

# Shadow World



## PLAYER GUIDE

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# THE WORLD

BY TERRY KEVIN AMTHOR





## PLAYER GUIDE

# THE WORLD

### CREDITS

**Written**—Terry Kevin Amthor

**Cover Artwork**—Craig John

**Interior Artwork**—Craig John

**Additional Material**—Matt Hanson

**Original Erlin vocabulary**—Peter C Fenlon

**Special thanks**—Kevin Manktelow for his renders of Kulthea

**Product Architect**—Matt Hanson

**Proofreading**—Nicholas HM Caldwell, Cormac Doyle,  
Thom Jones, Guillaume Maurice, Marc Rosen

**Layout Design, Pagemaking and Production**—Craig John

**Shadow World Line Editor**—Matt Hanson

**Shadow World Creator and Designer**—Terry Kevin Amthor

**Director of Guild Companion Publications Ltd**—Nicholas HM Caldwell

**Guild Companion Publications**—[www.guildcompanion.com](http://www.guildcompanion.com)

**Terry Kevin Amthor**—[www.eidolonstudio.com](http://www.eidolonstudio.com)

**Craig John**—[www.craigssketchpad.co.uk](http://www.craigssketchpad.co.uk)

### ABOUT THE COVER

This is where we'd normally talk about the cover illustration and explain the story behind it but it's not necessary in this case as the story excerpt is the opening text in Section 1 - The Introduction.

A close up on the deck of the skyship is on the back cover featuring the Loremaster Luronen Moje himself.



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## SECTION 1

# INTRODUCTION

Luronen Moje joined the Navigator on the fore-deck of the skyship. Sulfear appeared young to Moje's trained eye even for an Elven Navigator, and indeed Sulfear was barely out of his teens; somewhat of a prodigy. But Luronen had little time to muse upon the selection processes of Navigators, as the reason for his summons to the deck became clear. Dead ahead of the Emerian Princess, the cloudy sky had turned the unnatural, luminous green which could only herald the approach of one of Kulthea's greatest terrors: a flowstorm.

"I see we have a problem." Moje said without taking his eyes from the eerie phenomenon before them.

"Indeed," answered Sulfear tonelessly. "It formed about five minutes ago; the shock waves are already extending more than five miles."

The two men stood impassively watching the gathering storm while the crew of the Princess wrestled with the flapping sails and fought her air-rudder. Moje cast out a tentative spell to gauge the power of the storm, only to feel the Essænce torn from him, sucked into the magical vortex.

"Perhaps we should 'Jump' now, before the storm intensifies." Moje suggested mildly.

Sulfear peered through his sextant-like Compass and adjusted a jeweled screw. "Too late."

A moment later there was a brilliant flash from the area ahead, and knives of iridescent lightning stabbed down from the sky to the earth. The green clouds swirled into a monstrous funnel, twisting like a great screw towards the ground. The sky went dark; the sun seemed to go out as everything was lit only by this luminous

green tornado, laced with forks of lightning. Then the winds reached them.

The skyship trembled and began to list to starboard, her structure creaking ominously. Both men staggered but regained their balance as the craft slewed about in a strangely majestic spin, drawn towards the Essænce vortex.

Ignoring the wind tearing at his clothes and flowing hair, Sulfear carefully replaced his Compass in its padded leather pouch. Moje fought to control his own flapping cloak in this sudden gale, while the Navigator turned to face the storm.

The captain of the Princess rushed up to the two men, clutching at his cap. He still had his composure, but it was clear that even he was frightened by this monstrous storm. "Sirs," he shouted over the rising winds, "I realize you are not responsible for rescuing us from such as this, but any assistance would be much appreciated."

Sulfear continued to stare forward, eyes glazed, his knuckles white on the balustrade. Moje doubted he even noticed the captain.

"Captain Renian, I believe that the Navigator is even now doing his best to divert our course from a disastrous collision with this storm. However, I fear that even his powers will be of no avail against such a powerful flowstorm. I suggest you attempt to steer to starboard and make preparations to jettison the Xenium keel in order to attempt an emergency ground landing."

The captain was horrified. "That'll wreck my ship!"

Moje cocked an eyebrow. "Our alternative is quite likely to be caught in a Flow Vortex, in which case we will surely be destroyed... or worse."



*What is Shadow World? Shadow World is a high-fantasy setting published as a complete setting for the Rolemaster system in the late 1980's by Iron Crown Enterprise (ICE) and written primarily by Terry Amthor. Shadow World incorporated earlier published works by ICE such as Vog Mur and new material has continued to be published for it by, at various points, ICE, Eidolon Studios, and Guild Companion Publications. On this world of Kulthea there are more than a dozen continents although the vast majority of material written has been for the large middle continent of Emer and its neighbor to the north, Jaiman.*

This guide to Shadow World is the first in a series of publications intended for players rather than Gamemasters (although it will be useful for them as well!) Shadow World is rich in history and flavor but as a Gamemaster (GM) it can often be overwhelming just deciding where to start and what information to convey to players to help them with ideas for characters and backgrounds. This Player Guide is intended to give players general information on the Shadow World setting, while future publications will focus on specific continents and will contain cultural and regional information and maps.

It is an impossible task to make a player guide that is completely suitable for all campaigns. Therefore it is important that the GM establish what information is and is not available to the players. The guide was written to contain only general information that adds depth and flavor to the world, and "spoilers" have been avoided.

## LORE SKILLS

Just because information is contained in this guide does not mean that a character will know that information. This guide is meant to give an overview of the setting and will no doubt discuss aspects and regions of the world that some characters will know nothing about. Indeed, most peasantry and citizens of Shadow World will know very little, especially of things beyond the borders of their own local region. Each section given in the Guide contains a minimum of information. Characters may know none of it, some of it, all of it, or even above and beyond what is presented.

The guide is broken into different topics that can have in-game academic skills (lores, sciences, etc) associated with them. Actual skill sets will vary based on the Gamemaster, gaming system and rule set used, so a modest list of skills is presented in Table 1 to cover the areas in this Guide. The GM may use a more extensive skill set where these generalized lore skills are broken down into multiple skills, in which case each skill will just cover a smaller area.



*The Tower of Vour was the site of an ancient battle - only the dead remain now.*

**TABLE 1: ACADEMIC SKILLS FOR SHADOW WORLD**

SKILL	DESCRIPTION
Astronomy	Knowledge of constellations, planets, and astronomical events.
Essænce Lore	Knowledge about the flows of Essænce and their effects as well as the division of magical realms and spell-casting. (Alternate skills: Essænce Lore, Spell Lore, Lore for each realm)
Geography	Geography includes continental-scale geography and general trends in ecology. Learning to higher ranks is difficult due to a dearth of information and teachers. Local geography is covered by Region Lore (Alternate skills: World Ecology, Flora Lore, Fauna Lore)
History (localized)	More extensive history of a region beyond the limited knowledge covered by the Region Lore skill. Basic skill grants knowledge in world history (Section 8). Also represents local history for areas where local regions are known via the Region Lore skill. (Alternate Skills: World History, 'each region' History)
Region Lore	Each specific region is its own skill. General information about a region that includes geography, cultures, flora and fauna as well as a limited local history. The region size will vary but will generally be about 100,000 square miles (~300 x 300 miles). The specific regional areas will be described in each continent player guide. (Alternate skills: Region Lore, Culture Lore, Flora Lore, Fauna Lore)
Religion Lore (localized)	Knowledge of religions and their practices. Usually a character will have a single religion as a major focus, but nearly all also study and become aware of other religions as well. (Alternate skills: each specific religion or group or religions).

**Localized Skills**—Some skills only apply to a specific regional area and the GM may use a separate skill for each region (e.g. History—Rhakhaan). An alternative way is to leave the localized skill as a single skill but use the character's Region Lore skills to determine what regions the localized skill is useful for. For example, the effective skill ranks for knowing about herbs in Tanara can be found by using the lesser of the skills ranks in 'Herb Lore' and 'Region Lore—Tanara.'

## KNOWLEDGE TIERS

To help in gauging what a character may know about the world, Knowledge Tiers are provided at the beginning of each topic. The Knowledge Tiers will give a brief overview of what a character

could be expected to know given a certain knowledge level in an applicable skill. These Tiers are only intended as a guide; Gamemasters may alter them based on their own version of Shadow World and determine that characters know more or less than what is given here. The tier levels and their general descriptions are given in Table 2.

The description in the knowledge tiers only describes probable knowledge. The actual knowledge and recall will vary per the GM and sometimes will be determined by a roll. In these cases the Knowledge Tiers can be used in reverse. The GM will determine a difficulty based on the Tier of information as given in Table 2. The skill ranks and difficulty levels provided can be used with Rolemaster™ or HARP™.

**TABLE 2: KNOWLEDGE TIERS**

TIER	DESCRIPTION	EARTH EQUIVALENT	SKILL RANK	DIFFICULTY
Novice	Introductory knowledge with details on a few topics.	Grade School, Jr. High School	1-5	Routine, Easy
Student	Good understanding and recall of all major topic areas, as well as basic details.	High School	6-10	Light, Medium
Scholar	Mastery and recall of all important aspects of topic, plus many finer details in most areas.	College Undergraduate (BS, BA)	11-15	Hard, Very Hard
Expert	Ability to form multiple complex inferences, create accurate analogies, and form connections to other subject matters.	Graduate level college (MS, MA)	16-20	Extremely Hard, Sheer Folly
Sage	Complete understanding and knowledge of obscure and uncommon parts of subject matter.	Post-Graduate (Doctoral)	21+	Absurd



## SECTION 2

# OVERVIEW

*Books are the substances of History, the vessel of Understanding, the teacher of Wisdom. They hold the Past so we may know the Present and comprehend the Future."*

*— Creed of the Nomikos Scribes*

**T**he world of Kulthea, *The Shadow World*, is an ancient world of powerful magic, real deities, and shades of grey between good and evil. The world is home to hundreds—or perhaps thousands—of cultures that run the spectrum of technology from Old Stone Age through Late Renaissance, although Iron Age predominates. Creatures both fantastic and horrible call the Shadow World home and keep it wondrous... and dangerous. Invisible flows of magical energy, the *Essænce*, cross the world interfering with travel but also providing power to those who can manipulate it.

The intelligent races living on the world are diverse and varied. Most are isolated from each other by barriers: mountain ranges, broad seas, and the invisible walls of *Essænce*. Cultures are thus frequently unaware of each others' existence. As one might expect, geographical knowledge varies tremendously, depending on the environment, education and location of the inhabitant concerned. Your average man-on-the-street in the city of Sel-kai knows far more about politics of a kingdom a thousand miles away than a peasant ten miles distant. In general, though, it is important to keep in mind that on Kulthea communication travels only as fast as it can be hand-carried. While a Navigator could be hired to transport a courier (they will not carry messages themselves) that method gets expensive rather quickly. Few would be willing to pay thousands



*The Observatory of Ordye Mur.*

*2010*

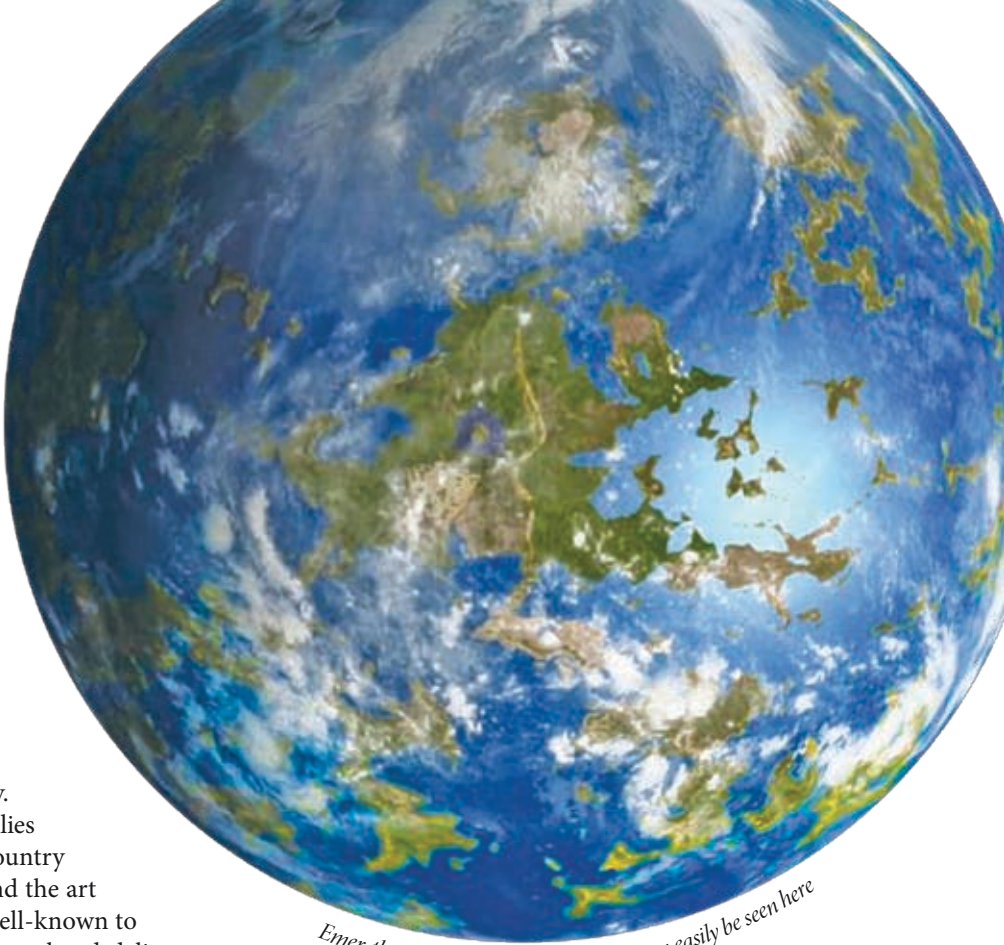
of gold pieces for Navigator courier services, even if delivery is instantaneous. Other spell-users could potentially transport themselves and messages instantly from one point to another, but they are not that common, and most would at least pretend to have something better to do than launch a career as a pricey mail service. Additionally, the Essænce Flows can make such transportation exceedingly dangerous. Skyships can significantly speed up travel but in most regions they are far rarer than even spell-users. Still, in places where skyships travel, populace tend to be far more informed as the skyship crews spread news... and rumors.

As a result, news travels slowly. A king could be assassinated and it might be weeks before a neighboring monarch learned of the tragedy. Wars could be fought and lost before potential allies can be alerted. True, the ruling powers of a country will be better informed than the populace, and the art of sending spies into other countries is one well-known to most governments. Most information—aside from hand-delivered documents sent by one aristocrat to another—is by word-of-mouth, carried on the many ships that sail the turbulent oceans or on the caravans that cross the lands. Naturally there is some distortion and embellishment.

### CALENDAR

A Kulthean year consists of 350 days, most often divided into 5 months (following the phases of the moon Orhan) of 70 days each. Each month in turn is divided into 7 weeks (following the phases of the moon Varin) of 10 days each.

The main calendar for historical record keeping – with variations based on location – used by the Navigators, most libraries, and many cultures – is referred to as Loremaster Reckoning (LR).



Presumably invented by the Loremasters, LR divides history into three Eras. The moon Varin is ignored for recording purposes, instead using Orhan exclusively to divide the Kulthean year. On the first of the month, Orhan is new; it is full on the 35th day of each month/season. Orhan is always full on the summer solstice.

Dates are recorded as “TE 5090, Orhan 4, day 45”, for example. This means the 45th day (of 70) of the fourth month (otherwise known as Autumn in the northern hemisphere) in the year 5090 of the Third Era. It might be even more briefly recorded as 5090•4•45. The current time will vary based on the campaign, but is assumed to be circa TE 6050.

TABLE 3: KULTHEA SEASONS		
	NORTHERN HEMISPHERE	SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE
1	Winter: Cool, becoming the period of deepest cold by midmonth.	Summer: Very warm weather with the hottest period in midmonth.
2	Spring: Weather grows warmer; planting season midmonth to end.	Autumn: Still seasonable weather though dropping temperatures. Harvest by months end.
3	Summer: Warmer weather still, yet (relatively) pleasant.	Fall: Rapidly dropping temperatures and preparation for winter midmonth.
4	Autumn: Hottest weather at start of month followed by a gradual cooling.	Winter: Deepest cold at beginning of month, starting to warm by end.
5	Fall: Temperatures drop and harvest by midmonth. Preparations for Winter made.	Spring: Begins with planting season and gradually warming temperatures through entire month.



SHADOW WORLD CALENDAR										
Week days	Orhayen	Buryen	Usivyen	Melyen	Ordyn	Maryen	Kyayen	Kindagyen	Aryen	Purlyen
Winter										
Winter										
Spring										
Spring										
Summer										
Summer										

SHADOW WORLD CALENDAR										
Week days	Orhayen	Buryen	Usivyen	Melyen	Ordyn	Maryen	Kyayen	Kindagyen	Aryen	Purlyen
Autumn										
Autumn										
Fall										
Fall										
<p>The Shadow World calendar is based on two of its moons – Varin for the weekdays (listed in Erlin) and Orhan for the five seasons.</p> <p>There are 350 days in the Shadow World year broken down into 5 seasons. Each season has 7 weeks of 10 days each making the seasons 70 days long in total.</p> <p> - Solstice       - Equinox</p> <p>The face of Orhan is pictured here for every night but the main phases are highlighted.</p> <p><b>note:</b> there are slight changes in the phases and solstice/equinox dates year to year.</p>										



## SEASONS, MONTHS, AND WEEKS

Kulthea—like any planet with an axial tilt and regular, elliptical orbit—has four celestial “seasons.” Their formal beginnings and endings are largely ignored however (except by astronomers and for a few holidays) in favor of the much more obvious phases of the great moon Orhan. There are four landmark dates in the seasonal year of Kulthea, two Solstices and two Equinoxes. The Solstices are when the sun appears to be farthest from the planetary equator. There is a ‘summer’ and a ‘winter’ Solstice, the latter signifying the first day of the calendar year to many Kulthean cultures. The Equinoxes are where the sun passes the planet equator. The vernal occurs when the sun appears to pass from the south to the north; autumnal when it appears to move north-south.

Rather than follow the above pattern, most cultures have adopted ‘seasons’ which mirror the five months of the Great Moon, each seventy days long. Because of the odd number of months there is no direct correspondence between the northern and southern hemispheres, as such the seasons fall upon the months differently. The northern hemisphere begins the year with the winter solstice, when Orhan is new, (in the Southern Hemisphere it is the summer solstice). These seasons can also vary from culture to culture of course, depending on climate and social orientations.

As noted above, there is a shorter period marked by many Kulthean cultures: the ten day span which is delineated by the phases of Varin, the Second Moon. Unlike Orhan (which sometimes looms huge in the sky, many times larger than the sun), Varin only shows a small disk. It is rather bright, however, and can be seen on even sunny days.

The week is shown with the moon’s phases and the names of the days in Erlin. The day when Varin is full is considered the first day of the week in many regions.

## DAYS AND HOURS

The Kulthean day is divided into twenty-five hours: five Quintars, each in turn subdivided into five Hours. Five is a number with powerful religious connotations: five moons, five months a year of Orhan, five elements (fire, water, earth, air, Essænce).

