

Troll Gods[®]

The Deities of Darkness



Troll Gods is Avalon Hill's trademark
for its fantasy roleplaying game
Supplement to RuneQuest.
Troll Gods was developed
and created by
Chaosium Inc.

By Greg Stafford,
Sandy Petersen, William Dunn

Troll Gods is a supplement to the
RuneQuest roleplaying game.
You must have a copy of either
the RuneQuest Players Box
or the RuneQuest Deluxe Box
in order to fully use Troll Gods.



The Avalon Hill
Game Company

DIVISION OF MONARCH AVALON, INC.

© Sullivan 88

What's In This Box?

Troll Gods is a Gloranthan supplement for *RuneQuest*. It is the definitive work on the subject of troll and darkness deities. It is a companion piece to *Trollpak*, also available from the Avalon Hill Game Company. We hope you enjoy it!

Contents

1. **The Troll Cults Book** contains comprehensive information on the fifteen most widely worshiped troll gods. Certain of these gods have been described in *Gods of Glorantha* in a short form. In this book you will find the full versions of these cults. Many of these darkness deities are also worshiped by humans or other non-troll species, so the cults have relevance for many kinds of adventurers, not just trolls. Several other troll gods are briefly described at the end of the book. These gods vary in power and influence, but their cults are extremely small. Most lack any worship site larger than a shrine.

2. **Minaryth Purple's Troll Facts #3: the Gods and Magic of the Uzko** is a facsimile of a rare original Lhankor Mhy document. This document was commissioned recently for a member of the Sartar nobility. All aspects of the original document have been painstakingly maintained, including the three different styles of penmanship used. This facsimile is presented in typeset form for the sake of readability, but each style of penmanship is given its own font. Even the strange selection of underlined words that existed in the original has been reproduced.

The document may be read by both players and gamemasters. One suggested usage is for the gamemaster to photocopy a section of the book pertaining to his adventure or campaign and use this photocopy as a player handout.

3. **Glorantha: Primary Troll Regions** is a map showing the twelve most populous and influential troll regions. At the end of the Troll Cults Book you will find a comprehensive cult membership table that uses these twelve areas. The areas also correspond to the character generation areas in *Trollpak*, so the map is a handy reference for troll character generation as well as for cult membership.

Using *Troll Gods* for Adventures

Troll Gods is a reference work, and may be used both by players and gamemasters. There are no adventures or other specifically gamemaster-oriented material in the supplement. However, the material found in our facsimile Lhankor Mhy document can easily form the basis of troll-related adventures. For example, the descriptions of troll ceremonies can be used to create adventures in which the player-trolls (or troll friends) experience one of these rites. The descriptions of events on Skyfall Lake can be used as guidelines for creating encounters on that lake. Use the information in the Troll Cults Book to flesh out non-player characters. Be inventive!

Authors: Greg Stafford, Sandy Petersen, William Dunn

Editors: William Dunn, Sandy Petersen

Interior Illustrations: Dave Dobyski

Cover Illustration: Tom Sullivan

Project, Graphic Design, Production: William Dunn

Map: William Dunn, Lisa Kasle



Troll Cults Book

The Avalon Hill Game Company

A Division of Monarch Avalon Inc.

4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214

ШR∇∂∂∂†∴ΔΥ∂ϕ⌘ШR∇∂∂∂†∴ΔΥ∂ϕ⌘ШR∇∂∂∂†∴ΔΥ∂ϕ⌘



RuneQuest is Avalon Hill's trademark for its fantasy roleplaying game.
Created & Developed by Chaosium, Inc. ©1989. All Rights Reserved.

Troll Cults Book

Authors: Sandy Petersen, Greg Stafford

Editor: William Dunn

Graphic Design and Production: William Dunn



*This is a document of Lhankor Mhy, Lord of the Light of Knowledge. May his
force grant Truth and Wisdom to all who read this book. All contents for sale:
5,000 guilders pure silver.*



CONTENTS

Annilla, Goddess of the Blue Moon.....5	Moorgarki, Goddess of Jungle Trolls54
<i>Illustration: A Priest of the Blue Moon.....7</i>	<i>Illustration: A Jungle Shrine55</i>
Aranea, Goddess of Spiders.....12	Subere, Goddess of the Inner Dark.....57
<i>Illustration: An Aranea Ceremony13</i>	<i>Illustration: Monsters of the Underworld59</i>
Argan Argar, God of Surface Darkness ..17	Xentha, Goddess of the Night..... 60
<i>Illustration: Bolgs.....19</i>	<i>Illustration: A Priestess of Xentha61</i>
Arkat21	Xiola Umbar, Goddess of Compassion.... 63
<i>Illustration: A Statue of Arkat23</i>	<i>Illustration: Troll Children and Nurse.....65</i>
The Black Sun.....26	Zong the Hunter..... 69
<i>Illustration: Combat in an Arena27</i>	<i>Illustration: Troll Hunter and Cave Troll.....71</i>
Gorakiki, Mother of Insects31	Zorak Zoran, God of Hate..... 73
<i>Illustration: A Warrior of Gorakiki33</i>	<i>Illustration: Zorak Zoran Berserkers75</i>
Himile, God of Cold.....38	Spirits of Darkness 78
<i>Illustration: Ice Demon.....39</i>	<i>Illustration: A Shaman.....79</i>
Kyger Litor, Mother of Trolls.....42	Cult Availability 85
<i>Illustration: A Priestess and a Grey Fury.....45</i>	New Spells and Skills 88
Mee Voral, Goddess of Fungi51	
<i>Illustration: Dark Elves53</i>	

A Chaosium Game

Published by the Avalon Hill Game Company

Created and Developed by Chaosium Inc.

This book and its companion materials comprise the boxed *RuneQuest*® supplement *TROLL GODS*, published simultaneously. *TROLL GODS* is copyright © 1988 by Chaosium Inc. All rights reserved.

This book may not be reproduced whole or in part by any means without permission from Chaosium Inc., except as quoted for purposes of illustration, discussion, and game play. All art remains the property of the artist unless otherwise specified.

Published by the Avalon Hill Game Company, 4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214

Printed in the United States of America



ANNILLA

I. MYTHOS AND HISTORY

THE GODDESS ANNILLA is ancient and mysterious. She was active and important in the misty realms of God Time, but has since lost most of her prestige and power. Even most of her myths are lost. Those that are described in this chapter were compiled by Thorloss the Scribe, a Lhankor Mhy priest from the Jadnor Knowledge temple, who wrote the most authoritative work on the subject of Annilla in 853 S.T.

Public information about Annilla begins with her origins as the child of Nakala and Zaramaka, the Primal Darkness and the Primal Waters which both preceded the Celestial Court. They say she was Queen of the Great Giants, a mysterious race which fought the dragons of old. Her husband, who was dismembered by the dragons, is called He Who Moves. Finding his corpse, the goddess devoured it and begat a child with no soul, who was subsequently possessed by Annilla. This, say the trolls, is the origin of the Blue Moon. Thus embodied, she taught Kyger Litor how to be a troll.

Her cultists tell a further story which they say is only half true. They say that Annilla was defeated by Yelm and Dayzatar in a contest of intellect, an unequal contest since the Blue Moon had none. Shamed, she fled to the underworld and plotted to invade the sky. She summoned the First and Oldest Blue Dragon, whom the God Learners equated with Lorion, and rode upon it to the sky. She disguised herself as a corpse shroud which Orlanth used to blindfold Yelm when the sun god was slain. Later Orlanth and his brothers abused her by making her the object of sport, sometimes said to be a ball and at others to be "marking upon the Running Field of Forbidden Sport." When violence enveloped the cosmos she was shattered, either by Orlanth the Bandit, Mostal of the Flesh, the Rat with Hands, or the Serpent of Fur and Legs (all titles or beings unacknowledged elsewhere) and cast down from heaven.

Most people, including the trolls, say that the Blue

Moon Plateau of Peloria is the largest single piece of her body which struck the Surface World. Trolls called the Tribe of Harvip Zeen found it, preserved the feeble life force remaining, and created the cult which is still active there.

Part of the Blue Moon remained in the sky, rising and falling in its own unpredictable pattern. It is believed to control the tides of Glorantha. The God Learners attributed the relationship between the Blue Streak and the falling tides to the close association between the Blue Moon with He Who Moves and her kinship with the Primal Waters.

The Blue Moon Trolls occupied their plateau and its surrounding hills since the earliest human contact in the First Age. They are isolationist to the point of xenophobia and terrifying enough to maintain their position and power. For the first 1500 years S.T., no one dared to investigate them closely. Anything of mysterious origin which occurred was commonly attributed to them. Only a few humans, twisted from their humanity by their proximity to the ill radiations of the Blue Moon, have been able to survive the initiation into the cult, and they have become as secretive as the trolls. The few acknowledged human members in Genertela are recognized to be demented, and are usually slain outright once identified.

This cult has been quite quiescent since the dawn. The Veldang of Pamaltela have participated in no important deed save the passive one of being conquered by other peoples. The Loper People caused local trouble, but seriously threatened no major culture. The single known act in which the trolls participated was of tremendous significance, however. They helped exterminate the Empire of the Wyrms Friends, acting in conjunction with the equally mysterious dragonewts. No one living knows why they aided nor how they were contacted. Everyone knows that they were instrumental in the overnight extermination of the Empire's leadership, and most people presume that they received much, if not all, of the unique treasures which disappeared that fateful night in 1042.

With the coming of the Red Goddess the first contact was established, albeit so secretly that few people within the empire are aware of their secrets. Strangers to their country are dealt with as harshly as ever, and



they have not been known to be hired as assassins. On the other hand, they are commonly believed to be the mainstay of the Red Emperor's secret police.

The Blue Moon cult is certainly friendly to the Red Goddess. Most trolls instinctively mistrust the Red Goddess for her consorting with chaos, but the Blue Moon trolls are persistent in their friendship, even attempting to convert more conservative trolls to acceptance, if not friendship, of the Red Moon.

Bina Bang is the leading proponent of this friendship among trolls today (1621 S.T.). She is a dark troll with awesome heroquesting powers, and once spat in Yelmalio's eye. Her efforts resulted in limited and begrudged acceptance by the children of Kyger Litor. She has since retired from active life, and now acts as advisor to her fiendish son, Pikat Yaraboom, the leading troll shaman of Dagori Inkarth.

Recent activity of the cult has been as secretive as usual.

Annilla's Runic associations are Lunar, Darkness, and Sea.

II. CULT ECOLOGY

Annilla is goddess of tides and secret powers. Her peculiar position ensures her cosmic importance, even if her exact nature remains obscure to most Gloranthans.

The cult does not manifest specific preferences to strangers. Its main dislike appears to be snoopy outsiders.

Thorloss the Scribe calculated that the cult's holy nights each season fell upon the start of the longest tide occurring that season, and thus changed from year to year. The longest tide for that entire year was the high holy night for that year.

III. THE CULT IN THE WORLD

Three distinct folks still worship her, two human and one troll. The best information is available on the trolls. Both human and troll worship of Annilla have the following characteristics: secrecy, patience, and a willingness to remain in the background politically.

Like the tides, Annilla's influence is gentle, often unnoticed, but omnipresent.

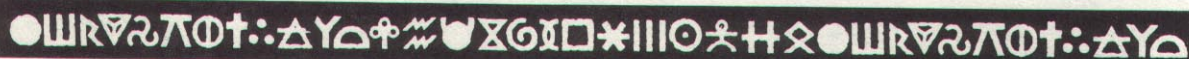
Human Worship of Annilla

The most widespread human cult is that of Mother Annilla, ancestress of the "blues", the Veldang peoples of Pamaltela who are found in two widely separated parts of the continent.

The oppressed and conquered Blues of Fonrit believe only that Mother Annilla was their ancestress and that she committed acts so atrocious that she was enslaved by Pamalt. This belief may have been forced upon the people after the tribes of Garangordos the Cruel vanquished them during the First Age, replacing whatever native cult once existed. It need not be taken seriously by any student of Gloranthan mythology.

The free Veldang, who populate the southern land of Zamokil, are a mystery to the rest of the world and their mythology and cult practices are barely known. They claim to be descendants of the Artmali Empire. Their great ancestral homeland was conquered by the Red Giants of Garanzarn, a race of extinct beings who originated in the Volcano Which Destroyed the Infinite Fleet. The Veldang say that Annilla was the mother of Artmal, who was sent to the Surface World to right the wrongs of creation and destroy the evil beings who were corrupting the realm. The goddess herself, they say, was shattered and cast down from the heavens when she fell prey to the same corruption plaguing the earth.

The second group of humans who worship Annilla are the Zaranistangi, more commonly known as the Loper People. These people are also blue-skinned, but claim to come from Coborandra, a land which exists or existed "between Star and Sea, halfway from the Hard Rock and the Soft Heart." The meaning of this ritual phrase is unknown to us, but was persistently used by them. The Zaranistangi were once widely spread, but are thought by most living peoples to be only a legendary and extinct race. Only the Praxians and inhabitants of Melib Island still believe them to be alive. The Zaranistangi rode upon large beasts called Lopers, known only in association with them. They were credited with incredible powers of evasion and concealment, appearing as if from nowhere to ambush their foes (who were numerous, since they had no friends). Tish Pistos, a Second Age God Learner, thought that they must actually have teleported about.



The Zaranistangi worshiped the Blue Moon, whom they called Emilla (the name used by men) and Annilla (the name used by women), and from whom they claimed descent. They are said to have offered human sacrifices to her every 16 days until their utter defeat in 805 S.T., by King Svagad of Seshnela, at the Battle of the Lopers in Slontos, whereupon their power was dissipated and they rapidly faded from history.

Troll Worship of Annilla

The third group of Blue Moon worshipers consists of the trolls of the Blue Moon Plateau, who have lived there since they first came to the surface world. These trolls are as secretive in their storytelling about Annilla as the humans are unreachable. The trolls say that she is so old that people cannot begin to understand her, and her mythos reflects this in that it concerns beings and races almost unknown elsewhere. They make no effort to clarify matters and seem to delight in confusing the uninitiated. "If you must think about this you can never understand," they repeat.

Blue Moon temples are only found deep within the land of the worshipers. Despite this, their locations are always kept secret. Once a temple is found by outsiders, it is never used again. Thus, temple sizes can only be implied through inspecting abandoned temples discovered by bold explorers of Blue Moon country. It appears that all temples sizes are used. It is known that shrines teach Spellteaching.

Temple and cult organization is a mystery. It is clear that there is communication and obedience between temples, but the main function of the cult hierarchy is to conceal its own nature. This, they have successfully done.

IV. INITIATES

A candidate for initiation does not present himself — he must be contacted by the cult and invited to join. This is not done unless someone in the cult has known the candidate for at least a decade. Thus, trolls and Veldang born within the cult find little difficulty in joining, while outsiders find it almost impossible.

Initiates must subordinate their plans to those of the Blue Moon. They must never tell an outsider any cult secret, which is to say, anything about the cult. The cult ways are often secret even from its own initiates.

Worshipers of the Blue Moon may not be affected by more than 1 point of any Healing spell per hit location per melee round, though they can learn the spell if they can find a teacher.

Spirit Magic: Befuddle, Coordination, Countermagic, Darkwall, Dispel Magic, Dullblade, Extinguish, Glamour, Glue, Invisibility, Mindspeech, Second Sight, Slow.

V. PRIESTS

Priests and priestesses of the Blue Moon are the unseen lurkers in darkness, moving in secret paths uncomprehended by other beings. Their lives and deaths are as secret as their goals and strategies.

A candidate for priesthood must have a skill of 90% or more in three of the following skills: Conceal, Devise, Hide, Sneak, or any weapon attack. There must be an opening for a priest, and the candidate must roll his POWx3 or less in a Test of Holiness.

Even more than initiates, priests are bound to their mysterious cult. They are closer to their goddess and so know more of the cult's plans, but they do not know the purpose behind those plans any more than an initiate. They must give up 90% of their time and all their income to the cult.

They receive certain reusable divine magic.

Common Divine Magic: Command Cult Spirit, Divination, Find Enemy, Find (Substance), Mindlink, Soul Sight, Spellteaching, Summon (species), Warding, Worship Blue Moon.

Special Divine Magic: Absorption, Command Selene, Conceal, Vision.

VI. SPECIAL ANNILLA SPIRIT SPELLS

Invisibility

3 points

ranged, temporal, active

This spell makes a character invisible by attracting the enemies' attention to a spot other than where the



character is. He remains unnoticed unless he wishes to draw attention to himself, or he is detected by magic. If he makes a noise, an enemy could try to strike him by ear, subtracting 50% from chances of success.

If the character protected by the spell attacks with missile, weapon or magic, the spell will disappear, and will need to be recast before the character can go unnoticed once more.

VII. SPECIAL ANNILLA DIVINE MAGIC

Conceal

3 points

ranged, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

Like Invisibility, this spell makes the user invisible by attracting the enemy's attention to a spot other than where the character is. He remains unnoticed unless he wishes to draw attention to himself, or he is detected by magic. If he makes a noise, an enemy could try to strike him by ear, subtracting 50% from chance of success.

If the character attacks with spell, missile or melee, he becomes visible in the first strike rank of the round in which he attacks or acts *and disappears again* after the last strike rank of that round unless engaged in melee. In any round that the character disengages from melee, he disappears again at the end of the round of disengagement.

Vision

2 points

ranged, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

This spell gives a viewpoint which may be up to 150 meters away from the spirit of the recipient of the spell. Looking from this viewpoint is approximately like looking through the character's eyes, but it gives a 180 degree view. After this spell is cast, the viewpoint can be turned up to 180 degrees in a melee round.

While using Vision, the character cannot use his own eyes. However, he can switch back and forth between the spell's viewpoint and his own from one

melee round to the next.

The viewpoint is visible as a semi-transparent sphere about 4 centimeters in diameter. Attack spells cast at the viewpoint affect the caster of the Vision spell.

VIII. SUBCULTS

Spirit of Reprisal

No spirit of reprisal is known for the Blue Moon cult. Perhaps there is none, as with many of the Red Moon's cults. Or perhaps it has never manifested because no cultist has committed deeds foul enough to bring its presence. Or perhaps it *has* manifested, but no traitor has survived the spirit's visitation to tell the tale. No outsider knows, and the Blue Moon cultists aren't talking.

One thing is certain. No Blue Moon cultist has ever managed to leave the cult and make any of its secrets generally known. Thorloss the Scribe postulated that, in fact, several times in the past, initiates had betrayed their cult and noised abroad the Blue Moon's mysteries. However, Thorloss believes that the cult's retribution descended in such force as to not only murder the traitor and capture his spirit, but to expunge from the face of Glorantha every outsider who had learned of the mysteries from that traitor.

IX. ASSOCIATED CULTS

Artmal

Annilla's son by Lorian provides her with one of his combat spells.

Vesper

1 point

self, temporal, stackable, reusable

This spell causes the caster to glow with a dull bloody red color. This glow covers an area 10 meters in diameter.

All friends of the caster within the glow may add



1 to their effective magic points for attack and defense either in spirit combat or spell casting. This "extra" magic point cannot be used to cast or boost spells, nor can it be lost in spirit combat. It vanishes immediately if the friend leaves the area affected by the spell.

This extra magic point does keep a character from falling unconscious when he has expended all his magic points. It does not prevent him from being possessed by a spirit, if his "real" magic points have been reduced to 0.

Each additional point in the spell can either increase the diameter affected by 10 meters or add 1 to the effective magic point increase.

Jakaleel

This goddess is one of the Seven Mothers, an important individual within the Lunar Pantheon. She is associated only with the Blue Moon cult in Genertela. She gives the Blue Moon cult the spell of Binding Enchantment.

X. NOTES

Divination

In olden days, the Blue Moon knew the secrets of the universe and communicated them freely to her worshipers. Now, she is half-dead, changed irrevocably. While she still knows the secrets of the universe, she does not dispense them coherently.

The Blue Moon Divination spell is unique. The ceremony is performed normally, but the caster asks no question, instead simply getting a random bit of wisdom. As always, the caster must roll his POWx5 or he fails to interpret the answer properly. The reply cannot exceed seven words per point in the spell, and is always a bit of data previously unknown to the caster. The answer to a two-point spell may be something like "Sixteen Rock Eater trolls still live under the Palarkri." or "Feobald the Cleanser is the last of the Gadaringer dynasty." If the caster does not know Feobald, where or when the Gadaringer dynasty flourished, or what Rock Eaters are, the information is basically worthless.

Once (only) in the caster's life, he may receive a Divination reply with immediate and powerful import to himself, such as "Broos lurk behind the next ridge." or "Gold is buried beneath the stoop." This special reply might be the first Divination the priest ever casts or may not come for years. Many priests die without ever receiving their special reply.

The Blue Moon's Activities

Several scholars speculate that the Blue Moon has been quite active since the onset of Time, but that all accounts of her activity have been lost or destroyed. They feel that several mysterious occurrences of great historical impact should be attributed to this cult's workings. While it is convenient to blame every occurrence without known cause on the Blue Moon, many different forces are active in Glorantha. It seems doubtful that every single great mystery has been caused by the Blue Moon's assassins or magic.

The Tides

Once per tidal cycle, Annilla plummets from the top of the sky dome (via the Pole star gate), through the atmosphere and straight down magasta's Pool. Concurrently, the tides precipitously fall from highest to lowest in a single day. At this time she can sometimes be seen by keen-eyed observers who know where to look and which spells to use. As a result of these sightings, Annilla is also called the Blue Streak in various languages throughout the world.

Selenes

Selenes are lunar elementals tied to the Blue Moon. They are formed from the glow produced by certain stones, fragments of the Blue Moon, dating from the time she was shattered and much of her form fell to earth. Such stones are expensive, difficult to obtain, and normally available only to priests. Each 6 ENC of Blue Moon fragments produce enough glow to form 1 cubic meter of selene.

Selenes are invisible and undetectable to most natural senses. Spells such as Second Sight or Mystic Vision can be used to perceive the selene's POW or



magic points.

Each round that a victim is completely englobed by a selene, he loses one magic point and one hit point. A selene can engulf 10 SIZ points of opponent per cubic meter of volume it possesses.

Selenes have a loose misty structure, much like that of lunes or shades, which can be broken up by attacks. Because these entities are invisible, an attacker's chances to hit are reduced by 75 percentiles, or by 25 percentiles if he is actually engulfed by it.

Selenes have the same statistics as shades. The magic point and hit point drain takes place on SR 10 of the round the selene engulfed its victim.

Sample Small Selene

<i>characteristics</i>	<i>average</i>
STR 1D6	3-4
SIZ 1 cubic meter	—
POW 1D6	3-4
HP 1D6	3-4
Move 6	

Sample Medium Selene

<i>characteristics</i>	<i>average</i>
STR 3D6	10-11
SIZ 3 cubic meters	—
POW 3D6	10-11
HP 3D6	10-11
Move 6	

Sample Large Selene

<i>characteristics</i>	<i>average</i>
STR 10D6	35
SIZ 10 cubic m.	—
POW 10D6	35
HP 10D6	35
Move 6	





ARANEA

I. MYTHOS AND HISTORY

ARANEA is goddess of all spiders. When Aranea first came to the surface world, she had an interesting and little-described meeting with a mysterious entity often equated with Arachne Solara. After this meeting, Aranea and her children spread over the world, preying primarily on the insects that at times threatened to engulf the world.

Aranea's cult is minute, but has gained prestige because Arachne Solara, goddess of Nature, takes spider form. In historical times, the cult has been noted for its most famous member — Cragspider the Firewitch, who has used the cult to step to her current status.

Cult members are promised that, if worthy, they may be reincarnated as a spider in their next life.

The dead of this cult are discarded or (if troll) eaten. Fangs or other pieces of dead spiders are not holy, and may be used as ornaments or tools.

Aranea possesses the Runes of Beast and Darkness. She is secondarily connected with Fate, which members of the cult love to point out is shaped like a spider's web.

II. CULT ECOLOGY

This cult is the ancestral cult for spiders; spiders instinctively worship it.

This cult is very self-centered, and cares little about other cults. Priests and priestesses are usually friendly to Gorakiki, though the reverse is not always the case. Her cult is generally friendly with all nature-oriented cults.

The Godday of Disorder week is the cult holy day; the cult High Holy Day encompasses both Goddays occurring during Sacred Time.

III. THE CULT IN THE WORLD

This cult is important only where directly worshiped. Any power gained by members is solely through their own efforts.

Both intelligent and unintelligent spiders worship Aranea, as do arachans — spider-like timinits. Two centers of Aranea worship exist among non-arachnids: one human and one troll. The human worshipers are the spider hsunchen of the Pamaltelan rain forests. The cult is also popular among trolls dwelling in and around Cliffhome and Skyfall Lake, in Dragon Pass. Holy places for Aranea include Cliffhome, Spider's Rest (in the Rockwood mountains), and Web Combe (in the Mari Mountains).

Spiders and other arachnids are generally solitary creatures, and hence maintain no temples. Intelligent spiders living near Aranea's holy sites can obtain divine magic from these sites. The spider hsunchen maintain shrines or minor temples in their villages. The trolls at Cliffhome actually maintain a great temple. Shrines teach Spider's Head.

Cragspider is supreme ruler of this cult. All worshipers are subservient to her, but need only actually obey her when she is actually present. No other lines of command or communication exist.

The Spider Masters of each temple exercise a loose hierarchy of respect, but not discipline, over one other.

IV. INITIATES

Intelligent spiders are automatically initiates of this cult upon reaching maturity. They need not even sacrifice a point of POW. They need obey none of the cult restrictions given hereafter (such as feeding other spiders, etc.)

Non-spiders must pass the usual test, and must bring a live prey creature of at least SIZ 5 to be fed to



the cult's spiders. Skills checked are: Animal Lore, Ceremony, Climb, Jump, and Net Attack. If the candidate belongs to an unusual race (i.e., one not common to the temple's area), he must pass an additional test of rolling his Netmaking Craft skill or less on 1d100.

Non-spider cultists must feed any hungry spider met, if possible, and may not harm any spider not directly attacking them or attacking a family member. Initiates learn spirit magic from the cult shamans, and can sacrifice for one-use Rune magic.

V. ACOLYTES

Any spider with a POW of 19 or more may become an acolyte of the cult by sacrificing a point of POW. Only spiders that live near temples or holy places do so.

A non-spider candidate does not have any POW restrictions, but must know Net Attack at 90% and one of the following skills at 90%: Climb, Jump, Net Attack or Parry, or Craft/Netmaking. He must have served as an initiate for 3 years and roll his POWx3 or less on 1d100.

VI. SPIDER MASTERS

The Spider Masters are shamans who glorify nature's most perfect invention — the spider. Most shamans are not spiders, but those that are need not obey the restrictions noted below. Spider Masters are also priests, and receive reusable divine magic.

Any initiate (or spider) who becomes a shaman is automatically a Spider Master. A non-spider who is already a shaman and wishes to join the cult must pass both the initiation test and the acolytehood test. If he qualifies on both counts, he is accepted as a Spider Master after one year's probation.

Spider Masters may never directly harm a spider and may never interfere in a conflict between spiders.

A non-spider Spider Master receives an awakened spider to act as an allied spirit. Whenever a Spider Master encounters a non-intelligent spider, he can attempt to roll his Communication modifier (if positive) times 5 or less. If he succeeds, the spider won't attack him, though it may attack others accompanying him.

If he does attack or inconvenience the spider, it will attack anyway.

Spider spirits are friendly to Aranea shamans. Other animal spirits may be friendly, neutral, or hostile (a fly spirit, for instance, would be hostile). Non-animal spirits are, at best, neutral. A Spider Master may join no other cult.

Divine Magic: Spider's Head, Spiderlimbs, Webbing, Worship Aranea

VII. SPECIAL ARANEA SKILLS

Craft/Netmaking (10%): For game purposes, there are three nets of interest: fishing nets, trapping nets, and combat nets. Their many similarities include their manner of construction. All nets have two statistics: strength and armor points.

Net Attack/Parry (05%/05%): Fighting with a net requires a specially-made combat net. Other nets usually are too big, and are weighted for different purposes.

A combat net can be snapped (doing 1d4 damage), as children do with wet towels, or it can ensnare an opponent. Nets are normally carried on the left arm, and used to parry. Edged weapons do normal damage to the net's armor points. Blunt weapons cannot damage the net, but the net gives only half protection vs. such weapons.

ENSNARING: An ensnaring attack is made by throwing one end of the weighted net over some portion of the target's body while maintaining tension on a cord attached to the other end, to keep the target from just shrugging the net off. An unparried hit gives the attacker two rolls on the melee hit location table. No additional benefit accrues if the same location is snared twice. An aimed blow permits the attacker to choose one location, but the other is still random. The ensnared areas suffer as follows:

Arm: Immobilized while tension is kept on the net.

Leg: Target can fight from his current position, but cannot move without falling. If the net user overcomes the target's STR with his own, the target falls. Once



he falls, he cannot get up again while tension is kept on the net.

Abdomen or Chest: Target cannot disengage while caught. If the net user overcomes the target's STR with his own, target falls, and cannot get up again while tension is maintained.

Head: vision obscured. Halve all combat skills.

ESCAPING A NET: Snared hit locations may be freed by taking one melee round to unwind, rip, or cut the net.

If there is no tension on the net, the victim can unwind it by rolling DEX or less on 1d100, unless both arms are pinned.

To rip open a net, both the victim's arms must be free. He must overcome the net's strength with his STR on the resistance table. Success rips a hole through the net and frees the victim.

An edged weapon can cut a net, doing damage directly to the net's strength each round. Damage done by non-daggers should be halved. A torch or other flame can be similarly used, doing fire damage to the net. When the net's strength is reduced to 0, it falls away.

DEFENDING VS. A NET: Parrying weapons are immobilized unless the parry is a special success. The chance to Dodge a net is reduced by 10 percentiles because of the net's large size.

A fishing or trapping net dropped from above cannot be parried. The gamemaster may assess penalties to the victims' Dodge skills, depending on the size of the net.

COMBAT NET STATISTICS:

Combat Net	STR/DEX	%	Base ENC	Dmg	armor pts/strength	SR	Price
Light	12/10	05	3	1d4	6/20	1	150 L.
Heavy	16/10	05	5	1d4	8/30	1	250 L.

VIII. SPECIAL ARANEA DIVINE SPELLS

Spider's Head

1 point

touch, temporal, non-stackable, reusable

When cast on a spider, this spell gives the spider's bite the ability to impale (but the jaws are never stuck in

the wound) and doubles the spider's venom potency.

When cast on non-spiders, this spell turns the target's head into that of a giant spider. He gains 2 points of head armor and a bite attack of 50% plus his Attack modifier, doing 1d6 damage plus any bonus. His to-hit chance may be raised by experience. The bite injects venom with POT equal to the caster's CON.

Spiderlimbs

3 points

touch, temporal, non-stackable, reusable

When cast on a spider, the creature's movement rate and Climb skill are tripled and it becomes immune to all manner of webbing, glue, grappling, or entangling attacks.

For non-spiders, this spell sprouts four extra limbs from the user's sides. Two are legs, used to double the user's movement rate and Climb skill, plus render him immune to the Webbing spell. The other two are arms, with tiny claws, too small to hold any weapon but a net, which may be wielded at the user's normal ability. The user may simultaneously use other weapons in his "real" arms. While in effect, the user receives one free Net Attack or Parry per round, in addition to all other combat actions.

Webbing

2 points

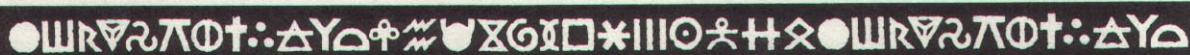
ranged, instant, non-stackable, reusable

This spell hurls a mass of silver strands of web onto a specified area 3x3 meters across. Those within the target zone must succeed in a special Dodge to leap out of the way. Anyone hit by the strands is helpless until he overcomes the web's STR of 40 with his own STR. If multiple victims are caught, they may combine their STRs to escape. The webbing remains for fifteen minutes after cast, and anyone walking over the top of it have has his feet Glued to it with a STR of 20.

IX. SUBCULTS

Spirit of Reprisal

Anyone betraying this cult is pestered and attacked preferentially by all spiders he encounters in the future.



Cragspider

The subcult of Cragspider may be joined only by the leading Spider Master of a minor, major, or great temple. It permits these individuals to obtain the spell Command Salamander.

When cast on a non-spider, the target bodily transforms into a giant, semi-divine spider. All the normal abilities of a spider are usable by the target for the spell's duration. See *Trollpak* for giant spider statistics.

X. ASSOCIATED CULTS

Kropa

Kropa, ancestress of all arthropods, is the mother of Aranea. She offers a special spell.

Transform Self

2 points

touch, temporal, stackable, reusable

This spell must be combined with all three cult specialty spells — Spider's Head, Webbing, and Spiderlimbs. All the specialty spells have full effect, and, additionally, last for six full hours instead of 15 minutes.

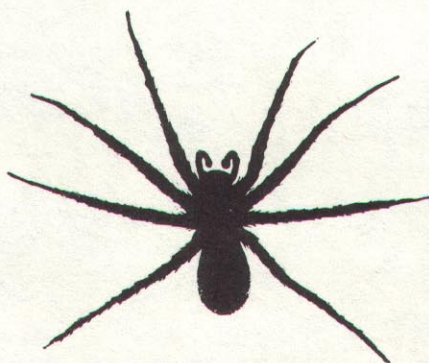
When cast on a spider, all the spider's characteristics are increased by 3.

XI. NOTES

Divine Intervention

A successful call for Divine Intervention in this cult has only one effect — the suppliant's Fate is linked to that of one other being for exactly 24 hours. So long as the suppliant remains alive, the chosen being cannot die. Any damage done to the chosen being is normal, but if he is reduced to 0 or fewer hit points, he merely goes unconscious. In addition, if the suppliant dies, the chosen being immediately dies, too, and cannot be resurrected until the 24 hour time period is up.

This ability is commonly utilized in two ways: to dissuade an enemy from killing the suppliant, or to keep a friend alive. Divine Intervention never has any effect upon the suppliant himself, only the being whose Fate is intertwined with his own.





ARGAN ARGAR

I. MYTHOS AND HISTORY

Argan Argar is a god of Darkness and a son of Night. Long before anyone existed, he figured prominently in an episode wherein he, Zorak Zoran, and Xiola Umbar witnessed the unveiling of Yelm.

When Yelm died and went to Hell, many deities fled to the surface. One of the leaders of those that fled was Xentha, goddess of Night. Shortly after coming to the surface, Xentha birthed Argan Argar — first-born, natural leader of the dark gods on the surface of the world.

Argan Argar was active during the Darkness, aiding anyone who called upon him, whether elf, man, or beast-man. But he was always most friendly to trolls, who love the shadows.

During the Darkness, Argan Argar conquered Lodril, fire-god of the deep earth. He forced that steaming deity into humiliating chains of shadow, and had him build the immense Palace of Black Glass in Ernaldela.

The cult of Argan Argar was widespread after the dawn of Time. In his obsidian palace in Ernaldela lived the Only Old One, Argan Argar's son and regent. The cult dominated all Kethaela and neighboring lands and had powerful connections with the trolls of Halikiv and Shadow's Dance. Other large pockets of Argan Argar worship existed in Peloria, Fronela, and Ralios.

The civilized empires of the time influenced the cult and showed its amazing adaptability. When other peoples built nations and kingdoms, so did the Only Old One. Thus was born the Kingdom of Night, which haunted the area for the whole of the First Age, forming a barrier between Dragon Pass and the foreign sea. The kingdom was part of the First and Second Councils, and trolls dominated its politics. In most contemporary western documents, the Kingdom of Night is labelled the Shadowlands.

In the Second Age, the Only Old One became an ally of the Empire of the Wyrms Friends, and the Argan Argar cult spread to Pamaltela.

The kingdom was destroyed by the arrival of the Pharaoh in 1258. In a series of epic battles, stratagems, magics, and rebirths, the Pharaoh managed personal conflict with the Only Old One at last. The fighting shattered the wonderful Palace of Black Glass, and at the end of the fight the Pharaoh crushed the body of the Only Old One into the earth. The dust from the castle now forms the treacherous black sandstorms of the Haunted Lands, and the Tarpit marks the site where the Only Old One's crushed brains melted a hole to the underworld.

The cult of Argan Argar was not suppressed by the Pharaoh, and lives on, popular not only in Kethaela, but everywhere in Glorantha that darkness is friendly with the rest of the world. The followers of Argan Argar are skillful in promoting such friendship, as befits the followers of the god of Surface Darkness.

Argan Argar promises his followers that they will become part of his mother's whispery train of immortal darkness which sweeps across the world each night and moves magnificently through the netherworld each day.

Burial customs for the cult always follow those of the dominant local culture.

Argan Argar has the Runes of Communication and Darkness. Secondary Runes are Harmony and Mastery.

II. CULT ECOLOGY

Argan Argar is the god of Surface Darkness, and performs many important functions for trolls unavailable elsewhere. Especially important are such civilized skills as communication, trade, and coinage. Whenever trolls find themselves in need of these skills, they turn to Argan Argar. In addition, the relatively civilized nature of this god makes his cult acceptable to other deities and non-trolls, and a useful intermediary between these other races and the powers of Darkness.

This cult is friendly to other mercantile orders, such as Issaries, Etyries, and Dormal. Unfortunately, because of arcane cult dogma, the Lokarnos wagoneers are unfriendly to Argan Argar and vice-



versa. These cults each trade to different peoples: when an Issaries merchant wishes troll goods, he seeks out an Argan Argar trader, and vice versa.

Argan Argar, like all deities of the normal world, hates chaos. He also dislikes the solar pantheon; Yelm and his worshippers.

Argan Argar's High Holy Night is that in between Waterday and Clayday of Harmony week in Dark-season. Other holy times for the cult all fall upon Harmony week in the various seasons. The nights are those following Freezeday in Sea season, Windsday in Fire season, Fireday in Earth season, and Freezeday in Storm season. Each of these days commemorates an important event in Argan Argar's story.

III. THE CULT IN THE WORLD

This cult offers little in social power to creatures that do not accept it. Places that have need of Argan Argar-type services often find his cultists important by that fact. This is done through individual power and con-ning, not cult necessity. The cult advises, rather than rules.

The largest single area of Argan Argar worship is now in Halikiv, a more-or-less intact civilized troll kingdom in Ralios. Shadow's Dance in Dragon Pass is another center of power. The holiest place is Morbode, the site where Argan Argar destroyed Braz-nofstel, an important chaos demon. A less important holy site is the Tarpit, where the Only Old One was slain. The Troll Woods in the Holy Country constitute another cult center and include many non-trolls. Argan Argar is worshiped in places as diverse as Fon-rit and the Kingdom of Ignorance.

Minor temples are normally the largest worship sites available. In the cult's centers of power, such as Halikiv or Kethaela, major and great temples exist. His shrines teach Create Shadow.

