

# THE YSGARTH RULE SYSTEM



**5: THE FANTASY WORLD**

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

This is a book intended primarily for the GM. While it could be of use in bringing a player to understand the world in which he plays, such knowledge is essential for the GM, who must design and monitor his world and scenarios. The fantasy campaign world is every bit as complex as the real world, and this requires work and knowledge, work from the GM and knowledge which is presented here.



We have already had a myriad of systems for operating characters in the fantasy world in every conceivable situation. In running a world such charts and tables are not enough. There are a few mathematical analogues and general principles which can be expressed in formulae or numerical relationships, but the vast majority of the work of creating the world will rest with the GM and his imagination.

Both designing and operating the fantasy world should be the work of a strong and active imagination, but even the most imaginative GM needs a solid basis of realism and theory to work from. Thus, this book is full of examples and principles taken from history and from the world of Ysgarth.

As Ysgarth is described here in great detail, it would be easy to run campaigns set in the world as it stands. This is a logical way

to save effort if you aren't up to doing a complete world on your own. Even so the GM will have to do a lot of work on specific situations and scenarios, and in fleshing out the world. Whatever course you choose this book should help with examples and specific information. What seems like a mere description of one world can be extended as principle and practiced in any world which has a similar basis.

## 2 GEOGRAPHY, FLORA AND FAUNA

If you are going to have a fantasy world it will probably need land, sea, weather, and other natural settings which are an essential backdrop and basis for life as we know it. There are several areas of world creation which should be outlined, and these can be well illustrated from the world of Ysgarth. Most of the material in this section refers to Map #1.

### 2.1 SHAPING THE WORLD

There is no need to go into plate tectonics, continental drift, and the hard technical background which goes into a world's birth. Just what your world looks like is up to you, and all you really need are some limits within which to fit it.

Most of our world is sea, though this need not be so in your world. Our land is made up of a number of mid-sized masses, usually grouped together, but surrounded by sea. The sea features trenches and ridges, islands, volcanoes, and currents. The land is just as variable, with rivers, lakes, volcanoes, fault lines, mountains, steppes, and the like. The easiest way to set up your world is to get a good atlas with detail and a variety of information. This can be used as resource material, and tracing parts of different regions and piecing them together in a different order can produce a realistic but unfamiliar map. The world of Ysgarth is not actually an entire world. The region called Ysgarth is actually the western section of a major continent which is separated from other parts of the world by natural barriers.

Examine Map #1. This shows the main area of Ysgarth. Ignore the letters, numbers and heavy lines of division for the moment, and examine the geo-physical details. Mountains are shown with contour lines of 1000 feet each, which makes the highest mountain some 6000ft high, an acceptable height for a region roughly equivalent to Europe. There are a variety of mountains, and several mountain ranges, generally running north-south as they do in North and South America. The coastline is varied, generally fairly rough, but not featuring the extreme glacial formation of parts of Northern Europe, though the mountains, steppes and the northern coast are the work of glaciation. There are a number of rivers, mostly short and originating in mountain regions. There are few islands, mostly simi-

ar in form to those of Scotland. Of particular and unusual note is the large black area on the map, which indicates the Great Abyss, which is a rift, similar to the Grand Canyon, but much larger, being some 800-1000 miles in length, and 25 to 75 miles wide. Canyons of this size do not exist on our earth, though they are common on Mars, where geophysics took more severe routes. In fact, the Abyss is so wide that when standing on the edge there are no areas in which the viewer would be able to see the far side, because of the curvature of the earth. A river runs down the middle of the Abyss, because it is unavoidable that many rivers would erode their way into this depressed area. The cliffs at the edge are 100 to 500ft in height, so most of the Abyss is above sea level. Before making such a geophysical anomaly you should consider its origin, reason for being, and the effects on ecology and related physical features.

There are a few things to remember as general principles about geography. First, rivers run downhill. They flow into large bodies of water which are at sea level or a lower level than themselves, and they have to have either a mountain collecting water or a natural spring or other water source at their start. Most rivers run south from their origin, many run east or west, and very few run north, the Nile being our world's major north-running river.

Think about what made your coastline. Glaciation will leave a rough, cliffy coastline, as is found in northern regions. Extreme glaciation will create such things as fjords, which are deep channels surrounded by mountains. The major fjords in the U.S. are mostly in Washington state, among them Puget Sound. The only fjord on the east coast is Soms Sound in Maine. Lesser glacial coasts are often shaped by wind, and coasts facing open sea are often much rougher and rockier than those facing channels and bays. Consider placement of natural harbors, which should be protected from sea-winds. Sand beaches are usually only found on relatively sheltered bodies of water, and in southern regions.

As for your oceans and lakes, lakes are mainly gathering points for rivers, though some are large basins scooped out by glaciers, like the Scottish Lochs. These are deeper than most other lakes. Oceans are big, but they can be of most any size. They are almost always connected, at least by a river, and then tend to wear down blocking land to join together with a wider channel. Tides and erosion should be kept in mind. Islands can be created by any of the same conditions which shape mountains, and are basically mountains surrounded by water. Glacial-formed islands are usually flatter with more varied terrain, most similar to the coastal areas near them, as they are merely cut off from the coast by glacier-dug channels.

Mountains can be formed in three major ways. The tallest mountains are made when two continental plates meet and push against each other. In these areas the earth's crust buckles, sending up mountains as high as several miles, in long ranges, such as the Himalayas. Most of your mountains should not be of this sort, and few should be over a mile or two. It is always tempting to make a mountain higher than Everest, but it is better to refrain, as gravity and other conditions on an earthlike world set a 6 or 7 mile limit, though on a world like Mars which is more violently active and of smaller gravity this limit might be doubled. It is also possible for volcanoes to form mountains, though these are usually more modest. Volcanoes come in groups and strings, and often coincide at least partially with areas of buckling crust. The final type of mountains are about the same height as volcanoes, but less cone-shaped and more dome-like. Both types run not much higher than 10,000ft. This last type is formed by glaciers, and unlike the others, the mountains are not pushed up, rather, the ground around them is scooped out by the pressure of the glacier. This usually happens in an area which was generally elevated, so it results in rounded mountains and sharp valleys.

As for what might be considered more common terrain, the hills, valleys, plains, and fields of the more densely populated regions, there are a few basic tenets. Rivers usually run in valleys, and these are usually the most fertile areas, as the currents carry silt and deposit it. Steppes should be considered, but they are not very fertile. Glacial regions feature a lot of rocky hills. Generally, look around and think about the terrain you know. It is the best way to get an idea of other possibilities. Some good atlases also feature photographs of different types of terrain.

The other important aspect of geology, especially in a game context is the presence and quantity of key minerals. For this you might want to consult a geology text, or an encyclopedia, as well as an atlas, which may have a resource map. There are certain minerals and other substances which were available and in great demand in the middle ages, and thus in the fantasy world. Chief among these are Iron, Copper, Salt, Tin, Clay, Lead, Peat, and Nickel. These are all about in different quantities and qualities. Iron is especially convenient, as it can be found easily in bogs. Peat can be found in moor-type areas and in bogs, and makes an excellent fuel. All of these, except nickel can be obtained with minimal mining. Nickel is harder to find, usually in meteors, and is only used by more technically advanced societies, in alloying steel. Other elements are also useful and easily available.

This is best illustrated with reference to Map #1. The lettered areas represent different mineral distribution regions. The exact minerals represented are:

- A: Iron, Titanium, Molybdenum, Copper, Lead, Gold, Zinc, Silver, Mica, Sulpher, Nitrates, Phosphates.  
 B: Iron, Mercury, Titanium, Copper, Lead, Nickel, Gold, Silver, Aluminum, Tungsten.  
 C: Nitrates, Phosphates, Sulpher, Mercury, Aluminum, Zinc, Salt.  
 D: Iron, Copper, Salt.  
 E: Tin, Copper, Clay.  
 F: Lead, Zinc, Salt, Iron.  
 G: Iron, Cobalt, Lead, Copper, Sulpher, Uranium.  
 H: Mercury, Sulpher, Salt, Asbestos, Talc, Lead, Borax, Tungsten, Iron.  
 I: Clay, Iron, Manganese, Lead, Zinc, Nickel, Copper, Aluminum.

Those minerals which are underlined are unusually large concentrations in those areas. The uses of these materials are many. Other important substances which are not mentioned include building-quality stone, peat, and some of the rarer elements. Exact quantities are variable, and this indicates the presence of that mineral in the area, not specific mines or veins. It just means that that mineral is present to be mined or gathered in that region in an amount large enough to justify the effort.

## 2.2 CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The weather and climate in a region can be quite important to lifestyle, culture, and every day events. We have divided climate in Ysgarth into 9 main divisions. These play a role in weather and agriculture. They are not the only climates possible, but they are the ones best suited to heavily populated, temperate regions. On Map #1 the land area is divided into sections which are numbered. These numbers indicate the climate type within that region, which includes ranges of temperature, rainfall, and associated elements. It also has effect on crops and vegetation, but this is explained in section 2.3. The nine climates are given below with their descriptions.

#	Description	Spring		Summer		Fall		Winter	
		Temp	Prec	Temp	Prec	Temp	Prec	Temp	Prec
1	Rainy, mild winter, always moist. Analog:London.	52	2	62	3	48	1	38	1
2	Rainy, severe winter, always moist. Analog:Moskow.	44	1	59	3	43	2	14	1
3	Rainy, dry summer, mild winter. Analog:Rome.	58	2	73	1	67	4	47	2
4	Rainy, mild winter, always moist. Analog:Belgrad.	52	2	71	2	57	2	32	2
5	Semi-arid steppe, cool and dry. Analog:Tselinograd.	35	1	69	2	38	1	01	1
6	Rainy, severe winter, always moist. Analog:Archangel.	33	1	60	3	33	3	08	1
7	Rainy, severe winter, always moist. Analog:New York.	46	3	66	5	52	3	32	3
8	Rainy, dry in winter. Analog:Chungking.	67	4	81	5	65	4	46	1
9	Semi-arid, warm, dry in summer. Analog:Tripoli.	61	1	78	0	69	2	54	3

These are general climate descriptions, but they can serve as a good guide for working out more detail. Temperatures are average for the season, in degrees fahrenheit. Variation is usually  $\pm 20\%$  as appropriate. Prec=Precipitation, in terms of average inches per month during that season. The analog should help give a concrete idea of the conditions.

