

HYBORIAN ADVENTURES



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INTRODUCTION

What is the Hyborian Age? What were the heroic deeds of Conan, the rude barbarian, the great warrior, destined to wear the jeweled crown of Aquilonia upon a troubled brow? The answers to these questions are in Robert E. Howard's books. These stories, that fascinate still nowadays a huge number of readers from all the countries in the world, can be considered the foundation of the "Swords and Sorcery" genre. Who's familiar with Conan's adventures already knows what this mighty world looks like, but the newbies should take a look to these little articles taken from **Conan Wiki** (conan.wikia.com) and **Wikipedia** (en.wikipedia.com) to enjoy more the game.

We can define the Hyborian setting both a "Sword-and-sorcery" and a low-fantasy one.

Sword and Sorcery

Sword and Sorcery (S&S) is a fantasy subgenre generally characterized by swashbuckling heroes engaged in exciting and violent conflicts. An element of romance is often present, as is an element of the supernatural. Unlike works of High Fantasy, the tales, though dramatic, focus mainly on personal battles rather than world-endangering matters. The subgenre has old roots. Ultimately—like much fantasy—it draws from mythology and Classical epics such as Homer's *Odyssey* and the Norse sagas, but its immediate progenitors are the swashbuckling tales of Alexandre Dumas, père (*The Three Musketeers* (1844), etc.) and Rafael Sabatini (*Scaramouche* (1921), etc.) — although these all lack the supernatural element — and early fantasy fiction such as Lord Dunsany's *The Fortress Unvanquishable Save for Sacnoth* (1910). In addition, many early S&S writers, such as Robert E. Howard and Clark Ashton Smith, were heavily influenced by the Middle Eastern tales of the *Arabian Nights*, whose stories of magical monsters and evil sorcerers were a major influence on the genre to be. But S&S proper only truly began in the pulp fantasy magazines, most notably *Weird Tales*.

The term was first coined in 1961 when the British author Michael Moorcock published a letter in the fanzine *Amra*, demanding a name for the sort of fantasy-adventure story written by Robert E. Howard. He had initially proposed the term "epic fantasy". However, the celebrated American S&S author Fritz Leiber replied in the journal *Ancalagon* (6 April 1961) suggesting "sword-and-sorcery as a good popular catchphrase for the field". He expanded on this in the July 1961 issue of *Amra*, commenting:

I feel more certain than ever that this field should be called the sword-and-sorcery story. This accurately describes the points of culture-level and supernatural element and also immediately distinguishes it from the cloak-and-sword (historical adventure) story—and (quite incidentally) from the cloak-and-dagger (international espionage) story too! (Fritz Leiber, *Amra*, July 1961)

Low fantasy

Low fantasy is a term not devised to describe a specific subgenre but to contrast specific works with high fantasy. It has been repeatedly coined to point out contrasts, and its meaning when coined has depended on what aspect the person wishes to contrast. This, naturally, led to many meanings, none of which have dominated the others. It is an umbrella term, describing various works within different sub-genres of fantasy. It is almost always placed in an antagonistic relationship with the better-defined high

fantasy genre, though as a work may contain one contrast with high fantasy and many common points; such antagonism centers on the traits the writer has decided to concentrate on.

Some of the meanings used are:

- Comic fantasy.
- Fantasy literature that has a relatively low amount of magic and the supernatural.
- Fantasy with a large degree of gritty realism about conditions of life in a medieval society, dirt, disease, power, or money. George R. R. Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire* cycle is, by this criterion, low fantasy, though having many high fantasy traits.
- Fantasy set in the real world with fantastic elements, like magic and monsters: contemporary fantasy or historical fantasy.
- Fantasy using a non-epic world view, as, for instance, not including an absolute evil.
- Dark fantasy.
- Fantasy where the protagonists are ordinary people, heroic only in character if at all (usually also an aspect of dark fantasy).
- Fantasy concerned with everyday life, as opposed to world-shaking quests.
- Fantasy written in a plain-spoken as opposed to an elevated style. (The diminishing stylistic influence of J.R.R. Tolkien and Lord Dunsany has made this definition less useful, as high fantasy is decreasingly marked out stylistically.)
- Sword and sorcery, which can be low fantasy by several of the above definitions.

The Hyborian Age

The Conan stories take place on Earth, but in the mythical (created by Howard) Hyborian Age, between the time of the sinking of Atlantis and the rise of the known ancient civilizations. According to Howard himself (in "The Phoenix on the Sword"): "...between the years when the oceans drank Atlantis and the gleaming cities, and the years of the rise of the Sons of Aryas..."

Howard devised the Hyborian Age to fit in with his previous and less-well-known tales of Kull, which were set at the time of Atlantis. The name "Hyborian" is a contraction of the Greek concept of the land of "Hyperborea", literally "Super-North-Land". This was a mythical place far to the north that was not cold and where things did not age.

Howard's Hyborian age, described in detail in his essay "The Hyborian Age", is a mythical time before any civilization known to anthropologists. Its setting is Europe and North Africa - with some curious geological changes that were thought up prior to the ascendancy of the geologic theory of plate tectonics, though somewhat similar to what geologists

theorize. They consider that during the Ice Age, Europe was quite different. The Mediterranean Sea formerly dried out intermittently, alternating with floods over the Straits of Gibraltar. Once there was a land-bridge across the English Channel between England and the Low Countries (but not across the Irish Sea) such that the Thames once flowed into a northern extension of the Rhine. And both the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea were once fresh-water lakes, the former (renamed the Ancylus Sea, after a fresh-water clam) covering much of the eastern half of what is now Sweden.

On a map Howard drew detailing it, his vision of the Mediterranean Sea is also dry. The Nile, which he re-named the River Styx, takes a westward turn at right angles just beyond the Nile Delta, plowing through the mountains so as to be able to reach the Straits of Gibraltar. Although his Black Sea is also dry, his Caspian Sea, which he renames the Vilayet Sea, extends northward to reach the Arctic Ocean, so as to provide a barrier to encapsulate the settings of his stories. Not only are his Baltic Sea and English Channel dry, but most of the North Sea and a vast region to the west, easily including Ireland, are too. Meanwhile, the west coast of Africa on his map lies beneath the sea. There are also a few islands, reminiscent of the Azores, but his stories are not about naval tactics.

In this general setting, Howard placed imaginary kingdoms to which he gave names from a varied series of sources. Khitai is his China, far to the East, deriving from an ancient name; Corinthia is his name for a Greek-like civilization, a name slapped together from the name of the city of Corinth and a reminiscence of the Middle Ages province of Carinthia. He imagines the Picts to occupy a large area to the northwest. The probable intended correspondences are listed below; notice that the correspondences are sometimes very loose, and are portrayed by ahistorical stereotypes.

- Acheron: A fallen kingdom corresponding to the Roman Empire. Its territory covered Aquilonia, Nemed, and Argos. The name comes from Acheron, a river of the underworld in Greek mythology.
- Afghulistan: Afghanistan. Afghulistan is the common name of the habitat of different tribes in the Himelian mountains
- Amazon: Brazil, or South America generally. In the Hyborian Age, Amazon is a kingdom ruled by women, located near the Black Kingdoms.
- Aquilonia: The Carolingian Empire, medieval France, with occasional hints of England. The name derived from the town of Aquilonia, Avellino, Campania, Southern Italy, Italy, although it also resembles Aquitaine, a French region ruled by England for a long portion of the Middle Ages.
- Argos: Various seafaring traders of the Mediterranean. The name comes from the Argo, ship of the Argonauts; or perhaps from the city of Argos, Argolis, Peloponnesos, Greece. Also hints of Italy in regards to the indigenous population's names and culture. Argos takes on the shape of a "shoe" in it's border boundaries as compared to Italy appearing as a "boot".
- Asgard: Sweden (Ásgard is the home of the Æsir in Norse mythology)
- Border Kingdoms: German Baltic Sea coast
- Bossonian Marches: Wales, with an overlay of colonial-era North America
- Brythunia: The continental homelands of the Angles and

Saxons who invaded Britain, which is the origin of the name, though the civilization is similar to that of medieval Poland, Lithuania, Latvia.

- Cimmeria: Celtic Britain/Scotland of ancient times. The name is based on "Cymru", the Welsh word for Wales. Conan, a Cimmerian, has an Irish name, as do his parents.
- Corinthia: Ancient Greece (Corinth is a Greek city)
- Darfar: The name may derive from Darfur, Sudan.
- Gunderland: The Netherlands ? Gunderland, count of Hesbaye (?-778). Perhaps Germany
- Hyrkania: Mongolia, Ukraine (Hyrkanians = Scythians)
- Hyperborea: Finland, Russia and the Baltic countries (Hyperborea was a land in "outermost north" according to Greek historian Herodotus. Howard's Hyperborea is a northern "evil empire", ruled by wicked wizards, perhaps akin to the perception of the 1930s Soviet Union)
- Iranistan: Iran
- Kambulja: Cambodia
- Keshan: The name comes from the "Kesh", the Egyptian name for Nubia.
- Khauran: The Crusader kingdom
- Khitai: China, Marco Polo's Cathay. The Kira-Khitai were a prominent tribe amongst Mongol steppe tribes.
- Khoraja: Khazaria?
- Koth: From the ancient Hittites; The Kothian capital of Khorshemish corresponds to the Hittite capital of Carchemish.
- Kush: From the kingdom of Kush, Nubia, North Africa.
- Meru: Tibet (This isn't an original Hyborian Age country, it's created by L. Sprague de Camp and Lin Carter.)
- Nemed: The Germanic Holy Roman Empire. Nemed was the rival of Aquilonia (which corresponds to the Carolingian Empire/France), and depended on Aesir mercenaries for their defence (as the Byzantines hired Vikings as the Varangian guard). The name comes from Nemed, leader of colonists from Scythia to Ireland in Irish mythology; perhaps the name is also meant to allude to Nemea, home to the Nemean lion of Greek myth.
- Ophir: Ancient Ophir, though clearly Howard saw it as situated somewhere in Italy.
- Pictish Wilderness: Pictish Scotland, with an overlay of colonial-era North America, possibly even colonial-era New York. Howard bestows Algonquian names on his Picts. Note that the name "Pict" comes from the Latin term for "painted one", which could be applicable to Amerindians.
- Poitain: Aquitaine (?) (likely, although the name reminds of Poitou, a province Northeast of Aquitaine, but not mediterranean, and not properly part of the South). Its location in the south of Aquilonia could point to Provence, which is in the south of France.
- Punt: The Land of Punt on the Horn of Africa.
- Shem: Mesopotamia, Syria, Palestine, and Arabia (cf. Semites, purportedly the sons of Shem)
- Stygia: Egypt. The name comes from Styx, a river of the underworld in Greek mythology. In earlier times the territory of Stygia included Shem, Ophir, Corinthia, and part of Koth.
- Turan: The Ottoman Empire (?) or Persian Empire (?) or Byzantine Empire (?). The name derives from Turan, the areas of Eurasia occupied by speakers of Ural-Altaic

languages.