Since the destruction of the Kingdom of Night, there has been no center of worship for the cult. Even before that, the Only Old One exercised only limited power over the religion, though his presence commanded worship from all. This cult has no central body of leaders now. High Priests always can command other priests whom they have ordained who have not requested or demanded a Right to Freedom. They may organize their priests as they see fit.

IV. LAY MEMBERSHIP

Lay membership in this cult requires that the person listen to a brief story about Argan Argar and his aims, and then pay money or trade goods to the priest, usually about 5 clacks or so in worth, unless the priest thinks the person is rich and can afford it and won't be so offended by the raised price that he'd attack the priest.

Continued membership requires that the new lay member continue paying, weekly, the amount it took to be admitted. He must join in the season worship services as well, giving up magic points on each holy day as do the initiates.

Lay members can purchase training in all language skills, Evaluate, and Troll Lore from Argan Argar leaders. There is no discount on price.

V. INITIATES

A candidate for initiation must fulfill the standard *RuneQuest* requirements. Skills checked are: Ceremony, Evaluate, Human (or any non-troll) Lore, Read/Write Darktongue, and Speak Other Language. The Speak Other Language requirement may not be an extinct or obscure language such as Spiritspeech or Old Wyrnish.

A non-troll candidate must be able to Speak Darktongue at 20% or more. An initiate must swear loyalty to his priest for the duration of their initiate status or the length of the priest's life, whichever comes first.

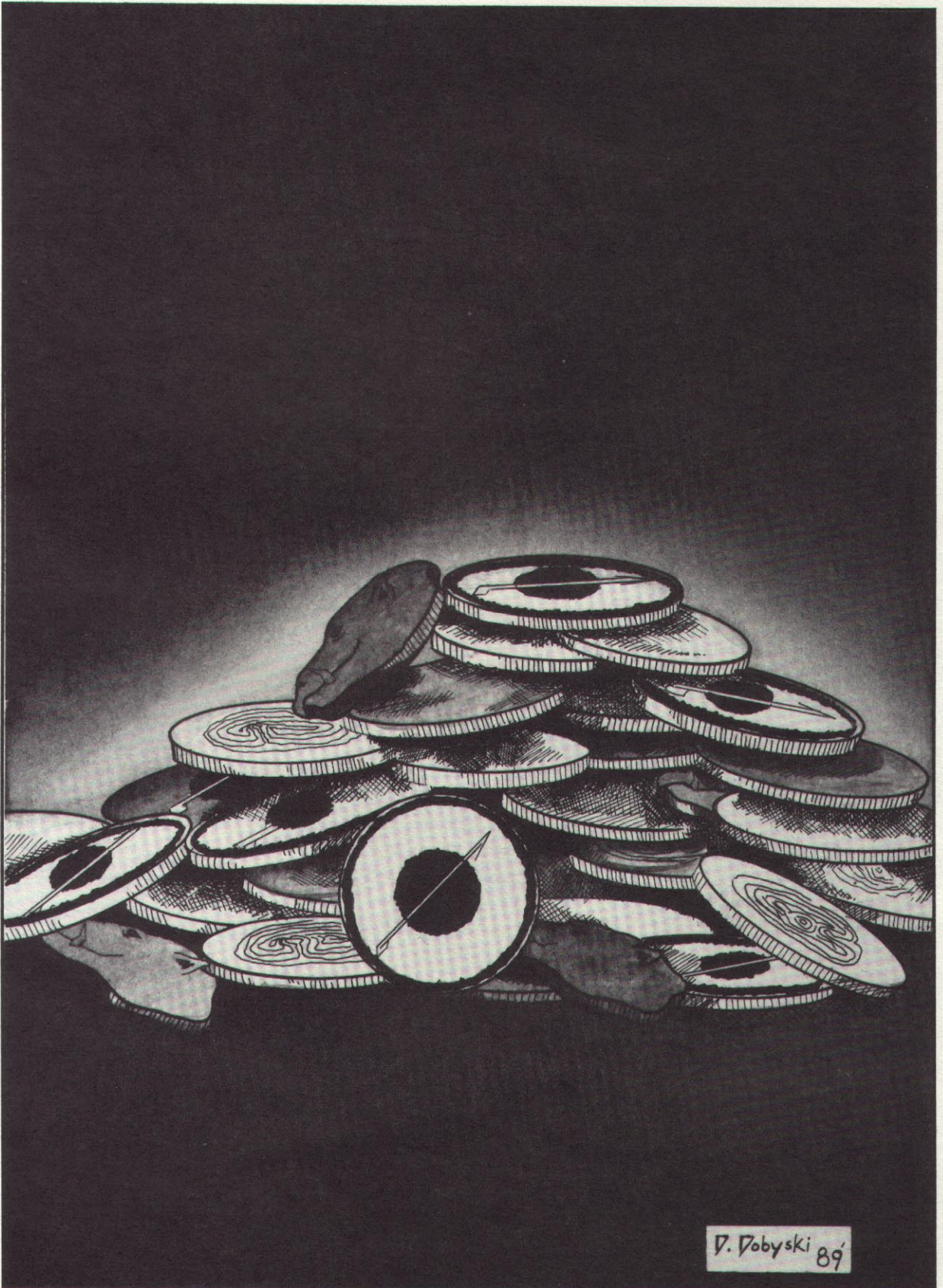
An initiate must fulfill all normal cult obligations, including attendance at worship services and paying 10% of all income to the cult. He must also obey his priest's dictates.

Initiates are promised protection by their priests. This includes one attempt at Divine Intervention by the priest if the initiate is killed while the priest is present. Initiates can leave the cult without penalty if they are ever ignored by their priest.

Spirit Magic: Detect Magic, Glamour, Mindspeech, Protection, Vigor.

Note: the spells of Glow, Light, Lightwall, and similar spells are forbidden to Argan Argar worshipers. If an

●山𐄂𐄃𐄄𐄅𐄆𐄇𐄈𐄉𐄊𐄋𐄌𐄍𐄎𐄏𐄐𐄑𐄒𐄓𐄔𐄕𐄖𐄗𐄘𐄙𐄚𐄛𐄜𐄝𐄞𐄟𐄠𐄡𐄢𐄣𐄤𐄥𐄦𐄧𐄨𐄩𐄪𐄫𐄬𐄭𐄮𐄯𐄰𐄱𐄲𐄳𐄴𐄵𐄶𐄷𐄸𐄹𐄺𐄻𐄼𐄽𐄾𐄿𐅀𐅁𐅂𐅃𐅄𐅅𐅆𐅇𐅈𐅉𐅊𐅋𐅌𐅍𐅎𐅏𐅐𐅑𐅒𐅓𐅔𐅕𐅖𐅗𐅘𐅙𐅚𐅛𐅜𐅝𐅞𐅟𐅠𐅡𐅢𐅣𐅤𐅥𐅦𐅧𐅨𐅩𐅪𐅫𐅬𐅭𐅮𐅯𐅰𐅱𐅲𐅳𐅴𐅵𐅶𐅷𐅸𐅹𐅺𐅻𐅼𐅽𐅾𐅿𐆀𐆁𐆂𐆃𐆄𐆅𐆆𐆇𐆈𐆉𐆊𐆋𐆌𐆍𐆎𐆏𐆐𐆑𐆒𐆓𐆔𐆕𐆖𐆗𐆘𐆙𐆚𐆛𐆜𐆝𐆞𐆟𐆠𐆡𐆢𐆣𐆤𐆥𐆦𐆧𐆨𐆩𐆪𐆫𐆬𐆭𐆮𐆯𐆰𐆱𐆲𐆳𐆴𐆵𐆶𐆷𐆸𐆹𐆺𐆻𐆼𐆽𐆾𐆿𐇀𐇁𐇂𐇃𐇄𐇅𐇆𐇇𐇈𐇉𐇊𐇋𐇌𐇍𐇎𐇏𐇐𐇑𐇒𐇓𐇔𐇕𐇖𐇗𐇘𐇙𐇚𐇛𐇜𐇝𐇞𐇟𐇠𐇡𐇢𐇣𐇤𐇥𐇦𐇧𐇨𐇩𐇪𐇫𐇬𐇭𐇮𐇯𐇰𐇱𐇲𐇳𐇴𐇵𐇶𐇷𐇸𐇹𐇺𐇻𐇼𐇽𐇾𐇿𐈀𐈁𐈂𐈃𐈄𐈅𐈆𐈇𐈈𐈉𐈊𐈋𐈌𐈍𐈎𐈏𐈐𐈑𐈒𐈓𐈔𐈕𐈖𐈗𐈘𐈙𐈚𐈛𐈜𐈝𐈞𐈟𐈠𐈡𐈢𐈣𐈤𐈥𐈦𐈧𐈨𐈩𐈪𐈫𐈬𐈭𐈮𐈯𐈰𐈱𐈲𐈳𐈴𐈵𐈶𐈷𐈸𐈹𐈺𐈻𐈼𐈽𐈾𐈿𐉀𐉁𐉂𐉃𐉄𐉅𐉆𐉇𐉈𐉉𐉊𐉋𐉌𐉍𐉎𐉏𐉐𐉑𐉒𐉓𐉔𐉕𐉖𐉗𐉘𐉙𐉚𐉛𐉜𐉝𐉞𐉟𐉠𐉡𐉢𐉣𐉤𐉥𐉦𐉧𐉨𐉩𐉪𐉫𐉬𐉭𐉮𐉯𐉰𐉱𐉲𐉳𐉴𐉵𐉶𐉷𐉸𐉹𐉺𐉻𐉼𐉽𐉾𐉿𐊀𐊁𐊂𐊃𐊄𐊅𐊆𐊇𐊈𐊉𐊊𐊋𐊌𐊍𐊎𐊏𐊐𐊑𐊒𐊓𐊔𐊕𐊖𐊗𐊘𐊙𐊚𐊛𐊜𐊝𐊞𐊟𐊠𐊡𐊢𐊣𐊤𐊥𐊦𐊧𐊨𐊩𐊪𐊫𐊬𐊭𐊮𐊯𐊰𐊱𐊲𐊳𐊴𐊵𐊶𐊷𐊸𐊹𐊺𐊻𐊼𐊽𐊾𐊿𐋀𐋁𐋂𐋃𐋄𐋅𐋆𐋇𐋈𐋉𐋊𐋋𐋌𐋍𐋎𐋏𐋐𐋑𐋒𐋓𐋔𐋕𐋖𐋗𐋘𐋙𐋚𐋛𐋜𐋝𐋞𐋟𐋠𐋡𐋢𐋣𐋤𐋥𐋦𐋧𐋨𐋩𐋪𐋫𐋬𐋭𐋮𐋯𐋰𐋱𐋲𐋳𐋴𐋵𐋶𐋷𐋸𐋹𐋺𐋻𐋼𐋽𐋾𐋿𐌀𐌁𐌂𐌃𐌄𐌅𐌆𐌇𐌈𐌉𐌊𐌋𐌌𐌍𐌎𐌏𐌐𐌑𐌒𐌓𐌔𐌕𐌖𐌗𐌘𐌙𐌚𐌛𐌜𐌝𐌞𐌟𐌠𐌡𐌢𐌣𐌤𐌥𐌦𐌧𐌨𐌩𐌪𐌫𐌬𐌭𐌮𐌯𐌰𐌱𐌲𐌳𐌴𐌵𐌶𐌷𐌸𐌹𐌺𐌻𐌼𐌽𐌾𐌿𐍀𐍁𐍂𐍃𐍄𐍅𐍆𐍇𐍈𐍉𐍊𐍋𐍌𐍍𐍎𐍏𐍐𐍑𐍒𐍓𐍔𐍕𐍖𐍗𐍘𐍙𐍚𐍛𐍜𐍝𐍞𐍟𐍠𐍡𐍢𐍣𐍤𐍥𐍦𐍧𐍨𐍩𐍪𐍫𐍬𐍭𐍮𐍯𐍰𐍱𐍲𐍳𐍴𐍵𐍶𐍷𐍸𐍹𐍺𐍻𐍼𐍽𐍾𐍿𐎀𐎁𐎂𐎃𐎄𐎅𐎆𐎇𐎈𐎉𐎊𐎋𐎌𐎍𐎎𐎏𐎐𐎑𐎒𐎓𐎔𐎕𐎖𐎗𐎘𐎙𐎚𐎛𐎜𐎝𐎞𐎟𐎠𐎡𐎢𐎣𐎤𐎥𐎦𐎧𐎨𐎩𐎪𐎫𐎬𐎭𐎮𐎯𐎰𐎱𐎲𐎳𐎴𐎵𐎶𐎷𐎸𐎹𐎺𐎻𐎼𐎽𐎾𐎿�0�1�2�3�4�5�6�7�8�9𐐀𐐁𐐂𐐃𐐄𐐅𐐆𐐇𐐈𐐉𐐊𐐋𐐌𐐍𐐎𐐏𐐐𐐑𐐒𐐓𐐔𐐕𐐖𐐗𐐘𐐙𐐚𐐛𐐜𐐝𐐞𐐟𐐠𐐡𐐢𐐣𐐤𐐥𐐦𐐧𐐨𐐩𐐪𐐫𐐬𐐭𐐮𐐯𐐰𐐱𐐲𐐳𐐴𐐵𐐶𐐷𐐸𐐹𐐺𐐻𐐼𐐽𐐾𐐿𐑀𐑁𐑂𐑃𐑄𐑅𐑆𐑇𐑈𐑉𐑊𐑋𐑌𐑍𐑎𐑏𐑐𐑑𐑒𐑓𐑔𐑕𐑖𐑗𐑘𐑙𐑚𐑛𐑜𐑝𐑞𐑟𐑠𐑡𐑢𐑣𐑤𐑥𐑦𐑧𐑨𐑩𐑪𐑫𐑬𐑭𐑮𐑯𐑰𐑱𐑲𐑳𐑴𐑵𐑶𐑷𐑸𐑹𐑺𐑻𐑼𐑽𐑾𐑿𐒀𐒁𐒂𐒃𐒄𐒅𐒆𐒇𐒈𐒉𐒊𐒋𐒌𐒍𐒎𐒏𐒐𐒑𐒒𐒓𐒔𐒕𐒖𐒗𐒘𐒙𐒚𐒛𐒜𐒝𐒞𐒟𐒠𐒡𐒢𐒣𐒤𐒥𐒦𐒧𐒨𐒩𐒪𐒫𐒬𐒭𐒮𐒯𐒰𐒱𐒲𐒳𐒴𐒵𐒶𐒷𐒸𐒹𐒺𐒻𐒼𐒽𐒾𐒿𐓀𐓁𐓂𐓃𐓄𐓅𐓆𐓇𐓈𐓉𐓊𐓋𐓌𐓍𐓎𐓏𐓐𐓑𐓒𐓓𐓔𐓕𐓖𐓗𐓘𐓙𐓚𐓛𐓜𐓝𐓞𐓟𐓠𐓡𐓢𐓣𐓤𐓥𐓦𐓧𐓨𐓩𐓪𐓫𐓬𐓭𐓮𐓯𐓰𐓱𐓲𐓳𐓴𐓵𐓶𐓷𐓸𐓹𐓺𐓻𐓼𐓽𐓾𐓿𐔀𐔁𐔂𐔃𐔄𐔅𐔆𐔇𐔈𐔉𐔊𐔋𐔌𐔍𐔎𐔏𐔐𐔑𐔒𐔓𐔔𐔕𐔖𐔗𐔘𐔙𐔚𐔛𐔜𐔝𐔞𐔟𐔠𐔡𐔢𐔣𐔤𐔥𐔦𐔧𐔨𐔩𐔪𐔫𐔬𐔭𐔮𐔯𐔰𐔱𐔲𐔳𐔴𐔵𐔶𐔷



Bolgs from various Argan Argar temples.



initiate knows such as spells when he joins the cult, he must forget them or, at least, never cast them.

VI. ACOLYTES

Acolytes must meet the same requirements as do priests, and receive access to all Rune magic. Acolytes of Argan Argar usually lead troll caravans, and act as translators and speakers for leaders of the Kyger Litor cult. Other cults are usually more friendly to a troll who is a recognized Acolyte of this cult. This is true, for example, for both Orlanth and Ernalda.

Acolytes receive all normal benefits for their status.

VII. PRIESTS

The priests of Argan Argar are the magical representatives of their god; their function is to exert his power onto the mundane plane. They are masters at getting along in the surface world. For trolls, they are worldly and sophisticated, and some are even acceptable by human standards. This makes their cult suspect by non-believer trolls. Human members of the cult often are trollish, but often are quite civilized. In fact, humans often teach trolls the mores and manners of the surface world.

They must meet the usual qualifications for priesthood, plus non-troll candidates must speak Darktongue at better than 30%.

Priests of Argan Argar are required to act as advisors, interpreters, and scribes for their tribal leaders. They must fulfill all other normal priestly functions and obligations. A priest must give income to the cult every Holy Day using the following system: half of his current money on the Holy Days falling in Earthseason, Fireseason, and Stormseason; and one fifth of his current money on the Holy Day falling in Seaseason. He need give up no money during the High Holy Day.

Priests may lead caravans and can organize their own, though they usually hire an Acolyte to do any actual organizing. Priests are respected in almost any community, and are the only acceptable trolls in some areas. Priests of Argan Argar are allowed to mint Bolgs legally, and are the source of this troll money.

This is a major source of priestly income.

Common Divine Magic: all.

Special Divine Magic: Command Shade, Create Shadow, Dark Walk, Safe, Suppress Aether.

VIII. SPECIAL ARGAN ARGAR DIVINE SPELLS

Dark Walk

1 point

ranged, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

This spell allows the user to be totally invisible and soundless in darkness and shadow to anyone within range. Blend-in is total.

Safe

2 points

touch, duration 8 weeks, nonstackable, reusable

This spell is cast upon a container or opening to bar unwanted passage. When it is cast, the priest must boost the spell with magic points. When anyone other than the priest or someone in Mindlink with the priest tries to open the secured container or cross a doorway with this spell, he is attacked by the spell's magic points. If his magic points are overcome, he takes 1d6 points of general hit point damage and is forced back. If his magic points are not overcome, the spell is broken and he may enter freely, as may anyone following. If he fails to overcome the spell on his first try, he can try again and again until he either succeeds or is slain.

The spell's entire magic points are matched against any defensive magic the intruder might have.

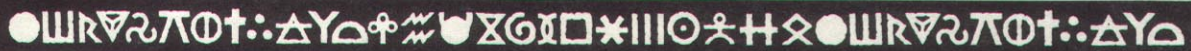
Create Shadow

1 point

ranged, temporal, stackable, reusable

This creates a region of shadow. The dimensions vary (shifting all the time at the edges), ranging from 10 to 20 (2d6+8) meters in diameter with a height one-quarter that. It is immobile.

When additional points of this spell are stacked together, the volume covered does not change, but the



darkness deepens. One point of Create Shadow permits the Dark Walk spell to be cast within its environs and creates a haze in sunlight. Two points cancel the effects of sunlight on light-sensitive beings such as cave trolls. Three points make a shadow equivalent to a moonlit night. Four points create a pitch-black area.

Fire or other illumination within such magic can be seen, but it illuminates nothing.

Suppress Aether

3 points

ranged, temporal, stackable, reusable

This spell creates a sphere 2m in radius centered on any specified spot within range, not necessarily around the caster. Inside the area is darkness equivalent to a Summon Shadow 1 spell. If anyone initiated into a Light, Heat, or Sky rune-based cult tries to cross the borders of the spell, they automatically take 2d6 damage directly to a random body location, ignoring all armor. The sphere's boundary also act as a four-point Countermagic against spells cast by initiates or priests of Light, Heat, or Sky rune-based cults. This spell may be cast to encircle a member of such a cult, and thus restrict his movements.

If, when the spell is cast, its boundary crosses a potential target, that target is unharmed by the spell and can move to either side of the boundary. If he attempts to cross the boundary in a later round, he is then affected.

Each additional use of this spell stacked together increases the damage done by 2d6 and the Countermagic effect by four points.

IX. SUBCULTS

Spirit of Reprisal

The spirit of reprisal for Argan Argar is Koth, which attacks the culprit in spirit combat. Koth has a POW of 2d6+12 and attacks vs. the victim's APP. The victim resists and attacks Koth with his own magic points, but when Koth overcomes his target in spirit combat, the victim loses APP rather than magic points. Koth attacks reprehensible initiates for only two melee rounds, then departs. He attacks priests and acolytes until Koth has been reduced to 6 or fewer magic points or the victim has been reduced to 1 APP.

At this point, Koth ceases attacking, and offers to

return all lost APP if the victim gives up all cult magic. If he refuses, or has no such spells, his APP loss is permanent — taking the form of facial blemishes; a cracked, squeaking voice; and similar personal faults. If he agrees to give up his spells, Koth returns all but one point of APP.

The Spirit Warriors

These are mysterious beings known to have sworn themselves to Argan Argar either during the Godtime or during the destruction of the Kingdom of Night. Many Argan Argar temples have altars to one or more of these beings, and during important cult ceremonies it is sometimes possible to summon one.

The Only Old One

Argan Argar's exemplar on Earth still survives in this hero cult, though this cult position can no longer be manifested physically. Worshipers of this cult can gain the divine magic of Cure Iron Burn. This spell is most useful to trolls, but anyone wounded by an iron blade can gain benefit from it.

Cure Iron Burn

1 point

ranged, instant, nonstackable, reusable

This spell is of no use by itself, but can be stacked with any spell used to cure a wound or other affliction received from an iron weapon. It provides all the magic points needed to work the spell. As such it has little effect on most rune spells, though it helps with Heal Wound. For instance, if it was stacked with a Heal 4 spell, the spell would cure four points of damage and cost the user no magic points.

XI. ASSOCIATED CULTS

Gorakiki

Gorakiki and Argan Argar, who both adapted so well to surface conditions, have long been associated. Argan Argar worshipers gain access to the Gorakiki



spell of Speak With Insects.

Xentha

Argan Argar's mother gifts her son her spell of Affix Darkness.

Affix Darkness

1 point

ranged, duration until the following sunset, stackable, reusable

This spell must be cast at night, at a chosen area with a volume of 100 cubic meters. That volume's darkness becomes fixed in place, and remains present even after sunrise, persisting all day, as a little piece of night. The affixed darkness remains exactly as dark as the area was when the spell was first cast. A torch or other light source carried into the darkened area illuminates it just as at nighttime. The darkened area has rather fuzzy, indistinct edges, but is clearly visible in daylight.

This spell may not be stacked with Extension. Each additional point placed in the spell increases the volume affected by another 100 cubic meters.

XII. NOTES

Bolgs

As mentioned before, bolgs are a troll unit of exchange. The bolg was invented by Argan Argar and is

the sole coinage used by the cult to pay trollkin mercenaries. The bolg is unique as a coin, for it is designed for use as a slingstone as well as handy cash. A single bolg does 1 point of damage as a slingstone. Two bolgs do 1d2 damage, 3 bolgs do 1d3, and either 4 or 5 bolgs will do 1d4 damage. Six or seven bolgs do 1d6 damage and 8 bolgs do 1d8 damage. Nine or more bolgs are clumsy and hard to use, but staff slings will do 1d10 damage with 10 or more bolgs.

The bolgs are used by trollkin and trolls by biting down on the mass of change and twisting it in the mouth while holding onto the money with the hand, thus forming the pellet. This feat is generally impossible for other races to duplicate.

Bolgs are nominally worth 1/10 of a clack each. Troll-hating people and races usually will not accept bolgs as money.

Cult Metals

Iron is forbidden to Argan Argar cultists. They usually do not use enchanted lead either, preferring bronze, a surface metal.

Spears and Trolls

Spears, the usual weapon for armies of trollkin, were first introduced by Argan Argar, fresh from his conquest of Lodril. Trollkin and worshipers of Argan Argar are the only trolls likely to be found wielding spears. In some troll areas, the spear is the symbol for Argan Argar and his cult.



ARKAT

I. MYTHOS AND HISTORY

ARKAT WAS THE GREATEST troll hero to be born since the sun rose in the east to take away our comfort. He was from the Icy Eye clan, and his mother was Garazaf Hyloric.

Arkat was born full grown. At his birth he turned and praised his mother and showered blessings upon her. Six other trollwives were also pregnant then and they gave birth to Arkat's Six: his mace-bearer, his shield-bearer, his singer, his pebble-bearer, his grey sister, his other ears, and his prayer-maker. Arkat took up warrior's weapons and clashed them together, and all the trolls prepared for war.

Arkat Chaosbane

In the world at that time lived the greatest evil, the monster of chaos and light who had seduced the minor races of the world to his slavery. The trolls called him D'Wargon, or "Womb-biter," and he is a servant or mask of Gbaji. All the races of the world had joined his banner and marched upon the place where Arkat had been born. D'Wargon knew what was happening and tried to halt his doom by sending an army with the Iron Vrok.

Arkat was a troll of extraordinary power and skill. He sent all the trolls to their places in the Valley of Darnstaggi, then went out and to a camp where the Western Army awaited. At first they resisted Arkat's command, but then relented and followed him into battle. The Western Army and the Northern Army of the Iron Vrok fought long and hard. Then the trolls descended upon them all and destroyed all of the Northern Army. The Iron Vrok was captured, and the dissipating heat of his own dying body cooked his corpse and his bird for the Zorak Zoran trolls who ate it.

Arkat Heroquester

Arkat was a heroquester of great magnitude. His most famous task was to visit Zzabur, the Brother of the

Devil, and steal the power of sorcery for uzdom. He did many other things, too, in his fight against D'Wargon. He joined the cult of Zorak Zoran to make him more fierce and aggressive and heartless. He ate only burnt food. He was so powerful that he stood upright even when Kyger Litor herself appeared at the High Holy celebrations.

Arkat Kingtroll

Arkat was called Kingtroll because he was acknowledged the supreme fighting leader for all living trolls. In this capacity he sent out the Ebon Net of All Hooks to muster uzdom in his struggle against D'Wargon. They came creeping from all across the world and met in great combats with hideous monsters from across time and space, summoned to defend their awful master. Arkat led the boldest and bravest in the final fight inside the Spiral Heart of Silence where he threw down D'Wargon and then confronted Gbaji, the Deceiver. In a hand-to-hand struggle in which all his old wounds reopened Arkat saw within Gbaji and dealt him the dislocating blow which severed him from chaos. Gbaji's parts were separated in the Manner of Arkstintoris, and the parts taken and hidden in the spirit worlds by Arkat's surviving henchmen.

Arkat set the world right while he remained. He convinced the other races around Dragon Pass to accept rule by uzko, and in Ralios all the races also submitted to Arkat himself. He instituted the Dark Empire and gave its best part, Guhan, to the trolls. Three times his wife bore children who were unmistakably uzuz — mistress race trolls! He then retired to Statham Well, always a difficult place to find.

In the Spirit Plane is the Astelkel Horse. It became the vehicle for creatures which called themselves Outer Atomic Explorers. With the Astelkel Horse they were able to destroy the known paths to the Statham Well. The Outer Atomic Explorers were followed by those who called themselves God Learners, who sought to destroy all the places and beings from whom trolls could learn sorcery. They thus became our foes, and sorcery diminished. Yet it still exists, so we know that Arkat Kingtroll also still exists, though we cannot



find him anymore.

When worshiped by trolls, Arkat's cult Runes are Darkness and Magic.

II. CULT ECOLOGY

Arkat is arguably the most important mortal ever to live in Glorantha. He is worshiped for his accomplishments in many different cults. Trolls worship him because he provides them with the secrets of sorcery. His worship does not make up a true cult, but is more of a societal occupation or subculture.

Humans in general are disturbed by the prospect of sorcerer trolls, and few humans enjoy having the fact of Arkat's troll nature brought forcibly to their attention. The troll Arkat cult is generally ignored by humans when at all possible.

The Arkat cult has no specified holy nights. Most troll worshipers celebrate his holy nights at the same time as Kyger Litor's.

III. THE CULT IN THE WORLD

By the nature of this faith, this religion offers no social or political power in and of itself. However, the useful magic it provides gives its wielders suitable reward.

Most troll Arkati live in Guhan and Halikiv. Some live in other troll areas, notably the Yolp Mountains and the Shadow Plateau, and a few are found in every troll land.

Temple size is not meaningful to Arkat worshipers. By most standards, Arkat temples are rarely larger than shrines. No divine spells are taught at these temples.

When Arkat lived, he dominated the cult. Now the cult is led from an underground city in Guhan, with unknown purposes.

IV. MEMBERSHIP

A troll wishing for membership in the cult of Arkat must be an initiate in any other troll religion. He must have the permission of his tribal and/or cult leaders,

as appropriate, and must sacrifice a point of POW.

The only benefit members gain is that they are taught the skills of sorcery by other cult members. Normally, they must pay for this privilege or serve a term as apprentice.

A member is also automatically joined into the cult network and must assist it to fulfill its mysterious goals.

V. SPECIAL ARKAT SORCERY SPELLS

Boost Elemental

Ranged, Passive, Temporal

This spell must be cast upon an elemental. The intensity of the spell is added to the elemental's hit points. When the spell expires, the extra hit points vanish, possibly destroying the elemental.

Darksense Projection

Ranged, Active, Temporal

This spell is like the other Projection spells, but is based on Darksense.

See Rune Magic

Touch, Passive, Temporal

While this spell is in effect, the possession of divine magic can be sensed by the caster. With one point of intensity, only the presence or absence of divine magic is detectable. At 5 intensities, the total points of divine magic possessed by the user is known. At 10 intensities, the exact spells of the target are seen.

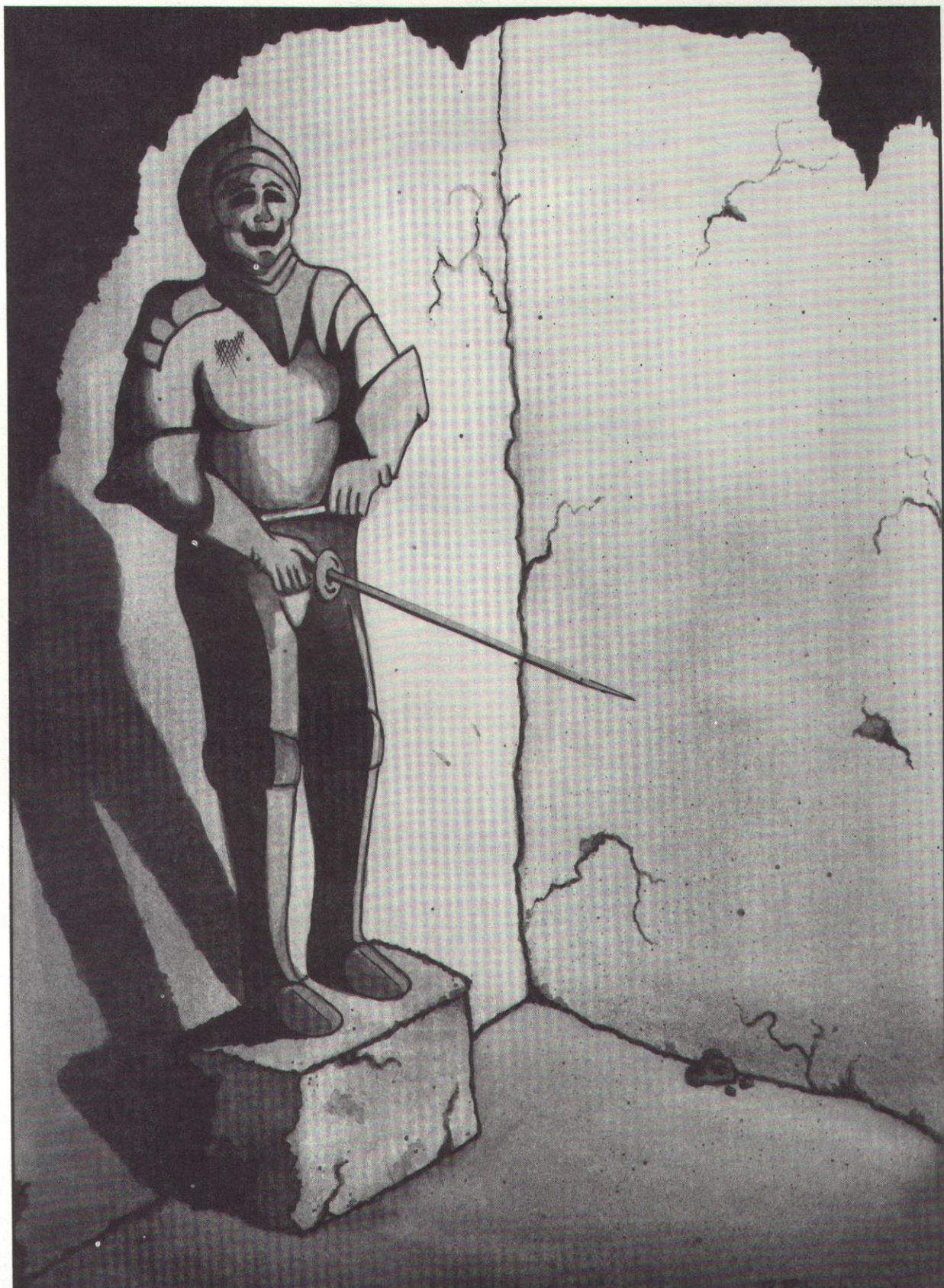
This spell does not detect divine magic in effect, only those spells known by the target, whether or not they have been cast. Defensive magic can block the effects of this spell.

VI. NOTES

The Temple Of Black Arkat

In the Holy Country, in the land of Heortland, is the House of Black Arkat. This is a temple of the cult which teaches sorcery to its initiates and is, in every way, just like the troll cult, except that all its initiates are human.

●WRVΛΠΘ†:ΔΥΔϕζΨXGIX□*III○⊕⊗●WRVΛΠΘ†:ΔΥΔ



A Statue to Black Arkat.



THE BLACK SUN

I. MYTHOS AND HISTORY

WHEN YELM ASCENDED to become Emperor of the universe there were only three opponents against him. First was Basko, a discontented relative previously noted only for his ugliness, who presented only comic opposition. He said that he, not Yelm, should rule, and swore to oppose the ascension. Basko dressed for battle in a costume familiar from imperial rituals. He armed himself with a rock and a stick and a leather sack. For armor he tied dried, rotten, or living fish by their tails onto his body. His black peasant's hat was on backwards. As Yelm approached from a distance Basko grew so frightened that he soiled himself and fell into a heap, sobbing and whimpering for mercy. Yelm never saw his foe, for in the radiance of the approaching emperor, Basko was only a shadow with no place to hide. In the brilliance of Yelm Basko dried out to become a seed which was buried in the Fields of Doubt. It failed to sprout for the whole of the Golden Age and was often touted as proof of Basko's perfection.

After Yelm died, all shadows grew, and Basko was no exception. He was well placed, too, for the Fields of Doubt became one of the exit points for trolls to the upper world. When the trolls first walked the fields, a silent, dark form awaited them. There was a debate among the trolls about whether to follow this strange entity. A segment, led by a troll named Dozaki, decided to test their luck on the surface world and accompany Basko, who became the Black Sun. The trolls became overlords in this new land, which they named Dozaki's Newhome. Everyone else continued to call the land the Kingdom of Ignorance.

The Kingdom of Ignorance is the land just north of Kralorela. The culture of the region occasionally changed completely. The gods worshiped there changed frequently, though the religion which spawned the area's title was continuous. An ancient prophet, his name now lost, was cursed with foresight. He related his visions of woe to any who listened to him, but few ever did. One group listened and became

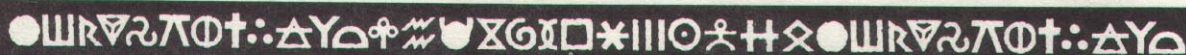
followers of this prophet. Their original name for themselves is also now lost. However, they built huge monuments and statues to their god and to gods to come. Using picture-writing on and within massive pyramids they documented the world to come and prescribed elementary methods of survival.

Early forms of their religion was based upon the belief that their god, who was ultimately a sun god, would undergo transformations and that differing methods of worship would be best suited to each form that he would take. The early forms which were worshiped are: (1) The Early Light; (2) The Rising Orb; (3) The Victorious Zenith; (4) The Solar Storm. This last form was the god-king living in the land during the reign of Shavaya, the Emperor of Splendor, a mythical king of good and plenty. Shavaya's legends list several encounters with the violent Solar Storm god of the north. In a final encounter Shavaya finally opens the blinded third (inner) eye of the ferocious Solar Storm and brings him to peaceful enlightenment.

The tales of the mystics of the Dragon Emperor don't finish the story, though. The epic continued after this defeat. The army which had accompanied the Solar Storm's latest invasion slunk home, thoroughly confused and demoralized. There then came among them a being who called himself Shadow of the Storm. He claimed he was another prophet of the land. Shadow of the Storm revealed the lessons which Solar Storm had learned while enlightened. He called them the Suns to Come. He interpreted the ancient pyramid picture-writings anew, then disappeared. The lessons revealed to the people of the land in the Suns to Come reduced the whole populace to a great malaise infecting the entire land. They thus chose ignorance rather than splendor and turned from the light to the darkness. This land of spiritual darkness was called the Kingdom of Ignorance. In the War of the Gods there were sometimes monsters which flew from it to bother the world. Jorazzi Redhand was another prophet who rose to enliven his countrymen by instituting blood sacrifice to strengthen their god. They called this new aspect the Blood Sun and believed the god would stay strong as long as he received fresh blood. In an amoral way, this was acceptable before Death entered the

[illegible]

A ritual of the Black Sun.



world. When the blood victims no longer rose and regrew their ripped bodies, though, the worshipers of the Blood Sun grew worried. Their god was blood and blood was life. They saw their own end if Death were allowed to gain the upper hand against Blood. They entered into a frenzy of self-consumption that sapped the land of life.

Some time later a great dark horde led by a howling black fire approached the exhausted lands. The wretched survivors recognized the fire as their prophesied Black Sun, and took it as their god. The black horde was made of swarming trolls, fresh from climbing for generations to reach this world. Black Sun had been waiting for them at the exit from below. They happily occupied the ancient ruins of the Kingdom of Ignorance, and made themselves the rulers and priests over the wretched, but now grateful, humans. Being wise, the leader trolls reinstituted a limited and controlled blood sacrifice to pacify the downtrodden peasants and to provide regular, high-quality food for the rulers. To entertain outsiders they also began a famous gladiatorial contest. This latest manifestation of a misguided deity, even though led by trolls, was just another phase of the Kingdom of Ignorance as far as the rest of the world was concerned.

Twice they mustered to destroy chaos. Once was the Glory of the Black Sun, in which a chaos army led by the deity Tien, fresh from the destruction of Genert, faced an army of trolls and humans. Both sides formed battle lines and fought a formal, set-piece battle. This was ominous, for it was the first time (but not the last) that organized chaos armies had been met. The Black Sun's forces crushed the chaos creatures, and Tien itself was dismembered. The second great battle in which the Kingdom of Ignorance participated occurred much later in the Chaos Wars. This was the Winter Win, atop Valind's Glacier, which victory the Black Sun shared with Himile-worshipping ice trolls, and Boztakang's Blue Moon army.