For information on winds and weather consult the Aeromancer section in book three. Weather patterns change, but generally those seasons with higher levels of precipitation are more cloudy and wet. Generally there is more precipitation at higher altitudes, and lower temperatures. The greater the change in temperature between seasons the greater the winds, especially around the time of the season change. Coastal areas tend to be up to 5% warmer than inland areas, al-



though the variation is less in the summer, and may even be reversed to the same degree in a windy season. Wind Chill may lower the temperature in any season or circumstance.

### 2.3 CROPS AND VEGETATION

Once you have the bare bones of a world, you are ready to flesh it out with living things. It is always good to start at the most basic level, with plants and growing things, because more complex lifeforms rely on them for sustenance.

Climate has a great deal to do with what grows where and how well. For the purposes of world design vegetation can be divided into two types, natural and cultivated. Different natural flora grow in different climates, and cultivated crops are also better suited to some climates than others. These can both be keyed to the nine climate types given in section 2.2, which are illustrated on Map #1, though adaptable to any world.

Given below is a chart of these nine climate types and both the natural and cultivated vegetation. Included under the cultivated classification are the domesticated animals suited to that climate, as all food sources should be looked at together for a comprehensive visualization.

<u>Climate</u>	<u>Natural Vegetation</u>	<u>Cultivated Crops/Domestic Animals</u>
1	Broadleaf Forest, Deciduous Trees, Mountain Scrub	Oats, Wheat, Barley, Horticulture, Fodder Crops, Sheep, Dairy Cattle
2	Mixed Forest, Broadleaf and Conifer, Taiga, Mountain	Barley, Oats, Rye, Potatoes, Spring Wheat, Forage Crops, Dairy Cattle
3	Mediterranean Scrub, Citrus, Olive, Short Grass	Horticulture, Viticulture, Citrus, Wheat, Sheep, Goats
4	Broadleaf Forest, Mountain, Conifer, Spruce, Fir	Cattle Ranching, Wheat, Maize, Rice, Truck Farming
5	Steppe, Short Grass, Prairie, Long Grass, Taiga, Shrub	Cattle, Sheep, Fodder, Wheat, Maize, Millet
6	Boreal Forest, Taiga, Tundra, Moss, Lichen	Barley, Oats, Rye, Forage Crops
7	Broadleaf Forest, Deciduous, Conifer, Long Grass	Wheat, Millet, Maize, Soybean, Forage Crops, Cattle, Sheep
8	Dry Tropical, Scrub, Thorn, Semi-Deciduous, Selva	Cattle Ranching, Wheat, Maize, Rice, Truck Farming
9	Desert, Shrub, Grass, Cactus, Short Grass, Scrub, Citrus	Sheep, Goats, Millet, Wheat, Date Palms

Natural Vegetation is given in order of importance in the region. The first item given is the general description for the area. The following items are lesser presences in the area, or elements of the main group. Broadleaf forest features deciduous trees, such as maple, oak, and the like. Conifers include all the evergreens, such as spruce, fir, and larch. Boreal forest is the same as taiga, a conifer forest dominated by spruce and fir. Selva is tropical rain forest and jungle.

This gives the quality of growth in an area and its specific nature, but not the quantity or yield of given crops. Generally, in this period only 5 to 15 percent of the land in a region was under cultivation or in use for grazing. The average farm was 4-13 acres, with serfs holding 2-5 acres, and villages averaging 20-35 acres of common land. Freeholders and manor-lords would have much larger land holdings, around 90-120 acres. Each acre of land yielded 700-20000 pounds of grain, but usually averaging 1000-2000lbs under normal conditions and cultivation methods. This is assuming 275lbs of grain were planted per acre, which is the amount necessary for full yield. A single farm-worker can work and maintain 2-4 acres of land. Grain is equivalent, roughly, to feed for animals, so it can be used as the measure of agricultural production. Grazing animals generally require more land, but less tending, so they balance out in work and other aspects to the grain which would produce an equal amount of consumable food. The price of grain and other foodstuffs should vary, from .5 to 1.5 Silver Marks. Remember that weather can drastically reduce a harvest, and around 300 pounds of each acre's crop should be saved to plant for the next season.

With this talk of crops and food-yield it is important to consider food consumed, because this also lowers the saleable portion of a crop. In grain and meat each peasant consumes the equivalent of 400-450lbs of grain per year, which means that between eating and saving for planting, very little would be left in a year with a poor harvest. The middle class and nobility consume the equivalent of some 700-800lbs of grain per year.

Everyone has to eat, so crops and vegetation can be very, very important, and should be kept track of to some degree for your world, so that you can fill in background and political/economic situations realistically. Remember that yield is much lower with un-cultivated, foraging, and mountainous areas than in those areas best suited to grains and the like.

## 2.4 CREATURES OF THE NATURAL WORLD

Most worlds are not only populated by plants. They also feature a variety of creatures which feed on those plants and on each other. Animal life includes a broad range of creatures, among them man and the other intelligent races.

Many GMS overlook the potential and importance of natural creatures and prefer to think up a vast array of strangely constituted beings, with weird powers and natures. Yet, there is almost infinite variety in nature, and myriad forms of deadly creatures no farther than the nearest zoo. This unrealistic over-creativity leads to a series of one-shot creatures who can surprise players once, but only once, with little lasting value. Many natural creatures can be used time and again, fitting realistically in game context, without being out of place or limited in usefulness.

Every creature should have a place in the ecology of your world. When you decide to have a player meet up with a beast of some sort, think about what that creature is doing there, how he got there, how he keeps alive, whether he is a pack animal with pack-mates near, and other important elements of the animal's life. You should be aware of the entirety of the creature's existence beyond the limited context of a single encounter. You should know his needs and aims, and he should not always be a mindless and ferocious monster attacking all who come near. Animals have varied motivations, and they do not always react with hostility. They are just as likely to flee as to attack, and many only fight when cornered.

In outlining animal life in your world there are several types which are important and should be considered. First we should consider the food chain. There are grazing and other herbivorous animals, which feed on plants. There are omnivorous animals which feed on other animals or insects and on plants. Finally there are carnivores who live mainly on other animals. There are many sub-groups, such as carrion-eating animals, or grub-eating animals, but these are the three main divisions. Each of these groups has many examples in different areas and climates. Some common herbivores are cows, goats, sheep, giraffes, horses, moose, and all of the hooved and horned animals, plus most of the rodents, and many birds. Omnivores include apes, bears, some rodents, some birds, and human beings as well. Carnivores include all of the great predators, plus the carrion eaters, cats, wolves, dogs, many birds, most reptiles, and a few additional types. The exact species in each group can vary from place to place. On the chart below the major wild animals are given for each of the 9 climate areas given on Map #1.

Climate	Animals
1	Deer, bear, squirrel, fox, bobcat, thrush, titmouse, woodpecker.
2	More or less as 1, plus hare, mole, shrew, wolf.
3	More or less as 1.
4	More or less as 2.
5	Antelope, deer, hawk, wolf, squirrel.
6	Moose, deer, bear, hare, lynx, bobcat, squirrel, mole, shrew, grouse, hawk, wolf, chipmunk.
7	More or less as 1.
8	More or less as 1.
9	Snake, rodents, lizard, deer, antelope, hyena, lion.

This is by no means a definitive list, and there are great variations by general region and for specific terrain. In addition, animals are mobile, and may spread around. For example, all types of burrowing, pack, and herd animals can be found in grasslands, as can carnivorous birds, while small, tree-climbing cats, and climbing rodents prefer woodlands, as do deer. Some specific breeds take to specific regions, like the mountain lion, and others range all over, like the wolf. The species given above are just a typical cross-section representative of the general animal types for the regions.

A little research should give more detailed information on animal types for different environments. In addition, descriptions and statistics for a number of common animals for these regions is given in Book VI of these rules, "The Last Song of Hergest", in the appendix.

It is always better to use a natural creature in a common encounter, because it lets more unusual beings retain an aura of mystery and power so that they are appreciated more. Unusual powers are always more frightening when they are unexpected and truly unknown.

## 2.5 UNUSUAL CREATURES

In addition to the natural creatures found in any earthlike world there is the possibility of strange and unnatural creatures in a fantasy world. These can generally be divided into three groups, Mythological, Magical, and Extra-Planal. Each of these has its own nature, and none of them should be used without discrimination. They should be the dreaded horrors and terminal dangers of

your world, feared, and avoided.

Mythological creatures are of two types, those which actually have their origin in mythology or similar sources, or those which partake of a nature which fits with the general principles which govern the design of mythological creatures. Some common mythological creatures are the Gryffin, Dragon, Giant, Gargoyle, Sea-Monster, Kraken, Troll, Hydra, Harpy, and many others. Generally these creatures are variations or combinations of natural creatures, for example the Harpy, Centaur, and Satyr are part human and part animal. Many of these have magical powers, but they are not magical of themselves, existing only because of the power of some supernatural agency. They are often of human or near human intelligence, and some, like Dragons or Centaurs may be more intelligent than humans. Because of their basically natural nature, they should have a place in the food-chain, and ecology. They should fill a role just like any other creature, though they may share it with another creature. They are rare, but less so than creatures of the next two types.