- Vanaheim: Norway (Vanaheim is the home of the Vanir in Norse mythology)
- Vendhya: India (The Vindhya Range is a range of hills in central India)
- Zamora: The Roma people. The name comes from the city of Zamora, Zamora province, Castile-Leon, Spain, alluding to the Gitanos of Spain; or possibly it is based on the word "Roma". The name could also, in part, allude to Sonora, a region of Mexico that is "spider-haunted" like Zamora. Also hints of ancient Israel and Palestine.
- Zembabwei: The Munhumutapa Empire (Its capital city was the Great Zimbabwe)
- Zingara: Iberian Peninsula. Zingara is Italian for "Gipsy woman".

Other Geographic Features

- The River Styx: The Nile
- Zaporoska River: The Don and/or the Volga. The river's name was probably influenced by Zaporizhian Sich, a settlement of the Cossacks in Zaporizhzhia (region). It was situated on the Dnieper river, below the Dnieper rapids (porohy, poroz.a), hence the name, translated as "territory beyond the rapids".

Conan

Conan is a Cimmerian, a barbarian of the far north; he was born on a battlefield and is the son of a blacksmith. He grew up fast: by age fifteen he was already a respected warrior, participating in the destruction of the Aquilonian outpost of Venarium. After this he was struck by wanderlust and began the colorful and exciting adventures chronicled by Howard and others, encountering fabulous monsters, evil wizards, and beautiful wenches and princesses - he has travelled throughout the world and been a thief and outlaw, a mercenary and commander of a mercenary company, and a pirate. He begins building larger units of men, aiming for greater territorial ambitions, though his efforts are repeatedly thwarted - usually by the total massacre of his force excepting himself. But in his forties he finally succeeds, becoming king of Aquilonia, the most powerful kingdom of the age, having strangled the previous ruler on the steps of the throne. Although Conan's adventures often result in him performing heroic feats, his motive is more than often his own survival, enrichment or rise to power and he thus displays many of the characteristics of an anti-hero. Conan is darkly tanned, has "sullen" or "smoldering" blue eyes, a "mane" of long black hair, and is scarred - Howard mentions most often the scarring on his face. Contrary to many modern illustrations, Conan is hirsute:

So formidable was his appearance, naked but for short leather breeks and sleeveless shirt, open to reveal his great, hairy chest, with his huge limbs and his blue eyes blazing under his tangled black mane, ... [The Hour of the Dragon, Chapter 3]

He is exceptionally tall and strong. Howard is never explicit in his stories, but in a letter to P. Schuyler Miller he wrote: At Vanarium he was already a formidable antagonist, though only fifteen. He stood six feet [1.83 m] and weighed 180 pounds [82 kg], though he lacked much of having his full growth.

Conan's height and weight as an adult are subject to speculation - some estimates make him 6' 6" (2 m) and up to 250 lb (113 kg) - but extrapolating the growth of the 15-

year-old Conan based on modern data would make him at least 6' 2" (1.88 m) and 216 lbs (98 kg) at 18. This tallies with a comment Howard wrote in another letter that his crusader character Cormac Fitzgeoffrey is a double of Conan and that Cormac is 6' 2" and 215 pounds.

In Howard's tales no human is ever described as stronger than Conan, although several are mentioned as taller (such as the strangler Baal-Pteor) or of larger bulk.

Although Conan is muscular, Howard frequently compares his silence, suppleness, agility, way of moving to that of a panther - see, for instance, "The Servants of Bit-Yakin" ("Jewels of Gwahlur"), Beyond the Black River or "Rogues in the House" - or another feline:

He moved with the supple ease of a great tiger, his steely muscles rippling under his brown skin. ["The Tower of the Elephant"]

His garb is very often a loincloth or breeches and sandals, and his weapon a sword of some description, depending on his fortunes and location.

He had discarded his torn tunic, and walked through the night naked except for a loin-cloth and his high-strapped sandals. ["The Tower of the Elephant"]

His only garment was a pair of short red silk breeks, and his sandals were slung to his back, out of his way, as were his sword and dagger. ["The Servants of Bit-Yakin"]

Sometimes he wears more:

The man in the boat was a picturesque figure. A crimson scarf was knotted about his head; his wide silk breeches, of flaming hue, were upheld by a broad sash, which likewise supported a scimitar in a shagreen scabbard. His gilt-worked leather boots suggested the horseman rather than the seaman, but he handled his boat with skill. Through his widely open white silk shirt showed his broad, muscular breast, burned brown by the sun. ["The Devil in Iron"]

The stranger was clad like himself in regard to boots and breeks, though the latter were of silk instead of leather. But he wore a sleeveless hauberk of dark mesh-mail in place of a tunic, and a helmet perched on his black mane. That helmet held the other's gaze; it was without a crest, but adorned by short bull's horns. [Beyond the Black River]

During his reign as King of Aquilonia, Conan was:

... a tall man, mightily shouldered and deep of chest, with a massive corded neck and heavily muscled limbs. He was clad in silk and velvet, with the royal lions of Aquilonia worked in gold upon his rich jupon, and the crown of Aquilonia shone on his square-cut black mane; but the great sword at his side seemed more natural to him than the regal accouterments. His brow was low and broad, his eyes a volcanic blue that smoldered as if with some inner fire. His dark, scarred, almost sinister face was that of a fighting-man, and his velvet garments could not conceal the hard, dangerous lines of his limbs." [The Hour of the Dragon, pp. 89-90]

He loses none of his vigour with age with the above description coming when he is in his mid 40's.

Though several later authors have referred to Conan as "Germanic-looking," Howard imagined the Cimmerians as a proto-Celtic people with mostly dark hair and blue or grey eyes. Racially the Cimmerians to which Conan belongs are descendants of the Atlanteans, though they do not remember their ancestry. In his pseudo-historical essay "The Hyborian Age", Howard describes how the people of Atlantis

(the land where his character Kull originated) had to move east after a great cataclysm changed the face of the world and sank their island, settling where northern Scotland and Norway would eventually be located. In the same work, Howard also described how the Cimmerians eventually moved south and east after the age of Conan.

Despite his brutish appearance, Conan uses his brain as well as his brawn. The Cimmerian is a talented fighter, but due to his travels abroad, he also has vast experience in other trades, especially the thievery one; he is also a talented commander, tactician and strategist, as well as a born leader.

Conan speaks many languages:

Many a sheltered scholar would have been astonished at the Cimmerian's linguistic abilities, for he had experienced many adventures where knowledge of a strange language had meant the difference between life and death. ["The Servants of Bit-Yakin"]

And can read and write. His very first appearance shows him busy writing!

Behind an ivory, gold-inlaid writing-table sat a man whose broad shoulders and sun-browned skin seemed out of place among those luxuriant surroundings. ["The Phoenix on the Sword"]

In some stories, he's able to recognize, or even decipher, certain ancient or secret signs and writings, such as when he uses the sign of Jhebbal Sag in *Beyond the Black River*. However, Howard never has him reading Stygian, although he can speak it.

Another noticeable trait is his sense of humour, largely absent in the comics and movies, but very much a part of Howard's original vision of the character, particularly apparent in *Xuthal of the Dusk* ("The Slithering Shadow"). He is a loyal friend to those true to him with a barbaric code of honour and chivalry that often marks him as more civilized than those more sophisticated people he meets in his travels. Indeed his straightforward nature and barbarism are constants in all the tales.

One fact that is often emphasized is that Conan is very difficult to defeat in hand-to-hand combat. Conan needs only to have his back to the wall so that he cannot be surrounded, and then is capable of engaging and killing opponents by the score. This is seen in several stories, such as *"Queen of the Black Coast"*, *"The Scarlet Citadel"* and *"A Witch Shall Be Born"*.

Conan is not superhuman, though: he did need the providential help of Zelata's wolf to defeat four Nemedian soldiers in the story *The Hour of the Dragon*. Some of his hardest victories have come from fighting single opponents, but ones of inhuman strength: one such as Thak, the ape man from *"Rogues in the House"*, or the strangler Baal-Pteor in *"The Man-Eaters of Zamboula"* ("Shadows in Zamboula").

Conan is far from untouchable and has been captured several times (knocking himself out running into a wall drunk after being betrayed, although he still slays the people initially sent to arrest him, a fall from a wounded horse) but never as a result of martial failings.

Original Robert E. Howard Conan stories

Conan stories published in *Weird Tales*

- "The Phoenix on the Sword" (novelette; WT 20 6, Dec 1932)
- "The Scarlet Citadel" (novelette; WT 21 1, Jan 1933)

- "The Tower of the Elephant" (novelette; WT 21 3, Mar 1933)
- "Black Colossus" (novelette; WT 21 6, Jun 1933)
- "Xuthal of the Dusk" (novelette; WT 22 3, Sep 1933, as "The Slithering Shadow")
- "The Pool of the Black One" (novelette; WT 22 4, Oct 1933)
- "Rogues in the House" (novelette; WT 23 1, Jan 1934)
- "Iron Shadows in the Moon" (novelette; WT 23 4, Apr 1934, as "Shadows in the Moonlight")
- "Queen of the Black Coast" (novelette; WT 23 5, May 1934)
- "The Devil in Iron" (novelette; WT 24 2, Aug 1934)
- "The People of the Black Circle" (novella; WT 24 3-5, Sep/Oct/Nov 1934)
- "A Witch Shall be Born" (novelette; WT 24 6, Dec 1934)
- "Jewels of Gwahlur" (novelette; WT 25 3, Mar 1935)
- "Beyond the Black River" (novella; WT 25 5-6, May/Jun 1935)
- "Man-Eaters of Zamboula" (novelette; WT 26 5, Nov 1935, as "Shadows in Zamboula")
- *The Hour of the Dragon* (novel; WT 26 6 & 25 1-4, Dec 35/Jan/Feb/Mar/Apr 1936)
- "Red Nails" (novella; WT 28 1-3, Jul/Aug-Sep/Oct 1936)

Conan stories not published in his lifetime

- "The Frost Giant's Daughter": Published in 2003 in *The Coming of Conan the Cimmerian*.
- "The God in the Bowl": Published in 2003 in *The Coming of Conan the Cimmerian*.
- "The Vale of Lost Women": Published in 2003 in *The Coming of Conan the Cimmerian*.
- "The Black Stranger": Published in 1987 in *Echoes of Valor*.

Other Conan-related material by Howard

- "Wolves Beyond the Border": A non-Conan story set in Conan's world. Fragment.
- "The Hyborian Age": An essay written in 1932. Published in 2003 in *The Coming of Conan the Cimmerian*.
- "Cimmeria": A poem written in 1932. Published in 2003 in *The Coming of Conan the Cimmerian*.

NOTE: A number of untitled synopses for Conan stories also exist.

The Dark Rippke Chronology

The *Darkstorm Conan Chronology* (2003) is a completely revised and heavily researched chronology, including only those stories written (or devised) by Howard. The Dark Horse comic series follows this chronology. Its major strength is its well-documented support for its various arguments for story placement, based on the texts as Howard wrote them. While works completed or revised by other hands and post-Howard works find no place in this chronology they were not intended to, the often erroneous assumptions under which they were written precluding their inclusion. A minor weakness is the disappearance and reappearance of Conan's horned helm.