In the Second Age, the trolls were ousted when the Dragon Kings from Kralorela took power in the Kingdom of Ignorance. The trolls fled north, where they still live. Some say they gather strength for their return, others claim that they are slowly becoming the extinct. The truth is shrouded by the future.

A large fraction of the populace of the Kingdom of Ignorance remains loyal to the Black Sun. Many of the thousands of trollkin still living in the Kingdom also worship the Black Sun.

When the Dragon Kings returned to Kralorela, they set up a government over the Kingdom of Ig-

norance, and Dragon Empire mandarins still rule there. It is considered a hardship post.

Before the Dragon Kings came, deceased worshipers of the Black Sun were eaten by the ruling trolls. Nowadays, the mandarins promulgate the practice of cremation. However, despite the hefty fine, many natives of the Kingdom still have their dead eaten, though now the devourers are trollkin, dragons, or pigs.

The Black Sun's runes are Shadow and Illusion.

II. CULT ECOLOGY

The Black Sun is Yelm's spiritual shadow — the blind spot he can never see. So long as Yelm exists, so does the Black Sun. His worship thrives not only because he represents the latest step in the ancient prophecy of the Suns to Come, but because he has proven his efficacy time and again. His reign tamed the horrors of the Blood Sun, his followers proved themselves in destroying chaos, and saved the land. He is worshiped by trolls, trollkin, and humans alike.

The Black Sun's cult is a foe to chaos and most sky gods. Though the Black Sun is a god of darkness, he is not particularly associated to other darkness gods and stands by himself.

The Black Sun's holy days all fall on Wildday, the sixth day of the week, representing his status as the sixth deity in the line of succession in the Kingdom of Ignorance's prophetic gods. They occur on Stasis week and Truth week of Sea season; Fertility week of Earth season; and Fertility week and Stasis week of Dark season. The high holy day occurs on Stasis week of Storm season.

III. THE CULT IN THE WORLD

The Black Sun's cult was once used by cynical trolls to rule and control the human population of the Kingdom of Ignorance. Now, though it has lost its formal dominance, the religion has shown a surprising amount of resilience and retains a powerful hold on the minds of the people. It is now a folk religion, rather than the faith of the rulers, and so has little political force. Whenever a priest of the Black Sun



gains too much prominence, the Kralori rulers of the Kingdom of Ignorance act quickly, working to suppress, oust, or promote the priest to a position of impotence.

The Black Sun is only worshiped in the Kingdom of Ignorance, where both humans and trollkin follow its principles, and by the exile trolls of North Pent.

The Black Sun's temples were quite standardized during the period of troll dominance. Each had a large courtyard surrounded by seats, for the gladiatorial arena, and a feasting room hidden in the back. These temples are still in use, though the arenas are now for public gatherings, not bloody combat. Each of these temples is a major temple. In addition, each town and village possesses a shrine to the Black Sun. Four Great Temples existed to the Black Sun, centered in the Kingdom of Ignorance's greatest cities. The trolls of North Pent can no longer afford to build such elaborate facilities, and their temples to the Black Sun may come in any size and shape. Shrines teach Blood Feast.

When the trolls ruled, the cult and the political leaders were closely allied. Now the cult is almost completely divorced from politics, and the different temples of the Black Sun have no formal inter-cult communication. Each temple is a law unto itself. When several Black Sun priests meet, each is considered an equal among equals.

IV. INITIATES

A candidate for admission into the cult of the Black Sun must sacrifice some blood to the cult, losing (permanently) a point of strength, and then sacrificing a point of POW to tie himself in with the deity. No other requirements are needed.

An initiate is required to give 10% of his time and income to the cult, and to obey his priest without question at least once each week if asked.

Spirit Magic: Countermagic, Darkwall, Extinguish.

V. ACOLYTES

A candidate must meet the same requirements as a priest. Acolytes must give up 50% of their time and income to the cult. They are able to gain all Black Sun divine spells as if they were priests.

VI. PRIESTS

A candidate for priesthood must have been an initiate or acolyte for at least 2 years, roll his POWx3 or less on 1d100, and have sacrificed (permanently) 6 points of his STR to the cult. There must be an opening for a new priest.

Priests must give up 90% of their time and income to the cult. At least once every seven years, the priest must release a living specter into the land (see Blood Feast spell description).

Common Divine Magic: all.

Special Divine Magic: Blood Feast, Blood Red.

VII. SPECIAL BLACK SUN DIVINE SPELLS

Blood Feast

1 point

ritual Summon spell, one-use

To cast this spell, the priest must cook up a sort of meat stew in a large kettle, including up to eight different body organs. Vegetables and spices may be added to taste, but do not affect the spell's outcome. When the stew is finished, the priest and his followers devour it, after which a specter — a living being composed completely of illusion, appears. The specter's appearance is a sort of composite of the individuals whose body organs made up the stew. Thus, if a trollkin and four dogs were used for a Blood Feast spell, the spectre would be basically dog-like, with trollkin-like features. It may have a half-trollkin/half-dog face, hand-like paws, or anything else the gamemaster deems appropriate.

Each of the eight organs which may be included in the magic stew provide several points of a specific Illusion spell, to help make up the specter. (Thus, a specter with 4 points of Illusory Sight would have a size of 12.) Each of the organs must come from a different individual, and only one organ of each type may be included.

An organ from an animal provides 1d6 points of



its illusion spell. An organ from a subnormal creature (here defined as a creature with normal INT, but a POW of 9 or less) provides 2d6 points of illusion. An organ from an intelligent being with a POW of 10+ provides 3d6 points of illusion.

If a brain is added to the stew, the specter receives INT. If the brain is from a fixed-INT or subnormal creature, the spirit receives a fixed INT of 2 for every 20 or more points of Illusion it possesses. If the brain is from an intelligent individual with a POW of 10+, the spectre receives an INT of 1d6 for every 20 or more points of illusion it possesses.

When the spell is cast, the priest must sacrifice one point of either POW or Red POW (see the Blood Red spell for an explanation of Red POW) for each organ in the stew, up to eight. He may also spend magic points. For each magic point, the specter remains under the priest's control for one full hour. After that time, the specter is free to depart, and to do as it pleases, unless it lacks INT, in which case it dissolves.

These living illusions are permanent and do not fade with time. However, they may be dispelled.

Organ	Illusion spell
Blood	Illusory Substance.
Brain	free will ("illusory INT")
Face/Snout	Illusory Sight
Heart	Illusory Sound
Legs	Illusory Motion
Skin	Illusory Odor
Tongue	Illusory Taste

Blood Red

1 point

ritual Ceremony spell, one-use

In this spell, the priest takes a sacrifice of blood from a willing initiate, enacted by the spell as a permanent drop in STR. For each STR point he drains, the priest gains 1 point of Red POW kept in a special reserve on the spirit plane. This POW may be used only to benefit the Blood Feast ritual spell (q.v.).

VIII. SUBCULTS

Spirit of Reprisal

Any being who grossly betrays the principles and doctrines of the Black Sun receives a very special curse. His body organs automatically provide 3d6+10 points of Illusion when used in the cult Blood Feast spell, a fact to which Soul Sight alerts all priests seeing the reprobate.

The 2,000 Maniacs

These are the ghosts of a band of trolls killed at the time of the Dragon Wars. Their souls are still used by the high priests of the Black Sun as allied spirits.

These allied spirits have INT 2d6+6 and POW 3d6. Each knows 1d6-1 points of common divine magic (one-use only) and 2d6 points of spirit magic.

IX. ASSOCIATED CULTS

Blood Sun

This vile deity, whose priests became known as the Wizards of Gore, was conquered and transformed by the trolls under the Black Sun. Worshipers of the Black Sun can obtain the following spirit spell from this associate cult.

False Healing (spirit magic)

2 points

ranged, temporal, passive

This spell is targeted against the hit location of the caster's choice, and immediately heals all damage to that hit location. Keep track of the actual damage healed, however, because when the spell expires (or is dispelled), the damage reappears.

This spell is most often used either to keep a comrade alive until he can get to a more permanent source of healing, or to prevent an enemy from healing a wound himself at an opportune time.



GORAKIKI

I. MYTHOS AND HISTORY

GORAKIKI IS THE GODDESS of all insects. When Ga, the first land, appeared, Kropa gave birth to Gorakiki. Gorakiki, who was originally a servant goddess, thrived and spread her progeny far and wide, though she herself remained safely underground. When the sun died and thrust himself into cold reality, Gorakiki and her children fled to the surface. Once there, Gorakiki proclaimed her position as leader, not slave, and her children thrive and grew prodigiously, eating and breeding everywhere.

Since prehistoric times, insects have prevailed in the world. This cult allows the domestication of insects and flourishes among trolls. Its strength may be seen in the fact that almost all trolls prefer insects as familiars.

Among other things, the cult promises worshipers that they will have insect food after death. Trolls view the afterlife as a mindless and memoryless existence in a gray empty plain, so this promise can be quite tempting.

Gorakiki is associated with the Runes of Beast and Darkness.

II. CULT ECOLOGY

This cult possesses the secrets of caring for insects in the most efficient and productive manner. Where the cult of Gorakiki flourishes, it produces some amazing breeds. Even small temples raise food insects (either in bulk or as delicacies), guardian insects, or special types for use as familiars.

All insects, intelligent or not, instinctively worship one of Gorakiki's spirit children. Many timinits also worship Gorakiki, and are treated as insects for cult purposes. Some hsunchen have insect totems. Trolls worship Gorakiki for obvious reasons. Some humans or elves worship Gorakiki in a propitiatory sense; an attempt to keep insects from devouring

crops or infesting livestock.

There is great variation in the prejudices of cult members in different areas, especially between the various sub-cults.

The cult holy days are held on Fertility week in each season on Freezeday. High holy days are on the holy day of each Dark season. These rites are concurrent with the holy days of Nakala.

III. THE CULT IN THE WORLD

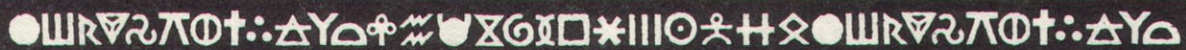
This cult is generally the only one worshiped among intelligent insects and insect-worshipping hsunchen. Among trolls, Gorakiki priests do not hold permanent positions inside the Kyger Litor hierarchy, but can exert social pressure because of the great commercial value of their wards,. Also, though relatively few trolls worship Gorakiki, entire families are found as members, not just groups of unrelated individuals.

Intelligent insects rarely manage to build or maintain even a shrine, though some types of social timinits practice formal religion. However, troll and hsunchen worshipers can count associated insects towards membership, so most groups can muster at least a minor temple. Shrines teach Speak With Insects.

No cult overstructure exists. Rivalries exist between different masters or different breeding schools; raids on rival temples are known to take place.

Temples of Gorakiki are termed Nests. Each Nest is divided into two major groups of worshipers — those who work and those who guard. One Imago leads the workers, and one leads the guardians. There must always be at least two Imagoes and/or Pupae to run even the smallest Nest.

The holiest place within each Nest is the breeding chamber. In small Nests, the egg chamber may also serve for other stages of growth, but most worshipers consider it best to separate the different stages of life at least into egg, larvae, pupae, and adult. Nests with several rooms for each stage of growth gain prestige.



usually hostile, sometimes neutral.

Imagoes are also priests and gain some reusable Rune spells.

Divine Magic: Sanctify, Speak With Insects, Transform Body, Transform Head, Transform Limbs, Worship (insect god).

VIII. SPECIAL GORAKIKI SKILLS

Breed (insect) (*Knowledge skill, base chance 00%*): Each major type of insect has its own associated Breed skill, taught by the appropriate Gorakiki sub-cult. This skill enables the user to breed an adult insect of the appropriate type and raise it from the egg stage to the adult. It also allows the user to tell good insects from bad and to identify the various species of insects falling under his specialty.

Insect Care (*Knowledge skill, base chance 00%*): This skill allows a Gorakiki member to keep an insect alive and healthy for its normal lifespan. It permits him to know what type of food is appropriate to that insect type, and it allows him to choose a superior insect over an inferior one at the marketplace. It also lets him treat common insect diseases.

IX. SPECIAL GORAKIKI DIVINE SPELLS

Speak With Insects

1 point

voice range, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

This spell allows the individual on whom it is cast to talk to any one type of insect for the duration of the spell. Oratory bonuses apply if the creature needs convincing. The spell does not instill any intelligence to the insect, so it can speak only from its natural awareness.

Transform Head

1 point

touch, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

This spell, named variously in different sub-cults, turns the target's head into that of the sub-cult insect. It can only be cast on an initiate of the appropriate sub-cult.

Transform Body

2 points

touch, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

This spell, named variously in different sub-cults, turns part or all of the target's body into that of the sub-cult insect. It can only be cast on an initiate of the appropriate sub-cult.

Transform Limbs

3 points

touch, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

This spell, named variously in different sub-cults, changes one or more of the target's limbs into those of the sub-cult insect. It can only be cast on an initiate of the appropriate sub-cult.

X. SUBCULTS

Spirit of Reprisal

The name of the spirit of reprisal varies with the sub-cult, but always takes the form of a pestilence of the cult insect which harasses and bedevils the reprobate. The plague continues for a period of 1d6 melee rounds (3d6 for Pupae and Imagoes), and literally eats the victim alive. Each round the victim suffers as if overcome by 3 Disruption spells scattered over his body, ignoring all defenses, magical or physical. This plague occurs when most inconvenient, or when the victim is least prepared.

Major Subcults of Gorakiki

Unlike most cults, each of Gorakiki's worshipers belongs to one of many mutually exclusive sub-cults. The reaction between two sub-cults may well be hostile. Four important insect hsunchen cults are: Bee, Dragonfly, Locust, and Moth. Most important among



trolls is, without doubt, Beetle, though many other subcults exist among trolls (one student counted 24). The Wasp subcult is worshiped in Dragon Pass by the human Wasp Riders.

GORAKIKI-BEETLE

More than half of all troll Gorakiki Nests are dedicated to this subcult. The priests learn to breed all manner of beetles for use, including the famed watch beetles and ham beetles.

Beetle's Head (transform head)

1 point

touch, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

When cast on a beetle, this spell doubles the basic damage done by the bite and gives 6 additional points of head armor.

When cast on a non-beetle, his head is turned into that of a giant beetle, with spiked mandibles. He gains 6 points of head armor and a Bite of 50% plus his Attack modifier, doing 2d6 damage plus his damage bonus. The Bite can be used in addition to normal attacks and parries, but must be used 3 strike ranks apart from other attacks. The attack skill can be raised by experience.

Carapace (transform body)

2 points

touch, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

This spell turns the target's skin or chitin into black, shiny armor, increasing his torso armor (only) by 12 points.

Beetle Limbs (transform limbs)

3 points

touch, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

When cast on a beetle, the creature gains the ability to perform two actions simultaneously. Thus, he could perform First Aid on two people at once, or use two Crafts. Running speed is doubled, and in combat, he gets four actions per round instead of only two.

When cast on a non-beetle, two auxiliary arms sprout from the target's sides. These extra arms have the same skill percentages as the target's real arms. A character using this spell could carry a weapon in each right arm and a shield in each left arm, attacking and parrying twice per round.

GORAKIKI-BEE

This subcult is worshiped by hsunchen who ride gigantic bees and the bees themselves.

Bee's Head (transform head)

1 point

touch, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

The target gains the abilities of storing liquid food internally and of drinking from flowers. Liquids (including beer, honey, water, etc.) can be drunk by the user and stored internally without harming the liquid. The liquid can be stored safely past the spell's duration, but new liquid cannot be drunk past that point. A non-bee under this spell's effects has his head turned into that of a giant bee.

Stinger (transform body)

2 points

touch, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

When cast on a bee, the bee's abdomen and legs gain 3 points of armor and its chance for a Sting critical hit is doubled.

When cast on a non-bee, the lower half of the target's body is turned into a giant bee's abdomen, complete with stinger. He receives a Sting Attack of 50% doing 1d6 damage plus any bonus, which injects venom with a potency equal to the caster's current magic points. His abdomen and legs each gain 3 points of chitinous armor, as well.

Sprout Wings (transform limbs)

3 points

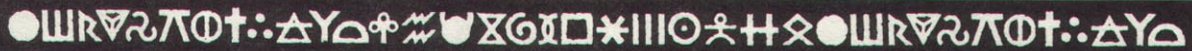
touch, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

When cast on a bee, flying speed is multiplied by 10, and it loses no fatigue for flying.

A non-bee target sprouts membranous wings from his back, with which he can fly at 12m per strike rank. Each 3 ENC carried subtracts 1m from movement speed.

GORAKIKI-LOCUST

This sub-cult is worshiped by a tribe of nomadic hsunchen who feed upon and follow grasshoppers and locusts. The cult includes grasshoppers, locusts, katydids, crickets, etc.



Locust's Head

1 point

touch, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

The target's head gains 3 points of armor, and he gains the ability to eat almost anything, even poison. Anything not immediately destructive, such as molten metal, can be eaten by the spell's user. Non-locusts gain a giant locust's head for the spell's duration.

Insect Song

2 points

touch, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

The target can, at will, create a loud creaking noise, which is deafening close at hand and clearly audible up to 5 km away. This noise can be used to transmit messages to all Gorakiki-locust initiates within ear-shot. The message is not understandable to anyone else.

Leaping Legs

3 points

touch, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

When cast upon a leaping insect, this increases his leaping ability by 50m either horizontally or vertically.

When cast upon a non-insect, it turns his hind legs into enormous, jointed, insect-like limbs. He can leap up to 50 meters horizontally or vertically, minus 1 meter for each point of ENC carried.

GORAKIKI-MOTH

This subcult includes both butterflies and moths.

Moth's Head

1 point

touch, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

Whenever this spell is cast, the user must specify a species of living organism to which he wishes to be sensitive. He gains a 100% chance to Track that species, and a 100% chance to Detect members of that species within 100 meters. He can pinpoint the exact direction, number, and distance of the target organisms when within 40 meters. The spell cannot be made more specific than to species; a user can specify Humans, but not Humakti.

When cast upon a non-insect, his head becomes

identical to that of a large furry moth, with long feathery antennae.

Featherscales

2 points

touch, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

Causes long, dense, feathery clouds of loose scales to coat the user's body, increasing his armor by 2 points. Additionally, when the character is hit by any weapon, that weapon becomes gummed up and covered with scales, making it blunt and padded. Such weapons henceforward do only half damage till cleaned off.

Butterflight

3 points

touch, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

When cast on a moth or butterfly, it raises the creature's Dodge by 100 and triples its flight speed.

When cast on a non-insect, long, colorful wings grow from the target's back, which he can use to fly at 3 meters/sr, reduced by 1 meter/sr for each 20 ENC carried.

XI. ASSOCIATED CULTS

Associated cults of Gorakiki are largely a matter of local convention. For example, in some troll clans, the Gorakiki Imagoes also join Argan Argar, so they can sell their insects as well as breed them. In some areas, different sub-cults of Gorakiki may share a Nest, but usually this is frowned upon as unnatural.

ARGAN ARGAR

The god of Darkness of the Surface is friendly to Gorakiki, and offers use of his Rune spell Safe, which proves handy in guarding the Nests.

KROPA

Kropa is the Mother of Arthropods, and thus the mother of Gorakiki. Kropa provides her daughter's cult with this spell:



Transform Self

2 points

touch, temporal, stackable, reusable

This spell must be stacked with all three sub-cult specialty spells — for example, a Gorakiki-beetle cultist would need to cast it with Beetle's Head, Carapace, and Sprout Arms. All the specialty spells take full effect, and, additionally, last for six full hours instead of 15 minutes.

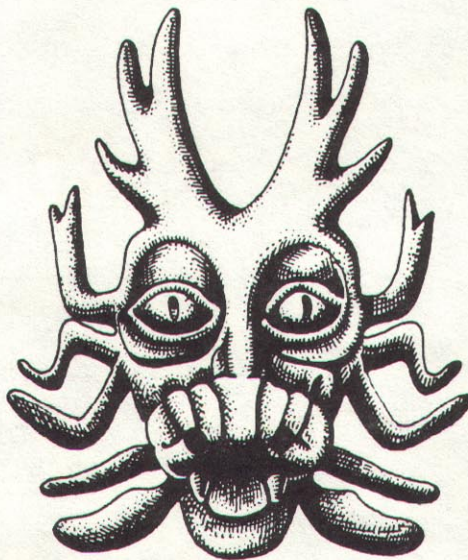
When cast on an insect, all the insect's characteristics are increased by 3.

When cast on a non-spider, the target bodily transforms into a giant, semi-divine version of his cult insect. All the normal abilities of the cult insect become usable by the caster for the spell's duration.

XII. NOTES

The usual mode of worshiping Gorakiki, the mode explained here, is not the only way. The Timinits, insect people of Jrustela and Pamaltela, also worship Gorakiki, but in a totally different manner — as ancestral beings, and they learn different skills. In some areas of Glorantha, Gorakiki is worshiped by humans in a propitiatory sense; an attempt to keep insects from devouring crops or infesting livestock.

The progeny of Gorakiki have spread so far and wide that her children have become attached to all sorts of strange groups, including Sky gods and even Chaos. Gorakiki has no real control over what her children do, and her adherents must often try to overlook the existence of insects tied to the cults of Malia, the Lightbringers (enemies to trolls), or other hostile gods.





HIMILE

I. MYTHOS AND HISTORY

EVERYTHING OF THE BELOW which was opposed to the Sun fled when that Bright God came, unasked, to the underworld. One among them was Himile, God of Cold. With his arrival, the first winter came, too. When Valind joined forces with Himile, freezing storms blanketed the world and ice demons ruled everywhere.

With the return of the Sun, Himile and Valind were forced to retire to their frozen glacier fortresses, but they return every year to bring cold, ice, and life-giving moisture to the lands south of the glacier.

Worshippers of Himile believe that they become Hollri — ice demons — after death.

Himile is the source of the Cold Rune.

II. CULT ECOLOGY

Himile is the deity of cold and ice, the eternal partner of Winter. He is worshiped primarily by northern trolls and ice demons.

Himile is a state of being which manifests as a lowering of ambient air temperature. As such, it is neither good nor evil, though the resulting effects may often be harmful.

Himile's holy nights fall upon the night following Freezeday. It occurs in Truth week of Sea season, Disorder week of Fire season, Death week of Earth season, and Stasis week of Storm season. The high holy night of the cult is the Wildday of Fertility week in Dark season.

III. THE CULT IN THE WORLD

While Himile is recognized in most places as an entity of power, his worship is uncommon. South of the

arctic tundra, the main cult centers exist in Pent and the Rockwood mountains. Some Pent horse barbarians have turned to worshiping Himile and other gods of winter. In the central Rockwoods, mountain-dwelling trolls worship Himile, and each winter try to get the weather cold enough so that ice and snow extend into all the valleys, permitting the trolls to travel safely from peak to peak. In turn, the valley-dwelling humans worship gods of summer and, each summer, try to get the weather warm enough so that they can safely travel from valley to valley.

Himile's cult consists of shrines, with a few minor temples among snow trolls. Shrines teach Decrease Temperature.

Each priest of Himile is a law unto himself. He need only obey a stronger priest. Sometimes groups of priests band together and create an organization. This is common among humans and trolls, which are social beings, but not among ice demons.

IV. INITIATES

If the candidate is a hollri, snow troll, or similar cold-connected being, acceptance into the cult is automatic upon sacrificing a point of POW. Otherwise, the candidate must roll his POWx4 or less on 1d100 to be accepted. Failure indicates that he freezes to death. If accepted, he must sacrifice a point of POW to Himile.

Initiates may never cast the spells of Ignite, Firearrow, Fireblade, or any other heat or fire-oriented spells.

Spirit Magic: Disrupt, Extinguish.

V. PRIESTS

A candidate for priesthood must have a POW of 20 or more and pass the Test of Holiness (POWx3 or less on 1d100). If the priest's POW ever drops below 20, he returns to initiate status.

●WRV2P0†:△Y△Φ※♣X6X□※III0△H△●WRV2P0†:△Y△



An ice demon.



Priests must give all 90% of their income and time to the cult, but since they themselves represent the cult, they have quite a bit of freedom.

Common Divine Magic: all.

Special Divine Magic: Chill, Command Ice Demon, Decrease Temperature, Form Ice, Increase Temperature.

VI. SPECIAL HIMILE DIVINE SPELLS

Chill

1 point

ranged, duration 1d10 melee rounds, stackable, reusable

This is an attack spell which must overcome the target's magic points to be effective. The target is immediately chilled, and feels freezing pangs penetrating his bones. Each point of Chill causes the target to lose 1d6 fatigue and 1 general hit point per round of the spell's duration.

Additional points of Chill extend duration by 1d10 rounds each.

Decrease Temperature

1 point

10m radius around caster, temporal, stackable, reusable

This spell decreases the temperature by 1d6 degrees Centigrade (or 1d10 Fahrenheit). Each additional point used either intensifies the cold by an additional 1d6 degrees or doubles the radius of effect.

Form Ice

1 point

ranged, instant, stackable, reusable

Each point of this spell affects 1 liter (1 ENC) of any liquid more than 50% water by freezing it solid. This spell affects 1d6 liters per point when cast in winter.

Increase Temperature

1 point

10m radius around caster, temporal, stackable,

reusable

This spell increases the temperature by 1d6 degrees Centigrade (or 1d10 Fahrenheit). Each additional point used either intensifies the warmth by an additional 1d6 degrees or doubles the radius of effect.

VII. SUBCULTS

Spirit of Reprisal

Himile is only rarely in need of a Spirit of Reprisal. Ice demons that are disobedient to Himile are punished by the Warming Effect, in which Himile withdraws his presence, causing the demon to begin to melt as his temperature rises. Non-ice demons may be punished by the reverse — a sort of Freezing effect which intensifies over time.

VIII. ASSOCIATED CULTS

Subere

Himile's sister, who is as ancient as he, provides Himile's cult with Command Shade.

Valind

Himile's most powerful ally is the god of winter. Valind provides the following spell.

Snow

1 point

100m radius around caster, temporal, stackable, reusable

This spell must be cast when precipitation is present. If it is raining, the spell changes all the rain to snow, sleet, or hail (at the gamemaster's option) within the spell's radius of effect. If it is already snowing, the spell doubles the amount of snow falling.

Each additional point of this spell increases the radius of affect by 100m.



IX. NOTES

Hollri

Ice demons, properly termed Hollri, are humanoid creatures made of solid ice. They live on Valind's Glacier and, for obvious reasons, never penetrate other lands except when the temperature is well below freezing. They come in a variety of sizes and powers. When they are first created, they are usually small, and slowly grow larger, accruing more and more size as they bask in the bone-crushing cold of their native land. They rarely leave Valind's Palace until they are quite good-sized. Most hollri are mindless, heartless minions of the winter gods. Many have special abilities: freezing breath, flight, etc. The creature described here represents the lowliest, weakest type of hollri, also the likeliest to be encountered by adventurers.

Hollri are made of ice. Though they are hard to damage, they are brittle, too. They have ice points rather than hit points or armor points. Their total ice points are equal to their SIZ plus their POW, and are divided up among the demon's hit locations as per hit points. Whenever a hollri is struck for damage, match the damage done vs. the hit location's ice points on the Resistance table. If the ice points are overcome, the location is shattered and destroyed. Otherwise it is unharmed.

Damage 10 or more points less than the location's points has no chance of destroying that location. The

demon's spear also uses ice points — it is shattered if its points are overcome on the Resistance table, and survives intact otherwise.

Hollri Statistics

characteristics	average	attributes
STR 4D6+18	32	Move: 2
SIZ 4D6+12	26	Ice Pts: SIZ+POW, or 45
INT 1D6	3-4	Magic Pts: 19
POW 2D6+12	19	
DEX 3D6	10-11	
APP 2D6	7	

location	melee	missile	points
r leg	01-04	01-03	15
l leg	05-08	04-06	15
abdomen	09-11	07-10	15
chest	12	11-15	18
r arm	13-15	16-17	12
l arm	16-18	18-19	12
head	19-20	20	15

weapon	sr	attack	damage	parry	pts
2H Ice Spear	4	75+5	1d10+1+2d6	75-15	20
Thrown Icicle	3/9	50+5	1D8+2d3	—	—

Magic: Hollri worship Himile, and use his magic. If POW is 20 or more, the creature possesses divine magic.

Notes: The freezing cold of a hollri's weapons chills and numbs the target. Thus, anyone wounded by the spear or thrown icicle also loses fatigue points equal to the damage received.

The hollri never runs out of thrown icicles, which it plucks off of its own beard and body.



KYGER LITOR

I. MYTHOS AND HISTORY

KYGER LITOR is one of the old Darkness gods, but one who was not important until the creation of the Man Rune. From the vague and unknown spirits of the Old Dark, she stepped forth to mate with the Man Rune for her mistress, Subere. There, in the lightless world, the Men of Darkness were made, and so was spawned the race of trolls.

The troll races first lived within the bowels of the Underworld, and it was a satisfying, though primitive, life for them. Kyger Litor walked freely among living trolls, and she founded many houses of noble trolls to rule over the lesser breeds. These ancient beings are the Mistress Race.

When Yelm the sungod came to the Underworld after his death, Kyger Litor was among those Darkness deities who fought against him. Like the others, Kyger Litor was defeated, and so Yelm earned his place as a god of the dead. The bright death was too much for the dark troll races to bear, and they fled in fear and anger from their birthplace. Kyger Litor led them by secret ways to the surface world where Night already hid, and so began the Lesser Darkness. Trolls and their dark allies fought against the forces of the surface world.

The trolls ruled much of the surface world during the Great Darkness, and they bore the brunt of the fighting against the things of chaos which swarmed upon the world with the Devil. Islands of life clung precariously to their existence through the wars against chaos, and were often led by trolls and their gods. Of those gods, Kyger Litor was the most popular.

Kyger Litor built several of the legendary Castles of Lead as bulwarks against the chaos armies and a few of these yet stand. They attracted the greatest enemies of chaos, and aided all nearby centers of population by doing so. Kyger Litor aided Waha once, and she was once saved by Arroin the Healer. Trolls from the Dagori Inkarth Castle of Lead fought in the I Fought We Won battle where chaos was defeated.

Kyger Litor was one of the more important deities at the Dawning. She had to be consulted in the Great Compromise which made Time, and she agreed to it as did all the gods. Many of her minions were frightened again by the orb in the sky, but it was much weaker this time, so many could withstand it.

In the Dawn Ages, the races of trolls were active and often took part in the political affairs of the times. In the Dragon Pass area, one of the members of the Dawn Council was a troll. Near the end of the Dawn Ages, the trolls were the first to quit the Second Council which was performing a massive ritual in an attempt to create a god. The dragonewts eventually agreed and were the second to withdraw. The Council continued its experiment and eventually spawned Gbaji, who deluded and seduced the world and was responsible for the Chaos Wars which destroyed the Dawn Ages.

At that time, the Broken Council (those who remained of the Second Council) cursed the troll race, and despite the best defenses of Kyger Litor and her followers, the curse struck home. Trolls call this the Great Woe or Curse of Kin.

The Great Woe did not destroy the trolls, but stunted their growth. Some trolls always bred true, but most births after the curse were of stunted things called trollkin. It was almost obscene that these things lived, but they did, though at first many were slain by their horrified mothers. Soon these deformed runts represented the bulk of troll population. Their inferior status was always accepted by trolls; trollkin rarely have the mental, spiritual, or physical abilities to think otherwise. Several unsuccessful attempts to break the curse have been made. One attempt resulted in litters of trollkin being born, rather than singletons. Another produced the sterile Great Troll types. Breaking this curse is the primary interest of Kyger Litor, who wishes to cleanse her race.

The Great Woe certainly affected the trolls' fate during the second age, when the Old Races of troll, elf, and dwarf set upon each other to leave only mankind as the winner. Trolls were driven hither and yon in their defeats, but in the end they won all of the dark and foreboding places of the world as their potential haunts, and there they have lived through all the

●ШR∇ℓΠΘ†:ΔΥΔΦ⌘⌘XGα□*IIIΘ⋈⋈●ШR∇ℓΠΘ†:ΔΥΔ



A priestess and Grey Fury.



rest of history.

Trolls all know that their Goddess lives in a secret place in the Underworld and that they will be sent to her after death by the judges of the dead. Life there is a bliss for trolls, consisting of an empty gray plain populated by giant insects which are food for the dead, and occasional springs where the dead may drink and (depending on which pool they drink from) determine what troll race they will be reborn into for their next life. Cursed trolls are condemned to be reborn as humans, dwarfs, elves, trollkin, or other food creatures.

Funeral rites for the cult are simple. The trolls chant a prayer (the full impact of the prayer is only possible in Darktongue):

*Friend, don't be slow
To find the home all life must know;
The goddess will help you go.*

*From the lands that see,
I am bound and you are free;
No longer bound must you be.*

*Of Darkness you learned
For Darkness you yearned
To Darkness you are returned.*

The soul is sent off and the living then sit down and return the body to Darkness by devouring it. Trolls are always happy to perform these rites over any other race, animal, or plant. The cult of Kyger Litor forbids killing other trolls for food, but trolls will so kill trollkin.

Kyger Litor has two Runes: Man and Darkness.

II. CULT ECOLOGY

Kyger Litor is the Ancestress of the races of trolls and as such forms the root of their being. She is very popular with her children and so her cult continues to exist. She is one of the primary fighters against chaos. This fact is begrudged by humans and troll-haters, but undeniable. Her importance in this is enough to prompt an occasional human to be adopted into her cult. Kyger Litor has a working relationship with all Darkness cults as neutral parties or potential friends. Kyger Litor dislikes all gods of light and fire. Trolls

rarely befriend cultists of light or fire, and sometimes are downright fearful of their powers. This is most noticeable among weaker trolls.

She dislikes the Lightbringers for many reasons. They were among those deities which Kyger Litor fought when she first led her children to the surface world, and they deserted the defense of the cosmos when they left on their quest. Even though their quest saved the cosmos, Kyger Litor knows that she did well without them, and she is resentful that they brought back Light. Trolls detest both dwarfs and elves, except as food. Especially hated are dwarfs, who invented iron, which is a poison metal to trolls (and elves). Both feuds started in godtime, and have harried all three races like plague in Time. In the Second Age, there were great wars in which the trolls lost territory, wealth, and thousands of lives to their foes.

Seasonal holy days are held each Freezeday of Harmony week. At these times, trolls place all their faith in the high magics of their goddess and abandon themselves to her protection and control.

Winter (Dark season) is the special time for trolls, and so their most sacred day is then. It starts at daybreak of Godsday/Disorder week, reaches its peak during that night, and comes to a smashing conclusion at dusk of Freezeday/Harmony week. the rituals reenact the wading of Kyger Litor through formless chaos until she found vile Thed, Mother of the Broos, and dashed the evil spirit to the earth and skinned it, using the hide to make the magical drums which beat of themselves through the rest of the ceremony. Thus the night ends in harmony, and the trolls rest for having done a good job.

III. THE CULT IN THE WORLD

Among trolls, the cult forms the very fabric of society and it permeates everything they do. Cult positions are identical to social positions. The goddess, through her priestesses, is extremely important in determining troll behavior.

All trolls are considered members of this cult at birth, and the great majority become initiated into its secrets at adolescence. Kyger Litor is still strong even among troll societies such as those of the Shadow Plateau or Kingdom of Ignorance, which now favor more sophisticated cults.



The size of a Kyger Litor temple depends directly on the size of the troll tribe which maintains it. Essentially all adult trolls are initiates. Even trolls belonging to other cults usually retain their ties to Kyger Litor. Shrines to Kyger Litor teach Darksee.

Troll tribes are run by religious hierarchies forming the social superstructure. They are matriarchal in structure, with priestesses and shamanesses as leaders. Trolls do not differentiate between religious and governmental control. They are never ones to disavow simple strength, however, and a mere male initiate can be important because of his prowess.

If there is a member of the mistress race present, she always will be the head of the hierarchy. When, as usual, one of these dominant creatures is absent, the strongest priestess or shamaness present becomes the tribe ruler and high priestess. Strength is counted by numbers of followers as well as personal power, and an inexperienced priestess of Kyger Litor with many loyal followers may outrank an expert Gorakiki shaman with few initiates.

Depending on the size of the tribe, any number of priestesses may report to the high priestess, and these may be chief priestesses with their own holy hierarchy as well. The ruling factor is personal loyalty of the followers.

All Karrg's Sons in a tribe are primarily loyal to the high priestess.

IV. INITIATES

All full trolls (dark, great, hot, ice and mistress race) who reach the age of 14 without dying are granted initiation, after the usual sacrifice of a point of POW. Candidates must take a pro forma examination by a priestess, but acceptance is automatic unless the member has performed hostile or questionable acts.

A troll-related creature, such as a trollkin or tusk rider, can be initiated if he has a POW of 10 or more, speaks Darktongue with a skill of 50% or more, and has both a weapon attack and parry of 40% or more. In addition, he must have proven himself a great friend to trolls in the recent past and he must give the high priestess a mighty gift of some sort (such as a good magic item, a year's supply of gourmet food, or the head of an important enemy). The candidate must go through a ritual rebirth in which he must roll his POWx5 or less on 1d100 and sacrifice a point of POW. Failure means rejection, and that individual

cannot try to join Kyger Litor's religion again for a year.

A creature completely unrelated to trolldom, such as a human, can only be initiated through a difficult adoption ceremony, symbolized by rolling POWx3 or less on 1d100 and sacrificing a point of POW. Failure means the death of the candidate. In addition to the ceremony, the candidate must fulfill all requirements listed for part-troll candidates.

In any case, any non-troll initiated into the cult will afterwards be addressed as a troll by cult members. They will have no more special exams other than those required of all cult members. Generally a slight physical change accompanies initiation for non-trolls. A human, for instance, might grow rudimentary tusks and gain grayish skin.

Initiation is the coming of age ceremony for trolls, and after its completion, they are considered to be an adult. Those few trolls which refuse initiation remain children officially, and especially cruel trolls may even treat them as trollkin.

Initiates are required to recite a grumbling prayer (learned in the initiation rites) each Darkday at dawn, and therein sacrifice a magic point to their goddess and ancestors. They are expected to obey their priestesses and social rulers. They must follow the Kyger Litor hatred for all things of chaos, and work for its destruction. Initiates must devour some form of vegetation each week, and give 10% of their income to their personal priestess.

Initiates are forbidden to learn Firearrow, Fireblade, Ignite, Light, or Lightwall or any other fire- or light-using spell. If these spells are known, they must be forgotten.

Spirit Spells: Befuddle, Bludgeon, Countermagic, Darkwall, Demoralize, Disruption, Dullblade, Extinguish, Heal, Mindspeech, Protection, Second Sight, Slow, Spirit Screen.

V. ACOLYTES

A candidate for acolytehood must have a skill of 30% in Read/Write Darktongue, and know both Darkwall and Mindspeech. She must have at least 50 percentiles in ritual magic. She must pay 1000 pennies to the cult and undergo the Test of Holiness (POWx3 or less on 1d100).