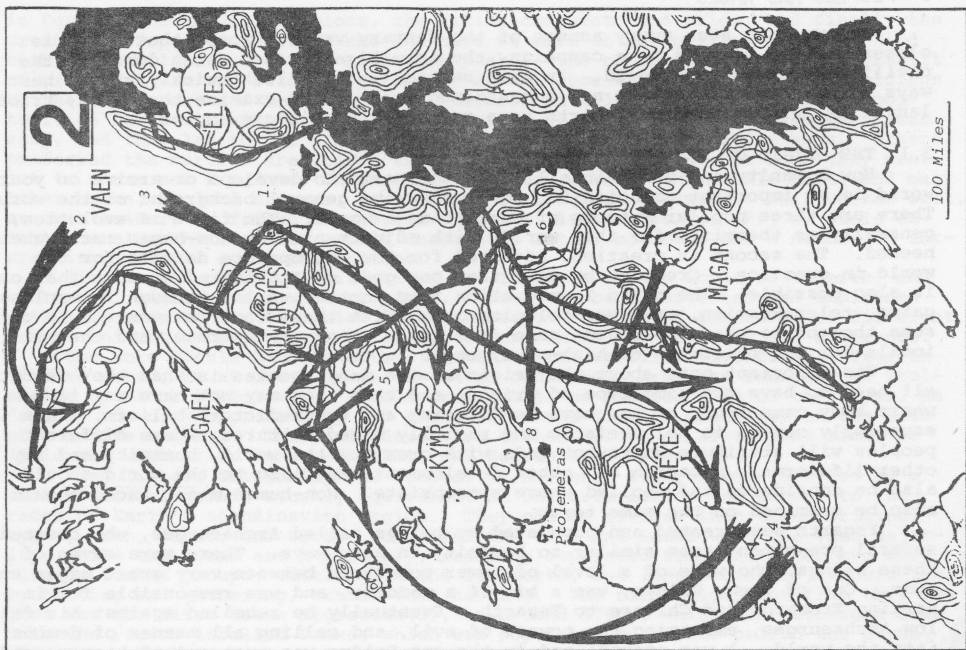
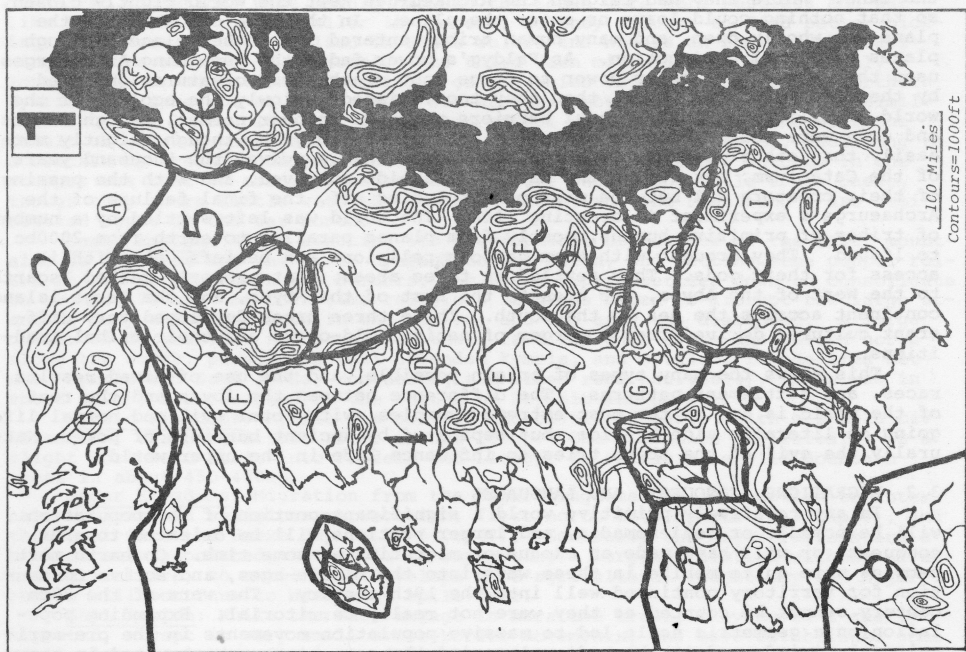
Magical creatures are those which are created or sustained by magical power from some source, either internal, or external. The best known form of magical creature is the undead. Undead can be of many natures, and include all spirits which are animated after death by magic or sheer will. The form of an undead is variable to an extreme degree. They can be purely spectral, corporeal, or even partake of an elemental nature. Some traditional undead are Zombies, Vampires, Vetalas, Ghosts, Wraiths, and many others. Many undead return for a specific purpose or goal, and they often have magical powers accrued from their hate, or carried on and magnified from their lifetime. In many cases evil magical power can feed on itself and keep an evil mage alive after death on the charge of hate and magic which has built up in him. This is the reputed cause of the Vampire or the Liche. Other creatures in this group include Golems and such animated or created beings, and elemental spirits of several sorts, especially Genius Loci spirits, whose power is focused on a thing or place, such as Dryads, or Nymphs. This group does not include the great interplanal elementals, such as Djinns, Efreets, Marids, and Sheitans, who are not bound to any region, but does include those of equal or near equal power who are bound to such things as great rivers, or mountains. Generally every force of nature has an element appropriate to it, one for each major manifestation. For example, each river has an elemental, as does each forest, plain, mountain, or moor.

Extra-Planal creatures are those who are summoned, or who are not native to the plane. This group includes all demons, Djinn-level elementals, and many lesser creatures. In this case caution is recommended. Such beings should be of great power, but few and far between. They should always be well thought out, with a logical origin, summoner, or means of entering the world. Extreme caution is needed when working with this sort of being, because if too many creatures whose natures do not fit in the natural order of the world enter it the natural order is weakened, and often torn down, bringing about a chaotic and disordered campaign. This is especially true of lesser beings who aren't as noticeable as the greater ones already mentioned. The more creatures you bring in with special one-use powers, or designed for unusual tasks, or suited to alien conditions, the less order will remain in your world. It is easy to overlook the dangers of such creatures and let them take over or undermine your hard work. They should be rarely used, by specific summoners, for specific purposes, and return whence they came after their use is served. They should also be kept hard to obtain so that their presence has more of an element of surprise. To determine if a creature fits in this classification, think about where it would fit in your world and how it would live. If it would die out, or have already wiped out most other life, or become a dominant race, it is probably not suitable. If you can think of an environment where it would be realistic, then it fits in this group. If there is no conceivable environment or conditions for its existence, through it out.

These are just some guidelines on dealing with these different types of creatures. For specific examples illustrating these different types at a number of power levels, and with very diverse natures, see the appendix of Book VI, where a good selection are given.







### 3 PEOPLES AND RACES

Now we have seen every aspect of the fantasy world, except that which is closest to the players in a campaign, the intelligent races which dominate the civilised areas of the world. In this section we will look quickly at the best ways to handle civilisation and human demographics, and examine the races, tribes, languages, and culture of Ysgarth as a source of specific examples.

#### 3.1 THE ORIGIN OF THE SPECIES

How humanity and other intelligent races came to develop or arrive on your world is an important question for developing the general background of the world. There are three popular methods of populating a world. The first is evolution, generally as theorized for this world, with adjustments for non-human races when needed. The second is creation, adjusted for the appropriate deities for the world in question. Creation by more than one god, or attributed to more than one is also possible. The third is migration from another world, through interplanal gates, teleportation, or space colonization. With these theories you should give some thought to where your gods came from and what generated them, and the rationale for the existence of high-power magic in the world.

One important note about the origin of the many species is that they do not all need to have the same type of origin, and that they may not have any idea where they came from, or may have conflicting and contradictory beliefs. This is especially common in polytheistic and racially mixed cultures, where different peoples will attribute different gods with creating the world, humanity and any other lifeforms. Mutation and other developments specific to the world should also be considered and applied where appropriate. Non-human major races should also be examined on the same terms.

Ysgarth was created and populated by beings called Archaeurges, who created several pre-human races similar to humanity in many ways. There were seven of these beings, who were of a level of power somewhere between very great mages and gods. One of them, Faldyg, was a bit of a meddler, and was responsible for importing Trozards and Chitare to Ysgarth. Eventually he rebelled against his fellow Archaeurges, embracing the powers of evil, and calling all manner of demons into the world. A war ensued, and in the end Faldyg was cast out of heaven, and struck the center of the great continent of Ysgarth, causing a natural disaster which split the earth open, creating the Great Abyss. This was the start of the Time of Cataclysm. Faldyg's great power was released in the land, causing many severe consequences, among them the death of most higher forms of life, the end of the power of the Archaeurges, and the introduction of many strange powers into the land. While they had reigned the Archaeurges kept the world tightly closed, so that nothing could leave or enter the plane. In the Time of Cataclysm the plane was wholly open, and many human tribes entered from other planes through places of planal conjunction. As Faldyg's power faded the remaining Archaeurges used the remnants of their power to force most of the evil creatures summoned by their foe into the Abyss, then they too vanished. Slowly the ecology of the world stabilized, and the planal barriers returned to near normal, though demons and gods were able to access the plane to a limited degree, though slightly more easily than other planes. Trozards and Chitare had survived the thousand years of the Cataclysm, but few of the native humanoids survived, and with the passing of their creators all but the most powerful died off, the final failure of the Archaeurge's experiment in creating life. The world was left settled by a number of tribes of primitive humans, mostly from planes parallel to earth from 2000bc to 1000ad. They brought with them various religions and beliefs, and with it access for their gods. They settled in three areas, that properly called Ysgarth, to the West of the Abyss, the area to the East of the Abyss, and the large island continent across the sea to the south. These three areas developed very different cultures derived from a merger of native hold-overs and their tribal traditions.

