

TORG

ETERNITY



**INFINIVERSE
EXCHANGE.**

TORG ETERNITY

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THE PROBLEM

The Living Land, more than most realms, appears to ignore its own axioms. This is especially true for its low social axiom, which bends to the needs of the narrative to let the invasion happen. It is also true for the very high spirit axiom, which has less of an impact on the realm than it really should. In this writeup, we will explore a possible change that brings the realm in line with its own axioms. Ideally, all this material should be usable with the normal sourcebooks for Torg Eternity. It should provide Game Masters with the tools to make the world feel different from the other realms for the players, and hopefully provide some additional fun.

SOCIAL AXIOM

The Living Land's social axiom is the lowest in the game, at seven. The High Lord, Baruk Kaah, is described as the "Saar of Saars," or "chief of chiefs." The sourcebooks describe tribal chiefs owing loyalty to their clan chiefs, who in turn swear loyalty to Kaah. However, while they use different titles, this is a description of feudalism, which should not be possible until a social axiom of 11. At the Living Land's social level, communities above the village level should not be well organized. Even the city-state does not exist until a social axiom of eight.

To put this into our historical levels, classical Greece was organized into city-states, which would then be just above the level of the Living Land. If we go back a bit further, to the dawn of civilization, we can look at the organization of the Sumerians, Akkadians, or Scythians. While we refer to each of these as though they were nations, they weren't. They were collections of cities or tribes, each of which had their own King (or other titles) and frequently warred among themselves. When not fighting, or sometimes while they were, they were also trading among themselves. This is a more appropriate form of organization for the Living Land.

Getting that disorganized band to be able to wage an invasion, as required for the game, will be dealt with below.

SPIRIT AXIOM

The spirit axiom of the Living Land is 24, the highest in the game. The brewing rebellion within the Living Land comes about because many optants are beginning to suspect that Baruk Kaah does not have Lanala's blessing. In a land where the Gods are real and physically manifest, and miracles are common, this does not work well. Edeinos can simply ask Lanala whether she approves of Baruk Kaah or not, and they can expect to get an answer. Even for those who don't speak with Her regularly, they can witness Kaah calling on miracles. Miracles are not the same as spells, where performing the rite grants an effect. They must be granted by a God, and the fact that they are indicates that the God has not withdrawn her favor.

Once again, we can look to our own experience for a justification. We have a technology axiom of 23, almost equal to the Living Land's spirit axiom. If we doubt that the Earth is round, we can satisfy that by looking at a picture. There are some people who still, despite everything, believe the Earth is flat, but they're at most a fringe group since the evidence otherwise is overwhelming. The same rule of thumb should apply to basic questions of religion within the Living Land. Fringe groups might question whether Kaah is truly following Lanala's will, but that can't rise to a mass movement because the evidence to the contrary is, or should be, overwhelming.

For these purposes, we must assume that Baruk Kaah is following Lanala's will. With the high spirit axiom of the Living Land, casting him out of the dominant religion removes too much power from him and kills off the invasion we need. Reconciling his actions with the presumed benevolence of the Goddess of Life is something we'll deal with throughout this book.

SOLUTION LIMITS

While attempting to bring the Living Land in line with its own axioms, the existing material in Torg Eternity must continue to work. Specifically, the invasion has taken place and has the same boundaries as in the existing source material. Baruk Kaah is the High Lord, and commanding recalcitrant tribes is an ongoing problem for him. He is facing a huge rebellion in the American mid-West from Thrakmoss and a significant fraction of the Whitespear clan.

All miracles and perks in the core rulebook and the Living Land sourcebook must also continue to work as described.



SPIRIT: THE NATURE OF KETA KALLES

Given the high spirit axiom of the Living Land, religion will permeate every aspect of a person's life in the realms. It is not something a character can ignore if he wants to get anywhere. However, we have very little detail on the nature of the Living Land's religion. This is understandable as part of a game, religion can step on people's toes and might also not feel fun for players. Given its importance to the realm, we need more detail. However, the lack of description in the core books gives us opportunity to use the religion to solve some of the problems noted above without directly contradicting, for the most part, published material.

At a spirit axiom of 20, a single faith becomes predominant in the cosm. We know that is Keta Kalles, and that Lanala is the Goddess of Life for that religion. We note, however, that while a single faith is predominant, there is no such requirement that it is a monotheistic faith. We also know that Rec Stalek is a God of Death who opposes Lanala, is largely missing from the Living Land, and is in the process of being revived by an opponent of Baruk Kaah. These facts form the limits we will work with in developing the religion.

EARLY DUALITY

From the beginning of time there has been Life and Death. Lanala and Rec Stalek were the twin powers of the dualistic Keta Kalles religion. She was the Goddess of Life, and he was her opposite, the God of Death. They were rivals, opponents, or lovers as the time demanded. Their fights were, or would be if they were known about now, the stuff of legend, as were their passionate reconciliations.

It took both together to create new life, to add new species to the bounty of Takta Ker. Vast changes to the ecosystem of the world happened during those happy times when the two were together, only to stagnate in the far longer times they spent apart. During one romantic period, the two created the

first intelligent creatures their world had ever known, the Ustanah.

The insectoid Ustanah knew and loved both of their Gods. They were held in Lanala's arms during their brief lives, and then went to Rec Stalek for the rest of eternity. Their worship pleased both Gods and kept the peace between them for an extended time. The Ustanah civilization grew strong during this time until it covered an entire continent.

Yet peace between the Gods cannot last forever. They grew jealous of each other. Lanala was bitter that Rec Stalek could keep their children with him so much longer than she could. He, in turn, resented that the Ustanah saw her as loving and him as cold. They split apart again and began fighting, leading to a prolonged period of suffering that nearly saw the entire Ustanah civilization destroyed. Ultimately an Ustanah hero, Tik'sek, brought the two deities back together, although that proved merely to delay his people's extinction.