Kyger Litor acolytes may not be shamans.



An acolyte must donate 20% of her time and 50% of her income to her priestess. She may learn reusable rune spells.

VI. KARRG'S SONS

Karrg's Sons are warrior leaders of the community. The priestesses are powerful, but have many important functions and duties besides those of war. War is a special matter, and Kyger Litor leaves it to the Rune lord subcult of one of her sons, Karrg, who started the class.

To become a Karrg's Son, a member must have been an initiate for at least one full year. He must be able to write Darktongue at 30% or more. He must also have at least 90% skill in two weapon attacks, 90% in a weapon or shield parry, and 90% in any two of the following skills: Climb, Conceal, Jump, Listen, Darksense/Scan, or Darksense/Search. He must also roll under his POWx3 on 1d100. If the requirements are met, and there is a need for a Karrg's Son, the candidate will be accepted.

Karrg's Sons are not allowed to speak directly with trollkin, and require underlings to act as intermediaries. They must ritually eat large quantities of vegetable matter (elves are considered vegetable matter). On each yearly high holy day, a Karrg's Son must eat a relative. (This can be a trollkin.) Karrg's Sons cannot sleep under a roof while their people are at war. They cannot pass by a herd of sheep or pigs without trying to kill one to give to their priestesses. They cannot have less than two spouses, and may not be married to a priestess of Kyger Litor, though a spouse can be a priestess of another, friendly, cult.

Karrg's Sons must always let a musician finish a song or tune before he praises or condemns it. (Kyger Litor loves music.)

A Karrg's Son must own slaves (to show the superiority of trolls), and are encouraged to own non-troll slaves. Karrg's Sons are required to hunt down one meal per season for themselves and their close family. They must personally kill and bring one deer, pig, horse, elf, or other appropriate food gift to their local High Priestess once per season.

Karrg's Sons favor black clothing, and may trim or decorate it as they wish. They must never travel about unarmed, even in their own dwellings.

A Karrg's Son may not be a sorcerer. He must give 90% of his time and income to his priestess.

Karrg's Sons are given a set of magically-smithed leaden armor upon attaining their status. Unlike the heavier enchanted lead armor available for most troll cult runemasters, this superb armor is no heavier than bronze armor in encumbrance, and absorbs 1 extra point of damage. Expensive sets of this armor are available, set with jewels and sculpture.

Karrg's Sons also receive special allied spirits, which are normally bound into their weapons. Weapons can also be made of magically treated lead which breaks less easily, giving it 2 extra armor points (in addition to doing the usual extra damage and having the usual extra ENC for enchanted lead).

A Karrg's Son rolls only 1d10 for Divine Intervention, rather than the usual 1d100.

Karrg's Sons have the honor of leading armies into battle, and of leading small parties on specialized missions. Even priestesses must defer to their commands when in the field with them. Karrg's Sons determine the disposition of spoils after a battle. See the previous chapter for more on troll military practices.

Karrg's Sons may sponsor trollball teams in their own name.

Even in peacetime, Karrg's Sons are respected and honored members of the community. They may live in the temples of the cult and may treat the temple as their own home. Karrg's Sons may choose a number of initiates to be their personal bodyguard and household troops. The number depends on the fame of the selecting lord, and the willingness of those selected. Some lords prefer a smaller body of experts, while some enjoy a colorful parade-ground platoon.

Karrg's Sons may sacrifice for Kyger Litor's Rune magic as do initiates.

VII. PRIESTESSES

The priestesses of this cult are social as well as spiritual leaders, forming a theocratic hierarchy based on family ties. The communities are run by noble families who also control the priesthood. The members of the priestesshood are revered with mingled superstitious awe, familial loyalty, and political necessity. Though they are called "priestesses", they need not be female.

A candidate for priestesshood must be able to write to at least 30% in Darktongue, an ancient tongue with a history of written documentation from before the Darkness. The candidate must have been an in-



itiate for at least 2 years, and must not be a sorcerer. She must know the spells of Darkwall and Mindspeech. She must have at least 50% in the various ritual magic skills, divided among them. Finally, there must be a need for a new priestess, or she automatically is not accepted.

If all requirements are met, the candidate is taught how to awaken her fetch by the high priestess. She goes to a secret cave and attempts to create her fetch as per the normal shaman rules. After this, the evil Burner comes with a POW of 35 and attacks the candidate. If the candidate has a fetch, Burner remains for only 2d6 rounds. Otherwise, it remains until it has possessed the victim or been driven away.

The priestess/shamans of the cult have few restrictions, save that they make no compromises in maintaining the cult's needs, likes, and dislikes. They must accept responsibility for their followers' welfare, and provide them with leadership. They have normal shaman restrictions.

Priestesses of Kyger Litor can only bind darkness spirits to their fetches. Such spirits, especially troll ancestral spirits, are usually friendly to the priestess and her fetch. Other spirits are generally unfriendly or neutral. Spirits of fire, earth, elves, humans, or other traditional troll foes, are usually desperately hostile.

Priestesses are allowed to extract as much as they can from their followers, and are treated with all the dignity and honor of the community. They get 10% of the income of all their personal initiates to support themselves. All priestesses are given a giant beetle to act as a watch creature and this may be awakened to be used as a familiar.

Common Divine Spells: all.

Special Divine Spells: Absorption, Blinding, Command Fear Spirit, Command Shade, Counterchaos, Darksee.

VIII. SPECIAL KYGER LITOR DIVINE SPELLS

Blinding

1 Point

ranged, temporal, stackable, reusable

This spell blinds the target entity. The chance of the

target hitting or parrying with a weapon goes down by 75% and visually targeted spells cannot be cast (spells such as Healing or Second Sight still could be). Each extra point used in this spell adds 25% to the chance of it working. If the caster had a POW of 18, the target would resist as if the caster had a POW of 23, if the caster used two points of Blinding instead of one. Creatures that can function without eyesight or light, such as trolls or dwarfs, are not hampered by this spell.

Counterchaos

2 points

ranged, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

Note: this spell description has changed from *Gods of Glorantha*. This description supercedes that one, and if you own *Gods of Glorantha*, you should make a note to that effect.

This spell must be cast on a chaos monster of some sort, whose magic points must be overcome before the spell can take effect. This spell cancels all chaos features which the creature possesses as a result of rolling on the Chaotic Features for Chaotic Creatures table. When the spell's duration expires, the feature returns. Thus, if a chaotic creature had a feature increasing its POW by 3d6, its POW would decrease by 3d6 (to a minimum of 1) for the duration of the spell. A chaos creature which grew an extra arm as a result of rolling 77-86 on the Chaos Features table would resorb that arm for the duration of the spell. This spell also affects reverse chaos features inflicted upon a creature as a result of the Curse of Thed, as well as temporary chaos features received through magic, as with the Chaos Gift rune spell.

This spell does not affect chaos features which are natural to a particular monster, only those received from the random table. For instance, a Jack O'Bear's Harmonize ability would remain intact, despite this spell. A cave troll could still regenerate from wounds, and a two-headed dragonsnail would keep both heads.

Darksee

1 point

ranged, duration 6 hours, nonstackable, reusable

Allows creatures which see best in full daylight to see in the dark as if it were full daylight. Creatures which are primarily nocturnal can see in full daylight as if it were the dark to which they are accustomed. It negates the effects of sunlight on trollkin and cave trolls. It negates Blinding as well (see above).



IX. SUBCULTS

Gray Furies

Initiates that apostatize from this cult can be sure that, some time in their life to come, they will be attacked by a Gray Fury. It may attack them during a battle, it may come in their sleep, or any time.

A Gray Fury is a winged, humanoid figure somewhat resembling a gargoyle. It has a POW of 2d6+12, an INT of 12, and knows the spells of Healing 5, Countermagic 4, and Ironhand 3, the last two of which it usually casts before manifesting itself. CON and DEX are each 3d6, and SIZ varies from 1d6 to 6d6. STR is always the same number of d6s as SIZ, but has a +12 add, so that, for instance, a Fury with a SIZ of 4d6 has a STR of 4d6+12. It has a basic attack chance of 55%, which is increased by the Fury's attack modifier. The Gray Fury's knobbly hide is worth 6 points of armor. It uses the gorgon hit location table.

This attack may be cancelled by rejoining the cult before it has occurred. It is possible to prearrange the attack by telling the local priestess of intentions to quit. She is, by custom, required to summon the Gray Fury to test the initiate's ability to survive outside the cult. Surviving the Fury, he or she is released from cult vows and allowed to leave.

Gray Furies can be summoned and controlled by means of Command Cult Spirit.

Hero Cults

Most Kyger Litor temples have a shrine to some famed troll hero or other. Different temples usually have shrines to different heroes. Some very important heroes are able to grant special spells or other benefits to their worshipers, and their cults may be widespread. Minor Kyger Litor temple have no shrines, but most major temples have one or more.

Examples of three troll hero cults are given below.

Gerak Kag

This troll hero defeated the Prax nomads in battle and invaded Pavis. His cult has spread from Pavis to Dagori Inkarth, but is unknown elsewhere. Gerak Kag

was famous for his leaping ability, and he invented the Jumping spirit magic spell.

Jumping (new spirit magic spell)

variable

ranged, temporal

This spell allows the user to jump up to 3 meters high or 3 meters away for the spell's duration. Every additional point in the spell adds 3 meters to the range of a jump. The user must make a successful Jump roll, or falls down upon landing, though the full distance is still jumped.

Stone Biter

This Rune spell was first taught by a troll known simply as Stone Biter. His cult is known by trolls through all of Genertela west of the Wastelands, though not by ice trolls.

Stone-Biting

1 point

ranged, temporal, stackable, reusable

This Rune spell is for special use against dwarfs only. It allows an initiate to increase his Bite attack by 2d6 damage for each point of Power in the spell. See Character Generation for information on the Bite skill.

Tree Chopper

He is another troll hero, from the Godtime. Tree Chopper stole a sacred axe from the earth goddess and used it to desecrate the forests. Then he learned a magic song to make axes work for him and his followers against trees, and he taught it to the trolls.

This Rune spell is called Tree Chopping Song and can be learned from his special subcult. Tree Chopper's subcult is found in Dagori Inkarth, the Elder Wilds, Guhan, and Halikiv of Genertela and the Tarmo Mountains of Pamaltela.

Tree Chopping Song

2 points

ritual Ceremony spell

This ritual, which is performed as a group song, influences every Kyger Litor initiate that chants along with the spell caster. All those affected may use any type of axe against Aldryami of any type with the same attack and parry percentage as they use with a mace or maul. No other weapon types convert. The



caster and all participants must beat on dead logs with their mauls or maces as part of the ritual. The spell lasts until the next daybreak. In any battle between elves and trolls, the evening before the battle will be marked by several gatherings of trolls beating on logs and singing their guttural song.

X. ASSOCIATED CULTS

Daka Fal

The cult of Kyger Litor is intimate with the way of Daka Fal. The priestesses are urged to become shamans of Daka Fal as well, and to gain access to the many ancestor-worship spells. The usefulness of this is apparent, for the priesthoods have the same general ancestral families and know the spirits' abilities. This eliminates many of the experimental dangers of the spells, for the cult teaches genealogy as well. They have a known pool of available spirits this way, and a hierarchy which is in command of those releasing them.

This also helps explain the persistent strength of the Mistress Race trolls still alive, for they have very short genealogical connections with Kyger Litor herself, and are themselves at the top of the lists of many widespread troll families.

Subere

This is the founding goddess of the Darkness Rune, and the entity worshiped by Kyger Litor. She gives Kyger Litor her spell of Attack Soul.

Xiola Umbar

Somewhat surprisingly, this is a gentle goddess of the trolls, also worshiped by humans. She is often called the sister of Zorak Zoran. Although she and her cult are somewhat disparaged by the common trolls, she is important to them for caring for the helpless (often trollkin) and also for healing. For the former she is scorned, for the latter she is blessed by all trolls. She gives Kyger Litor the rune magic of Healing Trance.

Zorak Zoran

Relations between the worshipers of Zorak Zoran and the Karrg's Sons are very trollish. This means that they are friendly or neutral, but personal feelings can always intervene between individuals or cults. Sometimes hostilities break out between Zorak Zoran and Kyger Litor factions. If Zorak Zoran wins, then the lords of the berserker cult will fulfill the same social roles as previously held by the Karrg's Sons. He gives Kyger Litor the Crush spell.

XI. TROLL ADOPTION RITES

When a non-troll joins the cult of Kyger Litor, he will have to undergo certain rites, including tests and ordeals, which will magically transform him to be a true troll, born of the womb of darkness. The rituals are highly secret: this account is pieced together from fragments from many survivors over the centuries.

The Kyger Litor priestess performing the adoption ceremony is in charge of all affairs, and her arrangements and commands will decide all details of the rites. This outline shows only the most general patterns which are always followed.

No trolls will allow anyone but a friend even to think of asking to be initiated. Trolls do not jovially expose their secret racial rites to outsiders. If someone unknown or questionable asked to be initiated, the trolls would always either kill him then and there or maybe plot his eventual demise some dark night. Troll religion is not trivial to its worshippers!

The questioning will be much like that asked of all troll initiates, but when the question "Who is your closest kin here?" is asked, the answer, is, of course, "No one." The whole ceremony is stopped. The trolls all put on a look of great surprise and everyone asks "How can this be?" and "Who is that there?" even if they've known the person for years. The priestess launches a raft of ritual questions. The wrong answer means death. "Are you sure you want to be here? You think you can find ancestors in the darkness? Is someone here willing to give his family to you?" Once the answers are given, the priestess announces that the Rite of Adoption will begin.

All entrances to the temple region are sealed. Lead is traditional but few clans use it anymore, for dirt and



stuffed rags do as well. Trolls then seize the initiate and hand him about from troll to troll until he reaches the central altar. The person is then placed upon it, standing.

The candidate then must sing a song to Kyger Litor, praising her in the highest terms and asking her to witness his virtues. Then he sings a song to the darkness, Subere, to find his sponsors quickly and send them to him. Then he prays to the trolls for mercy and a quick initiation.

There is no need to make things quick. Each troll has his turn at what follows, and each may take as long as he likes. No rules govern it, but if the songs were sung well and flattered the creatures involved, and if the trolls have a reason to be merciful, they won't linger too long.

The trolls mutilate the initiate to make him into a troll. At some point he will die and his soul itself will be reformed by Subere to be a troll. However, when parts of him are taken while living they are useful for some exotic and special magics. Therefore the priestess urges everyone to keep the person alive as long as possible as she collects the parts. The organs will have a special potency which cannot be gained from involuntary dissection.

These things are done to the person: his ears and nose are ripped out, and bones from dead trolls are inserted into place. All four canines are knocked out and troll incisors are driven into the sockets to act as seeds for new teeth. The internal organs are torn away and a new stomach and a new liver are added. Some other magical parts, including some rocks and carved sticks, are inserted. Examples are known where leg muscles also were replaced. Eyes are generally left alone, perhaps indicating that the trolls were aware of their use and left them in, being less interested in making

people less human than making them more Kyger Litor.

The corpse of the candidate is then wrapped in magical materials, bound by giant silk webs into a fetal position, and laid into the ground on the left side. The magical cocoon is preferably made of sacred insect materials gained from the Gorakiki priesthoods, but sometimes simple dirty blankets and furs are used, then covered with mud. Sometimes the sponsoring troll arms the candidate with magical amulets or weapons before he is covered up.

Some candidates never reawake. They are allowed to rest for up to five years. If they don't emerge by then they are known to have been rejected by Kyger Litor. The cocoon is opened and the troll temple serves a special delicacy at a feast of victory.

If the person does emerge, he will be a troll. The organs and implements so cruelly imbedded into the body will have taken root and become organic parts of the newborn. Teeth, stomach, liver, and so on will be infantile but functional. Darksense will be present, but must be learned without any instinct or training. A human's skull is generally misshapen as well.

In general, the creature will have taken on the features of a troll, though the original racial stock is visible as well. A former human who has had his skull fractured many times and reshaped into a troll shape may not appear human to any but careful observers. Trolls might notice, but they don't care. Beauty, to them, is not visual.

This ritual can be performed on trollkin to make them into full trolls. It is also possible for exceptional trollkin to be initiated into Kyger Litor without these excesses. An ordinary trollkin undergoing the adoption rite would be considered to have a full troll spirit in power and ability.



MEE VORALA

I. MYTHOS AND HISTORY

MEE VORALA is the name given to the goddess of fungus. From her body grew all of the types of fungi which embellish the worlds, and she is called the Goddess of Darkness Plants. The Goddess of Dark Plants is often considered an enemy of other plants, because of the parasitic nature of many of her children.

The great majority of fungi breed and grow on dead organic matter, and Mee Vorala's worshipers know that their own ultimate fate is to be similarly transformed into fungus. Corpses are left in cool, dark places to fester.

Mee Vorala's Runes are Darkness and Plant.

II. CULT ECOLOGY

Fungus is an important, but hidden part of the world's ecology, and so it is with Mee Vorala. Despite her importance, she is not considered a major goddess, and the only major group of beings to worship her are the relatively obscure black elves.

Her holy night is the night of Freezeday of each Fertility week. Her high holy night is the holy night falling in Earth season, the most prosperous time for her cult.

III. THE CULT IN THE WORLD

Black elves are worldwide, but mostly underground. The most notable aboveground sites for these entities includes Sporewood near Dragon Pass and the extensive Mold Barrens in western Pamaltela.

Black elves support the largest temples that they can, depending entirely upon local population. Since

these elves universally worship Mee Vorala, even small tunnel-villages can often boast a minor temple. Shrines teach Moulder.

Each temple is ruled by the oldest priestess in residence. There is no inter-temple communication except through Mee Vorala.

IV. INITIATES

Any black elf may join this cult automatically by sacrificing a point of POW.

Candidates who are not black elves must be known to the black elf priestess as a friend, have a skill of 50% or more in Plant Lore, and roll POWx5 or less on 1d100 for acceptance, as well as sacrifice a point of POW.

Spirit Magic: Darkwall, Disrupt, Heal.

V. PRIESTS

Mee Vorala's priests are the leaders of their community and grow many peculiar, poisonous, or magical fungi.

A candidate for priesthood must have a skill of 90% in both Plant Lore and Ceremony, and must pass the Test of Holiness (POWx3 or less on 1d100). There must be an opening for a new priest. Mee Vorala's priests must obey all normal restrictions. They may become shamans or sorcerers if they desire.

Common Divine Magic: Command Cult Spirit, Dismiss Magic, Divination, Excommunication, Find Enemy, Find (Substance), Mindlink, Sanctify, Soul Sight, Spellteaching, Spirit Block, Summon (species), Warding, Worship Mee Vorala.

Special Divine Magic: Moulder.

Moulder

1 point

touch, instant, stackable, one-use

This spell causes a mushroom, mildew, mold, smut,



rust, slime, or other fungus infection to infest a suitable object. The spell will afflict a single animal or tree with fungus disease, or a 1-meter-square area of grasses, ground cover, or stone or cloth. Stacking this spell permits the affecting of multiple targets or a larger area. The caster does not need to overcome the target's magic points to successfully initiate the growth of fungus on the target. The effect of a particular fungus infestation on a living target must be determined by the gamemaster.

VI. SUBCULTS

Spirit of Reprisal: Rot

Anyone betraying this religion is cursed by the spirit of rot. Any time the culprit stores food for more than a day, it festers and becomes rife with inedible mold and fungus.

VII. ASSOCIATED CULTS

Flamal

Flamal is the god of all plants, as well as Mee Voral. He gives her the following spell, which is useful for forming fruiting bodies with mushrooms and similar fungi.

Bear Fruit

1 point

ritual Ceremony spell

This spell causes a single tree or a 3-meter-square area of bush or ground cover to yield its fruits, no matter what the season. A full-day ceremony is needed to activate the spell and to appease the plant's spirit. This spell can kill the plant if done at a bad time. Chances of killing affected plants are seasonally determined: spring 30%, summer 15%, autumn 10%, winter 70%, storm 50%. In the Sacred Time, the plant always survives.

VIII. NOTES

Mushroom Drinks and Potions

Black elves are experts at brewing drugs and hallucinogens. Their fungi give rise to a amazing number of weird potions, some beneficial, some harmful. The elves are usually more than willing to trade their peculiar drinks for useful goods. The great variety of black elf potations is too great to be more than briefly mentioned here, but three common potions, found in most underground dark elf fungus forests, are described below:

Agara Cream

This is a black, oily cream which is eaten with a lead spoon. The partaker must match his CON vs. his own POW twice successively. If his POW overcomes his CON both times, then he changes gender. A woman becomes a man, or vice-versa. If the eater's POW fails to overcome his CON both times, then nothing happens. If his POW overcomes his CON once, but not twice, then he becomes genderless — a neutral, sexless being.

If a neuter creature (such as a black elf) eats the cream, and his POW overcomes his CON twice successively, he may choose what sex he would like to become. On any other result, he remains sexless.

Moscoso Potion

This is a clear fluid with an acrid taste. When consumed, the drinker gains the abilities to turn his own hit points into magic points. He does this by choosing a hit location and voluntarily converting taking 1 or more points of damage from that location into an equal number of magic points. The location is immediately furrowed, wrinkled, and begins to ooze blood, the degree of the disfigurement depending on how much damage was taken. This damage can be healed by first aid or magic.

After 2d6 hours, the Moscoso potion wears off and the drinker loses this ability.

Sabatch

This is a dried powder which is dissolved in any potable liquid and then drunk. It is a hallucinogen which also expands the powers of the drinker's mind. All the user's skills are halved for 2d6 hours, but for the same period he gains the ability to cast as many spells simultaneously as he wishes. He must make a separate spell casting roll for each spell, and must spend all magic points necessary.



MOORGARKI

I. MYTHOS AND HISTORY

MOORGARKI (known as Kwalyorni among non-trolls) is the ancestress of all *muri*, or Pamaltelan "hot trolls". When Moorgarki walked the world, alive and whole, life was good, and people and spirits moved in the same realm. But things changed after the explosion of the Great Mountain, where Kyger Litor lived. Moorgarki was a great and terrible fighter, and so when the monsters mustered again at the Field of Jaranpoor, Moorgarki was there against them, and was wounded. No one could ask for more help against chaos than that. Afterwards another survival deity came, armed with the Spear of the Burner, who again struck down the great goddess.

Moorgarki is clever, for she realized that the second wound, as debilitating as it was, was simultaneously the healing for her earlier "unclosable" wound.

Moorgarki is wise, and made simple arrangements with other creatures which would benefit all. One was with the Children of Aldrya, who also hated the demigod Pamalt. Though their ancient oaths and fears would never allow any uzuz or uzko friendship the *muri* did not qualify as such, and could make new deals. Moorgarki promised the Spirit of the Jungle that he would always help her against Pamalt and even carry their mutual hostility into the savannah populated by Pamalt's people. Thus the *muri* are thought to be servants of the Jungle, and they are. But they did not promise never to eat the jungle or the creatures that live in it.

The trolls living in the Tarmo mountains are not *muri*, but true *uzko*. Nonetheless many worship Moorgarki, as an ancient troll spirit of great importance in Pamaltela, and a conqueror of many Pamaltelan deities.

Worshippers of Moorgarki believe that, after death, they return to the Netherworld. Moorgarki's Runes are Man and Shadow. A shadow rune represents darkness without cold. It appears as a darkness rune with a bar through it horizontally.

II. CULT ECOLOGY

Moorgarki's mythos explains the origin of the jungle trolls and the conditions of their lives. The prejudices, mores, and morals of her cult are identical to those of the jungle trolls, and are not extremely dissimilar from those of trolls anywhere.

Moorgarki's cult is friendly to other darkness gods, and the jungle trolls themselves are not at all averse to worshiping cults such as Argan Argar, Xiola Umbar, and the like.

Moorgarki's holy nights fall upon the Windsday of Truth week in each season. Her high holy night is the holy night in Storm season.

III. THE CULT IN THE WORLD

Moorgarki, despite her importance among the jungle trolls, is still secondary to Kyger Litor. Her cult is known only as an enemy or legendary figure to other races.

Moorgarki is only worshiped by trolls living in Pamaltela.

Moorgarki's temples vary in size, but are usually only minor temples or shrines. Shrines teach Black Breath.

The cult organization, as with many troll religions, is loose. The strongest priest dominates any gathering of religious leaders. No inter-temple network exists.

IV. INITIATES

A *muri* may join this cult simply by sacrificing a point of POW. Any other type of troll may join by fulfilling the standard *RuneQuest* cult requirements. Skills checked are: Ceremony, Climb, Hide, Track, and any



weapon attack. Non-trolls are not accepted into the cult.

Initiates must fulfill all requirements for normal cults.

Spirit Magic: Bladesharp, Bludgeon, Coordination, Countermagic, Disrupt, Darkwall, Extinguish, Fanaticism, Healing, Speedart.

V. ACOLYTES

Acolytes must meet the same requirements as a priest and receive access to all Rune magic. They receive all normal benefits for their status and must fulfill all normal requirements.

VI. PRIESTS

Priests must support the warriors of their tribe. Moorgarki is a war god, and her priests must demonstrate their abilities in this field. Most muri combat consists of small-scale raids or ambushes in the jungle night, so the presence of a single priest is often of vital importance.

A candidate must meet the usual qualifications for priesthood and, once accepted, must fulfill all other normal priestly obligations as well.

Common Divine Magic: all.

Special Divine Magic: Berserker, Black Breath, Cancel Light, Fear.

VII. SPECIAL MOORGARKI DIVINE SPELLS

Black Breath

2 points

ranged, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

The target gains a poisonous breath which has a POT of 1 for each magic point spent when the spell is cast. Any being standing closer than 2m to the target must either hold his or her breath (as per asphyxiation rules) or inhale the poison. This poison does not affect any person under the influence of the Black Breath spell. The breath is clearly visible as a dank cloud around the target.

Cancel Light

1 point

ranged, temporal, stackable, reusable

This stackable spell must be cast upon an object or creature, and creates a hazy zone centered on the target and moving with it. This zone is 10m in diameter. Any light-producing spells which come within the zone are automatically canceled if the Cancel Light spell has more points than the light spell. As always, Rune points count for 2 magic points each for purposes of cancellation. Thus, a 1-point Cancel Light would eliminate a Light spell, but it would take a 3-point Cancel Light to eliminate a Lightwall.

VIII. SUBCULTS

Spirit of Reprisal

Reprobates are visited by the spirit Kajakka, who acts with a POW of 4d6 and engages the target in spirit combat at some time when most inconvenient to the victim. However, it steals POW instead of magic points when victorious in spirit combat. If Kajakka's magic points are ever reduced to 0, it departs.



SUBERE

I. MYTHOS AND HISTORY

There is the Darkness of Shadow: the place where Light cannot reach.

There is the Night: the place where Light has fled.

There is the Darkness of Before Existence: the place where Light cannot be.

There is the Darkness of Subere: the place where Light has never been.

THE UNIVERSE WAS CREATED, pulled from the gaping maw of Chaos and the Nameless Depths, existed. The Seven Underworlds hid, buried beneath the surface world, and grew. Paltry creatures came within her cavernous being, seeking her hidden powers, and came away with what men call Death, and the nameless being remained still.

The fiery sun itself came to the Underworld, blazing and burning away all the black shadows of that place. Kyger Litor, Xentha, Zorak Zoran, and other entities of the darkness fled his hot presence, but Subere, no longer nameless, withstood. Of all the deities of darkness, only Subere remained, untainted, unilluminated, and unchanged by the sun's light. She existed before shadows could form and gave refuge to all the creatures to which other gods could give no name nor haven.

Subere's hidden secrets have been taken from her only twice since the world began. The first time was when Death itself was brought from her hidden chambers. The second was when Kyger Litor summoned the Black Eater upon the chaos hordes of Gbaji. Her first gift has given woe beyond measure to the mortal world. Her second gift was returned to her by Gbaji's light before it had begun to operate properly.

Troll philosophers find no comfort or any hope of an afterlife in Subere's cold being. They look to Kyger Litor, Xiola Umbar, or other, more benevolent gods for such.

Subere is the source of the Darkness Rune and also possesses the Rune of Magic.

II. CULT ECOLOGY

Subere is the goddess of First Darkness, the darkness which has never been pierced by light. When folk delve into the blackest secrets and the ultimate truths of darkness, Subere, the "Darkness without any Shadow," awaits them. Because of her importance, she will always be worshiped. Because of her frightfulness, she will never be popular.

Subere's cultists are primarily powerful people who seek after the innermost mysteries or powers of darkness. They usually worship other darkness gods as well.

The cult of Subere cares little for anything but other darkness beings. Storm, sun, ocean, earth — all are unimportant to the philosophies of her darkness. Subere preceded them all, and, someday, will survive them all.

Subere's holy days are celebrated upon the holy days of the most important darkness deity of the area. She herself is timeless.

III. THE CULT IN THE WORLD

Except in lands with a strong darkness-worshipping history, the cult of Subere is small or non-existent. Even in troll strongholds and the Kingdom of Ignorance, the cult of Subere is small in extent, but its worshippers are generally important folk.

Subere is mainly worshiped among trolls. Other centers of its worship are Kralorela, the Mari mountains, and among the mermen of the Dashomo.

Because the cult is so small, often shrines in other deities' temples are all that is available for Subere's worshippers. In the places where Subere has an important cult of her own, minor temples may exist. In Kralorela are several major temples and even one great temple. Subere's shrines teach Attack Soul.

There is no complex temple organization. The most important Subere worshiper of the area must



tend to the temple and its upkeep and perform appropriate duties.

IV. INITIATES

A candidate for initiation into the cult of Subere must be either be a creature of darkness (such as a troll or morokanth) or be an initiate of some darkness Rune cult.

In addition, the initiate must succeed in a skill roll in both Ceremony and Summon. He must also provide his priest with a 200 Lunar fee.

Subere teaches no spirit magic.

V. PRIESTS

A Rune priest of Subere must already be an initiate of the cult. He must have a skill of at least 100% in Ceremony and Summon. There are no other cult requirements, but particular societies often have other criteria which must be met.

Priests need donate only 50% of time and income to the cult.

Common divine magic: Binding Enchantment, Summon (species), Worship Subere.

Special divine magic: Absorption, Attack Soul, Command (various types of underworld-inhabitants).

VI. SPECIAL SUBERE DIVINE SPELLS

Attack Soul

1 point

ranged, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

This spell enables the caster to attack a single chosen target in a form of spirit combat without being disincorporate. If the caster overcomes the target's magic points, the target loses 1d3 magic points. Just as in spirit combat, the target can resist and even attack back, reducing the caster's magic points. Unless one of the participants is disincorporate or capable of disincorporating, neither can possess the other's body.

The target may not resist this spell's effects on him, though Countermagic or similar magic blocks

the initial attack and must be overcome. Spells such as Spirit Block or Spirit Screen work normally to protect their users. The caster can break off or resume this spirit combat at any time during the spell's duration.

VII. SUBCULTS

The horrors of darkness took refuge with Subere during Yelm's sojourn in the land of the dead. Subere, the goddess of hidden terrors and nightmare monsters, has a wide array of Command spells available to her worshipers.

There are so many Command spells available from Subere that only a limited selection can be described here. Creatures commanded include chonchons, ghoulish spirits, hags, shades, hellions, lamias, all types of spirits, and wraiths, plus many more, not all of which are known to all cultists.

Temples of Subere hold ancient tomes listing the names of hundreds of individual demons and spirits, as well as Summon, Command, and Bind spells for many monsters unknown outside the cult. Those unprepared for encounters with outre horrors are advised to avoid Subere's cult.

VIII. ASSOCIATED CULTS

Most cults of darkness are friendly to Subere. Shrines of Subere are found in great temples of many gods that are not, strictly speaking, associate cults.

Himile

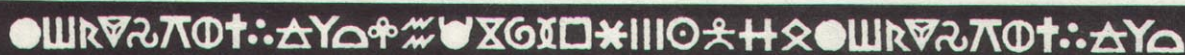
The God of Cold, Subere's son, gives Subere his special strength and his spell of Decrease Temperature.

Kyger Litor

The mother of all trolls has the greatest respect for Subere, Goddess of the Dark Deep Within, and trolls make up a majority of Subere's worshipers. She gives Subere the spell of Darksee.

Xentha

Xentha, goddess of Night, is the greatest of all the darkness spirits to flee Yelm. She is a daughter of Subere, and gives her the spell of Create Shadow.



XENTHA

I. MYTHOS AND HISTORY

XENTHA IS THE GREATEST of all the darkness spirits to flee Yelm. She is the protective goddess of night. The trolls say she is the Invisible of Yelm, implying that she is his shadow and hence never seen by the sun. Thus she can protect from all his dangers.

Despite her importance as a deity of night, her worship has never caught on, perhaps because of her lack of personality. She is not particularly jealous or malignant, and her beneficent rewards are freely given to all without need of worship.

Her Runes are Darkness and Mastery.

II. CULT ECOLOGY

Humans praise Xentha as ruler of the surface world, but this is less important to trolls than her protective aspect. Prayers are common to her, but initiation into her esoteric secrets is rare. Most beings have no use for them.

Every night is sacred to her, as it exists within her actual presence. Her priests normally choose a convenient night within each season to hold holy night services. Her high holy night does not change, however, and is constant throughout the cult, falling upon the Godday of Fertility Week in Dark season.

III. THE CULT IN THE WORLD

The cult of Xentha is extremely widespread, but is also extremely small. Most shrines to her are found in associated temples or in specially-built holy areas in

which the local hierarchy has specifically attempted to include all important deities. Most of her temples are only shrines, teaching Affix Darkness.

Because of this cult's rudimentary nature and sparseness of worship, it has not developed any temple or overall cult structure.

IV. INITIATES

A candidate for initiation must sacrifice a point of POW, avoid all contact with sunlight for a full week (if a single ray of sunlight falls upon his skin during that period, he fails the test), and roll his POWx5 or less on 1d100.

He must donate 10% of his income to the religion, and must sacrifice one magic point in prayer to Xentha each day he goes outside in daylight.

At each nightfall, the initiate gains one extra magic point, if his current magic points are less than his POW.

Spirit Magic: Darkwall, Extinguish.

V. PRIESTS

This cult's priests are the equivalents of acolytes in other religions. A candidate for "priesthood" must roll his POWx3 or less on 1d100, have a Ceremony skill of 50%+, and avoid all contact with sunlight for a full season.

Once accepted, the priest must donate half his time and income to the cult. He must continue to sacrifice one magic point in prayer to Xentha each day he goes outside in sunlight, and continues to receive one free magic point each nightfall if his current magic points are less than his POW.

The only advantage received is that the priest can obtain Xentha's special divine magic reusably.



Common Divine Magic: Command Cult Spirit, Sanctify, Soul Sight, Summon (otherworld creature), Worship Xentha.

Special Divine Magic: Absorption, Affix Darkness, Command Shade, Create Shadow.

VI. SPECIAL XENTHA DIVINE SPELLS

Affix Darkness

1 point

ranged, duration until the following sunset, stackable, reusable

This spell must be cast at night, at a chosen area with a volume of 100 cubic meters. That volume's darkness becomes fixed in place, and remains present even after sunrise, persisting all day, as a little piece of night. The affixed darkness remains exactly as dark as the area was when the spell was first cast. A torch or other light source carried into the darkened area illuminates it just as at nighttime. The darkened area has rather fuzzy, indistinct edges, but is clearly visible in daylight.

This spell may not be stacked with Extension. Each additional point placed in the spell increases the volume affected by another 100 cubic meters.

Create Shadow

1 point

ranged, temporal, stackable, reusable

This creates a region of shadow. The dimensions vary (shifting all the time at the edges), ranging from 10 to 20 (2d6+8) meters in diameter with a height one-

quarter that. It is immobile.

When additional points of this spell are stacked together, the volume covered does not change, but the darkness deepens. One point of Create Shadow permits the Dark Walk spell to be cast within its environs and creates a haze in sunlight. Two points cancel the effects of sunlight on light-sensitive beings such as cave trolls. Three points make a shadow equivalent to a moonlit night. Four points create a pitch-black area.

Fire or other illumination within such magic can be seen, but it illuminates nothing.

VII. SUBCULTS

Spirit of Reprisal

Those who betray the cult lose the special cult benefit providing them with 1 additional magic point each evening. They retain the special cult handicap of losing one magic point each day they go forth in sunlight.

VIII. ASSOCIATED CULTS

Argan Argar

Her son provides her with his spell of Dark Walk.

Subere

Her sister provides her with Command Passion Spirit.



XIOLA UMBAR

I. MYTHOS AND HISTORY

THE GODDESS XIOLA UMBAR is of unnamed parentage, though she is definitely a deity of darkness. She is always referred to as the sister of Zorak Zoran. Their association has been long and constant, and early (pre-Lesser Dark) prayers mention them together if they are mentioned at all.

The earliest tales of her healing and life-giving aspect occurred even before Death entered the world. At this ancient time, Zorak Zoran was labelled her "shadow" — even in the lightless underworld. She aided Dehore, the Dark One, to become the Dehori, the many shades. She aided at the birth of Styx and Zaramaka, becoming midwife to the waters of the world.

In the Gods War, Zorak Zoran grew in strength, personality, and power, and Xiola Umbar followed in his footsteps, undoing some of the troubles that Zorak Zoran created. She opposed him only once, when she saved the goblin race, but she never helped any true foe of the troll wargod.

When chaos came, Xiola Umbar stood by her brother, healing and aiding him to keep him fit, even at her own expense. No sacrifice was too great to save the world from chaos, and with her aid the wargod prevailed.

During the Greater Darkness, only the mighty or the lucky survived. Among creatures of darkness, the mighty followed Zorak Zoran; the lucky chose Xiola Umbar. She became protectress of the weak and friend to the helpless.

When the Great Compromise was made, the gods of darkness were powerful and controlled much of the world. In Dragon Pass, Charmilla, eldest daughter of Xiola Umbar, sat upon the First Council and helped lead the scattered peoples from panic back into the world. Xiola Umbar was popular then, but when troubles began anew, her savage brother more suited the needs of the people at that time. Her worship persists in the world, and she is even worshiped by some people who normally favor gods of storm or light, but

who still want divine aid and comfort when the storm falls quiet and the sun goes into hiding.

Xiola Umbar has always been most popular among trolls. Her midwifery skills make her a favorite of Kyger Litor, and her talents in healing make her a friend to fighters. When the trollkin curse swept the race, the Xiola Umbar extended her protection of weaklings by helping the misbegotten kin to survive the anger and embarrassment of their parents, preserving that puny race.

The cult of Xiola Umbar teaches that all things have a soul which lives on after death. The cult promises that initiates will be born again with little pain.

The cult of Xiola Umbar has no special burial requirements. Troll worshipers usually eat their dead, like all trolls.

Xiola Umbar is associated with the Runes of Darkness, Harmony, and Fertility.

