and, in the far north, quilts stuffed with the fibres of the sub-arctic *Vgáish* plant.

Low, wide couches, thickly cushioned and upholstered, are traditional in the clanhouses and palaces of Mihállu. Sitting is not the custom, and everyone reclines to eat, sleep, and even to write upon tiny desk-tables which are set upon one end of the couch. Furnishings and decorations are ornate. Lampstands of bronze, brass, or other materials; huge urns of stone carved in fantastic shapes; inlaid screens of pierced wooden scrollwork or metal filigree; sculptures of marble and precious metals — all are executed in a baroque style which is thought to be "pure Engsvanyáli" but which would probably have horrified the ancient masters.

Sleeping mats and hammocks are both prevalent in Tsolei and in Háida Pakála. It is customary to sit or kneel upon the floor to eat or socialise, and furnishings are therefore sparse. Delicately carved round tables are popular in Háida Pakála, however, and the base of one of these may contain several intricate drawers and compartments for valuables and also for daggers and other concealed weapons. Chests and shell-inlaid wooden boxes are similarly trapped so that one's own family members cannot get into them easily.

The commoners of the Nyémesel Isles are allowed only plain mats of woven sea-grass. Possessions are hung from pegs on the walls in woven baskets and bags. Acolytes of Mretténn receive better furnishings, and Initiates may own still more. The Ecclesiarchs use tall throne-like chairs; huge, low beds piled high with carpets; many types of cabinets and chests; and seats and tables each of which has its special purpose (cf. Sec. 1.920). Inns for foreigners are elaborately furnished with carpet-beds, squat stools, cupboards, shelves, and bric-a-brac of shell work and glass.

Carpets, gaudy but tightly and beautifully woven, are the rule within the tents of the nomads of the Desert of Sighs and in the dwellings of the Lorún. Leather boxes, sacks of *Hmá* wool, and bags of knotted thongs are employed for possessions and foodstuffs. The tribesmen of Rannálu sit, eat, and sleep upon leather cloaks sewn of many skins of the lizard-like *Ahúh* beast. Personal belongings are limited to what one can carry upon one's back. The inhabitants of M'mórcha and Nmartúsha socialise while reclining upon temporary couches of *Khí* leaves. Pottery and stone are rare in the thick jungle, and utensils are stitched of leaves or are carved of wood. Sleeping is done upon tall, four-legged cots: wooden frameworks upon which a netting of cords is stretched. Puff spiders cannot climb vertical surfaces, and these cots are thus often some 75 cm in height.

The Ahoggyá keep the floors of their houses clean and bare, with personal possessions being hung from the rafters in string bags. This species sleeps in a sitting position, four legs tucked underneath the thick, cylindrical body, and neither beds nor blankets are ever employed. The Hlíka make sleeping mats of felted fibre. They store foodstuffs and possessions in niches and shelves hollowed out in the walls of their eyries and otherwise employ no furniture. The Páchi Léi, on the other hand, manufacture intricately carved chests, racks and tables for belongings, cupboards and storage containers, bark cloth bags and sacks, etc. This race sleeps in an upright position, sitting on carved "sleeping chairs" with the four legs hanging down at each corner and the feet supported on fantastically sculptured built-in footstools. Páchi Léi woodwork, beaded baskets, and other handicrafts are much admired, particularly in Livyánu and in Salarvyá. Pé Chói houses display almost no furnishings. Each small, domed dwelling has a clay cooking hearth in the centre of the floor, surrounded by low platforms of wood, stone, or mud-brick upon which family members squat to talk, prepare food, or scrape one another clean with little strigils of bone. The Pé Chói sleep in a "folded up"position on these platforms as well, and no beds, mats, or other furnishings are used. The Pygmy Folk sit on the ground or upon thin cloth pads to converse and eat. They sleep in tiers of niches — "bunks" reached by handholds — dug into the walls of their burrow-cities. Provisions are stored in rows of giant pottery crocks, while personal belongings are kept in smaller pots, boxes of glass or fired clay, or metal receptacles. The Pygmy Folk are passable metallurgists; their lidded cases and chests of bronze, silver, gold, etc. are enamelled or worked in repousse in swirling abstract patterns. These are much sought after by the fashionable ladies of the Five Empires to hold cosmetics, incense, and jewellery. Scabbards for knives and swords, metal shields, belt buckles, and even some armour (modified for human use) are made for export. The Shén prefer heavy, crude furnishings of black *Té-Hlákh* wood (related to the *Tíu* tree; (cf. Sec. 1.415), banded with copper and set with malachite, turquoise, and green opals. Seven-sided broad tables of this same wood are inlaid with jagged designs and pictured with warriors and other scenes. The Shén sleep upon mattresses of soft leather (sometimes said to be human skin) stuffed with leaves and chaff. These are laid upon stone platforms built in the exact centre of the sleeping chamber. Each platform has a series of holes in its surface into which

weapons are vertically inserted within easy reach of the sleeper. A male Shén sleeps with his sword and dagger standing sentinel beside him. Females and "egg-fertilisers" (Sec. 1.510) are limited to a stiletto or a curved knife. The Swamp Folk resemble the Páchi Léi in the variety and complexity of their furnishings. Woven reeds and wood from several marsh trees provide the materials for their stools, tables, and hammock-like beds. Baskets, nets, chests, and occasional clay pots (obtained from the Mu'ugalavyáni) are ranged along the back wall of each family dwelling. Fishing nets and traps made by the Swamp Folk are highly prized by human fisherfolk. The Tinalíya eat, sit, and sleep upon the bare stone floor, but their apartments are filled with miniature tables (15-20 cm in height), squat chests, bronze lamps, cupboards, and other furniture. Compartments fitted with hinged doors are dug into the bases of the walls. Of all of the nonhuman species, the Tinalíya are perhaps the best craftsmen. Their subterranean cities are thus decorated with objects of metal, glass, pottery, wood, etc., but they care little for fabrics or woven goods. They manufacture spherical censers of gold, elaborate metal urns, tiny crystal perfume vials, silver ewers chaised in near-microscopic designs, and many other products for sale or trade to humans. They are also good with mechanical devices, bronze pumps, pulleys and tackle, cogs and gears, etc. Human engineers frequently consult the Tinalíya when some unusual contrivance is wanted. The Urunén, however, possess the most varied furnishings of all. Their houses contain oddly-proportioned chairs, tables, divans, stands, utensils, and ornamental objects made of diverse materials. They sleep upon wooden beds spread with quilted mattresses and blankets woven of the fibres of a plant related to that which produces *Firyá* cloth. Tapestries and drapes are employed as wall decorations. Mats and small carpets inscribed in red and black calligraphy are hung from the ceiling. Nearly every room contains tall urns of painted porcelain, statuary, and elaborate constructions of wood and coloured glass. It is thought that these last may be orreries depicting the motions of the planets and the moons since they contain moving parts.

The Hlüss make all of their sparse furniture from the bodily secretion mentioned in Sec. 1.413. These are largely limited to utensils, tools, and "storage eggs" (sometimes set with gems and crystals in patterns which indicate the owner). There are no beds, chairs, or tables since this species squats upon the floor to eat, sleep, and socialise. The walls of a Hlüss dwelling or nest-ship are honeycombed with shelves and compartments for provisions and personal belongings, and there is no other decoration. The Hlutrgú are not given much to furniture either. Baskets, bags, nets, and containers are woven of withes and reeds or are constructed of greenish *Chém* wood. The Hlutrgú sleep upon couches made of a spongy marsh plant, called *Galéntl* by the Tsolyáni; these beds are kept wet and half-submerged in the lower chambers of their swampy homes. Nothing is known of the appointments of the Shunned Ones' sealed cities. Both the Grey and the Black Ssú construct low seats adapted to their physiognomy, tables, and chests of finely sculptured stone or metal. Wood is rarely employed, and cloth and other woven materials are uncommon. It is reported that the Ssú sleep upon "beds" of their own discarded "skin" (Sec. 1.413) in small individual chambers hollowed in the walls of their underground labyrinths. The Black Ssú are said to possess considerably more in the way of furnishings, trappings, and accoutrements than do their Grey cousins.

The ruins of the cities of the Mihálli indicate that this race once lived a cultured and sophisticated life in surroundings of great luxury. Although all wooden and perishable articles are now dust, a few metal tables, chests, lampions, and tubular golden vessels have survived the ages, and these are indeed wonders of artistry and craftsmanship. The nineteen-sided Divan of Héres Fáa, found in an excavation in Nuru'ún about a hundred years ago, graces the Inner Hall of the High Chancery at Avanthár, and visitors often stop to marvel at the incised optical illusions which cover its surface. Some say that the Petal Throne (Sec. 1.370) is itself a Mihálli masterpiece, but the history of this creation is unknown before the Second Imperium. The location of the dwellings of the present-day Mihálli — if they are upon this Plane at all — have not been ascertained. There are no stories, epic poems, or bazaar tales about Mihálli settlements, and this in itself is curious in societies such as those of the Five Empires which so love the recounting of heroic adventures.

The roofless underwater cities of the Nyaggá contain objects of wondrous beauty and strangeness, if the fisherfolk of Lake Parunál are to be believed. Some of the mercantile clans of Prájnu and Ngakú utilise a system of "silent barter" — one side leaves its trade commodities on a deserted beach, and the other side replaces them with items which it hopes will be of equivalent value; the two parties never meet or talk face to face — to obtain delicate sculptures of priceless glass-coral (Sec. 1.415), shell, and other ocean products. These display a high level of artistic talent, although some of these things may be "grown" rather than worked with tools.

1.950. COSTUME

Clothing was mentioned in the context of sexual mores in Sec. 1.530. As stated there, a person's nationality, religion, clan, and class-status can usually be known by a glance at his apparel. There is almost no such thing as a "nondescript" costume; whatever one wears has to have some distinguishing feature or other, and drab, unornamented raiment only implies that the wearer is poor, clanless, or perhaps foreign. It certainly does not provide anonymity.

One cannot look at the throng in a crowded street without automatically identifying most of its members: the demon mask and rich purple robes of a priest of Hrü'ü; the red and black chequered kilt and short vest of the well-fed merchant from Katalál; the naked slave, bronze collar glinting at his throat; the clan-girl from the western provinces, her poncho-like tunic of fine *Firyá* cloth open at the sides from shoulder to calf and belted in at the waist with a cord woven in her clan colours; the high noble in his complicated pleated kilt, bejewelled vest, and transparent over-tunic of *Thésun* gauze; the peasant from the centre of the Empire, attired in a rough homespun kilt and leather buskins; the lady of fashion, dazzlingly white skirts almost touching the ground, her breasts rouged and tantalisingly concealed beneath a collar of starched and lacquered *Chlén* hide, golden chains and pins artfully arranged in her long hair; the gilt and scarlet armour of a soldier from one of the Legions devoted to mightly Karakán; the hurrying scribe, nude to the waist, knee-length kilt stained with *Hnéqu* juice, and painted wooden penbox clacking at his side; the arrogant Livyáni aristocrat, tattooed with delicate traceries of clan and religious symbols in red and blue from head to foot, brocaded cloak draped over one arm, and plumed headdress of *Khéshchal* feathers towering high above the crowd; the bearded Salarvyáni trader, fingers aglitter with rings, kilt and over-shirt of varicoloured vertical strips of *Gúdru* cloth shining in the sunlight like a flowing rainbow; the blue-black leather jerkin and skullcap of a peasant from the Kraá Hills; the priestess of Vimúhla, robed in flame-orange and crowned with a tiara of gold and flame-hued *Chlén* hide — etc. The worldly-wise city merchant learns to recognise them all: their languages, customs, perculiarities, idiosyncrasies, and needs.

Throughout the Five Empires slaves and the very lowest classes of free peasants and city dwellers go naked or wear no more than a twist of rag about their loins. Females are clothed — or unclothed — in much the same way, although adornments and hair-styles differ. Peasants and artisans of somewhat higher standing may work in the nude, but many don a leather apron to protect the body, possibly with the addition of a coarse shawl to keep off the sun. For special occasions a peasant male puts on a kilt of better quality *Firya* cloth, dyed and ornamented with his clan colours and religious symbols, and possibly a short cloth or leather vest, or, in some areas, an over-tunic with elbow-length sleeves. His wife or daughter wears a knee- or ankle-length skirt (depending upon the region) of white or pastel-hued fabric and leaves her upper body bare except for beads, necklaces, and perhaps a stiff collar of painted *Chlén* hide. Both sexes cut their hair in bangs straight across the forehead. Men wear theirs shoulder-length, while women grow their locks long and braid or pin them in a variety of styles. Headdresses differ greatly, ranging from cloth headcloths and fillets in the centre of Tsolyánu and in Mu'ugalavyá; to wide-brimmed straw hats in eastern Tsolyánu, Salarvyá, Jánnu, and Kilalámmu; to *Chlén* hide skullcaps throughout northern Tsolyánu, Yán Kór, and Pijéna; to cowls and turbans in the west and south; to basketcaps from which a cloth coif is hung to protect the neck in the Kúrt Hills and the Chákas, etc. — all contingent upon the wearer's region and his class-clan status. The poorer folk go barefoot; richer peasants wear sandals of straw, wood, or *Chlén* hide; the more affluent possess footgear of leather, buskins,

shoes tied with thongs, or calf-high boots for longer journeys.

The urban lower classes dress much as peasants do. The middle and upper levels of society exhibit a bewildering multiplicity of costumes, however. Most Tsolyáni merchants, artisans, and minor bureaucrats wear a pleated knee-length kilt of thin *Firyá* cloth; this may be dyed or left white, and it is usually bordered with one's clan colours and the insignia of one's faith. A tabard of stiffened *Chlén* hide hangs down from the belt in front to just below the knees, and this is similarly ornamented with small plaques of carved *Chlén* hide, bone, precious metals, beadwork, etc. The torso may be left bare, or it may be covered by a sleeveless vest or tunic of fabric, again blazoned with the symbols of rank and station. Sandals, a light mantle, and a fillet or headdress of lacquered *Chlén* hide complete the costume. Women dress in much the same way, except that the kilt is lengthened to reach the lower calf and may be slit up the sides to allow more freedom of movement. Again, the upper body is left bare, partially concealed beneath a collar of beads, inlay or intaglio work, or lacquered *Chlén* hide sewn with gold and silver thread and hung with little gems. The women of western Tsolyánu and all of Mu'ugalavyá prefer the poncho-like garment mentioned above. In the east, around Fasíltum and Sokátis and on into Salarvyá, women wear a sort of loincloth with the ends hanging down in the front and the back to produce a sort of open-sided skirt. Ladies of these areas wear a loose blouse or a short cape-like over-garment with slits for the wearer's arms instead of the "barer" styles of the south.

Older men and women throughout Tsolyánu, Mu'ugalavyá, Yán Kór, and Salarvyá wear kilts and over-tunics of a fuller cut. Children of both sexes run about naked or with just a "G-string" of twisted *Firyá* cloth — and a clay talisman-bead on a string about the neck to protect them from evil. On "ceremonial occasions" a child may be dressed much like a miniature adult.

The formal costumes of the upper classes vary greatly according to the dictates of fashion. Men's apparel consists of layered kilts of brocade, silky *Gúdru* cloth, and other fabrics. These are cut in dags, panels, and innumerable fantastic patterns. Vests and over-tunics may have long sleeves or short. Collars of lacquered *Chlén* hide extend out from the shoulders in upcurving wings and points. Tabards of rich materials, belts of carved plaques, pectorals of gems, armlets, bracelets, torques, earrings, greave-like calf ornaments, sandals or boots of embossed and begemmed *Vringálu* hide, etc. are all popular but differ from period to period and from one city to the next. Headdresses are similarly variegated, ranging from a simple headband to tall confections of light *Chlén* hide, plumes, and precious metals. Mantles and capes of transparent *Thésun* gauze are worn out-of-doors during the day, while thicker fabrics are preferred for evening wear.

Fashionable women of the aristocracies of the Five Empires attire themselves in some variation of the standard costume of their regions, but finer materials are employed, and costumes are designed both to reveal and to conceal the best points of the wearer's figure. Skirts, kirtles, and mantles are made of the best *Gúdru* cloth or *Thésun* gauze. Gilded and lacquered sandals are currently in style (though of all of the cultures of Tékumel only the harems of the Bednálljan nobility ever wore high heels!). Jewellery tends to be heavy and ornate; bracelets of gold filigree which reach from wrist to elbow, rings, collars, dainty gauntlets of silver chain ending in begemmed thimbles which fit over the fingers, pendants, tiaras, little jewelled cups for the nipples, armlets of gold containing sheathes for several miniature knives or implements of toiletry, earrings (some so massive that they must be supported by a chain fastened in the hair), tiny studs of sparkling stones for the nose, embossed thigh ornaments which depend from cords at the waist, and a thousand other adornments and artifices. Money and other necessities are carried in beaded bags and reticules by naked slavegirls or boys. Hair styles are intricate and may take hours to achieve. The tresses are woven into helmets, coronets, and circlets of precious metals and gems. The eyes are lengthened and darkened with a black paste (Tsolyáni: *Tsúnure*), the lips reddened (or in Salarvyá, blackened) with cosmetics, the cheeks touched with copper-red *Aunú* pollen, and the shoulders and breasts sprinkled with glittering *Renudé* (a talc-like mineral obtained from western Mu'ugalavyá) or with gold dust. Every maiden in the Five Empires may yearn to be a noble lady, the cynosure of all eyes at some lavish Imperial feast, but in reality this status is both costly to maintain and also too elaborate to be very comfortable!

The everyday costume of a priest or a priestess is essentially similar to the apparel of the urban middle classes just described. The vestments mentioned in Sec. 1.610 are worn "on business," but dress requirements are relaxed when one is off duty. A kilt, over-tunic, and a *Chlén* hide headdress or skullcap make up the casual attire of a priest, thus, while his female counterpart wears the skirt or tunic preferred by the women of her region, a collar of stiffened *Chlén* hide, and a fillet of cloth or cord to hold her hair. Ceremonial pontificals are another matter entirely; these differ from temple to temple, Circle to Circle, and from ritual priests to administrators to scholars! Every rite has its specific garments, symbols, implements, and accessories. *Gúdru* cloth and *Thésun* gauze are much employed, as are dozens of other fabrics ranging all the way up to mantles of thick, bejewelled, gold-and-silver-embroidered brocade (Tsolyáni: *Arzhúm*), which cost thousands of *Káitars* and take a year or more to manufacture. Headdresses are prescribed by one's sect, one's status in the hierarchy, and one's part in the rituals. Certain ceremonies call for elaborate helmets; other specify grotesque masques; still others demand towering crowns of *Khéshchal* plumes, etc. The wardrobe of a Grand High Priest (Sec. 1.832) of an important temple contains perhaps 50 vestments for particular rituals and occasions, some costing in excess of 15,000 *Káitars* apiece. The temples do provide such costumes for ceremonial use, but these do not belong to the cleric. More affluent clergymen and women buy their own pontificals and embellish these with their personal clan blazons.

The energies of the Planes Beyond (Sec. 1.620) are dispersed and randomised by metal of any kind. For this reason magic-users are prohibited from wearing armour made of any metal, and even metal jewelerry or items in a backpack, belt pouch, or sack (whether slung over the shoulder or held in the hand) will disrupt the casting of spells if these objects weigh more than about 60 grammes. A sorcerer may carry a maximum of 20 *Káitars* on his person, therefore, or perhaps a small metal dagger in lieu of these. His wealth must be transported in the form of gems or letters of credit (Sec. 1.550 and 1.731). All other metal items must either be left behind or be carried by a comrade or a slave. The caster of ritual spells (Sec. 1.620) is further required to keep his limbs free for the gestures of his incantations; he is thus restricted to partial armour: a helmet or headdress and a light breastplate of *Chlén* hide are possible, and he may protect his arms and legs with leather. He may not wear greaves or vambraces of *Chlén* hide. The psychic magic-user is not so limited. He may wear full *Chlén* hide plate armour and carry a *Chlén* hide shield if he wishes. Both types of magicians may bear *Chlén* hide weapons, but the ritual sorcerer must drop these in order to cast his spells.

Any magic-user may carry a metal weapon and a shield, of course, if he is prepared to drop these or hand them over to another person whenever he wishes to cast a spell. Indeed, he can attend a feast garbed in full steel armour if he desires, although this will be thought excessively paranoid. Sorcerers have formal costumes, just as other citizens do, and metal ornaments and accessories are natural and proper on festive occasions — after all, one does not go to a pary attired in one's work-clothes! If a mage believes that there may be magical combat, however, his choice of apparel will probably be a cloth kilt, a tunic or vest of fabric or leather, perhaps an over-robe or cape, a *Chlén* hide headdress, and a breastplate of the same material. Any jewellery or ornaments will consist of lacquered *Chlén* hide, gems, stone, bone, or other non-metallic substances. He may carry a leather pouch for scrolls, magical ingredients, and other paraphernalia. If he chooses to bear a physical weapon as well, this will probably be a mace or weighted staff — few magic-users have the training and skill needed to stand up against an expert swordsman, etc. Not many of this profession think it worth the bother and the risk to wear metal armour or even carry metal weapons when "on business," moreover. It takes time to shed or throw down these items; a bearer slave may run off taking the socerer's possessions with him; or the party may be forced to flee while the mage's goods are lying on the ground, thus possibly losing them forever.

It should be noted that "Eyes" (Sec. 1.620), amulets, and certain other ancient magico-technological devices are non-metallic and may be borne by a magic-user without disrupting his powers. Various metal objects consecrated to the deities also do not disturb the

energies of the Planes Beyond for reasons not understood: e.g. the *Kü'nűr* and the *Ţetkúmne* (the sacrificial knives of the temples of Sárku and Vimúhla, respectively), the *Ta'ón* (a ritual instrument used in the underground rites of Sárku), etc. These implements can never be employed as weapons, however; to do so runs the risk of Divine retribution.

Undress military uniform consists of the ubiquitous knee-length kilt, a soft shirt or tunic of *Firyá* cloth, a light *Chlén* hide breastplate or pectoral, possibly greaves of the same material, boots or sandals, the distinctive helmet or headdress of one's Legion, and a sword and dagger hung on a belt or baldric. Off-duty military personnel dress much as do civilians of the same class and clan status. On formal occasions, however, officers of the rank of Captain (Sec. 1.810) and above go arrayed in elaborate splendour; lacquered and gilded *Chlén* hide armour; an articulated collar with shoulder-pieces ending in upcurving wings; vambraces and greaves; boots with the toes turned up into points, flanges, or stylised demon faces; an elegant sword winking with gems and brilliants at the hip; and possibly a mantle of *Gűdru* cloth, brocade, or featherwork. Helmets differ from Legion to Legion, but many of these are crested with sculptures and fantastic ornaments, and long *Khéshchal* plumes hang down the back almost to the floor. A Senior General's court costume may cost in excess of 10,000 *Kaitars*. All of this panoply has little defensive value, needless to say, and were it not that most of these garments are made of light *Chlén* hide, its weight would be insupportable. Its purpose is to surround the wearer with the panache of authority and reflected Imperial glory, and in this it succeeds admirably. In contrast, field armour and "serious" battle weapons (Sec. 1.960) are relatively plain, solid, and practical.

Every nation has its own distinctive costumes. Slaves, peasants, and poor urban dwellers are nearly unanimous in their nudity, although there are indeed some differences. In Yán Kór, Saá Allaqí, and Pijéna, for example, even impoverished freemen feel the need for some sort of ragged kilt, leather apron, or twist of cloth about their loins when outside of their homes. Skullcaps of fabric or *Chlén* hide are also considered necessary. The rural folk of Livyánu go about informally with no clothing at all, on the other hand, but they don a toga-like mantle when marketing or visiting the temple. The lower classes of Mu'ugalavyá are much as was described for Tsolyánu, while poorer Salarvyáni favour a one-piece shoulder-to-knee tunic of black-dyed *Firyá* cloth.

Throughout the north (Yán Kór, Pijéna, Saá Allaqí, and over into Chayákku) the middle and upper classes prefer longer kilts, over-tunics with short sleeves, leggings of leather or high-laced sandals, capes edged with coloured velvets or brocade, and the ominpresent *Chlén* hide skullcap. The priesthoods display the same variety and complexity of costume found amongst the Tsolyáni, but the details deffer somewhat. The women of these northern lands wear the poncho-like tunic found in western Tsolyánu and the Chákas. This is frequently laced down the sides, however, and in addition a tight-fitting bodice of *Chlen* hide or some thicker fabric is worn to support and partially conceal the breasts. Women rarely employ headgear and braid their tresses in two elaborate "wheels" over the ears at the sides of the head.

Urban Mu'ugalavyáni men wear short kilts reaching to mid-thigh, cloth or leather vests laced in front, a tabard of stiffened fabric or *Chlén* hide which depends from the waist to just above the knees, and sandals. Males shave the sides of the head, leaving a "crest" on top and shoulder-length locks in the back. Women wear their hair long, binding it in a single hip-length tress with pins and ribbons. Priests and priestesses of Hrúsh (Sec. 1.610) differ from their Tsolyáni counterparts in that they wear full floor-length robes of red-dyed *Firyá* cloth. These have long, open sleeves. When the wearer is on duty, a surplice of lighter red, a pectoral of gold incised with the symbols of priestly rank, and a masqued helmet of *Chlén* hide are added. The women of eastern Mu'ugalavyá wear the poncho-like garment mentioned above. In the central plains one encounters full calf-length skirts of many coloured vertical strips, a short-sleeved blouse which ends just below the breasts, and over this a thin, gauzy shawl which is wrapped around the shoulders, crossed over the breasts, and tied at the waist. More Livyáni influence is felt in the cities of the south (e.g. Ch'óchi and Khéiris), and maidens favour a broad girdle belt from which two strips of silky cloth hang down to the ankles fore and aft, a broad collar of ornamented fabric or *Chlen* hide, and a mantle attached to the collar at the nape of the neck and caught up over one arm.

Salarvyani males are partial to a sleeveless shoulder-to-knee tunic coloured black with the dye obtained from the *Vrelq* crustacean. A surcoat of vertically striped *Gudru* cloth, loose, and fringed at the borders, is worn over this. Men wear their hair and beards long, curling and pomading their tresses with perfumed oils. Women cut their locks short just below the ears, giving the effect of a helmet or skullcap of gleaming black. Only males use headgear: in the west one encounters wide-brimmed hats of fabric or straw, often with a coif to protect the neck and shoulders; the central regions favour high-pointed quilted caps, sometimes with decorated earflaps from which strips of cloth sewn with little plaques and gems hang down over the breasts; and in the east the custom is only a simple headcloth held in place by a fillet of metal or cord. A priest or priestess of Shiringgayi or one of the other Salarvyani deities wears a collar of *Chlen* hide. A narrow strip of fabric dyed in the deep indigo of the Goddess (or in the colour of one of the other Gods) is attached to this at the back, passed between the legs, and is brought up again to be fastened to the collar in front at the throat with a brooch, making a curious sort of diaper-tunic. A broad belt is then clasped around the waist, and the costume is completed with a floor-length, long sleeved surcoat of transparent *Gudru* cloth. None of the Salarvyani priesthoods employes headdresses (except the Legion of the Loving Hand, which wears plumed black casques; cf. Sec. 1.740), but clergy of both sexes may wear earrings and tiaras as personal adornment. Generally speaking, ladies of the upper classes other than priestesses favour a flounced, sewn skirt of many horizontal lappets, a blouse of black-dyed netting, and a floor-length mantle fastened at the left shoulder and draped diagonally across the body, leaving the right arm bare except for an armlet blazoned with the family emblem.

Greater nudity is the rule in Livyanu. This may be attributed to the hot climate, but it probably also has much to do with the need to display the intricate tattooes (Livyani: *Aomuz*) with which the upper classes cover their entire bodies. These are said to indicate one's ancestry, clan and class status, and rank in the temple hierarchy, but only another Livyani of the same level can "read" them. In any case, Livyani males go about naked except for a harness of straps, plaques, and other ornaments. At most, a man may wear a kilt of thin coloured cloth; this is fastened to the belt at the left hip and hangs down diagonally to just above the right knee. A long cape of silky fabric is worn out-of-doors. Sandals or calf-length boots of *Chlen* hide or cloth are employed for journeys. Both sexes wear their hair long: men braid theirs and wind it around the head, while women allow their tresses to cascade freely down the back. Headdresses are a necessary part of one's apparel. These are complex and varied, being constructed of *Chlen* hide, mother-of-pearl, and precious stones. Formal occasions demand towering helmets so elaborate that they must be strapped to wicker frameworks on the back, and their trailing *Kheshchal* plumes have to be borne by pages. The ceremonial vestments of the Livyani temples are unknown. These are only worn for the rituals and are never shown to foreigners. Outside of the sacred precincts Livyani priests and priestesses are indistinguishable from the rest of the citizenry. The noblewomen of Livyanu usually remain in seclusion, but if they must go out they cover their bodies with little more than jewellery, as their menfolk do; curiously enough, however, they conceal their faces beneath *Chlen* hide masques which represent the creatures and demons of their mythology.

The men of the northeastern states, Jannu, Kilalammu, and parts of the Chaigari Protectorate of Tsolyanu wear calf-length kilts, short-sleeved tunics, a broad sash in which money and valuables are knotted, and low leather shoes or taller boots. Warriors employ two baldrics crossed over the chest: one for a dagger (and sometimes a belt-pouch) and the other for the long-bladed sawtoothed sword used in the region. Out-of-doors, an ankle-length robe may be added; this has broad sleeves trimmed with fur, and instead of a collar there may be a cowl. Headdresses other than this hood are uncommon. As one goes eastward through Chayakku the costume of women changes from that favoured in Yan Kor to a full skirt, a short-sleeved blouse, and a bodice or sash of brightly coloured cloth. As said in Sec. 1.530, females of this area do not appear before strangers without a thin headcloth which is pulled across the face as a veil. The Lorun of the

far north wear breeks of heavy fabric, felt, or leather; long-sleeved woollen blouses; and fur mantles with hoods. Women's attire is similar to men's, except that the blouse is longer, reaching to the knees. Both sexes wear soft felt or leather boots, cross-gartered to the knees. The costumes of the N'luss, the Ghatoni, and the natives of the aberrant city of Hlikku in Yan Kor were noted in Sec. 1.530.

Both sexes in Tsolei wear nothing more than a single shawl or mantle of coloured cloth. This is draped over the shoulders, wrapped around the waist, or is discarded at the wearer's whim. A kilt of cloth or leather may be worn while fishing or working out-of-doors, and a pouch or a beaded bag is slung over the shoulder to hold one's possessions. Men go bareheaded, but women often don headdresses of brightly coloured seashells strung together on cords. Both sexes wear their hair long and loose. In Haida Pakala it is customary for males to wear knee-length trousers of soft fabric belted at the waist, sleeveless vests, sandals, and flat leather caps sewn all over with brilliants and bits of gold or silver. Both men and women shave their heads and bodies entirely, but ladies then wear wigs of faience plaques, strings of coral, or beadwork. The usual costume for women of Haida Pakala is a floor-length, long-sleeved gown of thin, netted cloth. This is slit to the hip at the sides to allow greater freedom of movement. Commoners in the Nyemesel Isles are permitted only a G-string or a loincloth wrapped around the waist and tucked between the legs. Priests and priestesses of Mretten attire themselves in voluminous, rustling togas of soft-woven sea-grass, however, and these become increasingly intricate as one rises in rank. Men wear black, deep blue, and dull red, while women employ white (only for widows and the elderly), yellows, ochres, and greens. Again, both sexes remove all hair from the head and body. Males wear pointed skullcaps made of basketry or sometimes of a single great *Nha* shell, and a sort of turban may be wrapped around this. Women cover their bald pates with headcloths held in place by a corded cap or a tiara of gold wire.