With the two deities reunited, there was a new birth of species. They created their second intelligent creature, this time the lizard-like Edeinos. Their new children grew up on a large island off the coast of the Ustanah's continent. They intended for their new children to have a home of their own where they could grow up, but still meet their other children.

The two races met earlier than the Gods could have predicted. The Edeinos proved to be natural seafarers, with a great love for testing their mettle against the waves. They voyaged far and wide, and quickly met their cousins on the mainland. Life and Death were still united, though, and the meeting proved peaceful. In short order some Edeinos lived on the mainland with the elder Ustanah. Neither of them truly understood the other, but they could join in worship of their Gods.

THE WAR OF LIFE

In time, the Gods quarreled. They each had a favored race.

Rec Stalek loved the Ustanah, who took full advantage of the world's Law of Wonders to build impossible structures just for the joy of it. They built massive mortuaries to store their dead and please their God. They tried to teach their ways to the younger Edeinos, but the lizards never came to enjoy building permanent structures.

Lanala, in turn, loved her younger children. The Edeinos were brave and daring, always desiring to explore and see more of their world. They never abandoned the sea and were soon established on both major continents and most major islands. Their love of life was pleasing to their Goddess, and she rejoiced with them over each new triumph.

When the two Gods started fighting again, it was only natural that their favored children would turn against each other too. The Ustanah, being well established on the main continent, were able to defeat their younger and more savage cousins, albeit after some particularly vicious fights. Depending on the city, they would either kill or enslave the defeated Edeinos. With each defeat, and there were many, Lanala's rage grew greater.

The Ustanah had no love for the sea, and so the Edeinos on the islands and other lands remained free and unconquered. Lanala saw in them a chance for revenge on her now hated enemy, Rec Stalek. She appeared in visions or in person to the free Edeinos to send them on a great crusade against the Ustanah and against Death itself. Victory over him was not enough, she insisted on his utter defeat.

The Edeinos answered her with a great roar. She raised the winds and the waters to speed them across the seas. The Ustanah were completely unprepared for an attack by sea, and their cities fell to the new invaders. The Edeinos freed their captured brethren where possible and pressed on. They never took prisoners themselves. They killed the Ustanah instead.

The insectoids knew their legends and knew that the Gods' fight would end in time. When the lizards advanced on a new city, the leaders offered peace instead. They would end the war and honor their

cousins and their cousins' Goddess. They offered all that they could. Lanala would have none of it. Her rage still burned bright, and at her urging the city fell to her advancing army.

Each victory, far from slaking her anger, only made it mount higher. When the last Ustanah was killed and the race destroyed, she felt no satisfaction. She ordered her followers to go further. The Ustanah cities were razed, their mausoleums emptied, and their altars to Rec Stalek burned.

When her anger finally receded, she was alone.

LOSS AND MOURNING

Lanala was ashamed.

She'd driven her children with her blinding rage, and they'd killed both the Ustanah and Rec Stalek. She could not admit, even to herself, that she was the cause of it. If her children knew what she made them do, she feared they would turn against her, and they were all that she had left. The thought terrified the Goddess.

Now driven by fear, she declared all Ustanah relics forbidden. They must be destroyed on sight. Writing was taboo, lest they read anything the insects had written. Nothing Ustanah could remain.

The upshot of all this is that Lanala is a damaged Goddess. She is supposed to be half of a duality but is now on her own. Further, she is personally responsible for the death of her other half and has cut off her followers from even knowing about it. She is consumed by guilt and has no way to seek solace. The time of conflict has long passed, and she wants, desperately, to come together with her lover, Death, but there is simply nothing there.

The absence of Death is felt throughout the realm. Things still die, as that is part of the cycle of life, but they simply go away. There is no reverence for the fallen, their bodies just decay. No new species come into being, and the land is stagnant.

More than that, Lanala is not stable. She overreacts to her followers' prayers, with crushing devotion or

sudden anger. The world convulses in response, with volcanos and tsunamis become all too common. Were it not for Baruk Kaah, the world would have long since died, victim of a mad God.

THE RISE OF BARUK KAAH

The Darkness Device, Rek Pakken, came to this damaged world. Baruk Kaah found the Device, and his towering ambition led to it choosing to make him a High Lord. Normally, a social axiom as low as the Living Land's would prevent anything close to mobilization on the scale needed for an invasion. Kaah's ascension to High Lord should have been a failure, but it wasn't. He's been a long lasting and highly successful High Lord. None of the parties involved; Rec Pakken, Baruk Kaah, or Lanala, fully understand what is happening here.

There is a hole in the heart of Keta Kalles. The God of Death is missing and needed. Baruk Kaah's ambition and power has filled that hole in part. He can rise to become a God, and that potential fills him. A God's power is not limited by such things as time, or even certainty. The mere fact that he might, in the future, become a God gives him power now. He acts, in some ways, as the new God of Death already. That in turn makes his commands divine. As Lanala once called for a crusade against the Ustanah, he can call for a crusade against other worlds and expect the clans everywhere to answer.

It is important once again to stress that none of the parties involved understands all of this.

Baruk Kaah wants to be Torg, but that is only a stepping stone on the way to becoming Lanala's lover. He does not know that this will involve becoming a God at all. He would certainly not mind being a God but would not want to be a God of Death. That is the role he's filling, and many of his actions support it, but he truly believes he is following Lanala and honoring life. Everything he sees and feels from Lanala tells him that this is correct.

Rec Pakken does realize that Kaah could ascend to Godhood, and further recognizes that he would

become a death god. The Darkness Device thinks this is just fine. However, the Nameless One doesn't really understand spirituality. Death is not the same as destruction. Keta Kalles isn't nihilistic. Death is part of the cycle of life, bringing forth new life in turn. It is sometimes opposed to life, but other times it's a joyous part of it. (To be fair, Apeiros has the same blind spot in the opposite direction and would oppose a death god on general principals.) A successful ascension carries many risks for the Darkness Device.