1. "The Frost Giant's Daughter"
2. "The God in the Bowl"
3. "The Tower of the Elephant"

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4. "The Hall of the Dead"
 5. "Rogues in the House"
 6. "The Hand of Nergal"
 7. "Shadows in the Moonlight"
 8. "Black Colossus"
 9. "Queen of the Black Coast"
 10. "The Snout in the Dark"
 11. "The Slithering Shadow"
 12. "A Witch Shall Be Born"
 13. "The Devil in Iron"
 14. "The People of the Black Circle"
 15. "Shadows in Zamboula" Drums of Tombalku"
 16. "The Vale of Lost Women"
 17. "The Pool of the Black One"
 18. "Beyond the Black River"
 19. "The Black Stranger"
 20. "Red Nails"
 21. "The Teeth of Gwahlur"
 22. "Wolves Beyond the Border"
 23. "The Phoenix on the Sword"
 24. "The Scarlet Citadel"
 25. The Hour of the Dragon

A MAP OF HYBORIA

By Chrisagon



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BACKGROUNDS

In True20 Conan you can only be a human, but everyone has got his own traditions and features depending on his or her origins. In Howard's stories this is very evident. It's as difficult to find a litterate and cultured Cimmerian as to find a Pict one. If you are familiar with the races of the Hyborian age you can choose your background easily, but if you're new to Howard's fantastic world, it's better you narrowly read the descriptions. In the "Traits" line you can recognise the main behavioural element of every race, which gives to the characters that typical and fantastic feeling of Howard's ones. See the later section "Feats" for further informations about Traits. These Backgrounds have been realised by Ian "Rhyopewood"!

Cimmerian

Cimmerians are tall, physically powerful and very fierce, being regarded as one of the most barbaric races in the world of Hyboria.

- **Ability Adjustments:** +1 Strength, -1 Intelligence
- **Bonus Feats:** Iron Will, Skill Focus (Climbing), Terrain Mastery (Hills and Mountains)
- **Favoured Feats:** Evasion, Rage
- **Traits:** Blunt Speaking
- **Native Language:** Cimmerian
- **Optional Languages:** Aquilonian, Hyperborean, Nordheimer, Pictish

Hymelian tribesman

Himelian tribesmen are tall hairy hill men, fierce and strongly independent with a disdain of civilised standards but a clear tribal code of honour.

- **Ability Adjustments:** none
- **Bonus Feats:** Skill Focus (Stealth), Terrain Mastery (Hills and Mountains), Tough
- **Favoured Feats:** Hide in Plain Sight, Tough
- **Traits:** Superstitious
- **Native Language:** Afghuli
- **Optional Languages:** Hyrkanian, Iranistani, Vendhyan

Hymelian tribesman (Wazuli)

Wazuli are one of the first Himelian tribes encountered northwards from Vendhya and are adapted to a nocturnal existence.

- **Ability Adjustments:** none
- **Bonus Feats:** Night Vision, Skill Focus (Stealth), Terrain Mastery (Hills and Mountains), Tough
- **Favoured Feats:** Hide in Plain Sight, Tough
- **Traits:** Nocturnal, Superstitious
- **Native Language:** Afghuli
- **Optional Languages:** Hyrkanian, Iranistani, Vendhyan

Hyborian

Descended from the barbaric hordes that swept out of the north several millennia ago, the Hyborians have a varied appearance and a complex medieval society.

- **Ability Adjustments:** none
- **Bonus Feats:** Fated, Talented (Choose two skills)
- **Bonus Skill:** The hero gains one bonus known skill at 1 level, in addition to those gained for the hero's role and Intelligence score.
- **Favoured Feats:** Choose any two feats as the character's favoured feats.
- **Traits:** none

- **Native Language:** Choose one from Argossean, Aquilonian, Bossonian, Brythunian, Corinthian, Hyperborean, Kothic, Nemedian or Ophirean.
- **Optional Languages:** Argossean, Aquilonian, Bossonian, Brythunian, Corinthian, Hyperborean, Kothic, Nemedian, Ophirean, Pictish, Shemitish, Stygian, Zingaran, Zamorian

Hyborian (Argossean Orbarachan)

Argosseans are short and stocky descendants of the Hyborian people. They make superb sailors, traders and pirates.

- **Ability Adjustments:** none
- **Bonus Feats:** Fated, Sea Legs, Talented (Choose two skills)
- **Favoured Feats:** Choose any two feats as the character's favoured feats.
- **Traits:** none
- **Native Language:** Argossean
- **Optional Languages:** Aquilonian, Bossonian, Brythunian, Corinthian, Hyperborean, Kothic, Nemedian, Ophirean, Pictish, Shemitish, Stygian, Zingaran, Zamorian

Hyborian (Bossonian)

Bossonians are descendants of an aboriginal race conquered by the Hyborian peoples. Of medium height and ruddy complexion, the Bossonians are renowned the world over for their archery skills.

- **Ability Adjustments:** none
- **Bonus Feats:** Attack Focus (Bow), Improved Defense, Weapon Training
- **Favoured Feats:** Choose any two feats as the character's favoured feats.
- **Traits:** none
- **Native Language:** Bossonian
- **Optional Languages:** Aquilonian, Argossean, Brythunian, Corinthian, Hyperborean, Kothic, Nemedian, Ophirean, Pictish, Shemitish, Stygian, Zingaran, Zamorian

Hyborian (Gunderman)

Tawny-haired and blue eyes, the Gunderman is almost a pure blooded descendant of the original Hyborian tribes.

- **Ability Adjustments:** none
- **Bonus Feats:** Attack Focus (Pike), Iron Will, Weapon Training
- **Favoured Feats:** Choose any two feats as the character's favoured feats.
- **Traits:** none
- **Native Language:** Aquilonian
- **Optional Languages:** Argossean, Bossonian, Brythunian,

Corinthian, Hyperborean, Kothic, Nemedian, Ophirean, Pictish, Shemitish, Stygian, Zingaran, Zamorian

Hyborian (Hyperborean)

Gaunt, big-boned, violent and slow of speech, the Hyperboreans are the least civilised of the descendants of the Hyborian tribes.

- *Ability Adjustments:* +1 Constitution, -1 Charisma
- *Bonus Feats:* Skill Focus (Intimidate), Talented (Choose two skills)
- *Bonus Skill:* The hero gains one bonus known skill at 1st level, in addition to those gained for the hero's role and Intelligence score.
- *Favoured Feats:* Choose any two feats as the character's favoured feats.
- *Traits:* Slow Speaking
- *Native Language:* Hyperborean
- *Optional Languages:* Argossean, Aquilonian, Bossonian, Brythunian, Corinthian, Kothic, Nemedian, Ophirean, Pictish, Shemitish, Stygian, Zingaran, Zamorian

Hyborian (Tauran)

Regarded as backward by other Aquilonians, the people of the Tauran region make excellent woodsmen.

- *Ability Adjustments:* none
- *Bonus Feats:* Fated, Terrain Mastery (Temperate Forests)
- *Bonus Skill:* The hero gains one bonus known skill at 1st level, in addition to those gained for the hero's role and Intelligence score.
- *Favoured Feats:* Choose any two feats as the character's favoured feats.
- *Traits:* none
- *Native Language:* Aquilonian
- *Optional Languages:* Argossean, Bossonian, Brythunian, Corinthian, Hyperborean, Kothic, Nemedian, Ophirean, Pictish, Shemitish, Stygian, Zingaran, Zamorian

Hyrkanian or Turanian

Generally tall and slender with a dark complexion, Hyrkanians are descendants of the ancient Lemurians. They are nomadic horsemen although the largest tribe has settled and founded the Turanian Empire.

- *Ability Adjustments:* none
- *Bonus Feats:* Attack Focus (Bow), Ranged Shot, Ruthless Reputation
- *Favoured Feats:* Lasting Intimidation, Mounted Archery.
- *Traits:* Superstitious
- *Native Language:* Choose one from Argossean, Aquilonian, Bossonian, Brythunian, Corinthian, Hyperborean, Kothic, Nemedian or Ophirean.
- *Optional Languages:* Argossean, Aquilonian, Bossonian, Brythunian, Corinthian, Hyperborean, Kothic, Nemedian, Ophirean, Pictish, Shemitish, Stygian, Zingaran, Zamorian

Iranistani

A tribal people, the folk of Iranistan are black-haired with brown eyes and a dark complexion. Most Iranistani wear

richly ornamented clothing and anoint themselves with perfumes and scented oils.

- *Ability Adjustments:* +1 Charisma, -1 Wisdom
- *Bonus Feats:* An Offer You Can't Refuse, Attack Focus (Sabre), Evaluate, Talent (Handle Animal, Ride)
- *Favoured Feats:* An Offer You Can't Refuse, Evaluate
- *Traits:* Fatalist
- *Native Language:* Iranistani
- *Optional Languages:* Afghuli, Kosalan, Puntan, and Zembabwean

Khitani

With their yellow complexions, dark hair and strange customs, the Khitans are unfathomable and bizarre to the peoples west of Vilayet Sea.

- *Ability Adjustments:* none
- *Bonus Feats:* Knowledgeable (Natural, Supernatural, Theology and Philosophy), Skill Focus (Stealth)
- *Bonus Skill:* The hero gains one bonus known skill at 1st level, in addition to those gained for the hero's role and Intelligence score.
- *Favoured Feats:* Hexer, Summoner.
- *Traits:* Superstitious
- *Native Language:* Khitan
- *Optional Languages:* Acheronean, Afghuli, Demonic, Hyrkanian, Old Stygian, Stygian, Vendhyan

Northern Black Kingdom Tribesman

Slightly shorter than average with dark-brown skin and curly hair, the Gallahs make up the lower class tribesman and the majority of the population. The Black Kingdoms include Kush, Keshan, Punt and Zembabwei.

- *Ability Adjustments:* none
- *Bonus Feats:* Attack Focus (Spear), Attack Specialisation (Spear), Terrain Mastery (Hot Savannahs and Jungles)
- *Favoured Feats:* Attack Specialisation, Hide in Plain Sight.
- *Traits:* Illiterate
- *Native Language:* One of Keshani, Kushite, Puntan or Zembabwean
- *Optional Languages:* Black Coast, Darfari, Keshani, Kushite, Iranistani, Old Stygian, Shemitish, Stygian, and Zembabwean

Northern Black Kingdom Tribesman (Chaga)

Much taller than the Gallahs, the Chaga are the ruling caste of the Kushites and are partly of Stygian descent. They have a culture uniquely different from the Gallahs with a love of hunting and treacherous politics.