The costumes of modern Mihallu are complex, being cut to resemble the fashions of the ancient Engsvanyali as preserved in manuscripts and on the monuments. A man may wear a long robe bordered front with rows of carved plaques; a calf-length pleated kilt and a short-sleeved blouse; tight-fitting pajamas and a pectoral of leather set with gems; a one-piece tunic and hip-high hose — etc. A woman's costume may range similarly all the way from bejewelled nudity through sweeping gowns and flounced skirts, to a mantle which covers the entire body but has slits for the wearer's head and hands. What the present-day Mihalli do not recognise is that they are copying fashions and styles which were not used simultaneously but which developed over the many thousands of years of Engsvanyali history! For example, the *Mremel* — a cap of beaten gold which has an attached face-masque made of a netting of lace-like golden chains — was popular only amongst the court ladies of Ganga during the reign of Dharumesh Mssa VI and was thereafter abandoned. Yet one finds the *Mremel* being worn in conjunction with the *Arluron*, a costume consisting of a diaphanous robe of pierced panels of *Gudru* cloth and a chain-link belt, used by the Priest-kings' courtesans a millenium later in the time of the Rebellion of the Right Hand. The nobles of Mihallu disdain all instruction, and if criticised, they simply point to their original sources.

The sartorial practices of the peoples of M'morcha and Nmartusha were noted in Sec. 1.530. The natives of Rannalu and the nomads of the Desert of Sighs in Milumanaya superficially resemble one another in that both have an ample leather cloak as their main item of apparel. The former wear nothing beneath this mantle, however, although their womenfolk often don a loincloth of coarse woven fibres (or of cloth bartered from Salarvyani traders). The latter favour a brief under-tunic of *Hma* wool and knee-high leather boots or sandals, plus a headcloth held in place by a circlet of tasseled cords. In the desert this voluminous leather cloak is employed to retain moisture and keep out the heat during the day, and it is also useful as camouflage when stalking game or ambushing one's foes. According to one Yan Koryani officer, "It is when one can see nothing but empty sand dunes that one is most likely to be surrounded by the accursed tribesmen of these desolate wastes!"

Only three of the nonhuman races wear much clothing in the human sense of the term, as stated in Sec. 1.530: the Mihalli, the Shunned Ones, and the Urunen. The first of these species prefers pantaloons of some thin fabric, the wide cuffs of which may be left loose to swirl about the ankles or else are stuffed into calf-high boots. A broad girdle of thicker cloth, metal chain, or *Chlen* hide protects the waist and the lower torso below the four breasts. The upper body is left bare. Elaborate helmets and plumed headdresses are worn by Mihalli leaders, while lesser individuals seem to be permitted skullcaps or less complex headgear. Collars of curiously decorated enamelled or inlaid metalwork, armbands, and bracelets complete the costume. For travelling, a Mihalli may also employ a floor-length mantle, sometimes hooded and sometimes clasped with a brooch or a collar-like neckpiece at the throat. The ragged, flapping robes and cowls of the Shunned Ones are objects of terror in the folktales of Yan Kor and Saa Allaqi. It is thought that these are meant more as protection from the atmosphere and sunlight of Tekumel than as articles of dress. Beneath these cloaks this species wears tightly wrapped "puttees" of coarse fabric smeared with a blackish ichor. These are wound around not only the calves but also around the thighs, biceps, and forearms. In addition, some Shunned Ones are found with waist-to-knee kilts cut in strange points and dags. The taller leaders of this race (Sec. 1.810) may also have a pectoral of mirror-bright gold or electrum held to the torso by further windings of fabric strips. Other than the aforementioned cowls, no headgear seems to be employed. The Urunen possess a variety of garments and styles. Everyday costume consists of little more than a brightly coloured loincloth for males and a waist-to-knee skirt held by a drawstring knotted at the right hip for females. On special occasions both sexes don neck-to-knee over-tunics with wide, puffed sleeves. Males add short capes, harnesses of crossed straps, laced leggings or boots, and metal helmets which lie flat along the long snout and sweep back to cover the skull. These last frequently have combs, crests, and fans of colourful necklaces and pendants, small caps of beaten metal to which mantles are attached, and the *Evuyu*, an over-cape of gauzy white cloth which is fastened to each arm just above the elbow by a golden armlet and allowed to trail along the floor behind the wearer.

1.960. ARMOUR AND WEAPONS

Gold, silver, copper, and lead are relatively common on Tekumel. Enough tin and zinc can be obtained to make bronze and brass sufficient for most purposes. The planet's light core and the exhaustion of deposits over the millenia have made iron and steel very rare and costly, however, and this, plus the ease with which *Chlen* hide (Sec. 1.415) can be procured, has influenced military developments ever since the Time of Darkness.

There are indeed small iron mines in every one of the Five Empires and in some of the other states as well. On map 1 these are found in the foothills of the Praku Chaya Hills in Mu'ugalavya (hexes 4518 and 4418); in the Tlashte Heights of Livyanu (hexes 3020, 3122, and 2924); in Shenyu in hex 0821); and in Ra in hex 1120. There are rumours of important new sources in the unknown lands in the southwestern corner of map 1. On map 2, the mines near Butrus in Pan Chaka (hex 3506) are almost exhausted, but Tsolyanu still has a fair supply from the foothills of Bey Trantis Peak (hex 3720), in the Chayengar Range (hexes 3725 and 3626), and near Sokatis (hexes 3224 and 3225). All of Yan Kor's iron is sent down to the forges at Dharu by barge from Kharcha Sark (hexes 5821, 5922, and 5822), while Saa Allaqi depends upon small mines in the Jannu Range (hexes 5125 and 5126). The Salarvyani still work the ancient pits of the Tamkade Bay region (hexes 1821 and 1922), but much of the iron used in this part of the continent comes from the great mines of the Rekhmel lineage of Teshkoa in Pechano (map 3: hexes 2805, 2705, and 2706). In the eastern regions of Salarvya iron is obtained near Khirre in the rugged hills of Kchana Head (map 4: hexes 1913 and 2013) and from open pits near Ssormu (hex 2820). The Ahoggya of Onmu Tle Hlektis are also said to have iron mines, but the truth of this is not known. The resources of the tribal areas, the far northeast, Jannu and Kilalammu, Haida Pakala, etc. have not yet been carefully explored, but there is probably little hope of finding large deposits. The many civilisations of Tekumel's long past would certainly have found most of them and used them up, and the planet's geology is such that major lodes are not to be expected.

The rarity of iron — and the fact that it is the one metal which can easily accept "charges" of power from the Planes Beyond and thus become "enchanted" (Sec. 1.620) — make it more precious than gold.

A person who has an iron tool or weapon is counted fortunate indeed. An iron or steel object is sold or given only as a last resort, and even if an individual wishes to dispose of such an article, his clan may forbid him from doing so. Very, very few armourers in the Five Empires every have steel items for open sale — and then only at fantastic prices: perhaps hundreds or even a thousand times the cost of an equivalent implement of bronze or *Chlen* hide! Should an armourer acquire a steel weapon, it is quickly snapped up by buyers from the governments, the military, the temples, various noble clans, or even wealthy individuals. A lower-class person who comes across a steel weapon had best sell it at once for whatever he can get; otherwise he must expect to have it wrested from him — bought, confiscated, or stolen outright — by the agents of one of these powerful and ever-interested parties.

Many institutions and groups do possess considerable stocks of iron and steel artifacts. There is even supposedly a fair quantity of "enchanted" steel — weapons and armour strengthened by energies from the Planes Beyond. These things are guarded, cared for, and handed down with almost religious reverence from generation to generation, and they are brought forth only in times of great crisis. The chambers beneath Avanthar, it is said, would be emptied only if an enemy were at the gates of the fortress itself, as occurred in 2,020 A.S. The temples are even more tightfisted, fearing the jealousy and trickery of their rivals — and the power of the state. It is known that storehouses line the spiral staircase called "The Well Which Pierces the World" beneath the Temple of the Worm-Lord in the City of Sarku, and that these contain enough steel to outfit half the legions of the Empire. The canny priests, however, have refused to bring their contents forth into the light of day for over 2,000 years. Not even when the forces of Empress Shaira Su, "the Divine Daughter of Thumis," besieged the city in 974 A.S. did the Grand Adept of Sarku permit his own troops, the Battalions of the Seal of the Worm, to make use of these weapons and armour. Many Legions do have steel equipment for some of their Cohorts, it must be added, but this belongs to the Legion and not to the individual soldier, and it is only distributed when the unit faces a crucial campaign. The great clans and noble houses have less in the way of steel; they, too, protect their possessions with extreme care and vigour. A few of the highest potentates of the Five Empires have collected enough iron and steel items to equip their bodyguards, moreover, but such individuals are rare — and too watchful to be easily cheated.

Almost any one of the patrons mentioned above may occasionally be persuaded to loan a steel weapon, suit of armour, etc. to a loyal employee or follower in order to ensure the success of a special mission. Less commonly, a military officer, warrior priest, or valiant clanbrother may be gifted with an item of iron or steel in return for some feat of heroism. This is usually a "lifetime gift," to be retained as long as the recipient lives and to be restored to its original owners upon his demise. Patrons do indeed bestow steel equipment permanently upon truly outstanding contributors to their causes, but instances are rare and may be compared with the conferral of a noble title upon a favoured vassal during the First Middle Ages of old Earth.

In spite of mining and exploration, the amount of iron available in the Five Empires is too meagre to supply the demands of the governments and the aristocracies. The best sources for iron and steel thus remain the caches of the Underworlds (Sec. 1.424), where the remains of a hundred civilisations lie buried in perpetual darkness. Governments, military legions, temples, high clans, and wealthy individuals may thus be willing to hire bravos to seek steel artifacts in these labyrinths. The pay for such escapades is excellent. Some patrons will further aid their parties with men and weapons — and even share the loot. Yet the traps and guardians of the ancients are dangerous enough to make any adventurer think twice. "The dawn breeze presages the ending of the night, but no breath of air disturbs the cerements of the tomb," to quote the anonymous composer of "The Hymn to Na-Iverge."

Chlen hide is found all across the great continent. It is easily worked and can be made more or less flexible and malleable through the arts of the tanners' clans. At best, it has the hardness and durability of a fair grade of bronze. It also weighs much less than other metals commonly found on Tekumel. A cubic centimetre of water at 20 degrees C. has a density of 1 gramme. The same amount of iron weighs (i.e. has a density of) 7.86 g, of copper 8.92 g, of zinc 7.14 g, of tin, 7.3 g, of silver 10.49 g, of lead 11.34 g, of gold 19.3 g, and of platinum 21.5 g. Bronze made in the Five Empires normally consists of about 90 percent copper and 10 percent of tin (including small quantities of other materials); 1 c. cm of bronze thus has a density of approximately 8.75 g, and brass, too, falls within the same general range. The average density of 1 cubic cm of *Chlen* hide is 2.35 g. Taking this figure as a constant (it is not, really; there are regional and seasonal variations, and even pieces obtained simultaneously from different parts of the same animal may differ somewhat), the weights of similar items of steel and *Chlen* hide can be compared. The advantages of the latter are obvious, and were it not for the strength of steel, there would be scarely any reason for the warriors of Tekumel to prefer it at all!

Item	Weight if made of steel	Weight if made of Chlen hide
One-handed sword	1.568 kg	.469 kg
Two-handed sword of the Tsolyani Legion of the Lord of Red Devastation (18th Imperial Medium Infantry)	4.480 kg	1.339 kg
Armour and helmet worn by the Tsolyani Golden Sunburst Legion (11th Imperial Medium Infantry)	11.200 kg	3.349 kg
Armour and helmet worn by the Tsolyani Legion of Serqu, Sword of the Empire (14th Imperial Heavy Infantry)	17.920 kg	5.358 kg

Armour is constructed in many ways. Padded or quilted coats are relatively common in the states of the northeast and amongst the Lorun, but this form of protection is less useful in the hotter climes of the south, and it is restricted there to peasants and those who can afford nothing better. Leather coverage is encountered almost universally (except for those tribal areas where clothing itself is rare), and cuir-boulli (leather boiled in oil or water to harden it) is employed in Yan Kor, Saa Allaqi, the states of the northeast, Jannu, Kilalammu, and occasionally elsewhere as well. Archers, slingers, sappers, and support troops often wear leather tunics and simple helmets of *Chlen* hide.

Light, flexible mail is made by cutting thin strips of *Chlen* hide and bonding the ends together to produce small rings. Aventails and coifs for the head and neck, sleeves for the upper arms, and kilts to cover the abdomen and thighs are produced in this way. Neck-to-knee hauberks of mail are popular and are employed as standard battle dress by legions of many lands. The advantage of mail is that it is constructed from scraps of *Chlen* hide and is therefore cheaper than defenses composed of larger plates. Scale-mail (overlapping scales or small plaques of bronze or *Chlen* hide sewn upon a leather garment) are equally cheap and efficacious. This type of coverage is favoured by the N'luss, who also wear knee-to-ankle greaves made by this method. Lamellar armour (small plates each pierced with three holes and joined together with leather thongs) is encountered in Pechano, Yan Kor(e.g. the typical torso defences of the *Gurek* of the Valiant of Yan Kor), and eastern Salarvya. Examples made of plates of the *Nha* shell are known from the Nyemesel Isles and Haida Pakala; this material has about the hardness and durability of cuir-boulli. Banded or laminated armour (thick, stiff strips of *Chlen* hide attached to one another with leather straps, rather like the Lorica Segmentata of the Roman Empire) is perhaps the commonest form of armour. Larger plates are used for breast and back protection. Shoulder and thigh coverings of plates joined by sliding rivets or straps are equally frequent. Many methods — hooks, hinges, pins, buckles, laces, etc. — are employed to hold the various pieces of armour together and yet allow the wearer maximum freedom of movement. It must not be thought that the full armour of a heavy infantryman of Tekumel is identical with the cap-a-pie coverage of the knights of the later Middle Ages of Earth, however. The greatest disadvantage of armour is not so much its weight as its lack of ventilation, and on a hot world such as Tekumel a 16th Century Terran chevalier would soon be cooked in his harness just as the fisherfolk of Tsolei bake the little *Nanggal* crab in its shell!

It is very difficult to characterise the various styles of armour worn by the troops of the Five Empires and the other nations of the

continent. Every legions has its standard costume, dictated by historical tradition, regional preferences, and the whims of its commanders and patrons. Within a unit, styles become more elaborate as one rises through the ranks from common soldier to general. Dress armour (Sec. 1.950) differs from combat armour — etc. One can only provide a few broad generalisations and refer the reader to published drawings of Tekumel's military costumes. These, however, concentrate upon "parade" armour rather than the plainer varieties worn in battle. Some of the Legions of Tsolyanu are pictured in "The Armies of Tekumel, Volume I: Tsolyanu" (by M.A.R. Barker and Gary Rudolph, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1978). Other volumes in this series are planned. Briefly, then, the armour types used by the nations of the continent are as follows:

1. Headgear: the Tsolyani helmet is usually a form of the burgonet, with neck coverage and ear-pieces. Most Legions favour an open-faced helmet or one with an adjustable visor to guard the eyes and nose. The Mu'ugalavyani employ a kettle-hat with a downward-slanting rim all around; this "cookpot," as the other nations call it, may have a low crest or finial and a mail tippet to protect the ears and neck. Taller, conical helms which rise to sharp spikes or plumed knobs are the fashion in Salarvya and Pechano; these may have detachable ear-pieces, mail or laminated neck defences, and short visors. Many (but by no means all) Yan Koryani units wear the *Khil*, a close-fitting pointed skullcap which has an upstanding row of plates all around its rim (sometimes connected by a flat top), giving it the appearance of a fluted cylinder. The *Khil* has a short, pointed visor, round ear-pieces, and a mail aventail. There may also be a central crest or plume-holder. Other Yan Koryani legions utilise different styles, ranging from skullcaps to sallets and barbutas. Livyani helmets usually consist of tall, cylindrical casques with attached "wings" and plumes. Flat-topped helmets with downward-turning "beak" visors, Mu'ugalavyani-style "cookpots," and several other styles are also worn. The N'luss employ a conical cap to which reinforcing bands are attached (like the ancient German *Spangenhlem*). A tufted crest is added, dyed in the colours of the war-band or in those of the nation which the wearer serves. The Ghatoni and Pijenani follow the fashions of Yan Kor, while heavier and more complex helms are the tradition of Saa Allaqi. Chayakku and the states of the northeast prefer variations of the *Spangenhelm* or plain, round-topped caps of bronze or *Chlen* hide. These may have a spike or a transverse crest and a mail aventail. The nobles of these little countries wear similar helmets but with a crown of upward-projecting spikes and points. Flat-topped *Chlen* hide hats with a broad brim all around are the rule in Jannu and Kilalammu, while the gilded, plumed, and high-crested headgear of Mihallu can only be described as fantastic in the extreme. The soldiers of this nation are famous for fluted work, onion-domed casques, and carved demon-crests — all imitations of one or another Engsvanyali prototype. The islanders of Tsolei use plain skullcaps, sometimes with hanging lappets of leather or *Chlen* hide to protect the neck and ears. Flat leather caps covered with broad bands of *Chlen* hide are the custom in Haida Pakala (a similar form of headgear is worn, curiously enough, by the famed archers of Makhis in Yan Kor). The Haida Pakalani also wear the egg-shaped, domed helmets of *Nha* shell popular in the Nyemesel Isles. The latter usually wrap this helmet with several coloured cloth strips, making it look like a sort of turban. Helmets are unknown in the tribal areas of M'mocha, Nmartusha, Rannalu, the Desert of Sighs, and the Lorun regions of Yan Kor. The inhabitants of Pelesar in Milumanaya wear a motley collection of borrowed styles, while the eastern Milumanayani follow the practices of Tsolyanu and use a spike-crested burgonet. It may be added that those Lorun who have come south to serve the Baron of Yan Kor have adopted a distinctive broad-brimmed kettle-hat with an upstanding lanceolate crest. There are innumerable other fashions — almost as many as there are legions — or soldiers! Tall, flat-topped cylinders wound with gold or bronze tubing are presumed to be from Lost Bayarsha, for example. Fully masqued helmets, some with a bevor to protect the chin, are used by a few legions all across the continent, but these are hot and restrict vision more than the soldiers of Tekumel might desire. Examples include: the Tsolyani Legion of the Deep Purple Dark (16th Imperial Heavy Infantry); Legion I of the Fourth Palace of Mu'ugalavya, named "Imperishable"; the *Nchesh* of Power Upon the Land, funded by the Hruchchaqsha family of Chame'el in Salarvya; the *Lluneb* of the Dead Hand of Quyo, of the *Charoneb* of Hemektu in Livyanu; and the strange, long-beaked visors of the heavy troops of the *Gurek* of Hekekka Nna from nothern Yan Kor. Some of these visors are made to resemble beasts, birds, skulls (favoured by those units loyal to Sarku and Durritlamish), demons, and other beings.
2. Neck and shoulder defences: all of the Five Empires except Salarvya employ a broad collar (Tsolyani: *Tsukehlmri*). This is slipped over the head and fastened in front. Epaulettes extend out over the shoulders and end in up-curving wings, spikes, demon faces, etc. Thinner lappets, panels, and tabards may be added to hand down over the breast and back. The *Tsukehlmri* is often articulated, operating upon sliding rivets to permit the wearer to raise his arms. A good tanner, furthermore, can make one part of a panel of *Chlen* hide hard and stiff, leaving other areas of the same piece soft and flexible. The shoulder plates are thus kept strong and rigid, while those over the torso and the back are left more pliant. The Salarvyani and the Pechani prefer a different system, said to date back to the Bednalljans or even to the Fishermen Kings: the breastplate and backplate are connected by a series of broad *Chlen* hide straps which pass over the shoulders. Other types of shoulder-guards — pauldrons of plate, mail, bands attached to an under-tunic, etc. — are favoured by units all across the Five Empires, depending upon local tradition. Lighter troops usually have no shoulder protection at all. Some rely upon the mail aventail of the helmet, reinforcing this with little plaques of *Chlen* hide. Aside from the inhabitants of Mihallu, whose armour is elaborate and cumbersome in the extreme, most of the smaller nations lack specific shoulder defences, although mail hauberks, tunics sewn with scales, leather shirts with bosses or studs of metal or *Chlen* hide, etc. fulfill this function to some extent.
3. Arm defences: relatively few of the legions of the Five Empires employ articulated plates for the upper arm. Sleeves of mail or scales are common, however, as are tunics of fabric or leather sewn with little plaques or bosses. Elbow guards (couters) are practically unknown, except in Mihallu, amongst the Livyani heavy legions, and as part of the armour of the Mu'ugalavyani special legion, the Mourners in Sable. Vambraces for the forearm are almost universal, on the other hand. These are frequently made of two hinged plates, carved, set with spikes and ridges, and inlaid with metal and gems. Less affluent units rely upon bands of flexible *Chlen* hide or thick leather wound around the wrist and fastened near the elbow. Others use metal rings put on as one would a series of bracelets. Leather arm-guards are also common. Gauntlets are not employed by combat troops. Soldiers carry leather gloves for work purposes, of course, but these bear the stigma of the artisan and the middle classes and are therefore disdained in battle. A few units (e.g. certain Livyani heavy infantry contingents) do protect the back of the hand with a triangular flap of mail extending out of the vambrace and held to the base of the middle finger with a ring.
4. Torso defenses: hinged or buckled breast- and backplates are worn by most of the medium and heavy troops of the

Five Empires. These are moulded to fit each individual soldier by the tanner-armourers of the quartermaster corps. Coats of mail, scales, lamellar plaques, bands working upon sliding rivets, and other devices are favoured by this unit or that, again depending upon local prejudices. The *Gurek* of Ngaku in Yan Kor, for instance, favours a neck-to-ankle mail coat (often bronze!) with half-sleeves and mail vambraces. Not too far to the west, the *Gurek* of Daiche Hetrudakte, from the town of Greggeesa, wears a *Chlen* hide banded tunic and an oval pectoral attached by straps to the collar and also to the waist-belt. This latter costume is similar to that worn by several heavy Salarvyani units. It is thus extremely difficult to make generalisations. Of the smaller nations, only Mihallu employs articulated body armour. The rest make do with a breastplate (often with no backplate), mail brigandines or hauberks (e.g. the states of the northeast, Januu, and Kilalammu), coats of plates (e.g. the N'luss), or tunics sewn with scales. The troops of the Nyemesel Isles are unique in wearing neck-to-thigh coats upon which vertical rows of fish bones (the ribs of the *Che* fish) have been stitched. It is said that this provides almost as much protection as does *Chlen* hide.

5. Lower body defences: kilts or skirts of thick fabric or mail are the commonest type of protection for this part of the body. Belts of plaques or tabards are frequently worn over this, and many units employ waist-to-knee pteruges (hanging leather straps covered with little plaques of *Chlen* hide). Articulated tasses (bands of *Chlen* hide working upon sliding rivets) are favoured by some of the heavy legions of Tsolyanu, Mu'ugalavya, and Livyanu, and certain units of Mihallu even use a fauld (a projecting bell-shaped skirt made of one solid *Chlen* hide plate)! This again is a misinterpretation of the pictorial records of the Engsvanyali. Light and medium troops wear only a cloth kilt and a single tabard of stiff *Chlen* hide to guard the abdomen and the groin. Most of the smaller nations have no specific armour for the lower body, relying upon mail hauberks (e.g. the states of the northeast), thick kilts of cloth or leather reinforced with studs or bosses, or simply the fighter's prowess to deflect blows aimed at this part of his person. The warriors of M'morcha and Nmartusha wear skirts made of the broad, resilient leaves of the *Tekai* tree attached to a wide girdle of *Ava* fibre. This gives about the same protection as *Chlen* hide. These tribes wear no armour on the upper torso, however.
6. Leg defences: articulated sets of cuisses (thigh-plates), poleyns (knee-guards), and greaves (for the shin and lower leg) are very rare. The place of the cuisses has been taken by the mail skirts, tabards, etc. mentioned above under (5), while greaves with upward-projecting plates are used to protect the knee and the lower leg. Greaves usually consist of a single stout plate of *Chlen* hide, strapped to the calf, and often decorated with carvings, inlay work, projecting spikes and ridges, etc. Some greaves have a second plate hinged or laced to the first to guard the back of the calf. Leather leggings faced with *Chlen* hide plates are also common. Lighter troops wind leather straps or "puttees" around the lower leg, and one occasionally sees cross-gartered "stockings" of cloth or leather. The scale greaves of the N'luss were mentioned above. Almost all soldiers except light skirmishers wear sandals or boots. Many of these have *Chlen* hide plates to protect the foot, and not a few end in spikes or flanges which can be used to good effect in close combat. Full sabatons of *Chlen* hide plates are used by some of the heavier units. Warriors of the smaller nations have sandals or boots of less complicated forms, and many go barefoot.
7. Baldrics and belts: the elaborate girdles of plaques, panels, tabards, and hanging straps used by many soldiers have been noted above. Most of the swords of the Five Empires are too broad-bladed and oddly shaped (see below) to fit into scabbards. The Roman gladius, the broadsword, the raiper, and even the sabre would be unfamiliar to most of the warriors of Tekumel. Slashing, chopping, and catching the opponent's weapon in the points and hooks of one's own are favoured fighting styles, rather than thrusting with the tip. Swords are thus attached to the waist with straps and a spring clip (Tsolyani: *Sarelqe*) into which the blade is fitted just beneath the hilt. There is no scabbard, and the weapon thus hangs bare-bladed at one's side. The *Sarelqe* holds the sword only by pressure, so that it can be swiftly withdrawn, but the clip can be buttoned shut when no danger threatens. Two-handed weapons, packs, and other equipment are strapped to the back. Quivers for arrows, crossbow quarrels, etc. are slung across one shoulder on a belt of leather or braided fabric. The winch or goatsfoot lever of the crossbowman hangs from a strap at his right hip. Daggers, pouches, and other possessions are attached to the waist-belt. True baldrics and sword-belts are found in the states of the northeast, where blades tend to be narrower and more amenable to scabbarding.
8. Undergarments: padded or quilted caps and tunics are worn to keep armour chafing to a minimum and also to provide further protection. Most soldiers thus first don a loincloth or brief kilt of soft fabric, then the footgear and the vambraces, then an over-tunic (or a combination of a tunic and a kilt), then the quilted "arming jacket," then either the breast- and backplate or the waist-belt of tabards and pteruges (depending upon the style used by the unit), then the collar and shoulder-pieces, then the sidearms and other accoutrements, then the "arming cap," and finally the helmet. Common soldiers aid one another in this process, but officers are dressed by valets.
9. Over-garments: the "parade dress" of some legions includes a cape or mantle. This is not worn into battle, of course, and it is different from the travelling cloak (see below). A few units (e.g. the Priests of Light of Saa Allaqi) wear a cloth surcoat over their armour. On long campaigns most soldiers have their armour carried for them by bearer slaves or in *Chlen* carts, while they march along attired only in tunic, kilt, boots, and perhaps the helmet.
10. Other equipment: soldiers on the march are issued backpacks. These contain rations for 3-5 days, a waterbottle, perhaps a small wineskin, a sleeping mat, a thick travelling cloak, and personal possessions. Tents, cooking gear, tools, further provisions, and other impedimenta are borne by slaves or are transported in *Chlen* carts. Missile troops are expected to have a supply of arrows, quarrels, etc. with them at all times, as well as their weapons. Spears, shields, pikes, and sidearms are the responsibility of each troopers, and these he may carry as he sees fit. More uniformity is demanded when on parade or formal guard duty, of course.



The armour of the nonhuman races can be summarised as follows:

Species	Armour employed
Ahoggya	Not often worn, although some mercenary units and indeed some individuals do nail convex plates of *Chlen* hide or steel over the carapace. These may have downward-projecting flanges to protect the eyes or other organs. Vambraces and greaves of *Chlen* hide bands are quite common, and officers in mercenary legions may protect the upper arms and thighs with bands or plates as well. Footgear is unknown. Weapons and possessions are carried on a harness around the "waist".
Hlaka	Only a *Chlen* hide skullcap (at most) and a baldric or harness for their weapons and meagre belongings.
Hlutrgu	No armour, although leaders (Sec. 1.810) may wear a harness of leather (often human skin), a plaque or pectoral on the breast, leather vambraces on the fore limbs, and possibly a skullcap of leather or, very rarely, metal. *Chlen* hide is not employed.
Hluss	Naturally armoured in chitin. A harness of straps and egg-shaped little pouches is worn, and some add a helmet of steel or, more commonly, the same bodily secretion used to construct their cities and nest-ships. *Chlen* hide is rarely used.
Mihalli	Wear little armour, although the metal or *Chlen* hide corselet (Sec. 1.950) is strong enough to deflect blows to the lower torso and abdomen. Helmets of complex design, vambraces, and boots covered with small plates are used.
Nyagga	No armour known.
Pachi Lei	Half-armour only: a helmet consisting of a padded cap to which bands or plaques of *Chlen* hide or metal have been affixed, a breastplate and less frequently a backplate and vambraces. The lower body and thighs are rarely given any protection, although Pachi Lei in the service of human armies may add a frontal kilt or tabard of mail Greaves are uncommon.
Pe Choi	Unarmoured within their own enclaves. When in human service, however, some Pe Choi troops adopt a breast- and backplate combination, a helmet fitted with tall plumes, and small plate defences for every segment of their jointed arms and legs. The abdomen is given frontal protection with a short skirt of mail, but the lower body and tail are left unarmoured.
Pygmy Folk	Long, crested, or back-slanting helmets of *Chlen* hide or metal, breast- and backplates with shoulder-pieces in a style resembling that of some Yan Koryani units, a skirt of pteruges covered with little plaques, and vambraces and greaves composed of bands of *Chlen* hide or leather wound around the forearms and calves.
Shen	Mostly fight unarmoured, but units of heavy troops wear helmets of *Chlen* hide, steel, or specially hardened copper breast- and backplates, skirts of fabric sewn with small plates or scales, vambraces, and greaves. Shoulder-pieces are used by some contingents, but the upper arms are normally left unarmoured, or are protected by short mail sleeves.
Shunned Ones	No armour except for the pectoral of the "leaders (Secs. 1.810 and 1.950). The cloak and fabric limb-wrappings (Sec. 1.950) used by this species do offer some protection, however, perhaps equivalent to leather.
Ssu	Only vambraces and greaves of leather, metal, or rarely *Chlen* hide worn by the Grey Ssu; their larger and more fearsome cousins, the Black Ssu, use visored barbuta-style helmets, breast- and backplates, shoulder-pieces, and plate defences for all six limbs, however. Skirts of mail or tabards are employed to protect the soft abdominal areas.
Swamp Folk	Rarely use armour and will not wear *Chlen* hide at all. A few contingents, officers, and individuals have adopted an open-topped, crown-like helmet which has projections upward to guard this species' strange crest, and a visor or nasal to protect the upper face. Short breastplates of metal or -- interestingly enough – the chitin of the Hluss exoskeleton are sometimes worn, as are vambraces and greaves, but this much coverage is uncommon.
Tinaliya	Wear full armour of articulated metal or *Chlen* hide, visored helmets with gorget and bevor, frontal skirts of lamellar plaques, and even small sabatons of plate. The Tinaliya are excellent artisans, and their armour is therefore both cleverly articulated and beautiful. The favourite helmet style of the Tinaliya is one which bristles with spikes and spines, and the Mu'ugalavyani have thus given them the name of "Thorn-heads".
Urunen	Employ helmets of bronze or steel which lie flat along the elongated skull and are crested at the rear, vambraces of metal bands, and plate greaves. These are mostly made of bronze or, rarely, steel. This species wears only a loincloth of coloured fabric, leaving the torso, upper arms, abdomen, and thighs unarmoured. *Chlen* hide is known but not preferred.