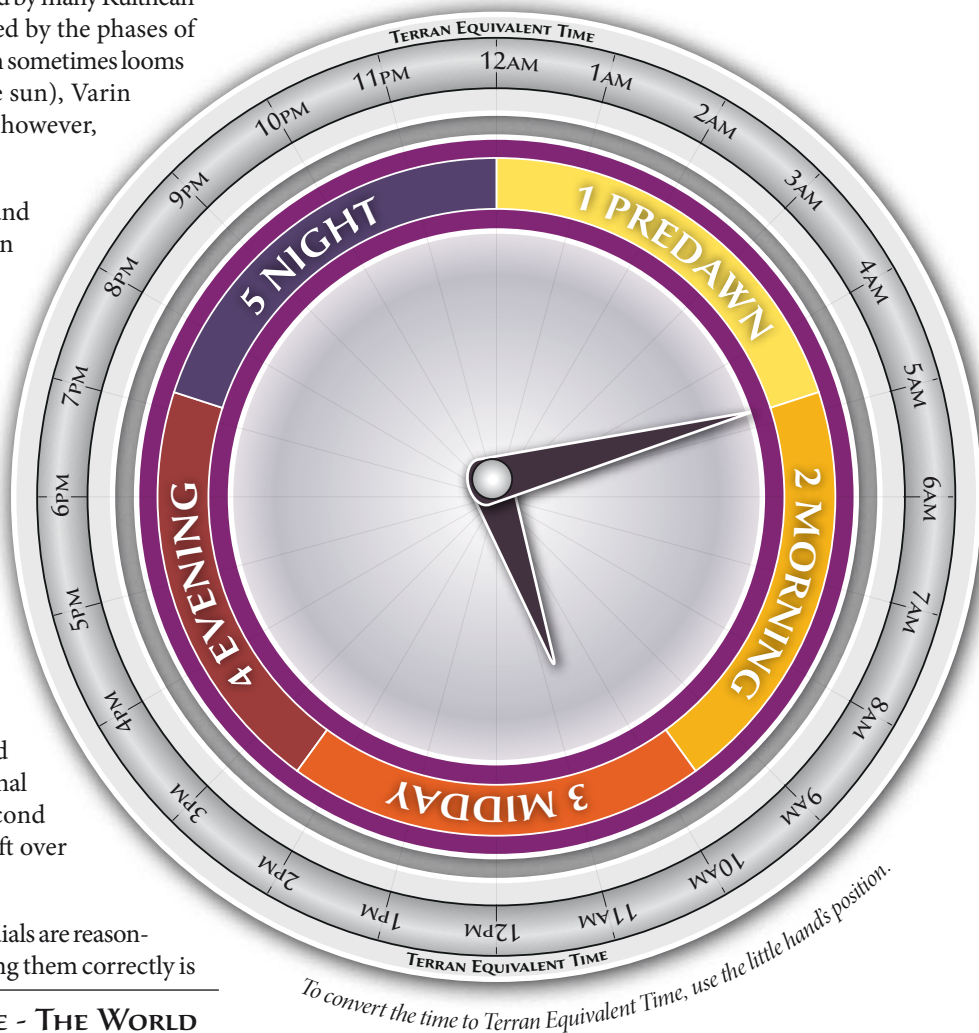
The five Quintars have names, which are the usual reference rather than a number. They are: Predawn, Morning, Midday, Evening and Night. Most Kulthean clocks are set by the Vernal (spring) Equinox: The first hour of the second Quintar begins as the first rays of the sun lift over the horizon.

For ages the only method of keeping time, sundials are reasonably accurate and simple to construct. Aligning them correctly is

sometimes a matter of trial and error, ironically using the stars, as magnetic north on Kulthea is erratic. There are several designs for sundials. Tabletop models can be flat with an upstanding blade, or the more sophisticated spherical model. There are also larger, more elaborate sundials, which often exist in conjunction with observatories: rings of stones carefully aligned to match lunar movements and sunrises at particular days of the years (solstices and equinoxes).

Clocks are rare and exist only in some large cities. They fall into one of two categories: the first invented (and most ‘common’) are those with one hand moving across a circular or pentagonal face divided into the five quintars - or even subdivided into a total of twenty-five parts to mark the hours. Others are broken into five parts, with a slow hand designating quintars of the Kulthean day; a secondary hand passes through the same five parts of the round clock face to designate the hours. Certain scientists - such as Astrologers - have special precision-made (and often magical) chronometers for very accurate timekeeping, required for star-study.

In a typical Shadow World clock, the short hand shows the Quintar of the day, while the long hand shows how many hours into the current Quintar. The long hand is often absent from clocks. The outside times show the earth equivalents. In the clock below it is 1 hour into the third Quintar.



## SECTION 3

# THE HEAVENS

*Of Orhan, many Tales are spun. It is the home of the Gods, and cradles a wealth of lore. To look at it aglow, pearly silver in the velvet night, it is easy to talk of gossamer castles and ethereal lords.*

*...Of Charôn, no one will speak.*

*The night sky - when not dominated by bright Orhan - is thick with stars. Many cultures have perceived patterns in the groupings and even imagined that they delineate images of the gods or other beings. Because of the variable night sky depending on location and season, different civilizations give many different names to these*

*perceived patterns. However it is worth noting that many of the Elven races of the northern Hemisphere have named constellations after the various Lords of Orhan.*

*Kultheans as a rule have an unusually well developed understanding of their place in the cosmos. In many cases this may be attributable to the wealth of knowledge - however fragmented - left*

**TABLE 4: ASTRONOMY**

TIER	DESCRIPTION
Novice	Knowledge of major constellations and moons and ability to identify them in the night sky.
Student	Knowledge and ability to identify major and minor constellations and planets. Ability to predict constellation and planet positions. Ability to determine rough time of year and general position on Kulthea through observation.
Scholar	Knowledge and ability to identify all constellations and planetary bodies. Ability to determine latitude or time of night through observation of constellations. Can predict solar eclipses of Orhan.
Expert	Ability to predict lunar eclipses of Orhan and other celestial events through observation. Can determine current latitude and time.
Sage	Complete understanding of orbits, celestial events, stars and constellations. Ability to predict comets with enough observation.



*An aerial view of the mighty Votania - its peak constantly shrouded in clouds obscuring a view from below.*

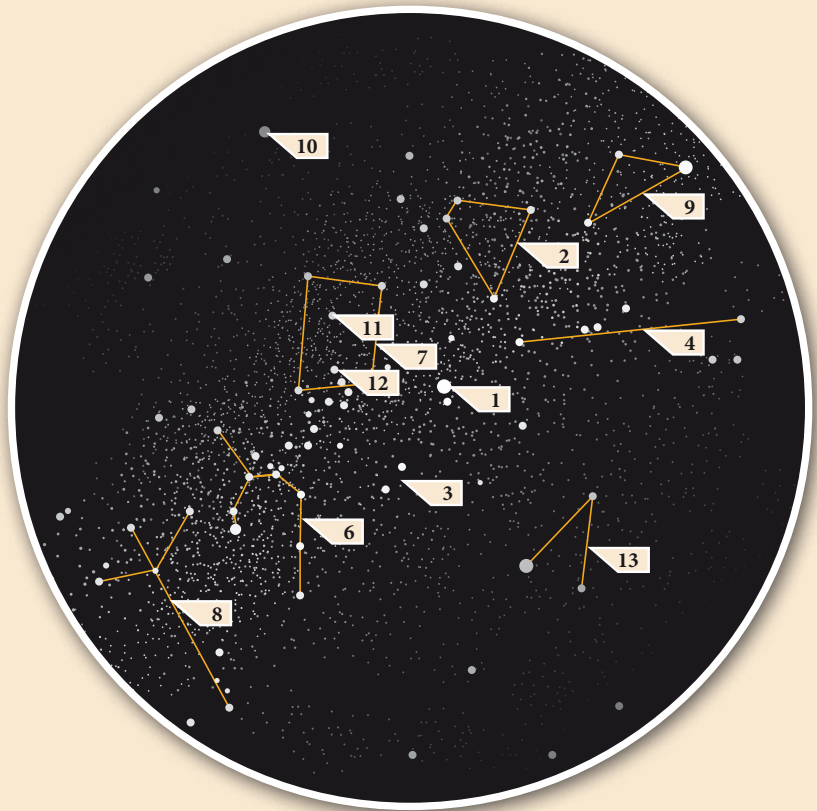
*Sept 2010*

behind by previous cultures. For instance, despite the fact that the globe cannot be circumnavigated, any goatherd knows that the world is a sphere, and that it (along with a number of other spheres) whirls around the huge burning orb of the sun. Things begin to break down, however, when one inquires as to the number of other planets and their names.

## THE MOONS

Kulthea holds in orbit five moons: one is very large and close, presenting an easily discernible disk. The other four moons are relatively small and more distant, with less visible disks. (The smallest is in fact a satellite of the largest moon, not of the world itself.) Orbiting nearly on the equator five times per year, the largest moon, Orhan, has regular and noticeable phases and profound effects on the tides of the world. The others have less tidal effect, but in conjunction the five act to create very strong and varying ocean currents and weather systems.

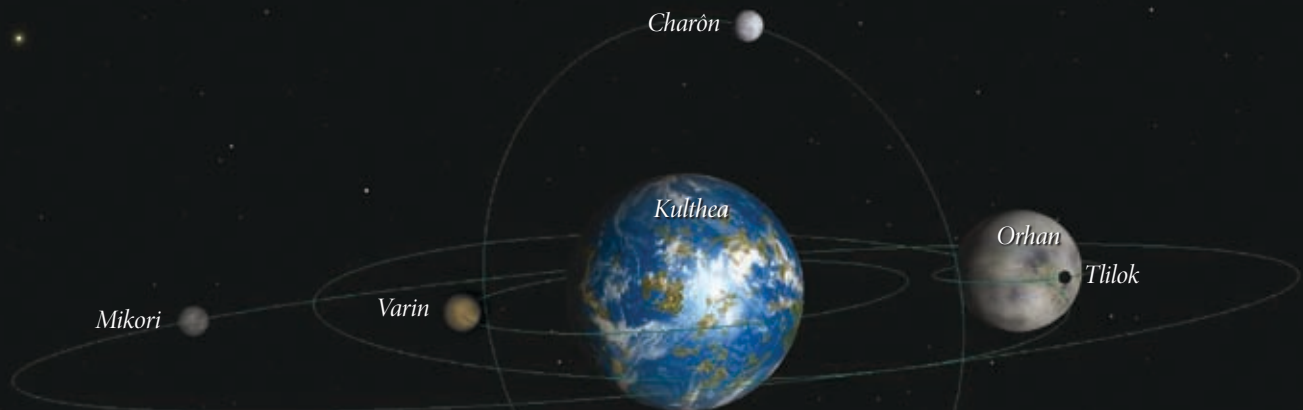
**Orhan**—By far the largest of the Kulthean moons, Orhan also has a unique characteristic: it apparently has an atmosphere. Orhan is nearly always shrouded in thick clouds so it is hard to discern the makeup of any land and water masses. Orhan also shows only one face to Kulthea; the other remains forever hidden. The Great Moon (as it is sometimes called) orbits nearly on the ecliptic. Orhan has phases as it orbits Kulthea, each full cycle requiring seventy days. The moon is so large and bright that it is quite visible, even in daylight. Such an overwhelming feature in the sky inevitably



- |  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| 1. Kuor's Eye                                  | 7. Eissa's Gate         |
| 2. Teris' shield                               | 8. Shaa's Trident       |
| 3. The Twins: Kieron and Jaysek,               | 9. The Scales of Valris |
| 4. Cay's spear                                 | 10. Iorak's Forge       |
| 5. Baeris' Tears. (running across the sky, the | 11. Jonno the Warder    |
| band of the Milky Way)                         | 12. Vult the Releaser   |
| 6. Reanni's Unicorn                            | 13. Laia's Gé           |

**Oriana**—the planet Nemeris, which passes close to Kulthea, then seems to vanish and merge with the sun

**Teris**—the planet Rhogan, which speeds around the sun (and so apparently across the sky)



Kulthea and its four moons. Tlilok is a moon of Orhan. The planetary bodies and orbits are not in scale, but show the correct proportions relative to each other.



influenced Kulthea's civilizations, and virtually every society's calendar is based upon the seventy-day cycle. Orhan is reputed home to the Lords of Orhan, a pantheon of Gods worshipped by many cultures under a plethora of names. Whether or not Orhan is inhabited by other intelligent life is yet to be verified, as any Kultheans who claim to have visited Orhan are usually considered raving mad moon-men who tell outrageous tales.

**Varin**—The second largest of the Five Moons, Varin is considerably smaller than Orhan, yet still has a discernible disc. It also orbits on the ecliptic, but at a much faster pace than Orhan: a period of ten days. This provides a secondary calendar subdivision for Kulthean inhabitants. This moon has a strange, mottled yellow appearance, a result of constant volcanic turbulence. Varin is tortured by the strong gravitational forces at work in this satellite system.

**Charôn**—Charôn circles Kulthea inside the orbit of Orhan but outside that of Varin, and is quite small. It is a featureless ball with a silvery grey appearance, barely large enough to show a disk to the naked eye. Because of this, for all but cultures with telescopes, the 'phases' of Charôn are estimations at best. It is also known as the Third Moon, not because of its distance from Kulthea but because it is third in size. One of the strange things about Charôn is its unique polar orbit (meaning that it circles Kulthea by passing over the poles rather than roughly on the equatorial plane, like the other moons). It takes about 21 days to make this orbit, but has many disturbing perturbations. Charôn is most notable because of the Charôn pantheon of Gods that reputedly make their home there.

**Mikori**—This is the least visible of the Kulthean moons. It can barely be made out as a gleaming mote in the night sky, brighter than most stars and planets, but no match for the other moons.

**Tlilok**—As mentioned before, Tlilok is actually a satellite of Orhan rather than Kulthea. It is small, and not a significant feature, though it can be seen against the backdrop of Orhan on clear nights. It is pocked with craters and is a multi-hued grey color.

## CELESTIAL EVENTS

Because Orhan is so large and orbits more-or-less on the ecliptic, solar eclipses (when Orhan passes between Kulthea and the sun) are relatively common affairs, occurring every few years in a given locale. And while they lack the spectacle of a Terran solar eclipse (where the moon centers on our sun and reveals a glowing 'corona') they cause a deeper darkness over a large area of the planet. Many cultures can predict eclipses with accuracy. A total eclipse can last over an hour and cause temperature drops of more than 40°F (~20°C), wreaking havoc with weather patterns. Lunar eclipses (in which Kulthea passes between Orhan and the sun) are also fairly commonplace, causing a large portion of the Great Moon to darken with a reddish hue. Some less sophisticated cultures believe that it is an attack by the Gods of Charôn upon Orhan, and they pray for the victory of their gods. To the relief of some



*The fiery comet Sa'kain passes dangerously close to Kulthea causing massive flow storms on the surface.*

(and disappointment of others) of course the blight inevitably is thrown off and Orhan shines brightly again.

Kulthea is visited by many comets at regular intervals; hundreds have been recorded over the millennia. By far the most famous and dreaded is Sa'kain, a massive ball of ice and dust which returns every 1500 years. This comet seems also to be imbued with powerful Essænce, for almost every visit is a harbinger of terrible flow-storms and other magical disruptions all across Kulthea. Sa'kain last visited Kulthea in 5650 TEI, so is not expected to return until around 7150 (current year is approx 6050 TEI), but it is not the only comet in the sky.

## SECTION 4

# THE ESSÆNCE

*The Essænce ebbs and flows, but the scales return to balance. Each time you take from the Essænce, you must in turn give back. For every day there will be a night; for every life there is a death.*

— From the Book of Precepts

*Spell users are not all that uncommon on the Shadow World; in fact many humanoids have the potential to wield the power in some form or other. Much rarer is the opportunity to train and hone this raw potential into something that can be used as a tool - and weapon.*

The raw energy that fundamentally fuels all magic is referred to as the Essænce, or Primal Essænce, the arcane term for primal magical power, and the source of what later became the three realms (Channeling, Mentalism, and Essence). The Primal Essænce manifests itself as Flows of Essænce that cross the planet like invisible rivers. While major flows are fairly stable, minor flows can randomly move and shift over time. The Essænce can have other alternate forms. It can be an impenetrable physical wall or a mental or sensory barrier. These barriers and the flows

themselves can be very powerful and interfere with all types of travel, helping the business of the infamous Navigators. Most of the time the Essænce is invisible, though it can sometimes appear as a shimmering mist or distortion.

A very important aspect of the Essænce is its tendency to form foci, both permanent and temporary. These concentrations of Primal Essænce come in many forms and manifestations, but all can have a telling effect on the surrounding lands (or waters). There exist varying powers of foci, of which there are hundreds of greater power and thousands of lesser power. Greater powers of foci are almost always rooted to a specific location or tied to a large item (like a great crystal sphere, a rock formation, or an ancient tree). Some were discovered long ago, and ancient monuments have been built around them to mark their location; some have arcane colleges, citadels, or towers of powerful

TABLE 5: ESSÆNCE LORE

TIER	DESCRIPTION
Novice	Recognition and knowledge of local major Essænce Flows. Ability to usually distinguish flowstorms from normal storms, as well as recognize typical Essænce disturbances as such.
Student	Recognition and knowledge of regional major flows and very approximate paths of the shifting minor flows. Knowledge of best ways to protect oneself from flowstorms in a given situation.
Scholar	Detailed knowledge as to size and distribution of major flows. Knowledge of any locally known foci. Improved recognition of specific types of Essænce barriers. Ability to make general predictions of a flowstorms effects.
Expert	Knowledge of most flow and foci phenomena allowing one to recognize flow locations and extent. Can recognize and often identify minor disturbances in the Essænce. Ability to make some predictions as to minor flow movement, as well as flowstorms and their effects.
Sage	Thorough knowledge of the flow and foci distribution in regional area. Ability to recognize sources that are channeling/tapping from it or any disturbances. Ability to make decent predictions of a flowstorms path and expected effects in any situation.

Note: Essænce Lore is concerned with the recognition and ability to predict and draw conclusions about Essænce manifestations. The GM may require a Power Perception or similar skill to first see the flows or manifestation, as they can sometimes be invisible. Predictions about the movement of minor flows and flowstorms are similar to normal weather predictions (perhaps even more random) and as such are very imprecise!



Magicians built over them. Others are all but undetectable, except by sheer accident. Most of these foci exist as mystical locations from which Essænce users are able to draw power when they are in proximity.

## FLOWSTORMS

One of the most terrifying characteristics of the Flows of Essænce is the storms they can create. When the Essænce is disturbed, the result can often be a Flowstorm. The cause of such an Essænce disturbance can be one of any number of events: solar flare, a planetary or lunar conjunction, even a particularly strong thunderstorm. Epic stories tell of powerful Mages who have triggered Flowstorms by tapping into a strong flow or focus and losing control of the Essænce that was unleashed. In nature, a Flowstorm takes the form of a great whirlwind or thunderstorm, but instead of dust or water vapor, it is composed of translucent bands of multicolored light (often a lurid green hue) with energy discharges arcing between them.

The greatest of these monstrosities behave like hurricanes and can last for weeks or months, wreaking havoc with weather, Essænce, and life. While to the untrained observer the impact of a Flowstorm is very similar to that of a normal (albeit prismatic and extremely violent) meteorological event, this is but a side-effect of far more devastating damage to the invisible Essænce. Almost all Flowstorms spawn whirlwinds of varying intensity. A small storm (sometimes referred to as a flow squall) may only support one small whirlwind, while larger ones may create dozens of powerful effects, some similar in might to minor tornadoes.

The properties of a Flowstorm can vary somewhat, but there is always a tremendous flux in energy levels, making it very dangerous to use the Essænce (or in some cases even to be attuned to the Essænce) in that area. Power might be drained or enhanced randomly, and the actual effect of a given spell might be warped, diminished, or increased radically. Sometimes a Flowstorm is localized, while every thousand years or so a single storm can envelop the entire planet. In many ways, Flowstorms behave in

a similar fashion to a hurricane or thunderstorm and are almost always accompanied by high winds, violent lightning discharges, and unusual weather. In addition, the energy release can trigger volcanic activity and earth tremors. Flowstorms can also have strange secondary effects and many more rumored effects.

Those caught within a Flowstorm will inevitably feel a tingling sensation as electrical and magical energies build up. Short neck hairs will stand on end; a smell like ozone might be detected. Essænce discharges occur as explosions of colored light. Small discharges are called microbursts, and are rarely more than a foot in diameter with durations a fraction of a second. Larger ones - called Essænce Bolts - are like lighting in power and appearance - except the bolt has many multicolored shifting forks, and a longer duration as the charges dance and waver.

## SPELLS

Legends speak of the Lords of Essænce from the early days of Kulthea: beings that could tap the power of their minds and the power of the Flows with equal ease. In fact, the two powers are supposed by scholars to be the same energy. Thus, the origins of the three realms are, in reality, one. Those capable of tapping into the united Essænce (referred to by many as the Arcane Power) have a unique flexibility and sensitivity. In any event, the ability to tap the Arcane Power is extremely rare and much sought-after by the mighty.

A Realm of magic is a way of collecting and using the Essænce for the casting of spells. There are three Realms: Channeling, Essence, and Mentalism. The term "Essænce" is used to describe the general concept of 'magic,' including the power channeled by Deities and the energy of the Mentalist. It is different than Essence, which is one of the three realms of power. Users of the Essence realm connect with the Essænce that infuses all living things around them. Channeling users channel Essænce from powerful gods, beings or foci, which in turn get their power from the Flows. Mentalism users tap into their own personal Essænce, which is infused within them by the Flows.



*A violent Flow Storm rages on.*



Some may also consider Arcane to be a fourth Realm, which is a progenitor and—in some ways—an amalgam of the three Realms; one that is greater than the sum. Regardless of the mythical Lords of Essænce or the original source of energy, magic has existed as three realms for as long as anyone knows. The separation of Arcane into the three realms represented a refinement and formalization of spell casting, a possibly artificial separation which is lost in the mists of time.

Spell-casters not only learn spells, they learn concepts. Thus, spells are divided by theme that the potential user studies in detail (in Rolemaster these are spell lists, in HARP they are scaled spells, and in other systems they are just spells). For instance, student mages may learn the concept of fire, and understand the manipulation of fire using the Essence and magical fire. However, only after practice do they gain the ability to actually cast the spells. Spells are learned through instruction from a mentor, guild or academy, oral traditions, or even through studying grimoires (to which access is often carefully controlled).