- *Ability Adjustments:* none
- *Bonus Feats:* Skill Focus (Sense Motive), Ritual Master, Craft [Alchemy], Terrain Mastery (Hot Savannahs and Jungles)
- *Favoured Feats:* Hexer, Summoner.
- *Traits:* Illiterate
- *Native Language:* Kushite
- *Optional Languages:* Black Coast, Darfari, Keshani, Iranistani, Old Stygian, Shemitish, Stygian, and Zembabwean

Northern Black Kingdom Tribesman (Ghanata)

Closely related to the tribes of the northern Black Kingdoms, the Ghanatas live in the Southern Desert where they exist as small loosely organised groups.

- *Ability Adjustments:* none
- *Bonus Feats:* Skill Focus (Ride), Attack Focus (Scimitar), Terrain Mastery (Hot Deserts)
- *Favoured Feats:* Attack Specialisation, Hide in Plain Sight.
- *Traits:* Illiterate
- *Native Language:* Ghanatan
- *Optional Languages:* Darfari, Keshani, Puntan, Iranistani, Tibu, Tombalku, and Zembabwean

Nordheimir

The Nordheimir are blue-eyed and pale-skinned with a tall and powerful physique. Living in the frozen tundra of the north, these hardy people are renowned for constant raiding.

- *Ability Adjustments:* +1 Constitution, -1 Dexterity
- *Bonus Feats:* Attack Focus (Sword), Attack Specialisation (Sword), Terrain Mastery (Cold Tundra and Snowy Wastes)
- *Favoured Feats:* Attack Specialisation, Tough.
- *Traits:* none
- *Native Language:* Nordheimir
- *Optional Languages:* Aquilonian, Cimmerian, Hyperborean, and Pictish

Pict

A short but broad, swarthy-skinned people renowned for their barbarous savagery and primitive Stone Age culture.

- *Ability Adjustments:* +1 Dexterity, -1 Intelligence
- *Bonus Feats:* Natural Hunter, Talented (Acrobatics, Jump), Terrain Mastery (Temperate or Warm Forests)
- *Favoured Feats:* Natural Hunter, Sneak Attack
- *Traits:* Illiterate
- *Native Language:* Pictish and Talking Drum
- *Optional Languages:* Aquilonian, Cimmerian, Nordheimir, and Zingaran

Shemite

Most Shemites live a nomadic existence in the deserts of eastern Shem. They are renowned archers and horseman with a dusky complexion and hawkish features.

- *Ability Adjustments:* none
- *Bonus Feats:* Attack Focus (Bow), Killer Instinct, Skill Focus (Bluff), Terrain Mastery (Deserts)
- *Favoured Feats:* Evaluate, Killer Instinct
- *Traits:* Fatalist
- *Native Language:* Shemitish
- *Optional Languages:* Argossean, Hyrkanian, Kothic, Ophirean, and Stygian

Shemite (Meadow Shemite)

Most Shemites in western lands are from the western meadow cities where tribal culture has been replaced by fiercely independent city states. They are still renowned

archers and horseman with a dusky complexion and hawkish features.

- *Ability Adjustments:* none
- *Bonus Feats:* Attack Focus (Bow), Killer Instinct, Talented (Bluff, Diplomacy), Terrain Mastery (Plains)
- *Favoured Feats:* Evaluate, Killer Instinct
- *Traits:* Fatalist
- *Native Language:* Shemitish
- *Optional Languages:* Argossean, Hyrkanian, Kothic, Ophirean, and Stygian

Shemite (Pelishtim)

The ancient Pelishtia region of Shem is the home to noted warriors and sorcerers. Wise men and mercenaries from this area can be found throughout the world.

- *Ability Adjustments:* none
- *Bonus Feats:* Attack Focus (Bow), Skill Focus (Knowledge [Supernatural]), Talented (Bluff, Diplomacy), Terrain Mastery (Plains)
- *Favoured Feats:* Evaluate, Killer Instinct
- *Traits:* Fatalist
- *Native Language:* Shemitish
- *Optional Languages:* Argossean, Hyrkanian, Kothic, Ophirean, and Stygian

Southern Black Kingdom Tribesman

Southern tribesman are very dark skinned, tall and muscular. The corsairs of the Southern Islands are the most feared pirates on the known seas.

- *Ability Adjustments:* +1 Strength, -1 Charisma
- *Bonus Feats:* Attack Focus (Spear), Dodge Focus, Skill Focus (Perform [Dance])
- *Favoured Feats:* Attack Specialisation, Jack-Of-All-Trades.
- *Traits:* Illiterate, Terrified
- *Native Language:* One of Bakalah, Bamulah, Southern Islander, Suba, and Wadai
- *Optional Languages:* Argossean, Bakalah, Bamulah, Black Coast, Kushite, Shemitish, Southern Islander, Stygian, Suba, Tibu, Tombalku, Wadai, and Zingaran

Southern Black Kingdom Tribesman (Darfari)

Although Darfar is one of the Northern Black Kingdoms, its inhabitants are similar physically to the Southern Islanders. They are renowned for their sharp filed teeth.

- *Ability Adjustments:* +1 Strength, -1 Charisma
- *Bonus Feats:* Attack Focus (choose one bludgeoning weapon), Bite Attack, Dodge Focus, Skill Focus (Perform [Drums])
- *Favoured Feats:* Attack Specialisation, Stunning Attack.
- *Traits:* Illiterate, Terrified
- *Native Language:* Darfari
- *Optional Languages:* Keshani, Kushite, Puntan, Shemitish, and Stygian

Stygian

Tall and broad with a dusky complexion and handsome features, the noble caste of Stygia are hereditary warriors and powerful sorcerers.

- *Ability Adjustments:* none
- *Bonus Feats:* Attack Focus (Bow), Skill Focus (Knowledge [Supernatural]), Talented (Craft [Alchemy], Ritual Master)
- *Favoured Feats:* Acrobatic Bluff, Fascinate
- *Traits:* Corrupted
- *Native Language:* Stygian
- *Optional Languages:* Acheronean, Darfari, Demonic, Hyrkanian, Keshani, Khitan, Kushite, Old Stygian, Puntan, Shemitish, and Zembabwean

Vendhyan

The people of Vendhya have straight black hair, large dark eyes and a complexion that varies from light to mid- brown shades. Vendhyan society is ancient and complex, steeped in caste structure and tradition.

- *Ability Adjustments:* none
- *Bonus Feats:* Iron Will, Sophisticated, Talented (Knowledge [Civics], Knowledge [History])
- *Favoured Feats:* Skill Mastery, Well-Informed
- *Traits:* none
- *Native Language:* Vendhyan
- *Optional Languages:* Afghuli, Hyrkanian, Iranistani, Khitan, and Kosalan

Zamorian

Black-haired with a dark complexion, the Zamorians are renowned as an old and evil race of men. They make the best thieves in the world.

- *Ability Adjustments:* +1 Dexterity, -1 Strength
- *Bonus Feats:* Nimble, Skill Focus (Gather Information), Terrain Mastery (Urban and Underground)
- *Favoured Feats:* Sneak Attack, Well-Informed
- *Traits:* none
- *Native Language:* Zamorian
- *Optional Languages:* Brythunian, Corinthian, Hyrkanian, Kothic, and Shemitish

Zingaran

The Zingarans are descended from a mixture of the Pictish and Hyborian people. They are lean and dangerous-looking with fiery tempers.

- *Ability Adjustments:* +1 Charisma, -1 Constitution
- *Bonus Feats:* Attack Focus (Sword), Sea Legs, Sneak Attack
- *Favoured Feats:* Acrobatic Bluff, Sneak Attack
- *Traits:* Suspicious
- *Native Language:* Zingaran
- *Optional Languages:* Aquilonian, Argossean, Ophirean, Pictish, and Shemitish

ROLES

Expert, Sorcerer or Warrior? After having chosen your Background, you've got to define the role you're going to have in the game. In this section you can rapidly look for an archetype, or rather a peculiar role (but remember you can create your character even without considering one), and start to take confidence with Howard's magic world. First of all, the Adept role has been replaced with the Sorcerer one: that because magic in Hyboria is mysterious and terrifying, it corrupts minds and hearts. Being a Sorcerer is so even harder than being an Adept! But dangers and horrible creatures wait in the dark for Warriors and Experts too...

New Role: The Sorcerer

Shaman, mage or wizard, the Sorcerer lives for Knowledge. Master of the supernatural, he can have a precise faith or not: he's more familiar with magic than the other roles because he's specialised in the sciences and arts of the supernatural. The Sorcerer substitutes the Adept as the "Magic" role in this setting because in Hyboria magic is harder than any other one: it fatigues both the body and the mind of the caster, which becomes more and more corruptible as the game goes on. That's why usually Sorcerers prefer to use magical charms instead of pure magic, and they become skilled in alchemy.

This role has been created following the rules in the Companion. If you haven't this rulebook, don't worry, the following table will make you able to run your game anyway.

- **Combat Progression:** Slow (2 points). Sorcerers aren't skilled in combat. They have the same combat bonus of Adepts.
- **Skill Progression:** 6 + Int (1.5 points). Sorcerers spend much of their times in magic training, but they're also very skilled in common activities.
- **Save Progression:** Good Will, Normal Fortitude and Reflex (0 points)
- **Power Progression:** Fast, Broad. A Sorcerer is a very powerful caster, but he can acquire a maximum of 12 powers. In fact, as in Howard's stories magic is a secret nobody can explore completely, Sorcerers are specialised in a set of supernatural powers. Calculate the Power rank like for the Adept role. (1.5 point)
- **Feat Access:** Sorcerer, Normal. Choose 4 starting feats from the General or Sorcerer list or a Supernatural power instead of a feat such as an Adept. (0 points)
- **Key Ability:** Wisdom.
- **Core Ability: The Light of knowledge:** A Sorcerer can use a Conviction point to automatically recover the startled and troubled conditions (see Alternative Rules in the Corruption section), or the first -1 penalty given by your Corruption points (if you want to use the Corruption rules in the Companion). A Sorcerer can also use this ability to sense the presence of spirits and other magical creatures in a radius in feet equal to his Sorcerer levels x

3. When a Sorcerer uses this ability he feels "the presence" of something in that place, but he cannot identify nor locate it perfectly.

The Sorcerer					
Level	Combat	Fort. ST	Reflex ST	Will ST	Rep.
1st	0	0	0	2	1
2nd	1	0	0	3	1
3rd	1	1	1	3	1
4th	2	1	1	4	2
5th	2	1	1	4	2
6th	3	2	2	5	2
7th	3	2	2	5	2
8th	4	2	2	6	3
9th	4	3	3	6	3
10th	5	3	3	7	3
11th	5	3	3	7	3
12th	6	4	4	8	4
13th	6	4	4	8	4
14th	7	4	4	9	4
15th	7	5	5	9	4
16th	8	5	5	10	5
17th	8	5	5	10	5
18th	9	6	6	11	5
19th	9	6	6	11	5
20th	10	6	6	12	6

Expert Archetypes

Artist:

He can be a bard or a man of letters. An artist loves notoriety, money, and gossip: the crown's secrets aren't safe if he's around. An artist is very useful as a spy or as a contact for a party but he can have also a great political weight.

Feats: Canny Dodge, Taunt, Fascinate (choose one), Inspire.
Good ST: Will.