Most shields are constructed of *Chlen* hide, the wood of the tough *Tiu* tree (sometimes rimmed and banded with metal), or bronze. Steel shields are found but are rather rare since such a large piece of metal would normally be broken up to make edged weapons. Shield sizes range from little round bucklers to huge pavises borne by one man as protection for himself and a comrade. Large shields average about 50 cm in height, while medium varieties may be 30-40 cm. Round and oval shapes are the most popular, but many other forms are found, depending again upon one's legion and local tradition: square, rectangular, diamond-shaped, hexagonal or octagonal, tall "kite-shields" (similar to those employed by the ancient Normans), "heater-shields" (like those of the knights of the later Middle Ages on Earth), heart-shaped varieties, and nearly every other form one might logically imagine. There is no system of personalised heraldry, such as existed on Earth, and shields therefore do not display the armorial bearings of individuals but rather the designs, colours, glyphs, etc. which identify one's legion. In Salarvya and Pechano there is indeed a custom of decorating one's shield with device indicating one's family and lineage, but these are not further individualised. Warriors who are not members of a military unit adorn their shields with clan symbols, depictions of their deities, "good luck" runes, frightening faces, etc.

Outside of the "high-culture" areas of the Five Empires, their client states, and Mihallu, one does find more ethnic uniformity: e.g. the N'luss prefer medium or large shields which are oval or round and which have a central boss or spike. These are painted in only one colour: that of the war-band or of the nation the warrior serves. Long ovals and kite-shields are favoured by the peoples of the states of the northeast; small leather bucklers in Haida Pakala; square or rectangular wickerworks shields in Tsolei; round, wooden, medium-sized shields amongst the Lorun; double-ended pointed ovals of *Nha* shell laid upon a wooden foundation in the Nyemesel Isles; circular targes of woven *Tekai* leaves in M'morcha and Nmartusha; medium-sized, violin-shaped shields in Ghaton; light bucklers of wicker, wood, or sometimes *Chlen* hide in Jannu, Kilalammu, and eastern Saa Allaqi; and little leather targes (made of the hide of the sand-worm) in the Desert of Sighs. The tribesmen of Rannalu do not use shields at all.

The Ahoggya prefer a thick, convex, circular shield of wood or bronze. The Hlaka use shields on occasion, favouring a small, round, leather targe. The Hluss' shield is a longish heater, often with projecting points, horns, and odd scallops. This is constructed of this species' bodily secretion and is about as strong as good *Chlen* hide. The Pachi Lei employ a light, round shield of wicker or wood, while the Pe Choi use either a small diamond-shaped buckler or else a convex round targe. The Pygmy Folk disdain shields, relying upon a quick and ferocious assault, but they can be persuaded to use small oval shields against missiles. The Shen are partial to a heavy heater-shield or round variety, which may have points or projections. This is made of wood, hardened copper, or bronze, rather than of *Chlen* hide. The Shunned Ones have a large, oblong metal shield, cut horizontally in two places to produce a squared "S" shape. These are typically of bronze or steel. The typical shield of both the Grey and the Black Ssu is a series of three ovals laid in line with upward-projecting horns or points. The Black Ssu also employ heater- or kite-shields, apparently depending upon the owner's preference. The Swamp Folk avoid *Chlen* hide but instead use a small, square buckler of wickerwork, wood, or Hluss chitin. The Tinaliya favour a small oval shield of *Chlen* hide or metal. Given this species' diminutive size, this provides the same protection as does a large shield for a human. The Urunen fight with double-ended halberds or with cross bows, and thus only officers carry round, medium-sized shields. The remaining species employ shields only rarely if at all.

Shields and armour are decorated in many ways: engraving (both with the burin and with acids), embossing, repousse work, fluting, inlaying with gold and silver wire, washing with silver, gold, copper, etc., or blackening certain areas through an oxidisation process and polishing others. The higher the rank, the more ornamentation there must be.

It is also customary to paint or dye military equipment. The grey-green of natural *Chlen* hide is almost invariably lacquered over with a pigment made of the boiled bark of the *Giyo* tree, native to most of the swampy lowlands of the continent. Fabrics and leather are dyed in the hues of the legion and of the nation which it serves. The Tsolyani "natural colour" is a rich, cerulean blue, for example: Mu'ugalavya employes various shades of red; Yan Kor favours an emerald green, Salarvya the glossy black of lacquer mixed with the ebon dye from the *Vrelq* crustacean, Milumanaya a buff or brown, Saa Allaqi an orange or tangerine, Pechano a saffron, and Mihallu the white and gold of old Engsvan hla Ganga. The Livyani employ combinations: dark green and purple, yellow and black, maroon and black, yellow and green, etc. These probably are dictated by the temples of the Shadow Gods, but their precise significance is not known. The N'luss prefer a single dull colour, or aggregations of two or three hues, depending upon the war-band's traditions. The troops of the Nyemesel Isles dye their armour a deep, iridescent indigo with a substance obtained from seaweed. The remaining states have no specific colours, and their "uniforms" thus consist of whatever their wearers fancy.

Nonhumans serving in human armies wear the colours of their employers. Within their own enclaves, however, they apply their own predilections. The Pe Choi, for example, leave their *Chlen* hide in its natural colour, while the Pachi Lei lacquer theirs black, violet, or vermilion. The Shen are partial to black, copper, silver, and other metallic colours, often trimmed with blue or red. The Tinaliya also like golds, coppers, and blacks but use various shades of grey (which they say appear different to their eyes) for trim. The Pygmy Folk paint their armour in swirling patterns of yellow, green, and olive, making it look as though it had been deliberately camouflaged. The Swamp Folk are similarly fond of dark, drab hues, while the Urunen and the Mihalli are quite the opposite. The colour schemes of the Ahoggya, Hlaka, Hluss, and Ssu are so alien as to be offensive to human tastes. The remaining species exhibit no clear preferences.

Army standards combine national and legion colours and symbols. Each legions has its *Kaing* (Sec. 1.821): a tall pole topped with fantastic sculptures of *Chlen* hide, plaques of precious metals and gems, and trailing *Kheshchal* plumes. Generals carry a ceremonial weapon or "staff of power" which also bears these colours and insignia. (In Tsolyanu this is also called a *Kaing*, but other languages distinguish it from the army standards with special terms.) The *Kaing* is used in Tsolyanu, Yan Kor, and Pijena. Each legion has only one *Kaing* at one time, although older "retired" standards are proudly displayed in the unit's headquarters. Whenever a contingent is detached from a legion for duty elsewhere, its commander is given a smaller *Kaing* in order to manifest the legion's "life" and presence. The Mu'ugalavyani, Ghatoni, Saa Allaqiyani, Chayakkuyani, Salarvyani, and Pechani use long banners covered with inscriptions and the glyphs of their deities. Livyani standards consist of veritable totem poles of leering demon faces, from which hang parti-coloured streamers of cloth-of-gold and rich brocade. The warriors of the states of the northeast identify their provenience and lineage with pennons and banderoles blazoned with the pictographs of the Kazhra Ve Ngakome script. The lords of Mihallu still reverently bring forth the three-tailed gold and white banners of mighty Engsvan hla Ganga. The troops of the Nyemesel Isles follow square standards woven of reeds and painted with the Two Hands of Mretten. These are often draped with the iridescent skins of the *Trek'e* fish. The Shen and the Urunen coincidentally both carry tall fans of feathers, while the Black Ssu (but, oddly, not the Grey Ssu) employ complex standards composed of plumes, skulls, and strips of dyed leather. The other races have no specific military banners or emblems.

Throughout the Five Empires and their client states troops are divided into categories according to their functions and also on the basis of the kind of armour worn. A "heavy" trooper is distinguished by his thicker and better quality *Chlen* hide armour, as well as by more complete body coverage: e.g. a "heavy" infantryman usually has protection for his upper arms, abdomen, and thighs, while a "medium" soldier possesses a thinner breastplate, possibly a backplate, vambraces, greaves, and a helmet. Crossbowmen and marines are generally outfitted as "mediums," while archers and slingers wear leather armour, a *Chlen* hide helmet, and occasionally a light pectoral, thus qualifying them to be classes as "light" troops. Artillerymen and sapper falls into this latter category, although very heavy bronze (or even steel) armour is issued to sappers who must expose themselves to fire at the base of a wall. Skirmishers receive the least armour of all: perhaps only a loincloth, a small helmet, and a *Chlen* hide pectoral held on by a harness of leather straps. Even this much coverage is uncommon, however, and many "light" troops go into battle with no more than a G-string, if that.

The weapons employed by the warriors of Tekumel are as follows:

1. Daggers: short-bladed knives (20-50 cm from pommel to point) are made in innumerable styles. Militarily, these are at best a tertiary weapon, useful only in close combat as a last resort or to give the coup-de-grace to a fallen foeman. Heavy stilettos, some triangular in cross section, are favoured for the latter purpose, while broad slashing or chopping blades are considered better for hand-to-hand fighting. Most daggers are too unbalanced for throwing, and if a warrior has mastered this rather uncommon skill, he must purchase throwing knives from those experts who know how to make them.
2. Short swords: these range from 51 to 60 cm and are the regular sidearm of some legions. Most of these are slashing or chopping weapons, of course, resembling the falchion of old Earth, but with projecting points and hooks. For armour piercing, one finds either a very broad-bladed straight sword (like the cinquedea of 15th Century Italy), or the *Kha*, a weapon which has a reinforced tip and in which the blade is perpendicular to the hilt (similar to the katar of mediaeval India). The Tsolyani Legion of the Fishers of Death (21st Imperial Heavy Infantry) is an example of a unit which uses this latter variety.
3. The most favoured cutting weapons include long swords and axes. These range from 61 to 90 cm in length, and if made of iron or bronze, they weigh about 1 kg. There are countless sword styles, many fantastic and seemingly of little military value until one remembers the ritual nature of warfare and the fighting styles of Tekumel. As examples, one may cite the *Chidok* of Livyanu (which has the sharp edge on the inside of its sickle-shaped blade, and which is weighted with bronze or lead); the curved, broad-bladed, serrated scimitar of the Tsolyani First Legion of Ever-Present Glory (1st Imperial Heavy Infantry); the straight, scalloped sword of the heavy troops of the *Gurek* of the Mighty of Yan Kor; the spiky chopping blade of Legion I of the First Palace of Mu'ugalavya, called "Victorious in Vimuhla," which has two projecting prongs instead of a point; the barbed and weighted *Ershummu* of the Salarvyani *Nchesh* of the Grey Standard, funded by the Chruggilleshmu family of Tsatsayagga; etc. Hilts vary from a simple handle to quillons, cups, and complex handguards. Many swords have spikes extending up from the pommel with which to deal a foeman a surprise backhand blow. Short axes are properly the weapons of the light infantry, although some heavier units use them. Weighted one-handed poleaxes are also encountered: e.g. Legion V of the Second Palace of Mu'ugalavya, called "The Hand of Might," which prefers these to swords.
4. One-handed bruising and crushing weapons are frequent. Again, these rarely exceed 90 cm in length. Clubs of *Tiu* wood, many set with bronze or *Chlen* hide spikes, are popular both with certain military units and also with those priesthoods which bar their clergy from the direct shedding of blood (a ritually unclean act, except during sacrifices). Maces and flanged morning stars are made of bronze or a *Chlen* hide shell filled with lead (about 1.6 kg). The warhammer, an axe-like weapon with a hammer-head projection on one side, a pick-like spike on the other, and a longish spike on the end, is a favourite sidearm amongst the Mu'ugalavyani: e.g. the famed "Sanguine Victory" (Legion V of the First Palace). One-handed flails — short wooden or metal shafts to which a spiked ball is affixed by a chain — are less frequent but are used by some units: e.g. the *Gurek* of the Clan of Na-Chu'ul of Yan Kor. Like the

mace, a flail-head must be weighted with bronze, lead or, if possible, iron.

5. Two-handed cutting weapons comprise swords and axes, ranging from 140 to 170 cm in length. Instances of the former include the heavy, broad-tipped blade of the Tsolyani Legion of the Lord of Red Devastation (18th Imperial Medium Infantry); the wavy-bladed flamberge of the Yan Koryani *Gurek* of Hekekka Nna; and the ponderous weapon of the N'luɒss, which is sometimes over 200 cm long! Double-bladed two-handed axes are employed by "The Vermilion Battalion" (the third of the special Legions of Mighty Ssa'atis in Mu'ugalavya); the *LluPneb* of Nirusama of the Livyani *Charoneb* of Kakarsh, and several others. Troops using two-handed weapons must have more fighting room, of course, and hence cannot be put into close order formations. Another disadvantage is that no shield can be carried because both hands are needed to wield the weapon. A few units (e.g. the Legion of the Lord of Red Devastation) do bear a small buckler to protect against missiles, but this has to be dropped before melee is joined.
6. Two-handed maces, clubs, and flails are not often found as military weapons, although various priesthoods and temple guard units prefer them. These arms have the same disadvantages noted above under (5). Long flails are very rare in the armies of the Five Empires although one or two units do carry them: e.g. the Tsolyani Legion of the Clan of the Sweet Singers of Nakome (12th Imperial Heavy Infantry). They are the favourite weapon of the troops of the Nyemesel Isles, however, and the retainers of the lords of the far northeast are also said to be experts in their use.
7. Polearms are popular all across the continent. Essentially these are combinations of slashing, chopping, and thrusting blades mountred upon a stout (and often reinforced) shaft, the whole ranging from 150 to 170 cm in length. Halberds, bills, glaives, guisarmes, voulges, partisans — all are found on Tekumel and are preferred by this unit or that. Most have projecting points, barbs, cusps, and hooks to catch and deflect a foeman's weapon. Some have cups or crosspieces to serve as hand-guards, and a few have identical blades on both ends. The fighting style needed for the latter is more reminiscent of the quarterstaff than of the spear or the axe. The Livyani *LluPneb* of the Horned God of Secrets, part of the *Charoneb* of Laigas, is a good example of users of the double-ended polearm. Military forks and tridents, on the other hand, are uncommon. Examples include: the Yan Koryani *Gurek* of the Mariners of Hekuuma from Chudrak, and two Salarvyani units: the *Nchesh* of the Secret Goddess, of the forces of the Mreshshel-Atl family of Lake Mrissutl, and the *Nchesh* of the Ruby Pommel, which belongs to the Shiggashko'onmu lineage of Jaekanta.
8. Short, heavy, thrusting spears are employed by some legions: e.g. Legion II of the Fourth Palace of Mu'ugalavya, named "Illustrious Advance." Short spears vary between 170 and 200 cm in length. Leaf-shaped spearheads are commonest, although barbed and scalloped varieties exist. Some spears have short, horizontal projections at the base of the head to prevent an enemy sword from severing the staff — and to preclude the blade from entering its target too deeply to be extracted easily. Most short spears are too heavy to make good throwing weapons (the pilum of the ancient Romans is not found on Tekumel), but a few units do train in this art: e.g. the first *Gurek* of Tleku Miriya of Yan Kor. (The javelin and the throwing dart are more properly the weapons of the lighter skirmisher; medium and heavy troops rarely use them.) The short spear is also favoured by hunters of large game.
9. On a world which lacks cavalry wars are won with massed formations. The primary weapons of the great phalanxes of medium and heavy infantry are thus the long spear and the pike. These are really two varieties of the same weapon: a long thrusting blade (sometimes serrated, barbed, or hooked) mounted upon a wooden shaft. The long spear is about 4 to 5 m in length, and the pike 5 to 6 m. As in ancient Macedonia and the Greek Successor states of Earth, pikemen are placed in deep, dense formations from which the points of the second, third, and even fourth ranks project past their comrades in the front line to create a hedgehog of blades against which a foe must hurl himself at his peril. After initial contact, the phalanx becomes an inexorable, slow, grinding mill, pushing forward against units of lesser staying power like some huge juggernaut. Only an opposing phalanx — or a unit willing to accept heavy casualties — can hope to halt or break the phalanx frontally. Rear and flank attacks will throw the phalanx into disorder, however, and rough terrain will cause it to lose its cohesion and formation — with dire results. In spite of the thousands of years of military tradition available on Tekumel, a disordered phalanx is vulnerable and difficult to reform. Even at its best, it is slow and hard to manoeuvre, needing room to turn and open, flat ground. For these reasons the pike and the long spear are of little use to small parties or in individual combat. They are clumsy, and once an enemy has slipped past the point, he can hack at the weapon's shaft — or at its owner — at his leisure. Large hunting parties do occasionally use these weapons defensively against the bigger game animals (e.g. the *Serudla*, the *Sro*, etc.), protecting their group with a thicket of spearpoints while some members attack with missiles or with shorter, heavier weapons. Should the creature become too enraged, however, it may charge and sweep the hunters away, pikes and all, like a bundle of *Tsahlten* sticks.

Missile weapons include the following:

10. Bows: tribesmen, peasants, and light skirmish troops often employ the short self-bow. Made from a stave of *Tiu* or *Ajatl* wood, such a bow may range from 90 to 150 cm in length and have a pull of 23-35 kg. Much longer self-bows (some of which approach the longbow of mediaeval England in weight and length) are found in the Chakas, the Forest of Gilraya, the Tlashte Heights of Livyanu, and throughout the northeast from Saa Allaqi over into Nuru'un. These are from 160 to 180 cm long and have pulls measured at anywhere from 36 to 52 kg, depending upon the stature and strength of the bowman and local preferences. The wood of the *Seresh* tree is the best material for such weapons, but this is not available everywhere. The best longbows are manufactured by the archers of the Kurt Hills, who comprise the Tsolyani Legion of the Inverted Hand (27th Imperial Light Infantry). Much more common as a military weapon, however, is the composite bow, built up of layers of wood, horn, and sinew glued together. These range from 115 to 160 cm in length and have draw-weights of 30 to 55 kg. Certain pike and long spear legions are trained to fire short composite bows from the first two ranks as they advance, passing them back to comrades behind and receiving their pole weapons in return just before melee is joined. War arrows are made of *Ajatl* wood, *Tiu* wood, or of a reed called *Nal* found in swampy lowlands. They are feathered with the plumage of the *Kuni* bird (or certain other species in various areas), and those intended for warfare have either broad, barbed bronze heads (iron being too costly for this purpose), which weigh about 17 g, or else long, bodkin-shaped, armour-piercing heads weighing approximately 14 g. In length, arrows vary between 70 and 75 cm, although some nations (e.g. the Mu'ugalavyani) prefer longer (80-84 cm) and heavier shafts. The total weight of a broadheaded war arrow averages 70-80 g, while one with a bodkin point tends to be lighter: 55-65 g. Quivers are constructed of basketry, leather, or *Chlen* hide and weigh from 250 to 600 g. The standard military quiver holds 20 arrows, and an archer's

missile supply therefore weighs about 1.5 kg.

11. Crossbows: those who specialise in this weapon are considered a separate troop-type in most of the armies of Tekumel. Although the crossbow has great penetrating power (particularly at short range) and can be used by anyone with average intelligence and a good eye, it has several disadvantages: it is both expensive and heavy; it requires about a minute to cock and load, whereas a bow can put perhaps six well-trained arrows into the air in the same period; it is a more complex device and thus needs greater maintenance — and expert repairmen cannot be found just anywhere. Nevertheless, the crossbow is a popular military weapon, and it is used for hunting as well. Most of the crossbows of Tekumel have composite bows constructed of wood, horn, and sinew. Steel bows, while much sought after, are rare and forbiddingly high-priced. The small military crossbow has a length of some 70-75 cm, a weight of 2.6 kg, a bow-span of 60 cm, an effective range of 30-40 m, an extreme range of 160-170 m, and is cocked with a "goatsfoot" lever. The statistics of the medium crossbow are: length: 80-90 cm; weight: 3.8 kg; bow-span: 65 cm; effective range: 60-70 m; extreme range: 200-250 m; method of cocking: windlass. The large crossbow is as follows: length: 100 cm; weight: 4.5 kg; bow-span: 70 cm; effective range: 70-80 m; extreme range: 300-320 m; method of cocking: heavy windlass. A still larger variety is used by Legion IX of the Second Palace of Mu'ugalavya, called "Lightningshaft"; this is fired from a tripod and almost qualifies as a ballista. Legion IX of the Fourth Palace, named "Dune-Leapers," employs a peculiar repeating crossbow. This has no great range or penetration, but the quarrels used are poisoned. Most crossbow bolts are short (30-35 cm), thick (1.5-2 cm in diametre), and weigh about 65-75 g. The bronze head itself weighs 38-42 g. Boxes for crossbow quarrels are constructed in the same fashion as quivers, and they weigh as much or a little more. A crossbowman's standard case of 30 bolts thus weighs approximately 2.5-2.7 kg.
12. Slings: only the Tsolyani field regular legions of slingers, the best known being the Legion of the Joyful Clan of Noble Vrayani (3rd Imperial Slingers), from the island of Vra. Light skirmishers often carry slings also. The Yan Koryani do not divide their forces according to troop-types, and contingents of slingers are thus found scattered all through the Baron's armies. A number of Mu'ugalavyani and Salarvyani legions contain groups of sling-using light infantry similarly. The sling is not favoured in Livyanu and is not employed as a military weapon, although peasants and hunters do use it. Outside of the Five Empires, it is common in Tsolei, Haida Pakala, and Saa Allaqi, and it serves as the primary missile weapon of the Nyemesel Isles. It is infrequent in the states of the northeast, Mihallu, and Pechano, but the mountaineers of Jannu and Kilalammu and the tribesmen of Rannalu regard it highly. The Lorun and the natives of M'morcha and Nmartusha are unfamiliar with it. A sling consists of a leather strap about 90-100 cm long and 3 cm wide, one end of which is attached to the hand, the other end held between the thumb and forefinger, and the missile placed in a pocket in the resulting loop. The peoples of the continental mainland whirl the sling horizontally over the head before letting go, but the inhabitants of Tsolei, Haida Pakala, and the Nyemesel Isles favour a vertical revolution parallel to the body. Using stream-rounded stones, chipped balls of limestone, or pellets of sunbaked clay, the effective range of a sling is about 60 m. Its extreme range extends out to 120 m or so, and much longer casts can be achieved (200-230 m) with smaller ammunition. Sling missiles are also moulded of lead, and these are both denser and aerodynamically better designed. The ranges with a shot-sling approach 80 m and 200 m, respectively. Interestingly enough, all sling missiles are kept within an optimum weight range of 30-50 g, whatever the materials of their composition. Exceptions are the beautifully worked, egg-shaped stone projectiles employed by the Tsolyani Legion of the Clan of the Standing Stone (2nd Imperial Slingers), which average about 350 g. These occasion some loss of range (50 m and 90 m), but this is compensated for by the greater damage done when they hit. The sling is very effective against light troops and even those armoured in leather or partial *Chlen* hide. A direct hit can even wound or stun a man in plate armour since the speed of a missile leaving the sling may exceed 100 km per hour.
13. Staff-slings: this consists of a sling affixed to the end of a 90-120 cm long pole. It is used to throw much heavier missiles (350-750 g), but its effective and extreme ranges are less than those attained by the hand-sling; 50 m and 90 m, respectively. Some Cohorts of the Legion of the Clan of the Standing Stone (cf. 12, above) employ this weapon, but its greatest popularity lies in Chayakku and the states of the northeast, where it is the common weapon of the lower-classes. The Legion of the Snows of Mayarsha, supplied by Chayakku to Yan Kor, uses the staff-sling to hurl pots of incendiaries into an enemy force before closing in to melee. Aside from occasional employment in the Nyemesel Isles, the staff-sling is not utilised as a military weapon elsewhere.
14. Javelins, throwing spears, and darts: these short-range missiles are carried by light troops of many nations, and even some medium legions have them. Javelins average 150-170 cm in length and have a range of perhaps 25-30 m. They are good against other lightly armoured troops but are fairly useless against heavier protection. Larger throwing spears are less common. These are about as long as the short thrusting spears described under (8), above, but are somewhat lighter. Their range is again approximately 25 m. As an example of a unit which employs this weapon, one may cite the first *Gurek* of Tleku Miriya of Yan Kor. Short, weighted, throwing darts 90-120 cm in length and with a range of 25-30 m are seen, but these are rather rare. The Lorun *Gurek* of Yan Kor, is an instance, however. Its darts are poisoned. A warrior may carry perhaps two throwing spears, 2-3 javelins, and 3-6 darts.
15. Bolas: this weapon is more widespread than it militarily deserves to be. Bolas consist of a braided leather thong some 120-150 cm long, to each end of which a bronze or lead ball is attached. A shorter thong, 60-70 cm long, is attached to its free end. This third ball is held in the hand, and the whole is whirled about the head and let fly to entangle the legs of a foeman or possibly to stun him. Troops using bolas are placed in the front line, and their objective is to trip, stun, and disorder an advancing enemy formation before contact is made. The Tsolyani Legion of Heketh of Purdimal (17th Imperial Heavy Infantry) has one Cohort of bolas-men. Two N'luṣss war-bands in the service of Mu'ugalavya (Legion XIV of the First Palace, "The Horde of Mrrgsha," and Legion XII of the Fourth Palace, "The Band of Ffrsha") employ bolas. Two Salarvyani units (the *Nchesh* of the Silver Standard, belonging to the Chrugilleshmu family of Tsatsayagga, and the *Nchesh* of the Loving Hand, fielded by the Mreshshel-Atl lineage of Lake Mrissutl) have contingents of bolas-men as well. Basically, however, bolas may be considered a hunter's weapon, and they are found spottily distributed all over the continent. This weapon is not encountered in Mu'ugalavya (except for N'luss immigrants), Livyanu, Pijena, Yan Kor, Saa Allaqi, or any of the states of the northeast, but the N'luss, Ghatoni, Jannuyani, and Kilalammuyani find it useful. It is unknown in Tsolei, Haida Pakala, and the Nyemesel Isles.
16. Blowguns: the only group to utilise the blowgun militarily is the second Band of the Unmerciful Ones, comprised of Pygmy Folk in the service of Yan Kor. These little creatures carry long reed tubes (150-160 cm in length) and

quivers of about a hundred poisoned darts. The latter are perhaps 25 cm long and are very light. The range of the blowgun is not great (25 m or so), but the secret poison used by the Pygmy Folk is quite effective, causing paralysis and death within a minute or two. The tribes of M'mórcha and Nmartúsha also have blowguns. These are longer (170-180 cm), and the puff spider venom smeared on their darts is almost instantly fatal.

17. Thrown melee weapons: heavy wooden throwing clubs (50-60 cm long and weighing up to 1 kg) are almost the only military weapon in this category. One unit which uses such clubs is the Tsolyáni Legion of the Givers of Sorrow (8th Imperial Heavy Infantry), which claims that these were the original weapon of their Pán Chákan ancestors. Any weapon — an axe, a mace, a sword, etc. — may be thrown, of course, but this is not something the soldiers of Tékumel are trained to do as a regular combat technique. Dagger- and knife-throwing is part of the expertise of the assassin clans (see below), and the hurling of battle axes (like the francisca of the ancient Franks) is an art peculiar only to the inhabitants of Tsoléi and Háida Pakála.
18. Artillery: ballistae are used both in field battles and at sieges. Heavy bolts with bronze heads (150-180 cm long and weighing 2-2.7 kg) or round stones weighing anywhere from .45 to 3.6 kg can be fired out to a range of 360 m by the medium and large sizes of these machines. The ballista is essentially a "bow," the short arms of which are tightened by vertical torsion springs made of sinew, hair, and *Ne'él* fibre. Some of the small field varieties require a crew of just two men to operate them, while larger models must have four or even eight artillerymen. A second type of machine is the onager or mangonel. This consists of a stout framework in which a thick skein of sinew, etc. holds the bottom of a beam. The upper end of the beam is fitted with a sling in which the projectile (a stone weighing from 2.5 to as much as 90 kg) is placed. When the torsion spring is tightened by levers and the upper end of the beam hauled down with a winch, the missile can be fired as much as 400 m. Onagers are used primarily at sieges. The third and largest seige engine of Tékumel is the trebuchet of mediaeval Europe. In essence, this is a long beam swinging on a horizontal fulcrum. The short end of this beam is attached to a massive counterweight (weighing several hundred kg in the largest models), and a sling for the projectile is fastened to the long end. When pulled down and released, the long end of the beam sweeps up and releases the missile (which may weigh as much as 200 kg). The range of the trebuchet is a little shorter than that of the onager (about 350-360 m), but it can fire much heavier projectiles. These three types of engine are known throughout the Five Empires and their client states. The Tsolyáni currently field three Legions of artillerists, the most renowned of which is the Legion of Mengáno the Jakállan (12th Imperial Artillery). The Mu'ugalavyáni have two such units. The best is Legion X of the First Palace. entitled "Tower-Breaker." The other three empires do not lag far behind. These engines are much less familiar in the states of the periphery. In fact, it was considered a great innovation when the Chayakkuyáni brought in a siege engineer from Yán Kór during their investment of the city of Nyá in 2,340 A.D. Mu'ugalavyáni artificers construct small ballistae for the city-states of Tsoléi, and Salarvyáni experts perform the same functions in Háida Pakála and the Nyémesel Isles. Artillery is very rare in Jánnu and Kilalámmu, known but never used in Mihállu, and quite incomprehensible to the tribes of M'mórcha, Nmartúsha, Rannálu, the Desert of Sighs, etc.

The focus throughout the preceding discussion has been upon the Five Empires, their client states, and, by extension, Mihállu. The armour and shield styles of the periphery have been touched upon above, but it is useful to summarise the weapons employed in these areas. The finer arms of the Five Empires are largely unavailable in the remoter regions except by trade or barter — and this only rarely. Many of the more complex weapons of the technologically developed cultures are simply unintelligible to the tribesmen of the far hinterlands. To quote the Mu'ugalavyáni proverb, "Give a M'mórchan a crossbow, and he will make cheese with it." This is said when one must use an unfamiliar tool in a strange process to produce a novel result.