## SPELL CASTING

Spell-users use the Essænce in different ways to achieve a wide variety of effects from spells that gather information to spells of destruction. While the energy source is the same, the method of gathering that energy and then shaping or using it varies based on the Realm and the individual spell. Despite the Realm differences there are a few important similarities. Most spell casting is achieved with a combination of speech, gestures, and discipline.

The use of Speech in magic originates with the Arcane and the powerful and partially telepathic Iruaric language. When magic developed into three separate paths (realms), these also developed unique languages that were used for casting and writing spells as well as enchanting items. These languages may very well have been narrowly focused offshoots of the Iruaric language with which they share many similarities.

Gestures are used extensively in spell casting, the subtlety of which

depends on the realm of magic. This may vary from something as simple as pointing a figure to more complex movements. Despite any spell-specific requirement, many casters use gestures as a matter of course unless they are trying to be subtle.

More important than speech or gestures are discipline and training. Although difficult, most spells can be cast without a vocalization or movement. Some consider Mentalism to be one of the most powerful realms because it is the pinnacle of subtle spell-casting and represents the great skill and discipline of the caster.

**Note**—The languages used for spell-casting are generally assumed to be learned along with the specific spells rather than as a separate linguistic skill. Iruaric is an exception to this and is discussed in the Languages section as it is used for both casting of spells and communication.

## SPELL MANIFESTATION

The Essænce often manifests itself in a rainbow of colors and hues, depending on the realm, the nature of the user, and even the environment. The color of the magic can be seen by those skilled (e.g. Power Perception or similar skill, if used), or can be seen visibly in the case of some powerful or destructive spells. Very powerful spell casters can alter the appearance of their spells to make them seem to be of another alignment or nature, but those skilled can see through this ruse. A spell caster's spell color may be a mingling of two colors, or could change from one to another if his nature is shifting. The hue would not change from day to day; the shift would be gradual. Some of the more general trends are described by realm.

The exact form of the visible manifestation can vary greatly on the realm and the type of spell being cast. Elemental attacks and spells of force tend to be most obvious. Most spells are at least accompanied by some sort of glow or aura, while some informational and passive spells may be very subtle with a near-invisible aura.

**TABLE 6: SPELL LORE**

TIER	DESCRIPTION
Novice	Recognition (from reading or observed casting) of realm and spell type.
Student	Knowledge of common spells/ lists. Recognition of spell list and basic spell parameters (level, area effect, etc.)
Scholar	Knowledge of common and uncommon spells/lists. Recognition of spell and spell parameters. Ability to draw conclusions of casting limitations and effects based on situation.
Expert	Knowledge of most spells/lists. Ability to recognize spell and parameters and predict effects. thorough knowledge of the other related spells or capabilities
Sage	Knowledge of virtually all known spells. Ability to recognize spell, all parameters, all limitations and strengths, as well as determine external influences (e.g. other spell modifying spells)

Each realm is often its own Lore skill. If so, then skill in any of the Realm Lores should be able to be used to at least recognize other realms at the novice level.

## REALMS

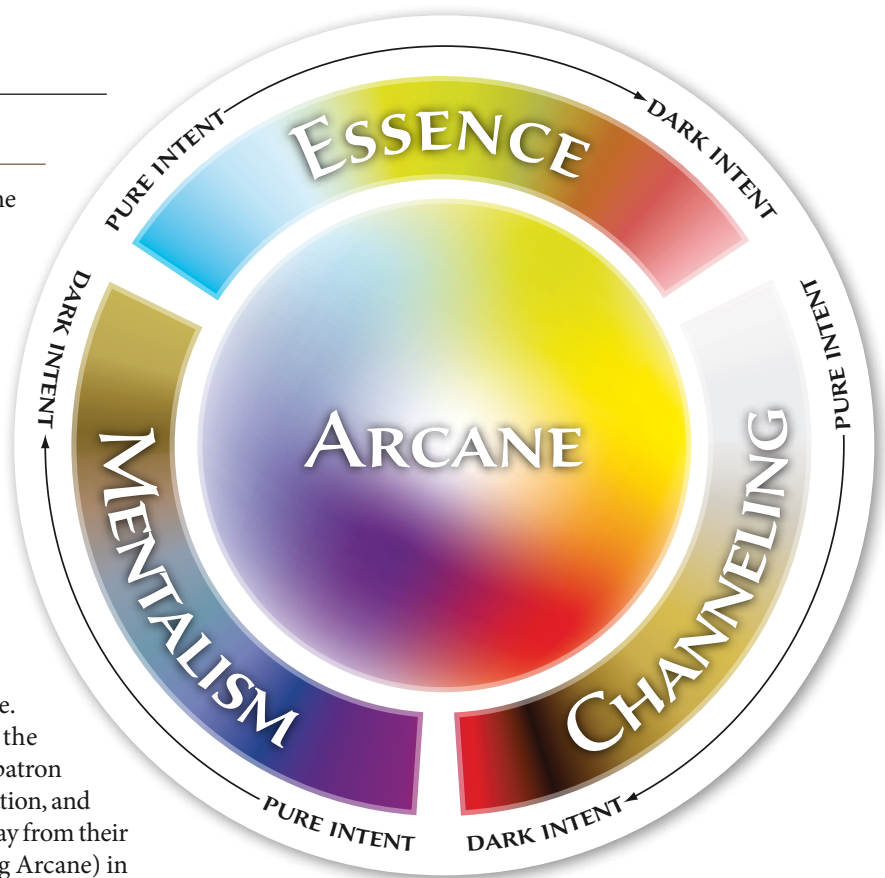
**Arcane**—The progenitor of the three realms, Arcane power predates known history. True, primeval Arcane power exists in the flows, and there are rare individuals who are able to access all three realms of power as one. They are essentially able to convert whatever Essænce is available into the power they need to fuel their own spells. This differs from the Hybrid Spell users who draw upon a blend of two realms. The color manifestation can vary greatly for Arcane magics, spanning the rainbow, and is often a mingling of many colors.

**Channeling**—Channeling represents the power of the deities (or of powerful sites or artifacts) as transferred (or ‘channeled’) through their followers or other spell users. It is spiritual and religious in nature and is independent of the ambient Essænce. Users of Channeling gain their powers not from the Flows of Essænce but from the very energy of their patron god. Many deities are, however, tied to a specific location, and their powers are significantly reduced when they stray from their home. The mightiest of the three realms (excluding Arcane) in terms of raw power, Channeling is also a rather ‘pure’ concept. Spells are of necessity aligned with whatever deity is channeling the energy.

Channeling spells almost invariably involve a spoken invocation; even those designed for hiding require a whispered plea to the deity. Other enchantments demand a full-voiced summons. A powerful Cleric’s Absolution spell will make a grand hall reverberate with the power of his voice. Lesser Channeling spells and those channeled from local gods are usually gold in color, powerful spells from pure sources are silver-white, while dark channelings are black with a red halo.

**Essence**—Magic spells may or may not have a spoken incantation; often it depends on the nature of the spell and the user’s schooling. Alchemy almost always involves a chanted incantation. Bardic spells require a musical component. Base Essence conjurings usually only involve a brief spoken phrase in Uscurac as the spell is cast. When subtlety is required, however, all but Elemental and Force spells may be cast silently. Most common of the three realms, Essence colors are based on the rainbow of light. The colors are more down-to-earth, as would be expected from a power which comes from the earth itself. The purest form of Essence appears blue and is often associated with the Iylari (“High Elves,” Section 7), while green implies a certain selfishness or impurity of spirit. Those who have fallen to use dark magic cast spells with a luminous red hue.

**Mentalism**—In contrast to the other realms, Mentalism spells are rarely vocalized—the exception being Force spells. In general, Mentalism manifests itself much more subtly than the other realms and the colors - when visible to the naked eye at all - are subtle. Many find the Mentalism realm to be unique in that it



does not use the power of Speech to manipulate the Essænce. In fact Mentalism does use Speech: that of Logos, a silent language of Word-Thoughts. Logos is a fundamental aspect of learning Mentalism spells as the Mentalist does not use gestures, and instead must form the precise Word-Thoughts to generate the desired effect. The colors of Mentalism, when visible, range from a blue-violet for non-evil to a sickly yellow orange from those with a more amoral nature.

LANGUAGES OF MAGIC			
LANGUAGE	WRITTEN	SPOKEN	SPECIALITY
<b>ARCANE</b>			
Iruraic	■	■	Essænce
<b>ESSENCE</b>			
Aludos	■		Enruning
Kuskarûk	■	■	Summoning
Uscurac	■	■	Common
Xytos		■	Power Words
<b>CHANNELING</b>			
Enruth		■	Plants, Animal
Krônýt	■		Symbols, Glyphs
<b>MENTALISM</b>			
Logos		■	Word-thoughts



## SECTION 5

# GEOGRAPHY

*Things change when you pass the Great Equator. People behave strangely; spells have variable effects. The Stars are different.*

*Of course, that is nothing compared to the East. To the East lies madness.*

*"Conversations with Andraax"  
An unverified compilation by The Historian Viiris Taldain  
Nomikos Library, c. TE 4900*

*Shadow World has an interesting and convoluted geography. Perhaps most intriguing though is the fact that Kulthea cannot be circumnavigated due to a great magical barrier separating the eastern and western hemispheres. Interestingly, this is fairly common knowledge (despite the fact that no one ever tries to make the sea journey to confirm it) to many cultures on Kulthea. It has just always been an accepted fact that Kulthea, while a globe, is separated into two halves. The East is a great source of mythological tales and legends.*

The western hemisphere of Kulthea has several continents and subcontinents. Harsh oceans, huge mountain ranges, and the dangerous Flows make traveling even within continents dangerous or impossible. The different continents tend to remain isolated with only occasional communication with any neighboring lands.

Kulthea is a world rocked by frequent disturbances from within. The unstable tectonic plates grind against one another, vying for dominance; powerful lunar gravity tugs at the planet. These tectonic plates generally correspond to the continents, with plate boundaries running along coasts and mountain ranges. These are the most likely areas for seismic activity... though nowhere is safe.

Islands are everywhere on Kulthea, in every shape and size, in long chains or resting alone in a wide sea. Some are even in motion: floating domains sustained by exotic marine plants, which are no more (or less) than great gas-filled balloons. Numerous chains of treacherous reefs also stretch across the seas, making navigation tricky for the skilled - and foolhardy for those without intimate knowledge of the sea-lanes.

Even as there are a few dominant continental masses in the world, there are but a handful of large unbroken expanses of ocean. Early seismic activity has so convoluted the surface of the planet

**TABLE 7: GEOGRAPHY**

TIER	DESCRIPTION
Novice	Knowledge that the world is divided into two hemispheres via a type of magical barrier. Rough knowledge of the continents and climates.
Student	Geographical knowledge of home continent, surrounding seas, bays, regional names as well as regional biomes (habitats).
Scholar	Knowledge of neighboring continents and seas. Names of larger and well-known regions in neighboring continents. Climates and biomes well known for home region, as well as global biomes (global flora and fauna patterns).
Expert	Names, locations, geography, climate, and biomes of all continents and major seas are well known.
Sage	Detailed knowledge of continental geography and all seas, many atolls, reefs, as well as a historical understanding of seismic and volcanic activity.

Note: All knowledge is relative to the Western Hemisphere. Nothing is known of The East.

that there are few stretches of water wider than one thousand miles unbroken by a formidable island or series of islands. Also common are volcanic island chains: strings of sheer black volcanic rock isles, uninhabitable, but presenting formidable navigational barriers. Many a ship has been wrecked upon these dark crags, either because the hazard remained undetected in the night or the ship was unable to veer away in time - for the currents of the world's seas are often swift and ever-changing. Cruel they have been called; it cannot be denied that they are fickle. A Navigator can safely direct a ship past reefs (for a fee, of course). Failing the guidance of a Navigator, only intimate knowledge of the area—ideally combined with accurate, detailed charts—offers a measure of safety. Sandbars are trickier in that they are constantly shifting; it is fortunate that they are usually only located very near sandy shores.

## CLIMATE

Kulthea's axial tilt is approximately 25 degrees (compared to Earth's 23.5), causing definite seasonal weather changes. Additionally, wind and air currents often lead to a variety of divergent local weather patterns. In general, weather is surprisingly mild, with habitable regions extending to quite near the poles. The equatorial regions, while sometimes quite hot, are bearable to most humanoid races. Climates are quite similar, on average, to Earth but with slightly greater seasonal variation: colder winters, hotter

summers. The climatic zones are also not exact. Due to not only winds and weather, but also the Flows, there can be substantial variation.

Kulthea's tropical (0-25 degrees latitude), temperate (25 to 65 degrees), and arctic (65 to 90 degrees) zones. Subtropical is often used to refer to a climate between tropical and temperate, 20 to 40 degrees latitude. Likewise, subarctic refers to cold regions between temperate and arctic and generally between 50 and 70 degrees.

## WEATHER

Like everything else on Kulthea, weather changes can occur abruptly and dramatically. Shifting wind and water currents can cause sudden changes in prevailing conditions. While the planet has discernible seasons and consistent temperature ranges in a given area, there are periods when norms are abandoned and completely aberrant weather occurs. The strange forces which have shaped Kulthea continue to influence her day-to-day environment. Weather prediction, even through the means of powerful magic, is far from a certain thing. Certain areas are prone to very severe weather, however, and have consistently remained so for millennia. It is believed that they are at or near old Essænce Foci, thus attracting the more violent meteorological effects.

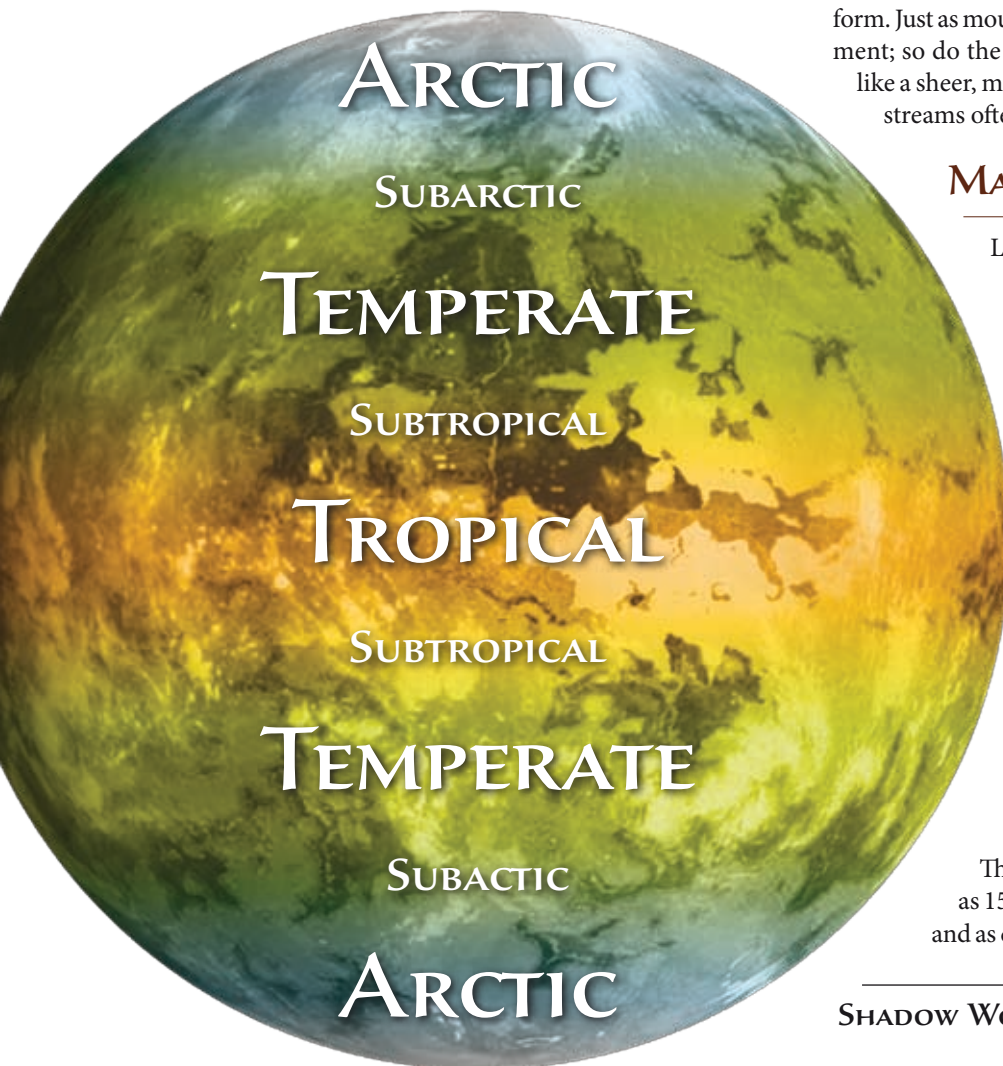
The Flows of Essænce have a role in the way weather patterns form. Just as mountain ranges and coastlines affect frontal movement; so do the Flows. A strong band of Essænce can act just like a sheer, mountainous ridge against a weather pattern. Jet streams often travel along Essænce Flows.

## MAGNETOSPHERE

Like most celestial bodies, Kulthea has a magnetic field. These gigantic 'belts' are generated from the core of the world, which acts like a huge magnet. The magnetosphere is critical to life on the planet, protecting the inhabitants from various types of solar radiation. It also has the side effect of creating beautiful displays of coruscating lights near the poles: a curtain of luminous gases drifting through the night sky.

Unlike many worlds, however, the magnetosphere of the Shadow World is in a state of flux. It appears to be affected by - and indeed a part of - the Flows of Essænce. The bands of magnetic force, which should flow in fairly uniform arcs in a N-S direction over the planet, are often warped as much as 20° along their route.

The magnetic poles themselves move about, as far as 15° from the geographic pole (the planetary axis) and as close as dead-on. The distortion of the magnetic





bands may have played a role in the formation of so many odd races on Kulthea by allowing heavy doses of radiation to reach the planet surface at intervals, stimulating mutation. The magnetosphere and the Flows are somehow related, though which one dominates the other is not clear. In any case, this capricious nature of the warped magnetic fields and the shifting poles makes a magnetic compass or similar instrument virtually useless. On Shadow World, a Compass is a magical device Navigators use in their trade.

## TIDES

The mighty Orhan primarily dictates the tides of Kulthea, causing a high tide every 12.17 hours, and two low tides per day between those times. There are two high tides per day because the pull of the Shadow World's largest moon drags the seas towards it. The weaker rotational force causes the oceans to 'bulge away' from the Great Moon. The separation of tides is slightly more than half of the day due to Orhan's orbit (in the same direction) around Kulthea.

In addition to Orhan, there are a number of factors (the other moons, the sun, and even the other planets), which can affect the severity of the tides and create minor tidal shifts. In some areas the difference between high and low tides can be more than 100 feet, given the right conditions.

## ECOLOGY

Biomes, or ecosystems, are regions that are similar with respect to flora and fauna patterns and share common climate. Shadow World's continent guides will use biomes to describe the patterns of life across regions. Some biomes, such as Tundra, Boreal, and Deserts specify climate characteristics while others, such as Temperate Forest, show a great amount of variability. Table 8 lists major biomes based on latitude and precipitation. These are not hard and fast regions. Due to ocean currents, jet streams, and Essænce flows climate can shift and create biomes at different latitudes on different continents.