II. CULT ECOLOGY

Xiola Umbar is the goddess of protective darkness. She preserves and heals, and even mighty queen trolls recognize her help. Oppressed peasants and despised trollkin revere her name. This cult is popular among many humans. It has a secure, if not powerful, role in troll society.

She is the traditional goddess of the weak and oppressed; the patron deity of children, grandmothers, and princesses in distress. Few humans or other mortals will admit to disliking her. Though she is friendly to Yelm, most other gods of Light are unable to overcome prejudice towards her.

This cult hates all chaos and dislikes most powers of light. Their is friendship between Xiola Umbar and Yelm, though, for she comforted him when he first fell to Death. These cultists oppose anyone, including Zorak Zoran-worshiping trolls, who would harm those under their protection.

The holy nights of Xiola Umbar vary with the



season. The holy night always falls upon Harmony week, and always matches the seasonal element: the night of Waterday of Seaseason, Fireday of Fire season, Clayday of Earth season, Freezeday of Darkseason, and Windsday of Storm Season.

The High Holy Day consists of the entire Fertility week of Dark season. The climactic ceremonies fall upon Freezeday.

III. THE CULT IN THE WORLD

This cult has a secure niche in troll society. Priestesses of the cult are accorded great respect. Those who have proven their abilities to their overlords and underlings often control great actual power as well, such as commanding the loyalty of trollkin warriors. Xiola Umbar healers are handy to have around, and both the arrogant priestesses of Kyger Litor and the grisly berserks of Zorak Zoran gratefully accept her presence during hardship.

Xiola Umbar is worshiped wherever trolls are found, though often her cult is small. She is also worshiped by many humans throughout the world, as a secondary deity. She has no central stronghold of power.

Her cult is not enormous in size, and fosters mostly shrines, with occasional larger temples in areas of troll concentration. Shrines teach Healing Trance.

No official organization oversees this cult. Whenever several High Priestesses come together, they decide upon the leader by counting the Rune spells of each. The priestess with the most Rune spell points wins.

The individual temples, too, have no official organization. Each priestess guards and protects her wards. Chief Priestesses and High Priestesses outrank lesser priestesses.

IV. LAY MEMBERSHIP

To join this cult, a lay member must desire protection. The only prohibition is that creatures of chaos may not join. Lay members are required to place their lives in

the hands of their priestess, and be willing to donate magic points or time when called upon. There are no monetary requirements.

Lay members are given free healing from the priestesses and initiates of the cult, when possible. They will also be defended and protected.

Spirit Magic: Healing, Solace.

V. INITIATES

Prospective initiates into the cult of Xiola must know the spell of Heal 4. They must pass the usual test for initiation. Skills checked are: Ceremony, First Aid, Plant Lore, Treat Disease (new skill), and Treat Poison (new skill).

Unusual races for this cult, such as dwarfs, beastmen, or elves, must pass an additional test of rolling their POW+APP or less on 1d100 before being permitted to join. Creatures of chaos can never join.

Initiates must fulfill all standard requirements. They often are assigned to protect certain groups of lay members, or may simply "adopt" such a group. They are expected to heal and protect members of the cult.

Xiola Umbar initiates are forbidden to learn Ignite, Light, Lightwall, Firearrow, Fireblade, or any other fire or light-based magic.

Priestesses of Xiola Umbar attempt to protect initiates within their influence. Initiates are always healed by priestesses before lay members.

First Aid, Treat Disease, Treat Poison, and Plant Lore are taught to initiates by cult leaders at normal prices.

Spirit Magic: Countermagic, Darkwall, Heal, Protection, Shimmer, Spirit Screen.

VI. ACOLYTES

Xiola Umbar is no warrior, nor is she a whimpering maid. Acolytes are primarily protectors and healers, and may have to fight to defend their charges. Candidates for acolytehood must fulfill all the requirements of a priestess.



Acolytes serve as centers for rallying their charges and are often found as the leaders of trollkin armies.

Shade, Couvade, Group Defense, Healing Trance, Regrow Limb, Shield of Darkness, Turn Blow.

VII. PRIESTESSES

Xiola Umbar is a not-so-gentle goddess of healing, and her priestesses behave accordingly. They do not heal everyone indiscriminately, only those worth the cost of saving.

Priestesses must fulfill standard priestly requirements.

The priestesses of Xiola Umbar are the main source of protection for those under their care, and must set the well-being of their charges above their own. This does not mean that a priestess is expected to sacrifice her own life or to risk her safety to save a follower: a priestess is able to save many lives during her lifetime, and she should not risk herself foolishly in order to save a single person, or even a group.

Priestesses gain the usual benefits of priesthood and the love and respect of their congregation. The cult gladly cares for them and preserves them if at all possible. Ransoms are paid to rescue a priestess from imprisonment.

Common Divine Magic: all.

Special Divine Magic: Attract Attention, Command Shade, Couvade, Group Defense, Healing Trance, Regrow Limb, Turn Blow.

VIII. CHIEF AND HIGH PRIESTESSES

A priestesses who runs a minor temple is titled a chief priestess. Priestesses heading major or great temples are termed high priestesses. Immediate aides to the high priestess of a great temple who have at least 15 points of Xiola Umbar divine magic are also called chief priestesses.

Common Divine Magic: all.

Special Divine Magic: Attract Attention, Command

IX. SPECIAL XIOLA UMBAR SKILLS

Treat Disease (*Knowledge 05%*): successful use of this knowledge skill doubles a victim's chances for success at his next recovery CON roll. Victims of acute, serious, or terminal diseases must be tended constantly to get this bonus. Victims of mild diseases need only be tended for one day per week.

A critical roll indicates that the victim's chances to recover are tripled. Specials mean nothing. A fumble indicates that the victim's disease progresses to the next stage (i.e., acute becomes serious or serious becomes terminal — a terminal victim dies).

Treat Poison (*Knowledge 05%*): a successful use of this knowledge skill purges the victim of 2d6 POT of poison. It must be performed before damage is taken. A special roll purges the victim of 4d6 POT, and a critical roll purges him of all poison. A fumble indicates that the victim's chance of resisting the poison is halved. A skill attempt can be attempted only once per poisoning.

X. SPECIAL XIOLA UMBAR SPIRIT SPELLS

Solace

3 points

ranged, duration 24 hours, passive

This spell is cast upon a sufferer. It acts to cancel mental distress, whether from grief over the loss of a loved one, from fear of death, or whatever. The effect is to relieve stress on the victim and enable him or her to go about normal actions. It does not relieve pain, such as from wounds, nor does it reduce the probability of death or maiming if the victim is seriously injured or diseased, but it does enable him to face the prospect of death bravely.



XI. SPECIAL XIOLA UMBAR RUNE MAGIC

Attract Attention

3 points

ranged, one melee round, stackable, reusable

When this spell is cast, the priestess makes a magic point vs. magic point resistance roll. Everyone whose magic points are overcome must look at the priestess. For example, if a priestess with 18 magic points threw this spell and rolled a 65, everyone within 100 meters with 15 or fewer magic points would be affected. This spell does not affect initiates of Xiola Umbar.

The practical effects are that affected enemies of the priestess must direct all attacks towards the priestess that round, and that her affected friends may not attack anyone. If the priestess is inaccessible to attack by a particular foe, the foe cannot attack at all that round, though he may still parry or dodge. This spell may be stacked with magic points to blast through defensive spells such as Countermagic.

This spell may be stacked with Turn Blow.

Couvade

2 points

ritual Ceremony, duration length of pregnancy, non-stackable, reusable

Xiola Umbar uses this spell for midwifery. It is always cast upon a pregnant woman, and it affects the father of her unborn child. Both father and mother must consent to be included in this spell and be present at its casting. It must be performed within the first season of pregnancy. All the pains and sicknesses of pregnancy affect him instead of her, effectively shielding the child from harm. At childbirth, the woman suffers only minimal pangs, but the husband is prostrate. But the pains of the husband cause him no lasting injury, and the spell ensures the safety of both mother and child.

This spell is especially important for trolls, as they have much difficulty in childbearing, especially with the large great troll births and with trollkin litters. This spell does not, unfortunately, enable the mother to be safe from birthing trollkin, but they are born alive and healthy.

Group Defense

3 points

ranged, duration till dropped, stackable, reusable

This spell is active, maintained by the will of the casting priestess.

It creates a veil-like barrier which encloses a sphere 5 meters in radius centering on the priestess. All those contained within the barrier lose one magic point into this barrier when it forms — they may not choose to withhold the magic point or to add more points.

Any creature attempting to pass the barrier automatically takes damage directly to a random hit location, ignoring armor, equal to the number of magic points in the barrier.

This spell is stackable, in which case each person within the barrier spends 1 magic point per spell stacked, and the damaging effect is accordingly increased. Stacking also increases the radius of the protective sphere by 2 meters per spell stacked.

Healing Trance

1 point

touch, duration as needed, nonstackable, reusable

The target of this spell falls into a deep trance, during which time his bodily processes speed up by a factor of 8:1. Thus, a wound which would normally take eight weeks to heal takes one. General hit points build back up from poison, etc. Also, diseased characters can get their healing (or failure to do so) finished within a much shorter time. It also affects healing spells such as Regrow Limb.

The caster of this spell and the recipient both remain in an unwaking trance state until all healing is done. Both patient and healer must be fed and cared for as if they were catatonics during this period. The spell's target must either be unconscious or voluntarily accept this spell.

Shield of Darkness

1 point

ranged, temporal, stackable, reusable

The spell acts as 2 points of Protection and 2 points of Shimmer per point. Additionally, it always creates a Darkwall effect.



Turn Blow

3 points

self, duration 10 strike ranks, stackable, reusable

If the priestess is struck by a blow or missile weapon while under this spell, any damage penetrating and damaging her gives her attacker an equal amount of general hit point damage. Armor does not help against the damage reflected to the attacker, though it acts normally for the priestess. Even poison and damage-increasing spells like Bladesharp are reflected. This spell can be boosted to assist it in penetrating defensive spells such as Countermagic.

Example: Ramba the priestess casts this spell in a fight against an elf. The spell takes effect on SR 4 and the elf impales with his Bladesharped spear on SR 4 as well. The elf does 18 total points of damage to Ramba's abdomen, where she has 4 points of armor. Ramba takes 14 points of damage to her abdomen and the elf takes 14 points of general hit point damage. His 6 point armor plus Protection 4 spell do not count and he dies.

This spell may be stacked with Attract Attention.

commit vile deeds in addition to forsaking the cult, he incurs the eternal hatred of all worshipers of Xiola Umbar and her associated cults... which includes Zorak Zoran! There is no formal spirit of retribution.

XIII. ASSOCIATED CULTS

Kyger Litor

The mother of trolls grants her friend and midwife the spell of Darksee.

Zorak Zoran

Xiola Umbar's wayward brother provides her with the spell of Shield.

XII. SUBCULTS

Spirit of Reprisal

The protection of Xiola Umbar is withdrawn from those desiring to leave her cult. If an apostate were to

XIV. NOTES

Trolls in general despise Xiola Umbar for her protective attitude towards the weak and toward trollkin, but all love her healing abilities and respect her defensive spells. A priestess must always be present at any game of Trollball, but the cult never sponsors teams.





ZONG

I. MYTHOS AND HISTORY

ZONG IS THE SON of Vaneekara the Hurler, and came to the surface world with his mother. When trolls first came to the surface, life was easy. Food abounded everywhere, and trolls needed only to reach out their hands to grasp it. Soon matters worsened. When Ernalda and her children fell asleep, vegetable food became scarce. The few remaining animals learned caution and cunningly hid or fled from hungry trolls. This is when Zong came into his importance. He taught trolls to seek prey properly, and also taught magic songs by which the dead prey's soul could be sent back to its mother, from whence it could be reborn again. In this manner, the total numbers of prey creatures could not be diminished by hunting.

Trolls believe in a cold gray afterlife, inhabited by dismal ghosts and mindless insects. Worshipers of Zong believe that, after death, their souls will be fed by those creatures for which they properly performed the Peaceful Cut. As with all trolls, their corpses are eaten after death. Zong's runes are Death and Harmony. He teaches how best to kill to preserve life.

II. CULT ECOLOGY

The basic troll lifestyle is that of hunting. While many trolls hunt without bothering to worship Zong, many others feel they can use all the help they can get. All creatures but trolls are fair prey for his hunters.

The weeks of the Great Hunt are sacred, but no special rites are performed until after it, when the master hunter is chosen.

III. THE CULT IN THE WORLD

Zong's cult wields no special social impact. However, any powerful troll of any background commands respect, and troll runemasters of Zong are no exception.

Zong is most-worshiped where trolls are most primitive, such as on Valind's Glacier, or Pamalt's jungle. All troll lands have a few worshipers of Zong.

Shrines to Zong are placed willy-nilly in troll wildernesses, and are kept up by wandering hunters. Tribes or clans may support larger temples, depending on how many worshipers the tribe possesses. Shrines teach Sureshot.

IV. INITIATES

If one of a candidate's parents was not an initiate of Zong, he must pass the usual test, demonstrating prowess in Missile Attack, Devise, Listen, Track, and Ceremony.

Initiates may never waste food, and are forbidden to hunt trolls (though not trollkin). An initiate must donate a prey animal to his clan once a season, and must attempt the Peaceful Cut on any animal killed for food.

An injured or sick initiate who cannot feed his family is cared for by food donations brought in by members. All initiates learn the Peaceful Cut as part of their initiation.

Spirit Magic: Disrupt (useful for small prey such as songbirds and rodents), Mobility, Silence, Slow, Speedart.

V. MASTER HUNTERS

Master hunters are stalwarts of the tribe, providing food in peace and acting as excellent scouts in time of war.

Each year the local cult holds a Great Hunt for its master hunters. If a vacancy for a master hunter exists, all initiates knowing Butchery at 90% or more may also take part. Each participant must hunt alone and unarmored, trying to bring in the most impressive game animal. Live captured animals are more impressive than dead ones. The quality of the various animals brought in is judged by the tribe's queen.

If an initiate brings in the most impressive game animal, he is ordained master hunter (only one new



master hunter can be created in a year). If two or more trolls tie for first place, no new master is chosen.

If a master hunter himself brings in the most impressive game animal, he is titled Great Hunter and rules the local cult that year. If no Great Hunter is chosen, last year's continues to reign.

Master hunters oversee the distribution of food, and may keep for themselves 5% of the prey given them for this purpose. They must donate 50% of their time and income to the clan and ensure that a worship service to Zong is held each season. Master hunters are priests, and have access to rune magic.

The tribe's queen never joins in the Great Hunt, and must judge the contest. She receives the winner's beast for her own; strong incentive to choose the best.

Common Divine Magic: Command Cult Spirit, Divination, Excommunication, Heal Wound, Sanctify, Soul Sight, Spellteaching, Worship (hunter aspect).

Special divine magic: Command (herbivorous insect), Command (rodent), Draw Beast, Sureshot.

VI. SPECIAL ZONG SKILLS

Craft/Butchery (*Knowledge skill 10%*): Butchery allows the user to dismember an animal in the quickest and most effective way. It also allows the user to divide up a prey animal in the tribe's traditional manner (i.e., brain to the troll who killed it, bowels to the Kyger Litor priestess, etc.).

Darksense/Scan, Special Bonus: Special Zong darksense training, taught to Zong initiates, permits a Darksense/Scan bonus of 10% to any hunter using his darksense scan outdoors. This special training is a jealously guarded secret, and is partially responsible for the legends that claim that Zong hunters can see behind themselves. A character who is an initiate of Zong gains this bonus whenever he uses Darksense/Scan in an outdoor situation (woods, rough terrain, plains, or other terrain). Add 10% to the character's normal skill.

VII. SPECIAL ZONG SPIRIT MAGIC

Peaceful Cut

1 point

ritual Ceremony

This special spirit magic ritual is performed to ensure that the soul of the slain beast returns to its mother, to be reborn properly. It includes a short prayer and ritual of thanksgiving.

This spell must be performed in conjunction with the Craft skill of Butchery. The user makes a single skill roll, attempting to roll under both his Ceremony skill and his Craft/butchery skill.

VIII. SPECIAL HUNTER DIVINE SPELLS

Most hunter cults gain this spell, including Zong.

Draw Beast

1 point

ranged, temporal, stackable, reusable

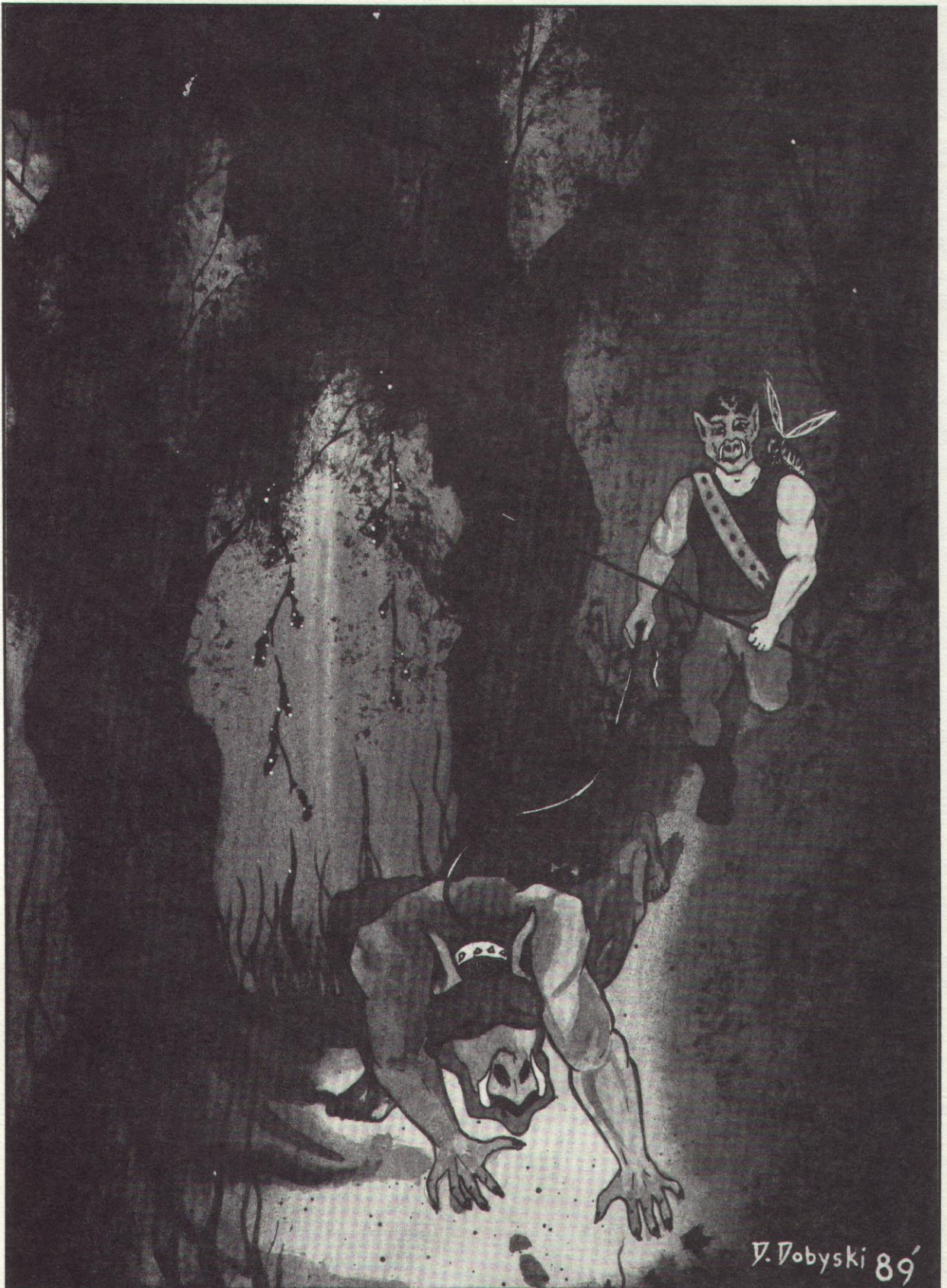
This spell only affects animals which are native to the mundane plane and possess fixed INT. If its magic points are overcome, the animal must either move towards the caster at walking speed. The caster can halt this motion, stopping the beast in its tracks, and begin it again at will for the duration of the spell. For each point in the spell, one beast may be affected.

IX. SUBCULTS

Spirit of Retribution

Any initiate who betrays his kindred or kills animals pointlessly is cursed by Zong, and gains a strong, foul odor. This prevents the culprit from sneaking up on or stalking any beasts unless there is a strong wind blowing his scent away, and incidentally makes him an out-

●ШR∇ℓΠΘ†:ΔΥΔϕ⚡☾XGℓ□*III⊙⊕†⊗●ШR∇ℓΠΘ†:ΔΥΔ



V. Dobyski 89'

A hunter of Zong.



cast until the odor vanishes. It is only removed upon proper repentance.

X. NOTES

Among many trolls the initiates of Zong are believed to have a special power of seeing behind them. This widespread superstition is only partially supported by direct observation.

One of the secret moves taught by the hunting elders is a special quick bob and weave move during which the hunter looks all about him. This overcom-

es the particular directional deficiency of the troll perception apparatus which is primarily forward-directed. Thus, compared to a troll which has lived primarily within tunnels, these hunter are particularly good at seeing around.

The second reason for the legend is that Zong's hunters look out for each other. Although one in a band may be surprised, the others are usually not. They are simply more experienced at operating out in the open than most of the tunnel-bred trolls.

Finally, in support of the superstition, is the fact that many of the allied spirits of the master hunters do, continually, watch behind their masters. Even though these are actually few in number, their presence is spectacular and always remembered by survivors.





ZORAK ZORAN

I. MYTHOS AND HISTORY

IN EARLY MYTHS, Zorak Zoran is little-noted. At best, he is mentioned as attending his sister, Xiola Umbar, or his friend, Kyger Litor. He is known to have been married by some trolls during Godtime, resulting in some Mistress Race dynasties, but many gods did that.

Zorak Zoran came into his own when Death was discovered within the depths of the Underworld. Zorak Zoran was watching, and conceived a passion for the new power which Eurmäl stole for his friend, Humakt. Zorak Zoran followed this power like a shadow as it passed from hand to hand until he saw and grasped the opportunity which made his name known throughout the heavens. Seizing Death as his own, he cut down Flamal, a god most beloved by all the world. That act worsened the Lesser Darkness by bringing on the Great Hunger.

In the Darkness he fought and wounded Yelmäl, son of the Sun, and stole his Fire powers for his own cult. Later he feuded with Orlanth as well.

Chaos entered into the cosmos along the same route of jealousy, fear, and death which was pioneered by Zorak Zoran, and that god was glad for his prowess when the muck of the void washed upon the world. He led in the struggle and grew to be favored by many trolls who fought alongside him. He was instrumental in halting the festering growth of evil before the return of the Sun and at that time earned his title of Lord God of the Demons of Death.

The rise of the Sun was allowed by the cosmic compromise called Time, which demanded that all living gods preserve a part of their former or present rule in the new world. Zorak Zoran was among the great Darkness deities who ensured that half the world would be Dark, and he was leader of those who opposed allowing the sun to return at all.

Zorak Zoran was widely-worshiped at the Dawn, having been embraced by many ignorant and savage remnant peoples during the terror of the Darkness. He grew even greater in the Dawn Ages when the First Council reached its limit and became the warlike

Second Council. The Legions of Death did much to assure the Council's supremacy, despite the losses it wrought among the worshiping population.

At the end of the Dawn Age, the cult fought the infamous Gbaji cult, but the savage violence of Zorak Zoran broke itself against the evil prophets' subtleties, and only a few bands of survivors marched to Gbaji's final doom.

In the Empire of the Wyrms Friends, the Zorak Zoran worshipers formed a powerful council in Shadows' Dance, and held more power than did Kyger Litor. They aided the dragons in the Dragonkill War at the end of the second age, but exhausted themselves, typically, in wars which all but exterminated the Aldryami of the Elder Wilds.

Zorak Zoran remains strong among trolls and other races desirous of his famed battle rage. The cult is often disliked or feared, but its powers are always recognized.

True worshipers of Zorak Zoran think nothing of death. They know that when they leave their mangled bodies, their souls pass to Zorak Zoran's fortress in the underworld, where they join his immortal Legions of Death to engage in perpetual warfare.

Worshipers of this god expect their only funeral rite to be a Create Zombie spell. They hold no regard for their mundane shells after death. To be made into a fighting zombie or skeleton, or perhaps even a ghost, is an honor.

A Darkness deity, Zorak Zoran has that Rune and also, as a major deity of Death and Disorder, those Runes as well.

II. CULT ECOLOGY

Zorak Zoran is God of Hate and Vengeance, the mindless explosion of fear and frenzy against both law and chaos which finds its only justification and satisfaction in unlimited violence. As much as the rest of the world might regret it, this entity is one which helped save the world and whose powers may be needed again. He is part of the Cosmic Balance. Zorak Zoran is the most popular wargod of the trolls. In any area



where trolls dominate, he is an important god, and all generals and other leaders probably belong to his cult. Even in non-troll areas some war leaders may be initiates of this cult.

This cult works fairly well with all Darkness deities. Zorak Zoran's greatest fondness, of course, is for slaughter and bloodshed, and torture is a legitimate form of questioning. The cult members like fighting and trouble, and also like to intimidate and pillage. Should anyone be so foolish as to capture one of their number, the cult tries to rescue the captive (at any cost) and destroy the captor. Blood vengeance for cultists slain by outsiders is integral to the cult.

This god's dislike for Humakt is well-known. He also has no love for Light or any sky deity. Because the Red Moon includes chaos, and has the effrontery to shed Light where the Compromise decreed there would be no Light, the Red Goddess has been another one of Zorak Zoran's targets since her apotheosis. Mostal, father of dwarfs, and Aldrya, mother of elves, are old enemies of Zorak Zoran, dating from wrongs committed in Godtime.

The High Holy Night of the cult is that following Darkday of Death week of Darkseason. On that day, cultists like to challenge lone Humakti to single combat, then gang up on him for an easy kill. On this day they all use spells and expend themselves in great berserk frenzies occasionally killing themselves as well as many innocents. Other holy days are celebrated on the Darkdays of Death weeks of the other seasons. If near a temple, a Zorak Zoran worshiper is expected to leave an offering each Darkday.

III. THE CULT IN THE WORLD

In any area where there is troll dominance, Zorak Zoran is an important god, and all generals and other war leaders probably belong to his cult. Even in non-troll areas, some war leaders are likely to be at least initiates of his cult. Members are accepted as part of troll society, but the Death Lords are left alone to do as they wish.

Zorak Zoran's power is centered in the dark and shadowed regions of the world, lurking where unexpected.

His temples are also military organizations and are usually at least minor temples. Major and great

temples are not uncommon, since the temples are only built where there are sufficient warriors to make up a gang. The few shrines teach Crush.

The temples are organized along regimental lines, with a Death Captain in charge of each temple whose duty it is to raise a gang of warriors in case of mobilization of all worshipers — which has happened more than once. As a rule the temples are independent, but a mobilization order immediately puts all worshipers under the command of the Lord General of Death, who lives in a secret Castle of Lead.

Each temple of Zorak Zoran is organized into companies, with a Death Lord as captain of each company. The Death Captain presides as commanding officer and ceremonial leader. Beginning lords usually receive second-in-command positions within established companies until they have faced at least one battle at that rank, when they are given a section of an old company.

IV. INITIATES

Dark trolls, great trolls, men, and beast men are all welcome to join this cult. Only exceptional trollkin are permitted. Elves and dwarfs are forbidden, as are all creatures tainted with chaos, such as cave trolls or ogres. A candidate must be 75% in any blunt weapon Attack and must pass a test abstracted as his (POW + STR) times 2 or less on 1d100. He must also sacrifice a point of POW.

An initiate joins the company of a particular lord and must be ready to fight with him if called. A member is expected to own and maintain a mace, a maul, and a sling. He must also have a month's rations ready to take with him at a moment's notice. He is obliged to work bodyguard details and generally protect the community.

Each initiate may live in an enclave of the temple, which is fortified and guarded day and night. His dependents also are taken care of in these enclaves, even if they are trollkin. Once a week a market is held within the temple to let worshipers obtain supplies at reduced rates. The market is usually run by an Argan Argar worshiper, but is overseen by a Death Lord.

Spirit Magic: Bludgeon, Darkwall, Demoralize, Detect Enemy, Dullblade, Extinguish, Fanaticism, Firearrow, Fireblade, Ignite, Protection.



V. DEATH LORDS

A Death Lord is expected to be the embodiment of his bloody-minded deity. Death Lords are leaders of charges and reavers of foes, and they show no mercy. Their prisoners are sacrificed and their hearts eaten. He who opposes a Death Lord must conquer or die horribly.

A Death Lord must be at least 90% with Mace and have a POW of 14 or more. He also must be 90% in three of the following skills: Any (non-mace) Weapon Attack, Conceal, Shield Parry, Sling, or Thrown Rock Attack. To be formally accepted as a Death Lord, he must pass a test abstracted as STR + CON or less on 1d100.

The Death Lord must look to the welfare of any followers (as long as they can follow), and never retreat in the face of a foe unless so commanded. They must never willingly cooperate with worshipers of Aldrya, Humakt, Mostal, Orlanth, or Yelm, and (at least) refuse to deal with any Lunar worshipers met. No troll may use iron, and Death Lords of the cult wear magical lead, even if they are not trolls.

The Death Lords's company attends its commander, and is sworn to protect and rescue him. The Death Lord receives a tithe of the proceeds from the company's market. Death Lords may sponsor their own trollball team. When checking for Divine Intervention, a Death Lord rolls 1d10 rather than 1d100.

Common Divine Magic: all.

Special Divine Magic: Berserker, Command Ghost, Command Shade, Create Ghost, Create Skeleton, Create Zombie, Crush, Fear, Seal Wound, Sever Spirit, Shield.

VI. ZORAK ZORAN SPECIAL DIVINE SPELLS

Create Skeleton

2 points

ritual Enchant spell, nonstackable, reusable

This spell creates animated skeletons, as described in the *RuneQuest* Creatures Book. When the spell is cast, both magic points and POW must be expended. Each magic point gives the completed skeleton one magic point. Each point of POW gives the skeleton either 1d6 STR or 1d6 DEX, specified by the enchanter. For

further information, see the Creatures Book.

Create Zombie

3 points

ritual Enchant spell, nonstackable, reusable

This spell creates zombies, as described in the *RuneQuest* Creatures Book. Zorak Zoran zombies, however, do not have the spirit of the original owner bound into them. Instead, they are mindless magical constructs, much like animated skeletons. When this ritual is performed, both magic points and POW must be sacrificed. Each magic point gives the completed zombie one magic point. One point of POW must be sacrificed for each 6 SIZ points or fraction thereof which the corpse possesses. The completed zombie's statistics are identical to those in the *RuneQuest* Creatures Book, except that it has an INT of 0.

This zombie creation process is in some ways inferior to the spirit magic ritual, as the result has no INT at all, and must be commanded to do anything. On the other hand, the corpse's name need not be known to the caster, and the caster does not need to engage in a dangerous spirit combat. For zombies of SIZ 18 or smaller, the POW cost is identical (not counting the original POW spent to obtain the Create Zombie spell).

Crush

1 point

ranged, temporal, stackable, reusable

Each point of this stackable spell adds 10% to the user's chance of hitting with the affected blunt weapon and adds 1d4 to damage done. Weapons so treated take on a black sheen.

Seal Wound

2 points

ranged, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

Damage done by the weapon this spell is applied to cannot regenerate or heal magically, but can only be cured naturally, in the normal time it would take. Thus, a Heal spell cauterizes a wound, but does not heal it. A sufficiently high Heal restores a limb, but does not mend it. First Aid is also ineffective, though it stops bleeding.

Sever Spirit

3 points

ranged, instant, nonstackable, one-use

This spell acts as a bludgeon to smash the spirit of the victim away from its body. The user must overcome



the target's magic points on the resistance table. If successful, the target dies. If unsuccessful, the target takes 1d6 damage to his general hit points.

VII. SUBCULTS

Spirit of Reprisal: Hell Roar

The cult of Zorak Zoran relies upon its members to carry out retribution against offenders within its ranks. These offenders are usually slain and their brains sacrificed to Hell Roar and Zorak Zoran. The spirit named here has an INT of 18 and a POW of 30, but does not engage in attacks itself. It acts as a defensive screen for any Zorak Zoran party which has gone to right the wrongs done by offending members. It screens by engaging in spirit combat with any spirit sent against a member of the party, thereby defending against this dangerous form of attack. It has the special ability that whenever it overcomes an enemy spirit in spirit combat, that foe loses 1d10 magic points instead of only 1d3.

The spirit's name comes from the sound it makes. Offenders begin to hear a whistling sound whenever the party sets off to right the wrong. The noise grows until, shortly before the attack, it is the sound of the roaring winds of gloom and darkness which shroud the underworld. Amid such noise the party will attack the defender.

Hell Roar's noise, which surrounds the culprit, also acts as a guide to the avengers when they draw close enough to hear it.

Amanstan

This spirit of fire houses the magic which Zorak Zoran stole from Yelmlio during the great darkness, and is the source of the fire magic of the cult. It is also the course of the cult ability to Summon and Command salamanders. This ability of Darkness to overcome Fire is unique to Zorak Zoran, and makes his cult very impressive to other Darkness forces and trolls. However, the effort is strenuous, and members must sacrifice twice the normal POW to get these spells. Thus, Summon and Command Salamander cost 4 POW each.

The normal Command Cult Spirit will not work on Amanstan's fire elementals. Command Salamander must be used.

VIII. ASSOCIATED CULTS

Kyger Litor

Zorak Zoran's old associate allows one of her Rune magic spells; Darksee.

Storm Bull

The Storm Bull has always had a soft spot in his heart for this fellow chaos fighter, and allows him the use of a spell for that purpose. He provides Face Chaos.

Face Chaos

1 point

ranged, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

This spell cannot be resisted and can be cast only on non-chaotic targets. When cast upon a single fighter, that person stands his ground and fights any chaotic foe he faces, even if ordinarily he would have run.

This spell does not render its target immune to the effects of such spells as Demoralize or Panic, though the target still will not flee. A Demoralized fighter continues fighting, though at half attack chance; a Panicked fighter can't fight at all, but doesn't flee; etc.

Xiola Umbar

The goddess of the Solace of the Dark Deep Within is Zorak Zoran's sister. From her the lords obtain Healing Trance.

IX. NOTES

Members of Zorak Zoran prefer clothes which are dominantly blood-red. Their distinctive weapon is the flanged mace.

While Zorak Zoran is a military god, with great emphasis on bravery and fighting, his companies do not tend to be well-organized. Everywhere but within the temple (and sometimes even there), they are known as gangs, for they have no particular order to their marches or attacks. Some disciplined Zorak Zoran units are known, but they are exceptional. Troll and other-race units of Zorak Zoran make headlong mass attacks — sweeps to the flank and careful positioning are not their style. For frontal charges or holding a line, these fighters cannot be beaten, and can be matched only with difficulty.



SPIRITS OF DARKNESS

SHAMANISM IS THE NATURAL FORM OF religion for trolls. Even their greatest deity, Kyger Litor, is no more than a glorified ancestral cult. As a result, the trolls tend to view all magical worlds shamanically — the gods are actually seen as big spirits; some of them supremely large, but still spirits.

Most troll spirit cults are spirits of darkness. The following spirit cults are of varied importance, but well known. Literally thousands of other spirit cults exist, but most are local, of limited interest, or only effective to heroquesters. Blackfinger, a troll cult of Guhan (in the land of Ralios), is a good example of a local spirit cult. Blackfinger is little known outside Guhan.

ASRELIA

Asrelia is the Crone of the Deep Earth, a goddess of Darkness who is loved by trolls for her accessibility. They say she is the one who makes and inhabits the many tunnels and caverns which trolls so love. Trolls encountered her on their way to the surface world, and freed her from her master, Lodril. Troll shamans often contact her now to receive her spell of Hide Wealth, usable for many things besides metal goods. Each time a shaman contacts her, he must sacrifice some object of value by secretly burying it in the earth. If the object is ever dug up or stolen (by anyone), Asrelia is angered with the shaman, and he loses the ability to contact her until it is returned.

Hide Wealth

1 point

touch, duration 1 day, stackable, reusable

This spell must be cast upon an inanimate bundle of goods, no greater than 1 ENC. It causes the target to become invisible to everyone except the caster or to anyone watching as the spell is cast. Each extra point of Hide Wealth cast at the same time permits an additional ENC to be hidden. Each point of Extension stacked with Hide Wealth doubles the duration of the

spell. Magic items hidden with this spell cannot be sensed, even with magical spells, but the presence of the spell of Hide Wealth itself could be. If the hidden goods are moved, the spell dissipates.

BOZTAKANG CHAOS FIGHTER

This, the third child of Korasting and last-born of the Seven Sacred Ancestors, is the greatest of all the foes of chaos. When he was newborn he plugged a leak in creation to keep out the evil stagnation of chaos. He also ripped the secret methods of destroying chaos from Arrquong, a chaos god no longer known to creation. Now all the troll gods go to Boztakang for their spells against chaos. Invocation of him is a regular part of all chaos-fighting ceremonies, and when a war party sets off to fight broos they hold a special rite dedicated only to him. Only trolls can contact Boztakang.

Stones to Kill Chaos

1 point

ritual Enchant spell, one-use

This enchants a rock with a single magical ability, which may be used once. The stone is thrown at its target, and takes effect if it hits. The stones come in different colors, and the effect varies with the color. The stones only take effect on chaos targets. The stones need not penetrate armor, and the target cannot resist the effect.

Black stones cancel out a chaos feature of the struck target for 1d6 hours. If the target has more than one chaos feature, it may choose which one is negated. The enchanter must eat the heart of a dead troll who, in life, had a POW of 10 or more. The religion of Kyger Litor forbids killing trolls for making these stones, but does not forbid using hearts from trolls killed for other reasons.

Blue stones drain 1d10 magic points from the tar-

●ШR▽2Π0†:△ΥΔΦζω●Σ6Σ□*III○*†×●ШR▽2Π0†:△ΥΔ



A troll shaman.



get. The enchanter must eat a dead being who had an INT of 12 or more in life. If the being had 15-17 points of INT, the stone produced drains 2d10 magic points. If the being had an INT of 18 or more, the stone drains 3d10 magic points.

Green stones, uniquely, are thrown at friends and heal damage caused by any chaos attack. Hit point damage per location is healed first, then general hit point damage, then damage to characteristics such as STR or CON. The enchanter must eat an Earth cultist, preferably a priestess or acolyte. For every 3 full points of divine magic (reusable or not) the Earth cultist had in life, the stone heals 1d6 damage when used.