Region	Usual and preferred weapons
N'lűss	Bone or metal daggers, great two-handed swords of bronze, iron, or *Chlén* hide, short spears, slings, bolas
Tsoléi	Short and long one-handed chopping swords (like the Livyáni *Chídok*), axes (which may be th rown), maces, one-handed poleaxes, slings, light ballistae (cf. above)
M'mórcha, Nmartúsha	Clubs, spears with points of bone or fire-hardened wood, blowguns (cf. above), some short self-bows
Lorún	Maces set with the teeth of the *Háiga* fish, bone-pointed spears, javelins, flint daggers, poisoned throwing darts
The Desert of Sighs	Bone and obsidian daggers (as well a s some of *Chlén* hide, bronze, or rarely stee l, traded in from Yán Kór, Tsolyánu, or Pelesár), long bone-pointed spears, javelins, slings
Háida Pakála	Short cutlass-like chopping swords of metal or *Chlén* hide, curved stilettoes, long one-handed scimitars, one-handed axes (which may be thrown), polearms (mostly halberds but including some tridents), slings, a few crossbows imported from Salarvyá, light and medium ballistae constructed by Salarvyáni craftsmen
The states of the northeast	Short and long one-handed weapons of bronze or *Chlén* hide (rarely iron), two-handed axes and flails, longbows, short self-bows, slings, staff-slings, crossbows (used by some palace guard units), quarterstaves (cf. below)
Jánnu and Kilalámmu	Broadbladed daggers of bronze or *Chlén* hide, short and long one-handed swords and clubs, short spears, short and long self-bows, slings, bolas, occasionally a few crossbows, quarterstaves (cf. below)
Rannálu	Flint-studded warclubs, spears with fire-hardened wooden points, javelins, slings
The Nyémesel Isles	One-handed and two-handed maces set with Nhâ shell spikes, short and long spears pointed with bone, stone, shell, or bronze, bronze polearms, long two-handed flails, slings, a few crossbows, some light ballistae built by Salarvyáni engineers

A further list is needed for the nonhuman races. Here it will be helpful to note weapons and techniques *not* employed by the various species in addition to those which are favoured.

Species	Preferred and restricted weapons
Ahoggyá	Huge, jagged swords, stout spears, halberds, flails, and maces. They never throw daggers or axes and rarely employ any type of missle weapon (slings being the only one used when they do)
Hláka	Light javelins, slender straight one-handed swords, occasionally light crossbows. They may also drop rocks or incendiaries from the air. Their rapier-like tail (usually poisoned) also functions as a weapon. The Hláka do not fight with their fists, nor do they employ two-handed weapons, polearms, or bows. A few Hláka have mastered the sling, however.
Hlutrgú	Short javelins and throwing darts tipped with bone, one-handed clubs and maces, and barbe d long spears. They use the short self-bow and also the light crossbow. All other weapons are considered unfamiliar and unusable.
Hlűss	Various styles of long one-handed swords (some with blades shaped like lightning bolts), spears of various lengths, and polearms. These are tipped with bronze or steel. They rarely employ bows or slings but do have crossb ows of a ll three sizes. They may also use their tails, which contain paralysing stings.
Mihálli	Long spears and heavy curved scimitars, both of metal or *Chlén* hide. They can use all of the weapons of man but favour magical devices to physical combat.
Nyaggá	Whips of the long, serrated, and flexible branches of *Bó* coral. It is said that this race also has some sort of under-water crossbow, but the details are not available.
Páchi Léi	Long one-handed swords, two-handed swords, long barbed spears, and polearms, all made of *chlén* hide , metal, or certain very hard woods of the Pán Chákan forests. Bows and slings are rarely seen, but this race is expert with the crossbow. Other weapons are avoided, although they may be used in special instances.

Pé Chói	Javelins, strangely shaped swords of several designs (including a long, thin rapier used by Tsolyánu's Legion of Tïk-Deqéq, 9th Imperial Pé Chói Auxiliary Medium Infantry), and light crossbows. The Pé Chói can use any of man's weapons when need arises but dislike doing so.
Pygmy Folk	Barbed, metal-tipped pikes or long spears, short axes, poleaxes, one-handed long swords, short composite bows, and blowguns. This species, too, can utilise any of the weapons of mankind with relative ease.
Shén	Short, very heavy metal axe-swords, maces, halberds, pikes, and long spears. A typical Shén weapon is the small pistol crossbow (40-50 cm long, with a bow-span of 50 cm, weighing about 1 kg or a little less). This is cocked by hand (a feat difficult even for the strongest human) and it attains a range equivalent to the light crossbow. The Shén may also strike with their powerful knobbed tail. They are very poor at archery, never use slings, and do not throw knives or axes. They construct and use artillery well, however.
Shunned Ones	Long, hooked, metal-tipped spears, two-handed swords and maces, polearms, and short one-handed swords and axes. They do not use bows, slings, or crossbows, although javelins and barbed throwing darts are fired from a spear-thrower (the Atlatl of the Aztecs). With this added to their excessively long arms, the Shunned Ones attain a close range with good penetration even of *Chlén* hide armour of 50 m, and a long range of 120 m.
Ssú	Both the Grey and Black Ssú prefer oddly designed one-handed long swords, short thrusting spears, and daggers, all constructed of or pointed with metal. Bows and slings are rare, and the typical missle weapon is the medium crossbow. Some onagers and light ballistae have recently been employed to reduce Pechâni villages along the frontier -- an unprecedented event. The Ssú never throw knives or axes, nor do they fight with their fists unless cornered.
Swamp Folk	Long spears pointed with bone or Hlüss chitin, cutlasses of the latter material, bronze, or steel, and one-handed maces. They are expert slingers but are indifferent archers or crossbowmen. As previously stated, they abhor *Chlén* hide and will not use weapons made of it.
Tinalíya	Long, hooked halberds, needle-like one-handed rapiers, and short thrusting spears. The only missle weapon used is the Shén pistol-crossbow, which is modified by the Tinalíya to suit their diminutive size. A small winch is fixed to this weapon. They can use -- but dislike -- other arms.
Urunén	Scalloped and ja g-edged long swords of metal or *Chlén* hide (some double-ended with the handle in the middle), double-ended halberds, javelins, and crossbows. Bows are rarely employed, and only the Urunén light skirmish troops use slings. Long pike formations are sometimes found in larger conflicts.

Mention has been made of weapons constructed of bone or materials other than metal or *Chlén* hide. These are by no means restricted to the tribal peoples and the nonhuman races. The Yán Koryáni *Gurék* of the Exalted of Hlíkku, for example, employed barbed, poisoned, bone spears, as do the nomads of the Desert of Sighs (although their weapons are not always poisoned). The Salarvyáni *Nchésh* of the White Standard, fielded by the Chruggillêshmu family of Tsatsayágga, has a contingent of light infantry who wield bone-pointed javelins. Stone is not entirely obsolete in the armies of Tékumel, moreover. Short maces studded with flakes of obsidian are used by the Tsolyáni Legion of the Peaks of Kraá (12th Imperial Archers), for instance. Only the Swamp Folk utilise chitin taken from the bodies of slain Hlüss, however; this is looked upon with distaste by other species.

Poisoned weapons have also been noted here and there above. Some of these are not really lethal, consisting only of excrement or rotting meat smeared on a blade to cause later infection. Some poisons, on the other hand, are extremely potent. The blowgun darts of the Pygmy Folk and the tribesmen of M'mórcha and Nmartüsha have been alluded to, as have the quarrels of the repeating crossbows of Mu'ugalayyá's "Dune-Leapers." In Livyánu, the *Llüneb* of the Pinnacle of Euz, of the *Chároneb* of Hráis, employs poisoned arrows which cause great pain (and thus put a target out of action for an hour or two) but not death. The Yán Koryáni *Gurék* of the Exalted of Hlíkku and Tsolyánu's Legion of the Peaks of Kraá (above) dip their weapons in fairly effective venoms, which are fatal within two or three minutes, as does the Salarvyáni *Nchésh* of the Worshipful Hand, belonging to the Mreshshél-Átl lineage of Lake Mrissütl. Even so, usable weapon poisons are rare. The apothecaries of the Five Empires stock toxins meant to be ingested in food or drink, but these are largely useless when applied to weapon blades. Those who wish to learn weapon poisons must therefore visit the regions in which they are manufactured — and learning their secrets is not always an easy task.

The following non-military systems of combat deserve notice:

1. Brawling and wrestling: warriors and others of quarrelsome disposition may learn to use their hands and feet as weapons through experience in the slums of the great cities. Those of good clan rarely acquire this art, and it is disdained by the aristocracies. Professional wrestling (Tsolyáni: *Charáge*) is taught in the gladiatorial schools, however, and its practitioners perform both in the *Hirilákte* Arenas and at private gatherings (Sec. 1.930). It is not "noble" for an aristocrat or a member of a high clan to study in one of these schools, however, but athletically-minded young people can indeed learn the basics from private tutors. It should be noted that wrestling is not distinguished from boxing, and the afficionados of the Five Empires see nothing unfair in dealing an opponent a good clout if possible.
2. Two similar systems of unarmed combat are taught in the Five Empires. The Temples of Thúmis and Keténgku teach *Dedarátl*, which focusses upon the use of the hands as weapons, and the priesthoods of Ksárul and Grugánu give instruction in *Hu'ón*, which stresses footwork and kicking. These systems are known to the Omnipotent Azure Legion (and its counterparts in other lands), to the assassin clans, and to the temples of Kirrinéb, Guodái, Ru'ungkáno, and Kikumársha in Livyánu (Sec. 1.610). The war-temples of Tsolyánu and Mu'ugalavyá consider these arts to be demeaning, as do the feudal lords of Salarvyá and Pechâno. In Tsolyánu, Yán Kór, and Mu'ugalavyá those temples which specialise in these techniques limit their instruction to loyal devotees who are being trained for special missions — usually on behalf of one of the secret societies mentioned in Sec. 1.610. Outsiders have little access to them, although a tutor may occasionally be found in the marketplace who can impart the fundamentals. Neither of these systems is of much use against armoured opponents, of course, and the armies of the Five Empires therefore ignore them.
3. The quarterstaff (a bronze-banded, thick pole some 190-250 cm long and weighing as much as 1 kg) is highly developed as a non-military weapon in Saá Allaqí, Chayákku, and also to some extent in Jánnu and Kilalámmu. The Saá Allaqiyáni have perfected this art, called *Kichána*, to a very high degree, and even an expert swordsman may sometimes find himself disarmed and laid senseless upon the ground by an adept. As might be expected, the quarterstaff is relatively ineffective against armour, but a man clad in fabric or leather had best learn to respect it. Tutors for *Kichána* are very rare outside of the centres listed above, and the farther one goes away from these regions the less chance there is of finding a teacher. Again, the Salarvyáni and Pechâni hold this weapon to be non-noble, and the peoples of the west and south are quite unfamiliar with it.
4. The skill of fighting in "Florentine" style — employing a long sword in one hand and a short dagger (often with blade-catchers: the main gauche of 17th century Europe) in the other — is peculiar to the duellists of Salarvyá, Pechâno, and Háida Pakála, where this technique is termed *Arruché*. Young aristocrats are trained to settle "affairs of honour" in this fashion. A "Florentine" fighter cannot use a shield, of course, and the system is rather ineffectual against an armoured enemy. Primitive varieties of this style are employed by bandits and ruffians in southern Tsolyánu and in Pelesár in Milumanayá, but the highest forms of the technique can only be acquired from a Salarvyáni or Pechâni master. A number of non-human races posses more than two hands (the Ahoggyá,

Hlűss, Páchi Léi, Pé Chő, and Ssű), and may strike two blows at once. This is usually done against two different opponents, however, and does not constitute a use of *Arruché*. Even when such a nonhuman hits twice at the same foeman, the blows are not nearly as skillful and coordinated as those of a Salarvyáni Arruchegár.

Members of the assassin clans (Secs. 1.422, 1.550, and 1.740) learn to use daggers, swords, shields, bows, and some other military weapons (but not long spears or pikes). They also employ short truncheons, "cat's claws," taloned gauntlets, and a variety of unusual arms, some of which may be developed by an individual assassin for himself and are not revealed even to his clan-brothers. Assassins, moreover, must become proficient in the arts of tracking, disguise, spying, forgery, locksmithing, traps and snares, poisons (both ingested and applied to weapons), other drugs, and ciphers. The last of these is taught only to true masters. Two such adepts can communicate with one another in speech or in writing in a perfectly innocuous way while at the same time conveying information of considerable complexity. Each clan has its own codes and argot, of course.

A few of the special weapons of the assassin are noted below:

1. "The Springing Doom": a slender dagger, circular in cross-section, and about 10 cm long. This is spring-loaded within a harmless-appearing handle, and when its stud is pressed, it emerges with force enough to penetrate leather armour or even thin *Chlén* hide. It is often poisoned.
2. "The Collar of Forever": a garrote made of twisted wire or *Gűdru* fibre. This must be used against an unsuspecting victim, of course, being flipped over the target's head and around his throat before he can react. Assassins pride themselves upon being able to do this so efficiently that the victim is dead before any outcry can be made.
3. "The Whisperer": a tiny blowgun which silently fires poisoned darts out to a range of 5 m or so.
4. "The Summoner upon the Way": a miniature, hand-cocked crossbow, so named because its snapping sound resembles the sharp finger-snap used by a master to call a servant — in this case onto the path leading to the Isles of the Excellent Dead. This weapon also fires poisoned darts, and its range is perhaps 8-10 m.
5. "The Teeth of the Demon Tomű́a": these are the light, spiny shells of the *Garésa*, a crustacean found on the beaches near Penóm. They are carried in a pouch and are scattered over the floor to discourage pursuit. Their spines will penetrate leather sandals (but not sturdier footgear), and their venom causes instant unconsciousness which lasts for as long as 30 minutes. They are fatal only to children, the weak, and the aged, however.
6. "The Deliverer from Existence": a specially balanced, razor-sharp throwing knife about 30 cm long. An assassin may carry five or six of these, and if he is a person of consequence in his clan, these will be made of slivers of steel. Only the clan's own smith can manufacture such knives, all others being forbidden to learn the art (although less effective throwing knives can be purchased in the marketplaces from certain smiths). Accuracy is expected out to a range of 20-25 m. It is said that each young apprentice is made to hurl these knives at a thread from which a leather whip is hung. Those who fail to sever the cord neatly within a stated number of tries are flogged.
7. "The Dance of Peril": a network of rough-surfaced, poison-smeared trip-wires strung across a corridor in a pattern known only to the assassin. He can step nimbly through this without harm, but others must proceed slowly or risk an ankle wound which will be fatal. Leather or *Chlén* hide footgear will foil this device, of course, unless the victim falls over one wire and cuts himself upon another.
8. "Pa'íya's Kiss": named after one of the terrible demonesses of mythology, this consists of a small, long-handled, glass vessel filled with the corrosive purple juices of "The Food of the Ssű" (Sec. 1.414), incendiaries, the lethal spores of the *Sagűn* (one of the monsters of the Underworlds), etc. Sometimes they contain only a blood-hued dye and are meant to warn or frighten a target. These little bottles are usually thrown by hand, but a few assassins have adapted them for use with the staff-sling.
9. "The Tender Companion": an expert assassin can sometimes train the rare and costly *Alűsh* snake of the desert highlands of Milumanayá to seek out a victim to whom he points with a long, thin rod. The little snake (which averages only 20 cm in length) follows the guiding tip of the rod and curls up next to the target. Should the latter move, he will be instantly bitten, and *Alűsh* venom "gives a man no time even to say farewell to his last breath." The snake then returns to its owner's basket. The assassin runs some risk in utilising these deadly creatures, of course, but their size and lightness give them a good chance of getting across a trapped floor, through netting, etc. without setting off alarms or waking the intended victim.
10. "The Worms of Death": these tiny, living worms really pertain to the worship of Sárku, and they are supplied by his temples to the assassin clans in return for certain unnamed favours. These worms are sealed in an inert state into clay "coins" — discs 2 cm in diametre and 50 mm thick. When the "coin" is broken, the worms emerge and bore into any warm body nearby. There they consume the internal organs and grow to considerable size — 1 or 2 m long. Death results in 10 minutes unless the victim is promptly treated by a competent physician or by certain magical means. It is from these worms that the Tsolyáni idiom "to bestow the coin" comes signifying "to condemn to certain death."

Assassins are forbidden by their clan laws from learning any type of sorcery. They may employ Lay-Priests (Sec. 1.832) to accompany them on particular missions, however, and they may also acquire and use the magico-technological devices of the ancients.

Gladiators are not divided into types as they were in Rome (e.g. the retiarius, the myrmillo, etc.). Such men fight with whatever armour and weapons they please, subject to the rules laid down in Sec. 1.740. Daggers and one-handed long swords are the most frequent gladiatorial weapons, although two-handed long swords and polearms are occasionally seen as well. Missile weapons are avoided. (The Pijenáni have been known to pit a squad of archers against a horde of naked slaves armed with clubs, however.) Poisoned blades are strictly forbidden. It may be noted that the net, so popular amongst the Romans, is not used on Tékumel.

Almost all warriors learn their weapons during service in the military. This is almost the only way a poor townsman or peasant lad can acquire such training. Each legion teaches only its traditional weapons: e.g. one who joins the Tsolyáni Legion of Lord Lángsha of Jaikalór (8th Imperial Medium Infantry) will be taught the dagger and the two-handed axe, while a soldier in the Legion of Mnáshu of Thri'íl (10th Imperial Medium Infantry) will be instructed in the long spear and the jag-edged, one-handed sword. Most soldiers are content to become skilled in the weapons of their unit and make little attempt to learn others. Those few who do wish to broaden their expertise must invest their hard-earned wages in the services of an arms-master — usually a retired subaltern from some other legion who has opened a school in the marketplace of one of the larger cities. Such men teach the specific weapons they have learned during their careers, and their academies thus provide instruction only in that one weapon (or group of related weapons). Classes are open to all but slaves, and costs run from 10 to 50 *Káitars* per month for daily one-hour sessions which may be attended by 10-20 students. The prices for private tuition are likely to be triple those of the group amount. The weapons most frequently taught are those considered "noble" in the Five Empires: daggers, short and long one-handed weapons, two-handed swords and axes, polearms, composite bows, and the crossbow. Tutors in other arms can sometimes be found: short thrusting spears (particularly as employed for hunting), javelins, slings, and even the bolas. Teachers for other weapons are quite rare: e.g. the manufacture and use of artillery can be learned only during service in an appropriate legion. Blowguns, staff-slings, quarterstaves, wrestling, the unarmed martial arts, and *Arruché*

(fighting in Florentine style) all have the restrictions previously noted, and the special weapons and techniques of the assassin clans are never revealed to outsiders at all.

Duelling masters of higher quality are available to the scions of the wealthier clans and the aristocracy. Such experts are to be found only in the largest cities, and they, too, are mainly ex-soldiers who have gained renown. Their instruction is not cheap, ranging from 50 to as much as 1,500 *Kâitars* per month for a daily private lesson (no group classes are given by these teachers). The secret societies of the great war-temples (Karakán, Vimúhla, their Cohorts, Hŕsh in Mu'ugalavyá, and Kirrinéb, Guodái, and Ru'ungkáno in Livyánu; cf. Sec. 1.610) usually provide this instruction at half price to their warrior-priests and legion officers. Weapons taught include only the "noble" ones mentioned above. It is considered eccentric and declasse for a person of high status to wish to learn arms other than these.

Although duelling masters and schools can be encountered in every large city, it is useful to list some of the most famous — and expensive — ones below:

Name of the school, its owner, and the city in which it is found	Weapon[s] taught, cost in *Kâitars* per month, and notes
The House of Blades; Nírunel hiQolsúna; Béy Sŭ	Short and long one-handed swords; 1,200-1,500; the most famous swordsman in Tsolyánu
The Threshold of Glory; Viumél hiArkódu; Jakálla	Short and long one-handed swords; two-handed swords; 900-1,000; another renowned expert and tutor to the children of Prince Rereshqâla
The House Which Knows No Fear; Qâlu hiChánkodel; Béy Sŭ	Daggers, short one-handed weapons, and knife-throwing; 800-1,000; an excellent teacher but one given to bursts of temper -- with occasional unfortunate consequences for his students
The Hall of Heroes; Dlárku hiKálovel; Khirgár	Short and long one-handed weapons, polearms; 700-1,000; although this school is relatively new, its owner has served as the personal tutor to Prince Eselné, and he is also a friend (and ex-subordinate) of General Kettukal hiMraktiné
The Red Sandstone Palace; Mréssu hiVríddi; Fasíltum	Short and long one-handed weapons, two-handed swords; 700-900; this is the school traditionally used by the ancient Vríddi clan of Fasíltum
The Place of Achieving Noble Proximity to Death; Númu hiCharkúnu; the City of Sárku	Daggers, knife-throwing, short and long one-handed weapons, polearms; 800-1,000; tutor to Prince Dhich'uné and his entourage
The Mansion of Weaponry; Wektúdhish Gra'ácha; Ssa'átis	Polearms, two-handed swords; 900-1,300; perhaps the finest teacher of the halberd anywhere
The Academy of Seeking Victory; Arúmaz Dlévu; Tsámra	The Livyani *Chídok* sword, two-handed axes and maces; 1,000-1,100; an elderly man but one who can still outdo most younger fighters
The Consortium of the Conquerors of the North; Grázhu Okhón; Yán Kór City	All "noble" weapons; 800-1,200; the owner is the Duelling Master in Residence to Baron Áld; under the latter's aegis several northern experts have been gathered together to teach everything from the dagger to the bolas, including the quarterstaff
The Conservatory of Noble Dignity; Edlúchcho Suzhán; Tsatsayágga (with a branch run by his son, Gyúsh, at Koyluga)	Short and long one-handed weapons, *Arruché* (Florentine fighting); 1,000-1,200; the best instructor in *Arruché* anywhere
The Domicile of Skillful Attack; Ailú Viridá'a; Saá Allaqiyár	*Kichána* (the art of the quarterstaff); 700-900; the greatest exponent of this style of combat
The Tower of the Twelfth Arrow; Tilunê hiVárchal; Jakálla	Longbows and composite bows; 700-900; and elderly archer, now going blind but still able to teach
The Academy of Inimitable Marksmanship; Zhnemúish Bé; Khéiris	Composite bows, crossbows; 800-1,000; instructor to Mu'ugalavyá's Legion VIII of the First Palace, called "Long-Arrow", now retired to Khéiris
The Mansion of the Porphyry Lintel; Yulêneb Fálla; Tsúpil Hlá ya	Composite bows, crossbows; 900-1,000; the finest archeress in Livyánu and tutoress to the *Liúneb* of the Shadowed One
The Chambers of the Volley of Death; Oná hiSrúgáshchene; Tumíssa	The longbow of the Kúrt Hills; 800-1,000; perhaps the only internationally known instructor in this weapon and younger clan-brother to General Ka'á hiSrúgáshchene of the Legion of the Clan of the Inverted Hand (27th Imperial Light Infantry)

Very few warriors ever attempt to learn the arts of the sorcerer — and vice versa. This is due to cultural reasons. The magic-using fraternity holds that any killing done by its members should be accomplished through the sorcerous arts alone. Blood-letting is reserved for sacrifices, and at most a priest or magic-user may defend himself with a mace or a club in moments of dire emergency. Warriors, on the other hand, believe that their rôle in the scheme of things involves slaying with physical weapons (although the use of one of the magico-technological devices of the ancients is not thought out of place). The temples, moreover, are generally unwilling to invest their time and effort in training a student to use magic unless he intends to devote his life to the traditional objectives of the priesthoods. The legions, arms-masters, and duelling experts hold the same opinion in reverse. In order to serve one's chosen profession "nobly," one must spend most of one's time at it, and any "cross-overs" are discouraged. The acolyte who passes a good portion of his day at the arms-master's school will quickly lag behind others in his Circle, and the young fighter who cons his books and spells at the feet of the temple instructor cannot hope to keep up with his peers in the nuances of weaponry. Both the priesthoods and the military tend to look askance at someone who "straddles the fence," and this may count strongly and negatively against him when he seeks promotion. This has nothing to do with the wearing of armour. As said in Sec. 1.950, priests and sorcerers may indeed wear certain types of defensive coverage, but very few have any expertise in the use of offensive weapons. Conversely, warriors (including temple guards and members of the temple-funded legions) almost never have any competence in magic. Nobles and the wealthy are welcome to play at learning both sorcery and physical combat if they wish, of course, but it is axiomatic that the dilettante can never achieve the level of the true professional.

A word on the professional armourer may be added here. Such persons are much sought after. Every large city has perhaps ten or twelve clanhouses devoted to this occupation, and competition is fierce. Although many shops do have some items "ready-made and on the rack," so to speak, most armour is made to measure, like a suit of fine clothing. Once the *Chlén* hide has been selected from the tanners' clan (steel being too rare to bother asking about, in most cases), it takes perhaps a month to make a common suit of armour — and a year to produce a truly fine one. Almost all armourers' establishments also deal in weapons, and the same considerations apply: cheap *Chlén* hide weapons can be had ready-made, but while a mass-produced sword will serve its purpose, it will not be nearly as suitable as one created specially for the customer's hand, height, reach, balance, and style of combat. Most good weapons are thus "made to order," which may take anywhere from a day or two to a month, depending upon the item's complexity and ornamentation.

Large armouries, such as those of Féshmu hiFershéna of Tumíssa, Vrí hiKakúvu of Jakálla (known there as "Vrí of Púrdimal"), or Hláru hiNimuné of Béy Sŭ, are veritable factories, incorporating facilities

for working *Chlén* hide, smiths for metal, engravers, goldsmiths, jewellers, painters and lacquerers, and several other sub-crafts. Such establishments serve as social centres for warriors, soldiers, and all those interested in the lore of weapons. The cognoscenti thus gather daily at the clanhouse of their favourite armourer, squat crosslegged upon the stained reed mats, eat, drink *Chumétl* or wine, and inspect his stock of arms and armour. Archers and crossbowmen congregate in the same fashion at the clanhouses of such experts as Jayárka hiShanátl of Béy Sú, called "the Father of Crossbows"; Ma'ál hiChiggéne of Mrelú, whose arrows are said to be as "faultless as Hriháyal's breasts"; or blackbearded Bushétra of Khúm, a Salarvyáni who has his shop in Jakálla and who sells both melee and missile weapons as well as armour. (This is unusual: there is generally a dichotomy between those clans which deal in melee weapons and armour and those which specialise in the equipment of the archer and the crossbowman. But, then, it is said, "The Salarvyáni will sell anything — and preferably twice over to the same customer...")

1.1000. Knowledge and the Arts

1.1010. TECHNOLOGY AND SCIENCE

From all that has been said above it is clear that the Five Empires have attained a level of technology comparable to that of Rome at its best. In some ways the Romans may be judged more advanced, while in other spheres the peoples of Tékumel can hardly be matched by any of the pre-fifteenth century cultures of Earth. This is due partially to sorcery and the devices of the ancients (Sec. 1.620), of course, but much can be attributed to the vastly larger labour force, the relative ease of communication (even over tremendous distances), and the old, stable, and conservative cultures of Tékumel. The "technological break-through" and the "Great Leap Forward" are indeed rare in the history of the planet; nevertheless, slow progress of a sort does occur, and the social upheavals occasioned by the Renaissance or the Industrial Revolution of Earth are absent. Those who hold that constant "progress" (or perhaps just "change") is desirable may find the "stagnation" of Tékumel frustrating. The latter does provide permanence and security, however, and the importance of these two things to the psychological well-being of the individual and to the unification of society cannot be underestimated.

The "why's" of culture are often unanswerable. One hears, "If the people of Tékumel have A, B, and C, then why can't they invent D?" The only possible reply is: "They haven't thought of it." This same sort of question has often been asked about the societies of Earth. The Romans had wheels, cogs, steel, and considerable mechanical competence; why, then, did they not invent the bicycle? (Admittedly, the vision of a contingent of Roman legionaries cycling through Gaul along the Empire's excellent roads is amusing.) The sciences, architecture, and crafts of the Mayans and the Aztecs were impressive; yet they never developed the wheel (although a few wheeled toys of clay have been found), nor did they use the true arch (instead building the walls of a room out towards one another with long tenons until a capstone could be laid on top). Wheels, carts, and human labour were long known in China and Japan, but the *jinrikisha* ("rickshaw") was not thought of until the 1880s. There is simply no single, solid explanation to such "why's" — only theories, and in the last analysis, just: "they didn't think of it."

Part of the answer to such cases of "cultural blindness" on Tékumel can be found in the easy availability of "magic," part in the conservativism of the societies themselves, and part in the secrecy of the clans, governments, and temples. Why, for instance, invent a flying machine when other-planar power can be used to create the same effect? Certainly, communication and transportation would be faster if one could catch an airliner up from Jakálla to Béy Sú, but then the cultures of the planet are largely elitist: there is no "good" associated with mass transportation, mass education, or "disseminating the benefits of science to the common man." The technology of the ancients before the Time of Darkness is too complex, moreover, for the modern peoples of Tékumel to comprehend when they find usable artifacts: what would a mediaeval sage have understood of the insides of a television set? The existence of such incredible devices creates a sort of "inferiority complex" when one looks at such machines. They are "magic" and "beyond us," and that is that. Even the knowledge-oriented temples can do little more than preserve ancient mechanisms — and occasionally effect minor repairs. Those manuals and textbooks which still exist are too complicated, and they are also written in languages no living person can understand. Experimentation is difficult in view of the "sacred" nature of such artifacts. In addition, none of the present societies of the planet has much of a "scientific spirit"; things are as they are.

Trade secrets are carefully protected by the occupational clans. The chemicals employed by one clan to tan *Chlén* hide may be more effective than those used by another, but the former would never tell the latter how to improve his processes. Publishing the details of a private clan technique may get one expelled from the clan — or even killed. Craftsmen depend upon a body of oral tradition, thus, transmitted down from master to journeyman to apprentice over the centuries. Literacy is not widespread, and the privileged secrets of one's profession are not to be reduced to writing in any case. Invention and innovation occur mainly through luck, accident, or sometimes through a little "industrial espionage." Those artisans who are successful in creating new products or techniques are usually the last to want to reveal their methods to their colleagues.

The temples are repositories of considerable knowledge. They are jealous of their power and prerogatives, however, and rarely share their information — not only across "alignments" (Sec. 1.610) but even between the priesthood of a God and that of his Cohort! Certain of the clergy of Thúmis (the most "open" of all the deities) once wished to compile an encyclopaedia of all knowledge; yet they soon found that none of the other temples would cooperate — or provided only incomplete or deliberately misleading data. This was true even of the priests of Thúmis' Cohort, Keténgku! The governments are even more stringent in their emphasis upon secrecy and security. "No one makes room for another upon the high dais," as the Tsolyáni proverb puts it.

Many technological principles and processes are visible to all, of course. All but the natives of M'mórcha, Nmartúsha, and Rannálu are familiar with the wheel. The Five Empires and all but the most remote of the smaller states know and use the winch or capstan, the lever, the pulley, the wedge, the screw, and even toothed wheels. Windmills, waterwheels, and pumps are employed here and there across the continent, but most of the planet's cultures are not very mechanically inclinded. The temples possess devices to open and close massive doors, to raise and lower altar platforms, and even to create "miracles," but again the details of these are kept as secret as possible. For more elaborate machines, moreover, men consult the Tinalíya, who specialise in such things.