Finally, Lanala recognizes in Kaah his potential ascension and the long-awaited return of a partner. She avidly desires this outcome and supports him in acquiring the power needed to do so. To her, this is the best of all outcomes; a new partner who has no part of the old one, and so does not require her to ever face her actions in that holocaust. But she is blinded by her love and desire; she doesn't look too closely at Kaah's actions. She barely pays any attention to the Darkness Device. If Kaah's ascension carries major risks for the Darkness Device, it also carries great risks for her depending on how it goes.

THE CHALLENGE OF REC STALEK

As dangerous as the situation was already, the attempted revival of Rec Stalek makes it even less stable. The Darkness Device might be behind this as a test for its High Lord, or it might have been random chance, or it might be the distant echo of Rec Stalek affecting the present (he's as unbound by time as Kaah, after all.) If this is the Darkness Device, it's playing with fire.

Thrakmoss discovered some evidence of the God of Death and began worshipping him. This is the original Rec Stalek, and he can obviously fill the missing piece in the pantheon even better than Baruk Kaah. The problem is twofold. First, Kaah has already started filling that missing piece. Second, he's been destroyed, and being brought back by someone who's missing a lot of information about him.

This is a Rec Stalek who is not in balance with Lanala. He was destroyed by her and brought back by a fanatic who is fighting against Lanala's Champion. He is, in short, the evil Death God that the Darkness Device wants. If he wins this contest and revives as the God of Death, the Living Land is likely to suffer. He will not reconcile with Lanala but will try to destroy her just as she destroyed him.

First, he must deal with Baruk Kaah. Rec Stalek is a god from the past, while Kaah is a god from the future, but they're both the same God fighting over the same role in the Living Land. They cannot both win, and the loser will be destroyed completely. Rec Stalek must fight through his champion, Thrakmoss, while Kaah fights through his champion, Baruk Kaah. That puts the High Lord in the stronger position, but he's far from invulnerable.


Baruk Kaah's claim to godhood comes from his strength as a conqueror. As that fails, so will his future ascendance diminish, and he will become less powerful. That can shift the battle to Rec Stalek. Lanala once turned the Edeinos against him, he now uses his power to turn them against Baruk Kaah. The rebellions that are causing him so much trouble among the tribes have their root in Rec Stalek's visions and commands.

Thrakmoss mounts the same pressure more directly. He seeks to rebel against Kaah and triumph. He wants a showdown, to weaken the High Lord and take his place.

THE POSSIBLE FUTURES

One way or the other, the future of the Living Land rests with the outcome of the campaign on Core Earth.

If Baruk Kaah fails in this conquest, his ascension to godhood will almost certainly fail. He might have recovered from a failure in the past, but not with Rec Stalek present to take advantage of it. The Darkness Device would try to move to Thrakmoss, but that would be futile. There is no potential for Thrakmoss to ascend; he is no future deity-in-waiting and



would not be able to command or mobilize the Edeinos on a large scale. The Edeinos would fall on each other as their two gods waged war, but the Land can no longer survive such an imbalanced pantheon, and they would all die shortly thereafter. Defeating Kaah outright will destroy the entire cosm.

With enough setbacks, Rec Stalek might win a victory while the Living Land is still invading. This will have many of the same effects. The Darkness Device will go to Thrakmoss but will recognize that as a failure. That can give it the opportunity to escape the doomed realm and find a new host elsewhere. The Edeinos war will break out in the realm, causing massive devastation to each other and everyone around them. It is very likely that the realm will fall apart since neither God has any real interest in the invasion. Supporting Rec Stalek against Baruk Kaah is a good way to break the invasion, provided you do not care at all about the consequences for Takta Ker. If Kaah still lives; and killing him will be high on Rec Stalek's list of things to do, he could conceivably reverse this, but would need help.

Kaah's path to divinity requires becoming Torg, but that might not be the only path forward. Discovering another way to ascend could be the basis of a long campaign. Either way, his ascension does not guarantee the outcome. This is a major risk for both sides in this battle, with Lanala probably playing the largest role in the outcome.

On the one hand, the Darkness Device might corrupt an ascended Kaah. Within the Living Land, Death will now serve the Nameless One. The massive spiritual power of the Living Land will have the ability to manipulate reality itself. This is a power on par with or greater than the Torg. His priests will be empowered to expand his realm through miracles, and they will become a force for death throughout the multiverse.

On the other hand, an ascended Kaah who is still linked to the Darkness Device might transcend it. The Nameless One and Apeiros do not understand

the spiritual realm, it is a blind spot for both. An ascended Kaah could be more powerful than his Darkness Device. He might bend it to his will and make it his tool in truth, rather than the Nameless One's. If he was also Torg, and linked to the Nameless One directly, the feedback could be damaging even to that cosmic entity. The God of Death would have power over reality, but use it in service to the Living Land, rather than himself. Even more, that power would be part of Lanala as well, for the two are a dualistic pair with neither greater than the other. This Kaah would most likely withdraw from the invasion, since it has served its purpose, and the Living Land would be safe throughout eternity. It would also cause real damage to all future invasions since the Darkness Devices would now know real fear.

SOCIAL: TRIBES AND CLANS

The religious war in the Living Land is the “big story,” but it is not part of the everyday life of someone living there. Players, especially at low clearances, will interact with tribe members rather than the major faction leaders. Even at the big picture level, being able to influence or direct the many tribes is an important part of the struggle between the Gods. It’s useful to think through what tribal, and clan, life is like for those who live it.

TRIBES

The tribe is the basic unit of organization within the Living Land. The realm is too harsh for an individual or even family group to survive on their own. Tribes vary greatly in size from a low of about 500 members to a high of about 10,000. Most tribes are on the smaller side of that range, from 2,000 to 5,000 individuals.

Living Land tribes are nomadic. They do not build fixed encampments. In general, they will camp in an area for two to eight weeks before packing up and moving on. Depending on the area, they will travel 50 to 150 kilometers before making a new camp. Most tribes can travel about ten kilometers a day, so this is usually a one or two-week journey.