This shows the many types of origin possible, and the use of mixed results, races, and settlement patterns. The difference between the Abyss and the rest of the world is one of the most extreme examples, with total evil and normal life going on literally side-by-side, but separated by ancient barriers of power. Naturally the evil of the Abyss tries to influence life in the upper world.

#### 3.2 MIGRATIONS, CONQUEST, AND LANGUAGES

In any relatively primitive world a significant portion of the population will be nomadic or semi-nomadic, and larger portions will be oriented towards conquest, or will have made an exodus or migration at some time. On earth most peoples were quite mobile in these ways into the middle-ages, and active contention for territory continued well into the 19th century. The wars of the 20th century cannot be counted as they were not really territorial. Expanding population on a geometric scale led to massive population movements in the pre-agricultural period, and in the medieval period the same pressures resulted in conquest and colonisation. Examples of this tendency are the barbarian conquests

in Europe, the Mongol invasions, the Viking conquests and raids, and finally the Crusades. Population growth and the need to move to new grazing areas or find cultivatable land led to the migration phase. The conquest phase was the result of primogeniture and related systems of inheritance which left all land-holdings to the first son, and left the other children with little to do and few opportunities for power. Many entered the church, as ecclesiastical advancement was easy, and this led to the great growth of the church in the middle ages. Others preferred the martial tradition, and since they couldn't rule at home they went out to carve new kingdoms, in England, Normandy, Italy, the Middle East, and many other areas, by land and sea, as raiders, or conquering armies. This worked well, as even raiders or failed conquerors either killed themselves off, or stole enough to raise their status. This leads to a lot of movement and a number of interesting tensions and opportunities.

Similar and parallel situations are in force in the world of Ysgarth, and historical migrations also took place. These can be illustrated and explained with reference to Map #2, which shows the rough regions of dominance of different tribes and the general patterns of migration, which are numbered for reference.

One note should be made before examining the specific migrations. Ysgarth time is noted, or at least as far as we're concerned, from the founding of Ptolemeias by Micorus Ptolemy, a trader from Achaja on the far side of the Abyss. He founded the city approximately 600 years after the Time of Cataclysm on the site of a native village. Thus, all dates are either before or after that time, as indicated with After Ptolemeias (AP), and Before Ptolemeias (BP).

Vaen Tribes: Originally the steppes of northern Ysgarth were settled by a race of tribal nomads roughly equivalent in characteristics and nature to the races of Earth's scandinavian region. They can be divided into three original types, Vaen, Saexe, and Ugrae. Of these the Vaen and Saexe were the vast majority, while the Ugrae are a minority, racially separated from the other two more closely linked groups, settling in the far north, and less migratory, subsisting by hunting and gathering, rather than herding. The first migration from this region was the first Saexe migration(1), in around 170bp, which went straight down into the region labelled Saexe, which was populated by a race called the Etrua, who were conquered with ease and assimilated as the Saexe Empire grew. The result was a race related to the Vaen, but worshipping Aesir rather than Vanir gods, and adopting many gods from beyond the Abyss, because of their proximity to the southern sea. The general division between the original Saexe tribes and Vaen tribes is in the Aesir/Vanir religious division. The second Saexe migration was in 120ap to the north, settling in the northern Gael area and the Gael islands(2). These two migrations were mainly because the Saexe were more restless and warlike than the Vaen, and smaller in numbers, so they thought to find better pickings elsewhere. This resulted in Saexe rulers and nobles in some of the Gael kingdoms (see section on nations). The third Vaen migration(3) was actually a long series of migrations of smallish groups which settled in parts of Northern Kymria, and came not as conquerors, but as immigrants, and were mostly assimilated into the lower classes. These were actual Vaen, not Saexe, and were the result of growing population. They took place from 460ap or so on, declining to a trickle by around 600ap, but never really ending. The final outcome in the steppes was that of about 30 tribes some 22 are pure Vaen, while 3 are Saexe, though they share little with the southern Saexe, and the remaining 4 are semi-settled Ugrae in the far north.

Saexe Empire: After reaching its geographical boundaries of the Magar mountains to the east and the River Cynfael to the north, and setting some puppet rulers in buffer states on its borders, the Saexe Empire settled down to consolidate in around 290ap. At this time religious factions began to disrupt the large standing army which remained in the empire, and the army was disbanded. A large number of disgruntled soldiers took their families onto ships and sailed north along the coast, passing up well-defended Kymria, and settling in the area between Kymric and Gael lands, conquering the mixed race natives(4). This was in about 380ap, and resulted in the states of Prydein and Lloegyr.

Kymric Kingdoms: Kymria was settled and civilised early, with a stable civilisation, changing little after around 100bp. The migration indicated(5) is a slight northward shift into Prydein and Lloegyr to settle some wild mountain areas in about 450-480ap.

Magar Kingdoms: Migration from the Magar kingdoms was in reaction to internal problems and religious persecution, first north into Kymria in 322ap(6), and then west into the Saexe Empire in 640ap(7). Generally the Magar regions are a bit sparsely populated, incapable of supporting a large population without advanced agriculture, so until they develop some agricultural technology the Magar region will continue to have some spill-over.

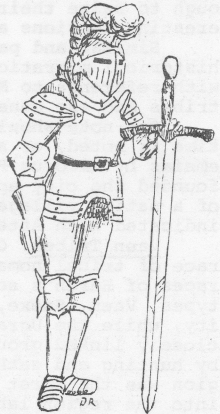
Gael Region: While the Gael engage in maritime trade, they haven't really migrated, except in very small cross-border movements, and have established some small, low-population fishing and farming kingdoms. They are best described in the section on specific nations.

Ptolemeias; The settlement of Ptolemeias(8) could be looked on as a migration of sorts. After its establishment by Micorus Ptolemy it was favored by a steady increase in trade over a 700 year period, and a continuing growth in population, from a village of less than 1000 before the arrival of Ptolemy's trading mission to over 300,000 at around 700ap. Settlers came from the other side of the Abyss by a sea voyage of more than a month, and from all the neighboring regions looking for opportunities for economic advancement.

Non-Human Races: Non-humans are spread throughout human settled areas, but in small minorities. Dwarves and Elves have their own nations, and Trozards can be found mixed in with humans. Chitare live apart in isolated colonies, and are the rarest of the five races. Migrations are hard to chart, as these races came to Ysgarth near the end of the Time of Cataclysm, or even earlier in the case of Trozards and Chitare.

As for languages, they are generally linked closely to race or tribe. Gael is the dominant tongue in the Gael region, Kymraeg in the Kymri region, and Magar in the Magar region. In Saexe a polyglot tongue related to Magar and Vaen, and with traces of ancient Etrua is spoken, and called Saexe. On the steppes Vaen, Old Saexe, and Etrua are spoken. In border areas and areas of invasion and infiltration mixed tongues and multiple tongues are spoken. Ptolemeias is a special case, and features all races and all tongues. In addition the merchants have developed a Trade Speech, which is limited to a vocabulary of some 5,000 words, plus a large number of technical terms, totally artificial, but widely known for trade purposes. It is perhaps one of the single greatest civilising forces in Ysgarth, because of the facility which it lends to any economic or cultural exchange.

These patterns should be some aid to GMs desiring to design and pattern races, and work well as a guide to the distribution and status of peoples and cultures.



### 3.3 NATIONS AND SOCIAL ORDER

As people develop more complex patterns of trade and responsibility and the other elements which we attach to civilisations they tend to settle down in a particular region which they prefer for location or agricultural capacity and to form nations and states. The earliest and simplest are tribal states or clans based on family and ancestral ties, with most members of equal status, and sharing farming and grazing land in common. The second stage, a step up from this, is the feudal state, where a complex pattern of allegiances create a pyramidal hierarchy of responsibility and debt, with each farmer pledged to the lord of his region, those lords pledged to more powerful overlords, and those overlords owing allegiance to a king. There are many stages of feudalism, ranging from the very basic land-based feudalism where holding land is a sign of responsibility to the state and the land, and all land is considered the property of the king, to the contractual feudalism of the later middle ages, where the allegiance of the individual to the state is important as an abstract. This later stage is important, because it permits, and even encourages the growth of trade and cities because of increased regional autonomy. In such a situation a town-guild or combine had the function of accepting feudal obligation in place of a lord. Feudalism works in many forms, and is particularly effective and rigid in conquered areas where local populations have been reduced to serf status, the ideal situation for land-based feudalism. Feudalism is a pyramidal society, though it is not really in a perfect pyramid form. In land-feudalism the base is very broad and it narrows to a centralized leadership, like a spire. In contractual feudalism the base is broad, but the slope is very gradual, and the point is not far above the base, so that the leader may be only a few steps above the lower classes, freemen are more likely than serfs, and the king may be little more than the first-baron among peers. Of course mixed systems are possible, including elements of tribal government, theocracy, oligarchy, and democracy. Neighboring nations do not necessarily advance in this process at the same rate, and a range of state-types can easily exist in the same world.

In the world of Ysgarth a good selection of states exists for comparison of the different levels of development and possible variations. For this comparison we will refer to Map #3, which shows the general positions of the major states of Ysgarth. Each of these is described briefly here, with notes on the type of government and social structure, culture, racial and linguistic breakdown, religion, and notable facts and local color.

Ynisrael, Thanet, and Imaly: These island states are part of the general Gael alliance. They are considered independant counties, each ruled by a Count and a number of lesser lords. The under-lords are Gael clan chieftains, and there are a total of 8 island clans. The Counts and their relations are Saexe

stock conquerors (See Map #2, invasion 2). The racial breakdown on the islands is 92% Vaen, with 3% Elves, 2% mixed humans, and 3% Saexe rulers. Religion is primarily Gael, with some Aesir worship, say 80% and 20%.