The development of mechanics, calibration, and precise measurements suffers, furthermore, from a societal idiosyncrasy, a case of "cultural blindness"; it is considered demeaning for a member of a high clan or an aristocrat to know or care too much about weights, times, distances, etc. Subjectivity is prestigious; objectivity is more the middle-class artisan. A nobleman may thus say that a dull feast "took days and days," while a calendar year spent pleasantly "passed in but one *Kirén*" (a measure equivalent to about half an hour). The dining room may be "many *Tsán* away" if one does not wish to go there, but a city halfway across the Empire may be "less than a *Tsán* distant" if it fascinates the speaker. The palaces of the nobility are full of devices created by middle-class artisans (or in exceptional cases by the Tinalíya), but it is not "noble" for their owners to take much interest in their workings.

For precision one must look either to the craftsman or to the temple scholar, whose discipline forms part of his service to his deity and is hence "noble." Astronomy, for example, has attained a high degree of practical development. The astrolabe is well known; ephemerides of the movements and positions of the heavenly bodies exist; and a simple compass is used (largely by mariners, however), consisting of a bowl of water or oil upon the surface of which a magnetised steel needle is floated. On the other hand, the telescope has not been invented — or rather one should say that it was invented but rejected: a priest of Thúmis, one Zarén hiDelashái, of the Monastery of the Grey Cloak in Dó Cháka, recently produced a working model, but his superiors told him that it was a waste of time when so much more could be ascertained through magic.

Astronomy is put to purely pragmatic uses. The temples employ it to establish the calendar (see below), to predict the seasons and the times of sowing and harvesting, to foretell eclipses in order to awe the

illiterate, etc. Navigators study this discipline in order to sail the seas. For the upper classes, astronomy is important in the casting of horoscopes. Precise birth-times are recorded by priests, and a specialist is summoned to delineate each upper-class infant's character, potential, and probably Skein of Destiny. There are twelve astrological "houses" (the Livyáni favour eight), and the presence or absences of the planets, moon, or the sun in each are noted and their inter-relationships examined. Daily transits of the celestial bodies over imporant positions in the natal chart are then utilised to foretell daily events and influences. There is no theory of "progressions," nor do the astrologers of Tékumel use arbitrary "parts" (e.g. the "Part of Fortune," once employed by the preceptors of Earth). Space preludes a more detailed discussion here of the astrological systems of Tékumel. See also Sec. 1.100.

Several competing hypotheses are found concerning the structure and nature of the cosmos. The idea of a round world revolving (together with the other four planets) about a central sun is only one of these, propounded by the priests of Hŕsh in Mu'ugalavyá and of Qame'él in Livyánu. A few Yán Koryáni scholars, notably Réghnu Dléppa, one of the Baron's advisors, also hold this view. Most Tsolyáni thinkers consider Tékumel to be a flat island floating inside a black sphere – an attempt byHrü'ű to contain and stifle the glorious light of Hnálla. This island is longer from north to south than from east to west, leaving room on the latter two sides for the rising and setting of the celestial bodies, which spend the night or day, respectively, "enjoying the favours of their patron Gods in the paradises beyond Teretané." The savants of the Temple of Vimúhla, on the other hand, see Tékumel, its sun, and its sister planets as an oval cosmological "leaf" which spirals down in a long autumnal flutter towards final ecstatic annihilation in the Supernal Flame. The Salarvyáni believe the world to be a gaming table built by the Gods for their immortal amusement. Men and other beings are but pawns in this elaborate game of *Daqű* (Sec. 1.930), and the sun, moons, and planets function as the deities' dice and score-markers. Many of the simpler cultures have only hazy cosmogonic theories: e.g. the N'lűss say, "We are the People, and our lands are the World. All else is the concern of others and their gods." The Tinalíya are perhaps the closest in their conceptualisation to the theories of twentieth century Earth. They claim that matter and energy are but different faces of the same "substance," that Tékumel and its sister planets move about the sun in "tracks like those of a cart — easier to remain in than get out of," and that the moons orbit Tékumel. They differ, however, in postulating a second type of "substance" which causes the particles of matter to cohere together — a sort of sub-atomic glue. Neither they nor any of the other peoples of Tékumel possess microscopes, and their hypotheses must thus stem from philosophical reasoning rather than empirical investigation.

The field of geography is hampered by two major obstacles. The first of these is the "noble" attitude towards precise distances mentioned above. The aristocrat is not supposed to care about such things. Nevertheless, localised maps are indeed made by those with "a need to know." The peasant is aware of the boundaries of his fields, marks them with stone cairns, and can sketch them with a stick in the earth for the temple or government administrators. The merchant draws up a rough sketch of the cities on a caravan route and indicates the number of days' travel between each. The scribes of the priesthoods and the governmental bureaus make schematised maps of their holdings. Soldiers diagramme the region in which they must campaign, inserting approximations of terrain, distances, and other features. Sailors keep logs of depths, rocks, shoals, coastlines, and harbours. Artisans, too, are precise when it comes to the details of their work: e.g. a masons' clan can easily say how many *Tsán* of roadway it has constructed. Reports on all of these activites are submitted to the rulers of the Five Empires, and were they all to be collected and collated, some reasonably good atlases might result. Yet this is another instance of "cultural blindness." Those at the lower levels have no need for anything beyond their immediate, functional requirements, and those higher up disdain to produce maps. If one wishes to journey to a distant place, thus, the best method is still to join the caravan of an experienced merchant, find a native guide, or consult a traveller who has been there.

The second reason for the lack of large-scale maps is the existence of "High Cartography" (Tsolyáni: *Chànmismongékjoi*). The ancients before the Time of Darkness employed other-planar power and technology to record information within small material objects, usually in the form of gems or beautiful artificial stones. One could obtain this knowledge telephathically by holding the stone in the hand. One could thus "hear" the details of a region's terrain, resources, demography, history, etc. and at the same time "see" pictures of its peoples, cities, natural features, and cultural manifestations. A few of these "recorded casettes" are still operative (Lord Cháimira hiSsánmirin, the Provost of the High Chancery at Avanthár, has a good collection), but the languages in which they speak are only so much babble, and the scenes displayed are of civilisations lost for millenia. What has happened since, however, is that scholars have continued to copy these little mechanisms, developing a "code" of minute grooves, protuberances, colourations, and patterns which can be felt with the fingertips or seen with the eyes. This has been aided by the Pé Chói, whose tactile sense is very sensitive. A skilled craftsman can thus manufacture a stone "map-symbol" (Tsolyáni: *Chánmisèn*) from which an adept can learn the general contours of a region, its population, the number and approximate locations of its cities, its major natural features, and more. "High Cartography" is the only culturally approved means of studying foreign lands, although it is certainly no substitue for a good book and a map!

Geology and mineralogy are again largely pragmatic. The appearance and provenience of many ores are known, as are the uses of a large number of chemicals, and the techniques of mining, smelting, and refining. The collection and classification of rare minerals constitue a "noble" pursuit, moreover, and Prince Rereshqála is said to have a display of over 2,000 specimens from all over the continent. His assistants have organised these and have prepared statements of their properties and uses. The basics of inorganic chemistry are fairly well known, therefore, and some progress has been made in identifying and listing the elements. Organic chemistry, on the other hand, is as yet rudimentary except for the practical applications of plant and animal substances to such fields as medicine, pharmacology, tanning, agriculture, etc. There is no concept of a deliberate, systematic chemical experiment, and such discoveries as do occur are mainly due to efforts by artisans to create better products: e.g. a more effective tanning solution for *Chlén* hide, a better oil base for perfume, a compound which will create glass of a different colour or quality, and so on. A few temples (notably those of Thúmis, Ksárul, their Cohorts, and certain of the Shadow Gods of Livyánu) are deeply interested in alchemy, but this is often mixed — and confused — with sorcery and is by no means "chemistry" in the usual sense of the term.

The Five Empires base their mathematics upon the decimal system. "Zero" is employed, but the decimal point remains to be discovered. The remains of the old vigesimal system of the Bednálljans (and possibly the Llyáni) can still be seen in the 20 *Qirgál* it takes to make up a *Hlásh*, and the 20 *Hlásh* which constitute a *Káitar* (Sec. 1.731). A few of the smaller states and some of the nonhuman races employ other arrangements: e.g. the Shén, whose units are founded upon sevens; the Urunén, who use fours, etc. The simplest system of all is attributed to the Dló tribe of eastern Rannálu, whose numbers consist of just, "One, two, three — many ..."

Practical geometry is indispensable to architects, masons, and some other professions. It is thus quite well developed. The properties of straight-sided figures are known, including calculations of areas and volumes, and experts can solve similar problems relating to circles, spheres, and cylinders, utilising an approximate value for *pi*. Beyond this, however, little is known, although it is said that some savants (particularly those of the Livyáni) have been experimenting with simple algebra. The Tinalíya are reported to have more in the way of theoretical mathematics, but these little beings are either incapable of explaining their techniques to humans — or do not care to do so. Logarithms, trigonometry, calculus, and further varieties and methods of mathematics are all as yet unknown upon Tékumel.

The botanical and zoological sciences are once more primarily classificatory and utilitarian. The Priestkings of Éngsvan hla Gánga compiled thick tomes listing and picturing every species of plant and animal they could find. Their scholars went on to note the uses of each to agriculture, nutrition, medicine, sorcery, and the crafts. Their "Scrolls of Knowing Those Things Which Rejoice in the Soil" are still

extant, consisting of some 30 volumes. One set of these is preserved in the Imperial library at Avanthár, while other recensions and abridgements can be had in Ssa'átis, Tsámra, Jakálla, Khéiris, Tsatsayágga, and Ke'ér. Unfortunately, the later companion work dealing with the fauna of Tékumel seems to have perished in the sinking of Gánga (Sec. 1.360). A partial copy is said to exist in the Palace of the Governor of Nimué in Mihállu, but this remains to be substantiated. Many lesser treatises are available, however. A few temples (e.g. Avánthe, Shiringgáyi in Salarvyá, and Ndárka in Livyánu) have produced practical textbooks covering crop diseases and veterinary medicine. Crossbreeding and the developement of hybrids are understood by agriculturalists, stock-breeders, and slavers. New varieties are brought to the markets every year or so, and one may thus assume a solid pragmatic knowledge of the basics of genetics and hereditary. Indeed, it is said that the priesthoods of Ksárul, Grugánu, and the Horned One of Secrets of Livyánu know — or perhaps once knew — techniques by which strange monsters and genetic sports could be created, possbily utilising devices left by the ancients. It is thought that this is the origin of the *Qól*, the hideous, serpent-headed guardians of the secret places of the Underworlds, for example.

No one has propounded anything like the theory of evolution. Since man did not evolve upon Tékumel, and since the flora and fauna of the planet are comprised of species from dozens of the worlds of space, it would be very odd if one were to encounter this idea. It may be added that the cultures of the continent are strangely disinterested in the origins of mankind. If one were to press the priesthoods for a statement on this topic, one would most likely receive a "religious" reply: e.g. the Gods created men to serve in the unending battle between Stability and Change; all living things were brought by the deities from the Planes Beyond (a theory more correct than its proponents might guess); Hnálla created the Egg of the World, and when the other Gods saw this, they quarreled over its perfection and caused him to drop it, whereupon some of its fragments were transformed into men, others became the Shén, the Pé Chói, animals, plants, etc. Many scholars, however, would simply shrug and say that the question is of no interest to them. Things have always been as they are now — a hypothesis hard to refute in view of the hoary and seemingly unchanging history of mankind on Tékumel, the lack of fossils which can be used to establish a ladder of evolutionary development, and the fact that the ancients — those whose remains indicate that they of all people might have known the answers to such questions — are all dead and dust in spite of their technology and glory. Speculation is hampered and almost precluded by the immanence and reality of the Gods (Sec. 1.610). When it comes to reasons for the "why" of things, thus, one can only point to the giant "inferiority complex" mentioned at the beginning of this Section. It is not for man to know all the answers, according to Pavár, and it is futile for him to do anything but obey the Gods, act "nobly," and follow his Skein of Destiny as best he can.

Medicine has been touched upon in Sec. 1.412. This field, as with many others, has lagged behind because of the easy access to sorcery and the time-honoured compendia of spells available to the temples. There has been some development, nevertheless. One may not always find a sorcerer with the requisite spell handy; the temples may refuse their aid to someone they consider politically or religiously dangerous — or irrelevant — to their goals; and the masses cannot afford the costs of sorcerous healing in any case. The physician thus has an important role to play amongst the lower and middle classes, and even the high clans and the aristocracies may prefer a medical doctor instead of a magic-using priest because they do not desire to owe the temples any favours.

The physicians of the Five Empires are well aware of the theory of contagion. A sick person may be quarantined within his own room or house, and an infected locale may be burned by order of the authorities — sometimes with patients still alive within it. The "germ theory" is not known, however. Illnesses are spoken of as though they were low-level sentient beings: a malady "resides" in a person; it "touches" him and "travels upon his person"; it "strikes with malevolence"; and if it is cured, one says that it "became affrighted and has fled." Medicines are referred to as "poisons for diseases," just as arsenic is a poison for the human body. Disease is thus not a part of the religious context. It is not caused by the Gods or an "affliction" from them in retaliation for past sins. No one would think to pray to cure an illness. Instead, sickness is a sort of invisible animal which "seizes its victims" and must be dispelled either by specific "poisons" or by sorcery, just as one rids oneself of a larger foe. The Gods can indeed be called upon to help: they may be asked to weave a better strand into one's Skein of Destiny. They can cause one to find a good physician, find the money needed for a treatment or a spell, or see that an efficacious "poison" for the malady is obtained. This is seen as being much the same sort of divine assistance vouchsafed a warrior: he may be given a better weapon, the skills to defeat his enemy, or the luck to strike at just the right moment.

Innumerable drugs and medicines are available to the physicians of Tékumel. The apothecary's pharmacoepia includes nostrums devised by all of the great civilisations of the past from Llyáni on to the present day. There are several natural antibiotics, an excellent anaesthetic (a greenish grass called *Airá*, which shuts off the pain centres if chewed), and literally thousands of prescriptions for everything from boils to hardening of the arteries. Not all of these are effective, of course, and many are based upon superstition and folk ideas: e.g. wearing a cap filled with the excrement of the *Kúni* bird to cure a patient of sexual impotence. Others are fairly useful.

Surgery is well advanced, the result of centuries of warfare and battle experience. The tourniquet is employed; wounds are cauterised with hot irons; cuts are sewed up with sinew; broken limbs are set and splinted; bandages are sterilised in boiling water (a known "poison" against infection and gangrene); and even trepanning is sometimes successfully accomplished. Internal injuries, haemorrhaging, and such problems as appendicitis are far harder to treat, of course. The doctors of Livyánu have propounded a realistic theory of the circulation of the blood, but this has not yet been accepted everywhere. Gynecological and obstetric matters are handled by the priestesses of Avánthe and her counterparts in other lands. Dentistry, too, has made some progress: teeth are pulled and replaced with dentures made of carved bone set in a matrix of moulded *Chlén* hide. Crude, simple glass lenses are available, and poor vision can be aided with hand-held magnifying glasses. Blindness, deafness, and many other conditions are still untreatable except by sorcery, however, and even this fails at times.

As with other disciplines, there is little medical experimentation. The apothecary searches through his musty tomes for tried and true remedies approved by the ancients, and much of his time is spent in preparing aphrodisiacs, love potions, sorcerous and alchemical components, and simple herbal specifics for common ailments. The surgeon similarly follows the texts of the authorities: operate upon this type of wound in such and such a fashion; cut here and tie there; and when all else fails hand the patient back to the sorcerers. There is little love lost between the medical and the magical professions. Sorcery is preferred by those who can afford it — a spell is less fearsome and painful than the surgeon's knife. Patients thus exhaust all of the possibilities of magic before turning to the physician, often too late for the latter to be of real assistance, and then if the person dies it is the doctor who is blamed. Fortunately, a physician cannot be sued for malpractice (Sec. 1.740) unless deliberate intent to harm can be proved.

1.1020. OTHER DISCIPLINES

The sciences of the mind have not yet made their appearance upon Tékumel. Telepathy, certain spells, and other sorcerous means are used to "modify behaviour," but if these are not efficacious, there is no concept of psychiatric treatment. Those who are non-functional in society may be sacrificed to the Gods, as in Mu'ugalavyá and Ghatón. In Tsolyánu and Yán Kór, they remain the responsibility of their clans or are turned out to beg at the temple gateways. The Salarvyáni treat physically healthy individuals as "normal" but try them as criminals if they commit antisocial acts. The deformed and obviously retarded are slain at birth. In Livyánu both the retarded and the mentally ill disappear into the shrines of the Shadow Gods, and the fate meted out to them there is not known. The smaller states deal with such unfortunates variously, ranging from a quick death sentence in Pijéna and Háida Pakála, to toleration and kind treatment in Tsoléi and the clanhouses of Jánnu and Kilalámmu, to honour as the "Chosen of the Gods" in Pecháno and Mihállu. The peoples of M'mórcha and Nmartúsha allow the mentally disturbed to become shamans and thus achieve respected positions in the tribe,

while the nomads of Rannálu and the Desert of Sighs expell their insane from the tribe to die in the wastelands. Amongst the Pé Chói and the Swamp Folk, an aberrant individual is watched and fed by his family. The Tinalíya, the Urunén, and the Páchi Léi confine such individuals to special quarters. Any abnormal young are eaten by the Shén, while Pygmy Folk children are said to be allowed to kill those who do not fit into the group. Ahoggyá adults solve such problems with a spear-thrust and a trip to the corpse-pile outside the village. The practices of the other races are not known.

History is one field in which the scholars of the Five Empires have attained great proficiency. Almost every temple has its group of historians and its libraries. There is little understanding of historical theory, however: the social and economic processes which motivated events. Instead, the scholars of Tékumel excel in the detailed recording of deeds and the delineation of the characters of their protagonists. They are annalists, rather than theorists.

There are several centres for historical specialisation. The temples of Thúmis, Ksárul, and their Cohorts are generally interested in the study of the past. The former has its Monastery of the Grey Cloak in Dó Cháka, for example, where Bednálljan history is emphasised. This same institution also excels in classical linguistics and religious studies. The priesthood of Ksárul maintains a large and well-funded academy in the ruins of the city of Hmakuyál; this includes experts in Llyáni, Bednálljan, and Engsvanyáli developments, and Miritsé hiChirkésu is perhaps the greatest living scholar of the Three States of the Triangle (Sec. 1.320. It is reported that studies are also made of the records and artifacts of the period before the Time of Darkness and the Latter Times, but if so, the prelates of the Doomed Prince's temple reveal their findings to no one. There are also secret monasteries and academies devoted to Ksárul in the mountains northeast of Thrí'l, while Thúmis and Keténgku are said to have clandestine schools scattered all the way out to the Dry Bay of Ssu'úm.

The other great temples are not specifically interested in history, but this does not imply ignorance. Certain scholars of the Temple of Hnálla at Béy Sú, for example, have devoted themselves to the fall of Engsvan hla Gánga and the rise of the Second Imperium. Others in the Temple of Avánthe at Jakálla are acknowledged to be the best in the fragmentary materials of the Time of No Kings. Engsvanyáli studies are best pursued in the Temple of Hnálla in the Isle of Gánga itself, while the Dragon Warriors form the special interest of the Temple of Vimúhla at Tumíssa.

Some historical periods may require the student to travel abroad. Llyáni materials are most common in Tsámra, and a few of the priests of the Shadow Gods are allowed to teach foreigners — in return for arrangements for Livyáni scholars to study in Tsolyánu and Mu'ugalavyá. The Dragon Warriors and the Llyáni both can be investigated at the institutes of Ch'óchi, Khéiris, and Ssa'átis, while the Fishermen Kings and the historical periods of the great southeastern part of the continent can only be studied in Tsatsayágga, Jgrésh, Jaekánta, or Retsúllu in Salarvyá. The Ssu form the subject of a special academy in Pechánо, but otherwise no special xenological institutes exist.

Archaeology has received some attention, too, as a necessary handmaiden to history. Scholars dig not only for treasure and the powerful devices of the ancients but to acquire knowledge of the past as well. Some of this is mere curio-collecting, of course, but fairly systematic expeditions have been mounted by some temples (particularly those of Thúmis, Ksárul, their Cohorts, and Qame'él in Livyánu) to examine sites. Preservation techniques are about as good as one might hope from cultures at this level of technology. Libraries and museums are often well kept, although the system of classification may be chaotic — frequently no more than a handful of slaves and one old keeper. There are no catalogues, and the keeper is expected to have all of the locations of the books, scrolls, and artifacts in his head! "Inducements" are inevitably needed to get information out of such a man, and if he dies, it may take years for a replacement to learn his way about.

Political science is restricted to "books of royal instruction": advice to rulers on the practical (and Machiavellian) running of a government. Anthropology is also rudimentary: travellers' accounts and the reports of infrequent Imperial expeditions. Sociology and economics are unknown as theoretical disciplines, although pragmatic counsel is indeed included in the "books of royal instruction" mentioned above. Vast amounts of data are submitted to the governments and the temples: censuses, records of births and deaths, reports on crops, trade, imports, exports, clans, crafts, works, etc. But for anyone to collate this and draw systematic conclusions from it is not within the ethos of any of the Five Empires.

Practical linguistics is a vital tool. No lingua franca exists, and diplomacy and commerce cannot be conducted without a knowledge of the major languages. Phrasebooks, functional grammars, and dictionaries thus form part of every library's holdings. Less work has been done on the minor tongues, of course, but the priesthoods of Thúmis, Ksárul, their Cohorts, and several of the sects of Livyánu pride themselves upon having at least a word-list of every language spoken on the continent, plus textbooks for the ancient and classical languages (within the sectarian limitations in Sec. 1.711). Travellers, traders, and scribes accompanying a legate's entourage are encouraged to compile vocabularies and rudimentary grammars as best they can. The scripts of the Five Empires are reasonably phonetic — "phonemic," to be technically precise: each unit of sound is always represented by one and the same grapheme (i.e. "letter" or diacritic). This facilitates the writing of foreign words. If a merchant writes *baté* (the Pe'é word for "village"), for instance his readers will know that the *a* is sounded like that of English *father*, and the *e* represents the *ay* in English *say*. There are no other possibilities, within certain phonetic limits. The *a* of English stands for many sounds: compare its values in *father*, *bat*, *above*, *fate*, or *talk*. There are no such spelling conventions or "silent letters" in the alphabets of the Five Empires. If the investigator's language (and hence his alphabet) lacks sounds and symbols for phonemes important to the tongue being studied, however, problems arise. The word-tones (like those of Chinese to some extent) of the Qùótl family of M'mórcha and Nmartúsha (Sec. 1.711) do not exist in the major languages, for example, and one may be excused for confusing Qùó *ré* "fire" with *rè* "finger" — or *rě* "phallus." The same is true of the glottalised stops of Pe'é (written in this book as *p'*, *t'*, and *k'*). A Tsolyáni may mix up *baté* "village" and *bat'é* "enemy." A few scholars have developed special notations for such unfamiliar sounds (including writing word-tones in coloured inks). Grammatical descriptions are less advanced. The Tsolyáni and the Mu'ugalavyáni have worked out a set of word-classes (i.e. "nouns," "verbs," etc.), but they apply these indiscriminately to every language whether such categories fit precisely or not. The emphasis is upon practical learning rather than theoretical niceties.

No mention has yet been made of the field of philosopy. This discipline is not distinguished from theology in the Five Empires. The priesthoods deal with philosophical issues — epistemology, ontology, metaphysics, ethics, etc. — but these are inextricably mingled with "mythic" and "religious" statements and "reasons." The omnipotence and omnipresence of the Gods have laid something of a damper upon man's faculty of speculative thinking.

1.1030. THE ARTS

Artistic ornamentation permeates the cultures of Tékumel. Craftsmen strive to outdo one another in the adornment of costumes, dwellings, utensils, furnishings, weapons, and all of the objects of daily life. Even a workman's mattock may have a bit of scrollwork or carving upon it. Plain wall surfaces exist only to balance the panels of images, calligraphy, and designs which form the high points of the composition. Painting, sculpture, music, calligraphy, and literature are all part of the repertoire of the polished aristocrat, male or female. Noblemen bestow their works upon one another as gifts, and some of these have attained high value as collectors' items. A single verse calligraphed by Lord Akhún hiMeshuné of Mrelú (who died in 2,319 A.S.) recently brought 25,300 *Káitars* at a sale held by his descendants, for example.

The paints of the artist are largely of mineral origin: earths, stones, and even pulverised gems. Animal and vegetable substances are used as well: the black obtained from the *Vrélq* crustacean of Salarvyá. Pigments are mixed with the gum of the *Ngéda* root, found in dense forests, and with water. Their colours then retain their brilliancy for centuries. Gold, silver, and copper foils and leaf are laid down upon a sort of glue and burnished. Thin slivers of gem-stones may be set into a painting or mural in the same way. Smooth-sanded boards or plastered walls are employed as a foundation, while canvas is not so

used, and painting upon any fabric is somewhat uncommon. The miniaturists who illustrate books and scrolls utilise paper, vellum, parchment, or papyrus (obtained from the swamps of southern Mu'ugalavyá), as do the court portraitists whose duty it is to limn the likenesses of the mighty for posterity. Sculpture is done in wood, clay, stone, metal, and even moulded *Chlén* hide. To these the craftsmen of Mu'ugalavyá add glass and crystal, while the artists of Lake Parunál carve in coral. The sculptors of the Nyémesel Isles use grey-gleaming *Chet'ú* shells as the background for their delicate little scenes and portraits. Jewellers are expert both at faceting stones and also carving them into cameos and intaglios. Metal is hammered and cast (often by the *cire perdue* method) into innumerable forms, some of massive size (e.g. the huge *Tunkúl* gongs of the temples). Fabric decoration is similarly highly developed: brocades, velvets, batik-work, the sewing on of tiny gems and sequins, pierced work, lace, etc. are all common, as are woven carpets and tapestries, many of incredible delicacy.

The artistic styles of the Five Empires are derived from the "formalised realism" of the latter days of Éngsvan hla Gánga — reminiscent, perhaps, of the ancient Egyptians or the Mayans. Portraiture and draughsmanship are both advanced, but the uses of shading and light and darknesses are not. Perspective is employed to some extent, depending upon the purposes of the work. The sprawling murals and bas-reliefs of the temples and palaces display no sense of depth, for instance. Important figures are gigantic, while minor ones are small. Buildings are mostly out of scale, and some may be shown in cross-section to reveal events transpiring within. On the other hand, the private art of the clanhouses and the mansions of the nobility is generally more "informal." This applies to portraiture, wall-murals, and the miniatures inserted into books and scrolls. Even so, significant elements in the background may loom larger than lesser items in the front of the picture. Some very curious approaches to "perspective" are encountered: e.g. Livyáni artists of the atelier of Sraón paint any north walls red or orange, east walls blue, south walls white, and west walls yellow. This, they say, both orients the viewer and creates "shadow" (Livyáni: *Shirudanáz*). Space does not permit further discussion of the many localised and provincial styles, those of different historical periods, or the innovations of specific schools and artists.

One may ask whether there is any "abstract" art in the Five Empires. The reply must be largely negative, but yet this must be qualified. The Tsolyáni, Mu'ugalavyáni, and Livyáni (and other peoples to a lesser extent) all have a penchant for the expression of intangibles in material form. Emotions, status, beliefs — all must somehow be *seen* in order to be understood and appreciated (cf. the *Méshqu* plaques mentioned in Sec. 1.910). Tangible symbols are also used to portray non-physical organisations and relationships (compare the organisational diagrammes and "flow-charts" of 20th Century Earth). On Tékumel, complex "abstract" symbols of metal, glass, ceramics, stone, *Chlén* hide, fabric, jewels, etc. have been developed to stand for the elements of a given system. These are assembled in large sculptures which portray the system's structure and interrelationships. Colours, textures, and superimposed designs provide the nuances, much like the map-symbols of High Cartography (Sec. 1.1010), from which this genre is probably derived. Adepts with the requisite training claim that they can "read" these three-dimensional flow-charts, but the amount of factual data they can convey is conjectural. As examples, one may cite the towering "fountain" of clear crystal, gold, pale "ivory," and winking diamonds which depicts the entire theology of Hnálla and the eventual victory of Stability. This sculpture, some 6 m in height, is preserved in the Temple of Illumination of All in Béy Sú. Another, kept in the Hall of the Eight Hundred Obeisances at Avanthár, manifests the splendours of the Tsolyáni Imperium, traces its origins back to the Gods, and sets forth the details of its administration and military prowess — all in a 7 m high "tree" of blue, red, and black glass, silver, sapphires, and golden nodules. The symbology is complex enough to allow the display of almost any type of organisation, once tradition has established the values of the elements. Thus, the Temples of Thúmis and Ksárul have produced "sculptured analyses" of religious tenets, other planar wisdom, and even languages. In the Hall of Mighty Tongues at Thúmis' Monastery of the Sapient Eye in Dó Cháka, for instance, one can see Vringayékmu hiKhorsán's wondrous exposition of Mu'ugalavyáni phonology and grammar, done in smoky red glass, black onyx, and other precious materials. Nearby stands Priestess Fssu'úma hiNatéla's monumental representation of Ghatóni, all green-mottled stone, black velvet, and figured strips of brown *Chlén* hide. Hórri hiSayussár's analysis of Salarvyáni is also considered a masterpiece: a low pyramid of ebon glass, set with garnets, and looped with silver strands depicting the 214 conjugations of the obstreperous Salarvyáni verb. The Colonnade of the Ambages of the Blue Room at the city of Hmakuyál is reported to contain similar — and even better — works of this nature, but the priests of Ksárul do not easily give permission to view them. Such abstractly symbolic sculptures exist also in Ssa'átis, Khéiris, Tsámra, Ch'óchi, and Tsúpil Hláya, but they are less common — and less elaborate — elsewhere.

The imortance of calligraphy has been adumbrated above. The many scripts of Tékumel lend themselves well to ornamentation. Every young aristrocrat is trained to write neatly (if not always artistically), while speed — and illegibility — are the hall-marks of the scribes of the marketplaces and the courts. A scribe's writing materials consist of a wooden box containing rolls of paper (or parchment, vellum, papyrus, etc.), a tray of ink-cakes, a jug of water, and several reed pens. Important books and documents may be illustrated, illuminated, and bordered with vignettes and arabesques. These are not skills expected of every scribe, however, and other members of the scribal clan will be called in to turn a piece of writing into a thing of beauty. Documents intended to last for many centuries are frequently written upon leaves of beaten gold with an engraver's stylus.