Yellow stones do 1d10 hit point damage, bypassing any armor. Yellow stones are ineffective if thrown by a troll or any other darkness creature, and usually trolls will blackmail or otherwise force humans to use them on the trolls' behalf. To enchant the stone, the caster must eat an entire salamander with a POW of at least 6. This means that he must destroy the elemental using only his Bite attack (no other weapons or magic attacks are permitted). The salamander fights back vigorously as it is being destroyed, so the caster is likely to take quite a bit of damage. The troll Bite attack is 20% base chance, doing 1d6 plus any damage bonus. If the salamander has a POW of 12 or more, the stone does 2d10 damage. If the salamander's POW is 18 or more, it does 3d10 damage, and so forth, increasing the damage done by 1d10 for every full 6 points of POW the salamander possesses.

Brown stones are the most powerful and spectacular. They break any chaos monster struck into 1d4 pieces. This usually kills the monster unless a 1 is rolled, or vs. gorp. To enchant the stone, the caster must eat a being that has been killed by lightning. The Lightning or Thunderbolt spells or similar magic does not count.

DEHORE

Dehore is the Father of Spirits and husband of Subere. He is sometimes known as commander of the shades. He fulfills the role of the Horned Man among uzko, awakening in some of them the sense and responsibility of working closely with the immaterial world. The thousands of his children are shades, spell spirits, hags, passion spirits, and other spirits known to trolls. Trolls always prefer to use his minions, even when the same effect is available from non-darkness spirits. All spell spirits received through any darkness cult

originally derive from Dehore.

Dehore is formless and shapeless. He is never shown in pictures or carvings. His most powerful children are known as the Dehori, which are highly intelligent shades of huge size with special magical powers.

GORE AND GASH

These twin mistress race trolls are worshipped as sources of inspiration and strength by the trolls of Dagori Inkarth, who also look to them as their ancestor. They accomplished many impressive deeds for which they are now renowned, including snuffing out stars and destroying kingdoms.

Shadows Dance

4 points

ritual Ceremony spell, non-stackable, reusable

This spell must be cast upon a group of dancing trolls. All trolls in the dance receive a special benefit — for the duration of the spell, whenever the troll overcomes an enemy spirit in spirit combat, that spirit loses 1d3+1 MPs instead of 1d3.

The spell's duration is nominally 15 minutes. If the target troll succeeded in a Dance roll when the spell was cast, it lasts for 1 hour. If the troll received a special success in Dance, the spell lasts 6 hours. If he received a critical success, it lasts a week.

HOMBOBOBOM THE GREAT DRUMMER

Hombobobom invented the many secret sounds of the trolls and also accompanies them in dancing. She was the second of Korasting's children. Her drum is the Cosmos, which is shaped like a great inverted bowl, and her rhythm helps maintain the workings of the Universe.

Some troll mystics say Hombobobom was the Creator whose creation went wrong. The world was made as a cosmic drum. Darkness was the shell, water filled it to make it resonate, earth was the drumskin, and the sun was the drumstick whose rhythm beat out reality. But Umath was the bad noise, or the silence (the mystics disagree) which disrupted things and broke the drum to make the world as it is now. But the trolls love the old Hombobobom and invoke her ancient perfection each time they beat their drums.



Tambour

2 points

range earshot, duration special, non-stackable, reusable

This spell must be cast upon a group of dancing trolls. Usually, the group is a large one, often an entire tribe. The caster of the spell must play a drum and permanently sacrifice one or more points from one or more of her characteristics, such as STR, SIZ, POW, etc. All trolls in the dance that succeed at Dance at least once get those points added to themselves. Thus, if the drummer sacrificed 3 of her INT, all successful dancers would have their INT raised by 3 for the spell's duration.

The duration and power of the spell depends upon the drummer's skill at Play Drums. She must attempt her Play Drums roll once per hour. If she ever fails her skill roll, the gain to each boosted characteristic is reduced by 1 point. But so long as she keeps up her drumming, the spell remains in force. Once the drummer has failed a number of times equal to the largest number of points boosted, there is no point in continuing. She loses 3d6 fatigue per hour of drumming. Other trolls are often assigned to feed her, cast Endurance, etc.

Frequently, several drummers gather together to cast this spell, thus spreading out the characteristic loss, and increasing the distance the sound carries. If a troll benefiting from this spell moves out of earshot of all of the drums, he loses 1 point from each boosted characteristic, but suffers no other ill effect. If he thereafter moves back into earshot, and the drumming is still continuing, his appropriate characteristics are increased again.

JAKABOOM, DANCER IN SHADOWS

She was the first troll shaman, the first being to make sense of the mystifying separation of spirit and body discovered after the trolls reached the surface. She was the first to deal properly with Dehore, and the first to explore the methods of controlling non-darkness spirits as well. She carved the first spell foci, and sang the first power songs.

Create Foe-Curser

2 points

ritual Enchant spell, one-use

This is an enchanted item which consists of a log set

upright near a troll village with a skull placed on the top. When the log is emplaced, the enchanter must place one or more magic points into it (which may not be replenished later).

If a troll-skull is used, the log acts as a sort of Detect Enemy matrix — when a foe passes within 50m of it, the skull expends one magic point and emits a subsonic howl (audible to trolls, but not most surface races), and the village is alerted. When the skull's magic points are all used up, it cracks and falls into pieces.

Other types of skulls are also seen on these log poles: fish skulls, amphibians, reptiles, hoofed mammals, and carnivores. These other skull types throw curses upon those foolhardy enough to brave their threat. The curse varies with the variety of skull. These curses cannot be dispelled once they take effect, and they penetrate Countermagic and similar spells as a 2-point Rune spell. These other spells work as follows: when a foe passes within 50m, the skull expends 1 magic point and matches its magic points vs. the target's magic points. If the target's magic points are overcome, the curse takes effect, and remains in effect until dispelled or until next Sacred Time.

Fish: the victim's movement rate is halved.

Amphibian: the victim cannot use more than one magic point per melee round.

Reptile: the victim's maximum possible fatigue drops to 0, from whence it cannot be raised, regardless of ENC. Taking actions reduces fatigue beyond this normally.

Bird: the victim becomes night-blind — if the sun is not visible, he is as blinded as if in pitch darkness.

Hoofed Mammal: the victim is Demoralized.

Carnivore Mammal: the victim begins losing hit points at the rate of 1 every 5 minutes.

JESET THE FERRYMAN

This deity is a son of Korasting, and is the Ferryman of the Dead. He invented the first boat ever made, and uses it to sail over the River Styx and deliver souls to the far side. For this he charges a small fee of one copper clack, or else a small magic item of varying worth to the living who wish to use his services. Jeset



teaches the ritual spell of Styx's Shore, useful only to Heroquesting and thus not described here.

KARRG, MASTER OF WEAPONS

Karrg is Master of Weapons and the first male troll. He is one of the Seven Sacred Ancestors. He is renowned through the existence of the Karrg's Son subcult in the Kyger Litor religion, to which most troll war leaders belong. In the early Second Age, Cragspider the Firewitch learned a new technique available through Karrg's spirit.

Induce Uzdo

1 point

ritual Summon spell, stackable, reusable

This spell is used when a troll woman wishes to give birth to a Great Troll. It summons one of Karrg's followers, a darkness spirit with a POW of 12d6. The troll woman then steps forward and the spirit envelops her in its form, automatically inflicting a Fearshock attack upon her as per the Shade rules. If she survives, she suffers no more ill effects, and merges with the spirit's darkness. Several hours later, she emerges and the spirit returns to the underworld. The troll woman is now pregnant, and gives birth a year later to an uzdo infant.

KOGAG THE BOATMAN

Kogag was born to the wife of Jeset the Ferryman. He is the god of ships. Humans and other surface-dwellers generally worship other sailor gods, such as Dormal or Waertag, but Kogag's fundamental nature is disputed by none. Trolls are beginning more and more to ply their sleek black galleys across the world's shipping lanes, especially in and near Jrustela, and Kogag is their spirit cult of choice. He provides Float.

KORASTING, MOTHER OF MANY

The Mother of Many is the goddess of fertility among the trolls. She is the first-born of Kyger Litor. Like other spirits she is considered a part of her mother, and

thus when Kyger Litor was wounded by Gbaji (curse his name and soul) it was Korasting who was bitten. She continued afterwards to bear many famous trolls of elder days, in addition to three of the Seven Famous Ancestors. She was crippled by the Sun's arrival in the underworld, and her injury has been the source of the trolls' lack of fertility.

Purification Ritual

1 point

ritual Ceremony spell, reusable

This ritual is used to cleanse female trolls who have birthed a litter of trollkin. Normally, any female troll who gives birth to trollkin will henceforth give birth to trollkin in all future pregnancies.

A female undergoing this ritual and avoiding pregnancy for a full year following the ritual is cleansed and can once again give birth to normal troll children (though there is no guarantee that she will do so).

LODRIL

Lodril is acknowledged as one of the great powers within the earth. This heat-oriented god is an outsider among darkness spirits, but he has been adopted into their number by virtue of his underworld kingdom and the fact that his cult does not use light, only heat.

Troll feelings for him are ambivalent: he is hated and feared for his warmth, but admired as a great fighter, especially against chaos. He was chained by ancient troll smiths and controlled by them. Among trolls, smiths are considered to be magicians, and they frequently figure as villains in troll stories.

Trolls contacting this powerful spirit obtain Spellteaching, which provides them with the following useful spirit spell, which can be used to soften and smelt metal without fire or light.

Heat Metal

variable (Lodril)

touch, temporal, passive

This spell causes one ENC of metal to heat up and become malleable. It takes about a minute for the metal to become red hot. Each point of the spell creates 1d6 intensity of heat. Use the Fire and Heat table on page 81 of the *RuneQuest* Players Book to determine how much heat is needed for a particular metal. Thus, a 7 point Heat Metal cast on bronze would bring it to its very softest for hammering and smithing, while an 8 point spell would simply melt it.



ROBBER

Robber is a darkness spirit of death who was captured by Magasta. Their offspring was Wachaza, the famous ocean war god. Together with Magasta and other sea gods, she led the ancestors of the sea trolls to a famous victory against chaos. Her victory was temporary, as her followers were mutated into sad imitations of their former selves.

Robber is often contacted by pirate dark trolls wishing her assistance on the seas. Exceptionally intelligent sea trolls sometimes contact her as well. At minor temples to Robber, spells other than Drown might be found. No structures larger than shrines are known to exist on land.

Drown

1 point

ranged, instant, nonstackable, reusable

This spell is only effective on airbreathing targets. The target's lungs fill with water, doing 1d8 points of damage to his chest if his magic points are overcome. The Breath Water spell renders a target immune to Drown, but does not heal damage already taken.

SKY RIVER TITAN (LORIAN)

During the Gods War, Lorian, a water god, invaded the sky and became the Sky River. Because of his conquest and humiliation of the enemy fire gods, he has become known to trolls as Sky River Titan. The Sky River pours out of the sky onto the land at Skyfall Lake in Dragon Pass. Trolls live on the shore and use huge nets to fish out the weird magic detritus that is washed from the sky by the permanent downpour.

Legends are also told among the trolls of Sky River Titan's battles with chaos. The site of Skyfall Lake is rumored to have once been a city of chaos. The rain that falls over the lake, becoming the great River of Dragon Pass, is described by trolls as the blood of Sky River Titan, rushing out of the great wound he took in battle with chaos.

Sky River Titan offers a number of useful spells, such as Breath Air/Water (see *RuneQuest*), and the spell of Strongnet, described below. Other, more

dramatic spells are reputed to be wielded by the high priest of the cult.

Strongnet

2 points

ranged, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

This spell must be cast upon a net. It makes the net unbreakable by any means, including fire. A trapped victim must escape by unwrapping itself, tearing the net from the grip of its captor, or squeezing between the weave. It is commonly cast by the trolls when fishing in Skyfall Lake, and can backfire — when excessively huge monsters are caught in an unbreakable net, the trolls cannot cut loose the net to save their ship, and must perforce go down with it (unless they can detach it from the ship in time).

THE RIVER STYX

She is the Water of Darkness. Many explanations of Styx exist. Some texts call her the Last Drop of Darkness, while others address her as the Mother of Zaramaka, the Primal Sea. Some texts call her a Pool or Well instead of a River. Some legends mention a great Black Sea of the Underworld whose listless waves wash a lifeless gray shore. All of these are the Styx in various forms. All Styx's children were daughters to guard the aspects listed, except a single son, Zaramaka.

The Styx is sometimes called the Garrotte of the Gods, for she can cause any immortal to choke and suffer if they swear an oath upon her name and break it. Thus she is known as an Oath Guardian, and avenger of broken oaths. She is aided in this by several families of Furies and similar demons. Some types (including occasional dragons) fought the more powerful deities who broke oaths, such as the time Yelm was forced to return to his path in the sky in 475 S.T. Other Furies were more mundane, such as the gnats which enraged the mothers of Balazar and drove them mad after they poisoned their sons. Most mortals shun swearing by the Styx, and pledge their word by other oath-guardians.

If her spirit is contacted in a *RuneQuest* game, the exact effects of her presiding over an oath are up to the gamemaster.



SWEMS

The deity of worms is a darkness spirit easily contacted by almost anybody.

Worm's Head

1 point

touch, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

This spell turns the target's head into that of a worm. The exact effects of the spell depend upon whether the caster is standing on soil or in water when the spell is cast. If he is standing on solid rock or an artificial surface, the spell does not take effect.

SOIL: the target gets an earthworm's head. He becomes capable of eating dirt and surviving when buried alive. He can burrow through soil at a speed of 1 meter per 5 melee rounds.

WATER: the target gets a leech's head. He receives a Bite Attack of 50% plus his Attack modifier, doing 1d4 damage plus his damage bonus. This Bite attack can be used in addition to normal attacks and parries, though it must be used 3 strike ranks apart from any other attacks. The chance to hit can be increased by experience. Once the bite hits, the head may remain attached, and the spell-user can drain the victim's blood at the rate of 1d6 fatigue points per round. Once the victim has lost fatigue points equal to the total of his current STR plus CON, disregarding any fatigue points lost from exertion, the spell-user begins to drain the victim's STR instead. The victim gains

+20% to his chance to hit the spell-user once the spell-user is attached.

VANEEKARA THE HURLER

Before Vaneekara trolls could understand only the things they touched, but she taught them how to deal with things outside themselves. This daughter of Kyger Litor was called the Hurler because of her everlasting fame at casting large objects over incredible distances. She once threw a chaos god out of the universe, and sometimes specially chosen trolls can learn how to perform this difficult maneuver.

Hurling

1 point

ranged, temporal, stackable, reusable

For the duration of the spell, all objects thrown by the caster have range multiplied by 5. Thus, a thrown javelin's normal range becomes 100m and its maximum range 250m when hurled by a troll affected by this spell.

For each extra point of Hurling used, the range is increased by another 5 times. Thus, a 2 point Hurling spell multiplies the caster's range by 10, and a 3-point spell multiplies range by 15.

The spell does not increase range for bows and crossbows, but has a partial effect on blowguns and slings, multiplying the range by 2 for each point of Hurling.





CULT AVAILABILITY

THE TABLES BELOW give a comprehensive view of troll cult membership in Glorantha. Only the major cults (worshiped by at least two percent of the population) are named in the tables.

Many trolls will never join another cult other than Kyger Litor, and the tables reflect this.

Local cult variations always exist, and many obscure spirit cults are worshiped that are subsumed under the "Other" category in the tables. For example, the trolls around Skyfall Lake in Dagori Inkarth worship Sky River Titan, a cult almost unknown elsewhere.

The tables can be used to randomly determine a troll character's cult membership. Roll 1d100 on the appropriate region's table. If any cult other than Kyger Litor is rolled up, assume that the troll worships Kyger Litor as well as the listed cult.

The random method is most appropriate for non-player character trolls. Players will probably wish to pick their troll's religious affiliation, rather than making a random die roll. In this case, the tables are used simply to determine which cults are popular and powerful in the player character troll's homeland.

Example of Random Cult Membership: Start by determining the region of Glorantha in which the troll lives. For example, say that the troll's home is in Dagori Inkarth, in the land of Maniria (on the continent of Genertela). Roll 1d100 on the Dagori Inkarth table. Note that in Dagori Inkarth, as in most other troll lands, the cult of Kyger Litor is by far the most likely result (48% in this case). To continue the example, say that a 67 is rolled. This indicates that the player troll's primary affiliation is to Xiola Umbar. The troll is also an initiate of Kyger Litor, but is pursuing a career in the cult of Xiola Umbar.

The tables below can also be used to determine the religion of a randomly-encountered troll or shrine, as well as to see which religions predominate in troll society.

Temple Sizes

Most players will wish their characters to join major or great temples, in order to receive the full benefits of their chosen religion. All the cults listed by name for an area can be assumed to have at least one great temple somewhere in the area. For example, trolls living in the Elder Wilds would be able to visit great temples to Gorakiki, Kyger Litor, Xiola Umbar, Zong, and Zorak Zoran.

Access to a temple may not always be easy for a troll player character. A journey of weeks or even months may be necessary in order for a troll priest to renew common divine magic spells, or spells granted by an associate cult, and many adventures may be encountered on such a journey.

The more prevalent a religion is in an area, the more likely it will be that a player character troll will have a major or great temple close at hand. Cults worshiped by around 10% of the trolls in a region can be considered popular and influential. Such cults will have several major temples, and possibly more than one great temple. Cults worshiped by 30% or more of the troll population are the major ones of the area — troll player characters should have no problem locating great temples to these gods, and shrines may well be omnipresent.

For example, in the Elder Wilds region Kyger Litor and Zong are the two major cults. Temples to these two gods would be encountered frequently, with temples to Kyger Litor being the most common. Several of these temples would be great temples, and many would be major or smaller.

The gamemaster will have to make the final ruling as to whether or not the requested size of temple is available in a particular area. Player trolls wishing to reap the full benefits of their religion had best join a cult that is popular. Cults not listed by name in a region are unlikely to have any great temples available, and in many cases worshipers of such unpopular gods will have to make do with shrines.



Temple Locations

It is beyond the scope of this work to give the locations of troll temples. Should the exact geographical location of a temple be important, the gamemaster will have to make a ruling. Remember that troll lands are barren and inhospitable, with only a few large concentrations of troll population, the rest being scattered amongst many small villages and minor cave complexes. This would indicate that, while shrines might occur almost anywhere, great temples would probably be found in only a few places. In Dagori Inkarth, for example, one would expect that the vast caverns beneath the Castle of Lead would house a significant proportion of all the great temples in the region.

51-56	6	Xiola Umbar
57-92	36	Zong the Hunter
93-97	5	Zorak Zoran
98-00	3	Other

GUHAN

1d100	%	Cult
01-05	5	Argan Argar
06-23	18	Arkat
24-27	4	Gorakiki
28-74	47	Kyger Litor only
75-77	3	Xentha
78-82	5	Xiola Umbar
83-86	4	Zorak Zoran
87-00	13	Other

Regional Cult Tables

BLUE MOON PLATEAU

1d100	%	Cult
01-28	28	Annilla
29-43	15	Argan Argar
44-45	2	Gorakiki
46	1	Himile
47-79	33	Kyger Litor
80-84	5	Subere
85-93	9	Xiola Umbar
94-95	2	Zorak Zoran
96-00	5	Other

DAGORI INKARTH

1d100	%	Cult
01	1	Aranea
02-09	8	Argan Argar
10-14	5	Gorakiki
14-62	48	Kyger Litor only
63-64	2	Subere
65-71	7	Xiola Umbar
72-76	5	Zong the Hunter
77-95	19	Zorak Zoran
96-00	5	Other

ELDER WILDS

1d100	%	Cult
01-04	4	Gorakiki
05-50	46	Kyger Litor only

HALIKIV

1d100	%	Cult
01-03	3	Argan Argar
04-06	3	Gorakiki
07-12	6	Himile
13-57	45	Kyger Litor only
58-61	4	Xiola Umbar
62-67	6	Zong
68-92	25	Zorak Zoran
93-00	8	Other

JUNGLES OF PAMALTELA

1d100	%	Cult
01-06	6	Gorakiki
07-36	30	Kyger Litor
37-48	12	Moorgarki (Qualyorni)
49-54	6	Xentha
55-57	3	Xiola Umbar
58-77	20	Zong the Hunter
78-87	10	Zorak Zoran
88-00	13	Other

KETHAELA

1d100	%	Cult
01-30	30	Argan Argar
31-34	4	Gorakiki
35-71	37	Kyger Litor only
72-80	9	Xiola Umbar
81-83	3	Zong the Hunter
84-93	10	Zorak Zoran
94-00	7	Other



KOROMANDOL

1d100	%	Cults
01-12	12	Basko
13-47	35	Kyger Litor only
48-50	3	Subere
51-56	6	Xiola Umbar
57-66	10	Zong
67-81	15	Zorak Zoran
82-00	19	Other

PENT

1d100	%	Cults
01-04	4	Basko
05-19	15	Himile
20-54	35	Kyger Litor only
55-56	2	Subere
57-60	4	Xiola Umbar
61-92	32	Zong
93-97	5	Zorak Zoran

TARMO

1d100	%	Cults
01-04	4	Gorakiki
05-23	19	Himile
24-63	40	Kyger Litor only
64-67	4	Mee Vorala

68-73	6	Subere
74-81	8	Xentha
82-84	3	Xiola Umbar
85-90	6	Zong
91-93	3	Zorak Zoran
94-00	7	Other

VALIND'S GLACIER

1d100	%	Cults
01-30	30	Himile
31-70	40	Kyger Litor only
71-72	2	Xiola Umbar
73-95	23	Zong
96-00	5	Other

YOLP MOUNTAINS

1d100	%	
01-06	6	Annilla
07-11	5	Argan Argar
12-20	9	Gorakiki
21-67	47	Kyger Litor only
68-76	9	Subere
77-82	6	Xiola Umbar
83-90	8	Zorak Zoran
91-00	10	Other



NEW SPELLS AND SKILLS

THIS APPENDIX lists all new spells and skills described in this book, giving the name of the deity and respective chapter in which the description appears. If the deity receives a spell from an associate cult, sub-cult, or other special source, that source is listed in parentheses. Spells or skills given in Deluxe Edition *RuneQuest* are not duplicated in this book, and gamemasters without access to that work must create their own descriptions.

New Divine Magic Spells

<i>spell name</i>	<i>deity (associated deity)</i>
Affix Darkness	Xentha
Attack Soul	Subere
Attract Attention	Xiola Umbar
Bear Fruit	Mee Vorala (Flamal)
Bee's Head	Gorakiki (Gorakiki-Bee)
Beetle's Head	Gorakiki (Gorakiki-Beetle)
Beetle Limbs	Gorakiki (Gorakiki-Beetle)
Black Breath	Moorgarki
Blinding	Kyger Litor
Blood Feast	Black Sun
Blood Red	Black Sun
Butterflight	Gorakiki (Gorakiki-Moth)
Cancel Light	Moorgarki
Carapace	Gorakiki (Gorakiki-Beetle)
Chill	Himile
Conceal	Annilla
Counterchaos	Kyger Litor
Couvade	Xiola Umbar
Create Foe-Curser	Jakaboom, Dancer in Shadows
Create Shadow	Argan Argar, Xentha
Create Skeleton	Zorak Zoran
Create Zombie	Zorak Zoran
Crush	Zorak Zoran
Cure Iron Burn	Argan Argar (Only Old One)
Darksee	Kyger Litor
Dark Walk	Argan Argar
Decrease Temperature	Himile
Draw Beast	Zong
Drown	Robber
Face Chaos	Zorak Zoran (Storm Bull)
False Healing	Black Sun (Blood Sun)
Featherscales	Gorakiki (Gorakiki-Moth)
Form Ice	Himile
Group Defense	Xiola Umbar
Healing Trance	Xiola Umbar
Heat Metal	Lodril
Hide Wealth	Asrelia
Hurling	Vaneckara the Hurler
Increase Temperature	Himile

Insect Song	Gorakiki (Gorakiki-Locust)
Induce Uzdo	Karrg, Master of Weapons
Leaping Legs	Gorakiki (Gorakiki-Locust)
Locust's Head	Gorakiki (Gorakiki-Locust)
Moth's Head	Gorakiki (Gorakiki-Moth)
Moulder	Mee Vorala
Purification Ritual	Korasting, Mother of Many
Safe	Argan Argar
Seal Wound	Zorak Zoran
Sever Spirit	Zorak Zoran
Shadows Dance	Gore and Gash
Shield of Darkness	Xiola Umbar
Snow	Himile (Valind)
Speak With Insects	Gorakiki
Spider's Head	Aranea
Spiderlimbs	Aranea
Sprout Wings	Gorakiki (Gorakiki-Bee)
Stinger	Gorakiki (Gorakiki-Bee)
Stone-Biting	Kyger Litor (Stone Biter)
Stones to Kill Chaos	Boztakang Chaos Fighter
Strongnet	Sky River Titan
Suppress Aether	Argan Argar
Tambour	Hombobobom the Great Drummer
Transform Body	Gorakiki
Transform Head	Gorakiki
Transform Limbs	Gorakiki
Transform Self	Aranea, Gorakiki (Kropa)
Tree Chopping Song	Kyger Litor (Tree Chopper)
Turn Blow	Xiola Umbar
Vesper	Annilla (Artmal)
Vision	Annilla
Webbing	Aranea
Worm's Head	Swems

New Sorcery Spells

Boost Elemental	Arkat
Darksense Projection	Arkat
See Rune Magic	Arkat

New Spirit Magic Spells

Invisibility	Annilla
Jumping	Kyger Litor (Gerak Kag)
Solace	Xiola Umbar
Peaceful Cut	Zong

New Skills

Breed Insect	Gorakiki
Craft/Netmaking	Aranea
Insect Care	Gorakiki
Net Attack/Parry	Aranea
Treat Disease	Xiola Umbar
Treat Poison	Xiola Umbar

Glorantha: Primary Troll Regions

Troll regions are shown in red. Dotted red areas are only sparsely populated.

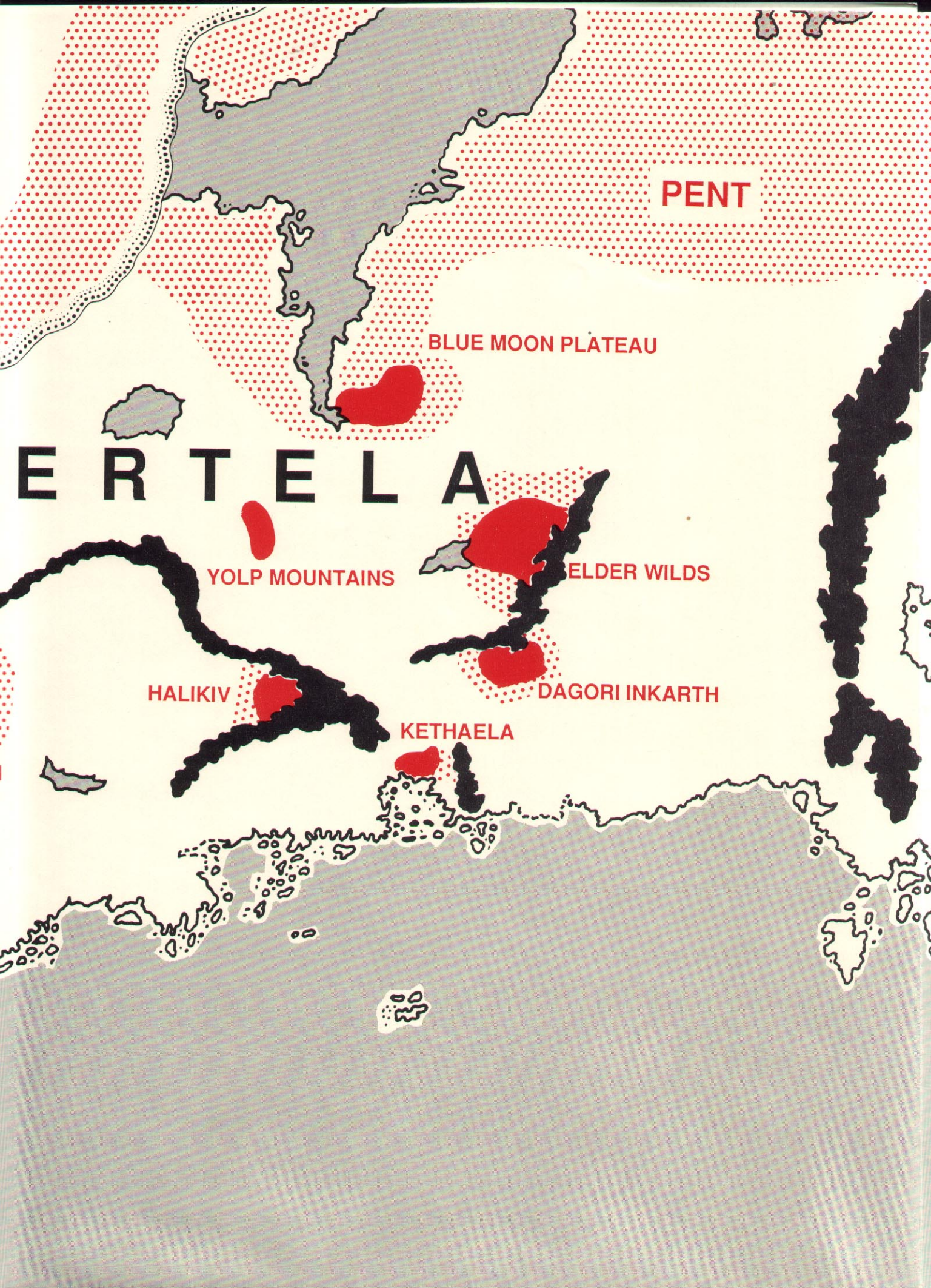
Solid black areas indicate major mountain ranges.

VALIND'S GLACIER

G E N

GUHA

BANTHE SEA



PENT

BLUE MOON PLATEAU

ERTELA

YOLP MOUNTAINS

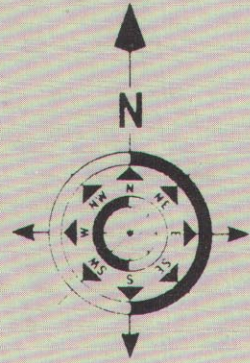
ELDER WILDS

HALIKIV

DAGORI INKARTH

KETHAELA

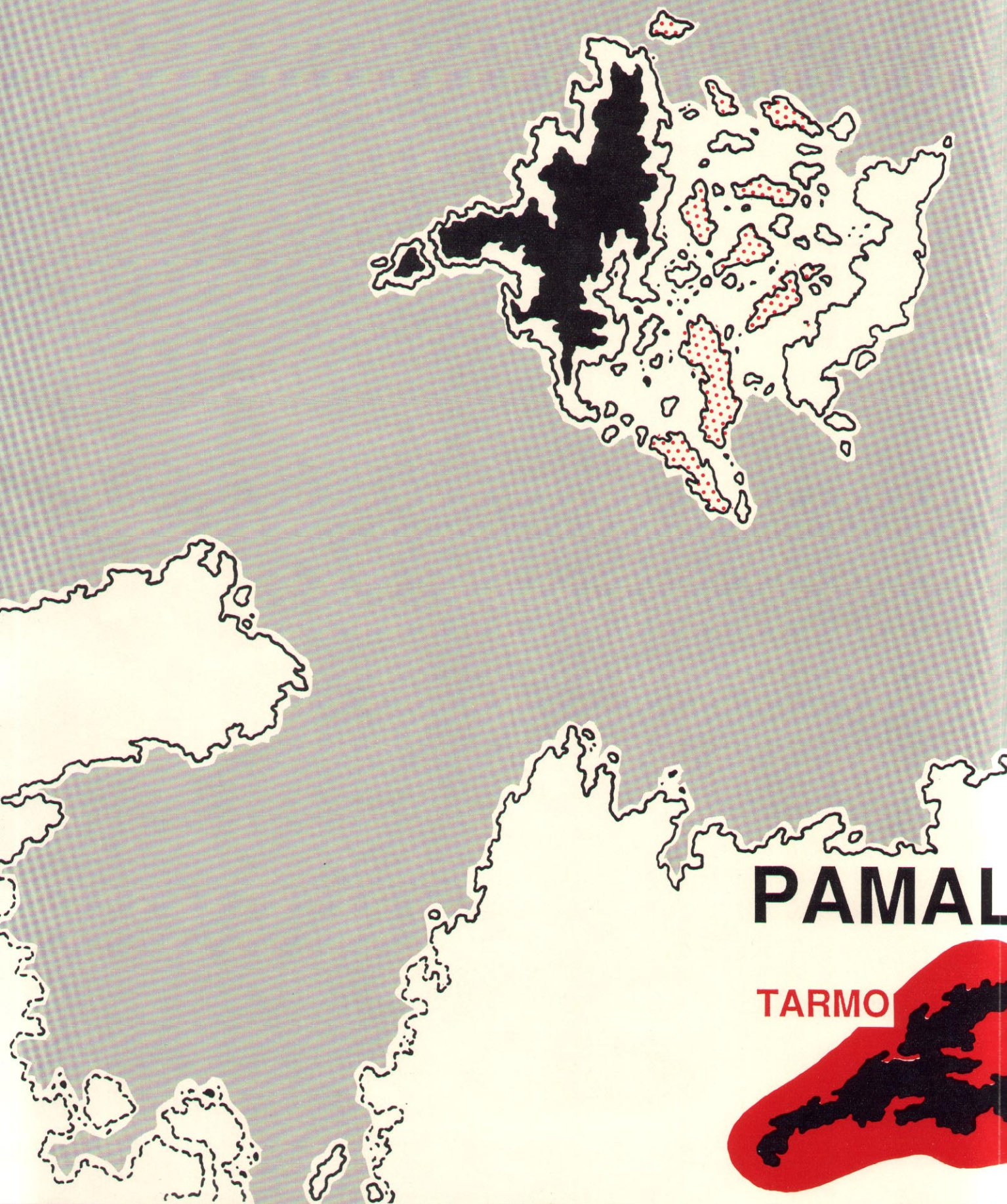
KOROMANDOL



KAHAR SEA

KILOMETERS

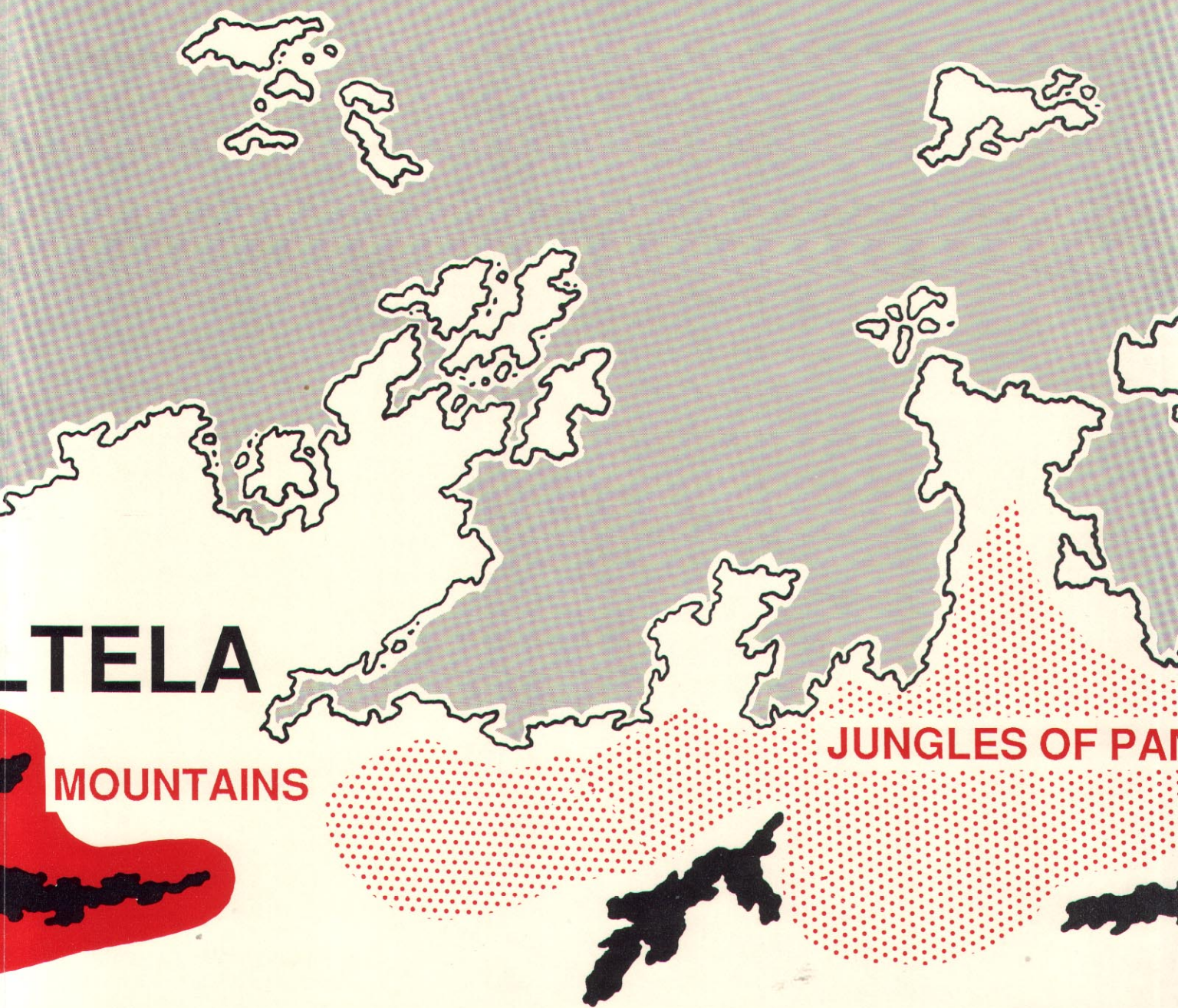




PAMAL

TARMO

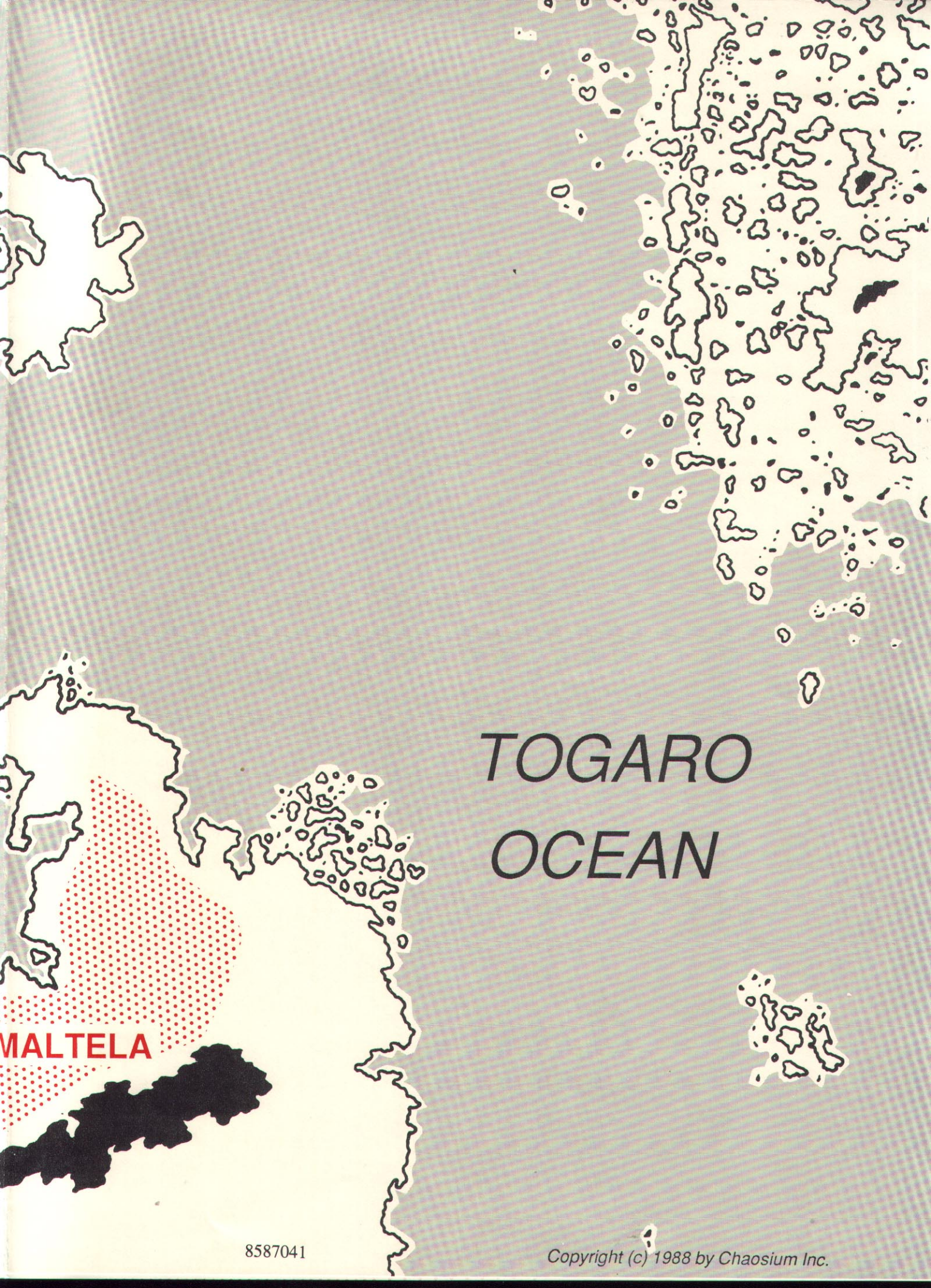
HOMeward OCEAN



TELTA

MOUNTAINS

JUNGLES OF PAI



TOGARU OCEAN

MALTELA



Jonstown Compendium *#270,173*



This is a sacred document of Lhankor Mhy, Lord of the Light of Knowledge. His blessing is upon all lore contained within. His might protects this work from evil-doers, and his all-seeing eye will expose and plunder the secrets of any who defile, plagiarize, or suborn this citadel of truth.