Skills: Bluff, Craft (musical instruments), Diplomacy, Gather Information, Knowledge (art), Knowledge (popular culture),

Perform (choose one), Sense motive.

Cat burglar:

A cat burglar is essentially a thief. His speciality is to open locks and to go into houses to steal all the gold possible. He likes jewelry, and he dislikes dangerous situations. He's not a great fighter at all, but who meddles between him and a treasure has no chance to survive.

Feats: Dodge focus, Lightning reflexes, Lucky, Improvised tools.

Good ST: Reflex

Skills: Acrobatics, Climb, Disable device, Escape Artist, Jump, Notice, Search, Stealth.

Con artist:

The scoundrel for definition. He knows everybody in the streets, he looks for his pray, usually a poor ingenuous man, he fools him, and he steals all his money. If the thievery has failed, there are two possibilities: run or fight, but a great con artist never fails!

Feats: Assessment, Canny dodge, Contacts, Fascinate (choose one).

Good ST: Reflex

Skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Disguise, Gather Information, Intimidate, Knowledge (streetwise), Sense Motive, Sleight of hand.

Diplomat:

He's an expert of bureaucracy or even a minister. He's always got a great influence on powerful kings or nobles, using his diplomacy abilities to confuse or to gain authority. A very argute person every uncivilized man fears!

Feats: Benefit, Connected, Contacts, Taunt.

Good ST: Will.

Skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate,

Knowledge (business), Knowledge (civics), Language (choose one), Sense motive.

Hunter:

He lives in the wild, in deep contact with nature, whose he knows all the secrets. An hunter has an armonic relationship with every being, but he usually lives alone or far from civilization. Also, he's quite good at fighting, even if he prefers a peaceful exchange of opinions...

Feats: Animal Empathy, Natural Hunter, Track, Trailblazer.

Good ST: Fortitude.

Skills: Craft (choose one), Handle animal, Knowledge (Earth sciences), Medicine, Notice, Ride, Stealth, Survival.

Sage:

A pit of science for definition, a sage is full of resources. He spent all his life on manuscripts and ancient texts, in an academy or isolated. Many sages become Sorcerers and many Sorcerers integrate their knowledge as sages. A sage isn't good at fighting, but who cares?

Feats: Eidetic memory, Talented (choose one), Jack-of-All-trades, Skill Mastery.

Good ST: Will.

Skills: Bluff, Concentration, Diplomacy, Knowledge (choose three), Language (choose one), Medicine.

Sorcerer Archetypes

Court Mage:

The court mage is usually the king's most respected counsellor. So, expert of gossips and noble's life, he's familiar with the highest social classes: he can come from an academy, maybe issued from a noble family himself.

Feats: Benefit, Connected, Taunt, Imbue Item.

Skills: Bluff, Concentration, Diplomacy, Knowledge (supernatural), Perform (magic), Sense Motive.

Crusader:

A Crusader lives for his ideal or for his god: his or her mission is purify Hyboria of any miscreant, and he's always ready to use his sword for this. It wouldn't be strange a crusader is a former warrior, because he's also got a good experience on the battlefield.

Feats: Armor Training, Dedicated, Weapon training, Empower.

Skills: Climb, Concentration, Intimidate, Knowledge (supernatural), Medicine, Ride.

Druid:

A druid lives in tight contact with the Nature. He believes everything comes from a unique and great principle in the universe which permeates the whole world. Some druids are also the most important moral figure of a village, and they often refuse to use sorcery for a bad or corrupting purpose.

Feats: Animal Empathy, Night Vision, Track, Familiar.

Skills: Concentration, Handle Animal, Knowledge (life sciences), Knowledge (supernatural), Medicine, Survival.

Shaman:

The Shaman is the most important figure in uncivilised villages, such as the Pict's one. Sometimes Shamans live alone in mountains, forests or marshes, where they come

into contact with demoniac forces. Also, Shamans are very skilled in craft powerful alchemical charms which they often use in combat.

Feats: Contacts, Iron Will, Light Sleeper, Imbue Item.

Skills: Bluff, Concentration, Diplomacy, Intimidate, Knowledge (supernatural), Knowledge (theology and Philosophy).

Wizard:

A wizard character is often present in Howard's stories: examples are Tsotha-lanti and Pelias from "The Scarlet Citadel". Refusing the rough knowledge of the magic of shamans, they find their way in dungeons and forgotten castles, where they can study from ancient and valuable texts, and not from insignificant tribal legends. That's why the wizard is very independent and adaptable to any situation which comes in front of him. But because of this he've always got to pay the price of corruption...

Feats: Eidetic Memory, Iron Will, Taunt, Empower.

Skills: Concentration, Craft (alchemy), Diplomacy, Knowledge (supernatural), Knowledge (choose one), Notice.

Priest:

The Priest lives for his deity. He can be a member of a mighty arcane order (there's always one in every city...well that's a sword-and-sorcery setting after all!) or an independent missionary, and what characterizes him, even more than his magical powers, it's his faith. A priest is an expert of theology and philosophy, but he's also familiar with the secret web of spies and mysterious secret cults which pervade Hyboria.

Feats: Dedicated, Iron Will, Weapon Training, Ritual Master.

Skills: Concentration, Craft (alchemy), Gather Information, Knowledge (supernatural), Knowledge (theology and philosophy), Sense Motive.

Warrior Archetypes

Barbarian:

A barbarian comes from an uncivilised land, and he usually lives as a rude man, following only his rules or his code of

what he knew thanks to myths and legends.

Feats: Lightning reflexes, Endurance, Trailblazer, Rage.

Skills: Climb, Jump, Notice, Survival.

Knight:

A knight is usually a noble man issued from a wealthy family, or a talented warrior coming from a special training academy. He serves kings, lords, or even an ideal which can be "good" or "bad". A knight always respects a code: the honour is the center of his life.

Feats: Armor Training, Benefit, Dedicated, Favored Opponent

Skills: Gather Information, Intimidate, Knowledge (tactics), Ride.

Fighter:

A fighter comes from an army, a guard corps or a gladiator academy. He's been trained to fight especially with swords or bare hands, to study his enemy to find his weak points and to make the best of the situation. He usually doesn't follow a particular code but to fight is his job.

Feats: Armor Training, Assessment, Improved Trip, Cleave.

Skills: Climb, Intimidate, Knowledge (tactics), Notice.

Bucaneer:

Coming from the sea, a bucaneer is a scoundrel and a raider. Gold and fame are all he desires: a bucaneer can also be a cat burglar when he gets off the ground. He's a specialist of con, but he never refuses a fighting when possible.

Feats: Assessment, Canny Dodge, Lucky, Sea Dog.

Skills: Acrobatics, Bluff, Diplomacy, Notice.

Archer:

An archer is a specialist of ranged weapons. He's been trained in repairing them, improving them, but, above all, killing with them. He's got a great aim, so he prefers reaching a good position above the combat and fight from there.

Feats: Armor Training, Assessment, Point Blank Shot, Attack Specialization (ranged weapon)

Skills: Climb, Craft (blacksmith), Knowledge (tactics), Notice.

Assassin:

As bounty hunter or a professional killer, the assassin always hides in the ground waiting to capture his prey. He's a good mettle fighter, but he prefers quick fights. An assassin can also be a spy for a government or for a ruler.

Feats: Accurate Attack, Lightning Reflexes, Killer Instinct, Track.

Skills: Acrobatics, Climb, Disguise, Stealth.

SKILLS

The use of skills is fundamental during every session. In this section you're going to find a new speciality for the craft skill, alchemy, which is a very important element in the Hyborian setting both for Sorcerers and other characters.

Craft

Intelligence. Trained only, Requires specialization, Requires tools

- **Alchemy.** You are skilled in alchemical arts

Poison: You can distil several kinds of poison. When you use this application of the skill, you must make a dexterity check against a DC of 10. If you fail, you suffer the effect of the same poison you were preparing because you came into contact with it. The poison can be a liquid or a powder but you need to have the proper spices, and some of them can also affect the final result.

- *Deadly poison:* The target must make a Fortitude check against a DC equal to 5 + your ranks in the craft (alchemy) skill. If he fails he can make a second check against the same DC, but if he fails a second time, he dies.
- *Other poisons:* The target must make a Fortitude check against a DC of 10 + your ranks in the craft (alchemy) skill. If he fails the effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to 10 minutes x your check result.
- *Combining effects:* You can combine the effects of 2 spices simply mixing two poisons, that means making two separate skill checks. The poison whose the check is the lowest is the first to have effect.

Exploding powder: You can mix several components and obtain an exploding powder, whose the damage counts as "fire". You make a skill check against a DC of 20 and a dexterity check against a DC of 10. If you fail the dexterity check, the powder explodes and you suffer the damage. If you have success in both the checks, you make a single-use powder quantity: you can throw it in the middle of a combat and all the people or objects in a radius of 10 feet must make a Reflex ST against a DC of 10 + your ranks in the skill. If they fail, they suffer the damage. The damage bonus of the powder is +3.

Ritual charms: Sometimes, before performing a ritual a Sorcerer must prepare some components. The average DC for this is 20. If he fails, the ritual has a critical failure. Only a Sorcerer can use this application of the Skill.

- **Calligraphy.** You are skilled in crafting books, parchments, or bullrushes. Use the table in the Adventure Roleplaying core rulebook to determine the difficulty of a craft.

FEATS

Feats are the most important element in the True20 system. Thanks to them, every character can have a particular which makes him different from the others. In the Hyborian Adventures setting there are several feat lists: General, Expert, Warrior, Sorcerer, Background and Trait. There are two types of Traits in Hyborian Adventures: in the case of human cultural and racial backgrounds, traits are used to represent negative aspects of a particular culture such as the Cimmerian's bluntness or the Shemite's fatalism. Traits are also used to supplement the existing animal and monster features described in the True20 Bestiary and represent abilities unique to creatures of the Hyborian Age. Feats from these last two cannot be taken if not part of the background you've chosen at the creation of your character. In this chapter you'll find the complete list of the new feats. Thanks to Ian "Rhyopewood" for the majority of them!

New Feat Descriptions

New Feat Category: Sorcerer Feats

Name	Summary	Name	Summary
Alchemy Expertise	+2 bonus to you power check when creating any magical charm	Quicken Power	Reduce the time requested to use your power. This doesn't apply to rituals.
Alchemy Mastery	+2 bonus to your fatigue check when creating any magical charm	Ritual Master	You are an expert in performing a ritual
Empower	You can increase the effective rank of your powers	Shield Penetration	+2 bonus to overcome a target Psychic Shield
Erase Signature	You can erase supernatural signatures	Subtle Power	You can mute the signature of your powers
Familiar	Determine how far it is between any two points You have a supernatural bond with a special companion	Supernatural Focus	+3 bonus with a chosen power
Imbue Item	You can craft supernatural items	Supernatural Talent	+2 bonus with two chosen powers
Mind Over Body	Substitute your Wisdom score for your Constitution check	Supreme Item	You can craft unlimited-use supernatural items
Permanent Curses	Your curses last forever	Widen Power	Affect an area with your powers

Alchemy Expertise (Sorcerer)

Prerequisite: Imbue Item, Craft (alchemy) 5 ranks

You gain a +2 competence bonus to your power check when creating every kind of magical charm. You can take this feat only once, but it applies to any power.