Both scrolls and books are found, and their containers and bindings offer further opportunities for artistic embellishment. Scroll cases of silver and gold, set with gems and cameos, are not uncommon in the collections of the wealthy. Book bindings are painted, inlaid, and carved in low relief on *Chlén* hide. In Salarvyá, Háida Pakála, and the Nyémesel Isles books are made differently: the text is engraved upon square-cut leaves of the *Chigjé* tree, black *Vrélq* paste is rubbed over these and wiped away again to make the letters stand out, and the whole is varnished, pierced, and strung on cords between two painted wooden covers. Tablets of clay are also used for "permanent" documents, particularly in central Salarvyá and Pechán. In the far northeast the ideographs of the Kázhra Vé Ngakóme script are lacquered or carved upon plaques of *Nmúr* wood. The more decorative of these are collected as art objects by the connoiseurs of the Five Empires without regard for any message they may contain. Block printing is employed for fabrics, but this process is not seen as applicable to books: "it takes away the personality of the writing." Printing with moveable type was developed at least once on Tékumel (Sec. 1.350), but this met with violent opposition from the scribal clans and was abandoned.

Architecture provides another meeting place for the crafts and the graphic arts. Walls, domes, arches, buttresses, roofs, columns, cornices — all are carved, painted, inlaid, set with mosaics, gilded, and ornamented both inside and out. Styles differ, of course, from the relatively plain edifices of Mu'ugalavyá to the rococo palaces of the Salarvyáni. Of the latter, the Tsolyáni traveller Dián hiBasküné (who died in 2,117 A.S.) says, "Seen from afar above the steaming, sweltering grey-green plain, the mansions of Salarvyá are gaudy mountains teeming with sculpted figures, ant-hills of colour and chaotic movement, topped with gilded domes, bulbous cupolas, and sky-reaching gables all a-crawl with gargoyles and other mythic beasts — more than a man could assimilate if he stood rooted to the earth and gazed for thrice three thousand years!" See also Sec. 1.421 and 1.940.

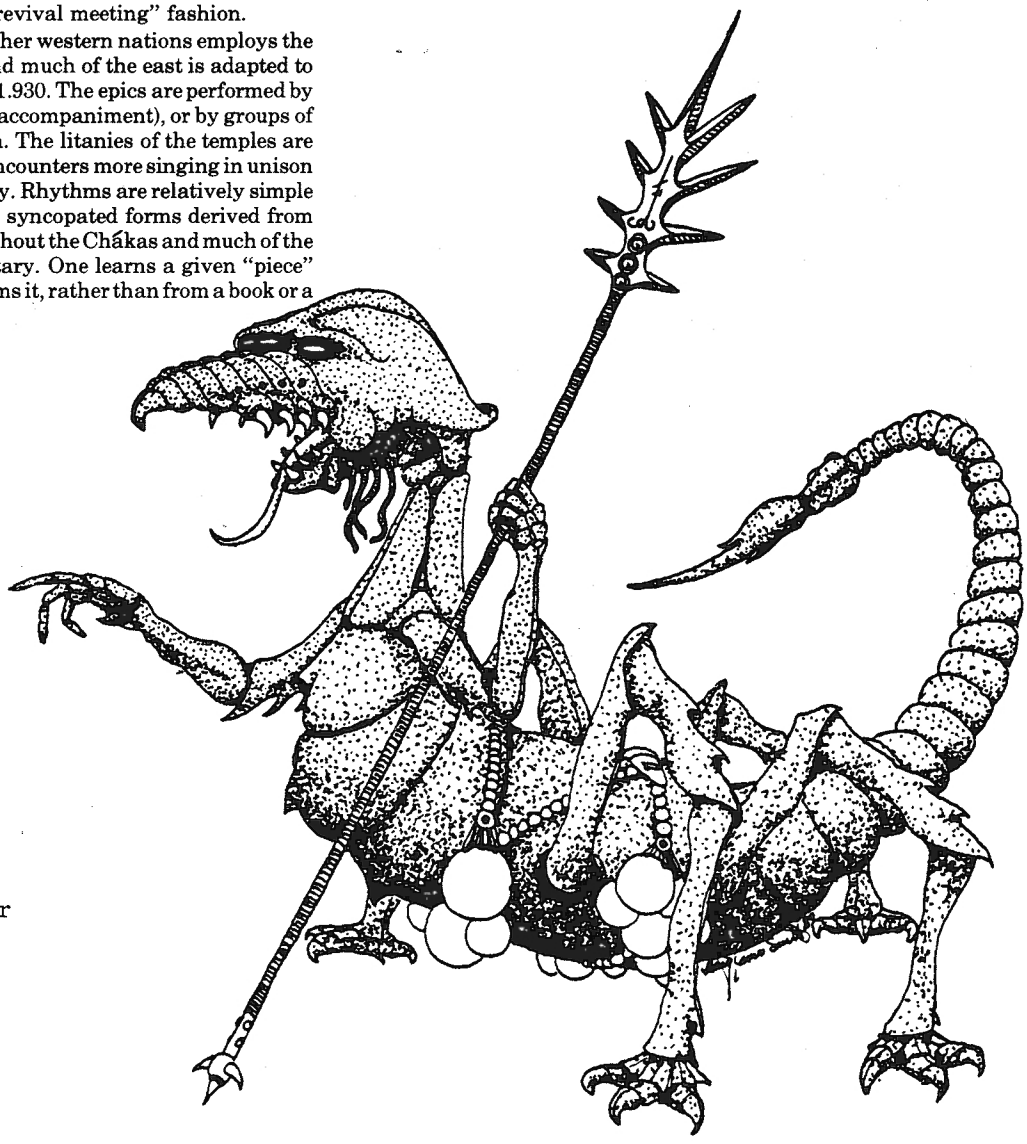
The art styles of the nonhuman races can probably be conjectured from what has been said of their natures previously. The ornaments of the Shén are crude and massive: copper, black, dark red, and gold are preferred; portraiture and scenic art do not exist; and images tend to be stiff and crude. The Pé Chói are famed for their nonrepresentational, utilitarian art: smooth, round, long-necked pottery; functional utensils which have a grace and beauty unfamiliar to the florid cultures of their human neighbours; and plain, curved, wall surfaces. The Páchi Léi expend their best efforts upon fine woodcarving, the Swamp Folk upon basketry, and the Pygmy Folk upon certain types of metalwork. The Tinalíya are

excellent craftsmen but produce very little of what humans might term "art," while the Hlâka and the Ahoggyá have no interests in decoration to speak of. The Urunén, however, have a wide range of "artistic" crafts and skills, even including painting in a curiously flat and stilted fashion, sculpture, fabric ornamentation, etc. The Mihálli, too, are artisically inclined, as — apparently — are the Nyaggá. The inimical races employ less embellishment, with the exception of the Black Ssú.

Literature, music, and the dance were touched upon in Sec. 1.940. In the Five Empires, their client states, and Mihállu one finds prose being employed only for didactic writing: the sciences, history, theology, autobiography (a great person may be asked to submit his life story to the archives in Avanthar, for example), reports, legal precepts, etc. Fiction and the epics are normally presented in verse. There are several genres of poetry, 34 standard metres, and rules for both internal rhymes and end-rhymes. The epics and certain religious rituals are meant to be sung or acted out as stylised dramas, and only the plays of the common marketplace are presented in prose. Indeed, verse is so prevalent and carries so much prestige that one encounters versified histories, scientific treatises, and even legal texts and medical works! Personal letters and state documents may be composed in verse as well, for that matter. Court etiquette and the art of epistolography require a knowledge of high-sounding rhymed epithets and noble titles. This latter skill merges imperceptibly into that of the orator, whose perorations should be sprinkled with proverbs, verses from the epics, and quotations from the literary giants of the past (in several languages) in order to achieve maximum effect. The Livyáni and the Mu'ugalavyáni favour a sing-song chanting style for their speeches, while the demagogues of the east thunder out their rhetoric in true "revival meeting" fashion.

The music of Tsolyánu and the other western nations employs the diatonic scale. That of Salarvyá and much of the east is adapted to the pentatonic scale, as said in Sec. 1.930. The epics are performed by soloists (usually with instrumental accompaniment), or by groups of soloists, a chorus, and an orchestra. The litanies of the temples are similarly presented, although one encounters more singing in unison and even some attempts at harmony. Rhythms are relatively simple and straightforward, except for the syncopated forms derived from the Pé Chói and now popular throughout the Chákas and much of the west. Musical notation is rudimentary. One learns a given "piece" directly from the master who performs it, rather than from a book or a scroll.

Many other art forms exist. For example, one might mention the "Joy of Pleasing Essences" practiced in Tsamra: tiny vials of perfumes and other fragrances are presented, one after another, to one's guests, and these are interspersed with "cooroborating or conflicting" wines and foods to create a combined olfactory-gustatory "performance." The art of cooking is prized in Jakalla, where the cuisine is as varied and clever as it is hot and spicy. The Swamp Folk create three-dimensional "miniatures" of coloured threads woven in abstract patterns within cubical or spherical frameworks of wicker. Such static string-figures are meant to arouse varying emotions when viewed from different angles. Cloaks and headdresses of silky grass-cloth and feathers are woven in Ngaku and Prajnu on the shores of Lake Parunal, and these may be further embellished with loops and chains of precious, multihued glass-coral. In archaic Mihallu it is said that "life itself is art," and one of the highest forms of expression is the placement of one's guests in pleasing tableaux and compositions according to their status and the colours of their garments. Dozens of further examples could be adduced.



Hlúss Warrior

1.1040. WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

The following measurements are derived from the Engsvanyáli Empire (in spite of apocryphal tales told of their origins.) They are hence international, although their names may differ from country to country. These are the measures employed by merchants and the occupational clans, and noble persons are expected to plead ignorance of them for the reasons given in Sec. 1.1010. The English equivalents are only approximate; the standards of one city may vary slightly from those of other locales.

Lengths are measured with rods marked off into sections. Longer distances are gauged with coloured cords and pegs. Architects utilise squares, compasses, protractors, and the plumb-line, but in general surveying techniques remain rather elementary. Substances are weighed in balances, and the weights used have their values stamped upon them by the scribes of the Palace of the Realm (or its counterparts in countries other than Tsolyánu). Liquids are measured in standardised vessels of wood or clay, as are grains, small fruits, etc.

Should a customer suspect a merchant's measurements, the market police (Sec. 1.734) can be summoned to settle the issue at the nearest Palace of the Realm. If no money has yet changed hands, the seller may simply cancel the sale and refuse to accompany the purchaser. On the other hand, if the sale has been completed, and if the measure is then found to be fraudulent, a serious crime has been committed. The merchant will be punished or made to give *Shámtla* (Sec. 1.740). Should the measure prove to be accurate, however, the accuser is liable to an accusation of slander and will have to pay *Shámtla* instead.

Time is measured with the sun-dial, the hour-glass (usually made to register the passing of one *Kirén*), and the clepsydra or water-clock. The best specimens of the last of these are constructed by the Tinalíya. An exceptionally elegant clepsydra is maintained in the Crimson Hall of the First Palace in Ssa'átis; this displays the hours, the days, the months, the phases of the moons, and the positions of the other celestial bodies. The Mu'ugalavyáni attribute this water-clock to Hakmúnish Giyó (who died in 1,765 A.S.), but some say that it, too, bears the marks of Tinalíya craftsmanship.

Astronomical measurements are made with the astrolabe (Sec. 1.1010). In addition, one finds huge, permanent instruments constructed of masonry: hemispherical, equinoctial, and zodiacal dials, devices for measuring the planets' azimuths, meridian circles, etc. Some of these measure 40-50 m from side to side and stand 20-30 m high. As might be expected, it is the Temples of Thúmis and Ksárul which are most interested in such observatories, and the largest and most extensive are found in Bé́y Sű, Páya Gupá, Khéiris, Mrelű, Ssa'átis, Tsámra, and Ke'ér.

Terms in the languages of the Five Empires*	**English equivalents, number of each unit in the next larger unit and notes**
Distance:	
T: Chóptse**; M: Cho'ótish; S: Annú; Y: Chpét; L: Chátseb	1.333 cm. 10 per *Hói*. Supposedly the width of the tip of the right index finger of the 10th Seal Emperor, Trákonel III, "the Godking" (ruled 382-384 A.S.)
T: Hói; M: O'íya; S: Ókh; Y: Khó; L: Oyéb	13.333 cm. 10 per *Dháiba*.
T: Dháiba; M: Dhéva; S: O'ókh; Y: Dvá; L: Da'éb	1.333 m. 1,000 per *Tsán*.
T: Tsán; M: Shán; S: Menókh; Y: Sháng; L: Shanéb	1.333 km. Said to be the exact distance between the Hall of Eternal Splendour in the great palace at Gánga and the private apartments of the Priestkings
Weight:	
T: Tnúng; M: Tu'úna; S: Tnég; Y: Tón; L: Tuonéb	.1875 g. 20 per *Mló*.
T: Mló; M: Mlóya; S: Ichché; Y: Mlé; L: Maléb	3.75 g. 20 per *Psé*.
T: Psé; M: Fsá; S: Béch; Y: Psá; L: Baséb	.75 kg. 2,000 per *Epü*.
T: Epü; M: Afúa; S: Ugwá; Y: Púgh; L: Abéb	1,500 kg.
Liquid:	
T: Tsértse; M: Shársha; S: Sháer; Y: Shórta; L: Shárseb	.3 l. 10 per *Kúvmu*. Said to be the amount held by the ceremonial Goblet of the Opening of the Day, poured upon the ground each day as a libation before the Golden Dome of the Gods in ancient Gánga
T: Kúvmu; M: Khu'úma; S: Khmá; Y: Hámmag; L: Kumuéb	3 l. 20 per *Nmécha*.
T: Nmécha; M: Nnásha; S: Nemmú; Y: Nmách; L: Namséb	60 l.
Time:	
T: Sivél; M: Si'íla; S: Mbétl; Y: Svátl; L: Sa'aléb	4.5 seconds. 20 per *Yóm*.
T: Yóm; M: Yáma; S: Ombétl; Y: Imé; L: Aiméb	90 seconds. 20 per *Kirén*.
T: Kirén; M: Khirána; S: Membétl; Y: Kráng; L: Karéneb	30 minutes. 6 per *Ténmre*.
T: Ténmre; M: Thánmra; S: Újj; Y: Tnámurr; L: Tammréb	180 minutes. 8 per day.

* For the language abbreviations, Cf. Sec. 1.832 ff.

** All of the Tsolyáni nouns in this Section are "ignoble" and thus take the ending *-ikh/-kh* in appropriate grammatical environments. The Mu'ugalavyáni and Livyáni terms are given with their masculine or feminine endings, while the Yán Koryáni and Salarvyáni are omitted. Cf. Secs. 1.821 and 1.832.

1.1050. CALENDARS

As said in Sec. 1.370, the Tsolyáni Second Imperium is reckoned from the accession of the first *Kólumel*. As of this writing, the year is 2,358 A.S. Other nations prefer different epochs. Mu'ugalavyá and Livyánu employ the calendar devised by the Priestkings Kazhilo'ób during the last centuries of the Engsvanyáli Empire, and the current year is thus 10,039 A.K. This era is also favoured by the Salarvyáni, but their scholars reckon the length of the Time of No Kings (Sec. 1.360) differently, and the "Era of Tsatsayágga" therefore adds 3,250 years, and it is presently 13,289 E.T. In Mihállu, on the other hand, Kazhilo'ób is considered a late-comer, and the "old" Engsvanyáli calendar is utilised: 2,358 A.S. corresponds to 21,776 O.E. Yán Kór, Pijéna, Saá Allaqí, Ghatón, Chayákku, and the more urbanised areas of Jánnu and Kilalámmu all begin their calendar from the reign of Tengguren Churitáshmu, "the Iron Fist of the Peaks," who conquered many of the lands of the north in 1,218-1,256 A.S. The year is thus 1,140 A.T. The priests of Mrettén in the Nyémesel Isles begin their dates from the mythological Emergence of the Goddess from the Sea of Night; it is now the year 2,972 in the 301st Cycle of the Fifth Age. Each Cycle is 3,000 years in length, but the number of Cycles in each Age is not revealed to outsiders. Another cyclical system is found in the states of the northeast. Each of the eight years in the cycle is given a name — the Tree, the Stone, the Peak, the Sun, the First Moon (Káshi), the Second Moon (Gayél), the Spear, and the Slaying (presumably of Aridzó or Heshu'él; cf. Sec. 1.610) — but no formal record of these cycles is kept. A person's age is reckoned both according to this system and also to the regnal year of the local ruler: a citizen of Nuru'ún may reply, for example, "I was born in the year of the Tree in the 34th year of King Jnáres" (i.e. 63 years ago). It is now the year of the Sun.

Many of the minor states have only vague calendrical systems, and their inhabitants neither know nor care about their birth-dates. The beginning of the year is roughly calculated from the spring equinox (as in Háida Pakála), from the return of certain seasonal phenomena (e.g. the spring run of the *Sá* fish in Tsoléi), from the winter solstice (amongst the N'lúss), etc.

Of the nonhuman races, only the Pé Chói, the Tinalíya, the Urunén, the Hláka, and the Shén have comprehensible calendrical systems. That of the Pé Chói is based upon their emergence from the mythical Forest of *Hh-kk-ssá*, a sort of paradise which may be a dim memory of

their original home world. It is now the year 75,690 of this epoch. The Tinalíya divide time into 17 periods of varying lengths according to events in their history. As of this writing, it is the year 533 of the current *Ní-gāā*, but these beings claim that their calendar goes back more than seven million years! The era of the Urunén, on the other hand, dates back only to the reign of the matriarch Arévi Hú, and their year is thus 9,759. For the Hlāka, time begins anew every hundred years; all previous centuries are "cancelled" and "did not occur." For them, therefore, this is only the year 33 "since time started to flow again." The Shén possess a complex cyclical system made up of multiples of seven: it is now the first year of the *Sŕ* (7 years), the 6th *Sŕ* of the 5th *Sŕ-Tì* (49 years), of the first *Khú* (343 years), of the 3rd *Khú-Tì* (2,401 years), of the 3rd *Ssór* (16,807 years), of the 5th *Ssór-Tì* (117,649 years), of the 3rd *Hssé* (823,543 years): i.e. the year 2,979,873 by Shén reckoning!

The Engsvanyáli year (and hence that of the Five Empires, their client states, and Mihállu) is divided into 12 months of 30 days each. Five intercalary days (Tsolyáni: *Tlāshanyal*) are added to bring the total to 365. Every fourth year another day (Tsolyáni: *Kòlumêhagi*) is appended to account for certain orbital irregularities. In Tsolyánu the *Kòlumêhagi* is dedicated to the glories of the Emperor, as its name implies, while in Mu'ugalavyá it is devoted to Hŕsh, in Yán Kór to Karakán, in Livyánu to Qame'él, and in Salarvyá and Pecháno to orgiastic festivities as an "empty day."

Other arrangements are found outside of the Engsvanyáli sphere of influence. Throughout the northeast one encounters no months but only four seasons: *Jgái* "spring" of 60 days, *Ómŭr* "summer" of 120 days, *Kàró* "autumn" of 60 days, and *Arjíēk* "winter" of 125 days. A 10-month calendar is used in the Nyémesel Isles. Each month has 36 days, and the five intercalary days at the end are spent in the worship of the Limbs of Mrettén. The same system is employed in Háida Pakála, althought the Salarvyáni version of the Engsvanyáli calendar is gaining currency there.

The Shén have no months but only 52 weeks of 7 days each, with one day left over to celebrate the curious ritual of "The Contemplation of One's Eggs." The months of the Hlāka are lunar: 12 "big" months based upon the lunations of Gayél, and 2 "little" months within each of these, consisting of the lunar months of Káshi. The Pé Chói, the Tinalíya, and the Urunén have no months as such, although they recognise the seasons, of course, as well as the equinoxes and solstices. These species all number the days of their years consecutively from beginning to end.

The Engsvanyáli system (and hence its modern users) further subdivides each month into 5 weeks of 6 days apiece. The last of these days is treated as a holiday from toil throughout the Five Empires. The names of the days are:

Day of the week	Names in the languages of the Five Empires*
First	T: Surúnra**; M: Sarána; S: Sárn; Y: Srúng; L: Surnáz
Second	T: Mugún; M: Mu'úna; S: Múnnu; Y: Mághn; L: Maganáz
Third	T: Zaqé; M: Za'á; S: Zíkku; Y: Záq; L: Zagáz
Fourth	T: Rú'úsá; M: Ra'ásа; S: Hrás; Y: Rús; L: Ra'sáz
Fifth	T: Tlakál; M: Tla'ákla; S: Tkáhl; Y: Tké'l; L: Tlakaláz
Sixth	T: Daunél; M: Dhonéla; S: Dúnnúl; Y: Dúnl; L: Danláz

* For the language abbreviations, cf. Sec. 1.832 ff

** All of the Tsolyáni nouns given here are "ignoble" and thus take the ending *-ikh/-kh* in the appropriate grammatical environments. Cf. the notes to the tables in Secs. 1.821 and 1.832.

A list of the 12 Engsvanyáli months and the five intercalary days can be conveniently combined with a calendar of important feast-days and other events. Discussion of the latter is largely precluded by lack of space, of course, and a word or two of description must suffice.

Number of the month	Month names in the languages of the Five Empires*	Date of the month	Deity or group celebrating the event, location, name of the celebration, and notes
1	T: Hasanpór**; M: Haspára; S: Heshpúrru; Y: Hésh; L: Hasparáz	1st	The Five Empires, their client states and Mihállu; universal; New Year's Day (approximately March 2nd in old Terran reckoning); feasting, gift-giving, and political pageantry
		"	Dilinála; Jaikalór; Welcome to the Returning Year; ritual and feasting
		"	Vimúhla; throughout Tsolyánu, Mu'ugalavyá, and Yán Kór; The Purification of the Flame; rituals and sacrifices for the prosperity of the coming year
		"	Qame'él; Tsámra; Extension of the Shadow over All the Lands; ritual and sacrifices
		"	The Horned One of Secrets; Tsámra; Opening of the Sun; rituals
		15th	Mihállu; all; Commemoration of the Death of Pavár; rituals
		23rd	Mrettén; the Nyémesel Isles; The Consecration of Fishing Fleets; rituals and sacrifices; the same event is celebrated in Háida Pakála on this day with games, displays, and revelry
2	T: Sháprս; M: Zhabára; S: Eshpír; Y: Shpár; L: Shabráz	2nd	The One of Fears; Dlásh; The Feast of Re-entering (?); rituals and many sacrifices
		10th	Ksárul; Mekú; Visitations of the Dormant Lord; underground rituals
		13th	Avánthe; Bé́y Sú́; The Revelation of the Maiden of Beauty; rituals and orgiastic feasting
		"	Shiringgáyi; throughout Salarvyá; The Invocation of the Fertile Land; rituals and feasting
		18th	Thúmis; Sokátis and Páya Gupá; the Adoration of the Grey Veil; rituals and offerings of flowers
		25th	Sárku and Durritlámish; the City of Sárku; The Descent into the Tomb Forever; underground rituals
		26th	Qárqa; Tsa'avtúlgu; The Display of Skulls; underground rituals
3	T: Didóm; M: Dhídma; S: Dómmu; Y: Dám; L: Zitmáz	3rd	Hŕsh; Ssa'átis and Mu'ugálla; Obeisance to the Lord of Armies; military ritual and pageantry
		19th	Sárk u; throughout Tsolyánu and Yán Kór; The Touching of the Worm of Copper; rituals and visitations to the cities of the dead
		22nd	Ru'ungkáno; Sraón; The Raising of the Flame; rituals and sacrifices
		"	Vimúhla and Chiténg; Tumíssa and Fasíltum; The Conflagration of All; rituals and sacrifices
		25th	Karakán and Chegárra; Khirgár, Bé́y Sú́ and Avanthár; The Litany of Noble Deeds; military rituals
		28th-30th	Tsolêi; universal; The Return of the *Sá* Fish; New Year's Day; the Sacrifice of the Year-King on Llürúra Isle (Sec. 1.720)
4	T: Langála; M: La'ángla; S: Vurúttu; Y: Liyáng; L: Langáz	3rd	The Five Empires, their client states, and Mihállu; universal; the Summer Solstice; feasting; also Pé Chói and Urunén New Year
		"	Hnálla; Bé́y Sú́; the Feast of the Lighted Path; rituals
		10th	Kikumársha; Nufésh; The Presentation of the Harsh Jest; rituals and cruelly humorous sacrifices

		19th	Belkhánu; Katalál, Usenánu, and Thráya; The Passing Over of Souls; rituals for the dead
		22nd	Salarvyá; universal; The Birthday of the King; rituals, feasting, and pageantry
		27th	Shiringgáyi; Jaekánta; The Hymn to the Verdant Land; rituals, feasting, and public carnivals
5	T: Fésru; M: Fa'ásha; S: Pessúrru; Y: Pésr; L: Fasráz	13th	Hrú'ú and Wurú; Púrd imal; The Recognition of the Vicissitudes of Endless Time; rituals
		17th	Mu'ugalavyá; universal; The Power of the Four Palaces; military pageantry and games
		19th	The One of Light; throughout Saá Allaqí; The Manifestation of the Illumined One; secret rituals within the temples
		20th	She Who Is Not Seen; Pijéna; The Giving Unto the Goddess; rituals and brutal gladiatorial games
		21st	N'lúss; universal; The Dances of the Bared Swords; displays of warrior skills and feasting; most N'lúss marriages are celebrated on this day
		26th	The Dual Gods of the Two Moons; Hólis (Tsolél); The Touching of the Four Walls; curious rituals
6	T: Drénggar; M: Drángga; S: Ójz; Y: Dréng; L: Daranggáz	2nd	Hrihávyal; Jakálla; The Unveiling of Beauty; rituals and orgies
		9th	Dlamélish; Ja kálla and throughout the Five Empires; The Enhancement of the Emerald Radiance; rituals, feasting, and furth er orgies
		22nd	Aridzó; throughout th e states of the northeast; The Sanctification of Weapons; rituals, displays of military prowess, and amnesty for common prisoners
		29th	The Sun; Ghatón; The Joining of Blood; clan dances, puberty rites, marriages, and rituals in honour of the Sun God
7	T: Firasúl; M: Fersála; S: Pérshu; Y: Píres; L: Farsaláz	5th	Shényu; universal; the Autumnal Equinox and the Shen New Year; rituals and feasting, acceptance of young Shén warriors into their Egg Groups
		19th	The Sea-Goddess of Kakársha; Sraón; Ho mage to the Deeps; rituals and sacrifices made at sea
		20th	Shiringgáyi; Retsúllu; Feast of High Summer; orgies and tourneys
		21st	Mihállu; universal; Birthday of the Priesking; feasting and ornate pageantry in honour of the Priestking Harkkúnes, who died millenia a go!
		22nd	Mretténu; Rusú; The Seeing of the Eyes of the Goddess; rituals
		23rd	Shigráz; Váris; Adoration of the Goddess and Her Nuptials with Aridzó; feasting and dances
		28th	Hśida Pakála; universal; The Offerings to the Monoliths; rituals and sacrifices, gladiatorial games
8	T: Pardán; M: Fardhá; S: Prúddu; Y: Prán; L: Fardáz	7th	Qón; Béy Sú; Fete of Boats; rituals commemorating the sailing of the souls of the dead for the Paradises of Teretané
		18th	Keténgku; Khéiris and Páya Gupá; The Offering of Wisdom; presentation of new books and knowledge to the deity, rituals and feasting
		19th	Chiténg; Chéne Hó; The Litany of Blood-Song, the Sword of the God; rituals and sacrifices
		24th	The Lost One of the Sea; Laigás; The Hymn unto the Waves; rituals and sacrific es; all devotees fast throughout this day
9	T: Halír; M: Alréya; S: Khíllùr; Y: Hél; L: Alráyaz	1st-10th	Tsolyánu, Mu'ugalavyá, Salarvyá, and Livyánu; universal; beginning of the harvests; local feasts and celebrations
		2nd	Grugánu; Mrelú; T he Night of Power; rituals and sacrifices
		5th	Yán Kór; universal; the Birthday of Baron Áld; feasting and military displays
		19th	Mretténu; the Nyémesel Isles; The Lifting Up of the Divine Countenance; rituals
		23rd	Heshu'él; throughout the states of the northeast; The Dance of the Youthful Slayers; dancing and rituals
		29th	Quyó; Heméktu; The Unsealing of the Sepulchres; underground rituals
10	T: Trantór; M: Tharandára; S: Muggútu; Y: Tartúr; L: Tarandáz	5th	N'lúss; universal; the Winter Solstice; rituals and the Circle Dance; also the New Year of the Nyémesel Isles and the Tinalíya; the Pé Chói also celebrate their New Year on or about this date
		12th	Hnálla; Béy Sú and Avanthár; The Circle of Life-Giving Light; rituals
		18th	Karakán; Béy Sú and throughout Tsolyánu; The Might of Heroes; military rituals and consecration of warriors
		19th	Karakán and Chegárra; Yán Kór City and Ke'ér; The Singing of the Splendours of Battle; rituals
		20th	The Lord of Sacrifice; Vrídu Isle; The Dedication of the Blood and the Flame; rituals and sacrifices
11	T: Lésdrim; M: Lasdára; S: Omuggútu; Y: Léshd; L: Lazaráz	4 th	The Shadowed One; Tsúpil Hláya; The Passage into That Which Is Not Named; underground rituals
		9 th	Tsolyánu; universal; the Birthday of the Seal Emperor; imperial pageantry, ritual, and military display
		29th	Wurú; Mekú; The Expurgation of Tranquility; rituals
		"	Vrusáemaz; Fálli; The Showing of the Pandects of Objurgation; rituals
12	T: Dohála; M: Dháhla; S: Menmuggútu; Y: Dáhle; L: Dahaláz	2nd	Guodái; Foshá a; The Litany of Prideful Slaying; rituals and sacrifices
		10th	Tsolyánu; universal; The Accession of the Seal Emperor to the Petal Throne; imperial pageantry, feasting, and rejoicing
		25th	Thúmis; Sokátis; The Uncovering of Wisdom; rituals
		28th	Quóth; Mechanéno; The Visualisation of Infinte Power; rituals
		29th	Nyésset; Teshkóa; The Showing of Warlike Tabards; rituals, feasting and tourneys

* For the language abbreviations, cf. Sec. 1.832 ff.

** All of the Tsolyáni nouns given here are "ignoble" and thus take the ending *-ikh/-kh* in the appropriate grammatical environments. Cf. the notes to the tables in Secs. 1.821 and 1.832.

Feasts and ceremonies occur on each of the five intercalary days throughout the Five Empires, their client states, and Mihállu. It is impossible to do more than list a few of the more significant of these events.