Most camps are in defensible locations; on top of hills with a good view, or near a rock face to protect an avenue of approach. The smallest tribes might use concealed locations, like a cave. Camps will usually be near a source of water, but not too close, due to the many water-borne dangers of the Living Land. Structures are normally made of plants, often calling on Lanala to help shape them. Animal matter decays too quickly for them to use skins in their campgrounds. These dwellings vary greatly in shape and decoration, and usually can hold 20-50 edeinos.

Tribes always have lookouts posted, whether they’re in a camp or on the move. The nomadic tribes do not have defined territories, so tribes can end up in the same area. Rich though the Living

Land is, there's usually not enough game and plant life to support two tribes in the same grounds. If they find themselves too close, they might try to work out a solution, but they also might try raiding and driving the others away. Lookouts also watch for the numerous natural dangers in the realm too.

While tribes can and do raid each other, they also meet for trade when they are in the same area. They trade food and animals when one has extra, and they also trade people. In trade, they make a sharp distinction between thralls and tribe members. Thralls are those captured in previous battles who can be used for any labor needed. If traded, they expect the other tribe to keep them as thralls, but don't really care. Trading a tribe member is different, and they will also bargain for that tribe member's position in the new tribe, as a hunter, guard, or whatever. Young edeinos often want to strike out away from their elders, and this works well. It also helps keep the peace, since a warrior may want to attack and show off but will rarely want to kill or enslave those he grew up with. A traded tribe member will take great pride in the price his new tribe paid for him.

TRIBAL LEADERSHIP

A tribe is led by a single person, the saar. All but the smallest tribes have some additional leadership who aid their leader, though the details vary greatly.

Tribes can replace their saar, and again the details vary from tribe to tribe, but they tend to follow along similar lines. Most importantly, the challenger needs support. Usually the support comes from the tribe's optant, but it could also come from one or more of the other leaders, or some number of the tribe members. It is almost universal, though, that you can't just go up and challenge the saar for leadership. The actual challenge ritual varies from tests of combat or strength to tests of memorizing tribe legends.

In most cases, challenges are not fatal. A deposed saar normally occupies an honored position in the

tribe, sometimes taking on one of the other leadership positions. This helps prevent the challenges from becoming fatal or stops a victorious saar from retaliating against those who supported his challengers. In some cases, a saar might actively support a chosen challenger as a way of effectively going into retirement. They might have a low social axiom, but this does not prevent them from being complex people.

If a saar dies, the tribe will set up a round of challenges to select a new saar. This is usually done in an ad hoc fashion; few tribes have plans set up for this. This is the most common way for a tribe to split, as multiple challengers claim victory and take their followers with them.

While saars are basically universal in the Living Land, the supporting leadership in tribes varies greatly. At its most casual, a saar might have an advisor or a council, who are advisors and can give orders in the saar's name. Other tribes, especially the larger ones, have more formal areas of responsibility, such as a lead hunter, a chief guardian (in charge of camp setup and defenses), a lawgiver (in charge of settling disputes), a quartermaster, or a storyteller. These are examples, and any given tribe might have some combination of these or entirely new ones.

Optants and gotaks are nearly as universal as saars. Only the smallest and most unfortunate of tribes would be without them, and many tribes have several optants and/or gotaks. Some tribes formally incorporate them into the tribe leadership while others do not, but they always occupy an important position. An optant who receives a vision from Lanala will share it with the tribe, and the saar will usually follow it. Gotaks also receive visions, usually concerning the invasion, and the tribe will normally follow those too. That gotak visions come from Baruk Kaah or Rec Stalek is not generally known, even the gotaks believe the messages come from Lanala – and Lanala herself will claim the same thing when asked.

TRIBAL SPECIALIZATIONS

The Living Land's social axiom supports specialized trades, and the tribes have them. Not everyone with a recognized position or job in a tribe is a leader. Those who have these specialized jobs normally get additional food from the hunts and are relieved from some of the more menial tasks that are part of maintaining a camp.

Specialized hunters are unusual, because pretty much every member of the tribe needs to hunt, and the clear majority also enjoy it. There are handlers in charge of maintaining any captured animals a tribe may have. A mostly tame dinosaur requires plenty of food and movement, so this takes up a lot of time for the handler, but most tribes find it well worth the cost.

Setting up and defending a camp is quite a bit of work. Some tribes, especially the larger ones, have specialized guards. Many have diggers, who dig and maintain sanitation canals – effectively a primitive form of sewers. Edeinos can eat their meat raw, but they prefer it cooked, and specialized cooks have arisen in several tribes. Through a combination of talent and prayers, some tribes support builders, who make particularly large or beautiful lodgings when building a camp.

On tearing down a camp, many tribes support sowers. The nomadic tribes do not practice agriculture, but they do know that spreading seeds properly will result in more edible plants when they return to the same area. This specialized knowledge is used by some edeinos while a camp is being torn down and the tribe prepares to move.

Finally, many tribes have thralls. Fighting between tribes often result in captured members of the losing tribe. They are usually kept as thralls and used for unpleasant tasks around the camp. Thralls are never permitted to hunt, and they eat last, but they are usually allowed to join in the tribe's religious rituals.

TRIBAL EVENTS

Taking care of the necessities of food and security eats up a fair amount of time, but tribes still have plenty left over for other activities. Most of these revolve around religion.

Stories are a vital part of Keta Kalles and tribal life. All edeinos are expected to share a story with others every day. Most tell stories about themselves, things they have done and seen. This can come across, to outsiders, as bragging or self-centered, but that is not how they see it. It results, of course, in tribal members knowing a lot about each other, which helps keep them together. If the tribe has a storyteller, she can tell traditional stories of the tribe, or stories about Lanala. Optants and gotaks often do that too.