Minaryth Purple's Troll Facts Number Three: The Gods and Magic of the Uzko

As prepared for Lord Harshax, Thane of the Culbrea Tribe of Sartar.

Edited and with a commentary by Grey Sage Minaryth Purple.

Completed wind/fertility/fire/1622 S.T., Jonstown Knowledge Temple.

MY LORD HARSHAX, here is the best material on troll cults and magic that can be found in the time you have allotted. It is delivered, free and clear of further obligations, in accordance to our Agreement.

As allowed, I engaged the services of two copyists, Crangress and Jalques, each bonded by the Jonstown Temple, whose original copies are enclosed here. I have also copied certain material myself.

The contents of this work are listed below. They include several very rare or unusual pieces, obtained with great difficulty, that I believe will shed new light on the subject of the mysterious Uzko.

With best wishes for your continued good health,

Minaryth Purple

CONTENTS

Stygian 237-1306-GA: Geolgin's Report	4
Nochet 290-945012-GV-1614vlb: Dagobard's Collection	12
Addendum to Nochet 290: Three Unedited Interviews with Trolls	17
Irripi Ontor Cult Document #90.45.7.8929/34: An Analysis of the Fauna of Skyfall Lake	19

Stygian 237-1306-GA: Introduction by Minaryth Purple

THE FIRST PORTION of this information is from the the ancient scholar named Geolgin Askarios, an acolyte of the Stygian Lhankor Mhy Temple during the Second Age, about 1000 years ago.

Geolgin Askaros studied troll cults during the Second Age when the Only Old One ruled over the Shadowlands, the ancient region which included the current lands of the Holy Country and Dragon Pass. Geolgin received a commission from the rulers of Esrolia to investigate the possibilities of instituting worship of various darkness deities among humans. The Only Old One granted him permission, protection, and the loan of the Dark Lens, a magical item which looked like a modern magnifying glass and allowed the viewer to see in the darkness and avoid ambush. He never failed in his task. From 619-623 he travelled and viewed their holy day rites. His reports are given here.

During the lifetime of Geolgin the Only Old One was a demigod who ruled effectively during a deeply troubled time. Under his leadership the region avoided both the invasions and internal excesses of the God Learners and the Empire of the Wyrms Friends, thereby helping preserve the Old Ways for us. Geolgin was aware of the magnitude of the events during his lifetime and approached it as a philosopher and man of action — my sources say he served as a messenger during the war against the Slontos Marines. He believed that life in the Shadowlands was the best possible life, that rule by darkness was inevitable and benevolent, and that rule by trolls could contain no treachery and was the result of natural order, and therefore inevitable.

I have included brief personal commentary as well. Such additional material is the superb scholarship which sets me apart from the usual hack scholar. I have paid particular attention to the particular subjects of your interest. I am confident you will find the information complete, according to our Agreement.

Stygian 237-1306-GA: Analysis by Minaryth Purple

ARGAN ARGAR

Our lands were different when Geolgin wrote. It is new now. The entire region described here changed radically about six hundred years after Geolgin wrote. The hero Belintar, now called Pharaoh, attacked and

— Stygian 237-1306-GA —

Geolgin's Report

ARGAN ARGAR

THE GRAND CITY OF BLACK GLASS, ruled by the Only Old One, is a perfect representation of the god Argan Argar and illustrates his natural harmony with the surface world.

The Shadow Lands spread outward from the center, flowing in the manner that night flows from the east to take over the night sky. Everything around the City of Black Glass is enveloped by its influence. Within this region the many races of intelligence live with natural harmony.

The Shadow Plateau surrounds the City of Black Glass. It is the root of a great mountain which Lodril, the hot demon, raised to disrupt the world. Its top was sheared off by Argan Argar to make it the great plateau which it is now. Then Lodril erupted again, this time to Argan Argar's command, and constructed the incredible City of Black Glass upon the plain of the Shadow Plateau. The first eruption formed a great cone, while others exploded to Argan Argar's command, casting its particular shape. Argan Argar got Or-lanth to polish one part, and got Yelmali to smooth it in some places.

The city has three main parts: outer, inner, and secret. The delicate outer structure is called the One Hundred Towers, though the actual count is only 78. They are all of naked black obsidian which rise from the sloped sides of the Inner City, and many are connected by huge pathways cut so thin that they are grey. Clouds, like black fog, drift in and about the spires. Even at noon it is not very light in its towers and slopes. The unique conditions make it a place of utterly delightful sounds to the uzko inhabitants, as if beautiful music was always screeching in the background.

The outer section of the city demonstrates Argan Argar's integration with the natural harmony of the surface world. The spires evoke mixed response from non-trolls, but all agree that they are delicate and tempting, beautiful and powerful towers.

The inner city are the neat round lava vents which provide the basis for the widespread troll settlements built among the adapted, but natural-

ly occurring, tunnels.

The freshest place in the inner city is the Styx Grotto, where the Creek Stream River floods impetuously through the underground networks, and where there live net-casters who find debris and monsters from the broken myths of the world.

The secret city can be reached by a stairway hidden in the treasure room of the Only Old One and leads directly to the places where Lodril can be conquered, and where Dehore's minions lurk. Argan's Argar's own room is someplace off that, too, and so is the place where they healed Arkat one time. Another tunnel, marked with the arrow with three raised squares, goes to the Court of Silence, and no one returned from that one.

wind/harmony/sea/619

ANNILLA

I CANNOT BELIEVE the things the trolls tell me about this cult. I believe that their reluctance is just another way to conceal the truth about themselves, for the Blue Moon is the source of concealment. Something mysterious dwells in this ancient religion, something which drives fear into the hearts of trolls, just as a fear of trolls inhabits the hearts of all right-thinking humans.

I was fortunate to be in Arkat's Hold when they were preparing for a great festival. They had assembled a vast feast and even the trollkin were gleeful, anticipating the food. The priestess of Kyger Litor was sitting beneath the stars upon a high seat overlooking the crowd, her usual frown upon her ugly face, showing her teeth. Then a Karg's Son, the one who loved to eat the legs off of living beings, shouldered his way through the crowd which thronged the area. His passage spread an unease through everyone. His presence always worried the trollkin the way a pike panics a school of perch, but this time even the warriors and others among them became uneasy. I listened with my spells to overhear their secrets carried by the breeze and I heard a frantic whisper of "Blue Moon, Blue Moon, the ghosts of the gods are among us." The warlord spoke to

the great mother and she gnashed her teeth as if in pain, uttering worried growls from deep in her belly. The trollkin milled about and many huddled together in fear while others dashed away seeking someplace to hide. The High Priestess called together the other leaders among them and they cast about in worry, sending their voices into dark places and light places, seeking the hidden thing. No argument ensued as was common when any decision was made by them, but instead they begged for advice from the Mother. She silenced them with a gesture, and they formed a defensive ring about her, snapping commands to the warriors which were obeyed as if an army was upon them. Without leaving her seat she cast a spell and I saw her spirit leave her body, going into that dark place they go to in spirit form. By this time all the trollkin had fled, save for the Lunch Bunch which lay huddled in a great writhing mass, wailing and squeaking with fear. She returned quickly, surrounded by a swirling black wind. Eight of the greatest among the leaders clambered up the chair and perched precariously in a strange formation while they chanted words which were meaningless to me. They called to the swirling cloud which pulsed with red sparks shooting out of it like bolts of lightning, then it moved swiftly and without a sound upon the herd of mixed beasts which stood ready for the feast. Before they even had time to low in fear and pain it was among them and they dropped dead, their spirits thrown about as straw is cast by a tornado. Their ghosts faded into another world, taken by something I could not see or sense. At last the high priestess growled a command and the trollkin leapt to work, even those which had hidden in fear crawling out to help. Frantically, as if they would be lunch if they were too slow, they dragged the unmarked carcasses to the nearby stream and cast the corpses into the water. They slowly floated away, untouched. I have never seen such sacrifice of food by the trolls, and it must have been a great fear which so motivated them.

No one would tell me what went on. It seemed clear to me that this was a propitiatory sacrifice, quite unplanned, and that it ruined their previous plans. The trolls pretended that nothing unusual had occurred, and when I asked about the Blue Moon one struck me down and broke my jaw while another crushed my ribs with a swift kick, cursing me in the name of Kyger Litor to never name such a thing to them again.

Considering the reaction of the trolls, who are

closest to the Blue Moon (though quite distant) I suggest that investigation be undertaken only by someone who is feared by the trolls more than I.

fire/movement/sea/620

ARANEA

I FELT I HAD TO EXPLORE THIS CULT more deeply, even though most of our priests assured me that it was little more than an aberrant form of the Gorakiki religion. Whenever any uzko spoke of the high priestess I detected a mixture of admiration and fear from them and my curiosity was piqued.

I travelled north through the Empire of the Wyrms Friends to Skyfall Lake where the Aranea cult is centered. The journey was easy — the people there are every bit as civilized as we are and the inns were pleasant and reasonably priced. The rumors of the profusion of hungry dragons were far overstated, though I saw more dragonewts than I expected. Skyfall Lake is every bit as impressive as I had heard. The aura of the gods is strong.

I was given a great honor, as representative of the Lord of Knowledge: I was permitted to meet the High Priestess of this cult, and I can see why she has brought great fame to it. She is called Cragspider, though I doubt this is her real name. But no troll would tell me any other, and her acolytes frightened me so much that I did not dare cast Mind-Read to test them more deeply.

Their rites are not very different from Gorakiki, though they have no great breeding grounds and rely instead upon the wild spiders which abound in her area. Undoubtedly their profusion is due to the presence of this cult. The trolls have an inordinate respect of them, even allowing themselves to be bitten and their loved ones carried away rather than hurting the beasts. I was glad to have brought a quantity of anti-spider venom, though, and to have used it liberally among them. The would-be victims who I thereby saved from pain and death were grateful. This assured me of some friendship, for they recognize the Only Old One but not as their master and so my protection depended upon myself rather than on his official favor.

The ceremony I witnessed was unique. It was held outside in a sheltered valley where a few buildings perched on the cliff ledges.

At first only trolls were present, though most

had a small pet spider present. They began by handing around webbing which had been gathered from the giant spiders. An actual web was set up, each initiate holding upon one of the nodes to maintain its shape. I do not know how they avoided its stickiness. After it had been cast each of the initiates sang a song, different for each of them. Some were quite long and, in a trollish way, beautiful. Their language was mixed with strange words, undoubtedly the cult secret language which is unknown to any but initiates. The individuals towards the center were always better singers of longer songs, and almost completely in the secret language. Only Cragspider, in the precise center, did not sing.

On the second round many huge spiders stalked in among the crowd and began spinning a web strung from the surrounding rocks and buildings so it hung like a canopy overhead. I still find it hard to believe that so many spiders, including several different types, could work in such unison, but they did. The monsters took their places in the new web. The initiates then cast their spells and sprouted parts of spiders upon themselves, a sight which I still find unnerving. The initiates who were nearly complete spiders clambered to the upper web among their arachnid kin. They sang another song, similar to the first though I am unsure if it was the same one. I could not hear the spiders sing, but I had the distinct impression that they did so.

The entire ground sang and danced about, threading among their respective webs as if they were a maze. As they sang Cragspider slowly rose into the air until she was motionless above them all. Then the most beautiful sounds filled the air, apparently from this troll priestess singing. It was not troll language, nor even troll song. I was transfixed with visions of the cosmos in a myriad of images: some were of the universe as pearls on a necklace, others like fish in a net, others like mythical and historical events arranged in a mysterious mosaic. What these meant, or were meant to convey, I cannot say.

I found it hard to concentrate, but I think I saw Cragspider metamorphosize into a great spider unlike any I saw elsewhere. Then she danced about overhead of everyone, casting and weaving an intricate web more delicate and beautiful than any Esrolian lace work I have seen. I thought I could see the stars through her body, as if she was a spirit. The music continued. Something was then caught in the web, maybe it was a spirit moth,

though I have no real recollection, being transfixed by the visions. She wrapped and devoured it, as spiders do, and then brought forth something else which I could not see. Apparently it was some sort of food, for she descended to the overhead web and moved about, sharing the material with the spiders there which wrapped it themselves and devoured it again. Then she did the same with the worshippers who stood below on the ground, though these incomplete spiders simply devoured their gift without wrapping it.

I do not know what this was all about, and none of my training has prepared me to even guess at an interpretation. The obscurities of spider mythology elude me.

Afterwards everyone sang together and the webs slowly melted away. Even the one on the ground disappeared, as if absorbed into the earth. By dawn it was over and everyone dispersed to their homes.

I do not know what purpose this cult might fulfill among us, and do not recommend it as being of use or purpose to our worshippers. However, among all the troll cults which I experienced this was without a doubt the most beautiful, transcendent, and peaceful.

water/illusion/fire/620

ZORAK ZORAN

I THANK THE ONLY OLD ONE for the protection he gave me before I entered the Zorak Zoran ritual. Most of the trolls avoided me if they saw his spirit sign upon my face, though I could see that they would rather have victimized me in their rites.

I have no doubts that these beings worship an evil god. The worshippers are crude, even for trolls, and violence is so innate to them that fights broke out among them as they gathered for the worship. Two among them were slain, and a great hooting and laughter broke out. The corpses were mutilated, probably so that after resurrection the losers would be hampered.

Their rites begin with a blessing on the site, in this case a cavern which was filled with many stalagmites and stalactites, some of which had been chewed apart so that they all looked like wicked teeth. I counted nineteen zombies standing around the perimeter, motionless. The drums began, a deafening sound which surely must have disturbed their normally sensitive hearing. Perhaps they could hear something beneath or

around the incessant beating through some secret cult means. The cavern took on the odor of decayed corpses, a smell which brought smiles to their fanged countenances.

With great laughter a dozen trollkin were cast out into the crowd where they were ripped apart and partially eaten. By this time the fighting among the worshippers had finished. None of the trollkin were killed, though, and instead their agonized cries and whimpering continued through the whole ceremony. I saw that some of them were healed by the trolls, probably to cruelly maintain their suffering for the length of the rite.

Then most of the drums stopped. One continued with a low rolling drone. I could almost hear a voice in it. The trolls began chanting a litany of their god's heroic deeds, swaying side to side, bobbing their heads. The litany of bashings, crushings, gougeings and rendings was hypnotic. I could see their cult memories dancing and swirling overhead, huge and oppressive, oblivious to the solid ceiling overhead.

The chanting increased in tempo and volume. Some of the trolls broke into a keening, more high-pitched than any troll voice I ever heard before. The trolls began growling and gnashing their teeth amidst their chant, like savage punctuation to their horrid song. It felt like the cave itself, with its stony fangs, was gnashing us like we were a great god-meal. When the zombies around the perimeter moved I nearly jumped out of my skin. Abruptly the entire crowd on the left side broke into a moaning wail. A priest gabbled and gibbered in the front of the crowd, his guttural voice an impossible growl and scream both at once. Then a bright fire burst out overhead. Some of the worshippers ducked, but from most a great hooting cry of triumph burst forth. They stamped their feet and clapped their hands and the fire flowed downward in a shower of sparks which they plucked from the air and ate, as if with a flock of helpless birds. Then the priests, as one, shouted out the names of their conquered foes, and the initiates answered in unison, each shouting "Him we conquered, him we ate, and more!" The two last named were Lodril and Yelmario. Then the high priest clapped his hands, and everyone in the room seemed to grow, doubled in size, swelled with the presence of their horrible god.

Then a crowd of beasts were loosed among them, some in panic and rushing about, others cowering in fear. The trolls fell among them, tearing and ripping them into shreds as they engaged

in a loathsome feast of dripping flesh. Big sacks of drink, sewed closed, were cast among them and quickly burst open to run over the floor, mixing with the blood of the victims. The miserable trollkin were also dispatched. In short time the worship was a mass of gorging trolls, some gnashing loudly, others on all fours licking and slurping the liquids from the floor. I could stand no more of this, and was fearful for myself, and left with great relief.

I am utterly convinced that worship of this god should never be initiated among us, and that any humans who have descended to worship them be exterminated if they will not renounce their vile practices.

water/death/dark/623

THE RITUAL OF KYGER LITOR

by Maranus Persistus, Jadnor Temple. For Geolgin Askarios. 624 S.T.

HERE, WITHOUT THE TIRESOME detail of most scholars, is the most common form of the regular Kyger Litor ritual. This description is the result of attending over two hundred actual ceremonies among eleven different troll groups. I have endured terrible suffering and significant personal loss in gathering this information, whose veracity is blessed by Lhankor Mhy.

1. The Gathering and Call

All trolls fast after they cross the threshold into the sacred temple regions for this ceremony. The voluntary hunger is a point of great pride and strength to the voracious trolls. Remember that sometimes these ceremonies last two or three days among large crowds of only 500 initiate trolls.

The trolls wander in over many hours beforehand. No discernable pattern exists as among humans concerned with precedence. The clans arrive and move towards their traditional stations. Always some name-calling and gesturing between rival groups occurs. This is often quite good natured and harmless. However, territory fights always erupt when a group settles down and cause the whole crowd to ripple back and forth as more trolls arrive. In territory fights any natural weapons are used, but rarely any weapons at all. It is not uncommon for the

strongest members to become engaged in the dispute. Death is rare, broken bones common, but injuries are always healed before the ceremony begins.

The One Call is the official signal that the ceremony has begun. In it all trolls screech in their silent language to a single pitch and find the true voice of Kyger Litor. A word is spoken by them all at once, and no one ever knows what the word is going to be. (I don't really believe that even the priests really know what it means afterwards, either.)

2. Drums and Dancing

The trolls bring drums. I can't tell how they assign the duty. Perhaps it is always voluntary. All drummers say "The Old Man is in me," when asked why they drum. Some are terrible, utterly untrained. However, all drummers eventually enter into the a single wild and thunderous harmony which changes the whole world about them. The movements and chanting of the worshippers brings their darkness upon the holy site and the Spirit World and Surface World temporarily intersect.

3. The Early Ritual

Always some ritual is performed which is preparatory to the upcoming ritual. It might be a protection, a summoning, a cleansing, or all of the above. These are often group dramas, with different trolls taking parts for their respective cults or families.

4. The Ancestor Summoning

The Ancestors are usually present before the Early Ritual, attracted by the sound. Usually these are sensible only as spectral echoes to the trolls, or can be seen with second sight. When the blood troughs are set up and one of their ancestors is called to speak, it congeals over the pool with other close kin swarming around it like bees around honey. The ancestors who are invited to possess someone are invited at this time. They are fed with an array of living beasts intended to flatter and strengthen them during the time that the Kyger Drums begin to call for the One Uz Song.

5. The Oneness

The initiates perform their secret rituals and par-

ticipate in the growing Unity with Kyger Litor. This is a phenomena which links the worshippers with their ancestors into a multiple consciousness, then makes them one mind, which then experiences Oneness with other parts of the universe which are connected to it, and makes them into a new single mind, and so on until the final unity of Kyger Litor and Darkness is experienced.

Afterwards an initiate remembers only as much of this as she is capable of recalling without experiencing spiritual shock. Most initiates remember it as a momentarily timeless point of utter satisfaction.

6. The Feast

After appropriate purifications, blessings and thanks the food is at last released for general consumption. At last the fast of the trolls is broken. The period is one of gradual un-magnification and re-integration as everyone eats and, if necessary, gets reacquainted with new relatives.

clay/movement/sea/623

APPENDIX: XIOLA UMBAR

I FOUND THE PLACE as you described. The lair of this priestess is a court of mayhem. The overly numerous trollkin clamber underfoot, clumsy to the point of humor at first and frustration later.

At all times they were a distraction and threat. The stupid mewling things crept upon us and could have disarmed me if they could have followed a single command. But it was a Xiola Umbar place, and I had to remember that there was probably no such order among the refugees here.

The priestess, standing as upright as possible in the low cave, came out towards us. We bobbed and weaved through Jonny's Song and Elly's Song. I could sense her surprise at me, a human, doing this so well.

"Humans are not welcome here," she said, "Even with the mark of the Only Old One upon them. This is a place of mercy and kindness, and no human has ever given us that."

"Please test me in the secrets of the troll way," I said. I could tell her about any number of troll myths and their secret meanings.

"Yes," she said, and gestured quickly. A big trollkin, well armored and with a big club, strode

quickly forward. Two trollkin, dressed alike in red beaded uniforms, with spears, strode in his wake. The hordes of trollkin fell all over each other in their desperate attempts to escape the trio.

"Get that furry one we saw," said the priestess, and before I could see the target the big trollkin threw a rock and knocked out one among the crowd. The onlookers fled in all directions and the two trained trollkin grabbed up the still kicking body. One took a small ritual Eating Board out while the other seized a big bronze nail. Normally the nail would be used to attach a frog, or giant spider, or something equally tantalizing to the troll gullet onto the board. Now they just stuck the unfortunate trollkin's wrist to it, then carried it to me with the usual words of praise and invitation.

I don't know what the priestess expected me to do with such a corpse. The funny looking thing was the size of a big dog, and furry. I thought that licking the fresh blood, as the trained trollkin were doing as I watched, would be enough.

"Get the one with the unknown ear notches too," said the priestess coldly. The big trollkin lifted another big rock.

"Wait," I said, "This will do." I hated to waste the magic, but I felt this was the best time to impress someone. As usual it tickled, and I was ashamed to giggle before the hideous uzko priestess.

But when the change was upon me and I knew I could swallow I laughed a different laugh, opened wide, and engulfed the entire corpse, including spike and Eating Board.

The entire room fell silent, all staring at me expectantly. I expected to, at last, communicate with the priestess. However, her only response, after a brief hesitation, was to repeat "Now get the one with the strange ear notches." I was shocked that the priestess was unimpressed.

But I no longer wished to be among these creatures. I could feel the furry one moving around inside me, sort of like a beginning illness of digestion. Without lowering my head, I backed away. Once in the tunnel I turned and made my way quickly here, where I vomited up this for you.

I am ashamed of my reaction, and especially unhappy at using my Big Swallow. Worst of all is the sense of betrayal which I feel. You told me these were the nice ones. Thanks for the set-up. Why didn't you tell me I could be killed? Thanks for nothing. Where I come from what I just did for you is what we do for close kinsmen.

I imagine your limitless charm will supply some smooth reply, once again. But I'm not kidding about nearly losing my life. You know where to find me.

Copyist: Crangress, wild/death/fire/1622

changed everything. The Only Old One was killed and his City of Black Glass was shattered, turned into the dust which blots out Shadow Plateau today. Where the City used to be is now only a vast tar pit, perfectly flat and level, where the great volcano once rose. Only where creatures slowly sink into the tar is it disturbed.

The Only Old One prepared his defense and summoned a fabulous monster to help him, but it was killed and its skeleton is now a range of hills on the plateau. The fortress of Blackwell was made to hide it, and now the trolls keep everyone away. The corpse fell against the plateau and blocked the path of the Creekstream River so that vast parts of the Styx Grotto are accessible. The caverns are so vast that a city could dwell there, if they could be fed.

ANNILLA

The mysteries surrounding this troll cult are so dark that even I cannot offer anything other than speculation. Geolgin's work remains the most useful at this time. I doubt that the Lunar Empire knows any more than

this.

ARANEA

Our intrepid scholar seems ignorant of the significance of this rite, but it is obviously their High Holy Day rite since it recreates the cosmos. This was originally the High Holy Day ritual of the Aranea cult and that it is probably also the High Holy Day ritual for the current Cragspider cult. I believe the date for this rite was one day earlier than that given in Geolgin's document. In the only other traceable significant date Geolgin recorded among his impressions was that of the Zorak Zoran ritual on the day following the rite. Thus Cragspider's High Holy Day is probably freezeday/illusionweek/fireseason.

ZORAK ZORAN

Clearly the bloody cult of Zorak Zoran is dangerous and harmful. They glory in direct confrontation and consider assassination to be a sign of weakness. The religion will not be easily destroyed, however, since it ser-ves a dark, powerful need both in troll and to a lesser extent, our human society. Thus a strategy of conciliation is in order. I have several acquaintances among the cult of the Storm Bull whose words have given me a deeper respect for the ways of Zorak Zoran.

KYGER LITOR

An interesting description of the most basic troll rite. Geolgin did well to include it in his report. My own researches into the background of this piece indicate a good chance that the description is accurate. It should also be noted that the troll rituals described have not changed appreciably to this date.

XIOLA UMBAR

This document was reportedly found among Geolgin's papers. It is unsigned and was apparently not intended to be part of his report. However, it has found its way in anyway, and is called Geolgin's Anonymous Appendix. A spy, apparently a trickster cultist, worked for Geolgin. The dangers involved in the search for knowledge become more clear after a reading of this equivocal statement.

Nochet 290-945012-GV-1614vlb: Introduction by Minaryth Purple

MY LORD, the work below is a *heretofore unknown* document in the possession of the copyist, Jalques, a foreigner from distant Ralios. The Nochet temple registration date is recent, official, and verifies the information as being true. I can personally vouch for the honesty and accuracy of "vlb" too, a highly-placed official known to loath all Humakt cultists. But you and I are probably the third and fourth people to read this material in the centuries since it disappeared from record. I guesstimate that it is originally from the Lyleket temple, sacked when the God Learners fell. A Tarsh tribe is known to be searching for this knowledge, and we are fortunate that Jalques secretly sympathizes with us.

In addition to these insights the copyist Jalques included a number of original interviews which he undertook on his own. In haste I have included the originals, though they were surely never meant for official use. I would normally shun such unplanned trivia, but this copyist is from distant Ralios and has an unusual rapport with uzko of all types. No one speaks, or translates, darktongue better than he. I make this statement without reservations — I have been in simultaneous mindlink with Jalques and a troll, who was in mindlink with Jalques and I both. And I understood things better through Jalques's mind than my own alone. This is surely an unusual benefit. Furthermore, he is one of the luckiest people I know, as if a Great Force were looking over his shoulder to direct his actions to be greater than normal men. So I trust his words, and his intuition. I think you will find his comments of interest.

Irripi Ontor #90.45.7.8929/34: Commentary by Minaryth Purple

SKYFALL LAKE, lying against the mountains north of Dragon Pass, and the associated spirit cult of Sky River Titan have been subjects of interest to me for many years. The following intriguing document on the subject of Skyfall Lake has found its way into our compendium by unusual means. Some years ago, on the basis of orders from a low-ranking imperial noble, the Lunar knowledge cult of Irripi Ontor commissioned a study of certain aspects of the lake. My vast web of sympathizers and contacts was able to furnish a copy only a year later, the complete text of which appears below.

Nochet

290-945012-GV-1614v1b

Dagobard's Collection

Compiled for Lord Egalis of Aerinthanx, 1248 S.T.

Commentary by Jalques of Ralios

May the blessings of the Lord of the Light of Knowledge illuminate your search for understanding. The original document from which the following copy has been made is drawn from my personal library of troll-related material.

The title of the document is Dagobard's Collection. Other copies of this document are exceedingly rare, perhaps nonexistent. I am certain of the authenticity of my original, especially considering certain hazards incurred in the discovery of the document, which was hidden in a unusual location which I am not at liberty to divulge.

Dagobard's Collection is a typical scholarly compilation of loosely related material. However, the Collection is of great importance to all students of troll lore because of the fundamental nature of the material it includes. These ancient legends, poems, and eyewitness accounts are central to the dogma of the cults in question.

The Collection is also of interest because it reveals information on three of the most mysterious and obscure troll cults: Annilla, Swems, and Arkat. While much is available on such major troll cults as Kyger Litor, facts about the above cults are extremely rare.

I have made a copy of this valuable document for your lordship's perusal as an act of professional courtesy to my esteemed colleague Minaryth Purple.

1. ANNILLA: THE PELORIAN BLUE MOON MYTH

Nochet 65-45-902-x-PBMM.

As told by an anonymous dark troll, reputedly a native of the Blue Moon Plateau, circa 400 S.T.

WHEN YELM WAS STRUCK DOWN and Night filled the air, a complete and utter gloom covered the heavens. The absolute darkness struck terror into every person's soul. Great wailings filled the murky air.

Gods and great powers began piercing the absolute darkness as they asserted themselves. Pole Star brought the first ray of light into the darkness, piercing a hole through the impenetrable sky dome beneath his castle near the top of the Spike. Other officers of Pole Star did likewise, and from each beam of starlight came one of the Star Captains, who helped struggling people on the surface.

Orlanth the Storm God gathered his minions and led them howling through the Night, driving their stygian foes before them so that the air was driven around in shifting patches of dark and not-dark.

Annilla rose into the sky from the east.

She had been born in the desperate struggle between Yelm and Styx. Each god wounded the other, and where their blood mingled was born a fabulous glowing force which hovered over the

enraged battle. When the forces of darkness fled before the God of the Dead and the Dead God, the new glowing force went with them. The glow contained the shattered remnants of the conflict: paradoxes of dead and not-dead, of eternal dying, and unattained rebirth. Those things which traveled within the protective glow called her Annilla.

The glow slowly coalesced and integrated its consciousness into itself, taking on the form of a shimmering orb. Annilla then undertook a journey to learn of herself, which is known as the Moon Journey Upward.

In the Moon Journey Upward, the newborn goddess passed from the Primal Depths through the Inner Potentials. As she ascended, she followed the Path of Balance Between, determining the prime pathway. On the way she befriended her essential Lunar connections. Foremost was the mutual attraction shared with Lorian, an aggressive sea god. Their son was Artmal, a fighting god.

When Annilla reached the horizon the waters knew her name and gladly followed her march skyward. Annilla went first, Lorian second, upon Yelm's abandoned path, and the light-quenching waters of Lorian and his kin flooded across the sky so that it is blue now instead of yellow.

On the surface world the waters rose in triumph, drowning and sinking the earth, making mountains into islands. Then Orlanth and hateful Himile came in strength and conquered the waters again.

Annilla took refuge in the sky, a wandering blue orb of light with a constellation of lesser stars following her about. Xentha allowed the dim light to penetrate her night cloak, for both were creatures of darkness. Annilla was visible to creatures on the surface world. Thus the goddess was visible to men as a shimmering blue orb which lit the world with a haunting murky radiance. Sometimes she moved her house, and so the blue moon

moved about in an erratic way. Sometimes she was down low, close enough to the surface to light up a continent with her murky glow. At other times, she was a distant brightly colored star. There she remained, a member in the mythology of the sky, until the coming of Chaos.

When the Devil invaded the Spike and blasted it apart the world began to end. A great void opened which began to swallow all of creation. Many deities were sucked helplessly into it and disappeared without a trace. Others fought valiantly with the best of their knowledge, casting themselves away with a willful commitment to help the world exist. When those gods survived, they did so with great powers, always different from what was before.

Annilla was one who survived. When the Spike disappeared from beneath her, she took her own fear and alarm as the shield she used before her into the void. Thanks to her (and others) the world was not swallowed, but was instead reborn. At first they lay, wounded and healing, in the darkness again, and was part of the Great Compromise. Thus she retains half of her old life and half of her new.

However, no one is quite sure what her new, historic half is supposed to be. Philosophers are still working on this mystery.

2. A SONG OF SWEMS

Nochet 450-59083-ORWT.

This song from the Swems ceremony was recorded by Orangins Whitefeather, of the Nochet Lhankor Mhy temple, in 1213 S.T.

I am Everywhere.
I am the shape of the world.
All life is inside me.

When the food moves through
your bowels, it is in me.
When the blood moves in your

veins, it is in me.
When sound moves through senses, it is in me.
When the thought moves through brain, it is in me.
When babies move through birth tubes, it is in me.

I am the eater, I am the eaten.
I am before, I am afterwards.
I am the inside, I am the Outside.
I am Life, I am death.

3. ON ARKAT

Nochet 472-4608-GTVG.

As related to Gorlok the Voyager, Initiate of Lhankor Mhy, by UuUURalaffu-Rrz, priest of Arkat of the Yolp Mountains, 1223 S.T.

SOMETIMES HUMANS ask me "What about the other Arkat, the human Arkat who disappeared just before our Arkat was born? Don't you think he is involved somehow?" For them I have two answers, which I give according to the personality of the listener:

1. Arkat was once a vile and traitorous human being who discovered that the truth lies inside the Dark, and then made the ultimate sacrifice to discover the truth. After all, once he became a troll you see no perfidy or betrayal in him. His true self brought the balance of living peace.

2. Arkat was always a troll spirit, sent into his first body by Kyger Litor so that he could be born again and again, quickly, each time keeping his troll self intact so he could rob the human race of its greatest secrets. He suffered, even greater than any other troll has suffered, to trick the trickers and steal from the thieves.

I always say, whichever of these answers you can understand or believe

in, Arkat's blessings will come to you, for his spirit now has peace in the Dark.

Those who reject uz views of Arkat are doomed to wonder and ponder their god eternally, with no hope of an answer, for their search is futile. Our Arkat is indeed the final form of that hero.

4. THE BIRTH OF ARKAT KINGTROLL

Nochet 75-30-900-GVGR

As related to Gorlok the Voyager, Initiate of the Lyleket Lhankor Mhy Temple. A uzko told me this, in the city of Seven Picks, 1230 S.T.

I REMEMBER WHEN ARKAT was born. I was there.

Arkat had companions with him. We had never seen someone be born with companions before, and every uzko wanted to watch. So many crowded in that only the most powerful came. Even three of the Mighty Ones were present to lend their weight of authority and collect presents.

Arkat was already a god then, I think, because of his companions. They were dedicated to him the way one of us would only dare be dedicated to the Mothers, or to one of the other gods. But the companions were loyal to Arkat. Even though they were humans, and in a vast cavern crowded with the most powerful among all the uzko of Dagori Inkarth, they were not afraid. I know why: they had already voyaged into strange worlds and undergone immeasurable suffering and tragedy. I saw them work when I was in Ground Land when they destroyed an army of the purple men.

Kwaratch Kang was the dissector. He relished his part in the ritual. He spent a lot of time with Arkat, and the man more than once imposed his wishes to restrain the warlord. Now Kwaratch Kang would have his vengeance, and the fullest powers of Zorak Zoran, the god of cruelty, would have

their fullest play before the admiring eyes of uzdom.

Kwaratch Kang announced that he was going to save Arkat until last so he would have the honor of seeing his companions slowly dissected, and begin to comprehend the agony which would course through him.

Arkat refused. He just broke his bonds, stepped down from the wall, and interrupted the proceedings. Kwaratch Kang tried to silence him, but was seized by an invisible force, probably a spirit of some sort.

The other Zorak Zorani broke from among the crowd, bellowing and foaming at the mouth like they always do, charging in a mad scream to kill the man. Arkat gave a Great Shout which stunned them all, and a rock dislodged from the ceiling and crushed the skull of Zernian Aselbos, the High Priestess of the Blue Moon.

Garazaf Hyloric was the first to obey, and since she was the New Mother most others also refrained. Or else we stopped because we were used to following her commands, of course. I could hear the greater gods moving in the cavern, sifting themselves through the hundreds of ears straining throughout. It was the sense of a High Holy Day the air rang with magic so much.

The Mighty Ones alone maintained the chant. It was as if nothing had happened to interrupt them, or as if they could not stop because they did not know how. We never understand the ways of the Mighty Ones. But everyone else listened.

Arkat insisted that his transition be first so that all his companions could watch him. They must know the right things to do at the right time, and he would show them by being the first to be blessed. It would be a dishonor if he was not the first to be sacrificed for he was the leader among them. The success of a great magic depended upon it as well.

Kwaratch Kang was loosed, and he refused to change. He said, "You are

ours now, Slayer of Diamodonus."

"Not yet," said Arkat, "I am still the man who walked into this place, and still the man who saved your life at Inti Pardo where the Great Crocodile Man lives. You still have your head, and can remember spells, because I was there. In return for that favor I demand that I go first."

Lord Watcher, the Dealer of Death, spoke through Kwaratch Kang. "Never. I never owe."

And then there were four or five Arkats all who seized upon the limbs of Kwaratch Kang faster than I could tell. They weren't there, then they were with the rune lord held helpless and Arkat made some swift move, ignoring the terrible magics which were cast at him, and with his bare hand killed Kwaratch Kang. I saw his soul fly apart out of his bodies, broken into shadowy fragments, helpless. I heard the mind of Xiola Umbar admire the stuff that hero uzko are made of.