Intercalary day	Names in the languages of the Five Empires*	Deity or group celebrating the event, location, name of the celebration, and notes
1st	T: Ikáner**; M: Ga'ánra; S: Gnérru; Y: Ghinér; L: Ganráz	Dlamélish; Jakálla; Entering in unto the Goddess; rituals and orgies
		Ksárul; Púrdimal; The Putting on of the Raiment of the Doomed Prince; rituals
		Thűmis; Mrelű; The Web of Wisdom; rituals
		Hnálla; Bév Sű and Avanthár; Joyous Singing of the Praises of the Emperor; rituals and pageantry
		Hŕsh; Ssa'átis and Mu'ugálla; The Hearing of the Voice of Might; rituals
		Shiringgáyi; Tsatsayágga; The Bringing Forth of the Lamps of the Goddess; rituals
		The Deities of the Seven Peaks; throughout Pecháno; Homage unto the Gods; rituals, pageantry, and tourneys
2nd	T: Turugdáshe; M: Thárga; S: Turúkku; Y: Trággesh; L: Targdáz	Avánthe; Bév Sű; The Wearing of the Girdle of Fertile Loveliness; rituals
		Hrű'ű; Penóm and Púrdimal; The Rising Tide of Darkness; rituals
		Chegárra; Hekéllu; The Commemoration of Ruling in Splendour; rituals
		Keténgku; Chéne Hó; The Opening of the Eyes of Sagacity; rituals
		Qame'él and the other Shadow Gods; throughout Livyánu; The Exhibitions of the Talismans of the Divine; rituals
		The Two Moons; Ghatón; The Presentation of the *Sérudla* to the Gods; rituals involving the great beasts which only the Ghatóni can train
3rd	T: Vrahárma; M: Vra'árma; S: Vurúmmu; Y: Vrém; L: Varamáz	Sárku; City of Sárku; The Night of Worms; underground rituals
		Karakán; Jakálla; The Celebration of Splendid Victories; military pageantry
		Chiténg; Chéne Hó; The Offering Up of the Sword of Fire; rituals and sacrifices
		Wurú; Mekú; The Entrance into the Mouth of Demons; rituals
		Qón; Bév Sű; The Repulsion of the Powers of Change; rituals
		Shényu; universal; The Clashing of Copper Bells; rituals and feasting
		Yán Kór; universal; The Raising of Standards; military pageantry
4th	T: Ngaqómi; M: Ngáqma; S: Nguqqúm; Y: Ngúqm; L: Ngaqmáz	Durritlámish; The Pageant of Death; public parade and rituals
		Dilinála; Haumá; The Dance of the Flowered Crown; rituals and feasting
		Grugánu; Úrmish; The Unsealing of the Gates of Night; underground rituals
		Hrihávyal; Jakálla; The Feast of the Many-Coloured Lanterns; feasting and orgies
		Ndárka; Hráis; The Perfection of the Shadow; rituals
		The One of Fears; Dlásh; The Festival of Terrible Sights; rituals?
5th	T: Chitlásha; M: Shatla'ásha; S: Chtáshshu; Y: Chetálsh; L: Shatlasház	Tsolyáni Imerial court; Avanthár; The Naming of the Names of Supernal Power; recitation of praises to the Seal Emperor
		Chiténg; Katalál; The Seeding of the Land with Flame; rituals and sacrifices
		Thűmis; Páya Gupá; The Visitation of the Eye; rituals
		Jakálla; universal; The Masque of the Old and the New Year; public carnival
		Avánthe; Dhárru; The Elegy for Those of the Sea; rituals
		The City of Vrá; universal; The Dance of the Sacred Youths; rituals and feasting
		Hrű'ű; Sunráya; The Dedication of the Changes of the Year; rituals
		Vimúhla; Tumíssa; The Armageddon of All the World; rituals and sacrifices
		Ksárul; Butrús; The Drawing Aside of the Azure Veil; rituals
		Belkhánu; Thráya; The Transformation of the Spirit-Soul; rituals
		Vimúhla and Chiténg; Fasíltum; The Wrath of the Flames; rituals and sacrifices
		Karakán; Khirgár; Obeisance to the Lord of War; military rituals
		Hŕsh and Vimúhla; throughout Mu'ugalavyá; The Kindling of the New Fires; rituals
		The Mad One; Hlíkku; The Carnival of Ever-Changing Oneness; public festival, rituals, sacrifices, and orgies
		The Horned One of Secrets; Tsámra; The Recitation of the Scrolls of the Inner Temple; secret rituals
		Thűmis; Ninué; The Joining of Minds in the Refulgence of Sapience; rituals
		Súr; Tkú; The Lighting of Corpse Tapers; rituals and sacrifices
		Sárku; throughout Dó Cháka; Libation unto the Final Master; rituals and processions
		The Sea-God of Pijéna; Ashékka; Propitiation of the Storm Winds; rituals, sacrifices, and bloody gladiatorial games
		Mrettén; throughout the Nyémesel Isles (and also in Háida Pakála, where she is called She Who Strides the Wind); The Manifestation of the Perfect Goddess; rituals and sacrifices
		Shirinngáyi; throughout Salarvyá; The Night of Tears; mourning for the past year, changing to festive rituals on New Year's Day
		Karakán and Chegárra; Ke'ér; Propitiations Before the Lords of Battle; military rituals and sacrifices

* For the language abbreviations, cf. Sec. 1.832 ff.

** All of the Tsolyáni nouns given here are "ignoble" and thus take the ending *-ikh/-kh* in the appropriate grammatical environments. Cf. the notes to the tables in Secs. 1.821 and 1.832.

1.1100. Pronunciation

Preceding Sections have introduced words taken from many of the langauges of Tékumel. These are mostly from Tsolyáni, although some belong to the tongues of the other four great empires, and only a few are from Pe'é Qǔótl, Aòm, Nlü'ársh, or other non-Khíshan languages (Sec. 1.711). All of the modern descendants of Engsvanyáli (i.e. the tongues of the Khíshan family) have approximately the same phonological inventory; yet what they do with these phonemes (units of sound) differs greatly. For example, Mu'ugalavyáni favours long glottalised vowels (*a'a, e'e,* etc.) in place of certain Engsvanyáli sequences. Indeed, at an earlier point in its history, Mu'ugalavyáni had developed a set of glottalised stops — *p', t',* etc. — which are still represented in the writing system but now pronounced just like nonglottalised *p, t,* et al. Yán Koryáni tends to drop syllables and vowels (but has more of the latter than the other tongues of the Five Empires), creating complex consonant clusters. Of the various developments in Salarvyáni, one of the most salient is consonant doubling (e.g. *mm* for *m, tt* for old Engsvanyáli *t,* etc.). Livyáni, on the other hand, has simplified the Engsvanyáli system somewhat; it has fewer consonant clusters, more vowel clusters (e.g. *ua, ui, eo, ai,* etc.), and less fricativisation. It is not possible to go into these matters here. It suffices to say that the phonologies of the languages of the Five Empires are similar enough to permit their phonemic inventories to be described together, although some additional comments will be needed.

Each letter (e.g. *p, b, k* etc.) or digraph (e.g. *ch, sh, ts, tl, hl, ng,* etc.) has one — AND ONE ONLY — pronunciation unless otherwise stated. The letter *s* is thus ALWAYS the *s* of *sip* (and never the *z* of *zip*); *ch* is always pronounced as in *child* (and NEVER as in *chasm*); *a* is the *a* of *father* (and NEVER the *a* of *fate*), etc. Doubled consonants (e.g. *mm, tt, kk,* etc.) and doubled vowels (e.g. *aa, ee,* etc.) are held twice as long as single ones: compare the *KK* in English *bookkeeping* with the *k* of *bookie,* or the *mm* of *room-mate* with the (pronounced) single *m* of *consummate.* The single exception to this is the digraph *ss*; dental *s* is never found doubled in the Khíshan languages (compare English *misstate* with *mistake*), and *ss* is therefore employed to represent a completely different sound (see below). For further details, see "The Tsolyáni Language," (by M.A.R. Barker, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1978, vol. 1, pp. 1-4).

The following list of sounds is arranged in Tsolyáni alphabetical order. English equivalents are provided as an aid to pronunciation wherever possible, and examples from other Terran languages are identified as such.

Letter or digraph	English (etc.) equivalents
p	*p* as in *spin*
b	*b* as in *boy*
m	*m* as in *my*
f	*f* as in *fish*
v	*v* as in *vine*
w	*w* as in *wine*
t	dental *t* as in Spanish *tu* or French *té*
d	dental *d* as in Spanish *dos*
n	dental *n* as in Spanish *no*
th	*th* as in *thigh.* Note the following:
dh	*th* as in *thy*
ch	*ch* as in *church*
j	*j* as in *judge*
y	*y* as in *yes*
k	*k* as in *skin*
g	*g* as in *go*; never as in *gym*
kh	*ch* as in German *ach* or Scots *loch*; technically a voiceless mid-velar fricative
gh	the *ghayn* of Arabic; technically a voiced mid-velar fricative and the voiced counterpart of *kh*
q	the *qaf* of Arabic; technically a voiceless back-velar stop. This is a "*k* pronounced farther back in the throat" -- never the *q* of *quick, quote,* etc. The English letter *q* often represents a *kw* sound or else just a simple velar *k,* a spelling convention borrowed from other languages (e.g., *clique*)
h	*h* as in *hat.* Note that this sound may sometimes occur at the end of syllables, unlike English where it is found only syllable-initially
ng	*ng* as *sing.* Note that this sound can occur word- and syllable-initially, as well as syllable-finally; e.g., Tsolyáni *ngerú* "sometimes"
	the glottal stop: The *t* of a Cockney pronunciation of *bottle* or *little* -- or like the "hiatus" between a word ending in a vowel and a following one beginning with a vowel: e.g., *the (') elephant*
ts	*ts* as in *fits.* This sound can occur word- and syllable-initially: e.g., Tsolyáni *tsáipa* "to find"
tl	the *tl* of Aztec *atlatl*; technically a voiceless lateral dental affricate. Not the *tl* of *little.*
s	*s* as in *sip*
sh	*sh* as in *ship*
z	*z* as in *zip*
zh	*zh* as in Russian *Zhukov,* the *z* of *azure,* or the *s* of *pleasure*
ss	the retroflex (or apico-domal) *ṣ* of Sanskrit and certain modern languages of India; technically a voiceless grooved retroflex fricative. This is made by bringing the tongue-tip up behind the alveolar ridge (instead of upon it, as English *s* is produced)
r	the *r* of Spanish *pero*; technically a voice dental single-tap vibrant (not the *r* of American or British English *bar, door,* etc. -- American and British pronunciations of *r* being themselves quite different from one another). When *r* is doubled (i.e., when rr occurs), a trill is produced: the *rr* of Spanish *perro*
l	the dental *l* of Spanish *le* or *él*; technically a voiced lateral dental continuant; this is always a "light *l*" and not the "dark" velarised *l* found in syllable- and word-final position in English *wall, mail, mile, pool,* etc.
hl	*ll* as in Welsh *Llewellyn;* technically a voiceless lateral dental fricative

The preceding list does not exhaust the consonantal inventories of the languages of the Five Empires by any means, but what might be analysed as a single phoneme is considered two sounds (and hence written with two letters) in many cases. For example, *dl* (logically the voiced counterpart of *tl*) is treated as *d + l* in Tsolyáni, whereas Mu'ugalavyáni considers *dl* to be one unit and writes it with one letter. The same is true of *dz* (the voiced counterpart of *ts*); Tsolyáni writes *d + z*, while Mu'ugalavyáni again has a single grapheme for *dz.* There is a series of voiceless, pre-aspirated continuants (^{h}m, ^{h}n, ^{h}ng, ^{h}r, ^{h}w, ^{h}y, and possibly ^{h}ny) in several of these languages, but these are treated as sequences of two letters: *hm, hn,* etc. (An idea of the nature of these may be gained from a comparison of *when* with *wen, where* with *wear,* etc.)

The only Mu'ugalavyáni consonant not found in Tsolyáni is an aspirated k^{h} (which contrasts both with *k* and with the fricative *kh* -- the *ch* of German *ach* -- listed above). Some Tsolyáni attempt to maintain this contrast in loan-words: e.g., k^{h}*atun* "species of fruit" vs. *khatun* "name". The nearest English equivalent is the sub-phonemic contrast between the *k* of *kin* and that of *skin,* or the *k* sounds in *cool* vs. *school.* The *k*'s of *kin* and *cool* are released with more breath (aspiration) than those of the other two words. Mu'ugalavyáni also has a palatalised /Y, the *ll* of Spanish *pollo* or the *li* of English *polio.* The *ng* (as in *sing*) is rather uncommon in Mu'ugalavyáni.

Yán Koryáni displays a palatalised n^{Y} (as in English *canyon* or Spanish *mañana*), and two more retroflex sounds: *ṇ* and *ḷ.* These latter two sounds, as with *ss* (above), are made by touching the tongue-tip just behind the alveolar ridge instead of upon it, as for *n* and *l.* These two sounds are not frequent in Yán Koryáni, however.

Salarvyáni has separate letters for voiceless nasals, laterals, etc., (e.g., *hm, hn, hr*), while other languages write these with two letters each. Salarvyáni also has an aspirated s^{h} (i.e., an *s* released with a puff of breath -- not the *sh* of *ship*). This is written with the letters for *s + h,* while the *sh* (as in *ship*) has a letter of its own.

The vowel systems of all of the Khíshan languages except Yán Koryáni are quite similar to one another. Tsolyáni, Mu'ugalavyáni, and Livyáni possess five vowels, which are much like those of Spanish or Italian (i.e., *i, e, a, u, o*), plus another vowel, *u,* described below.

Letter	English (etc.) equivalents
i	*i* as in *machine* or *marine.* Never the *i* of *bite* or *bit.* Like the *i* of Spanish *mi*, there is no *y*-like offglide at the end
e	*e* as in *they, obey, fate, say,* etc. Never the *e* of *me* or *met,* and never silent, as in *use, dune,* etc. There is no final *y*-like offglide, as in Spanish *me* or *se*
a	*a* as in *papa, spa, father,* etc. Never the *a* of *face, bat,* or *above*
u	*u* as in *flute, rule, Zulu,* etc., or the vowels of such words as *do, woo,* or *shoe.* Never the *u* of *put* or of *but.* Like the *u* of Spanish *tu,* there is no final *w*-like offglide
o	*o* as in *no, go, vote,* etc., or the vowels of such words as *toe, throw,* or *boat.* Never the *o* of *cot, bob, son,* or *wolf.* Like the *o* of Spanish *no,* there is no final *w*-like offglide

ü	*ü* of German *für, über, lügen,* etc. To make this, the lips are rounded as though to say *woo*, and the vowel *i* of *machine* is uttered. This variant is preferred in Livyáni, Mu'ugalavyáni, Yán Koryáni (and most other northern tongues), Salarvyáni, and in Tsolyáni west of the Mssúma River. In eastern Tsolyánu (including the Imperial court at Avanthár), Jánnu, Kilalámmu, and certain other eastern regions *ü* represents a different sound: a high back (or central-back) unrounded vowel, the *"i* without a dot" of Turkish. For this, the lips are not rounded (as though one were saying the *i* of *machine*), and one then produces a vowel otherwise like the *u* of *flute*. Some "Cowboy Western" American dialects have this vowel: contrast *gist, jest, just,* and *"jist" in "he's jist comin'"* (for standard English *"he's just coming"*) *

*This vowel was trascribed as *y* in many of th e author's previous works on Tékumel: e.g., *Béy Sý, Hry'ý.* Although this was a useful spelling and typing convention, it gave rise to confusion. Some readers pronounced this y like that of *my;* others made it the *y* of *truly.* Upon reading the description, still others pronounced *y* like the *u* of *Zulu.* It seems better to indicate the real quality of this vowel by writing as *ü* throughout. The reader mu st still decide whether to adopt the eastern or western pronunciation, however.

Salarvyani has two additional vowel phonemes:

Letter	English (etc.) equivalents
æ	*a* as in *bat, bad, cab,* etc.
ö	*ö* as in German *schön, böse.* To produce this, the lips are rounded as though to say *woo,* and the vowel *e* (as above: the sound represented by such English spellings as *a* in *face, ay* in *say,* etc.) is pronounced

Tsolyáni, Livyáni, Mu'ugalavyáni, and Salarvyáni have no counterparts of the vowels of English *cut, kit, pet, put,* or *law.* Yán Koryáni possesses the vowels of *cut* and *law,* however, as well as the *ae* and *o* phonemes just described for Salarvyáni.

Consonant clusters are numerous, including some which are not found in English: e.g. word-initial *mr, nm, sr,* etc. Clusters involving the glottal stop as the first or second member are frequent: e.g. *'n, n', m',* etc. Three-member clusters in which the glottal stop is the second member occur as well: e.g. *M'mórcha* (actually the Mu'ugalavyáni name for the region; the aborigines call it *Qè* in the Qùó language). Doubled consonants (i.e. clusters of two identical consonants) are very common, and in Livyáni nasals and laterals can even occur doubled (or "long") at the beginnings of words: e.g. *lllíneb* "legion."

Vowel clusters are most prevalent in Livyáni and Mu'ugalavyáni and least frequent in Salarvyáni. Such sequences consist of two separate vowels and have the length of two syllables: e.g. *ai* is comprised of syllabic *a* followed by syllabic *i,* and *ai* thus has the same duration (or "syllabic weight") as *kata, biti,* etc. Monosyllabic diphthongs (i.e. a vowel nucleus followed by an offglide) did occur in Engsvanyáli and Bednálljan Salarvyáni, and some of these are preserved in archaic words and place names: e.g. the *béy* in *Béy Sű* (the first syllable sounding like English *bay*). The writing systems of all of the modern Khíshan languages treat some vowel sequences as single graphemes (i.e. letters or diacritics): e.g. Tsolyáni has single symbols for *ai* (similar to the vowels of *I, eye, pie, kite*), *au* (as in *ouch, out, cow*), and *oi* (as in *boy, joy, oil*). Other vowel sequences must be written with two symbols (e.g. *ua, ea, ui, ia,* etc.). In Mu'ugalavyáni, on the other hand, even the long glottalised vowels (*i'i, e'e, a'a, u'u,* etc.) are treated as single units for graphemic purposes.

The modern Khíshan languages exhibit both primary and secondary stresses (or "accents"). These are not marked in the writing systems but are of importance to pronunciation. Just as an English speaker distinguishes *PER-mit* (the noun) from *per-MIT* (the verb), so is it necessary to put the stress on the correct syllable in the languages of the Five Empires: e.g. one says *TE-ku-mel,* and not *te-KU-mel* or *te-ku-MEL.* Unlike English, in which unstressed vowels all tend to become indistinct *"uh's,"* the length and quality of an unstressed vowel are maintained. A word may have only one primary stress (=), but as many as three secondary stresses (') may occur, particularly in compounds. (For other uses of the symbols ' and =, see below.)

It is not possible to describe the intonation contours of sentences here. As in English, numerous nuances of meaning can be communicated by such vocal "ups and downs": e.g. Tsolyáni *tűsmi chegùchegún guál* "you are very kind" may be uttered enthusiastically, sincerely, ironically, sarcastically, wistfully, etc., using certain standard intonation patterns. See "The Tsolyáni Language" (*op. cit.,* vol. 1, p. 4).

The consonants and vowels of the Nlü'ársh, Aòm, and Qùótl families (Sec. 1.711) are generally similar enough to those of the Khíshan languages to make detailed discussion unnecessary. The glottalised stops of the Pe'é stock deserve comment, however. These are made by closing off the air-flow at the positions of *p, t, ch, k* (and at other positions as well in certain languages) and at the glottis simultaneously. The muscles of the throat and mouth then constrict the air contained in the doubly closed oral cavity; the *p, t, ch, k,* etc. are then released with a popping sound, followed by the opening of the glottal closure. Such glottalised stops occured in many American Indian languages of the Pacific Coast of North America, in Mexico, and also in some of the languages of the Caucasus.

The Qùótl and Aòm families possess phonemic word-tone (like Chinese), rather than word-stress. The former displays high (=), low ('), low-rising (), and high-falling () tones, while the Aòm tongues have only three level registers: high (=), low ('), and mid (no symbol). The Shén dialects also have word-tone, so far as can be ascertained: high (') and low ('). These are linked with other features impossible for humans to produce, however; e.g. the low tone is accompanied by a kind of "post-velar growling," and the high tone is conjoined with a "hissing" or "whisper." The language of the Tinalíya is also tonal, with rising, falling, high, low, mid, and other contours difficult to describe. One Tinalíya "tone" consists of a mid-level register accompanied by strong nasalisation, for example, written in this work as (~). The remaining nonhuman languages exhibit only word-stress — or are so alien as to make their transcription impossible.

1.1200. Scripts

It is not possible to provide discussions of each of the many scripts mentioned in Sec. 1.711. The main features of the writing systems of the Five Empires may be given, however, although their details must await the publication of further grammars and dictionaries.

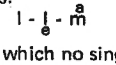
1.1210. TSOLYÁNI

The script used for modern Tsolyáni (and also sometimes for Milumanayáni) has been published elsewhere twice before, the most complete presentation being in "The Tsolyáni Language," (*op. cit.,* vol. 2, pp. 125-129). It is useful to restate it here, nevertheless, for the benefit of those who may not have access to previous works.

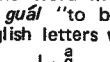
The Tsolyáni call their writing system *Vísumikh hiKólumel* "the Servant of the Emperor." It is a cursive and much-modified form of the Engsvanyáli alphabet. The 45th Seal Emperor, Hejjéka IV, "Restorer of Dignities" (ruled 1,458-1,517 A.S.) commanded that this be used instead of the "monumental" variety of the old Bednálljan syllabary in which Classical Tsolyáni and early modern Tsolyáni had heretofore been written. Merchants, artisans, and others had already been utilising this script for some time in preference to the complex and unwieldy Bednálljan symbols, and the change was welcomed by all but the most conservative sections of society.

The Tsolyáni script is linear and runs from right to left: i.e. "backwards" for one accustomed to English. Only consonants are written on the main line of writing, and those belonging to the same word are all joined to one another with little ligatures, as in English handwriting. Word-initial vowels (e.g. the *e* of *eru* "now") are also written on the line of writing, but these are NOT joined to following letters.

Word-medial and word-final vowels are written as diacritics above or below the consonantal letter which they follow in speech: e.g., *bara* "to argue" is written as *b-r,* with a diacritic for *a* above the *b* and another above the *r.* The diacritics for *i, a,* and *o* are written above the letter which they follow in speech, while *u, u,* and *e* are written below it, as also are the three recognized diphthongs, *ai, au,* and *oi.* For example, if *malel* "but" were to be written in Tsolyáni fashion but in English letters (and remembering that the script runs from right to left), it would appear as:



Vowel sequences for which no single symbol exists may cause some initial confusion: e.g., ua, ao, ui, etc. Both diacritics must be written, and one must know the word in order to know which vowel is pronounced first: e.g., *guál* "to be" might be read as *gaul,* as a Tsolyáni writing in English letters will illustrate:



Does one read the diacritic for *a* first, or that for *u*? Only familiarity with the language will reveal which is correct.

Word-initial vowel sequences (other than *ai*, *au*, or *oi*) are very rare and are mostly loan-words from other languages. In such cases the word-intial symbols for both vowels are written, one above the other, and the topmost is read first. There are no sequences of more than two vowels in Tsolyáni.

Each consonantal letter has a maximum of four possible forms: (a) one when it begins a word or comes after a non-connecting initial vowel symbol; (b) another when it occurs in the middle of a word joined to consonant letters on both sides; (c) a third when it is the last consonant in the word and is joined to a preceding consonant is the only letter on the line in the word. For example, in *dímlal* "to hit" the *d-* is initial, the *-m-* and first *-l-* are medial, and the second *-l-* is final. An example of a single, independent consonant occurs in *ngá* "thus, therein, thereon" (remembering that *ng* is a single sound and hence a single letter); this consists only of the letter *ng* with the diacritic for *a* upon it.

A few letters have variant forms in the eastern and western regions of Tsolyánu, but these may be ignored here, as may certain forms limited to special script styles (e.g. those of the Káshtri style; cf. pp. 127-128 of vol. 2 of "The Tsolyáni Language," cited above).

There are two special symbols: (a) a ^ written over a single consonant to indicate that it is doubled: e.g., *m̂* = *mm*; and (b) a special sign written on the line like any other consonant for a doubled *l* (i.e., *ll*), as in *Jakálla*. The latter does not occur in word-initial position in Tsolyáni, but it does so in Livyáni and certain other languages, and an initial form is thus found, as are medial and final forms. No independent *ll* occurs, however.

An initial glottal stop is not needed except in foreign words in which it is the first consonant after an initial vowel: e.g. *a'é* "a type of mercantile contract," borrowed from Livyáni. It is understood that word-initial vowel symbols include a preceding glottal stop, however; e.g. *asú* "to rest" is really *'asú*. This is clear from the fact that a glottal stop is indeed written when a prefix ending in a vowel occurs before a stem beginning with one: e.g. *bru-* "in" + *izhú* "bottle" *bru'izhú* "in the bottle"; *hi-* "of" + *alán* "baby" *hi'alán* "baby's, of the baby."

Although word-stress is phonemic in Tsolyáni, as said in Sec. 1.1100, it is not indicated in the script.

Like the initial vowel symbols, the numerals are written on the main line of writing and are not joined to one another. A numeral sequence is usually read from left to right (i.e. opposite to the direction of the script), but older conventions exist in which the numerals are also read from right to left. In modern Tsolyáni a numeral sequence is read much as in English: e.g. a *3* followed by a *5* followed by a *7* = *357*. An older system exists, however, in which *357* is written with a *3* followed by the symbol for *100*, followed by a *5* + the symbol for *10*, and a *7*. Although the concept of zero exists in Tsolyáni (Sec. 1.1010), there is no decimal point. Fractions are written with the numerals one above the other separated by a curved slash-mark. Indeed, fractions are not normally taught in the temple schools, and their use is restricted to those professions which have need of them (e.g. architects, merchants, etc.).

There are few "punctuation marks." A period, a comma (or clause-final marker), an interrogation mark, and a symbol to signal a quotation are all that exists, and these are often omitted. Personal names are frequently underlined or enclosed in a decorative cartouche, and the names of the Emperors and the Gods and Cohorts are set apart from the text, illuminated, and done in coloured inks.

The following tables present the symbols discussed above.

1.1211. Consonants

English	Initial	Medial	Final	Indep
P				
B				
M				
F				
V				
W				
T				
D				
N				
TH				
DH				
CH				
J				
Y				

English	Initial	Medial	Final	Indep
K				
G				
KH				
GH				
Q				
H				
NG				
'				
TS				
TL				
S				
SH				
Z				
ZH				

English	Initial	Medial	Final	Indep
SS				
R				

English	Initial	Medial	Final	Indep
L				
HL				

English	Initial	Medial	Final
LL			

1.1212 Vowels

English	Initial	Med-Fin
I		
A		
O		

English	Initial	Med-Fin
U		
Ú		
E		

English	Initial	Med-Fin
AU		
AI		
OI		

1.1213. Numerals

1		4		7		10		10,000	
2		5		8		100		million	
3		6		9		1,000		0	

1.1214. Special Symbols

Period		Comma		Interrogation Mark		Quotation Mark	

1.1220. MU'UGALAVYÁNI

The Mu'ugalavyáni script is also descended from old Engsvanyáli. Sometime during the Time of No Kings (which Mu'ugalavyáni scholars call the "Millenium of Tumult") the peoples of the west ceased to speak the "High Language" (i.e. Classical Mu'ugalavyáni) and developed the local dialect of Khéiris into a literary tongue.

The phonemic and graphemic systems of Mu'ugalavyáni and Tsolyáni are very much alike. There are some differences, of course. Mu'ugalavyáni has no letters for *th* and *dh*, for example, although both of these sounds occur. They are indicated by writing a horizontal line or a ^ above the letters for *t* and *d*, respectively. The script also includes separate letters for *dz*, *dl*, and *ly* (cf. the preceding Section). An aspirated k^h (contrasting with both *k* and with the fricative *kh*; cf. Sec. 1.1100) exists. Classical Mu'ugalavyáni had furthermore developed a set of glottalised stops and an alveoplatal affricate (i.e., *p'*, *t'*, *ch'*, and *k'*) during the Time of No Kings, but these have been replaced in the modern language by *p*, *t*, *ch*, and *k*. Only a few "special spellings" remain to burden the student: e.g., the city-name *Ch'ốchi*, which is pronounced as though it were just *chốchi*.

The vowel system is identical to that of Tsolyáni except for the glottalised long vowels. To an English speaker these sound like two vowels separated by a glottal stop: e.g. *o'o* sounds like the interjection *oh-oh!* All Mu'ugalavyáni vowels and vowel clusters have glottalised counterparts: e.g. *ia* (roughly the *ia* of *Serbia*) contrasts with *i'a*.

The script is written from right to left, and there are no "capital letters," as is the case in Tsolyáni. Unlike the Tsolyáni script, however, the letters are not joined by ligatures, although this was indeed done by some scribes in earlier times. Consonant clusters (e.g. *sr*, *kl*, *mp*, etc.) usually write the first member above and the second (and third, if any) below.

All of the vowel diacritics are written below the consonant they follow in speech, unlike Tsolyáni, which puts some above and some below the main line of writing. This creates a pleasing effect: an upper line of consonants and a lower one containing the vowels. All vowel sequences (e.g. *ai*, *ia*, *ui*, etc.) are written with one symbol apiece, just as if they were single vowels. This is also true of the glottalised long vowels: *a'a* is one symbol, for instance. To write *ka'á* "I," one writes a *k* and puts the *a'a* symbol beneath it. There are no word-initial vowel symbols, moreover. A word-initial vowel is interpreted as a glottal stop followed by the vowel: e.g. *'e-*, *'a-*, etc. In this respect the glottal stop letter is utilised much like the *alif* of the Arabic script.

Each consonantal letter has only one form. There are no initial, medial, final, and independent variants, as in Tsolyáni. (This will be seen to be true of the other languages of the Five Empires also, making Tsolyáni somewhat more difficult to learn — although each of the other scripts presents its own problems as well.)

Primary and secondary stresses are phonemic, but, as in Tsolyáni, they are not indicated in the script.

One feature which is not shared to the same degree by any of the other languages of the Five Empires (but which is found in Bednálljan and Ancient N'lússa) is the use of ideographs for grammatical elements which would require more space to write out. The "masculine" ending *-ish/-sh* is written with just one small symbol, for example, as are the "feminine" ending *-a*, the "plural" ending *-el/-l*, the "total plurality" suffix *-e'es*, etc. In classical texts and monumental inscriptions one encounters further ideographs for the locative prefixes also: e.g. *vu-* "in." In modern documents these are more frequently spelled out.

Another and more burdensome phenomenon – again derived from Bednálljan and Ancient N'lússa – is the addition of an unpronounced "determinative" to many stems. This symbol indicates the semantic class of the word. For example, nouns which denote male persons will be spelled out, and the determinative for "man" will then be added. Some 200 determinatives are in common use: e.g., "man", "woman", "city", "animal", "fruit", "tree", "deity", "fortress", "water or liquid", "tool", "weapon", etc. A scholar may use from 800 to 1,000 of these, and approximately 5,000 determinatives are known in all. As an example, both a man and a woman write *ka'á* "I" with the same phonemic letters (cf. above); the former adds the determinative for "man", however, while the latter adds the symbol for "woman". Both pronounce the word identically. Should a grammatical-element ideograph (cf. above) and a determinative both occur, the former is written first. One may illustrate this by writing *sho'olish* "city" in English transcription:

$\underset{o'o}{sh}$ - l + ("masculine" *-ish*) + (determinative for city).