Performances, most commonly dance or song, are another form of worship. Tribes normally gather for this at dawn or dusk, though there are some who do this at noon or some other marker of time. Special performances might mark bigger events, such as consecrating a new camp, gaining a new saar, or winning a battle against another tribe.

Most tasks an edeinos performs can be interrupted by a spiritual experience, which is typically considered religious observance. Different tribes have differing levels of tolerance for this, but it happens quite frequently. This might be the discovery of sacred plants that induce visions when consumed or burned, or a message delivered as Lanala possesses a creature, or even the outright appearance of an avatar. These are not uncommon events in the Living Land, and most edeinos will experience something like this a few times over the course of their lives.

CLANS

Clans are much larger groupings than tribes but are also less firmly organized. They are groups of tribes that have a common enough culture to allow them to trade meaningfully. Trade between different cultures is not possible until a social axiom of 9, and

the clans constitute the common cultures of the Living Land. A clan generally consists of 100-1,000 tribes, and so is usually between one to five million edeinos.

The largest difference between clans is language. There is no single language in the Living Land, instead each clan has its own language. Tribes typically have their own accent as well, which in extreme cases can cause two tribes that are ostensibly in the same clan to consider each other outside of their clan. Tribes from different clans do not talk to each other or trade. Their interactions tend to be violent, though retreat is more common than wiping each other out.

Clans also have common markings, as with the Redjaws red dyed jaws. These markings help identify common clan members at a glance. They are not taken as gospel; sneaky tribes have faked other clan's markings to spring an ambush on their enemies. So even clan members from different tribes will approach each other warily. A meeting between tribes is never taken lightly, as violence always lurks very near the surface. However, the opportunity for trade, celebration, and general showing off is also there, so the meetings often proceed anyway.

Some tribes from rival clans have tried to open discussions, learning another clan's language and trying to gain the advantages of trade from some new tribe. It doesn't work. The social axiom doesn't allow it. The number of possible misunderstandings prevents it, and such negotiations always break down. This is something that is not possible in the Living Land.

There is an odd, and for Core Earth people trapped in the Living Land, useful exception to this. Jakatts are perfectly capable of trying to convert nonbelievers from another culture. That is, in its way, a form of cultural exchange. Of course, the exchange is largely one way as they will be teaching you their ways, but it is a form of peaceful interaction that the social axiom would otherwise bar. Similarly, converted people living in the realm can learn from that foreign culture as well as part of

their conversion. This is helpful for converted humans who need to learn a lot of survival skills. Once they've been taught, edeinos and humans will go their separate ways.

COORDINATION

The Invasion cannot happen at a tribe by tribe level. It needs massive coordination among tribes and even among clans. The social axiom disallows this, and yet it happens. It happens, as detailed earlier, because of Baruk Kaah's position as a possible God. The details of how this happens are still important within the game, whether for players to disrupt operations, or even try to subvert them.

Because of the very low social axiom, there is no direct coordination between tribes at all. The apparent coordination comes about because a lot of tribes respond to the religious visions they receive. For the most part, these visions come from their optants or gotaks, depending on whether it comes from Lanala or Baruk Kaah. Remember that Lanala is supporting Kaah because she wants him to become divine, so she will send the tribes out to support him. In some cases, other edeinos receive the appropriate vision or sign, and usually have their optant confirm it.

The tribes do not always follow these visions, but they do often enough. Visions are rarely precise, it's not like they get a vision to attack a specific point at a given time. Usually it is to go to a general area, or whether to kill, capture, or help the humans.

COORDINATION WITHIN CLANS

Tribes within the same clan speak the same language and will trade both goods and ideas. If either of them is pursuing a divine vision, that is almost certain to come up early in any discussions. They do not have any concept of operations security and do not attempt to keep this secret.

While the social axiom prevents deliberate coordination, the edeinos are by no means dumb or even unsophisticated. They can judge the difficulty of whatever task they're undertaking. If a tribe

knows it's going to be very hard and they still want to undertake it, they're happy to get other tribes to share in the vision. That can be a matter that they include in the trade. Trades might go the other way as well, with the second tribe wanting to join in and paying for the privilege.

The level of coordination, however, will remain low. Logistical planning, sharing warriors, or in-combat communications are out. However, going back to our Sumerian level social axiom, there are a lot of reasonably complex military maneuvers that are reasonable. Tribes can arrange flanking maneuvers or set a tribe up in ambush after the other tribe retreat. They can arrange for one tribe to launce a feint or a distraction on an unrelated target to allow the other tribe to make the main attack with less opposition. Exact timing is out, but anything that allows two (or more) forces to operate independently and react to visual cues is reasonable.

COORDINATION BETWEEN CLANS

Tribes from different clans do not share a language and won't trade with each other. Coordination in this case usually involves keeping them separate. That's on reason the Living Land's invasion is widely dispersed. It allows Kaah to send different clans to different areas and avoid too much overlap.

The most common 'coordination' for tribes between clans would be visions to attack the same target, probably a major city, and not kill other edeinos. Since clans choose how to interpret and follow visions on their own, this is far from an exact science. It is possible for it to work, but there will probably be some scuffles between tribes, and the military maneuvers that can occur between tribes from the same clan are not possible in this case.



CAMPAIGN

Aside from fitting the Living Land into its own axioms, this allows for some potential new adventures. Ideally, each High Lord can be beaten either militarily, or through figuring out their 'story' and taking advantage of it. The latter should involve a lot more adventures, role play, and puzzling things out for the players. But if they're particularly interested in a few realms, it can provide a highly rewarding experience. This method of defeating, or removing, a High Lord would spread through a whole campaign, taking multiple adventures.

Other gameplay opportunities also come up from this, in ways players can work with the various tribes or even clans.

BEFRIENDING OR TURNING TRIBES

The earliest step in the Kaah story is to be able to speak with more than one tribe. At this stage players shouldn't even know there's a bigger story involved. On unrelated adventures in the Living Land, they may have to try to trade with or interact with various tribes. This has its own levels of difficulty and would probably start with conflict and capturing the survivors, who would then be willing to speak. This could allow the players to learn how to mimic the appropriate clan and begin speaking with tribe members without fighting first.