Alchemy Mastery (Sorcerer)

Prerequisite: Alchemy Expertise, Craft (alchemy) 15 ranks

You gain a +5 competence bonus to your fatigue check when creating a magical charm (but consider the laborious powers rule in the proper chapter!) You can take this feat only once, but it applies to any power.

Bite Attack (Background)

When you are grappling an opponent, you can choose to bite him. You gain a +1 bonus to damage for every four total levels, rounding up. All damage from the bite is lethal (piercing) rather than non-lethal.

Blunt Speaking (Trait)

You are blunt and direct in your speaking, a habit that has been known to get you into trouble on any number of occasions. You have -2 penalty on all Diplomacy and verbal-based Bluff skill checks.

Corrupted (Trait)

You are weak willed and susceptible to temptations, especially those that offer you the chance to improve your personal power. You have -2 penalty on all saving throws versus Corruption and on any checks that oppose your chosen Vice.

Distillation Expertise (General)

Prerequisite: Nimble, Craft (alchemy) 5 ranks

The Character who take this feat ignores the dexterity check to avoid to come into contact with the poison or explosive powder he's preparing. He's so much skilled in this operation that he cannot make a mistake.

Fatalist (Trait)

You are fatalistic, firmly believing that your destiny is

written whatever you may choose to do about it. If today is your day to die then you will die, however, much you may duck and weave to cling to life. You have a -1 penalty to all saving throws to avoid injury and death.

Fated (Background)

The Hyborian peoples are the leading culture in the time of Conan the Barbarian. You gain 1 point of Conviction to reflect your heroic destiny.

Illiterate (Trait)

You begin play unable to read or write in your native language. You must spend an additional rank or bonus language choice to gain literacy.

Note: This applies only to native languages with an alphabet. Regardless of this trait, all characters are assumed to be illiterate by default in bonus languages and any subsequently taken Language ranks unless literacy is paid for (T20 page 37).

Knowledgeable (Background)

You come from a highly knowledgeable culture that eschews schooling in the esoteric laws of all kinds. You gain a +1 bonus to three Knowledge specialisations of your choice.

Killer Instinct

You are a merciless, stone-cold killer able to deliver the killing blow without a trace of compassion. You gain a +2 bonus to damage when delivering a coup de grace attack.

Incorruptible (General)

Everytime you take this feat you gain a +1 bonus to your Corruption checks. You can take it up to 5 times.

Natural Hunter (General)

You are a natural and experienced hunter. You gain +1 bonus to hit and to damage rolls when fighting creatures of the Animal type with melee weapons or ranged weapons within one range increment. You may take this feat more than once up to a maximum bonus of +3.

Nimble (General)

You have nimble and dextrous touch. You gain a +1 bonus to Craft, Disable Device, and Sleight of Hand skill checks. Eligible Craft specialisations include those that involve quick and nimble fingers.

Nocturnal (Trait)

You are so close to being nocturnal that you barely function during the daytime. You have a -1 penalty to all attack rolls and skills checks made during the hours of daylight.

Permanent Curses (Sorcerer)

Prerequisite: Power rank +13

Your curses are so much powerful that last forever if not removed with the Ward Power. A Sorcerer can willingly stop the effect of his own curse. See the proper chapter for more informations about curses.

Ranged Shot (Background)

You are very accurate when shooting with a bow at extreme ranges. You gain a +1 bonus to attack rolls with any bow if the target is at least six range increments away, rising to a +2 bonus if the target is at least nine range increments away. If you also have the Far Shot feat, the minimum conditions required to obtain these bonuses are reduced to four range increments and six range increments respectively.

Ritual Master (Sorcerer)

You're particularly attuned in rituals. You gain a competence bonus of +2 for any check concerning a particular ritual, including Saving Throws for an eventual failure. You can take this feat more than once and everytime you must choose another ritual.

Ruthless Reputation (Background)

The Hyrkanians are known for their ruthless domination in the lands east of Zamora, west of Khitai, and north of Vendhya. You gain a +2 bonus to Diplomacy, Gather Information, and Intimidate skill checks when your martial weapon is visible (although not necessarily drawn).

Sea Legs (General)

You have an affinity with the sea and a natural aptitude for seamanship. You gain a +1 bonus to Acrobatics, Gather Information, and Profession (Sailor) skill checks.

Slow Speaking (Trait)

Slow Speaking (Trait)

Your speech is slow, almost plodding, and does not lend itself well to complex orations, singing, or con tricks. You have -1 penalty on all Diplomacy, and verbal-based Bluff and Perform skill checks.

Sophisticated (Background)

You come from a sophisticated society with complex politics, knowing the power of words and the importance of negotiation. You gain a +1 bonus to all Bluff, Diplomacy, and Sense Motive checks.

Superstitious (Trait)

Your culture has a long tradition of tales and superstitions concerning the power hypnotism, which tends to reinforce

its power against you. You have -2 penalty on all saving throws against hypnotism of any kind.

Supreme Item (Sorcerer)

Prerequisite: Imbue Item, Alchemy 18 ranks, Power rank +18

You can imbue items with unlimited-use powers. An item can be imbued with up to 5 powers. When you use this feat the power DC is increased of 5. When someone else uses that item he must make a Knowledge(supernatural) check against a DC of 20, and if he succeeds he takes the fatigue of the power and all its consequences, but the power is casted like the simple Imbue Item feat.

Suspicious (Trait)

You are naturally wary of others, assuming the worst in negotiations and other social interactions. You have a -1 penalty on all Diplomacy skill checks where your paranoia may get the better of you.

Terrain Mastery (Background)

You have a heightened understanding of a particular type of wilderness arising from your cultural upbringing. You gain a +2 bonus to Notice, Stealth and Survival checks when knowledge of this terrain is an important factor.

You can take this feat more than once but you must specify a different type of terrain each time you take it. Example terrains include: deserts, forests, hills and mountains, icy tundra, jungles, and plains.

Terrified (Trait)

Your culture has a long tradition of tales and superstitions concerning horrors from the Outer Dark. You have -2 penalty on all saving throws against fear checks against supernatural creatures.

The Riddle of Steel (Warrior)

Everytime you held a weapon made of steel you gain a bonus of +1 to your damage roll. You can gain this feat only once and this bonus stacks with any other.

Value (Expert)

Prerequisite: Knowledge (business) 1 rank

You can use your knowledge checks to determine the effective value of an object. The DC is 10 for common objects, 20 for more specialized items and 30 for very peculiar ones.

OTHER FEATURES

"Heroic deeds" also means "Honours and Tentations". That's why in this section you can find some new rules about the Codes of honour and Corruption. Actually the Companion already offers some well-fitting rules in the Honour and Corruption sections, but these ones are expressly based on Howard's novels and stories, and link even more sanity and moral conduct of the character. If you are going to run a "Hyborian Adventures" campaign, you absolutely need to know these rules.

Codes Of Honour

A character can choose a code of honour to follow. I quote from wikipedia: "An honor code or honor system is a set of rules or principles governing a community based on a set of rules or ideals that define what constitutes honorable behavior within that community. The use of an honor code depends on the idea that people (at least within the community) can be trusted to act honorably. Those who are in violation of the honor code can be subject to various sanctions, including expulsion from the institution." There are two kind of honour codes: the Civilised one and the Barbaric one.

The Civilised code of honour feats the main principles of chevalry. It's the code of knights, and it should be similar to this.

- A warrior of honour is the poet of justice and truth.
- A warrior of honour is the guardian of the weak, the defender of the helpless.
- Money, Power, a warrior of honour seeks not these things.
- A warrior of honour salves his life for those he serves.
- Every one dies, not every one truly can ever live, unless they understand and apply the truths of honour and duty.
- No one gains true respect by the murder and the pain of others.
- Those who seek for valour will discover the poets of justice that lie within their noble hearts.

The Barbaric code of honour is the one of pirates and barbarians. Here's a little example of a tipical pirate code of conduct.

- Every man shall obey civil command; the captain shall have one full share and a half in all prizes. the Master, Carpenter, Boatswain, and Gunner shall have one share and quarter.

- If any man shall offer to run away, or keep any secret from the Company, he shall be marroon'd with one bottle of powder, one bottle of Water, one small Arm, and shot.
- If any Man shall steal any Thing in the Company, or game, to the value of a piece of Eight, he shall be Marroon'd or shot.
- If at any Time we should meet at another Marrooner (that is, Pyrate) that man shall sign his Articles without Consent of our Company, shall suffer such Punishment as the Captain and Company shall think fit.
- That a man that shall strike another, whilst these Articles are in force, shall receive Moses's Law (that is 40 Stripes lacking one) on the bare Back.
- That Man that shall snap his Arms, or smoak Tobacco in the Hold, without cap to his Pipe, or carry a candle lighted without lanthorn, shall suffer the same Punishment as in the former Article.
- That Man that shall not keep his Arms clean, fit for an Engagement, or neglect his Business, shall be cut off from his Share, and suffer such other Punishment as the Captain and Company shall think fit.
- If any man shall lose a joint in time of Engagement, shall have 400 Pieces of Eight: if a limb, 800.
- If at any time you meet with a prudent Woman, that Man that offers to meddle with her, without her Consent, shall suffer Death.

A character can create his own code of conduct but only with the permission of the Narrator. If he follows his code he gains a +3 Morale bonus on all will saving throws and a +3 bonus on all Corruption saving throws. Furthermore he gains a +2 bonus to Reputation

The Corruption Track

When a character is in contact with disturbing magical auras he can suffer a spiritual corruption. That's because the worldview portraied in the Conan stories is essentially bleak. There are no cosmic forces for "Good" and "Evil" exists in a very real and concrete manner. Come into contact with a corrupting creature or situation has two possible consequences: a loss of Sanity or a loss of Purity. All the damage rules apply for the Corruption Track.

Corruption check: d20 + Wisdom + Other bonuses
Corruption DC: 15 + Corruption level

Startled, Phobic, Paranoic, Hallucinated are conditions related to Sanity, while Troubled, Disturbed, Detached, Corrupt and Possessed are related to Purity.

Corruption Track				
0	5+	10+	15+	
Startled	Phobic	Paranoic	Hallucinated	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Troubled	Disturbed	Detached	Corrupt	Possessed

Conditions:

- **Startled:** -1 to further Sanity saves
- **Phobic:** -1 to further Sanity saves and he must flee as possible from what has scared him or he's dazed. He's now got a phobia of that. He can make a Will ST against a DC of 20: if he succeeds he can act freely in that scene.
- **Paranoic:** The character loses the first full round, then -2

to defense. He can only take one action. The character starts believing in a number of highly personalised delusions, all of them relating to persecution towards himself.