Another consideration is cultural influence. Grasslands (Prairies & Steppes,



*The majestic Spine of Emer which spans the entire length of Kulthea's largest continent.*





### TABLE 8: BIOMES, FLORA, AND FAUNA

		Biome	Precipitation	Example Flora	Example Fauna	RM Climate/ Locale
ARCTIC	I	Ice Caps & Polar Deserts	Arid	Dwarf shrubs, mosses, lichen, some woody shrubs in southern regions, scattered grasses and herbs	Seals, penguins, walruses, arctic foxes, arctic terns, whales, <i>ovir (huge polar bear)</i> , <i>giant ice beasts</i>	e / G
	T	Tundra	Semi-arid	Low shrubs, sedges, mosses, lichen, grasses, flowers, thokot (shrub with poisonous thorns)	Mosquitoes, flies, bees, caribou, seals, wolves, migratory birds, <i>ovir</i>	e f / AMH
	B	Boreal Forests	Humid	Evergreen conifers: pine, fir, spruce, taiga, and blue spires. Some oak, maple, elm, poplar in southern parts.	Chipmunks, weasels, foxes, wolves, deer, bear, Large herbivores (moose); owls, hawks; a few reptiles	c / ACM
TEMPERATE	X	Desert & Xeric Shrublands	Arid	Evergreen or deciduous shrubs with small leaves or spines, succulents, bore-burrs	Burrowing animals, reptiles such as lizards and snakes, owls, <i>large carnivorous reptiles</i>	a / HDZ
	P	Prairies & Steppes	Semi-arid	Perennial grasses and flowering plants adapted to drought, fire, and cold, blastnuts, bore-burrs	Grazing animals, wild horses, canines, rodents, weasels, badgers, foxes, <i>giant beetles, spiders, and bats.</i>	s / BSTH
	F	Temperate Forests	Humid	Broadleaf and coniferous trees – oak, hickory, maple, cedar; flowering herbs; <i>constrictor vines, exploding mushrooms</i>	Most boreal fauna; squirrels, rabbits. Reptiles & amphibians, snakes, turtles, mountain lions, timber wolf, <i>giant insects</i>	c t m / CDMF
TROPICAL	D	Hot Deserts	Arid	Ground-hugging shrubs, short woody trees, cacti, balloonpods (drifting cacti)	Burrowers, kangaroo rats, insects, arachnids, reptiles, and birds, <i>srill (large bipedal lizards)</i>	a / HDZ
	S	Savannas & Grasslands	Semi-arid	Perennial grasses 3'+ tall. Drought and fire resistant trees and shrubs, <i>razorgrass, giant carnivorous plants</i>	Hoofed mammals, antelopes, cats, canines, elephants, giraffes, rhinos, <i>giant beetles and spiders, srill</i>	s / BST
	R	Tropical Forests	Humid	Large variety of trees, orchids, vines, ferns, mosses, and palms, gort (euphoric drug), <i>torchstalks</i>	Simians, large cats, variety of insects, birds, <i>large reptiles and amphibians, giant insects</i>	m h / CDFJM
OTHER	A	Alpine	Any	Varies by elevation; as forests (low), shrublands (mid), or tundra (high)	Varies; mountain goats, alpacas, marmots, elk, beetles, <i>large birds (gryphons, rocs)</i>	Any / AV
	E	Essænce	Any	Enchanted varieties; <i>Intelligent plants, healing herbs</i>	Enchanted varieties; <i>unicorns, dragons</i>	Any / Any
	O	Oceans	Any	Seaweed, algae, fungi, sponges, <i>bubblekelp (can form small islands)</i>	Shellfish, fish, some mammals, crustaceans, turtles, <i>giant crabs and serpents</i>	Any / O
	U	Underground	-	Fungi, root systems from above, <i>ironwood trees (a very hard black wood)</i>	Many insects of all sizes, burrowers, reptiles, amphibians, bats, <i>giant salamanders</i>	Any / U
<p><b>Italicized flora and fauna</b> indicates creatures and plants from stories and legends, not all are confirmed. <b>Arid</b> includes regions that receive less than 10” of rain annually which include hyper-arid deserts (1” or less a year) to shrublands. <b>Semi-arid</b> regions can have a wide range of rainfall but is generally between 10” and 40” annually. They are often grassland with extended dry seasons and a short rainy season. <b>Humid</b> regions include everything else, from fully humid and semi-humid regions: monsoonal (short periods of heavy rainfall) to seasonal variations (e.g. wet winters, wet summers) to high year -round precipitation (as in a rainforest). Humid regions are nearly always forest.</p> <p><b>RM Climate:</b> <b>a</b> – arid, <b>c</b> – cold, <b>e</b> – everlasting cold, <b>f</b> – frigid, <b>h</b> – hot &amp; humid, <b>m</b> – mild temperate, <b>s</b> – semiarid, <b>t</b> – cool temperate</p> <p><b>RM Locale:</b> <b>A</b> – Alpine, <b>B</b> – Breaks/Wadis, <b>C</b> – Coniferous Forest, <b>D</b> – Deciduous/Mixed Forest, <b>F</b> – Freshwater coasts &amp; banks, <b>G</b> – Glacier/snowfield, <b>H</b> – Heath/scrub/moor, <b>J</b> – Jungle/rainforest, <b>O</b> – Ocean/saltwater shores, <b>M</b> – Mountain, <b>S</b> – Short Grass, <b>T</b> – Tall Grass, <b>U</b> – Underground, <b>V</b> – Volcanic, <b>W</b> – Waste, <b>Z</b> – Desert</p>						



Savannahs & Grasslands) can be created by continuous slashing, burning and clearing. These areas still are humid like forests but the vegetation is never allowed to achieve full growth so grassland vegetation prevails.

The flora and fauna listed are some typical examples of what may be found in the biomes but this too can vary considerably. Flora and Fauna can also vary tremendously in size. From folklore, there are races of giants, species of huge sea monsters, giant insects and reptiles, and everything in between. Sure enough, it does not take more than one encounter with a giant beetle to realize how true many of these stories may be.

Other than the intelligent races, there are dangerous and unusual species spread throughout the world and found in nearly every biome. Among these are the Zephyr Hounds – canines somehow infused with Essænce and granted elemental power: night, water, ice, fire, etc. Zephyr Hounds, while of low intelligence, will travel in packs and attack on sight. This adds a further danger to travel.

## ARCTIC

### ICE CAPS & POLAR DESERTS

In these regions the temperature never gets above freezing, even in the nightless summers. The humidity levels are so low that it is similar to the hyper-arid conditions of most deserts; precipitation is never more than 1" and frequently less. During the long polar night the temperatures get brutally low, being the coldest temperatures known on the planet. This is an inhospitable region and yet, there is still life.

### TUNDRA

These regions are nearly completely covered by snow and ice. The soil just under the surface is frozen year-round into what is called permafrost, making the growth of trees impossible. The bare and sometimes rocky ground can only support low-lying vegetation. In the winter the tundra is a dark and desolate place when animals hibernate or migrate. The summer on the other hand is filled with light and a surprising amount of life. The snow melts and is unable to drain through the permafrost so it creates a land filled with marshes,

bogs and streams that give life to insects and birds.

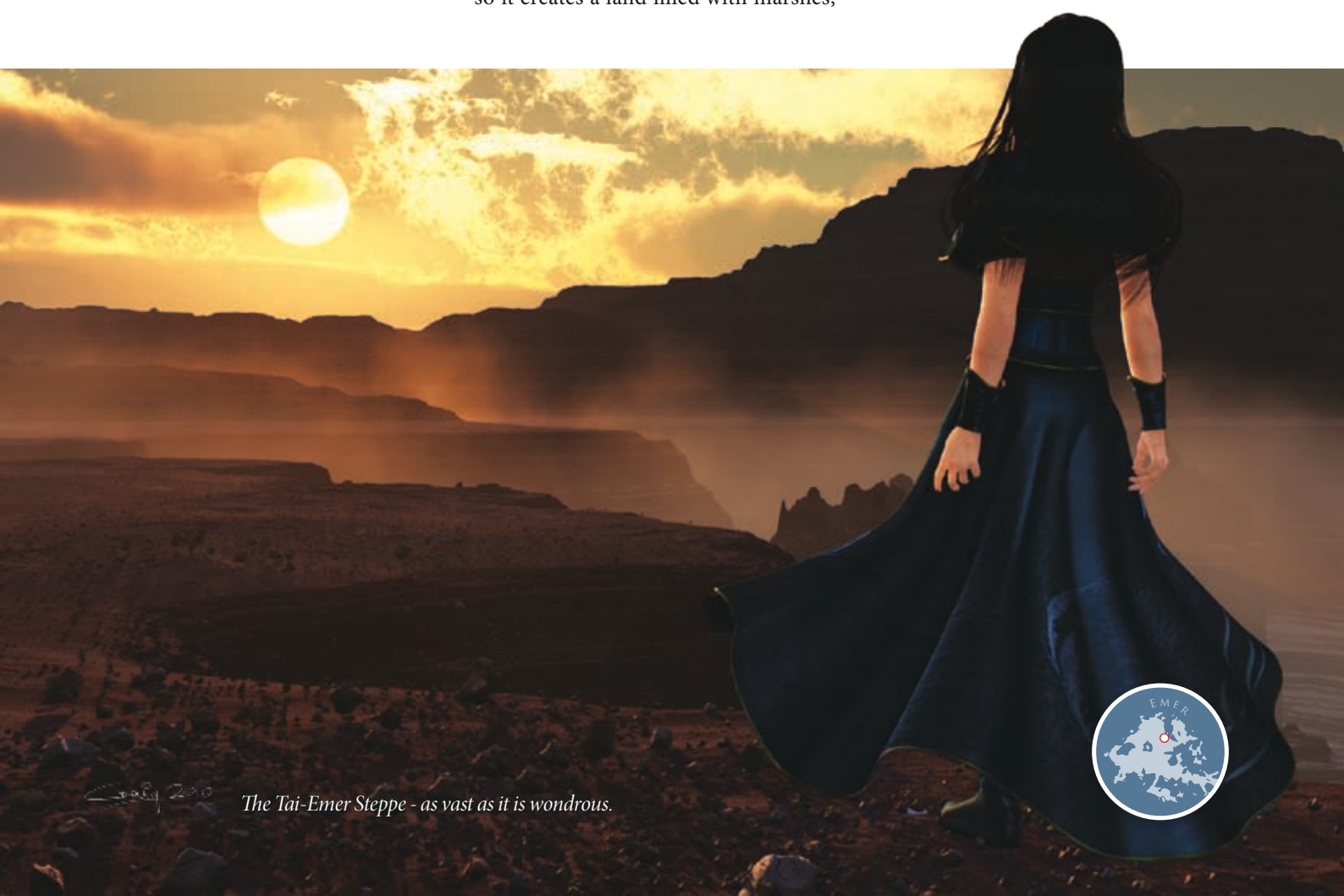
### BOREAL FORESTS

The cold temperatures, low precipitation, and nutrient-poor soils result in conifer trees being the majority of the vegetation here, some of which can grow to incredible heights. The canopy lets little light through so the undergrowth is limited. In some of the more northerly parts, trees become spaced farther apart and there is more lichen ground cover. There is more animal diversity than the tundra and in fact some animals such as the caribou migrate to the boreal forests from the tundra in the winters.

## TEMPERATE

### DESERT & XERIC SHRUBLANDS

Deserts and shrublands experience large ranges in temperature from hot daytime heat to cold nights, as well as large seasonal variations. Depending on the amount of moisture vegetation can vary greatly. Hyper-arid deserts are mostly devoid of



*The Tai-Emer Steppe - as vast as it is wondrous.*

life; however other regions can include sparse grasslands and shrublands. Animals are usually nocturnal to avoid moisture loss.

### PRAIRIES & STEPPES

Prairies & Steppes are dry grasslands with little to no trees or large shrubs and a variety of grazing animals. Rainfall can be moderate in some of these areas, but it is concentrated during a small part of the year. Prairies are grasslands with tall grasses, while steppes have less precipitation and have short grasses. Prairies and Steppes make excellent farms due to their flat landscape and rich soil, and are frequently turned into such by Kulthean cultures.

### TEMPERATE FORESTS

Temperate forests encompass a great many regions, from the more northerly portions where the broadleaved trees merge into the conifers of the boreal forests to subtropical rainforests. The richer soil in the temperate forests leads to a larger variety of vegetation on the forest floor, which in turn leads to greater variety in smaller cold-blooded reptiles and amphibians. Sub-biomes: mixed, dry coniferous, mediterranean forest, temperate/subtropical rainforest.

### TROPICAL

#### HOT DESERTS

Deserts in tropical areas have extreme temperature ranges due to the lack of humidity in the atmosphere to block the sun. Some deserts can get to well over 100°F (38°C) during the day and still drop to freezing at night. Rain usually comes in short bursts after long dry seasons. Light rain can often evaporate before it even hits the ground. Vegetation is rare, but well adapted animals are usually nocturnal. Hyper-arid hot deserts of sand can be almost completely devoid of life. Deserts can also occur due to poisonous materials, such as an abundance of salt (from a dried sea for instance) which effectively kills plant life.

### SAVANNAS & GRASSLANDS

Savannas receive a fair amount of rainfall (20"-50" yearly), but it all comes in a short

rainy season, followed by a long drought during which fires can occur. Some savannas actually receive enough rainfall that if spread throughout the year it would be a tropical forest. They can also contain scattered individual trees, depending on the precipitation. Whether due to natural or cultural (e.g., slashing and burning) causes these savannas are never allowed full growth to become forests even when they do receive enough precipitation.

### TROPICAL FORESTS

Tropical forests are commonly referred to as rainforests or jungles due to the perpetually warm and wet climate that promotes vast and varied plant growth. Brimming with life, the tropical jungles are home to more variety of life than anywhere else on Kulthea, with the greatest diversity living within the forest canopy. One square mile of rainforest can hold over a thousand species of trees with a typical height of 150', while the forest floor is relatively clear due to the thick canopy. Sub-biomes: evergreen rainforest, seasonal rainforest, semi evergreen forest and dry deciduous forest (monsoon).

### OTHER

#### ALPINE

Vegetation can change rapidly with altitude in mountain regions, which can be similar to changes in latitude. As one climbs in altitudes it is like heading north: Forests (temperate then boreal), shrublands, alpine tundra, which is very similar to arctic tundra except that it has better drainage due to an absence of permafrost. Amongst many of the mountain ranges are a variety of large flying beasts, some legend and some very real. From the enormous Roc to the mystical Gryphon or Storm Hawk, the high altitude regions are rife with folklore. Sub-biomes: Alpine Temperate Forest, Alpine Boreal Forest, Alpine Steppes, Alpine Shrubland, and Alpine Tundra. Not every mountain region will have all of these biomes.

#### ESSÆNCE

As noted earlier, the flows of Essænce can wreak havoc on local climate and weather patterns. But even beyond that, local concentrations of the Essænce, such

as with flows or foci, have created their own biome that can even have unique flora and fauna, as well as widely variable climactic conditions. These regions are so widely varied that each one is essentially unique, although they can be found across the globe. Flora and Fauna will usually consist of local populations from the surrounding region altered in some way by the proximity to Essænce.

### OCEANS

Covering tremendous area on Shadow World, the Ocean biome could be further subdivided: intertidal, benthic, coral reefs, etc. There are numerous ecosystems that are as varied as those found on land. One of the most enduring mysteries of the Shadow World is the nature of the Greater Depths - and what may lurk there. Legends tell of monstrous creatures, which make their homes in the darkest reaches of the sea bottom, yet sojourn to the surface to wreak havoc with the fragile ships and coastal homes of men - the mighty kraken, great whales, and sea serpents.

### UNDERGROUND

Underground regions can be found in every climate and maintain a rather steady constant temperature, between 50°F and 55°F (10-13°C), regardless of the outside conditions. This can vary depending on drafts and the existence of underground heating sources such as vents or volcanic regions. There are also a few races that live completely underground: the Duranaki of Jaiman, the Nomari, and the countless tribes of Murlogi who seem to be everywhere. They all have at least one thing in common; they are all reclusive of those who dwell above.

## THE CONTINENTS

### MULIRA

The name Mulira is applied by most scholars to the great 'H' shaped land mass, as well as the large area of land to the north (which is imprisoned in an ice sheet). The main continent hosts a wide variety of environments from cold tundra and wasteland to subtropics. Much of southern Mulira is lowland, excellent for farming.



NORTH POLAR REGION



SCALE



SOUTH POLAR REGION





**AGYRA**

A large land riddled with rivers, bays and lakes. Agyra is divided primarily by the Iron Mountains (which run along the southern coast of Cestos and Ormulu) and the great Roak Ridge that separates the Alnora Plain from the western lands, then continues south to form the eastern edge of the continent until it meets Thuul. Agyra's lands are for the most part remarkably fertile and its climate temperate.

**THUUL**

Thuul is a great ring of land that appears formed by a cataclysmic event ages ago. Thuul is most known for the isle in its center known as Luor'ka'tai (Iruaric: "Pillar of the Gods"). It is a tapered column of black crystal and metal rising out of a rocky foundation several miles into the Kulthean sky. The northwestern area of the ring is arid desert, while the southwest is semi-arid. The eastern regions are tropical in the north to cool or temperate in the far south. The Guardian Sea on the interior of the continent is surprisingly turbulent; whirlpools are common and violent storms are frequent.

**MYTHENIS**

A continent of contrasts, Mythenis lies in the far southwest of the hemisphere, a mountainous heartland sprouting numerous peninsulas and strings of islands. The shores along the north and center are amazingly temperate for the latitude, while the southern regions are blanketed with snow through most of the year. Mythenis is also subjected to considerable volcanism; clouds of ash are common.

**JAIMAN**

While a small mass of land rather far north, Jaiman has had a powerful role in the world's history. The large realm of Rhakhaan is one of the oldest kingdoms in the west. Jaiman is broken by mountain ranges, swift rivers, and a series of great lakes. Much of northern Jaiman is sub-arctic (except for the far northeast, which is warmed by extensive volcanic action), while the more southern areas enjoy cool temperate climes.

**EMER**

Lord of the western continents, Emer dominates the map. The climate on the vast continent varies considerably. Much of the southwest is arid, and while the northernmost regions are cool and temperate; the southeast is humid and tropical, and the central areas are temperate to subtropical. Due to its central location, Emer has more impact on the geopolitics of the west than any other continent. With its two large cities, Kaitaine and Sel-kai, it is said that nearly all trade and information eventually channel through Emer.

**FALIAS**

Lying to the south of Emer, Falias comprises a sizable land mass, a large adjacent island further south, and a number of islands and island groupings in between. Protected from the chill southern winds along the west by a range of sheer mountains, much



*Tower Isle is an awe inspiring sight.*

*—Gael 22/12*



of Falias is temperate and even tropical, with much of the northern portion of the main continent covered by lush rain-forest.

## KELESTIA

Kelestia, among the northernmost of inhabited lands, is known to the well-traveled as the Land of the Northern Lights. This is because Kelestia is particularly graced by shows of the luminous curtains of gas ignited by the planetary radiation belts. Northernmost Kelestia is largely tundra, with limited agricultural capability except in more sheltered vales and the southern grassland ranges. The southern mass of the continent is quite lush, however, being primarily temperate in nature.

## GAALT

Swept by winds from the Endless Sea, the eastern shores of Gaalt are largely cold, barren places, with few large coastal communities. Some areas find protection, however, and Gaalt supports many scattered populations. Much of Gaalt is cool and moist (inundated by eastern storms along the Barrier), with some temperate areas inland and a few pockets of subtropical climate in the southernmost regions.

## PALIA

Partially because of its more southerly location and partly because of its protective mountains – has a generally temperate climate. The central western isles bridge the seas between Gaalt and the Iyxian cluster off the east coast of Emer. These islands are temperate to subtropical, and some of the south-western areas are the most verdant on the planet.

## FOLENN

An isolated, shadowy land on the edge of the hemisphere, Folenn has had little

contact with the rest of the west. It is shielded by the encircling Gales of Hues (a name for the Essænce Flow surrounding the continent), and is near the Great Barrier dividing East from West.

## GOVON

Much of Govon enjoys tropical or subtropical weather. Areas along the many rivers and lakes are dense with rain-forest and other deciduous growth, while some of the northern areas are given over to desert.

The central basin, surrounding the Gefting Sea, is home to several states.

## MURLIS

The name is generally used to describe not only the large land masses south of Folenn, but the vast archipelago to the southeast, and the frigid lands south of Govon. Murlis includes the long string of islands extending past Folenn to the west, all the way down to the polar regions in the Kiskaa Arûs (Iruaric: “Chilling Waters”).



*Mount Urgokh periodically spews fire and ash into the sky but has yet to erupt with real violence.*



# WONDERS OF

## THE GREAT NOMIKOS LIBRARY

While the construction of the Nomikos complex is impressive it is the wealth of knowledge contained within that make it a wonder. Located on the isle of Ormian in southern Jaiman, it consists of a large complex of buildings and numberless subterranean vaults. Tended by the Scribes who have devoted their life to learning and study and protected by the famous Changramai monks, Nomikos is as famous as its supposed founder, Andraax.

## EIDOLON, CITY IN THE SKY

In northern Emer, Eidolon floats above the bustling port of Selkai. Eidolon is a fraction of the size of the city below, being little more than the Prince's palace, a few clusters of beautiful, glittering residential towers, and the most prestigious consulates, guildhalls and inns. It is a testament to Loari skill that it not only floats a half-mile in the sky but that it has remained stable for more than 1400 years amidst the all-powerful flows and storms of Essaence.

## NAVIGATOR OBELISK NETWORK

Scattered across the lands of the world are triangular stone obelisks that are used to contact the Navigators. One simply places a hand on one and says, in just about any language, something to the effect of "I require a Navigator" and one will magically appear within moments. Navigator Obelisks can be found on every continent, both in urban areas as well as the most remote locations one could imagine.