Then they'd encounter a different clan and nothing they did before would work. This would teach them that there is a lot of violence between the various clans, and they have a tool they can use. But if they learn to deal with a second clan, they're probably on their way to learning more about the religious aspects of the Living Land.

An adventure based around trying to turn a tribe against Kaah or working with a tribe that already opposes him would give an opportunity to get more of this information across. Players should learn that Kaah is a follower of Lanala, the Goddess herself

says so. Gotaks were a dying institution before Kaah's rise, but now they are the main source of direction in Kaah's war. However, players can also learn that for those tribes in rebellion, the gotaks are the main source of the direction to rebel. In all cases they claim to be carrying out Lanala's will, and in all cases, they are legitimate divine visions.

If players find this information intriguing and want to move forward, that would be the time to go to the next step. This is not an adventure to force on players. Only proceed if they are interested.

LEARNING LANALA'S HISTORY

The next step in this journey would be learning what is really going on, and that will involve delving into Lanala's history. Of course, players will be doing this in the context of the Reality War, not just as something to satisfy their curiosity.

There are three main sources of information about the world's past. First, there are the 'dead worlds' supported by the Law of Wonders. These are remnants of Baruk Kaah's victories, and signs of his impending Godhood. Going through these, possibly to look for tools to use against the Living Land, characters can learn about Kaah's history, and especially that Lanala has become a greater supporter of his over time. Previous highly spiritual civilizations might even have known about Kaah's potential ascension.

Next, players can venture among the Whitespears and try to learn about the worship or history of Rec Stalek. This would be a very dangerous mission in the heart of a true enemy's territory. It's also a mission of considerable interest to the Core Earth nations, since it's the most obvious rebellion against Baruk Kaah. Learning the history, even the biased history the Whitespears tell, of Rec Stalek can also tell them about Lanala and the reason Rec Stalek is such a dedicated enemy of Baruk Kaah.

The last way to gain information about Lanala is to speak to Lanala herself. This would be a spiritual quest, which is entirely reasonable within the Living Land. It might involve travel to spiritual realms,

hallucinatory visions, or calling on a struggling with Lanala's avatars. This would be a very difficult mission since Lanala is adamant on not facing her own history, and she is considerably more powerful than the heroes (whatever their clearance level, she's stronger.) It's also the best possible source, though.


If players are pursuing this line, we recommend running at least two of these three possibilities, so players get two different views of the relevant history. Each adventure covers the history through the biased view of one of the three parties.

HEALING A GOD

Lanala can only be healed by restoring a death god to her pantheon. Doing so stands a very good chance of ending their invasion. It is possible players will try to restore Rec Stalek, to remove Kaah's claim to divinity. Doing so would remove Kaah's ability to command the invasion, and things would likely fall apart in short order, but there would not be an orderly withdrawal. For now, we assume players are trying to elevate Kaah to end the conflict; a risky move that is worthy of Storm Knights.

Before trying to elevate Kaah, players probably want some form of insurance that he won't just continue the invasion but now with more power. Meeting him isn't hard since he's such an active High Lord, but he's generally not in the mood to talk. Coming to an agreement with outsiders is also not a part of his social axiom – he's bound by the local reality too. The best assurances can come from Lanala, if players can ensure she will accept Kaah as her equal and bring him back home.

The simplest way to elevate Kaah is to help him become Torg. Again, we assume for now that this is out of the question, although in some campaigns it might be worth considering if an even worse High Lord is sufficiently close to that prize. See the Possible Futures sections for more details on what might happen in that case.



So, players need to find an alternate source of power or means for Kaah to ascend. Fortunately, one is just sitting there. Rec Stalek is back and is a source of divine power. A direct confrontation between the two, besides being dramatic, would decide the issue. Converting Thrakmoss to Kaah would probably do it too. Defeating Thrakmoss and forcing him to acknowledge Kaah might do it but killing him almost certainly wouldn't. Any of these is a major adventure on its own.

Never neglect the aftermath. Kaah's ascension will result in a lot of confusion in the Living Land. Even if the Gods want to end the invasion, pulling everyone out takes time and effort. There's also the issue of reality collapse if they leave, refilling the ords left behind is important. Rec Pakken won't be destroyed and will be seeking a new High Lord. Players' best is to try to attach it to someone in the Living Land, where it'll be nearly helpless.

Carrying this plan out will require multiple dedicated adventures, piecing together lots of clues, and taking some big chances. But it would be a satisfying end to one of the Invasions, putting a world back the way it should be and removing it as a threat to the multiverse.

GAMEPLAY

Most of the changes in this document revolve around how players interact with the tribes, or how a game master can design adventures in the Living Land. There are not a lot of new miracles or perks needed. A few do come up. The biggest involve the divisions between the clans – with lots of new languages – and the fact that Baruk Kaah is, unknown even to himself, granting miracles.

SKILL USES

Language. Each tribe has its own language, which would require many uses of this skill if you're trying to use it that way (many campaigns ignore this skill, in which case you can ignore this as well.) The clan languages are all related languages, so if you have a skill of two or more in any one clan language, you are considered to have a skill of one in all others. You can communicate with members of another clan but will be marked as an outsider.

PERKS

The new perks added reflect the spiritual struggle going on in the realm and reflect the fact that the spiritual life of the Living Land is intimately tied up in the success of the invasion.

FAITH

Cosm: Living Land

Faith permeates everything in the Living Land. Almost every adult edeinos has had at least one religious experience, and it frequently leaves them changes. Most welcome and seek out such changes. Very few, however, recognize the spiritual struggle at the very heart of their realm, as Lanala seeks a new God of Death to replace the one she slew, and two competitors vie for the title.