- *Hallucinated* The character sees objects which are not there, or he hears voices in his head. The first round he's stunned, then he's constantly shaken.
- *Troubled*. The character has occasional nightmares in which he commits atrocious acts. -1 to further Purity saves.
- *Disturbed* The character starts doubting the value of acting ethically and thinking demons would be better to worship. +2 to all charisma related skill checks when dealing with another corrupted character. He's no more got a behaviour code.
- *Detached*. The character is obsessed by the supreme power. -1 to Constitution, +1 to Wisdom, +4 to all charisma related skill checks when dealing with another corrupted character.
- *Corrupt* The character actively seeks out demonic creatures in hope of making a pact with one. He starts have a physical corruption, for example his eyes may be constantly swollen and bloodshot. -2 to Constitution, +2 to Wisdom +6 to all charisma related skill checks when dealing with another corrupted character.
- *Possessed* A demon has taken control of his body. He begins to directly corrupt anyone who makes peaceful contact with him.

Corruption level	Action
0	A nonsense murder.
1	Coning someone to feel more powerful, using a power which alters the senses of the others.
2	Making immoral actions and feeling powerful, using a power which profanes the mind or body of others.
3	Killing someone to feel more powerful, using a power which inflicts a bloody pain on others.
4	Come spontaneously into contact with a demonic entity, summoning an innatural creature.
5	Making a pact with a demonic entity, Using a power that brings spirits from the Outer Dark to life.
+2	If the character is in a corrupting place (such as a dark temple) or if he's got some charm imbued with a corrupting power.

Corruption Recovery:

Wisdom check against a DC of 20

every day: startled, troubled

every week: phobic, disturbed

every month: paranoic

every 2 months: hallucinated

every year: detached

every 2 years: corrupt

An adept (or scholar) can use a Conviction point to automatically recover startled and troubled conditions

Corruption level:

The Corruption level varies from action to action and from power to power. If you come into contact with a creature or in a situation you don't want to, then you make a Corruption check for sanity with a Corruption level in the following table. If you spontaneously do this, then you must make a Corruption check for Purity. The difference is in the hunger of power of the character and his weakness in front of it. Remember that a failure against Purity has an effect on Sanity as for the lethal and non lethal damage in the Damage track.

Corruption level for sanity	Creature or event
1	Seeing a dark sacrifice.
2	A medium-size innatural creature.
3	An enormous innatural creature.
4	A demon.
5	A god.

EQUIPMENT

Hyboria is a land of wars, so weapons are fundamental. But what makes a weapon or an armor so useful is the material in whom it's made. So, in this chapter you'll find some new rules concerning materials, and several new magical items. Consider in Hyborian Adventures weapons are the classical ones: swords, axes, warhammers, knives and so on.

Materials

Bone

An item made of bone has got a -1 penalty to damage or toughness.

Copper

A weapon or an armor made of copper is useless after a combat because it's completely deformed. You must make a Craft (blacksmith) check against a CD of 15 to make it work again.

Iron and Bronze

Actually a weapon made of Iron or bronze is very common in Hyboria. They've got no bonuses or penalties.

Steel

An ancient Cimmerian legend tells that steel was owned by

the Gods, but during a celestial battle it fell from the sky so that men finally stole its secret. It's a very powerful material: a man wielding a weapon made of steel has got a bonus of +4 for breaking another's weapon, while an armor has got a bonus of +2 to toughness.

Steel is also very expensive and rare. An item made of steel has got a wealth bonus is increased of +3.

See also the feat "The Riddle Of Steel" for bonuses concerning steel.

Stone

An item made of stone has got a +2 bonus to damage if cuttusive, but it's also very heavy: add 50% to his normal weight.

Magical, Herbal or Alchemical Items

Crystal ball

A crystal ball gives a +4 bonus to the Scrying and Vision power checks. The wealth DC is 20.

Books of Power

A Book of Power is a bullrush written by a mythical mage, such as Skelos, Toth or Bubastis. The ancient words of these tomes can reveal incredible magical secrets to a Sorcerer who studies them. An item like this is incredibly rare and expensive: it requires a wealth check against a DC of 30 to be bought.

Reading or studying a book like this always requires a Knowledge (supernatural) check against a DC of 20. A tome permits an unlimited use of one or more powers.

For example: The Book of Skelos contains *Drain Soul*, *Ghost Touch*, *Imbue Unlife*, *Plane Shift* and *Summon External*. Worg, a Sorcerer, finds it in a crypt and wants to study from it. He only knows the *Ghost Touch* power of the ones listed in the book. He spends a lot of time on the tome: he uses the other powers apart from the ones he already can, but everytime he must read the book with a Knowledge (supernatural) check against a DC of 20.

Making a personal Book of Power requires an use of the Supreme Item feat over a bullrush crafted with the proper skill.

Exploding Powder

Usually crafted in Kithai, it has a base cost of 10 per pinch (every pinch is a single use). It works automatically when in contact with the air: the explosion requires a Reflex Saving Throw to avoid the damage, whose the bonus is +3.

The cost is variable depending on the saving throw: the base ST is 10 but the wealth difficulty increases of +1 every +5 bonus to difficulty you want to add.

Magical Powders

A pinch of magical powder is a charm which permits a single use of a power. The use of this item is automatic, but the distillation requires both a Craft (alchemy) skill check against a DC of 20 and the use of the Imbue Item feat.

Spices and Compounds

They're very linked to the Craft (alchemy) skill which concerns their preparation. The choice of a particular substance affects the result, such as the Saving Throw DC.

Spice	Effect	Wealth DC
Black lotus	Sleep or Death	5
Golden lotus	Paralysis	5
Green lotus	Killer fury against everyone the target comes into contact	15
Grey lotus	-2 to Dexterity	10
Purple lotus	Paralysis (+10 to Fortitude DC)	20
White lotus	- 2 to Intelligence	10
Yellow lotus	Hallucinations	15
Apples of Derketa	-2 to Constitution	10
Black Scorpion Venom	Death (+5 to Fortitude DC)	15
Cobra Venom	Death (+10 to Fortitude DC)	20

Ready-to-use-poisons

If you aren't an Alchemist but you need to kill someone silently, maybe it's better you find some merchant soon and buy one of these...

Poison	Effect and Fortitude DC	Duration of the effect	Wealth DC
Black lotus poison	Death DC 15	In 1 hour	15
Golden lotus poison	Paralysis DC 15	10 rounds	15
Green lotus poison	Killer fury against everyone the target comes into contact DC 20	10 rounds	25
Grey lotus poison	-2 to Dexterity DC 20	10 minutes	20
Purple lotus poison	Paralysis DC 20	10 minutes	25
White lotus poison	- 2 to Intelligence DC 20	15 minutes	15
Yellow lotus poison	Hallucinations DC 25	15 minutes	20
Apples of Derketa	-2 to Constitution DC 25	30 minutes	30
Black Scorpion Stygian poison	Death DC 20	In 30 minutes	25
Cobra Venom poison	Death DC 25	In a minute	30
Red Dope	The character ignores all the fatigue conditions	10 minutes	15
Black Dope	The character ignores all the damage conditions	10 minutes	20

SORCERY AND SUPERNATURAL

In a fantasy game, of any genre, there's magic. In Howard's vision, the supernatural is something mysterious and dangerous. Everyone flees from it if he wants to save his soul. Magic is so a mystical energy: it can be used only by a tight group of people, the Sorcerers, or by the Gods themselves, who can fully draw it because of their nature. But since Sorcerers are human, they're corruptible, weaker than the demonic creatures who inhabit the Outer Dark. That's why they often fall insane. In this chapter you'll find some new rules concerning the use of powers and new "Definitions" or rather descriptors, and learn everything you should know about the supernatural, but remember: how to use it it's up to you...

Laborious Powers

The Hyborian magic is more fatiguing than any other. A Sorcerer can even come out of a magic battle dying, because he draws an energy that is devastating even for his body. So, when you use a power, you always have to calculate the

fatigue DC as:

Fatigue DC: 10 + All the character's Scholar levels

New Power Definitions

Corrupting:

Using some powers requires a Corruption saving throw. See the related chapter in this setting. The Corruption level varies from +1 for to +5.

Ritual:

The powers marked this way can only be casted as a ritual. For more informations see the "Ritual magic" rules in the Companion (page 83), but consider in Hyborian Adventures there are some modifications. Before a ritual, the players must choose who's gonna be the leader of it, so who makes the final power check, and her helpers. The "Ritual" definition implies some other descriptions too:

- *Difficulty*, if it's a very hard ritual. This value must be added to the final power check DC. Also, this description may include an ability check (and its difficulty) that the leader must succeed before starting the ritual.
- *Ritualists*, which defines the number of helpers for the leader of the ritual. Everyone of them must make the same ability check which is asked to the leader. If they succeed, each of them gives him a +2 bonus for the final power check. If a power is corrupting, they must make a Corruption check too.
- *Components*, if there's the necessity to prepare some charms before the ritual itself. In this case see the Craft (alchemy) speciality in the proper chapter.
- *Time*, the duration of the ritual itself. You must consider this instead of the one in the Adventure Roleplaying.

A ritual is a very hard and dangerous practice. A critical

failure (a natural 1 on the final Power check) may cause one of the following random events. To determine it, roll your die again without any bonus. A critical failure cannot be ignored using a Conviction point.

D20 result	Effect
01 - 10	Something is gone wrong: the magical energy is depleted and the leader of the ritual is exhausted.
11 - 13	A magical blast hits the Sorcerer. He must make a Toughness Saving Throw against a DC of 20.
14 - 16	The place of the ritual is filled with magical energy and explodes. All the presents must make a Toughness saving throw against a DC of 20.
17 - 19	An area of 5 miles is devastated by earthquakes, storms and meteorites, while the Scholar's soul is taken by a demon coming from the Outer Dark, who opens a rift in the middle of the ritual's place.
20	A rift is opened and demons from the Outer Dark bring all the present's souls with them, for being damned forever. An area of 10 miles of radius is devastated by earthquakes, storms and meteorites.