Banchor, Ardmacha, and Llynan: These are the highland Gael kingdoms. They are land-based feudal, but with clans and chieftains in place of regional lords, and a king who is the equivalent of a war-chief for all the clans, representing a hereditarily dominant clan. The population is 85% Gael, with 3% Dwarf and Elf, and the rest Saexe who have settled in clans. Saexe rule in Banchor and Ardmacha. Religion is by race and in roughly the same proportions, Aesir for the Saexe and Gael for the Gael.

Hy, Gaeldoch, and Argathylia: These are the lowland Gael regions. They are land-based feudal kingdoms. They have some clan structured areas and a number of normal manor lord situations. Gaeldoch has a Saexe ruling family, conquerors from the islands. Argathylia has a somewhat larger population of Vaen and Kymri peoples. Racial breakdown is generally Gael:85%, Saexe:4%, Vaen:8%, Kymri:2%, others:1%. Religion is generally by race. Hy is an island, and almost pure Gael in population.

Lloegyr and Prydein: These are situated as a buffer between the Kymri and Gael, and are open to Vaen invasion. As a result they are racially and culturally mixed. To make matters worse, Lloegyr was conquered by Saexe invaders, as mentioned in 3.2. In Lloegyr the ruling class is Saexe, the middle class is Gael, and the serfs are mostly Vaen. Prydein is less stratified, with mostly Kymri rulers, and Saexe, Gael, and Vaen lower classes. The racial breakdown for Lloegyr is Saexe:15%, Gael:30%, Vaen:50%, Kymri:3%, others:2%. Prydein is Vaen:45%, Kymri:35%, Gael:10%, Saexe:10%. Religion is by race, but as these are the southern, imperial Saexe, and heretics to boot, Baldr is ranked double the normal percentage, and Mithras ranks triple his normal portion of the population.

Seregond: Seregond is the kingdom of the Island Elves or Gwagedd. They speak their own tongue, and tend to worship those Gael or Kymri gods indicated as popular with Elves, preferring sea-gods. The division is about even. Their government is a loose land-feudalism.

Ard-Galen, Andor, Nangaur: These are the three kingdoms of the Mountain Elves or Gwyllion. They are rigid land-feudalism, but racially un-mixed, though some Dwarves are in the serf class. There is a high rate of atheism. Otherwise they worship 80% Vanir gods, 20% Kymri gods.

Ellyllon: These woodland Elves are not organized into nations, but exist in tribes in many nations, inhabiting the wilder woodlands. They are simple, non-hierarchical clan-structured societies. They worship an even mix of Vanir, Kymri, and Gael gods.

Khuzdaral: This is the kingdom of the Dwarves, and is organized on a high level of mercantile-based contractual-feudalism, with larger cities, and a great deal of trade. There are no slaves or serfs, but a large number of Vaen are imported as paid labor. The population is about 20% Vaen. They worship mostly Vanir gods.

Vaen: As noted in section 3.2, the Vaen are organized by tribe, and exist on a very loose tribal basis. The only thing approaching a general government is the Vaen-Thing, a meeting of all tribes in the spring to settle inter-tribe disputes and trade. At this meeting a war-chief is elected from among the tribes in case of conflict during the coming year. They are racially mixed as noted in 3.2, and worship by race.

Morganwc, Seisyllwch, Ceredigiawn, Ystrad-Tywi, Marchwc: These are the five Kymri kingdoms. The king of Morganwc is looked on as High-King, and nominal feudal overlord of the area. This is a contractual feudal region, so his power over the others is limited, and the society is not too stratified, with a fair number of towns, and some social mobility. Race is mostly Kymri, with some few others (4% overall) mixed in. Religion is almost all Kymri.

Marsk, Suesiones, Frejsa: These are buffer states between the Kymri area and the Saexe Empire, mostly under the control of the Saexe, and made up of primarily Kymri and Etrua population, except Frejsa, which has a bit more autonomy, and is mostly Saexe, a splinter of the original migration. All are highly stratified land-feudalism, ruled by puppets, except Frejsa, which has a weak monarchy. Religion is very mixed and variable by region, featuring Saexe, Magar, and Kymri elements.

Saexe: The Saexe Empire has a population 70% Etrua, and 30% Saexe, with the Saexe a dominant military elite, with near-universal conscription. This is a variant on land-feudalism, with land-holding based on citizenship, and citizenship dependant on military service. Saexe are given preference in the military and hold most of the land, but it is possible for others to rise in the strata. Regional rulers are hereditary, then larger areas are ruled by imperial appointment, and the Emperor is hereditary with a token vote of confidence from the appointed ruler governors of his predecessor. Language is mixed, and religion is wildly varied, with many foreign elements on an Aesir base, as explained in Book #4.



Magar-Orszag, Toth-Orszag, Erdely-Orszag; These are the highland Magar, and are organized on a highly stratified land-feudalism. They tend to be xenophobic, and worship as indicated in Book #4. The serfs are really kept in line, and the nobility is very militaristic.

Mamarash, Horvath: These are the lowland Magar. They are a bit less rigid than the last group. They are land-feudally organized, but tend towards a more contractual set-up, with more upward mobility. They are trade-oriented, and religion is more or less as given above.

Information for Ptolemeias and other towns is given in a later section on that subject. Some general information of a demographic nature will also be of use in this section.

Population density varies from region to region. Population density is important, because it determines such things as agricultural production, taxes, and military conscription. Density generally ranges from 5 to 80 persons per square mile, averaging around 15. The breakdown is as follows: Vaen-5; Nangaur, Andor, Ard-Galen-11; Ynisrael, Thanet, Imaly, Banchor-12; Ard-macha, Llynan-14; Hy, Gaeldoch, Argathylia-16; Khuzdaral, Lloegyrr, Prydein-18; Seregond-13; Morgancw, Ceredigiawn-30; Seisyllwch, Ystrad Tywil, Marchwc, Suessiones, Marsk-22; Frejsa, Saexe-24; Toth-Orszag, Magar-Orszag, Erdely-Orszag-15; Mamarash-20; Horvath-33. This will also vary within a region, depending on available resources and other elements. Note that agriculture is covered in section 2.3.

### 3.4 RELIGION

There is not much to say about religion here. There's a whole book on it. Look through Book #4, and think about applying the statistics and population information given to populations rather than individuals. By following the general principles and patterns outlined in this book the religious breakdown in an area should be easy to determine.

### 3.5 BUSINESS AND TRADE

Business and trade between tribes, nations, and regions can be handled in any of several ways. Naturally, most of it will take place in cities, and some cities are born for this purpose. In addition, there may be specific places where tribes or merchants meet at set times for festivals and trading, there should be regular trade routes used by certain merchants at regular intervals. In tribal areas much trade would be done by barter and exchange, of goods for other goods of set or negotiable values. In more developed regions currency is established to facilitate trade. The main centers of currency use are usually cities, and they are usually the places where the currency is issued. Such currency is usually of coin in precious metals, with a variable value dependant of the value of the metals. It is either issued by merchant combines or by established governments. Standard coinage of Ysgarth is given in Book #1. Local coinage may exist in different values, denominations, or divisions.

All sorts of goods are traded, and generally, wherever there is a need or desire for something there will be a merchant eager to fill that need at his own profit.

### 3.6 THE CITY AND THE TOWN

In a medieval/feudal world there should be a village of less than 500 population every 5 miles or less. Every 10 to 20 miles there should be a town of up to 1000 population. Cities are rarer, coming every 30 or 40 miles, and having populations of as much as 10,000 people. The population density of a village is 30 persons/acre. In a town it is 50 persons/acre. In a full city it is 80/acre. There should be one large city for every major geographical region (all of Ysgarth as mapped). Generally a city will have a population of 1-5% of the population of the region it serves and which surrounds it. Thus the large city for an entire continent would have 1-5% of the population of that continent. However, the percentage is adjusted for the size of the city as suited to the region. Large cities run 5%, normal cities 3%, towns 2%, and villages 1%, with a good bit of variation. To find the number and size of towns you need to know the population of an area. To find population you need to know the size of the area.

The land area of a given region has to be measured and approximated to the best of your ability. We will use Morganwc as our example. Morganwc has an area of roughly 11,500 square miles. Its population density is set as 30, so it has a total population of around 345,000 persons. This means that Haddlech, the capital and main city of Morganwc would have a population of around 10,350. The number of towns in an area for different sizes can be determined as follows. Pop./200,000=# of Cities, Pop./10000=#of Towns, Pop./4000=#of Villages. These are only rough estimations. Morganwc would have 1 full-size city, and 575 towns, plus 2300 villages. With a total urban population estimated at around 80,000, a high level of urban population. Settlements tend towards the lower range of their possible population.

Now that we have seen the numerical aspects of cities and towns it is important to look at the quality and nature of life in urban areas. The best way to do this is to look at a specific example, and the best example from Ysgarth is Ptolemeias. Ptolemeias has everything, and you can see a rough map of it in Map #4. It is a large city, with a population in excess of 300,000 souls, and the center of trade for the continent. Other towns and cities of note can be viewed from its model, but on a smaller scale. The smaller a town, the more of the independant institutions and services that will be combined, and the fewer unnecessary luxuries there will be. Smaller towns will have a general town guild rather than the 100 some guilds of Ptolemeias, or the larger ones will have a few key crafts represented. The same ideas apply to institutions of religion and government.