# SHADOW WORLD

## PILLAR OF THE GODS

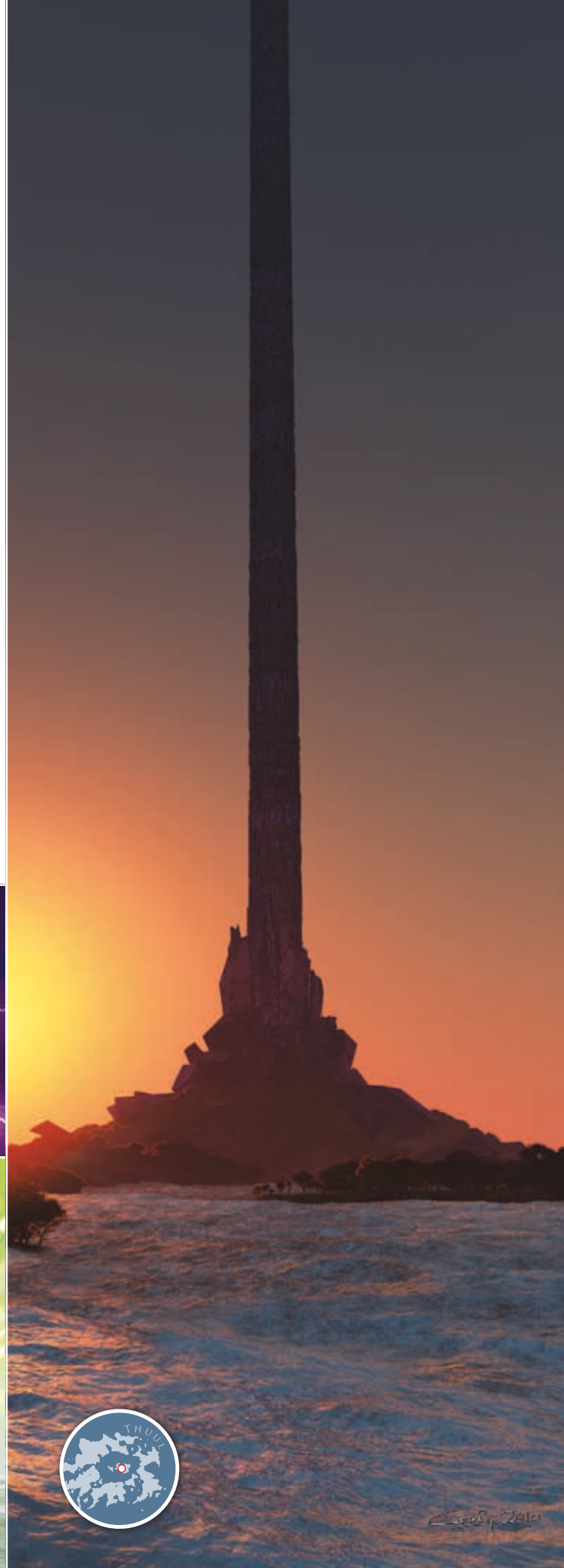
In the center of the great ring of land that is the continent of Thuul is the mysterious Luor'ka'tai (Iruaric: "Pillar of the Gods"), a tapered column of black crystal and metal rising out of a rocky foundation several miles into the Kulthean sky. Most current Kulthean inhabitants assume that it was the work of the gods, although the exact origin and nature of the Pillar is unknown. Powerful Essænce envelops the area, and The Bay of the Gods immediately around the Pillar is always churning, full of treacherous whirlpools, waterspouts and electrical discharges.

## ESSÆNCE STORMS

One of the most terrifying characteristics of the Flows of Essænce is the storms they can create. While to the untrained observer the impact of a Flowstorm is very similar to that of a hurricane or thunderstorm, this is but a side-effect of far more devastating damage to the invisible Essænce. Those caught within a Flowstorm will inevitably feel a tingling sensation as electrical and magical energies build up and Essænce discharges occur as explosions of colored light.

## THE GREAT BARRIER

A giant barrier of Essænce, the Great Barrier separates the eastern and western hemispheres of Kulthea. While few have ever traveled to see it, virtually every inhabitant knows that Kulthea cannot be circumnavigated. The western hemisphere is considered the known world for no one has been known to even venture into 'The East', much less returned.



## SECTION 6

# GODS AND RELIGION

*Just who - or what - are the 'Lords of Orhan'? Centuries, even millennia of research have yielded little on the nature of these legendary beings. Clearly they are supernatural; the humanoid forms they assume are no doubt mere conventions for our benefit. But why are they here? Their motivations, while generally benign, seem at times to be opaque to our understanding. In fact, these gods themselves seem to behave in a manner which appears to be simplistic; some of them even seem childish at times.*

*One would be led to believe that they were no more sophisticated than humans or elves with supernatural powers. But ponder for a moment this idea: suppose you were given godlike abilities. You are immortal, un-killable, and all creatures of the world are little more than toys or pets. No one has the power to control you or even influence you. You are a god.*

*Perhaps for a while you behave admirably, allowing only your best nature to prevail. But the ages slip by and benevolence becomes dull. Why not tinker - just a little - with one or two races? Who will stop you? Who has the right to judge you? No one! You are a God!*

*Soon the tinkering becomes more than harmless. So slowly you do not even notice it, your amusements become more perverse and twisted until you are a depraved creature with nothing left but a gnawing emptiness where your soul once lived.*

*Perhaps this explains the quixotic simplicity of the Lords: they do not think as we do, because to do so would mean their downfall. Both more complex and more simplistic, they have a different set of goals and morals. Let us be grateful that they seem to be benevolent.*

*— Yael Ziriv-Kari*

*From her 'Deities' lecture*

*'Good' and 'Evil' fall at the two extreme ends of a spectrum; most thinking beings exist somewhere in the middle ground. In addition, there are the complicating factors of the competing affiliations among those that consider themselves 'Good' or 'Evil.' Then there are misperceptions, fine lines between actions, and the argument about which one is actually the right way. What is 'Good'? Are the Lords of Orhan or the Gods of Charôn good? Can humanoids ever be good? Does 'Good' just mean the extermination of 'Evil'? What is 'Evil'? Are some gods evil by nature? Evil does not mean the small injustices one man commits against another; nor does it even mean most acts of violence or warfare.*

*'Order' and 'Chaos' can mean a number of things in the Shadow World universe, including (according to the scholar Taliax Chun) opposite lines of reality. However, in practical terms Order and Chaos are empirical references for the leanings of individuals and groups, helping to indicate whether their tendencies lean towards a very structured environment or one in which events are more random and disorganized. Both philosophies have merit, and the world of Kulthea exists somewhere in between what we could consider absolute Order and absolute Chaos. However, these forces are at odds with each other as much as the powers of Good and Evil.*

*Some may explain Gods as the Essænce given form and personality. Whatever the explanation, Gods wield very real power on Shadow World and their existence cannot be denied. The mighty Lords of Orhan and Gods of Charôn reputedly live on the moons,*



TABLE 9: RELIGION LORE

TIER	DESCRIPTION
Novice	General details of tenets, rituals and religious texts for major religions.
Student	In-depth knowledge of all major religions texts and expected behavior of devout followers. Less detailed knowledge of minor religions.
Scholar	Knowledge of all well-known major and minor religions including all tenets, rituals, and general history.
Expert	Ability to apply religious knowledge to interactions with followers. Excellent skill at debating difficult religious questions and interpreting texts.
Sage	Complete understanding of nearly all major and minor religions including history, cultural impact and all known religious texts and lore.

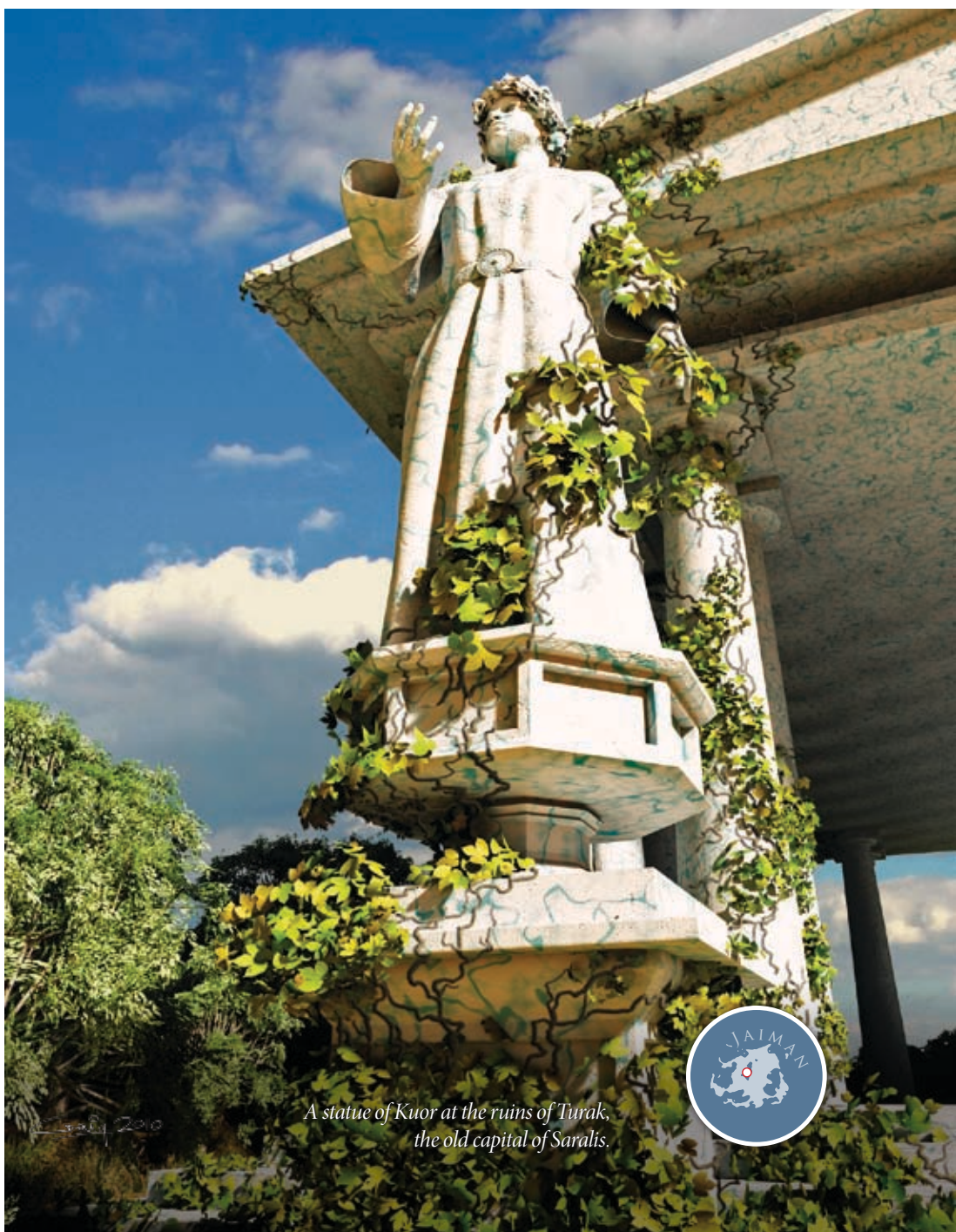
Note: Often times Religion Lore will be taken with a focus on a single religion, although most will also at least partially study other religions.

watching over the entire planet. However, there are other powerful beings on Kulthea itself, often tied to the earth and worshipped by lesser beings. These 'local gods,' be they nymphs or powerful spirits, seem tied to a specific place, and their priests are limited in the area in which they have access to the god's power. They cannot stray far from their focus or their powers are diminished.

## THE ORHAN PANTHEON

Of all the gods and pantheons, which have come and gone through the history of Kulthea, the Lords of Orhan stand alone. Priests of the Lords of Orhan draw major powers from them, whereas the Essæncemasters tap into the Flows for their energies. Their godlike abilities are without parallel.

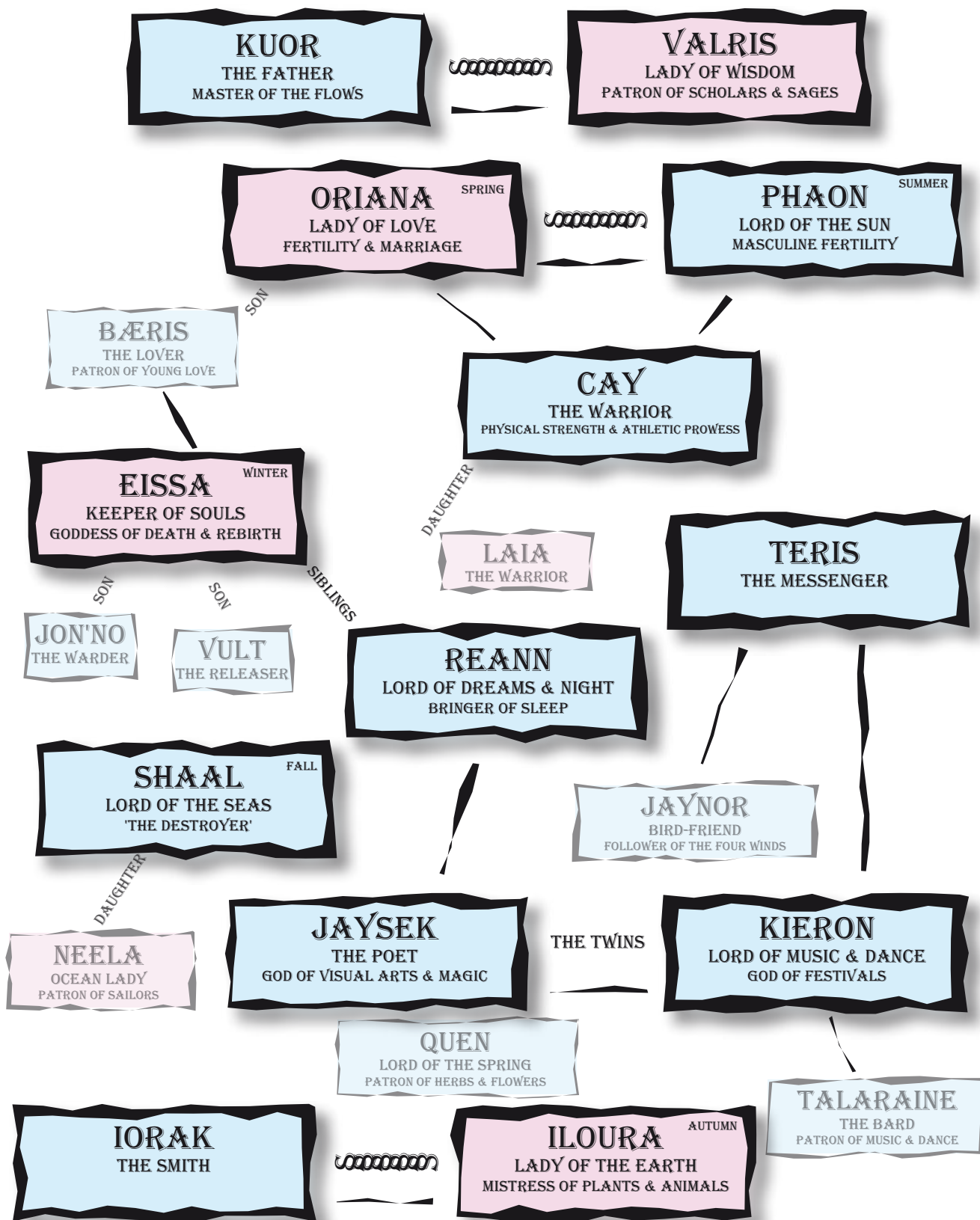
The Lords reputedly make their home on the great moon of Orhan. The sky of Orhan is almost always shrouded in clouds, preventing easy viewing of the surface from Kulthea. Whether or not the souls of dead Kultheans go to Orhan is uncertain, but the Lady Eissa is said to guard the portal to another dimension, from whence she has the power to recall souls from the dead. She can also channel that ability to her devout followers.



*A statue of Kuor at the ruins of Turak, the old capital of Saralis.*



## THE LORDS OF ORHAN

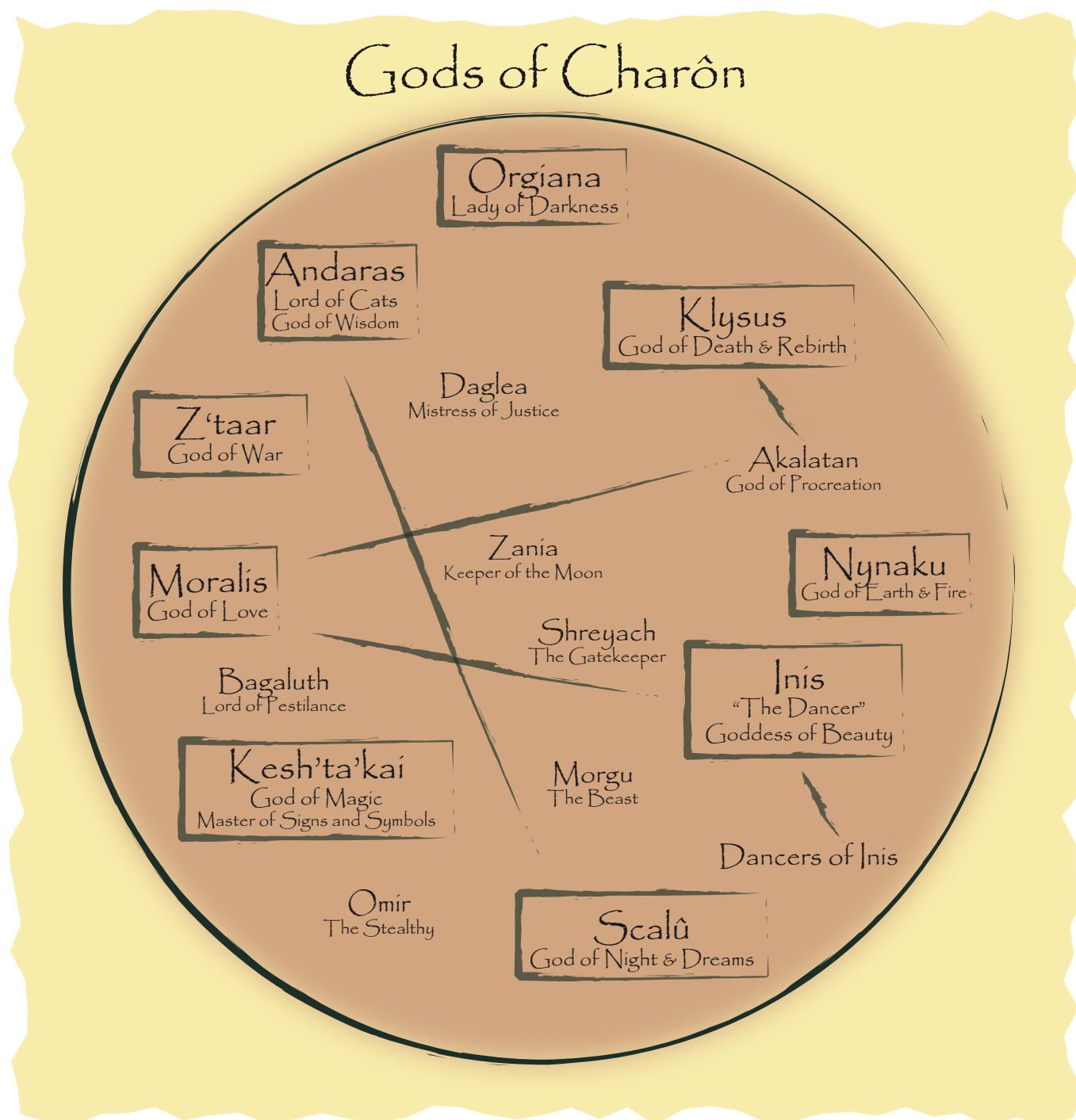


*This shows the Lords of Orhan as well as some major Spirits. The ring lines represent marriages, while the straight lines represent alliances.*



Mirroring the rather benign Lords of Orhan, there is another pantheon of immortal beings residing on another of Kulthea's moons. The dark featureless moon seems like an unlikely home for The Gods of Charôn, yet its powerful presence cannot be denied.

every night rising higher and becoming more full, until one night every 149 days Charôn is full and at Zenith in a given location (the full moon occurs in different places at different times, of course, and the latitudes further from the equator miss this event). It shines much more brightly, and with a reddish glow. There is no mistaking the Night of the Third Moon. Worshippers of the Charôn pantheon consider the zenith to be a time of particular importance, a time when servants of the Gods are able to leave their home on Charôn and come to the Shadow World.



## SHADOW WORLD PLAYER'S GUIDE - THE WORLD

## SUGGESTED PATRONS BY PROFESSION

There are many religions in the Shadow World, from local gods to the globally revered Lords of Orhan and Gods of Charôn. Table 10 shows some suggestions for the Orhan and Charôn gods for Rolemaster professions. Choice of one's God or Gods, if any, for non-Channeling professions (spell-users who don't receive power from a god) would be for role-playing purposes. Also note that, especially within a pantheon, one might not worship a single God. In fact there are many religions devoted to multiple Lords or the entire pantheon. Most channeling users however will have a favored patron that is more closely aligned with their spells. Local religions will be included in the regional player guides.

## RELIGIONS

While most specific religions are relatively localized, there are several that are widespread and can be found on several continents.