And then Arkat turned to his Mother and asked, "Is there objection to my Womb Wish?"

"None, my son."

And so it was done, and Arkat was taken apart and put back together first, with all his companions watching. And Arkat suffered the dissection without a hint of suffering, as if he had put the pain off to the side or something, until they reached his heart, which is when all humans always break. So that is how I know that Arkat was truly a human being beforehand, no matter what the rumors say he was. And it was a Complete Dismemberment, as I had expected anyway, and we aren't surprised that the old parts came out perfectly, providing a formidable arsenal of magical implements.

And each of the companions afterwards went through the same process, although none of them were so perfect. One forgot a whole song, and one of them did not cry out when his heart was replaced. Another was fearful, a fourth was defiant when he should have shown humility. But they did as much

as they could to be like Arkat.

And so that is why they came to be just like him, except not so strong. They had Arkat's arsenal, just like him. But because they were so devoted to him they were like extensions of the Kingtroll, like trained weapons in his hands. So sometimes when you hear that Arkat did this or that, it is really his companion.

This was the first time we had seen how to make duplicates this way, and a year afterwards one hundred superior trollkin were prepared for rebirth as well. The Mighty Ones, of course, did not come. All went well, following the ritual which Arkat had shown us, and we reaped a vast bounty of magics for the fight against Gbaji.

Kwaratch Kang wanted to kill all the newborn trolls because all of them professed absolute loyalty to Arkat, who was preparing for the Thunder Mountain Jump. But Arkat threatened him, and the trolls joined the new war god's cult. Many learned sorcery, although it seemed impossible to them beforehand. The First Hundred stayed

with Arkat throughout the war, and went with him to Ralios afterwards. Their descendants live in Guhan.

The next year, at our High Holy Day, we discussed if this was a reflection or an approval of the end of the enlo curse, because all the uzko born were true. And so we decided to risk some mothers beforehand, and they joined the cult of Arkat. They were all losers, who had born only enlo before. They were full of great hope. Some even learned sorcery in their zeal to fulfil cult obligations.

But it did not work. Half the births were enlo, and although some wished to find a large number of Superiors among them the effort was for naught. It reached its extreme when Fat Karathasa tried to convince us that her trollkin was Superior because of its great weakness. But the mothers stayed with Arkat, and their descendants are called the Wizard Children because they still learn the arts from their mothers, even if they are not in the Arkat cult.

- Copyist: Jalques de Galin,
water/fertility/fire/1622

DEAR MINARYTH, Wisest and Most Benevolent Sage: I spent the night in my favorite dirtpit and here is the result of my conversations. Hope it is useful to you. Ask me in private about why I know about "Auntie Come-and-go" and I am sure even your staid judgement will agree that I earned this pay. "The dirt of the road is no sweeter for pay," as they say in my homeland.

1. A Hunter of the Zong Cult

Don't mess with Zong guys. My familiarity with the initiates of Zong has given me a deep appreciation of these predators. Initiates of the god are usually skilled in their particular ways to a degree that few of our civilized brethren can equal.

It should be noted that they are not primarily warriors, and usually have few of the combat skills of those expected to fight. They do not know how to fight in mass, but operate as loners, often gone from the tribe for a season at a time. They cannot abide the wearing of heavy armor, nor do they fight well in a melee. But their skills in secret movement and surprise attacks are impressive, as I can attest after a troublesome period of study in the wilds of our land. I now can see where the legends of the Zong runemasters' magical prowess have come from.

For the cost of a few liters of Boldhome Brainbasher I managed to elicit this succinct statement on Zong attitudes:

"We live to hunt. Kyger Litor was a hunter first, even before she was the Mother. We are made to stalk silently through the darkness, creeping stealthily upon the hapless prey. The feel and the power of the sling in my hand is what gives me satisfaction. To hear it whirr around my head, to feel the snap of the soft leather

and the whizz of the sling ball, and to hear the ball smash the target with mighty force - these are both pleasures and sacred duties unto our god and our families. We are made to slay, to take the life of an inferior creature so that the children and others may live. This is the best thing of being alive!"

The speaker was a Zong initiate with the worst personal habits I ever encountered, even among trolls. While speaking he continually drooled, smacked his chops, and picked at his naked, enfolded skin so that the insects nesting there scampered and dodged about. His few articles of apparel were of the roughest animal hides, and had never been washed, by my estimation. Yet this uncouth troll was accounted one of the most promising members of the tribe he hunted for.

2. The Pleasures of Insecthood

For the cost of a rotten sheep and a liter of Rainbow Delight I overjoyed this uzko to tell me what he liked about his cult:

"I love being an insect. My favorite thing is the extra legs. I can pick up several things at once. I like to time it so that four limbs all work at once, carrying a never-ending stream of goodies to my maw. I love the way I can open my mouth so far to cram it full. I love the way I can feel my stomach straining against the inside of my carapace. I wish I was an insect all the time!"

He ate the sheep immediately afterwards without further word. No one shared his feast. I offered him another liter of Rainbow Delight, and for the cost of two liters he hummed his sacred song, an unintelligible

bug-sounding thing which resulted in a shining carapace for his stomach to press against.

In Ralios a theory says that the cult of Gorakiki is a conspiracy by the Great Mothers to turn the uzko from kinfolk into dinner.

3. Interview with an Important Troll Spirit

This one really scared me, Minaryth. After a little bit of troll small-talk my female subject launched into this. She never identified herself, but I mindread a nearby uzko who recognized Ergenfralz Ivory-and-tooth. If it was her, still alive almost 1200 years after the fact, and in Boldhome talking to me, then someone close by to you or me is in Big Trouble. However, I had heard of her long ago, when I was in Ralios.

Ergenfralz Ivory-and-tooth was called "Auntie Come-and-go" and cited as an example of a bad, or rather naughty, spirit. According to Ralios troll lore she often possesses her descendants, even without their permission, but always briefly.

I should also note that my own family has a legend about this spirit. According to this legend, some 60 years ago she became angry with my grandfather (from my mother's side of the family), and reportedly ate his soul! But whichever is true, I believe this account.

So you think you know our ways and language now, Jalques? Are you surprised I recognize you? Perhaps your human ways have blinded you as they have so many others...for example, what is my name? Where am I from? Let me tell you something of our ways, since you are so persistent, my dear. This body is a good, sturdy one, as I'm sure you've noticed in your greedy way. But what of the power inside this mass of flesh? What do you know of that? By the way, what is that arrogant family up to these days - the one that used to claim to rule this area? Have they paid their penalty to the dark yet? Many lifetimes may pass but the dark remembers. Perhaps I can shape an understanding of that with your help, Jalques, though perhaps not with your acquiescence...

Fortunately, at this point a brawl broke out at the dimly visible cave mouth. The speaker cried out the name "Hangnail" and departed for the fracas without further ado. I saw her rescue a collared cave troll, then pass out into the night. Since the mood had turned ugly I left to finish up the report for you. Why are you so rushed anyway?

- Jalques de Galin, wind/fertility/fire /1622

I think your Lordship will find much of the Lunarized rantings in this document amusing rather than useful, and the subject matter is troll magic rather than troll religion. But a core of original data exists that I believe has some relevance to your interest, even if the material is not immediately obvious in utility. Certain insights into troll mysteries are available only herein. Therefore I have selected the document as the final part of this survey. May your affairs prosper.

Irripi Ontor #90.45.7.8929/34

An Analysis of Aquatic Fauna Encounters, Skyfall Lake, Dragon Pass

Irripi Ontor Document #90.45.7.8929/34: Raibanth Wisdom Temple. Inscribed Under the Seal of Lord High Sage Requat Rattlepate, 26th year of the 7th Wane, using Irripi Ontor Truth Grading System 5a/RPATE. Prepared for Blademaster Sigillius Gar-Sool of Yanafal Tarnils, Baron of Carantes, in accordance with Imperial document regulations 35.1, 600.3, and 12.37 (Imperial Code of the Red Emperor, Revision XVII).

Research Staff: Acolyte Ubiquus, known as the Skeptic; Scriveners Baz Razorpen and Mur-got Thimble; Library Assistants Xot-Sin Swivelhips and Rusticus of Two Tomes.

MY DEAR SIR SIGILLIUS, thank you for your patronage of our modest temple. My assistants and I have researched the subject of Skyfall Lake with care. As you have requested, we paid particular attention to information pertaining to the greater monsters of the lake. I hope that the fruit of our efforts will suit your exalted pleasure.

After six seasons of dangerous field investigations, library work, divination, and onerous numerological codification, I have been able to arrive at certain definitive conclusions. Sections below summarize my recommendations for your expedition and the theoretical basis for these recommendations.

I also include several excerpts from documents related to the subject. These excerpts are representative of the large body of data I and my assistants examined, and I hope that they will serve to demonstrate the scope and accuracy of this project. Of course, a more exhaustive research effort would undoubtedly yield a more sophisticated result, but would require an even longer period of time and considerably more funding.

You will be relieved to know that all of the data I was provided with or unearthed has been painstakingly evaluated for accuracy using our famous Truth Grading system. Although I am certain you are fully cognizant of this system, permit me to recap the salient features for your convenience. After assembling all material on a sub-

ject, we sift each document for its essential validity, ascribing a numeric grade from 0 to 100 to every statement or piece of data encountered. A grade of 0 represents our estimation that a statement is an utter and certain falsehood or error, and a grade of 100 is awarded only to those statements guaranteed absolutely truthful and accurate in all details.

As said before, all data pursuant to the subject of this project was rated using our system. In accordance with our hallowed Irripi Ontor traditions of precise analysis, any material that fell below a TGS (Truth Grading System) of 85 was ignored.

Following are representative excerpts from the three most useful documents I analysed.

Document I. Ubiquus the Skeptic's Report

OUR TEMPLE here in Raibanth is known for the fine training and preparation our initiates receive. With this in mind, I summoned young Ubiquus, one of our most promising staff members, and offered him the chance to perform field research on the subject of Skyfall Lake. This task was accepted with great enthusiasm, especially once the alternative was clear.

Within four seasons he had returned, only a little worse for wear, bringing with him a veritable mass of raw data on the subject of

Skyfall Lake, which I and other experienced members of our temple then carefully sifted and analyzed using our special techniques.

Although Ubiquus belongs to one of the little cliques that often form in large temples like ours, he is basically a sound researcher, and I think you will agree that his work is excellent in terms of detail.

Ubiquus took a position on board a troll fishing vessel and spent many weeks keeping a scientific record of events. Several of the most significant entries from his log of observations follow, all presented complete and unedited, and in chronological order. Ubiquus began his work on the first day of Earth Season, and ended his career as a fishermen on the 38th day of Dark Season.

Note that all observations were made at night, using the troll spell of Darksee. Since trolls are a primarily nocturnal species, fishing on Skyfall Lake normally occurs at night.

My lord, I doubt you would wish to see the complete body of data that Ubiquus recorded. Most entries record events of little interest, and are, let us say, a bit overzealous as well. I am sure that so busy a member of the nobility as yourself has far more important work at hand. Nevertheless, the material is available should you have need of it.

Excerpt 1:

Commentary by Requat: In this early entry from Ubiquus's journal, the second in the series, one can already see certain indications of the linkage I have discerned between storms localized to the north and the potential for dangerous or magical manifestations. Further perusal of the data confirms this hypothesis, as you will see.

Date: Waterday, Disorder Week, Earthseason, 26th year of the 7th Wane

Weather: Powerful storms in the northeast. Heavy rains. As regards rainfall, a note on troll perceptions. The level of precipitation I consider heavy, based on accepted norms, is considered moderate by the trolls on board this ship. Luckily I have been trained in the standard techniques of objective measurement, and have brought a standard 100-ring beaker on board the vessel.

Comparatively light rains though they may be, I note that the precipitation was still so strong that my heavy oilcloth windbreaker was soaked through by the end of the night. I am sure that other corrections to my preconceptions about the lake will be necessary.

Odd yellow and blue lights in the south appeared during the later part of the night (total number sighted: 26). The trolls were uncommunicative about the meaning of these lights or their source. I deduce that beings of semi-intelligent nature inhabit the great marshes in the southern part of the lake. Further research will be necessary.

Sailing Route: Followed the edge of the marsh to the south. Stopped several times for an hour or so while all the crew examined the water carefully. Apparently some sort of magical, green-colored ruins can occasionally be seen in the lake on nights like tonight, or so I was told by one garulous dark troll fisherman.

Fishing: Average.

Unusual Creatures Caught: Many huge insects, of the water beetle variety (#3520-3528, New Jrusteli System), were present in our fishing area tonight. Distribution was approximately 3.2 insects per 100 Raibanth rods the ship sailed. Typical sample insect measured 1.35 rods in length.

Unusual Items Netted: None.

Notes: A little joke was played on me this evening, in which it was suggested that I be the bait for the Brown Shark, a legendary monster which the crew has apparently been trying to catch for some years now. They seemed to think it would be out and about this evening, and were looking around nervously. Trolls seem to take a joke a little farther than humans do. It was only when I had actually been tied to a huge rusted hook and tossed into the water that they relented. It is always important for a sage to remain calm and unangered in such circumstances. I must remember to give my two bodyguards a raise, considering the way that they maimed several of the most obstreperous troll humorists so suddenly and efficiently shortly after I was pulled out. The shark

was not sighted.

Measured Data:

Cloud cover: 74/100ths

Wind Force: 20 flags

Average Temperature: 5 I.T.

Average Precipitation: 87 rings

Observed average speed of ship: 2.3 short knots

Weight of catch, overall: 310 RSB

[Overall TGS grade: 91]

Excerpt 2:

Commentary by Requiāt: Stasis Week of Earthseason was the most eventful week of Ubiquus's journal, with four major encounters with dangerous fauna. This entry is typical. Also see the following entry four days later. Note the caution and ritual activity displayed during this night's fishing.

Date: Waterday, Stasis Week, Earthseason, 26th year of the 7th Wane

Weather: Very strong, warm rain tonight over the entire lake and the shore. Powerful storms in the northwest. Around midnight what appeared to be a tornado appeared, of great height and shot with lightning, lasting for only a few minutes. Its appearance and motions violated all normal weather patterns, and the ship stayed so far away that I was not able to make any accurate observations. Rain included a mass of various small snails, grubs, and other squirming aquatic organisms too varied to classify. Most were unpleasant in smell and feel, although the trolls quickly devoured all within reach. •

Sailing Route: Stayed near shore. Crew very wary.

Fishing: Plentiful, but almost all fish were an odd blue color. They seemed to slip through our enchanted nets without trouble until the captain brought out a small stone box, placed it in the center of the deck, and opened the top. I was not permitted to look inside the box.

Unusual Creatures Caught: While netting fish, we also caught a magical crocodilian with metallic skin. The creature was very difficult to kill, as its gleaming, silvery skin was as tough as bronze armor. One of our crew was lost during this bat-

tle. The body, from jaw to tail, measured 3.2 Raibantha rods in length. Other than skin, monster was similar to ordinary *Crocodylus porosus* in most respects (Classification 298, New Jrusteli System), but about 25/100ths heavier. Metal in skin was not identifiable.

Unusual Items Netted: One wooden idol, of a fish with a crown. Dated 3rd quarter of the 1st Age, using Droffat's system. Sold to a trader that morning.

Notes: Overall, a very notable and strange evening. Saw the Green Glass City clearly for the first time tonight. The trolls were very quiet, aware of even the slightest noise, during our passage over this eerie aquatic phenomenon. They all stayed away from the edges of the vessel, apparently in fear of the Brown Shark.

When we returned to shore, I examined the metallic crocodile's body (see above data), and offered to contact an armorer in Aldachur, a friend of mine, whom I knew was capable of working with magical materials, suggesting that he fashion the skin into a magical set of scale or plate armor.

Measured Data:

Cloud cover: 98/100ths

Wind Force: 15 flags

Average Temperature: 8 I.T.

Average Precipitation: 97 rings

Observed average speed of ship: 2 short knots

Weight of catch, overall: 562 RSB

[Overall TGS grade: 93]

Excerpt 3:

Commentary by Requiāt: The entry below, another from Stasis Week of Earthseason, is one of the most dramatic listings of magical events and encounters to be found in the journal. The description of the storms as "shifting" may have some special significance.

Date: Wildday, Stasis Week, Earthseason, 26th year of the 7th Wane

Weather: Severe, gusty winds, rough water, and oddly shifting storms. Saw waterspouts for the first time: a disturbing experience. I doubt very strongly that most waterspouts have huge, murki-

ly visible sea-beings rising up them as this one did. I noted that the captain stayed well clear of these phenomena.

Sailing Route: Stayed in the southern part of the lake, avoided storms. Several rituals were performed at midnight. I was not permitted to observe any of them, though the trolls were polite.

Fishing: Poor. Much damage to nets. Several lines, poles, and hooks taken.

Unusual Creatures Caught: Fourteen huge, voracious lake sharks were taken with hooks baited with various offal. Apparently identical to normal salt-water *Carcharodon*. How such creatures can survive in the lake is beyond my understanding. Skins are apparently somewhat valuable to trolls, especially those that were striped with yellow and red. Largest measured 12.48 rods in length: unusually large for a shark. I must remember to keep my belt strap attached to the ship at all times.

Unusual Items Netted: Six large, shimmering floating containers, made of a magical transparent substance, were snagged late this evening. They were formed of some sort of light protoplasm of unusually durable nature, and were shaped into a sack-like form. Each sack contained a myriad of odd blue and white crystals, which the trolls discarded before I could perform tests. The protoplasm that made up the sacks was extraordinarily non-porous, not even allowing the passage of air, as I was able to observe. One of the more playful trolls almost strangled a smaller one by pulling one of these containers over his friend's head. The captain took all these magical sacks for his personal use.

Notes: Near dawn I had the alarming experience of seeing several huge eyes on stalks peer over the edge of the boat. The eyes appeared to be of great complexity, similar to those of a human. I estimate that their diameter was between .2 and .3 rods. The trolls seemed not to notice the eyes, so I restrained my outcries and said nothing. I have learned to control my normal survival impulses as a result of my experiences on the lake thus far.

Measured Data:

Cloud cover: 81/100ths

Wind Force: 30 flags

Average Temperature: 1 I.T.

Average Precipitation: 85 rings

Observed average speed of ship: 3 short knots

Weight of catch, overall: 230 RSB

[Overall TGS grade: 94]

Excerpt 4:

Commentary by Requat: One of the more peculiar and imprecise entries from Ubiquus's journal. Nevertheless certain points are raised of possible interest. Ubiquus refers in this entry to a series of depth-soundings that he had been making for some weeks previously, with peculiar results. Accuracy of the results obtained seems highly doubtful.

Date: Clayday, Movement Week, Earthseason, 26th year of the 7th Wane

Weather: Powerful storms. Warm winds. Very hot, even for this season of the year. Saw one whirlpool at close quarters tonight. Estimated diameter: over 600 Raibanth rods.

Sailing Route: North. Much tacking.

Fishing: Good. Many large creatures were caught, including giant crabs, several kinds of marine mammals, and some odd octopi with many extra tentacles.

Unusual Creatures Caught: Tonight the lookout sighted a gigantic lake whale. We followed the beast cautiously at my request for a short time, and I was able to make a few observations. The colossal monster was similar to a sperm whale from the deep ocean, but with a different form of head. As it breached, one could see many odd crustaceans and other life forms writhing on its vast green back. I am reluctant to offer an estimate of this creature's size. However, we pursued and harpooned a much smaller whale that joined the first after midnight, whose carcass measured 32 rods in length.

Unusual Items Netted: Several large pearls were found, to the excitement of the fishermen. I was not permitted a chance to examine these valuable items.

Notes: Although it was a busy night, I made

another series of soundings tonight, with so vast a roll of measuring cords that it took both of my great-troll guards to help me unroll it. One of the foolish trollkin slaves panicked and was crushed by the roll when the work crew loaded it on board, and the captain demanded a stiff fee from me. The expenses involved in this effort proved worthwhile, however. To my amazement, there were still several places where bottom was not touched. Unless some special event is occurring, this experiment indicates that the lake is deeper than it is wide at some points.

Measured Data:

Cloud cover: 71/100ths

Wind Force: 24 flags

Average Temperature: 10 I.T.

Average Precipitation: 79 rings

Observed average speed of ship: 3 short knots

Weight of catch, overall: 378 RSB

[Overall TGS grade: 90]

Excerpt 5:

Commentary by Requat: Entry made for the High Holy Day of Kyger Litor. Note unusual events.

Date: Godday, Disorder Week, Dark Season, 26th year of the 7th Wane

Weather: Heavy rains and strong wind. The severe thunderstorms and lightning experienced during the day interfered with my sleep, but by evening they had died down. However, vast, slow swells and surges of water were experienced tonight, bringing the ship up and down in a manner reminiscent of travel on the ocean. Both of my bodyguards and I became seasick. The rain at one point included finned eels, tiny blue flying fish, and various kinds of small hard-shelled mollusks, one of which stunned me slightly, even though I was wearing my armor as usual underneath my oilskins. Biggest shell measured was .23 rods long, weighted 1.28 RSB.

Sailing Route: As has occurred before, tonight we sailed straight off into the clouds to the east. The ship sailed in a consistent direction for a period of five hours without reaching the marshes near the opposite shore of the lake. I was quickly able to

estimate our speed over the water, which was enough to have brought us to the opposite shore in approximately 3.9 hours, based on standard maps. Yet the marshes were never sighted. Clearly there is powerful magic occurring on the lake.

Fishing: Good. Several kinds of smaller (one rod or less) fish, many of unusual beauty.

Unusual Creatures Caught: The tiny flying fish mentioned above were caught in hand-held nets by several of our crew. A closer examination showed that their wings were made of some mineral substance. Those trolls lucky enough to take any of the fish guarded their catches so jealously, growling and snarling, that I was intimidated from making further analysis. Nor could I purchase a specimen.

Unusual Items Netted: An odd box made of some form of paper was dredged up. It was covered with garish colored symbols, and on the side was an odd rune of a whirlpool, made of black and white stripes. Inside was a disordered jumble of strange ritual objects such as small, distorted images of human beings.

Notes: A day filled with interesting encounters and events. Godday of Disorder Week in Darkseason is the High Holy Day for the great troll cult of Kyger Litor, so much religious activity took place in Crabtown. However, in addition to the normal troll activities I expected to see this day, the fishermen performed a ceremony of their own. Perhaps it celebrated the beginning of Dark Season, which is odd, since by normal reckoning using the Theyalan system popular in Dragon Pass, Dark Season had begun six days earlier. The ceremony was identical to that performed on Clayday of Stasis Week last season, so I am in doubt as to the actual event being celebrated.

Measured Data:

Cloud cover: 74/100ths

Wind Force: 25 flags

Average Temperature: 8 I.T.

Average Precipitation: 87 rings

Observed average speed of ship: 3.9 short knots

Weight of catch, overall: 561 RSB

[Overall TGS grade: 87]

Excerpt 6:

Commentary by Requiat: This was one of the few entries that seemed to confound my theory of linkage between storms and monster sightings (see analysis following this section). I include it as a sample in order to demonstrate my commitment to the search for accuracy. One of our more speculative initiates used this entry and certain other data to come up with a ludicrous theory linking the level of magical activity on the lake to certain days and weeks during the season. This theory was quickly disproved, but certain points raised were intriguing. Further analysis of the pattern and frequency of magical events on the lake might prove rewarding, but would require a considerable amount of temple donations for proper efforts to be made.

Date: Godday, Harmony Week, Dark Season, 26th year of the 7th Wane

Weather: Again, relatively calm weather for the lake.

Sailing Route: North, circulated in area. The island was not in sight this evening, and I believe that the ship sailed over the area in which it would normally be found. The storms were not severe, and visibility was reasonably good. Darksee spell is certainly a boon. It is clear to me, based on experiences like tonight's, that the bounds of the lake are not always limited by the marsh.

Fishing: Average.

Unusual Creatures Caught: The placid weather seems to be stimulating the larger creatures of the lake to more surface activity. Final analysis of these entries will clarify the situation, I hope. We sighted several monsters such as sharks, crabs, and water wyrms. Worst was a huge, hungry plesiosaur (*Plesiosaurus*) that attacked our boat just after we had netted a large shoal of fine blue swordfish. The monster was the first live plesiosaur I have ever seen (New Jrusteli System category #8700). Only one fisherman was lost to the monster, though many sling bullets and much magic were expended in the battle. Estimated length of the plesiosaur was 12 rods, far greater than the usual number recorded in my book.

Unusual Items Netted: Nine hollow sea-metal spears, of some indeterminate ritual nature. Each spear tip was surmounted with an odd blue and

silver device of some sort, such as a net or a brush-head.

Measured Data:

Cloud cover: 75/100ths
Wind Force: 16 flags
Average Temperature: 8 I.T.
Average Precipitation: 74 rings
Observed average speed of ship: 1.7 short knots
Weight of catch, overall: 367 RSB

[Overall TGS grade: 88]

Excerpt 7:

Commentary by Requiat: A typical entry during one of the five weeks in the journal with no dangerous encounters recorded. Note the relatively peaceful evening experienced by the crew during a period without storms. The mysterious ritual may have some importance to the absence of storm activity.

Date: Windsday, Death Week, Dark Season, 26th year of the 7th Wane

Weather: Average. No storms. Very strong winds.

Sailing Route: Stayed near Crabtown. Trolls performed a long, complex ritual tonight that seemed to involve the sacrifice of one of their number. Once again, I was not permitted a close look at events. I did note what appeared to be a large pool of blood on the deck soon afterward, but this evidence washed away too quickly for me to take a sample.

Fishing: Average.

Unusual Creatures Caught: None.

Unusual Items Netted: Nothing but shards of some form of blue-green crystal that broke and shrank to nothing when exposed to sunlight at daybreak.

Measured Data:

Cloud cover: 73/100ths
Wind Force: 29 flags
Average Temperature: 6 I.T.
Average Precipitation: 81 rings
Observed average speed of ship: 4.4 short knots
Weight of catch, overall: 331 RSB

[Overall TGS grade: 94]

II. Narrative of Neasha of Rhigos

This narrative was one of the most informative works in our archives, and was an excellent supplement to the superb field work performed by Acolyte Ubiquus. I should immediately acknowledge that the said Neasha was a female rune lord of the proscribed and presumptuous cult of Orlanth, whose power the Emperor will soon crush. My inclusion of material linked to that barbarous god is not, I hope, offensive to your eyes. In the search for knowledge we searchers for truth must often suffer improprieties.

Neasha was apparently a citizen from the violent land of Esrolia. For reasons shrouded in obscurity, this foolhardy woman led a team of warriors from various cults to Skyfall Lake, where she spent several weeks on a so-called hunting (more accurately, fishing) expedition. Her purpose was the capture of an odd monster or being known as Thog-don, on the subject of which no suitably reliable information exists. The year was the 18th year of this Wane.

The expedition was a failure, but Neasha later agreed to give a description of her experiences to a member of the barbarian knowledge cult of Lhankor Mhy. I have included samples of material that I feel is of interest from her narrative, which consists primarily of descriptions of combat and spellcasting, much of a highly colored nature not appropriate to this survey. Although Neasha was not a trained observer or scholar, her statements have authority, and command relatively high Truth scores, considering the heretical nature of her religion.

Excerpt 1 (lines 40-45):

Commentary by Requiat: Neasha's team of warriors and fishermen often encountered underwater monsters that took the bait and broke the enchanted fishing lines without even deigning to attack the boat. Neasha describes the weather during one such day in the following passage:

...During this terrible day all our lines were broken, even the one plaited of manticore's fur, by forces that exceeded the strength of a normal

fish as much as a man's strength exceeds that of a ant. Often the creatures lurked like cursed cowards in the depths, battering our hull or surging mightily upwards in fruitless attempts to swamp our spell-laden craft.

The creaking ship was buffeted by powerful winds and savage waves, though we had stayed distant from the black and lightning-shot stormclouds that hovered over the lake's northern quarter like raging dragons. Even my spell of wind reduction seemed not to help, though perhaps my faith was not at its strongest at that time.

My pauldrons of finest and most carefully enchanted iron were twice dented by jagged shards of marble or some other pale stone that pelted from the sky from no apparent source, and several less-well armored warriors took severe injury from this unprecedented source. No one was killed, however, by the mercy of our lord Orlanth...[TGS 87].

Commentary by Requiat: Note the references to the position of the storm over the northern part of the lake. Also note the rain of stone shards. The fact that this experienced Wind Lord could not affect the storm over the lake is particularly intriguing and shows the ineffectual nature of the god Orlanth.

Excerpt 2 (lines 120-156):

Commentary by Requiat: The following is a selection from the end of one of the worst battles in Neasha's narrative. In this chapter she described a fight with a giant octopus or squid of colossal proportions. The team came off badly from the encounter. There are several more similar battles described, all depicting the same gory, sweaty work. I have not bothered including such material.

...Even to raise sail was an effort, but good Sir Varnous and his followers proved equal to the task, even though the knight's left hand and arm had taken awful damage from the squid's suckers and our faith was too sorely depleted for further healing efforts to be made. But our rest had made us ready for a final day's hunting. We wiped the stinking ink from our eyes and put back our battered helmets, ready for another trip into the depths of the stygian clouds. The sky continued to assault us with masses of earth and repulsive,

squirming worms, some large enough to wrap themselves around one's body several times. Curse the luck, this last hunt yielded us no prey, for which the craven sailors were most thankful, and we sailed south at sunset with heavy heart for those brave ones who had gone to their gods without trophy or prize to show for their struggle...[TGS 86].

Commentary by Requiāt: Observe the entry of the ship back into the storm clouds, and the presence of falling objects. Also note the direction sailed when the day's hunting was over: south. By this point in her expedition Neasha had come to the conclusion that the most worthy monsters were to be encountered wherever the weather was worst on the lake, usually to the north by her observations. As a rune lord of the barbarian Storm God, Neasha naturally felt no hesitation in sending her ship and followers into the heart of the raging thunderstorm. Neasha's expedition arrived at the lake during Sea Season, a period when most of the Dragon Pass region experiences mild weather and gentle rains. Clearly this does not extend to Skyfall Lake.

Excerpt 3 (lines 240-246):

Commentary by Requiāt: One day's struggle with a being of horror began with a description of interesting weather effects, of the kind that support my hypothesis.

...The foolish trolls were all about us this morning, bellowing in fear while priests performed hasty rituals. Even though the trolls are usually snoring at this hour of the day, the crisis was such as to galvanize even them into action. The black and gloomy stormclouds had moved over the town, shrouding the morning light, and the usual pestilent offal was pelting the trolls' crude shacks unmercifully. Several structures were flattened or buried by masses of coiling green eels, to the amusement of many of our warriors. Lightning flashed occasionally, to the great dislike of the masses of trollkin milling about the docks. Praise the lord of storms, cried I! We saw that today would be a great day, and set forth into the winds immediately with our hearts blustering to do battle with mighty Thog-don...[TGS 89].

Commentary by Requiāt: Once more Neasha's ship

entered the central part of the storm, which this time occurred in the northwest portion of the lake, moving away from Crabtown after a period of imprecisely defined but apparently brief duration. The hunters failed to meet with Thog-don, but ran into a being perhaps as fell. Observe the recurrent description of severe storms during days in which great monsters were encountered. Also note various debris described as falling from the sky. Both storms and falling debris are a sign that the passageway between the worlds has opened wide.

Excerpt 4 (lines 444-449):

Commentary by Requiāt: This is a typical entry describing an "unsuccessful" day, that is, one in which no truly extraordinary monsters were encountered. Descriptions of peaceful days become predominant in the latter part of Neasha's narrative, and the weather corresponds to the lack of interesting prey.

...I was sore disappointed with our hunting this day, although weather was reasonably calm for once. While the rain continued, there was no storm front visible, nor any thunder or lighting. The rains of stinging insects and other annoyances were also absent, but a warrior soon learns to ignore these things once the hunt is on...[TGS 90].

III. The Guidebook of Gnashk Oneleg

Although trolls, as accursed and benighted beings of darkness, are rarely respectable sources of information, the cult of Argan Argar is to a certain extent known for fair dealings and sensible behavior. Argan Argar seems particularly placid and trustworthy when compared with other troll religions. With this point in mind, I carefully analyzed one troll document that pertained to the subject of Skyfall Lake. This was the so-called Guidebook of Argan Argar priest Gnashk Oneleg.

This troll fisherman/priest lived in the Skyfall Lake area during a period of increased interest in the lake on the part of foreigners. He produced a short and rambling document which his temple later sold under the title "Oneleg's Guidebook to Skyfall Lake" to visiting merchants, fishing groups, transients, and other humans in the area. While the guidebook itself was not a great success, certain material is worthy of your perusal.

Please excuse the trollish nature of this material,

my lord, in the understanding that all of relevance to your request was examined. As usual, I have not edited or modified the material in the following excerpts. Note that the translation from Darktongue into Sartarite, done many years ago by trolls, was imperfect at best. Such inaccuracy is typical of heathen trolls and is not worthy of further discussion.

Excerpt 1 (lines 110-131):

Commentary by Requat: An excerpt from a discussion of the island that is often visible in the north part of the lake, in which Oneleg describes his first trip to that mysterious place. The island seems quite hazardous, and I include this passage as the best example of the material available on the subject:

...You bet, no sir, I never since went back to the island without a whole boat of big guys to back me up and float-skins off of bears or giants. Those storms up by the mountains [*note: the northern part of the lake*] are real nasty and you will surely do much better not to push your luck up there. Swamp is full of surprise tricks also. No swamp or island for safety is what we who are wise say to smaller ones.

But the big baskets with lobster locks worked out real good and I think everyone soon use that idea week next. Caught more frogs did we in one night than we caught the whole week before. Always you make sure frogs are not spuffy [*note: chaotic*] before eating.

Your choice is final arbitration as to far north part of lake: fishing is sure good, but two broken boats in two weeks is no good. In closing subject of island, we wish to say twice that often some guys go onto island, then island gone until flying fish start to jump high [*note: an unclear reference to a trollish method of time measurement*], after which island come back but friends are gone for good...[TGS 86].

Excerpt 2 (lines 353-378):

Commentary by Requat: In one section of his guidebook Oneleg derides a group of thrillseeking humans, some apparently sages, who go off to the lake after big game, with him as the guide. Note the choice to head north once he gains a dislike for his customers. The strange creature described as a "half-bird" of large

size may also be of interest to your lordship, considering the many references to such a being in legend and rumor (especially those of the barbarous southern land of Kethaela).

...But after they offer me the second pile of bolgs-I decided it was fine whatever these boys wanted, so long as they are not too good fighters. Maybe they mostly fall off my boat when out of sight of the Grog Shop, I think, so after taking a sniff or so at the wind and a little prayer or two, I head the boat straight out to the mountains, looking for trouble.

But this guy who has big ideas about catching stuff, he is a most unpleasant mosquito. When we catch that big half-bird, he makes up all sort of reasons why we trolls do not get to eat the fellow. After buddy Ozzgo pitches some of his cow boards into the lake he becomes less pestilent [*note: "cow boards" is apparently a translation of a troll word for leather-bound books*] and we have great feast, with much rakhsh to talk about for weeks thereafter [*note: "rakhsh" is a local troll word, untranslatable, having to do with the experiences involved in the ingestion of food. Both pleasure and certain other odd concepts are involved*]. Fast-talking guy is much pleased to get half-head from bird, which we offer since we feel so sorry for him after great meal. Too bad Ozzgo has taken out funny half-brain and heart first, but that is what humans call the hard luck for fellow...[TGS 93].

Summary of Research Findings

IN REGARDS to my overall appraisal of the data, samples of which you have read above, I can offer only a very basic, but carefully considered recommendation: your attention should be focused on the weather over the lake. When certain meteorological events occur, as defined below, a probability of 73 out of 100 exists that your expedition will encounter hazardous magical events and supremely dangerous creatures. When these events are in abeyance, the probability of such encounters drops to 29 out of 100. Using this system, expeditions onto the lake can be conducted

without a catastrophic level of risk.

The specific event your scouts must watch for is the appearance of black stormclouds over the northern part of the lake, leading to a Class Seven or higher (using Jar-Veeshna's Weather Codex) thunderstorm in that area. High winds, lightning, and waterspouts are usually present during these storms, as are rains of odd objects such as worms or flakes of metal. This should make identification relatively easy. My research has established a correlation of Rank 73.13 significance (Temple Schedule 98.N1) between such thunderstorms and the sighting of dangerous monsters such as *Megaserpentes maritimus* (sea serpents), or of more inexplicable entities, such as the apocryphal "Brown Shark."

Note that thunderstorms are frequent events on Skyfall Lake (occurrence in 43.41 out of 100 entries), but only those of great severity, and only those that occur in the northern part of the lake, are worthy of your special consideration. You may rest assured that a careful watch for this weather pattern will protect you and your men from excessive and undignified exertions during your expedition.

Theoretical Background to the Analysis

MY LORD, THE THEORY behind my recommendation is quite simple. The monstrous fauna that infest the zone of magic known as Skyfall Lake derive from a source that is hidden in the sky, far above the rainclouds and storms over the lake. Using advanced methods of numerological divination, I have determined this distance to be exactly 719 Solar glm. (Temple Measurement Schedule 98.LI3).

My theory is that the clouds function as a curtain or barrier between our world and some strange opening into the plane of the gods, an

opening that appears to be located over the northern part of the lake. Imprecision in the available material precludes a more specific localization.

When the clouds are thickest and storms are present, the opening to the god plane gapes wide, letting vast monsters and other more mysterious forces through to our world, thus creating conditions hazardous even to a warrior of the greatest stature.

If you will indulge a speculation, my lord, I believe that beyond this opening is some place sacred to the gods, a place that is too awesome for our unworthy mortal eyes to behold. Thus great clouds and storms are constantly present, hiding all knowledge from our sight. The waterspouts, rains of odd objects, aquatic monsters, and other marvels are only small manifestations of the importance of this magic place.

My research indicates that very powerful storms (Levels Seven through Ten of Jar-Veeshna's Weather Codex) form over the northern part of the great lake periodically. There seems to be no link between these storms and the ordinary weather of Dragon Pass. Nor does any other discernable local phenomena seem to be connected, even dragonewt sightings or brood outrages. This would tend to reinforce the theory that events in another world determine the pattern. Frequency is once per 17 days, on average.

As mentioned above, monster sightings or other dramatic events reliably occur on the same days that these great storms brew up in the north. Odd objects and entities follow the opening of the hole between the worlds in the same way that smoke follows fire.

I might add, for your peace of mind, that use of Yak-Teel's Solar Codex, the numerological technique pioneered by High Priest Yak-Teel Prime Requisite of our temple, fully confirms my theory of this linkage between the weather of the lake and the sighting of monsters.

Copyist: Minaryth Purple, freeze/fertility/fire/1622