Ptolemeias was founded in the year lap by Micorus Ptolemy, a trader who followed ancient maps to sail the 1800 miles or so from Achaja. He and a combine of merchants set the city up as a trading center with this newly discovered land, and it soon drew local population and more merchants from Achaja and other far lands. The area established and walled in by Ptolemy is that labelled as the Old City on the map. Accross the river, on the sight of the pre-ptolemeiac village, traders from the nearby land settled on a hill, to trade with the foreign merchants accross the Cynfael. This area was walled in to protect it from Saexe wanderings, and became the High City. Next to form was the Lower City, which grew up from around 200ap to 530ap, when it was finally walled in. It was settled mainly by local Kymri who were drawn to the growing city as a place to put their central churches and set up industrial production. Thus, the Lower City became a major manufacturing area. The Upper City started to grow as early as 270ap, but was not walled in until 640ap, when the residents of this largely residential area decided they did not want to associate with the rif-raf of the growing suburbs. The Saexe Mark, Vaen Mark, Seagate, and Norgate are the four major suburbs, settled mainly by laborers and transients. Each of these eight districts of the city, and the 9th, Bankside, or the region within the walls and on the river-edge, has its own character, and there are even divisions and neighborhoods within the districts. The Lower City is the most populus and the most varied. It is divided unofficially into a number of nighborhoods, where certain trades and professions have settled and established business and residence. For example, the street of the gods and the area around it is populated by the clergy, the western area is held mainly by metal-working guilds, the southern area by textile and leatherworkers, and the area near the necropolis by mages. The same is true to a lesser extent in the Upper City. The oldest and most respected guilds have their center and halls in the Old City or the High City. A listing of points of note in the city follows. After that is some more detail on common life in Ptolemeias. The listing here refers to the numbers on the map, which indicate buildings. Generally members of a guild live near the location given here for their guild hall. Only the most popular temples and important public buildings are given.

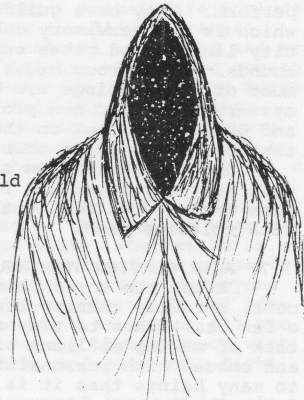
- |                              |                         |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1: Old Necropolis (Disused)  | 30: Execution Square    |
| 2: New Necropolis (Open)     | 31: Mercers Guild       |
| 3: Palace of the Guild Lord  | 32: Tailors Guild       |
| 4: Colliseum                 | 33: Brewers Guild       |
| 5: Public Lists              | 34: Grocers Guild       |
| 6: Castle of Lord Kaerisar   | 35: Goldsmiths Guild    |
| 7: City Guard Headquarters   | 36: Leathersmiths Guild |
| 8: Castle of Lord Alharazan  | 37: Founderers Guild    |
| 9: Castle of Lord Rachan     | 38: Ironmongers Guild   |
| 10: Theodome/Thearch's Court | 39: Weavers Guild       |
| 11: Temple of Gilrod         | 40: Pewterers Guild     |
| 12: Temple of Baldr          | 41: Coopers Guild       |
| 13: Temple of Gwyn           | 42: Blacksmiths Guild   |
| 14: Temple of Sutekh         | 43: Shearmens Guild     |
| 15: Temple of Thor           | 44: Bakers Guild        |
| 16: Temple of Aranrhyd       | 45: Mariners Guild      |
| 17: Temple of Hor            | 46: Carmens Guild       |
| 18: Temple of Dylan          | 47: Porters Guild       |
| 19: Temple of Odin           | 48: Pepperers Guild     |
| 20: Temple of Nudd           | 49: Drapers Guild       |
| 21: Temple of Manannan       | 50: Fishmongers Guild   |
| 22: Temple of Ra             | 51: Haberdashers Guild  |
| 23: Temple of Arawn          | 52: Salters Guild       |
| 24: Temple of Coel           | 53: Vintners Guild      |
| 25: Temple of Freyr          | 54: Clothworkers Guild  |
| 26: Temple of Brigit         | 55: Victuellers Guild   |
| 27: Guild Court              | 56: Butchers Guild      |
| 28: Bankside Shipyards       | 57: Cobblers Guild      |
| 29: Northbridge Shipyards    | 58: Pavers Guild        |



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|-----------------------|
| 59: Curriers Guild    |
| 60: Tanners Guild     |
| 61: Pelters Guild     |
| 62: Armorers Guild    |
| 63: Bladesmiths Guild |
| 64: Braziers Guild    |
| 65: Spurriers Guild   |
| 66: Bowyers Guild     |
| 67: Fruitiers Guild   |
| 68: Gardners Guild    |
| 69: Fullers Guild     |



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|-------------------------|--|
| 70: Cutlers Guild       | 101: Bricklayers Guild                         |
| 71: Hatters Guild       | 102: Brickmakers Guild                         |
| 72: Saddlers Guild      | 103: Embroiderers Guild                        |
| 73: Cordwainers Guild   | 104: Glass Blowers Guild                       |
| 74: Girdlers Guild      | 105: Jewelers Guild                            |
| 75: Hostellers Guild    | 106: Shipwrights Guild                         |
| 76: Notaries Guild      | 107: Tarrriers Guild                           |
| 77: Stationers Guild    | 108: Miners Guild                              |
| 78: Glass Cutters Guild | 109: Stone Cutters Guild                       |
| 79: Felters Guild       | 110: Potters Guild                             |
| 80: Painters Guild      | 111: Pitch Chandlers Guild                     |
| 81: Carpenters Guild    | 112: Farriers Guild                            |
| 82: Barbers Guild       | 113: Wax Chandlers Guild                       |
| 83: Wiresellers Guild   | 114: Conjurors Guild                           |
| 84: Accountants Guild   | 115: Hydromancers Guild                        |
| 85: Scrivners Guild     | 116: Geomancers Guild                          |
| 86: Book Binders Guild  | 117: Aeromancers Guild                         |
| 87: Physicians Guild    | 118: Pyromancers Guild                         |
| 88: Chirurgeons Guild   | 119: Necromancers Guild                        |
| 89: Divines Guild       | 120: Sorcerers Guild                           |
| 90: Dowsers Guild       | 121: Wizards Guild                             |
| 91: Soothsayers Guild   | 122: Mystics Guild                             |
| 92: Astrologers Guild   | 123: Soldiers Guild                            |
| 93: Alchemists Guild    | 124: Archimages College                        |
| 94: Artificers Guild    | 125: Bardic School of Llywarch Hen             |
| 95: Enchanters Guild    | 126: Martial Training School of Herulf Ingling |
| 96: Apothecaries Guild  | 127: Martial School of Balan Uriag             |
| 97: Herbalists Guild    | 128: Martial School of Kolo Alisendar          |
| 98: Joiners Guild       | 129: School of the Mystic Arts                 |
| 99: Cartwrights Guild   | 130: Scrivners and Accountants School          |
| 100: Hiltyers Guild     |  |



This is a near complete listing of the guilds of Ptolemeias, plus some other institutions of note. To clarify the functions of some of these institutions might be of help.

Guilds generally exist so that merchants and tradesmen can regulate and protect themselves. There are a total of some 65,000 full-members of Master status in the guilds in Ptolemeias. Membership in a guild goes through three phases, Apprenticeship, a period of training, Journeymanhood, a period of practice under the direction of a master, and Mastery, when one is a full member in good standing, working on ones own. The time of each phase will vary with the ease with which the person learns and advances his skill. Masters may run their own shops and hire Journeymen or take on Apprentices. Shops vary in size, with 1-15 masters (average:3.6), 0-7 Journeymen (average 2.6), and 0-11 Apprentices (average:8.1). The larger shops are more like factories than anything else, and Masters will join together, even accross trades in profitable joint endeavors. The guild has elected officers, with a Guildmaster at the top, Aldermen to advise him, and Wardens to enforce regulations. The guild keeps all work by its members up to standards, and keeps non-members from working in the city. Laborers need not be in a guild. The Guild Lord is the hereditary head of the Guild Merchant, a guild of import/export merchants which includes representatives of the largest craft guilds as well. He is the equivalent of a mayor or prince. The largest guilds are: Mercers (2700), Tailors (2100), Brewers (1230), Grocers (985), Goldsmiths (850), and Leathersmiths (740). They and 6 other major guilds are allowed on the Guild Merchant, along with some 40 merchant princes, like those who live in the castles at #s 6, 8, & 9.

The Theodone is where the seven Thearchs, High-Priests of the seven top temples in the city, sit in judgement to regulate the religious life of the city. They have judicial and limited legislative powers, and are served by a jointly-contributed guard force.

While Execution Square is noted, it should be mentioned that there are no restrictions on street sales, so any square is a market, and there are stalls on many street-sides.

Ptolemeias is a generally active and dangerous city. It has air-pollution from the many industries, and an active street-life and night-life. There are at least 12,000 inns, wine-shops, and hostels, some run by un-guilded proprietors, and some by foreigners, as it is one of the less restrictive guilds. Crime is far from unknown, but there is no unplausible organization like a Thieves or Assassins Guild. Assassins are freelance, or in small secret organizations, or more commonly in the pay of some martial church, but for hire. Thieves are of many types and work alone or in gangs, mobs, syndicates, or whatever. Many areas are controlled by such groups who seek payment from extortion, robbery, or blackmail. They tend to operate most among the un-guilded and laborers, because guilds tend to work against their entering the business world in great force.

The presence of mages and magic in the city should not be overlooked. They have a clear role and function in industry and the many services which they can perform. They have guilds, and above these guilds is the Archmage College, which is a supervisory council which regulates the use and abuse of magic in the city limits, and makes sure that no mage under its jurisdiction oversteps his bounds. As a group mages are a minority in the city as they are anywhere, and most of their doings are kept secret, and they try to shroud their actions in mystery for their own protection, as the other powers in the city, the Thearchs and Guild Lord look on them as a political threat, and cannot go much farther than condoning their unobtrusive presence.

Life in Ptolemeias or any large city is a complex and fascinating experience with many opportunities for the clever or enterprising person. From these examples and suggestions, you should be able to work out more detail and elaborate with relative ease.