Faith perks may be marked with a prerequisite of Lanala, Baruk Kaah, or Rec Stalek. Perks from Baruk Kaah and Rec Stalek are not compatible, players may take one or the other. Perks from Lanala are

available to both. You can keep this information from players by making the appropriate perks incompatible.

CLANSPEAKER

Prereqs: Baruk Kaah and Farwalker or *Charisma* 10+

This rare perk enables the gifted recipient to speak and understand all tongues. All listeners hear their words as though they were spoken in their native language, and the character hears everything said to him in his own language. The character is treated as having a *Language* skill of three in all languages. Note that the character cannot turn this off. Everyone who hears her will understand her no matter what language she is speaking. The character does not gain the ability to read or write in any language unless she has the actual skill.

DESECRATOR

Prereqs: Rec Stalek and *Faith* 10+

This perk allows followers of the old Death God to directly engage in the struggle. Someone with this perk may use his *faith* skill to taunt an opponent of a different faith (the target must have at least one add in the *faith* skill.) For these purposes, a follower of Lanala is a different faith. If the taunt is successful, the target takes two shock damage in addition to any other effects of the taunt. Further, if the target attempts to call on a miracle while under the taunt's effects and fails, he takes an additional two shock damage beyond any normal consequences for failing the miracle.

FACE OF DEATH

Prereqs: Rec Stalek and *Spirit* 9+ and no adds in *Persuasion*

Bones stick out from this character's face or neck and the skull is clearly visible under tightly stretched skin. He is a horrible reminder of the death that pursues you. This character causes fear. Any character in melee with him must test for fear every round. This character can never put any adds in the *Persuasion* skill.

FAITH SUSTAINS ME

Prereqs: Baruk Kaah and *Faith* 8+

The character with this perk knows that faith is more important than life, and pain is even less important still. This character will not suffer wound penalties when making an all-out attack or calling for a miracle. Further, if this character successfully calls for a miracle, he heals two shock and may make an immediate healing check against any wounds (this is a separate roll from the one that called on the miracle and may not be used for a multi-action or anything other than rolling a healing test.)

TWICE BLESSED

Prereqs: Lanala and at least one add in *faith*

This character knows she's greatly blessed, and the miracle merely proves it. When she is the recipient of a *Bless* miracle, even if she is the caster, she may choose a second attribute to improve by the same amount as the first. Note that this only applies to the character with the perk; anyone else affected by the blessing only has one attribute increased.

INVASION

Lanala and Baruk Kaah support the invasion and their support has caused the Land itself to change to help. These perks tend to provide additional protection when dealing with their technologically superior targets or to help them attack reality rated enemies. Anyone from the Living Land can take these perks even if they are not involved in fighting the invasion, or even if they follow Rec Stalek or a Core Earth variant religion (for transformed people.)

COWARD'S DOOM

Prereqs: Tooth and Claw, *Faith* 10+, Beta Clearance

If this character does not have any ranged weapons, he gains +1BD when attacking any enemy who has attacked him with a ranged weapon since his last action. This extra bonus die stacks with any bonus dice gained from other sources. Thrown

weapons do not count as ranged weapons for this perk.

FOESLAYER

Prereqs: None

This character gains +1 to his effect total when fighting in melee with a reality rated opponent from a different reality. If he makes an all-out attack, that bonus increases to +2 and stacks with the +4 from the normal all-out attack. This applies to melee and unarmed attacks only.

IRON SKIN

Prereqs: Tooth and Claw, *Faith* 9+

If this character does not have any ranged weapons, he gains +5 toughness when he is hit by a ranged weapon. This is not armor, so armor penetration does not get through it. Thrown weapons do not count as ranged weapons for this perk.

TOOTH AND CLAW

Prereqs: At least one add in *Unarmed Combat*.

Whether a miraculous blessing or a twist in reality, this character is protected against ranged weapons. If the character does not have any ranged weapons (including firearms, energy weapons, etc.) any ranged attack against him suffers a -2 penalty as the missiles simply veer out of the way. This bonus does not apply to thrown weapons.

MIRACLES

Lanala, in this version of the Living Land, is actively supporting the invasion to help promote Baruk Kaah. Kaah's future godhood is also deeply invested in the invasion and provides miracles to help the faithful. Rec Stalek may not care much for the invasion, but he is outnumbered in the conflict of Gods. Each of them is quite willing to provide some additional power to their followers.

For these purposes, a Keta Kalles Optant is drawing power from Lanala, a Keta Kalles Gotak draws from Baruk Kaah, and a Rec Stalek Gotak draws from Rec Stalek. The standard Living Land

Jakatt miracles can be supplied by any of the gods, though Lanala is the most common.

CONFUSION

Axiom Level: 15

Skill: *Faith* 13

Casting Time: 1 action

DN: Target's *willpower*

Range: 15 meters

Duration: 3 rounds

Confusion causes enemies to forget their plans and lose their concentration in the middle of a combat. Characters effected by this miracle cannot concentrate on spells, miracles, or powers and cannot use the Aid Another action or play Supporter cards. To take any action in combat while under this miracle, they must first make a standard *Willpower* test. If they fail the test they may only take an active defense action.

Success Levels:

Good: Duration increases to 1 minute.

Outstanding: Willpower test increases to DN 12.

Note: For Keta Kalles Gotaks, there exists an axiom level 22 version of this that can affect whole armies or possibly cities. Not detailed here as this is better used for narrative purposes by GM characters than it is for Storm Knights.

DARKNESS

Axiom Level: 14

Skill: *Faith* 11

Casting Time: 1 action

DN: Very Hard (DN 14)

Range: 15-meter radius around the caster

Duration: 3 rounds

Darkness causes the light around the caster to fade to that of a moonless night. Combatants take a -4 penalty due to the lack of light. However, Jakatts only have a -2 penalty, as Lanala helps them see a bit better through the darkness. This miracle is not used against other Jakatts, it's intended for use during an invasion. The darkness cloud moves along with the caster.

Success Levels:

Good: Jakatts do not receive any darkness penalties.