### BROTHERHOOD OF THE TREE

The Brotherhood is a peaceful, decentralized religion devoted to Iloura that teaches harmony among all living things. Many of the Brotherhood travel constantly, teaching of the value of the earth and the importance of the balance of nature. While there is no congregation, they are quite happy to teach those who have an interest. With their considerable agricultural knowledge, they are welcomed by farmers who often have them bless harvests and preside at fall festivals. Temples and Monasteries, always in the country, range from larger accommodations where members of the Brotherhood live or take shelter to small shrines in caves or small in-ground structures.

### CULT OF ANDARAS



Andaras, the "Cat God," is the Charôn god of wisdom and knowledge. While the cult is fairly decentralized, it is also widespread. Many large cities have temples, though the majority of the cult's centers are large affairs.

TABLE 10: SUGGESTED PATRONS

PROFESSION	ORHAN PATRONS	CHARÔN PATRONS
Fighter/Thief/Rogue	Cay, <i>Laia</i>	<i>Z'taar</i> , <i>Omir</i> , <i>Morgu</i>
Cleric*	Any, (Kuur, Eissa, Oriana, Phaon)	Any, (Kesh'ta'kai, Andaras, Klysus, <i>Bogaluth</i> , <i>Shreyach</i> )
Animist*	Kuur, Iloura, Shaal, <i>Quen</i> , <i>Neela</i> , <i>Jaynor</i>	Andaras
Healer*	Eissa, <i>Jon'no</i>	Moralis, Klysus
Magician	Kuur, Valris, Oriana, Jaysek, Iorak, <i>Neela</i>	Kesh'ta'kai, Nynaku
Illusionist	Kieron, Jaysek	Kesh'ta'kai, Scalû
Alchemist	Valris, Iorak	Kesh'ta'kai, Klysus
Mentalist	Valris, Phaon, Kieron, Teris	Andaras, Inis, Moralis, <i>Daglea</i>
Seer	Valris, Reann, Jaysek	Andaras, Klysus
Lay Healer	Oriana, Eissa	Klysus
Sorcerer*	Shaal	Orgiana, Moralis, Klysus, <i>Akalatan</i>
Astrologer*	Valris, Reann	Andaras, Klysus, <i>Zania</i>
Mystic	Reann, Jaysek, Kieron, <i>Talaraine</i> , <i>Neela</i>	Scalû, Klysus, <i>Omir</i> , <i>Zania</i>
Bard	Valris, Kieron, <i>Talaraine</i>	Inis, Moralis
Ranger*	Reann, Iloura, Shaal, <i>Quen</i> , <i>Neela</i> , <i>Jaynor</i>	<i>Morgu</i>
Monk	Oriana, Cay, Teris, <i>Laia</i>	Inis, <i>Z'taar</i> , <i>Nynaku</i>
Paladin*	Reann, <i>Vult</i>	Scalû, <i>Daglea</i>

*Italics* represent Spirits (e.g. Lesser Gods).

\* Channeling user



in remote locations. While these are said to house extensive libraries, they are not open to the public. Much like the Order of Light they are devoted to learning and the acquisition of knowledge.

### MORALIS SANCTITY

While considered a perverse cult,—and sometimes banned—in some more civilized societies, the Sanctity is widespread and accepted in many regions. Moralis is the Charôn god of love and pain, and the services are off limits to any non-followers (though all are welcome to join the cult). Monks of Moralis, both male and female, can be seen outside the temple wearing red, hooded robes with black rope belts.

### ORDER OF LIGHT



Not as much of a religion as a philosophy, the Order of Light seeks to preserve knowledge, including literature, history, science and art. Worshipping Valris, temples are actually libraries, galleries, and museums. Followers include scribes, astrologers, seers, bards, and anyone interested in the preservation of knowledge. Library and museum access is open to the public, for a fee. The Order of Light is sometimes referred to as the “College of Valris.”

### SISTERS OF EISSA



One of the most widely known religious groups, the Sisters are an entirely female sect who follow The Lord of Orhan, Eissa. The Sisters, who always dress in white robes, are all skilled in the healing arts, which are available to all who follow the

Lords of Orhan (for a suggested donation). While they do have Chapter Houses in most cities they do not actively recruit a congregation, nor do they ever become active in political affairs. They do make their positions quite clear however: killing of any sort is evil. The Sisters rarely travel and are seldom seen outside urban areas.

### TEMPLES OF NEELA

Across Shadow World, Neela has among the largest and most devout following of all the deities. Her association with the sea and her reputation for calming the fierier disposition of the greater Orhanian god Shaal make her a natural choice for sailors, merchants, fisherman, and anyone living in coastal environments. Neela welcomes males and females, though the majority of the priests tend to be women. Temples are always on shores or banks and often are open-roofed.



*Orgiana, The Lady of Darkness - one of the many fearsome gods of Charon.*



## SECTION 7

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# RACES

*In the early part of the Second Era the Iylari (I. "First Thinkers"; the Noble Elves) asserted their dominion over large portions of the World. Vast regions had already been laid waste; the continent of Emer was largely wilderness. Jamain, however, as well as the Vashaanic and Ronic lands to the east and south - were widely populated with the Immortals.*

*Although the Iylar Lords rarely dominated the Ruyari (I. "Lesser Thinkers"; the mortal peoples) by force, they were often royal advisors and even rulers over mortals by default. The Elves were not held in fear in most lands, but were respected for their inevitable wisdom.*

Andraax "Notes on Immortals"

*The races here are only some of the most common, with moderate to high populations across a few or more continents. Individual continents may have more races, often mixes or offshoots of these major races. The races are presented here without any information regarding their culture or specific locations where they reside. These will be provided for cultures in specific continent guides. Elves tend to vary little over the globe and time because of their increased lifespan and there are consequently only a few different elven races. Mortal species however are much more varied.*

### NON-HUMANS

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From the ape-like Garks to the grotesque war-mongering Lugrôki, Kulthea is filled with dangerous non-humans that despise the races of men and elves. Also among the non-human races are the unusual subterranean Nomari who seem out of place when they venture out into the giant world above them. The Ta-lairi on the other hand have blood of men and elves, making them neither.

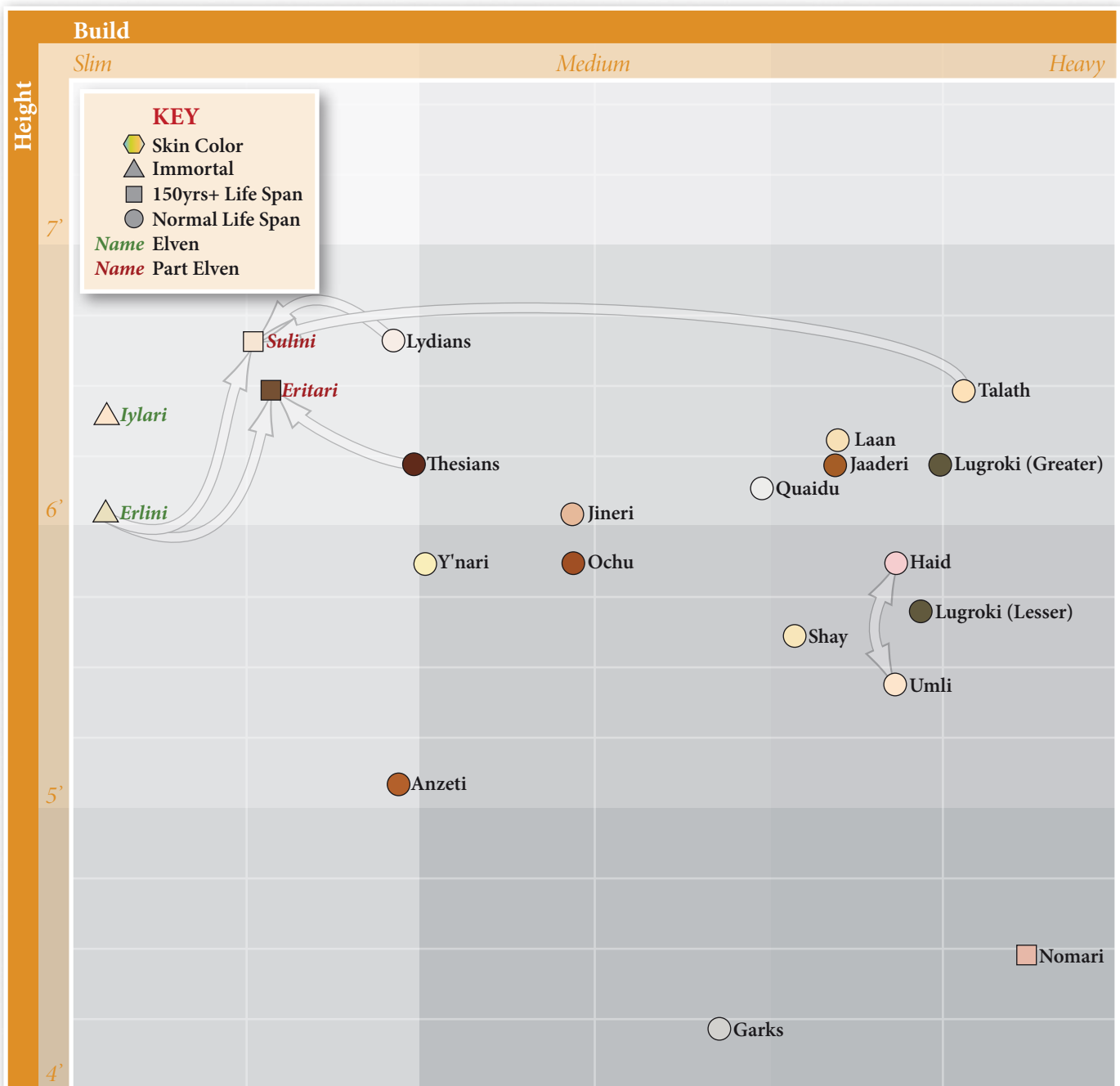
**Garks**—Mottled grey fur covers all of the ape-like Gark, except the palms and soles of his feet. Long arms hang to his knees, and a powerful, prehensile tail grows from the base of his spine. While they could barely be considered intelligent, they do use crude weapons, wear decorative clothing, and organize themselves by family groups. Garks are spread over all types of forest regions and the mountains.

**Lugrôki**—Grotesque creatures, Lugrôki are a race of warriors with slanting eyes and flattened snout like noses. A Lugrok's teeth are large and irregular, with oversized incisors, which frequently jut from their thick-lipped mouths. Nocturnal, the Lugrôki hate the day and sometimes panic under the brighter sun. Hulking in form, with heavily muscled bodies and thick limbs they respect little save superior force. Because of their warlike nature they do not often operate in more than a tribal society, but are often governed by a strong lord of another race, and can be found on most of the continents.

**Nomari (Dwarves)**—Dwarves are a stalwart people, comfortable below ground where they delve labyrinthine cities. Dwarves are stocky with complexions ranging from grey-white to ruddy to red-brown; their dark eyes are deep-set, and their hair is brown or black, occasionally flame-colored. Short and powerfully built, they seem ideally suited for a life underground, though their homes are usually much more than a mere warren of tunnels: they have constructed entire cities and palaces under mountains. Male Dwarves almost always grow thick beards, though some clans are hairless. They are found on Jaiman, Emer, Falias, Govon, and Kelestia.

**Ta-lairi (Iy: 'part-elves')**—The Ta-lairi can be an individual offspring of a Elf and mortal, in which case where they are simply known as a Ta-Lairi. Or they can be entire races: the result of elven/mortal interbreeding long ago, creating a fairly homogeneous group of beings. The latter are actually multiple races; there is tremendous variation depending on mortal component. Elven parentage is almost always Erlin when widespread enough to constitute a subrace. The variety in appearance among half-Elves stems not so much from the subtle variance in Elves, as the more





pronounced differences between the Mannish races whose blood also flows in their veins. They are nearly always mortal, though they enjoy a longer life span (often of a couple of centuries). They usually remain healthy and vigorous until very near the end, then they age very rapidly over the last 5 years or so of life. An example of a Ta-lairi race is the Sulini of Jaiman.

## HUMANS

The vast majority of races on Shadow World are those of men. There are dozens of races of men and as much variability between them. From the small hardened Anzeti of the north to the powerful and noble Laan, men of some type can be found on every continent.

**Anzeti**—The Anzeti are a small people, hardened by the unfriendly climate of the chilly places they inhabit in Mulira, Kelstia, Gaalt, and Murlis. Dark haired, with red-brown skin and green or hazel eyes, they reside almost entirely in high, mountainous areas. By nature they are reticent—even shy—for they are seldom encountered by other races.

**Haid**—The Haid are related to the Umli yet taller and more heavily boned than the Shay. Tending to be hirsute and stocky of build, the Haid have a ruddy complexion and a reddish-brown hair of variegated color. The Haid can be found on nearly all the northern and southern continents.

**Jaaderi**—Robust and often powerfully built, the Jaaderi are a

race to stand with the Laan in physical nobility. Their skin is a coppery red-brown, with green, brown or hazel eyes. Other distinguishing features include a prominent, hooked nose, full lips, and large earlobes. Their hair is sleek, straight and black; men have little body hair and their beard grows sparsely. Jaaderi faces have a slightly elongated look, accentuated by a high forehead and a hairline which often recedes soon after maturity in men. Jaaderi are found on Agyra, Emer, and Falias

**Jineri**—Though similar to the Y'nari in facial features, the Jineri tend to be taller, with slightly darker skin pigmentation, suited to hot and humid climes. Eyes are usually brown or hazel with the distinguishing epicanthic fold over the inner corner. They have little body hair, and scalp hair is always thick and straight, usually black but sometimes streaked with silver or white after puberty. Jineri are found on all but the most northern and southern continents.

**Laan**—The Laan are often taller than the Elves, but more heavily boned and physically stronger. Their hair is straight and dark brown to coal black, eyes blue, grey or hazel, and they tend to be fair-skinned, from very pale seeming to a flushed but light complexion. While not immortal they live two or three times longer than some other mortal races. Few of the men sport beards; in fact most have little or no facial hair (and little body hair). The Laan are great warriors, leaders and empire-builders: their ambition matches their great stature. The Laan live on Jaiman, Gaalt, and Murlis, as well as significant populations on Emer.

**Lydians**—The tall, slender Lydians are most populous in Mythenis and some regions of Gaalt, though they are found on other cool climes—especially in the southern hemisphere. This race has a somewhat elongated skull and large, bright, amber-colored eyes. They have fair skin, pale blond hair and are more slender than the Laan or Talath and tend to be hirsute. Men begin to lose their scalp hair soon after maturity, and even many older women have a receding hairline.

**Ochu**—The Ochu are a people commonly found in warmer climes such as Agyra and northern Falias, the Ochu also have a colony in northeastern Emer. In appearance they have red-brown skin and tend to be of medium height and build, with straight or wavy coarse black hair. The eyes are brown and almond-shaped, with wide faces and high cheekbones. Body and facial hair is relatively sparse.

**Quaidu (aka: Pale Men)**—The men usually tall and powerfully built, the Quaidu are so pale as to seem to have no skin pigmentation. Though even an albino has a pinkish color from the blood under his skin, these men and women are ashen-white, almost grey in hue. Their bodies are hairless; the mane on their scalp is either ebony or snow-white, their eyes invariably black as orbs of obsidian. No iris, no pupil can be seen, no white sclera. Both sexes have a high prominent forehead, slender nose and thin lips of a darker grey. Quaidu front teeth are larger and more pointed than those of average humanoids, giving them a frightening visage when they smile. To say that they are troubling to look upon is an understatement. Hailing mostly from Gaalt, they also have

populations in Mulira and Jaiman.

**Shay**—The Shay peoples are shorter than most other races but stocky and hardy. They usually have brown hair and fair skin, with eyes blue, hazel or brown. Shay men are more hirsute than most other races, and in most cultures are likely to let their dense facial hair grow. Shay are arguably the most populous race on the planet, inhabiting most of Emer, but also with significant populations on several other continents.

**Talath**—The Talath are a hardy race, blond and blue-eyed. They are suited to cooler climes, having settlements in southeastern Jaiman (known as the Myri), northwestern Hæstra, Palia, and Gaalt. Powerfully built, the Talath are of amazing size and strength. Most have a fair countenance; the men have little or no beard. Both sexes are big-boned and have a physical and mental strength born of a life of hard work and pure spirit.

**Thesians**—This tall, graceful people have dark brown skin, full lips and flattened noses. All Thesians have dark brown eyes and have little body hair. Scalp hair, however, grows thickly and in very tight curls. Long-fingered hands are also the norm. Thesians are found in warm-temperate and tropical environments in Thuul, Palia, and Falias

**Umli**—The Umli are the masters of the far north and far south; no mannish folk can stand with them amidst the fury of the bitter frost. They range far out across the realms others call wastes. Few tread in their traceless paths, and there are none who dare challenge their dominance at home. There was a time when the Umli lived much further south, but they have been driven from these more friendly lands by their many enemies. The Umli are stocky of build, with fair skin and either silver-white or raven-black hair.

**Y'nari**—Generally quiet and serene, many Y'nari peoples are nevertheless reticent— even stubborn. Of average height and medium to slight build, they have fair skin (with a slight yellowish tint) and little body hair. Scalp hair is thick, straight, coarse and deep blue-black (or, in rare cases, white). Eyes are usually brown, hazel or amber, and a distinguishing feature is the epicanthic folds (the small overlap of skin over the eyes, like Terran Asian peoples). Y'nari also have 'flattened' features: small noses, wide, prominent cheekbones. Y'nari have the most numbers on Mulira, Kelestia, and Murlis, with lesser populations on a few other continents.

## IMMORTALS

These are beings that, unlike the other races, do not age or grow old. Most maintain a youthful appearance indefinitely. As part of this eternal youth, they have a high resistance to diseases and natural extremes of temperature. Elves are very similar in appearance to humans, except they are generally taller and have elongated ears with points at the top, and more delicate features. Males have no facial hair, and Elves have almost no body hair, while scalp hair grows thick and full throughout their lives. The Elven physique



is naturally slender and their metabolism prevents them from gaining extra body fat. Physical exertion and training does allow them to gain muscle mass and add strength, though some mannish races are more easily able to gain muscular bulk.

Elves mature at about the same rate as humans, but once they reach adulthood, the pure blooded do not show the signs of aging. There are several sub-races of Elves much the same as there are for men. The Linæri, Loari and Dyari are all in fact very closely related genetically and make up the Iylari (“High Elves”) race, the lordliest and imposing of the Elves. The Erlin, by contrast, are quite a different species from the Iylar; as distant from the High Elves as they are themselves from the mortal peoples. The elves are all named in the Iylar tongue.

Being immortal, Elves think much differently than mortals. They also are physically superior in many ways. They seem to have better vision and hearing, are naturally quicker, more dexterous and more intelligent than most mortals. They are also completely immune to most sickness and disease. However, being immortal they perceive the flow of time differently than mortals, and might take longer to learn the same concept or perform the same task.

**Dyari (Iy: ‘Delvers’)**—The Dyari are very fair-skinned and so similar to their Loar cousins that it is difficult—at least for mortals—to tell the difference. While most have raven hair, a few are born with pure white locks. Their ears frequently have more pronounced points than the other Elves; their eyes are grey, black, or sometimes amber. The Dyari embody the traits of the Loari but to the extreme: they are vain and arrogant, considering all other races (including other Elves) to be inferior. They have a lust for power: political, magical, physical, and spiritual. Dyari tend to live in isolated conclaves.

**Erlini (Iy: ‘Gardeners’)**—The Erlini most often have sandy or dark blond hair and light blue, green, or grey eyes. Like the Linæri, they prefer to live close to nature

in her unaltered state. When they employ tools and structures these are always subtle and clever of design, simple yet practical. The Erlini are the most prevalent of the Elven-kind by far, and in many areas they have interbred with mortal groups to create a hybrid race. In fact, the Erlini are found on more continents than any other race, which has led Erlini to become the most common trade language. However, when a culture of Erlini has been isolated for a long period, they are very shy and resist becoming involved in the affairs of humans or High Elves.

**Linæri (Iy: ‘Singers’)**—The Linæri possess golden-blond hair, blue eyes, and fair skin. They are tall and graceful, generally slender of build but strong. Most Linæri prefer natural spaces rather than built structures, and when they build homes they are always airy, open designs filled with light and warmth. True to their name, the Linæri are as a rule a musical people. All children are taught to sing at the same time they are instructed in language. Like the Dyari, the Linæri tend to live in small communities and relatively isolated from the rest of the world.

**Loari (Iy: ‘Builders’)**—The Loari almost without exception have raven black hair. Eye color can be brown, grey-blue or hazel, and their complexion is fair—even pale. While a Loar may love nature as much as his Linæri cousin, he seeks to unlock its hidden secrets rather than enjoy it in its untouched state. Among the contemporary peoples, they are unmatched in science, architecture, and technology. Loar egos are also unsurpassed among Elves and men—except perhaps by the Dyari. Though always small in number, Loari are found in Emer, Palia, and Kelestia.