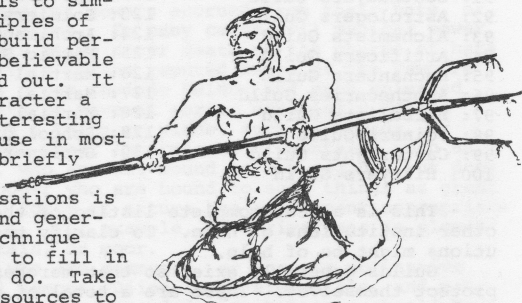
### 3.7 ROLE PLAYING THE WORLD

After the world is designed, the GM has his greatest challenge still to come, actually running the world and its inhabitants. While a player may have a few characters to play and characterize, the GM has the much more difficult task of making millions of intelligent beings and animals realistic, believable, and imbued with personality. Naturally it is much harder to give personality to many beings than it is to give it to only a few. The way to solve this problem is to simplify your task, and find some principles of characterisation which will let you build personalities quickly so that they are believable and interesting, if not fully fleshed out. It is possible to give a background character a basic personality which makes him interesting without going into great depth, because in most cases such characters only interact briefly with player characters.

The way to do quick characterisations is to find and classify certain basic and general personality traits. This is a technique used by many writers and playwrights to fill in background characters, and is easy to do. Take a look through literature and other sources to pick out character types. Shakespeare is a particular master of this technique. Isolate the popular character elements and note them. Characters can then be created by combining these elements as a base for the character's personality. These archetypal traits are similar to the sins and virtues revered in the middle ages. The seven sins are: pride, wrath, envy, lust, gluttony, avarice, and sloth. The seven virtues are: faith, hope, charity, prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance. Each person is a mix of these elements in different degrees, though not all of them will be significantly present. Further, each sin or virtue has an opposite, or negative value, such as despair for hope, weakness for fortitude, parsimony for charity. Adding in the opposites adds even more depth. For example, a character might possess faith, justice, and fortitude, with a limited degree of pride, imprudence (rashness), and intemperance, plus a little wrath, and be a perfect holy warrior type. You can even assign numerical positive and negative values for each sin or virtue to indicate positive or negative intensity of that quality for a character. If you work with this system you can easily and quickly create good medieval characters in much the same way as Shakespeare, and what's good enough for him should be good enough for anyone. Naturally you don't want to rate all of the values, and should leave some neutral, and at the same time you should keep a good mix of sins and virtues. They form a good guideline for your characterisations, and can be very versatile when you learn to work with them.

Of course, some characters in your world should be developed as fully as the characters of your players, specifically those with whom the players interact on a regular basis, members of their family, business associates, and the like. A great deal of homework goes into setting up these major characters, though the method given above is still a good place to start, but modified with more development and analysis.

Finally, you have to analyze the personality of your world as a whole. A world is more than just a combination of the many elements which we have described. It has a personality, characteristics, alignment, and the like, which should have a profound influence on your campaign. This personality is formed from the combined effect of the natures of the beings which populate the world and the GMs personal point of view. A world can even be personified and expressed as a physical entity. For example, the world of Ysgarth could be described as a great but ancient king with a fatal disease barely kept in check, though as a world it is harder to personify than some. Think about such things as the al-



ignment of your world. Ysgarth, for example, would tend to be C/G to C/N. In addition, such things may change from region to region depending on the local circumstances. The personality of your world is manifested in many ways, such as the nature of governments, levels of xenophobia, criminal activity, warfare, and the like. It is also reflected in the general attitudes of the people who live in it towards themselves and each other.

Most of all, it is important to come to know your world and the people in it. You should come to an intuitive and emotional understanding with it, so that you will be able to make decisions and describe things with hardly a moments thought, because even though you haven't thought about them before, you know how your world is and how those specific elements have to be to fit. This felling and oneness with the world is the thing which separates a good GM from a great one, and is developed through time, work, and thought.

## 4 THE FANTASY ADVENTURE

Merely having a world is not enough. Players in your world will want to do things in it, to have adventures. The skill of designing and running an adventure has oft been neglected or cruelly slighted, and there are too few GMs who really know how to make an exciting and imaginative adventure scenario. Too many rely on random "dungeons", or other festivals of illogic and wanton violence. In this section are some guidelines for creating logical scenarios which flow in a natural fashion from your world background.

### 4.1 THE BIRTH OF AN ADVENTURE

An adventure can be spurred by any of a large number of forces. Even the most unlikely circumstances can generate exciting action and intriguing challenges to the players.

Traditionally too many adventures have been motivated by greed, and stamped in the same mold of searching for lost treasures or exploiting a region for its wealth. There are many other ways to find adventure in a fantasy world, and many other motivations which can drive characters. Virtually any situation which has the potential for interest on any of several levels can be a workable adventure.

There are several general types of adventure. They can be called the Quest, the Raid, and the Encounter. These are very loose classifications, which change greatly in specific circumstances.

In a Quest situation the characters set out with a specific purpose or goal. The reason why they set out can be almost anything. They may be hired to find or pick up something, or to guard someone during a journey. They may be sent by a holy vision or on instructions of their church. They can even go in response to a rumour for information, greed, or self-advancement. The basic signs of this type of adventure are that it is started by an outside impetus and usually involves a journey and a specific objective. It may also be complicated by dangers involved with bringing back whatever is gone for, pursuing something which is stolen, keeping something from being taken, or entering a trap or pursuing a false or dummy objective. Think about the origin of the quest, and what those sending the party out want to achieve. Perhaps they even want to get the party killed off. Remember that these are not always vast overland treks. The same concept can be applied in a city, in varied situations, or even without actually going much of anywhere.

A Raid is similar in concept to the Quest, but there need be no specific purpose. This is a sort of Viking adventure, or a "land-grab", where the characters need money in a general way, and go out and get it from someone who is less powerful than they are. This can follow any of a number of patterns, from a simple robbery or burglary within a city, to an armed expedition to sack a town or village, perhaps involving mercenaries or freebooters in it for the plunder. In some cases it might even be an expedition of conquest, where the characters instead of plundering a region, take it over, usually by eliminating and replacing the top echelons of government. There are many variations of this concept which are possible, as the idea of snatch and run can apply in most contexts.

The Encounter is perhaps the broadest and most interesting, but least used, type of adventure. It is the adventure of the social background where characters get to experience their world and get to know it. It is perfect for newly created characters and new players, and particularly easy to set up. Its drawback is that it involves good GM control of the action, imagination, and the ability to improvise. It works by the use of situation. Basically the GM sets up a region in as much detail as he can, with all of the important aspects, especially as they relate to the type of action he has in mind. Then he introduces the characters to the background, and works them into a situation, where they have to either extricate themselves, solve a problem, fulfill an obligation, or generally do something which will let them interact with the area and situation which the

GM has set up. This approach works particularly well in combination with one or both of the others. For example, a party might set out to escort one of their members to claim an inheritance to rule over a small province. Arriving there they find that a distant cousin has taken control with the aid of a powerful mage. Once they eliminate him, hopefully with tact, and taken control, more things are possible. Perhaps the new rulers are ardent Freyr worshippers, and start converting and setting up temples. It is only a small step for the GM to get them to do something foolish like forbid the worship of a local death god, say Crom Cruiach, and before they know it they have a religious uprising on their hands. There are many options like this possible in a well-detailed region, for example, even famines or plagues can lead to adventurous solutions. Cities and other areas are also very viable, but the GM must be ready to adapt his region to his needs, work from its background, and improvise specific incidents and developments with complete confidence.

Once you've picked the type of adventure, set the general circumstances and rough plot, and you can work from there to expand and make your adventure more complete. Detail and personality make an adventure interesting, and should always be kept at a high level, though not to a ridiculous and too weighty degree.

#### 4.2 PLANNED AND INCIDENTAL ENCOUNTERS

Some systems recommend random encounters as space fillers and things for the player to do. Generally it is better to derive encounters from understanding and logic than from die rolls. The encounter is an important concept here. It is a basic conceptual unit of adventure design. Each encounter is a complete phase

of interaction between the characters and the world, where they initiate and complete a conflict or other interaction. For example, if they are travelling on a road and are set on by highwaymen, from the first meeting with the highwaymen to the conclusion of their dealings with them would be an encounter. However, it is possible for encounters to be long and extended or very brief, and there is no set length, and they often merge together. Encounters within encounters, and discontinuous encounters are also possible. For example, the highwaymen might take them prisoner, and then they would all be set on by wolves, creating an encounter within another, or the highwaymen might give up, leave, and hit them later, making a discontinuous encounter. There are two main types of encounters, each of which is divided into two types again. The two main groups are Planned and Incidental encounters, and the sub-divisions are Static and Active.



Planned encounters are those which are set up with the region, and limited to an area. If the characters enter that area they have a certain chance of meeting the encounter, either random, or dependant on their exact actions, though it may also be at the choice of the GM. Within this is the Static/Active division. Basically, Static encounters only react if directly contacted, and will not pursue or act on their own unless provoked. Active encounters will work on their own to encounter the characters, and will usually pursue and act with initiative. Planned Static encounters are such things as towns, farm-houses, merchants on the road, or other encounters which are always around to be met when the circumstances are right. Planned Active encounters would be regionalized predators set-up in advance, enemies of the characters, or opposing forces, which are intended as a major active part of the adventure.

Incidental encounters are those which come into play as needed at the discretion of the GM. They should be planned in advance, and a smart GM will keep a list of ideas for incidental encounters for use when they are needed. They are the same as Planned encounters, but not linked to an area in particular, or a particular adventure, though he might pick out a set to use in a given adventure. Generally they exist so that the GM can throw them in to keep things lively as needed in places where they seem appropriate. Static incidental encounters are ones which meet the party, but leave the initiation of action to the party. Active incidental encounters are more common, and seek out the party. For example, a pack of wolves is a good active encounter, while a wandering priest is a good static one. It often helps to make static ones have the potential to be useful to the party, or dangerous if provoked.