Outstanding: Enemy penalties increase to pitch black (-6).

HEALING WARD

Axiom Level: 17

Skill: *Faith* 13

Casting Time: 1 minute

DN: Hard (DN 12)

Range: Touch

Duration: 1 day

The *Healing Ward* is a way for Jakatts to prepare for battle. Rather than react to injuries by asking for healing, they prepare in advance with a miracle that will heal the target when or if she gets injured. A caster may only call for this miracle once per day, and since touch is required, it can be multi-targeted to at most 2 people (3 if you include the caster herself.) When a target under this miracle takes a wound, the wound heals immediately.

Success Levels:

Good: Targets will heal 2 wounds.

Outstanding: Targets will heal 3 wounds.

KILL TECHNOLOGY

Axiom Level: 18

Skill: *Faith* 15

Casting Time: 1 action

DN: Target's *Dodge*

Range: 40 meters

Duration: Instantaneous

When the supplicant calls on the *Kill Technology* miracle, tendrils of the Deep Mist pour from his hands and spiral out to his target(s). They surround the target and attempt to destroy anything he carries that is higher than a technology axiom of 6. A success will result in the spirits destroying all advanced weapons the target carries.

Success Levels:

Good: The target suffers 2 shock points per destroyed weapon.

Outstanding: All high technology items on the character are destroyed (only take shock for weapons.)

Note: Baruk Kaah has been praying for a larger version of this miracle, presumably axiom level 22, that can affect cities or armies. As of this time, such a miracle has not been observed, but could be very deadly to Core Earth forces if he is ever successful.

POISON

Axiom Level: 13

Skill: *Faith* 10

Casting Time: 1 action

DN: Varies

Range: Touch

Duration: 1 minute

Poison allows the Jakatt to call forth any poison native to the Living Land. The difficulty of the miracle is equal to the price value of the poison. He can use this miracle to poison an opponent, but that cannot be multi-targeted, or to poison some weapons, which can. Poisoned weapons will deliver their poison when they hit an enemy, and cannot accidentally poison the user or a friend, even on a mishap. The duration applies if the poison is put on a weapon, and it fades away after the duration passes. Once an enemy is poisoned, the poison functions as normal, until it is resisted.

Success Levels:

Good: Skill rolls to resist the poison are at -2.

Outstanding: Skill rolls to resist the poison are at -4.

SOURCEBOOK CHANGES

This revision of the Living Land is designed to make as few changes as possible to the source rulebooks. The spiritual struggle that is at the heart of this version is not in the source books but doesn't contradict much about it. Clans, in the source material, are much more coherent than this version, but that was also the impetus for beginning this project.

CORE RULEBOOK

In the Core Rulebook, the section on Secrets of the Living Land is largely superseded by this revision. Lanala is not a reluctant or unknowing supporter of Baruk Kaah and the Invasion, instead she is a willing and indeed avid supporter, just not because of Kaah's devotion. She wants Kaah to ascend so that she will have a partner and she has chosen him due to the depth of his ambition and his past success.

Baruk Kaah cares far more about becoming Lanala's lover than he does the position of Torg, seeing the latter as the means to his end. He does not know he will ascend to Godhood to accomplish that but would not be put off by it – though learning he'd be a death god would give him some pause. He pursues the invasion to impress Lanala and is aware it has been working.

Kaah's potential divinity already has real effects on the realm, and he is the actual power source for most gotaks. He also delivers the visions that get the clans moving in the invasion beyond what the social axiom would normally allow. The lost civilizations that occur in the realm are also his doing, memorializing his conquests and preparing the land for his ascension. The current High Lord is unaware of any of this – it is the potential future god version of himself that takes these actions.

Rec Stalek is more important in this version than in the core rulebook. Instead of being a minor God who rises as a challenge to Lanala, he is the revived remnant of the Death God she once destroyed. Since he and Kaah are fighting for the same position, he is

a mortal threat to the High Lord, even though Kaah does not know this yet. Lanala greatly fears this revival as she does not want to face her guilt in destroying him originally.

LIVING LAND SOURCEBOOK

The history of the Edeinos section needs very little revision. The material in this book is supplemental, rather than changing it.

The material on the clans has them a little more united than they are in this revision. However, there are few actual changes needed. Allow more variation for each tribe in the clan, and don't have them under the clan's command, and things work well. The Goldsun and Redjaw clans should not be as opposed to or as supporting of Kaah as they are in the book, since each tribe acts on its own. All the bits about clan leaders can be ignored – any saar who wants to claim he's really the whole clan leader is welcome to do so; it's not like there's anyone keeping track. You can still use that material, just say that the Delphi Council believed that story.

The Whitespear clan, on the other hand, is largely opposed to Kaah. In that case, it's because of Rec Stalek's influence. Thrakmoss doesn't command the clan, but they do listen to divine visions. He holds a similar position to Baruk Kaah as the High Lord, though not nearly as well established. Rec Stalek holds a similar position to Baruk Kaah the future God. The fact that Kaah is supporting himself does make his position more secure.

THE GOD BOX

This adventure could be played as written, with changes to some character motivations. Remember as a game master that Kaah, Rec Pakken, Rec Stalek, and Lanala are all missing some pieces of the puzzle themselves. That helps explain why they take actions as they do.

POTENTIAL AXIOM CHANGE

At the time of this writing, Ulisses Spiel has announced that the Living Land will, at some point in year two, increase both their technology and social axiom. Kaah was trying to raise the social axiom. That part fits with this revision, as Kaah does not realize his own potential position in the pantheon and blames the low social axiom for the periodic rebellions in the ranks that are caused by Rec Stalek's interference. However, under this revision, that interference wouldn't go away, so it is possible that these versions will diverge further. An increased social axiom will strengthen the Darkness Device's position, as it will be possible to support someone else for High Lord.

An increased technology axiom will not change anything in here, except perhaps that the *Kill Technology* miracle will only destroy technology above whatever is now available in the Living Land.