*The Erlini, who are the most prevalent of the Elven-kind by far, prefer to live close to nature in her unaltered state.*



Craig 2010

## SECTION 8

# HISTORY

*Clouds of ash and smoke covered the globe in a shroud of twilight. The oceans boiled and the lands were aglow with molten rock. The fragile life of the world hid in what few refuges could be found... and waited. Ages passed. From the tortured works of*

*the Conflict, new lands arose from the steaming seas. Green shoots sprouted from cooling black earth and life began anew.*

— From 'The Tale of the World'

*In Loremaster Reckoning the First Era was a period of time of uncertain length when the world was inhabited by those known as the Lords of Essænce. It was followed by the Interregnum, during which the world healed. The start of the Second Era was when the Loremaster calendar was established, and became year 1. By Loremaster Reckoning the Second Era lasted nearly 7000 years until it climaxed with the worldwide Wars of Dominion. It is now several thousand years into the Third Era (circa 6050, date will vary by campaign).*

### THE FIRST ERA

*"Utha was the first of his kind: the masters of the Flows. Power was in their hands, and the shaping of the lands was for them an easy task. The world was yet young and warm with red-hot rock that ran like rivers across the steppes. Utha and his people were wise and sought to temper the wild earth and still her uneasiness. But there were those among the masters, led by a woman, Kadæna (I. "the slayer"), who sought to disrupt their ways, and there arose a great conflict. This was the First Era."*

—Lydek Terisonen – 2267 Third Era

These fragmented tales are the only certain information (if they are even that) available from the First Era. The annals of that Era recall the Lords of Essænce and the conflict which arose between them over the forming of the world. Definitive knowledge of the events of the First Era is scanty as there are nearly no records; they were most likely destroyed in the final cataclysm, an upheaval which set the lands in the shapes which supposedly have changed little since.

It is believed that the Lords of Essænce were as men in their

natural form but were able to assume any shape they desired at will, for they held awesome powers over the Essænce. Old legends tell that there were two groups of Lords, one led by Ûtha and the other who called Kadæna their mistress. These two orders existed for quite some time unaware of each other, gathering power and followers.

After thousands of years, Kadæna and her followers developed the power to shape the land, and they began to modify their environment as they saw fit. It was not long before this came to the attention of Ûtha, for Kadæna's idea of a fit environment was a land tortured by earthquakes and cut by rivers of lava. After many years of unsuccessfully attempting to control Kadæna's whimsical destruction indirectly, Ûtha decided that the only way that the world would survive was through the death of Kadæna and the obliteration of her order. Thus it was that the two met, each with the strongest of their kind. The ensuing struggle was one that shook the world to its core. Continents sank; lands long under the seas were thrust up again. Entire races were destroyed by flames and tidal waves. It is said that the battle lasted for an entire year. At the end, when the great smokes and plumes of steam began to clear, every man and woman of each order was slain. This ended the First Era. Now the only users of Essænce are pale shadows of the powers which once walked the land.

### THE INTERREGNUM

This shadowy period refers to the time it took for civilization to reappear on Kulthea and for the lands to heal from the ravages of the final conflict of the First Era. It started with the slow healing of the lands and the gradual dispersal and condensation of the mile-high clouds of steam - mists generated from the evaporation of much of the waters of the ocean in the great fires and explosions each order had cast upon the other. Slowly, plant life began to grow again on the new lands as rains cleansed them.



Animal life recovered and multiplied. The levels of the sea rose, and lands - which had been connected - were sundered by new waterways. The few peoples who had survived the cataclysm were without order or civilization, barely clinging to life itself. Though this was a tranquil period for the earth compared to the time of the battles of the Lords of Essænce, the planet groaned and sighed as it settled into its new form. Winds and tides suddenly shifted; the orbits of the moons were unstable, and the Flows of Essænce were ever-changing, making travel anywhere perilous. The duration of this period is uncertain, but the Loremasters said that it lasted for tens of thousands of years.

## THE SECOND ERA

Quietly and without apparent synergy (though all at approximately the same time), Loremasters appeared across the Shadow World. Under their tutelage, civilizations flourished. Peoples learned the ways of language, agriculture, and the working of stones and metals. The Loremaster calendar was established and the Second Era began. Great kingdoms across the hemisphere rose, and fell. A few of those kingdoms persist to this day. The Second Era saw advancements in magic and science and holds rich histories of varied cultures and races.

### THE WARS OF DOMINION

*"Without fanfare beyond a silvery luminescence, a presence materialized between Scalû and I. His golden skin bare but for a tunic of azure, a simple youth bearing only a spear had appeared to confront the Dark God. The Jackal-god halted before the youth, and his mouth opened in a human exclamation of surprise. "Cay!"*

*And even as the youth seemed to grow in size to match Scalû, he held aloft his gleaming spear and spoke with a voice like music, yet it carried over the tumult: "Take heart, people of Kulthea! Orhan has joined the fray!"*

*And I took heart indeed, for at last the very heavens had come to our aid."*

*Andraax "The Battle at Maegrís" The Wars of Dominion, Vol 7  
SE 6825 (The last days of the Second Era)*

In year 6450 in the years counted after the founding of the College of Loremasters (later known as the Second Era), the feared harbinger of the final darkness arrived: the Comet appeared in the sky, its red tail ablaze. Sa'kain grew brighter and more sullen, until it passed most closely to Kulthea. On that day, the world was torn asunder. The earth cracked and from great wounds poured armies of hideous creatures, a giant wave of unspeakable minions of darkness. Portals opened and disgorged awful monstrosities from the Outer Planes and beyond. The Black Host, captained by Ordainers and other demon lords, swept across the lands, destroying everything in their path. At the van were the Gods of Charôn, somehow gaining material forms on Kulthea. The Loremasters and even the historically neutral Navigators took up arms and attempted to defend a few strongholds. But it was a hopeless struggle. Then the Lords of Orhan descended to face the Gods of Charôn and their minions. One by one the masters were captured and forced off Kulthea. Then Sa'kain passed, and the Portals were sealed again. Much was lost in the conflict; many lands lay waste and valued leaders were slain.

## THE THIRD ERA

While the land had been cleansed, it suffered grievously under the tortures of the reign of the dark gods. In many places on Kulthea no civilization existed beyond a handful of sheltered enclaves, although some regions did see cultures flourish. The last millennium has been another period of decline in most lands, with warfare increasing and natural disaster claiming many lives. Areas suffer droughts, floods, and devastating storms. Societies which previously interacted have drawn away from each other in fear of contamination.

**TABLE 11: HISTORY**

TIER	DESCRIPTION
Novice	Knowledge of major events (kingdoms and cultural time periods, wars, etc.) and famous people.
Student	Details of the influencing factors for major events (impact of economy on wars, etc)
Scholar	Knowledge of many minor events and secondary people in history.
Expert	Detailed knowledge of major and minor cultural events such as migration patterns, agricultural practices, etc.
Sage	Very detailed knowledge of nearly all events (e.g. troop movements in battles, migration patterns, economic fluctuation, etc.) and ability to correlate information across time periods.

Note: History is covered by the History skill for regional areas, and World Lore for history of the whole world. World Lore would of course be far more general and cover events, which span multiple continents. Learning World Lore to higher ranks is difficult due to a scarcity of information and teachers.

One will also naturally know more about recent history than ancient history. Consider the effective Tier to be two less for the Second Era and four less for the First Era. (i.e. An Expert historian would only be an Expert in Third Era history, while he would be a Student for the Second Era, but know nothing of the First Era (very few would know anything of the First Era beyond the stories).

## SECTION 9

# POWERS OF NOTE

*Knowledge is the greatest of all tools, for it can sculpt the mind.*

*Knowledge is the greatest of all weapons, for it is as powerful when withheld as when wielded.*

*Knowledge is the greatest of all fortresses, for it travels with you*

*Knowledge is the greatest of all burdens, though it weighs nothing at all.*

*Knowledge is the greatest of all addictions, for the more you learn, the less of it you know.*

—Loremaster Axiom

*Most important people in history have been on a regional level. However over Kulthea's history there have been a few groups and individuals that have had an impact on a global level.*

### LOREMASTERS

The Loremasters were a group of knowledgeable men and women that appeared at the beginning of the Second Era (See History Section 8) and acted to spread knowledge to help cultures flourish. They wore many guises, spoke every tongue, and held knowledge critical to the survival of these infant peoples. They also developed the calendar in use today.

No one but the Loremasters themselves knew from where they came, or indeed how many there were; they did not speak of their origins. They may not even have been a completely organized group; instead they may have been a loose organization of wise men and women. There is no doubt, however, that they were unmatched masters of the Essænce. It is rumored that the Loremasters were immortal even as were the first Lords of Essænce, or as the Elven-kind are now, but this too is not known for certain.

Centuries elapsed, and those claiming to be Loremasters came and went from various lands, always available to teach. It is entirely possible that these teachers were not different generations of Loremasters but the same group, circulating through the widely separated lands and only returning to places that they had been after many hundreds of years. It is also possible that many who claimed to be Loremasters were not, and only used the name to give themselves legitimacy. Many believe that they were always just a legend. If not legend, there must certainly be far fewer now that declare themselves as such. In some areas of the world they

have faded into obscurity, while in more cosmopolitan areas some say Loremasters still provide council to rulers.

### ANDRAAX

No description of Shadow World would be complete without mentioning Andraax. Probably the most famous historical figure of all time, Andraax—a Loari Elf—is credited with not only being one of the founders of the Loremasters but also many important places such as the Nomikos Library of southern Jaiman. Andraax was reported killed during the Wars of Dominion.

### NAVIGATORS

*"No trip too far, no fee too large."*

*"If you have the gold, we know the way."*

*"The Flows are paved with gold!"*

*Slogans attributed to the Navigators*

Perhaps the most widely-known organization across the hemisphere is the famous Navigators. The Navigator Alliance is a coalition of several 'guilds,' an alliance that has virtually monopolized a unique transportation and guide service. They provide swift, relatively safe transport to anyone who has the money to afford their prices. The main resource they provide is the ability to guide people safely through the Essænce flows, and to locally influence Kulthea's often violent weather. The actual boundaries of the Guilds' jurisdictions have yet to be understood by outsiders (partly because they seem to differ depending on the time of year—and even time of day). A single Navigator is almost always the guide for an entire assignment, however.

Obviously, Navigators are masters of the Essænce, for not only



can they guide ships and caravans along the safest route; they are able to teleport groups—or cargoes and even ships— across vast distances by using nearby Essænce Flows. However, direct ‘Jumps,’ (what the Navigators call their Teleportation powers), especially long ones or those involving large numbers of people, are tricky and correspondingly (more) prohibitively expensive. Conventional transportation—such as riding animals or sea vessels—is almost never supplied by the Guild, and in fact must frequently be provided to the Navigator by the client. The Navigator, however, will advise the ignorant client on what mode of transport is most appropriate.

All Navigators utilize some sort of device (usually referred to as a Compass) in their trade, though its nature and appearance varies tremendously from Guild to Guild. One group uses a disk-shaped object resembling a large and ornate magnetic Terran compass (such are useless on Kulthea), worn

about the neck on a chain. Another’s members manipulate an intricate device with many small tubes and slides, which looks like a very sophisticated sextant. Yet another Guild uses a bracelet of silvery metal fitted with a single hemispherical gem.

The Navigator Alliance does make clear some of the tenets of their common Alliance Code, one of which is that they will not transport what they consider military personnel or items, either for the purpose of attack, espionage or sabotage, and they maintain the right to refuse any assignment they consider to be such.

Navigators are businessmen above all things, and they are notoriously unsympathetic to people with no money in tight situations. In the event that a vessel or caravan accompanied by a Navigator is attacked by raiders or bandits, the Navigator will not fight unless he or she is personally threatened. That instance rarely arises, partly because of the famous vengeance inflicted upon those who attack Navigators, and partly the fact that Navigators wield very real power over the Essænce. It is also said that none is less than a superb fighter should he opt to draw steel.

There have been a few incidents in the past in which some power-hungry lord has attempted to coerce a Navigator—or, worse yet—kill one to try to acquire his Compass. The failure of such attempts is quite well known: retaliation is always swift and spectacular. One king who ordered a Navigator killed vanished soon after (along with the entire royal treasury) and was never heard from again.

There is one common way to contact a Navigator, should one have the cash and the inclination to travel. Scattered across the lands of the world are triangular stone obelisks, one foot across at the base, usually twenty feet tall and tapering to a needle-sharp point at the top. They are unmarked, shiny black, and virtually indestructible. Simply place a hand on one and say, in just about any language, something to the effect of “I require a Navigator” and one will magically appear within moments. He or she will then discuss terms and payments (inflexibly cash up front).



*A Navigator always likes to make an entrance - although frequent users find them to be far more arrogant than impressive.*

## SECTION 10

# LANGUAGES

*Did I say that? Then I've changed my mind.*

— Ajkara III, Empress of Rhakhaan 5091, Third Era

The following languages are 'global' in the sense that they are spoken across continents, however in most cases there are many dialects that vary widely. Interestingly, though these languages are global in scope, they are the most uncommon. Local regions and mortal cultures speak their own language. It is no coincidence that the languages that span the globe are the Elvish tongues. The immortality of the Elves has resulted in less variable language over time and a geographically farther reach.

**Enris-Sokal**—While technically dead, it is very much alive in the halls of the Nomikos Library and other scholarly institutions

(many very old tomes are written in Enris-Sokal). It is a very concise tongue (both written and spoken) with a large vocabulary and complex structure. Learning it is difficult (assuming you can even find a teacher).

**Dyar**—Originally a dialect of High Elvish, this tongue has changed over the years and now has only limited resemblances to its parent language.

**Erlin**—('Speech of the Forest') While not as ethereal as Iylar, the Erlin language has a musical quality. It is more accessible to mortal tongues, and is often a 'common' language between cultures. There are many dialects, including Muri-Erlin, Jaimani-Erlin, and others.

**Iruaric**—Presumably the original language of the Lords of Essænce, Iruaric

was partially telepathic and very powerful. It is no longer used for communication, although its legacy lives on in place names, and in magic. The few users of the Arcane, the Primal Essænce, are its only students now, although teachers are exceedingly rare.

**Iylar (High Elvish)**—Iylar is a beautiful and ancient tongue, lyrical and mystical, used primarily by the Linæri for poetry and song. Men cannot speak it properly.

**Loariki**—Written and spoken language of the Loari. A very old tongue, it is rarely taught to anyone outside their race or even spoken in the presence of others. It has an extensive vocabulary, which allows great precision - perfect for histories and technical texts. It is often used by Loari scribes.



The Great Oak, a massive tree purported to be alive in the heart of the Emerald Forest.



## ERLIN DICTIONARY

ENGLISH TO ERLIN		ERLIN TO ENGLISH	
ale	<i>gudd</i>	baas	<i>hollow</i>
avenue	<i>thal</i>	buir	<i>fires</i>
awake	<i>nem</i>	bur	<i>fire</i>
awaken	<i>nemrais</i>	burn	<i>black</i>
bay	<i>hel</i>	burs	<i>grey</i>
bay	<i>yuil</i>	burth	<i>smoke</i>
black	<i>burn</i>	cibur	<i>haven</i>
blade	<i>saren</i>	cisur	<i>bridge</i>
blue	<i>orn</i>	cor	<i>dawn</i>
break	<i>kura</i>	daart	<i>fall</i>
breaker (waves)	<i>sulem</i>	dalla	<i>islet</i>
bridge	<i>cisur</i>	daloiv	<i>islands</i>
broken	<i>kurim</i>	dalov	<i>island</i>
burn	<i>lum</i>	derum	<i>slow</i>
burning	<i>luim</i>	dom	<i>silver (1)</i>
canal	<i>lenov</i>	dorth	<i>coven</i>
cliff	<i>kai</i>	edos	<i>dwelling</i>
cloud	<i>kindag</i>	eduum	<i>dweller</i>
cove	<i>lew</i>	emer	<i>west</i>
coven	<i>dorth</i>	encla	<i>iron</i>
dark (night)	<i>ordak</i>	esov	<i>east</i>
dawn	<i>cor</i>	faal	<i>head</i>
death	<i>vog</i>	galeb	<i>steep</i>
deathless	<i>oevaag</i>	gedal	<i>hidden</i>
depth	<i>surth</i>	gorl	<i>fool</i>
dweller	<i>eduum</i>	gref	<i>jewel</i>
dwelling	<i>edos</i>	gudd	<i>ale</i>
eagle	<i>resiv</i>	haft	<i>heather</i>
east	<i>esov</i>	hel	<i>bay</i>
eat	<i>krin</i>	ien	<i>point</i>
eater	<i>kruin</i>	kai	<i>cliff</i>
eye	<i>lon</i>	karn	<i>spire</i>
fall	<i>daart</i>	kindag	<i>cloud</i>
fire	<i>bur</i>	kirn	<i>spires</i>
fires	<i>buir</i>	krem	<i>glass</i>
fool	<i>gorl</i>	krik	<i>frost</i>
forever	<i>yenor</i>	krin	<i>eat</i>
frost	<i>krik</i>	kruin	<i>eater</i>
gate	<i>turic</i>	kulag	<i>storm</i>
glass	<i>krem</i>	kura	<i>break</i>
gold	<i>orv</i>	kurim	<i>broken</i>
grand	<i>kyr</i>	kyr	<i>grand</i>
great hall	<i>tyrl</i>	lemira	<i>watching</i>
green	<i>voru</i>	lenov	<i>canal</i>
grey	<i>burs</i>	lew	<i>cove</i>
guardian	<i>throk</i>	lin	<i>part; piece</i>
hall	<i>tyl</i>	lon	<i>eye</i>
haven	<i>cibur</i>	luim	<i>burning</i>
head	<i>faal</i>	lum	<i>burn</i>
heather	<i>haft</i>	lyry	<i>lake</i>
heavens	<i>ordag</i>	matha	<i>twin</i>
hidden	<i>gedal</i>	mur	<i>watch</i>
hill	<i>wode</i>	murten	<i>pit</i>
hollow	<i>baas</i>	nadek	<i>plaza</i>
hound	<i>zurt</i>	nadam	<i>woods</i>
ice	<i>wirs</i>	nem	<i>awake</i>
iron	<i>encla</i>	nemrais	<i>awaken</i>
island	<i>dalov</i>	oedum	<i>moneyless</i>
islands	<i>daloiv</i>	oevaag	<i>deathless</i>
islet	<i>dalla</i>	ordag	<i>heavens</i>
jewel	<i>gref</i>	ordak	<i>dark (night)</i>
keep	<i>throg</i>	ordye	<i>sky</i>
lagoon	<i>rel</i>	orn	<i>blue</i>
lake	<i>lyry</i>	orv	<i>gold</i>
mist	<i>vurl</i>	perac	<i>strait</i>
moneyless	<i>oedum</i>	perce	<i>straight water</i>
narrows	<i>shurth</i>	perll (arc. puirl)	<i>winds</i>
part; piece	<i>lin</i>	purll	<i>wind</i>
passing	<i>veurd</i>	ras	<i>shore</i>
pirate	<i>yyn</i>	rel	<i>lagoon</i>
pit	<i>murten</i>	resiv	<i>eagle</i>
plaza	<i>nadek</i>	saren	<i>blade</i>
point	<i>ien</i>	saren	<i>sword</i>
privateer	<i>yon</i>	sel	<i>silver (2)</i>
rain	<i>udam</i>	shurth	<i>narrows</i>
secret	<i>vurd</i>	sulem	<i>breaker (waves)</i>
shore	<i>ras</i>	surth	<i>depth</i>
silver (1)	<i>dom</i>	thal	<i>avenue</i>
silver (2)	<i>sel</i>	throg	<i>keep</i>
sky	<i>ordye</i>	throk	<i>guardian</i>
slow	<i>derum</i>	turic	<i>gate</i>
smoke	<i>burth</i>	tyl	<i>hall</i>
spire	<i>karn</i>	tyrl	<i>great hall</i>
spires	<i>kirn</i>	udam	<i>rain</i>
steep	<i>galeb</i>	usiiv-daart	<i>waterfall</i>
storm	<i>kulag</i>	usiv (arc. usuv)	<i>water</i>
straight water	<i>perce</i>	usiva (arc. usuiv)	<i>waters</i>
strait	<i>perac</i>	veurd	<i>passing</i>
sword	<i>saren</i>	vog	<i>death</i>
twin	<i>matha</i>	voru	<i>green</i>
watch	<i>mur</i>	vurd	<i>secret</i>
watching	<i>lemira</i>	vurl	<i>mist</i>
water	<i>usiv (arc. usuv)</i>	vurt	<i>wild</i>
waterfall	<i>usiiv-daart</i>	wirs	<i>ice</i>
waters	<i>usiva (arc. usuiv)</i>	wode	<i>hill</i>
west	<i>emer</i>	yenor	<i>forever</i>
wild	<i>vurt</i>	yon	<i>privateer</i>
wind	<i>purll</i>	yuil	<i>bay</i>
winds	<i>perll (arc. puirl)</i>	yyn	<i>pirate</i>
wolf	<i>zart</i>	zart	<i>wolf</i>
woods	<i>nadam</i>	zurt	<i>hound</i>

**Note**—plurals of indigenous words tend to be formed by the addition of a second vowel after the last vowel in the singular word; usually it is an i. Lone u's are most often indicative of a singular. Compound words such as breakwater are commonly separated by dashes, with any ending vowels dropped in both component words. Erlin has four distinct secondary vowels: a, e, i, and y, and one primary: u. One further note: the term arc. That follows certain words is an abbreviation for 'archaic', and it indicates the older and less common term for a presently-used word. More powerful or educated folk tend to use the older forms in everyday speech.