Flexibility is the key to GMing, and a GM should be ready to improvise and work on his feet. At one time it was thought that everything had to be static, set-up, randomly generated, or in rooms, or some such, but it is generally better

to be able to make and adjust encounters on a moments notice as needed, or to keep a broad selection of possibilities in mind, using only those which seem to fit in the situation, and playing them off the characters, so that you can keep changing and adapting in a reasonable fashion. This means that you can work in much more background and action based on the character's past deeds. You can have a specific cruel retribution fall on a character, rather than explaining it off later as the result of some action, to justify some random roll.

Remember that an adventure can happen anywhere, in popular settings, like ruined cities, cavern complexes, and the like, or in rural villages, grasslands, city markets, or anywhere. By the same rule, anything can be an interesting encounter, and encounters should be keyed to the region of the adventure as much as possible, though some will fit anywhere. For example, mountain lions belong in the mountains, thieves in cities, pirates on the sea, wolves in the forest, and so on. A bit of logic always helps, and don't forget that a good GM can make even the most basic and simple encounter interesting. Finally, retain the balance between physically-oriented and mentally-oriented encounters. If characters do nothing but fight it can bog down quickly, but it can be just as dull to only solve puzzles and riddles. A balance appropriate to the mood of the players and GM should be struck, with thought and action, or best of all, thought leading up to sensible and effective action.

#### 4.3 REACTION AND INTERACTION

Remember that by their own lights the non-player characters of your world are as real and important as your players characters, and have them act according to that principle. They should display sense and logic, and not attack suicidally in every case, or run in fright from the player characters.

Each person has his own personality, and this should determine what he does and how he reacts to the actions of a player character. Play a few times yourself, and then when you play as GM, react as you would if you were a player. Too often GMs let their characters take insults and slights from player characters which the player characters would never take. There is a tendency when running a whole world to look on individual characters within it as expendable. This may be true from the GM's overview, but each of those characters is the whole world to himself, and definitely not expendable.

Keep this in mind, and use the potentials of your world's characters. Let them fight deviously and fiercely when needed, and back down when that is the best course, provided such actions fit their personalities. By doing this you will find that your players enjoy interacting with the world more, and they will find play more challenging.

#### 4.4 GOALS: TREASURE AND POWER

Many adventures end in some form of reward, either material or spiritual. This can come in the most obvious form, riches, or in more subtle forms, such as increased status in the eyes of a god, or a legendary reputation. Different characters should have different values and personal goals, and there should be opportunities in more than one area available on an adventure.

Further, never give out too much or too little of anything, or concentrate too much in one area. You will have to use your good judgement, but generally give away enough to keep the players satisfied, but not happy. A happy player is a restless player, but if he gets only barely enough he will not get bored and will continue to seek new opportunities. Be especially careful of magical items, as outlined in the next section.

Finally, don't let those characters who have advanced beyond others in your campaign rule over them and injure them, and especially don't let characters do anything to other characters who they have not met in a logical game context. If high-power characters want to interact with low-power characters, let them do so indirectly or in some limited capacity as benefactors, sponsors, or leaders.

With the most powerful characters you should consider encouraging players to retire them to your use after they have achieved near-legendary status. You as GM may then play them as non-player characters to generate adventures and activities and be benefactors or villains in the world. They have the advantages of characters already fully developed by the player, and clear and present reputations with the other players. Generally this concept works very well, and is welcomed by players, though it can't really be started until you've been playing for a while.

If you find treasure of any sort getting out of hand, you are the GM, and rule, so feel justified in reducing it, so long as you do so fairly and explain why you are doing it and how it will benefit the players in improved quality of play.

#### 4.5 MAGIC ITEMS

Magic items are one of the great benefits and banes of many fantasy campaigns. They should not be given out too freely, but the number is far less important to limit than is the nature of the items. There should never be so many

items of holy or magical nature available that they could make a fighter the equal in magic of a mage, or in holy powers, of a priest.

A magical item is one which has powers of magic in addition to its normal physical properties, and they can be of various levels of power and have more than one power. A holy item is of the same nature, but derives from a holy rather than magical source. Lesser versions of both may be bought or manufactured, but the serious ones should be either granted or found.

As a general guideline such items should remain internally logical and consistent. A single principle should guide the powers of an item. A sword which can flame and at the same time freeze is ridiculous. On a lesser scale such things as swords which fire missiles are fairly silly. You should try to envision the essence of an item before creating it. Powers should be related, at the best, and certainly never at odds. Most items of serious power should be unique, and lesser items should have only one or two powers, and be limited by time or charges. Powers can be derived easily from common spells, and for more detail on making items see Enchanters in Book #3. In addition, there is a selection of typical items in Book #6, in the appendix.

Finally, look in literature and myth for examples. Properties given there are almost always logical, and often relate to the practical physical use of the item, for example, heightened sharpness in a sword, or flame-deflection in a shield. Use your discretion, and think about what effect the item will have on your campaign. Don't give out things which will let the character wade through all opposition, or which have negative powers which will make him useless, unless he has some chance of escaping them. Also, if you are going to have items in the possession of creatures or persons before players get hold of them, have those persons or creatures use them in self-defense to whatever degree they can, and take full advantage of the powers to their benefit. Do not overlook the use of negative powers to counterbalance positive ones in an item.

#### 4.6 DEITY POINTS, OBEDIENCE POINTS, AND KARMA POINTS

These measures of the character's religious and alignment development have been gone over in detail before as they apply in play. This is just a note of advice on awarding them.

At the end of an adventure, look at the actions of a character. If he has shown a flaunting of law, give him some negative OP. If he has been law-abiding give him some positive OP. If he's been killing and maiming take away KP. If he's helped or healed others give him some. If he has served his god give him DP. If he has renounced him, ignored him, or passed up good opportunities to serve take off DP. It is a rare adventure in which a character should lose or gain more than 30 in any of these values. Such things as pre-meditated murder run around 20 to 30 points, depending on the level of barbarity, and a second murder in a set adds only a couple of negative KP. Only a great act of faith would pass 30 DP, or a total renouncing of the god in the negative range. Gods may test mortals, and if they pass they might get over 30DP, or even as much as 10 permanent DP, indicating a favored status. The same principles apply with OP.

Use your judgement, and, as in so many things, you will find the best course. Try to avoid the "Karma War" phenomenon of point escalation and corresponding retribution.

Remember that DP, KP, and OP alter the actions of gods, various powers, and temporal authorities respectively. Once again, your wisdom will temper their actions of retribution and reward to keep results in balance to deeds. Some ideas on the results of extreme DP, KP, and OP have been given in earlier segments, but the main decision on just what they will do is in your hands for your world. You might also allow some variants, like having DP be allowed to be used to adjust KP or OP so that they are in keeping with an alignment appropriate to that god, probably on a one-to-one basis. These values are all aids, and how well they work is up to you.



#### 4.7 AWARDING EXPERIENCE

One of the most important duties of the GM is awarding experience points at the conclusion of an adventure session. The exact rate you award them on depends on how fast you want characters to advance in your campaign, but some general principles apply in all cases.

Experience should be based on the actions of the character. If he was passive he should get less than if he were active, and it should be based on your assessment of how well the character was played and developed, and how much he did

to advance himself or the party. The subjective element in awarding experience is important, so long as it is fairly done.

A good rate of experience awarding is to give out enough so that each character advances 80% of what he needs to advance a level after each session, though a little more or less works well enough. This should further be adjusted for the level of participation of the individual, working from a base, adding from 10 to 50 percent for good playing and knocking off an equal amount for poor playing.

For example, at the end of an adventure with a party of 4 5th level characters it might go like this: a base of around 15,000EP, with a range from around 8,000 for the least good player to 22,000 for the best. This should encourage good playing in theory, with advancement at least somewhat earned. Of course, you might want to make more extreme adjustments, and further adjustments for the length of the adventure. For the advancement tables see I:8(p.26).

Experience is one of the most important areas in which a GM should exercise good judgement, so consider well the outcome of the amount you are giving for the work involved. Players like to have something to show for the work that they do on adventures, but they should not be overloaded with EP so that they become too powerful too quickly. Such overloading leads to lack of character development, and early retirement.

## 5 CONCLUSION

It is your world and you can and should do what you want. This book contains much which is useful, and much which you may discard, but it should have at least some value.

Most of all, you should understand your world, and this book is designed to help you do that, by giving basic principles and formulae, and some insights into history, anthropology and human nature. There is also much to be learned in the preceding books, because, after all, professions and character classes are an outgrowth of the culture of the fantasy world.

As a GM you have rights and duties, but most of all you have power, and that power should be tempered by judgement and prudence. The GM has the power of a god, and that can be too much for some. You must keep things in perspective, view all the consequences of your actions, and most of all, be willing to admit when you are wrong, reverse precedents, and work with your players to improve the quality of your campaign. This is all part of establishing a working rapport with the players, which creates an atmosphere in which the most enjoyable and productive fantasy role-playing can be done.

Most of all fantasy adventure should be fun, and some may find that after GMing for a long period they may become frustrated and withdrawn, so try to get more than one GM in your group and play some. One thing which you may find is that GMing makes you more aware of and sympathetic to the problems of your GM, and that it definitely improves your role-playing and character development, and lets you enjoy playing more, getting into your character more deeply, while retaining some objectivity. There is no question that experienced GMs make the best players.

Finally, look to Book #6, "The Last Song of Hergest" for an example of adventure in the world of Ysgarth. It can serve as an example, a source, or can be used as is as an introductory scenario. The powers of creation and control rest in your hands, use them well.