One further special symbol remains to be mentioned: the "doubler," a diacritic written below a consonantal letter to indicate that the sound is long. Compare *lakúish* "button" and *lakkúish* "dog"; *k* is written only once in both words, but the "doubler" is inserted below the *k* of the second word (above the vowel symbol for *u*).

In highly formal documents and inscriptions, moreover, one may find the determinative used alone without any phonemic letters to stand for the whole word. This writing is completely ideographic, as in Chinese and occasionally in ancient Egyptian. For example, *sho'ólish* "city" may be written with just the "city" symbol followed by the ideograph for "masculine." It is read as *sho'ólish*, of course.

Numeral symbols are written from right to left, like the script itself (and differing from the usual modern Tsolyáni custom). The older practice described in Sec. 1.1210 is followed: to write *5,367*, one writes a *5* followed by the symbol for *1,000*, then a *3* and the symbol for *100*, then a *6* plus the symbol for *10*, and finally a *7*. Some scribes and merchants are beginning to omit the unit symbols and write the numerals in sequence, as in modern Tsolyáni: i.e. *5-3-6-7 5,367*. The right-to-left direction is maintained.

Punctuation marks are a recent addition, as in Tsolyáni. Earlier manuscripts used a little circle to indicate the end of a line of verse, and this has been generalised to denote the end of an utterance. Other special symbols have also been developed, but these are sporadically utilised.

The Mu'ugalavyáni writing system is presented in the following tables.

1.1221. Consonants

English	Mu'ug.	English	Mu'ug.	English	Mu'ug.	English	Mu'ug.
B		V		KH		R	
P		F		H		Y	
D		DH		M		W	
T		TH		N		P'	
J		Z		L		T'	
CH		S		HL		CH'	
G		SH		TL		K'	
K		ZH		DL		K^H	
Q		SS		TS		LY	
'		GH		DZ		NG (rare)	

1.1222. Vowel Diacritics

I		E'E		U		O'O	
I'I		A		U'U		Ü	
E		A'A		O		Ü'Ü	

1.1223. Dipthongal Diacritics

English	Ma'ug.	English	Ma'ug.	English	Ma'ug.	English	Ma'ug.
IE		E:		AI		UI	
IA		EA		AE		UE	
IU		EU		AU		UA	
IO		EO		AO		UO	

No diphthongs beginning with o are found; i.e. no oa, oi, etc. occurr. All of these diphthongs may occur glottalised, however: i.e. a'i, a'u, a'a, etc. are found. To indicate this, ' is inserted beneath the symbol: e.g. a'i.

1.1224. Numerals

1		5		9		10,000	
2		6		10		100,000	
3		7		100		1,000,000	
4		8		1,000		0	

1.1225. Special Symbols

MASC. NOUN		CONS. DOUBLER		COMMA		PLURAL	
FEM. NOUN		PERIOD		?		TOTAL PLURAL	

1.1226. Common Determinatives

Class meaning	Symbol	Class meaning	Symbol
man, male		woman, female	
god, deity, Cohort		goddess	
demon		animal (domestic)	
nation		temple, priest	
city		priestess	
fortress		book, scroll, writing	
soldier, army		abstract idea	
road		killing, fighting, death	
water, lake, river, ocean		building, house, palace	
earth, land		part of the body	
mountain, hill		power, victory	
tree, vegetation		food, drink	
weapon, armour		nonhuman	

1.1230. SALARVYÁNI

The script used for modern Salarvyáni and Pecháni is also derived from Engsvanyáli, but with strong admixtures of Bednálljan and local influences. It is not a very old writing system, as the scripts of Tékumel go; the oldest clay tablets and inscriptions date back only a thousand years or so, before which a variant of the Bednálljan syllabary was employed. (Few of the leaf books mentioned in Sec. 1.1030 last for more than 500 years at the most.)

The script is called "The String of Fishing-Boats" because of its resemblance to a row of vessels with lines and hooks trailing down behind them. It is written from right to left, with consonantal letters on the main line of writing and vowels below, as in Mu'ugalavyáni. Each consonantal letter has only one form, and these may either be joined together with short ligatures or left separate, as the writer wishes.

One curious features is the treatment of voiceless and voiced consonantal pairs: e.g. *p* and *b*, *t* and *d*, *th* and *dh*, *ch* and *j*, *k* and *g*, *s* and *z*, etc. Both members of each pair are made at the same point of articulation (i.e. labial, dental, etc.) and in the same manner (i.e. stop, fricative, nasal, etc.), but the vocal chords vibrate to create "voicing" during the production of *b, d, dh, j, g, z,* and others to be seen in the tables below, and not during the utterance of *p, t, th, ch, k, s,* etc. The script takes the voiceless consonants all as "primary" and has a symbol for each. In order to indicate the voiced counterpart, a short horizontal bar is written above these voiceless consonants. Using English letters to illustrate, it is as though one were to write *b* as *p*, *d* as *t*, *g* as *k*, etc. This phenomenon is probably due to morphophonemic rules operating at an earlier stage in the language (the Time of No Kings?), and it is still seen in some features of the modern language: e.g. in the 52nd verbal conjugation, where "to come" is signified by *páhr* in the present and past paradigms and by *bár* in the future, imperative, and conditional systems.

The letters just mentioned above are employed to write the sounds of nominal and verbal roots and stems. These are called "big letters". The vowels and consonants of the prefixes and suffixes are written with "little letters", however: special abbreviated forms of just those letters needed for the grammatical apparatus: *p, t, k, m, n, ng, s, sh, h, r,* and *l*. The only vowels used in Salarvyáni affixes are *i, a,* and *u,* and there are "little letters" for these as well. The "little letters" are written horizontally or vertically before and behind the "big letters" of the stem. Using English capitals to represent the "big letters" and lower case symbols for the "little letters", *kapáhrumasa* "he came (completively, recently)" would appear as:

$$\overset{k}{a}\text{ - PÁHRU - }\overset{m}{\underset{s}{a}}\text{ - a}$$

As in Mu'ugalavyáni and Tsolyáni, there is a "doubler" in the Salarvyáni script: a small dot or diamond placed over a single letter to indicate that it is pronounced long: e.g., *ṁ = mm.*

The vowels of the "big letter" category are written below the consonants which they follow in speech. They are attached to their consonantal letters by vertical ligatures — the "fishing-lines" implied by the script's metaphorical name. Most scribes "hang" the vowels from the right side of the consonantal symbols, although a position directly beneath is favoured by the scribes of Tsa'avtúlgu and central Salarvyá. There are only two recognised diphthongal symbols (*ai* and *au*), and all other vowel sequences require two separate vowel "lines." These may be placed side by side (with the rightmost being read first), or one above the other (with the topmost being the first in pronunciation). Vowel clusters are found mainly in loan-words in Salarvyáni, although consonantal clusters are all too common. As in Mu'ugalavyáni, there are no word-initial vowels; their place is taken by a glottal stop+ a vowel. "Little letter" vowels are not joined to their consonants.

The numerical symbols are written and read from right to left, and the system employed in Mu'ugalavya is also found in Salarvyani: i.e. *5,367* is written *5 + 1,000, 3 + 100, 6 + 10,* and *7.*

Punctuation consists of little more than a vertical line to indicate the end of an utterance. In modern texts, however, one finds the punctuation marks of Tsolyáni being borrowed wholesale.

The Salarvyáni writing system is presented in the following tables.

1.1231. "Big Letter" Consonants

English	Salarv.	English	Salarv.	English	Salarv.	English	Salarv.
P		HW		SS		HR	
B		W		KH		R	
T		F		GH		HY	
D		V		HL		Y	
CH		TH		L		HM	
J		DH		TL		M	
K		S		DL		HN	
G		Z		TS		N	
Q		SH		DZ		HNG	
'		ZH		H		NG	

1.1232. "Big Letter" Vowel Diacritics

I		Ü		U		Æ	
E		A		O		AI	
AU							

1.1233. "Little Letter" Consonants

English	Salarv.	English	Salarv.	English	Salarv.	English	Salarv.
P		M		S		R	
T		N		SH		L	
K		NG		H			

1.1234. "Little Letter" Vowels

I		A		U	

1.1235. Numerals

1		5		9		10,000	
2		6		10		100,000	
3		7		100		1,000,000	
4		8		1,000		0	

1.1236. Special Symbols

CONSONANT DOUBLER		PERIOD	

1.1240. YÁN KÓRYÁNI

The square, blocky script of Yán Kór is also utilised to write Pijenáni, Saá Allaqiyáni, Lo'orunánkh, and some dialects of Milumanayáni, with appropriate modifications. It seems to have originated early in the Engsvanyáli period (and is mentioned as being "accursed and savage" by the Governors of the North), but its development appears to have been stimulated by ancient Llyáni rather than the graceful, rounded writing system of the Priestkings.

The script is written from left to right (the only one amongst all of the writing systems of the Five Empires), and it is almost entirely phonemic: there are no determinatives, ideographs, or special symbols. Consonantal letters occupy the main line of writing, and each has only one form. They are always written separately, as in English printing.

The vowels are written above the consonantal letter which they follow in speech, as is the case with some of the Tsolyáni vowel symbols. Again, a word-initial vowel is represented by a glottal stop + a superscript vowel. The diphthongs are each written with one symbol apiece, but loan-words may require two vowels; these are written one above the other, and the topmost is read first. There is also a unique triphthong: *aia*, which has its own symbol. One further feature not found in any of the other languages is nasalisation: i.e. allowing some air to escape through the open velic simultaneously with the oral production of the vowel, as in French *bon, main, Jean, un*, etc. Such nasalised vowels are not common in Yán Koryáni, and the script indicates them with a placed over the symbol for the corresponding non-nasalised vowel. The two unique Yán Koryáni vowels (*a* as in *above*, and *aw* as in *law*) are written as *a* and *aw* here for convenience' sake.

There are no numeral symbols. Instead, Yán Koryáni uses the first 10 letters of the alphabet as its numbers: *p=1, b=2*, etc. The letter *s=0*. Numeral sequences are written otherwise much as in English: e.g. *5,367=k-t-g-'*.

Punctuation is sparse, but symbols for a "period" and a "comma" (i.e. a marker for the end of a clause) do occur. Two "commas," one above the other, are now written to signify a question.

Primary and secondary stresses are phonemic in Yán Koryáni, but again the script does not recognise these features.

The variant of the Yán Koryáni script used to write Pijenáni requires further symbols: a little subscript circle beneath *p, t, ch, k*, and *q* to denote glottalised *p', t', ch', k'*, and *q'*; a subscript circumflex (̭) which acts as a "labialiser": i.e. it transforms *p, t, k*, etc. into *pw, tw, kw*, etc.; and a subscript horizontal line which functions as a "palataliser": i.e. it changes *p, t, k*, etc. into *py, ty, ky*, etc. The other letters are used without modification.

The phonological inventory of Saá Allaqiyáni is much the same as that of Yán Koryáni. Long vowels (*ii, ee, aa, uu, oo*, and *uu*) require another diacritic: a separate little vertical line or check-mark written to the right of a superscript vowel symbol. Saá Allaqiyáni is an Aõm language (Sec. 1.711), furthermore, and it has word-tones, as do the other members of its family. Unfortunately, these are not indicated in the Yán Koryáni script — a serious defect since it is impossible to distinguish such pairs as *õm* "hand" from *òm* "rake." A few scholars have begun to write the vowel symbols in coloured inks to indicate their tones.

Lo'orunánkh and Milumanayáni can both be written without difficulty in the Yán Koryáni script. The former is little more than a rather distant "rustic" dialect of Yán Koryáni, while the phonological inventory of Milumanayáni is compatible with the Yán Koryáni graphemic system.

Modern Yán Koryáni is also written in the ancient Tsáqw script around the city of Hlíkku and in southwestern Yan Kor. The Tsáqw language itself — the ancestor of present-day Yán Koryáni — is extinct everywhere but amongst the clergy of the Mad One of Hlíkku. The script, however, is said to possess arcane magical powers, and talismans inscribed in it are held in superstitious regard by the illiterate throughout southwestern Yán Kór and in Milumanayá down to Pelesár. The nomads of the Desert of Sighs display a fear of writings in the Tsáqw script and often slay those who have them in their possession.

The Yán Koryáni script is presented in the following tables.

1.1241. Consonants

English	Yán K.	English	Yán K.	English	Yán K.	English	Yán K.
P		Z		M		L	
B		TH		N		CH	
T		DH		NY		J	
D		SH		N		TS	
K		ZH		NG		DZ	
G		SS		W		TL	
'		KH		Y		DL	
F		GH		R			
V		Q		L			
S		H		HL			

As stated in Sec. 1.1240, the first ten letters are employed as numerals; i.e. p = 1, b = 2, t = 3, d = 4, k = 5, g = 6, ' = 7, f = 8, v = 9, and s = 0.

The subscript diacritics used to write Pijenáni are as follows: (a) the circle which indicates glottalisation is found only with p, t, ch, k, and q; (b) the circumflex and the horizontal bar employed for labialisation and palatalisation, respectively, are possible with all consonantal letters except ', ss, ny, w, and y. Examples:



1.1242. Vowel Diacritics

English	Yán K.	English	Yán K.	English	Yán K.	English	Yán K.
I		E		Ü		Ö	
Ä		A		U		O	
Æ		AW		AI		AU	
IA		OI		EAW		AIA	
NASALISATION				LONG VOWEL MARKER (Saá Allaqiyáni)			

1.1243. Special Symbols

PERIOD		COMMA		?	

1.1250. LIVYÁNI

Of all the Five Empires, Livyánu maintains the graphemic system of Éngsvan hla Gánga better than any other nation except Mihállu. The present script is very similar to that used by the Priestkings. This, however, is a relatively recent development. During the Time of No Kings Livyáni was written in a deliberately obscure script called Duruób. This had some 1,700 glyphs: some stood for single sounds, others for syllables, others for complete words, others for grammatical elements, etc. Duruób is now employed regularly only by the clergy of the One of Fears of the forbidden city of Dlásh — and by the other temples of the Shadow Gods for recondite sorcerous purposes.

Present-day Livyáni is written in vertical columns. These are read from top to bottom and from right to left. Horizontal lines are sometimes employed, however, these again being read from right to left. Each consonantal letter has a single form, and these are not joined to one another. A subscript circle shows consonantal doubling, but *ll* has its own special letter for reasons now lost in history. (The same is true in Tsolyáni: cf. Sec. 1.210).

The vowels are written above the consonantal letter which they follow in speech, as in Yán Koryáni and Engsvanyáli. Initial vowels are treated as occurrences of a glottal stop *μ* the vowel. Only the three traditional Engsvanyáli vowel clusters (*ai*, *au*, and *oi*) are written with single symbols; all other vowel sequences require two symbols, written one above the other over their consonant, the topmost being read first.

The script is almost entirely phonemic (except for the absence of any indication of phonemic stress; cf. preceding Sections). There are no special spellings, ideographs, determinatives, etc.

Two problem areas are encountered, however. The first of these is less serious for the learner, while the second presents a major obstacle.

The lesser difficulty centres around the presence of huge, complex glyphs (Livyáni: *Kenemúz*) inserted here and there in almost every text, whether religious, governmental, or as prosaic as a business receitt. These glyphs are not part of the text; they are not read or pronounced, and they are necessary, the Livyáni say, only for "religious reasons." About 600 such glyphs exist. They differ from temple to temple and are never explained to foreigners (or even to other Livyáni). A scribe will claim to know precisely where a *Kenemúz* is to be inserted and what form it will take; any other *Kenemúz* is incorrect. It is thus difficult to forge a Livyáni document since the absence of *Kenemúz* or the use of the incorrect ones in the wrong places will give the attempt away at once.

The second and more substantial problem involves the mania for ciphers. The temples of the Shadow Gods, the government (indeed, various branches and departments of the administration), clans, businesses, and even individuals all may employ codes known only to their intended readers. There is thus no guarantee that a Livyáni manuscript can be read, even if one knows the language well. Letter values are changed; symbols are transformed; new letters are devised; and one may even unroll a scroll only to discover that the entire alphabet, the direction of writing, the vowel system — everything — have been turned into arcane gibberish. Such ciphers are never revealed to outsiders. Even a native Livyáni may be unable to read documents written by some group to which he does not belong.

As in Yán Koryáni, the letters of the alphabet are employed as numerals (often with secret numerological significances). The first letter, *p*, stands for *zero; t* through *g* for *1-9; m* through *dh* for *10-90; s* through *dz* for *100-900;* and *dl* through *y* for *1,000-8,000.*

Larger numerals can be made by writing the vowel diacritics upon the alphabetical letters again from the beginning: e.g., *p̈ = 9,000; p̊ = 10,000,* etc. Zero is required only as a null quantity and in certain computations since (e.g.) *5,067* is written *5,000 + 60 + 7* (i.e., */-v-d/*). Numeral sequences are written in coloured inks to set them off from the text.

A small circle is employed to show the end of an utterance. A vertical bar signifies the end of a clause (i.e. a "comma"), and two such bars indicate a question. A little hollow diamond denotes the beginning of a quotation.

The Livyáni script is presented in the following tables.

1.1251. Consonants

English	Livy.	English	Livy.	English	Livy.	English	Livy.
P		G		DH		DZ	
T		M		S		TL	
CH		N		Z		DL	
K		NY		SH		SS	
Q		NG		ZH		R	
'		F		KH		L	
B		V		GH		HL	
D		W		H		LL	
J		TH		TS		Y	

1.1252. Vowel Diacritics

I		Ü		U		AI	
E		A		O		AU	
OI							

1.1253. Special Symbols

PERIOD		COMMA		?	
QUOTATION MARK		CONSONANTAL DOUBLER			

The following two examples of the Kenemúz (Sec. 1.1250) are appended for purposes of illustration. The first is a "small" Kenemúz, taken from a Livyáni travel document issued to a Tsolyáni merchant. The second is a "great" Kenemúz, found on a copy of the magical text entitled "The Scroll of Bloodstained Reeds," said to have been copied in the Temple of Qame'él in Tsámra about 25 years ago. The meanings of these two symbols are not known.

Small Kenemúz



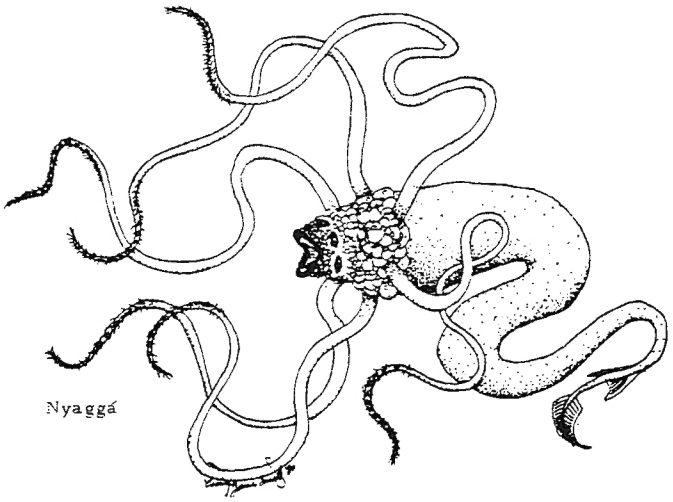
Great Kenemúz



1.1260. SCRIPT SAMPLES

Two specimens of each of the scripts of the Five Empires are given below. These illustrate the direction of writing (→ · "left-to-right"; ← · "right-to-left"), the use of vowel diacritics, determinatives, etc.

Language	English Meaning	Transcription and literal order of the letters	Script
Tsolyáni	(the) Gods	mîtlanyal l-ȳ-n-t-l-m <--	
	(the) general (noble noun)	kérdukoi k-d-r-k <--	
Mu'uga-lavyáni	city (masc.)	sho'ólish (city)-(masc.)-l-sh <-- (sign)	
	to die (intransitive	mssomú'u (death)-m-s <-- (sign)	
Salarvyáni	he came (completively, recently)	kapáhrumasa a-m-HR-P-k <--	
	High Adept of the Powers	tubajjógmuti -M-G-JJ-B-t <--	
Tán Koryáni	he passes through	télgusinkopchrèn --> f-l-g-s-n-k-p-ch-r-n	
	this-present-man-here	ditsasranăchăaia --> d-ts-s-r-n-ch-aia	
Livyáni	shadow (masc.)	shirudanáz z-n-d-r-sh <--	
	military legion	llűneb b-n-ll <--	



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As this work goes to press, Professor Barker informs us that the DAW Book Company will soon be printing his 'Empire of the Petal Throne' novel, tentatively entitled 'MAN OF GOLD'.

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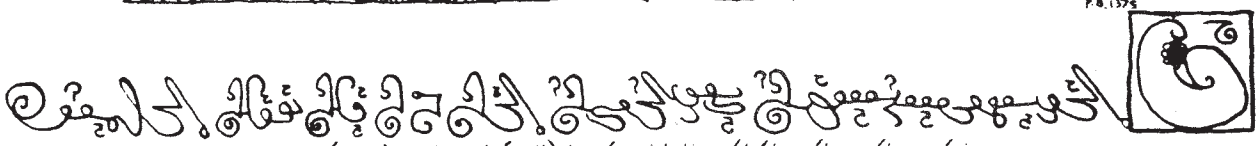
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Mló	Unit of weight: 3.75 g	124
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Ngúqm	4th Intercalary day: Ngaqómi	127
Ninóa	Unit of 64 soldiers	80
Ninóa'ù	Commander of 64 soldiers	80
Niqómi	Legion	79
Nmách	Unit of liquid weight: Nmécha (60 liters)	124
Nmécha	Unit of liquid weight: 60 liters	124
Nümür	Commander of 50 soldiers	79
Ochür	Commander of a legion	79
Páchukoi	Lord	61
Pardán	8th month	126
Pésr	5th month: Fésru	126
Píres	7th month: Firasúl	126
Prán	8th month: Pardán	126
Psá	Unit of weight: Psé (.75 kg)	124
Psé	Unit of weight: .75 kg	124
Pügh	Unit of weight: Epü (1,500 kg)	124
Qádardàlikoi	Great war; an all-out war	81
Qél	Military vessel, larger trieme with a mast & a sail	83
Qirgál	Copper coin	63,65,66
Rü'üsá	4th day	125
Rüs	4th day: Rü'üsá	125
Sarelqe	Spring clip which holds a sword	109
Savàlharétokoi	City mayor	74
Semétl	Unit of 10 soldiers	70,79
Séscha	Military vessel: small, fast galley	83
Sháng	Unit of distance: Tsán (1.333 km)	124
Shápru	2nd month	125
Shórta	Unit of liquid weight: Tsértse (.3 liter)	124
Shpár	2nd month: Shápru	125
Shuggétl	Commander of 250 soldiers	79
Sivél	Unit of time: 4.5 seconds	124
Srügánta	Military vessel: bireme	83
Srúng	1st day: Surúnra	125
Surúnra	1st day	125
Svátl	Unit of time: Sivél (4.5 seconds)	124
Tá-Kr	Ritual instrument of Sarku underground rites	105
Tartür	10th month: Trantór	126
Ténmre	Unit of time: 180 minutes	124
Tetkúmne	Sacrificial knife of Temple of Vimuhla	105
Thagamúsekoi	Ambassador	74
Tirrikámu	Lieutenant	70,79,82
Tkél	5th day: Tlakál	125
Tlakál	5th day	125
Tláshanyal	Intercalary days	125
Tlümrik	Unit of 500 soldiers	79
Tlüsém	Unit of 25 soldiers	79
Tnámurr	Unit of time: Ténmre (180 minutes)	124
Tnék	Two-masted merchant ship	64
Tnúng	Unit of weight: .1875 g	124
Tókhn	Unit of 1,000 soldiers	79
Tón	Unit of weight: Tnúng (.1875 g)	124
Trággesh	2nd Intercalary day: Turugdáshe	127
Trantór	10th month	126
Tsán	Unit of distance: 1.333 km	4,10,35,101, 118,119,124
Tsértse	Unit of liquid weight: .3 liter	124
Tsukehlmri	Armor: broad collar	108
Tsurúm	Unit of 400 soldiers	79
Tugrúnmodàlikoi	Senior magistrate of Governor's court	74
Tugrúnmokoi	Rural judge	74
Tugrúntokoi	Professional judge of Tsahlten	98
Turugdáshe	2nd Intercalary day	127
Uténg	Commander of 25 soldiers	79
Vaimé	Unit of 4,096 soldiers	80
Vaime'ù	Commander of 4,096 soldiers	80
Vraháma	3rd Intercalary day	127
Vrém	3rd Intercalary day: Vraháma	127
Yóm	Unit of time: 90 seconds	124
Záq	3rd day: Zaqé	125
Zaqé	3rd day	125
Zírunel	Military vessel: quinquereme	83

The Tsolyáni General, Bazhán, speaking with Yilrána, the mistress of the Baron of Yán Kór at the siege of Ke'ér. When she refused to surrender the fortress, the Tsolyáni assaulted the place and took it by storm. Yilrána was subsequently impaled, as is the custom in Tsolyánu, and this was the sight which greeted the Baron's eyes when he arrived at last with reinforcements.





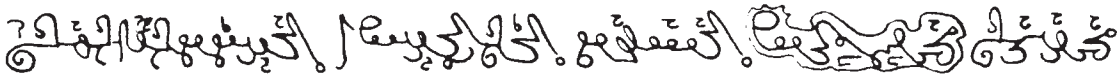
Ngá,, Màsunbruchiŕudhàli túsmidali mál úl guál pagál mssúri
Lo, in this lovely picture ye will see them



tlaKólumelra tlaYilránadhàlidhàli hiYán Kórdàlidhàlisa. Kérdukoi
the Empress, beauteous and lovely Yilrána of great, excellent, powerful Yán Kór The General



Bazhánkoi tùplanménggu purlím daimí másun kharidán guál
Bazhán, beloved and kind requested her to surrender



tlasavál tlaKe'ér marashán molmáisur. Màsunònul Thiáladhàli
the city [of] Ke'ér sadly unto him That lovely maiden

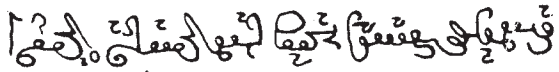


vá kharidán màsuntlasavál, lél Bazhánkoi tlamárashongyal zhagú
did not surrender that city, and Bazhán tears we

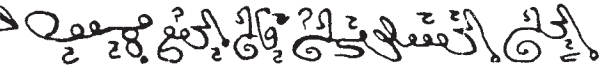


daimí'mssúran, lél tlasavál héheganu daimí'másun, lél máisur tlaYilrána
and the city [he] destroyed it, and he Yilrana

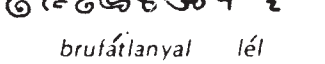




sangúshtragà cháru lanmrála muní.
upon a stake had to impale.



Muél, maráshdali guál muní'qúru-
Indeed, great sorrow there was, all



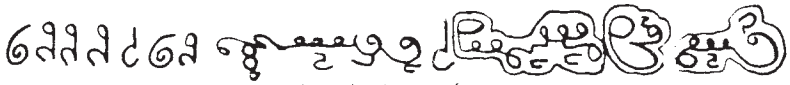
brufátlanyal lél
in the nations and



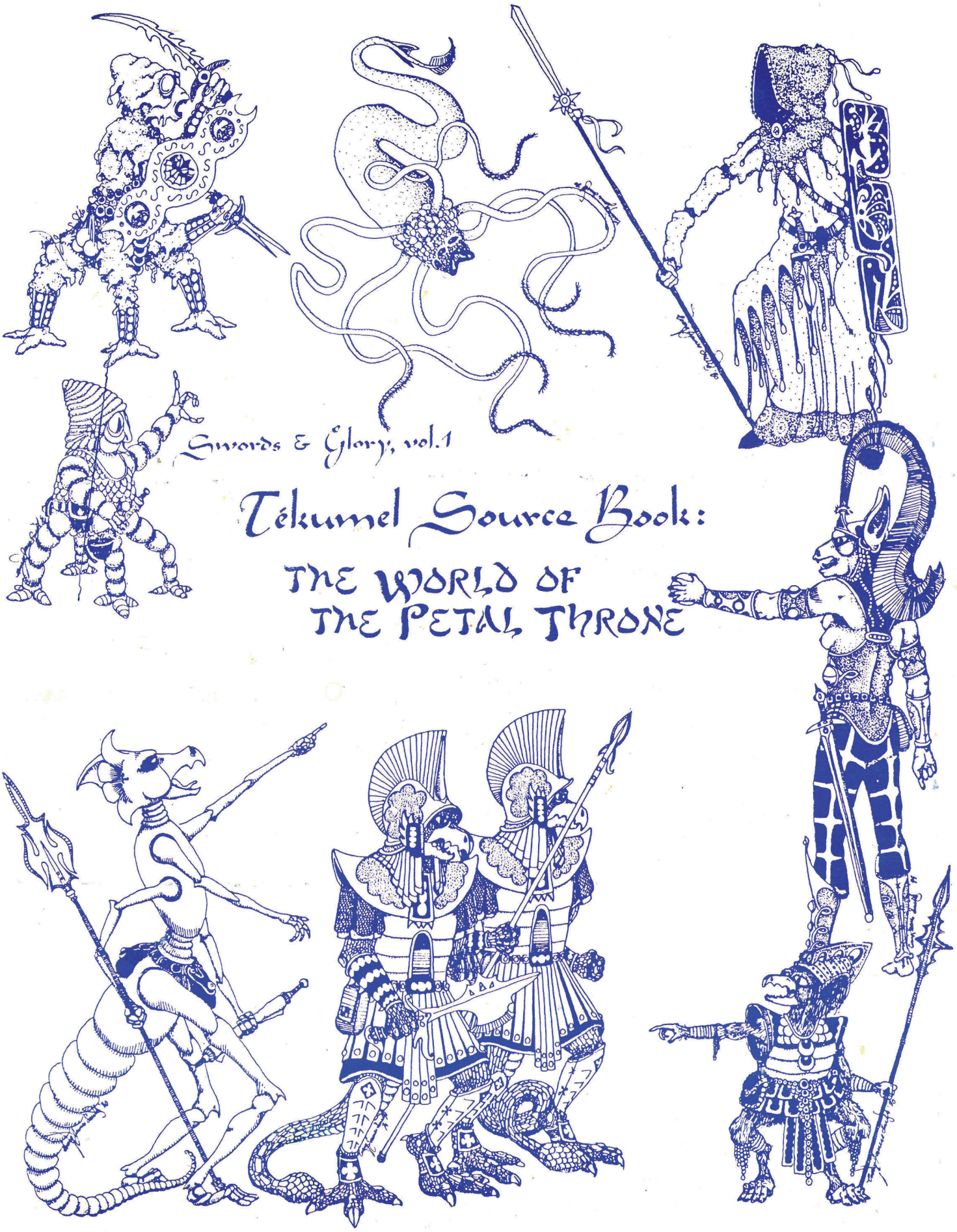
qúru-bruwíśuyal.
all- in the worlds



Rínmy muní másun
Drew this,



Fíru Bá Yéker, Fésrukh 23, 2333.
Fíru Bá Yéker, the 23rd of Fésru, 2,333 A S



Swords & Glory, vol.1

Tékumel Source Book:

THE WORLD OF THE PETAL THRONE