## IRUARIC DICTIONARY

ENGLISH TO IRUARIC		history	gaalek; gaalenakh	IRUARIC TO ENGLISH		loar	builder
(modifier 'to'; er)	is	home	man	aek	stone	loorn	lonely
(plural)	i	island	nuul	aer	thirsty	lug	ugly
(of)	ta	iyx	twist; turn(ing)	ahren	secret	lyx	dread
apart	lenn	lake	lak	and	first	malvin	endless
assassin	khâng	land	-ia	arul	see	man	home
barren; empty	hulkanen	lonely	loorn	arulis	seer	mûn	hill
beautiful	iyła	lord	K'	arus	water	mur	female/feminine
blade	dag	lore	Pn	az	dwel/home	nae	past
blind	xyg	lost	laakh	dæn	elder	nak	tower
born	thal	maker	lavan	dag	blade	nuul	island
broken	tairken	male/masculine	syr	dir	shackle	phoen	travel
build	loa	master	kort	dom	shallow	Pn	lore
builder	loar	mind	xu	dyar	dark	puk	wild
cavern	trog	mist	ran	emer	heart	ra	power
circle; ring	reth	mountain	thos	erlin	grower	raax	claw
claw	raax	ocean	usuiv	farok	forbidden	rak	cold
cloud	hulum	past	nae	fol	gather	ran	mist
cold	rak	place (n)	-is	gaalek; gaalenakh	history	reth	circle; ring
cold; chilling	kiskaa	power	ra	her	vision	rôk	stupid
crystal	iæn/laen	power	vir	hír	sky	ryk	soul
cult; sect	Jerak	sea	tesea	ho	giant	serem	green
dark	dyar	secret	ahren	hulkanen	barren; empty	shin	death
dead	shon	see	arul	hulum	cloud	shon	dead
death	shin	seer	arulis	iæn/laen	crystal	shú	fire; flame
dread	lyx	separated	lenn	-ia	land	shulu	wet
dwel/home	az	shackle	dir	-is	place (n)	syr	male/masculine
elder	dæn	shadow	kul; torg	iyła	beautiful	ta-	half
enchanted	vul	shallow	dom	jai	gift	tairken	broken
enchanter	vuul	sing	lina	Jerak	cult; sect	tesea	sea
endless	malvin	singer	linær	K'	lord	thal	born
Essænce	viir	song	lin	kemm	glass	thea	world
eternity; forever	lan	soul	ryk	khâng	assassin	then	haven
female/feminine	mur	sky	hír	kiskaa	cold; chilling	thos	mountain
fire; flame	shú	spirit	lo	kort	master	throk	guardian
first	and	star	kygar	kul; torg	shadow	trog	cavern
forbidden	farok	stone	aek	kygar	star	twist; turn(ing)	iyx
forever	lair	stupid	rôk	laakh	lost	tykil	tiny
gather	fol	tall; high	larn	lair	forever	usuiv	ocean
giant	ho	thirsty	aer	lak	lake	viir	Essænce
gift	jai	tiny	tykil	lan	eternity; forever	vir	power
glass	kemm	tower	nak	larn	tall; high	vul	enchanted
green	serem	travel	phoen	lavan	maker	vuul	enchanter
grower	erlin	ugly	lug	lenn	apart; separated	xu	mind
guardian	throk	vision	her	lin	song	xyg	blind
half	ta-	water	arus	lina	sing		
haven	then	wet	shulu	linær	singer		
heart	emer	wild	puk	lo	spirit		
hill	mûn	world	thea	loa	build		

**Notes**—Some forms utilize the apostrophetic syllable breaks, while later forms smoothed the words for human tongues. Some leeway is necessary to interpret the Iruaric to common references. For instance, the names of the Elvish races are actually simplistic references to their stereotypical aptitudes or appearance. The High Elves are known as Iylari or literally 'beauties', because of their looks. Sometimes an 'r' is added before the pluralizing 'i'; this is believed to be an indication of increase; instead of more than one, it indicates many more - often applied to a race of beings.



## SECTION 11

# APPENDIX

... the rainforest seemed to close in upon us with the darkness, trees and vines whispering as we passed. Even Luronen Moje seemed uneasy, occasionally hesitating on the narrow path to listen with those superhuman ears. "We shall be at the Gate soon," he whispered.

The Great Moon Orhan rose in the sky, an intermittent presence through openings in the forest canopy. I began to feel a prickling on my skin like before a storm - and all of the usual forest-sounds had ceased. The leaves had even stopped their incessant whispering.

Then the trees parted and we were at the edge of a clearing. Directly ahead a massive ruin rose, carved of some green stone and polished to a dark gloss. A stairway marched up to a gigantic colonnade where great pillars supported only the sky.

This was a center of power, a focus-point of the Essence. It was also a Gate through which we could pass to other places - even other times, if we wished.

Luronen put his foot on the first step - and a powerful gust of wind ripped through the clearing, tearing at the trees. Then a shimmering green light erupted between the columns. A fork of lightning stabbed down out of the cloudless sky, dancing through the pillars - and around a figure in the center of the Gate. Someone had arrived.

From the Tales of Relis Charishaang

The material in this appendix includes common information that will be referenced by the continent guides, but is not actually used in this guide. Such information includes descriptions of cultures including technology levels and subsistence patterns, as well as climate and biome descriptions.

## GEMS & METALS

"Craftsmen work with Steel. Artists work with Laen. Only fools and geniuses work with Eog."

Tethior the Smith, after purchasing 100 pounds of Eog

In addition to all the common metals and gems familiar on Earth, Kulthea has some additional gems and metals that often have magical qualities. Some gems are particularly attuned to one of the magical realms or have inherent magical properties.

**Channeling**—Aventurine, Obsidian, Rose Quartz, Sapphire (normal and black)

**Essence**—Jacinth, Opal (normal, black, fire), Ruby, Topaz

**Mentalism**—Amethyst, Aquamarine, Carnelian, Pearl, Quartz, Rhodochrosite

Other unique gems have certain protective properties or other unusual qualities.



**Bloodstone**—A soft, sandy stone dark red in color it can stop bleeding in seconds by just placing the stone over it. Each 6 oz stone will only work once before the virtue is spent however.



**Bluestone**—It's similar to azurite in appearance but it's naturally enchanted to provide an element of protection against essence spells.

TABLE 12: METAL LORE

TIER	DESCRIPTION
Novice	Knowledge of, and ability to identify, common and precious metals and their uses. TL 2 (Bronze Age)
Student	Knowledge of metal-working crafts. Ability to identify alloys and unusual and uncommon metals. Some knowledge of magical properties. TL 3 (Iron Age)
Scholar	Knowledge of uses for uncommon, rare, and magical metals. Excellent understanding of various metal-working techniques. Ability to determine quality of alloys. TL 4 (Medieval Age)
Expert	Exceptional ability to determine quality of worked metal and identifying flaws. Ability to make inference as to when and where specific objects were made. Advanced metal-working techniques. TL 5 (Early Renaissance)
Sage	Complete knowledge of all metals, all known uses, and all known magical properties. Ability to make detailed inference about specific objects including how metal was worked. Knowledge of superior metals. TL 6+ (Pre-industrial and later)

The typical knowledge tiers for learned persons in a given culture will be based on the technology level (TL) for that culture and are given for each knowledge tier above.



**Eissa's Tears**—These clear pale blue gems are said to warn and protect against death and detect creatures of 'evil'.



**Moonstone**—Moonstones can be aligned to either Orhan or Charôn and will change color to match the phases of the respective moon.

Kulthea has no shortage of metals and some cultures have developed quite sophisticated metal working techniques. It is also home to some more unusual metals with inherent magical properties. A few of these are listed here, but there are other rarer metals.



**Arinyark**—This bluish-green can be polished to a dull luster and can absorb raw Essænce radiations, allowing it to store power for use or be used defensively (e.g. through armor).



**Eog**—An extremely hard dull silvery metal, it is brittle in its pure form, but when combined with certain other elements it can be used to make superior and enchanted weapons and armor. Certain pure types of Eog (white & black) also have the power to inhibit Essence.



**Laen**—An extremely hard volcanic glass, which can be forged into very keen-edged, almost indestructible, weapons. Laen can also be tinted and very rarely is naturally colored.



**Rularon**—Dull silver in color Rularon is very soft and malleable and can inhibit spells of Mentalism.



**Shaalk**—A very lightweight, pliable and resilient metal that can be made into thin sheets that resemble the finest white paper. but is glossy and almost indestructible.



**Xenium**—Blue-silver in hue, Xenium is the only alloy listed here and deserves mention for its famous use, which is on the underside of skyships. The alloy somehow nullifies the force of gravity but the exact manner in which this is accomplished encompasses many factors and are extremely difficult to calculate, or understand.

## CULTURES

Detailed information on individual cultures will be given in the continent guides and will use the descriptors given here for Technology Level, Political Structure, and Subsistence Patterns.

## TECHNOLOGY LEVELS

The following technological periods are examples, which reflect a common course of development among most intelligent humanoid species and are particularly appropriate for Kulthea. Various societies on the Shadow World have technologies ranging from Old Stone Age through Iron Age and even beyond. For convenience, the various 'levels' are assigned numbers so they can be noted in the cultural descriptions in the continent guides.

One might wonder how a wide range of technological levels can exist in such close proximity, especially given the amount of trade on Kulthea. This situation is understandable, however, because technical advancement depends on skill, knowledge and the proper facilities. For instance, the Lankani have neither the skill nor the equipment to make fine steel, even though they might know the formula. In another example, the making of the antigravity metal Xenium requires not only sophisticated equipment, but the formula is a closely guarded secret held by a few Alchemists.

The weapon references include a suggested range of modifiers based on a d100 system.



TABLE 13: CULTURE LORE

TIER	DESCRIPTION
Novice	Knowledge of cultural holidays and proper protocol and rituals.
Student	Knowledge of everyday practices and ability to predict how individuals may react. cursory cultural history.
Scholar	Cultural history well known in addition to sub-cultures and different factions. Good understanding of cultural politics.
Expert	Cultures are well known including detailed knowledge of the spectrum of cultural views and politics.
Sage	Nearly all aspects of cultural life and history are very well known.

**Stone Age**—Crude stone tools used; little or no cultural development. Fire, basic spoken language. Natural metals used late in this period.

**Old Stone Age (OSA)**—No metal used. Stone tool use confined to a variety of types of chopping and hand ax devices made from pebbles of varying sizes. Choppers are nothing more than pebbles with a rough but sharp edge, formed by flaking chips off the rock. The more sophisticated hand axes (-30 to -75) are like large, hand-held stone blades or points. Wood is used, but weapons are generally clubs (-0) or spears (-25 to -50) made out of long sticks with fire tempered points.

**Middle Stone Age (MSA)**—Still no metal in use. Stone is worked by a variety of methods and there are some very effective tools. Wood and bone tools become widespread; and by combining wood shafts with harder spear, ax, and knife points, some reasonable (-15 to -35) weapons become available. Combination maces (-10 to -25) are relatively effective. Throwing spears (-15 to -35) and atlatl (spear-throwers) are used instead of bows.

**Late Stone Age (LSA)**—No true metalwork (e.g., smelting), although naturally occurring metal pieces might be used. Pottery appears in force. Highly specialized and sophisticated stone, bone, and combination tools (-10 to -25) are widespread, and include farming implements and a wide variety of weapons. Various short bow types are in use. Mixed economies using rotational agriculture require this technology as a minimum.

**Bronze Age**—Crude metalworking, agriculture, and simple art forms. Settled cultural groups. Basic written language. The wheel, oared galleys, herbal healing, crude spears and bronze swords. Stone used in important buildings.

**Early Bronze Age (EBA)**—Natural metals, mostly copper, are frequently used for certain implements such as knives or pots. Metalwork consists of trimming and shaping pieces and primitive smelting enables folk to create large metal objects and weapons (-10 to 0). Bone, hardened wood, stone, and other mediums remain the tools of the common man.



*The Zor Wastes is all that remains of the Kingdom of Zor which was utterly destroyed in a cataclysm many centuries ago.*





**Late Bronze Age (LBA)**—True metal industries form with the advent of extensive smelting and the making of bronze tools out of tin and copper. Smithies abound and a vast variety of weapons (0 to +10) are in evidence, but metal objects are still confined to a relatively small segment of society and military units are small and often made up of the elite.

**Iron Age**—Refined weapon and tool-making, sophisticated agriculture. The beginnings of science and philosophy. Regional governments. Keystone arch, water power, chemical medicine, scale armor. Sophisticated metalworking methods enable society to master alloys such as iron and create vast quantities of metal objects. Smiths use hot, bellows-assisted forges to smelt metals heretofore unworkable. Hard iron (0), and later steel (+5 to +10), weapons are widespread and cheap, enabling large armies to be equipped properly.

**Medieval Age**—Steel alloys (swords, chain-mail), sailing ships. Art and language refined. Windmills. The pointed arch allows for greater unsupported spans.

**Early Renaissance Age**—Regional Governments become more sophisticated. Art is a powerful force. Rigged sailing ships, telescopes.

**Late Renaissance/Pre-industrial Age**—Superior metals, advanced cultures with national governments. The beginnings of 'technology': printing press and first clocks developed. Balloons, medical experimentation.

## POLITICAL STRUCTURES

**Anarchy**—Actually, the absence of a working structure or government, generally leading to complete disorder and confusion.

**Clan**—A large group of families or bands (family groups), which claim descent from a common ancestor and have strong blood ties. They are typically ruled by a chieftain or warlord, although a council of representatives (e.g., elders) may possess some or all of the real power and authority.



*The Isle of Fire, the religious centre for the Church of Zanar.*

الجزيرة النارية



**Democracy**—A society where the ultimate power is vested in the citizenry. Under this system, each citizen has an equal vote.

**Dictatorship**—Absolute power, but not necessarily authority, is held by one person (the dictator).

**Feudal**—A somewhat decentralized system based on various tiers of landholders (possessors or owners). Those with lesser holdings (vassals) derive their grants and security from those above and, in return, provide the greater landholder (lords) with goods (e.g., food) or services (e.g., troops). Such a system is often hereditary.

**Monarchy**—Absolute power and authority is held by one overlord, the monarch (e.g., king, queen, emperor, empress, etc.). Such a system is generally hereditary.

**Oligarchy**—Power and authority rests in the hands of a small number of individuals (oligarchs), who may form a coalition or elite upper class.

**Republic**—Supreme power rests in one or more representative(s), governmental assemblies elected by the citizenry. Citizens may or may not have practical equality (i.e., an equal vote).



Unfortunately, portals to and from places of unspeakable horrors aren't an uncommon occurrence in Shadow World.

**Theocracy**—Ultimate political power and authority rests with those who hold supreme religious power and authority. The overlord is often considered a deity or divine representative.

**Tribe**—A group of related clans or a large collection of people who maintain the same culture and consider themselves brethren. They are typically ruled by a council of elders (e.g., clan chieftains) and/or a high chieftain or king.

## SUBSISTENCE PATTERNS

**Hunter-gatherers**—These groups rely on big game for food, have low population densities, and exist in a nomadic or semi-nomadic state. Extreme temperatures, rough terrain, and/or poor soil discourage any form of agriculture. Bands or tribes may have distinct hunting circuits and therefore establish vague territorial boundaries. Urbanization is virtually nil, although certain specific sites may be sacred and the focus of periodic societal gatherings. High protein meat diets are supplemented with nuts, fruits, berries, and occasionally fish. Wild grains are rarely used.

The average group size is normally limited to 25-50 people. The territory is limited by the availability of water, wild foods, and game, and the overall proximity of these staples to each other. Population density varies from .05 to 10 people per square mile.

Men normally do the hunting because the mobility requirement conflicts with childbearing. Women usually gather supplemental foodstuffs, an often arduous task that accounts for up to seventy percent of the group's nutritional intake. As with most extremely mobile groups, few old or weak people survive for any length of time (e.g., they may perceive their presence as a burden and wander off to die). In addition, possessions are usually limited to what one can comfortably carry.

**Slash and burn agriculturists**—These folk rely on hardy yet primitive vegetables, mostly grains and tubers. Often poor soil, harsh climates, steep grades, or dense foliage prevent a society from exploiting the land any more efficiently. Farming revolves around the clearing of an area by slashing large foliage obstacles and burning off the remainder. Normally one crop is harvested per year, and the land is again cleared by burning. Since the soil is quickly exhausted, movement to new cultivated areas is frequent. Coarse grasses replace the cleared forest in the abandoned fields. The replenishment of the trees takes decades or centuries. Fishing

and gathering may supplement the diet. The population density varies from 1 to 20 people per square mile.

**Herders**—Herding peoples survive by supplementing a modest agricultural base with meat and dairy products taken from goats, sheep, cattle, and the like. Generally, the relatively small parcels of fertile soil are reserved for cropland or gardens, while the less arable territory is given over to the herds. Although the fertile land is provided with adequate fertilizer and is depleted rather slowly, overgrazing can exhaust the limited foliage elsewhere. Therefore, large areas are needed for the herds, since some rotation of the grazing lands is required.

Seasonal movements between lowland and highland pastures occur on occasion and serve to counter soil depletion and subsequent erosion. Mobility can also conquer the problems of drought and famine, which can devastate the animal-based food supply. Unfortunately, it is harder to hide from disease, and a herding group can suddenly find itself without food, should their flocks contract a severe illness. The people's proximity to their animals also makes them more susceptible to contagious disease. Herder population densities vary from 3 to 40 people per square mile.

**Fisherfolk**—Fishermen may supplement their diet by gathering or gardening. Normally these folk live on islands, beside the coast, or along rich watercourses, and get most of their nutrition from fish, shellfish, sea mammals, and other related delicacies. Some of these societies are akin to hunters and gatherers, and move periodically, as a result of weather or the flow of food sources. Others live a more sedentary existence, usually in comfortable seaside spots. This sort of subsistence produces population densities between .5 and 50 people per square mile.

**Mixed economies**—These groups emphasize rotational farming, often yielding large amounts of food, mostly grains and vegetables. Modest amounts of meat, dairy products, and fish round out the diet. Such societies generally possess large tracts of arable soil, and devote their surplus land and harvests to providing for animals, or as storage for future use. Within these areas, population density varies from 10 to 100+ people per square mile.

## REGIONS

Detailed information on smaller regions will be given in the continent guides. The Region Lore table is given for completeness.

**TABLE 14: REGION LORE**

TIER	DESCRIPTION
Novice	Ability to identify major landmarks (cities, major roads).
Student	Knowledge of minor cities and terrain variations, as well as cursory local history of major landmarks.
Scholar	Knowledge of small towns, local histories of minor areas, and minor landmarks.
Expert	Knowledge of all major and minor landmarks.
Sage	Knowledge of nearly everything in the area, including some secret areas, and local history.



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# A ONE MONTH CALENDAR

ORHAYEN	BURYEN	USIYVEN	MEIYEN	ORDYEN	MARYEN	KVAYEN	KINDAGYEN	ARYEN	PURLYEN
									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
									
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
									
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
									
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
									
41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
									
51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
									
61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70
									





# Shadow World

Step into the **Shadow World** with this indispensable guide to a richly detailed and exotic fantasy setting. Designed explicitly for players, the **World Guide** will inform and delight newcomers and veterans alike through crystal-clear text and stunning artwork, which bring the world's wonders to glorious life. For gamemasters, this book will answer the questions of what every character should know about the magic, the lands, the gods, the history, and the peoples of **Shadow World**.

## WELCOME TO THE SHADOW WORLD



GCP-SW-1001

The skyship trembled and began to list to starboard, her structure creaking ominously. Both men staggered but regained their balance as the craft slewed about in a strangely majestic spin, drawn towards the Ess  nce vortex. Ignoring the wind tearing at his clothes and flowing hair, Sulfean carefully replaced his Compass in its padded leather pouch. Moje fought to control his own flapping cloak in this sudden gale, while the Navigator turned to face the storm.