Powers

Name	New Definition
Apport	<i>Ritual: Difficulty +5, 5 Ritualists, Time 10 minutes</i>
Arord's Curse	
Beast Link	
Bliss	
Body Control	
Calm	
Cold Shaping	
Combat Sense	

Powers	
Name	New Definition
Cure	
Cure Blindness/Deafness	
Cure Disease	
Cure Poison	
Dominate	<i>Corrupting +3</i>
Drain Vitality	<i>Corrupting +2</i>
Drain Soul	<i>Corrupting +3, Ritual: Difficulty +5 (Wisdom DC 20), Components, Time 1 day of preparation.</i>
Earth Shaping	
Elemental Aura	<i>Ritual: Difficulty +5, Components, Time 1 minute</i>
Elemental Blast	
Elemental Resistance	
Elemental Weapon	
Energy Shaping	
Enhance Ability	
Enhance Other	<i>Ritual: Difficulty +5 (Charisma DC10), 4 Ritualists, Time 1 minute</i>
Enhance Senses	
Fire Shaping	
Flesh Shaping	
Freezing Sight	
Ghost Touch	<i>Corrupting +1</i>
Harm	<i>Corrupting +2</i>
Heart Reading	
Heart Shaping	<i>Corrupting +1</i>
Illusion	
Imbue Life	<i>Corrupting +2 , Ritual: Difficulty +5 (Wisdom DC 20), 10 Ritualists, Components, Time 1 hour</i>
Imbue Unlife	<i>Corrupting +5, Ritual: Difficulty +10 (Wisdom DC 20), Components (DC 30), Time 30 minutes</i>
Kaivina's Curse	
Light Shaping	
Manipulate Object	
Mind Probe	<i>Corrupting +1</i>
Mind Reading	
Mind Shaping	<i>Corrupting +2</i>
Mind Swap	<i>Corrupting +3, Ritual: Difficulty +5, 5 Ritualists, Components, Time 10 minutes</i>
Mind Touch	
Move Object	
Nature Reading	
Object Reading	
Pain	<i>Corrupting +2</i>
Phase	<i>Ritual: Difficulty +0 (Charisma DC15), Components, Time 10 minutes</i>
Plague	<i>Corrupting +4</i>

Powers	
Name	New Definition
Plane Shift	<i>Corrupting +2, Ritual: Difficulty +10 (Intelligence DC 20), Components, Time 30 minutes</i>
Plant Shaping	
Psychic Blast	
Psychic Reflection	
Psychic Trap	
Scrying	
Second Sight	
Self-Shaping	
Sense Minds	
Severance	<i>Corrupting +1</i>
Sleep	
Suggestion	<i>Corrupting +2</i>
Summon Beasts (Bestiary)	<i>Corrupting +1</i>
Summon Elemental (Bestiary)	<i>Corrupting +2</i>
Summon External (Bestiary)	<i>Corrupting +5, Ritual: Difficulty +10 (Charisma DC 20), Components, 4 Ritualists, Time 30 minutes</i>
Supernatural Speed	
Supernatural Strike	
Supernatural Weapon	
Teleport	<i>Ritual: Difficulty +10, Components, Time 10 minutes</i>
Transform	
Truth-Reading	
Visions	<i>Corrupting +1, Ritual: Difficulty +5 (Wisdom DC 10), Components, 4 Ritualists, Time 10 minutes</i>
Ward	
Water Shaping	
Weather Shaping	<i>Corrupting, +1 Ritual: Difficulty +0 (Charisma DC 10), Components, Time 20 minutes</i>
Wind Shaping	
Wind Walk	

New Powers

Aarord's Curse

Concentration, Fatiguing

A black cloud of dark magic comes out of your hands and starts fluctuating towards the target. He must make a Will saving throw against your power saving throw DC or suffer one of the following effects:

- He becomes sterile.
- The next person he will meet, she will hate him violently.
- Everytime he makes a 20 with his die, it's considered as a 1.
- He starts to get older faster.
- In the next week, some thieves will steal all his wealth.

- One of his friends or his relatives gets badly ill.
- The most powerful object (the one with the highest bonus or the one with the most powerful magic) the character owns in that moment becomes useless.
- He can wield only objects as one-handed.

The duration of the power in years is equal to the Sorcerer's level.

Time: The Aarord's Curse requires a full-round action.

Drain Soul

Concentration, Fatiguing, Mental Contact

Prerequisites: Harm, Power rank 18

The Sorcerer draws away the soul of your target to be damned forever in the Outer Dark. The DC for Drain Soul is 30, but the target can make a Will saving throw against the Sorcerer's power DC after the power check. If he succeeds, the power fails.

Time: full round.

Retry: Only after a day has passed.

Freezing Sight

Fatiguing, Maintenance, Mental Contact

After the Sorcerer has established a mental contact with the target, he watches him in his eyes and imposes him to stop. The target makes a Will saving throw against the power DC of the Sorcerer. If he fails, he's frozen, or rather he cannot move his body, but only his eyes as long as the Sorcerer maintains the power. If he succeeds, nothing occurs.

Time: 2 rounds

Retry: not against the same target

Kaivina's Curse

Concentration, Maintenance

The Sorcerer inflicts a curse with obscure magical words. The target must make a Will saving throw against the Sorcerer's power DC. If he fails, he suffers the effect of the curse, a non-cumulative penalty to any check as listed in the table, as long as the power is maintained:

Power Result	Penalty
10	-1
15	-2
20	-3
25	-4
30	-5

Retry: yes

Mind Swap

Concentration, Fatiguing, Mental Contact

You can swap the mind of two people, for example your mind with the one of a beast, or the minds of a man with another. First of all, you need to keep a mental contact with both the creatures. Then you make a skill check against a difficulty of 25. If you succeed, then it's time for the victims to make their Will saving throws against your DC. If you are swapping your own mind, you obviously forgo the saving throw. If both of them fails, the swap occurs.

Time: full-round action.

Retry: only after a day against the same victims.

Plague

Fatiguing

Prerequisites: Power Rank +13

The Sorcerer can infect one or more victims with a terrible disease by a powerful anathema. To do this, he must choose his target/s as listed in the next table and make a power check. If he beats the DC the infection spreads and the target/s must make a Fortitude saving throw against the Sorcerer's power DC. The disease is a -4 ability damage which the scholar can freely manage; for example he can choose his plague to give -2 to Strength and -2 to Intelligence.

If the target/s beat the Fortitude DC, they won't be infected. If they fail, their disease will last till the end of the contagion, a period in weeks equal to the Sorcerer's levels. A "Cure Disease" power check can cure a person if its result is higher than the Plague one.

A Plague can be lethal if the power check result falls in a category higher than your target's. In this case, the infected people die in usually a couple of days if they fail their Fortitude saving throw.

Target	DC
A single person	20
A small village	25
An entire city	30
An entire region	35
An entire nation	40

Time: full-round action

Retry: only after a day has passed

Transform

Fatiguing, Maintenance, Mental Contact

Prerequisites: Flesh Shaping

The Sorcerer can transform a being into another. He makes a power check against a DC depending on what creature he wants the target to be transformed into as listed in the following table, and if he succeeds the target makes a Will saving throw against the Sorcerer's power DC. Also, he can willingly forgo the saving throw and the caster can use this power on himself. The effect lasts till it is maintained by the Sorcerer. The familiarity modifiers apply: for example if you want to transform a target in a dragon and you've seen a creature like that only once, the DC is increased by +25, so that means you practically can't transform anything into it.

You can try to recognise someone you know as transformed with a Notice check against a DC equal to her power saving DC.

Creature Size	DC
Medium	15
Large, Small	20
Huge, Tiny	25
Gargantuan, Diminutive	30
Colossal, Fine	35

Time: full round action

Retry: yes

A Sorcerer can choose a speciality if he wants. A narrator can follow the rules at page 32 in the Companion to create a speciality like "Necromancy", "Elemental Shaping" or "Psionics",

but consider Hyborian Adventure, thanks to the True20 Adventure roleplaying core rulebook already offers a good choice for powers and fets concerning specialization.

Faiths and Pantheons

The Hyborian world knew as many cults and religions as it knew tribesfolk and peoples. Religious practices and beliefs were as often the result of superstitious dread and sorcerous practices as of exalted spiritual yearnings and theological understanding.

In any case, the age bred few atheists, and even the most cynical of philosophers accepted the existence of greater beings, evil ones over all, as a fundamental tenet of reality. Though the various individual gods were often worshipped within strict geographical boundaries, the age was thoroughly polytheistic, and it was a matter of course for nations to acknowledge the existence of rival deities to their own. The major exception to this rule was to be found among certain priests and adherents to the god Mitra who declared their deity to be the one true god, deserving of unwavering, monotheistic devotion.

Among the barbarian Aesir and Vanir of Nordheim, **Ymir the Frost Giant**, lord of storm and war, was chief of all gods, while individual tribes might have their own local deities as well. Ymir's domain was Valhalla, a snowy, shadowy place that was home to warriors fallen in battle; Ymir's daughter, **Atali**, was said to have appeared to dying warriors as harbinger of their journey to her father's realm.

The Cimmerians worshipped a grim and savage god, **Crom**, Lord of the Great Mountain, who cared little for mankind save to breathe into men's souls the power to strive and slay. The Cimmerians believed in a shadowy afterlife in which the souls of the dead would wander Crom's grey realm aimlessly for all eternity.

The Hyperboreans to the east worshipped ancient **Bori**, while west of Cimmeria the Picts served **Jhebbal Sag**, the "ancient god of darkness and fear", as well as the **Ghost Snake** and **Gullah** the gorilla-god. Unlike the Cimmerians, the Picts had no aversion to human sacrifice, and their black altars were permanently stained with the gore of men, women and children.

In the kingdoms of Aquilonia, Argos, Ophir, Nemedia and Zingara, south of Nordheim and Cimmeria, **Mitra** worship was almost universal, rivaled here and there only by cults of small numbers such as that of **Asura**, **Ibis**, **Ishtar**, and even, to some degree, the Stygian serpent-god, **Set**. Unlike the battle-minded gods of the north, Mitra was a gentle god. Blood sacrifice was expressly forbidden in the Mitran religion, the rituals of which were marked by simplicity, dignity, and beauty. Unlike pagan idols, the statues of Mitra were mere emblems meant to represent the god in idealized form and *not* to be worshipped themselves.

Koth, which at one time knelt to Mitra, afterwards fell under the influence of Shem and Stygia and abandoned the gentle god for the more sensual rites of **Ishtar**, as did **Khoraja** and **Khauran**.

The city-states of Corinthia may each have had patron gods, though Mitra-worship was known there, as was the cult of **Anu** the bull-god.

Zamora, on the other hand, never accepted Mitra but played host rather to any number of weird and mysterious cults and

divinities. Most notorious of them was **Bel**, the god of thieves, borrowed from the Shemites of Shumir, and most horrible was the nameless **spider-god of Yezud**, worshipped in the form of a giant tarantula sculpted in black stone.

The land of Shem also worshipped a plethora of divine beings, most of them fertility gods and goddesses as befitting an agricultural people. Each city-state owned its own patron deity such as **Bel**, noted earlier, and **Pteor**, the male sky-god, mate to the Earth-Mother; the latter appeared in several guises as **Ashtoreth**, **Derketo** and **Ishtar**. **Ishtar**, in particular, was worshipped in rich temples and at lavish shrines with rituals of blood sacrifice and orgiastic frenzy performed before sensuously carved idols of ivory.

To the Zuagir tribesmen of the Eastern Desert, **Yog**, the ancient demon Lord of the Empty Abodes, was considered most sacred.

South of Shem, in Stygia, **Set the Old Serpent** reigned paramount, a reminder of the Elder Gods worshipped everywhere in the pre-human period of history and later feared in the Hyborian kingdoms as the most abhorrent and foul of demons. Indeed, the gruesome rituals of Set worship, carried out in temple, tomb and pyramid, and including live human sacrifice and sorcerous obscenities, only underscored the reason why Set's very name evoked disgust and terror among civilized and barbarian peoples alike.

Among the Black Kingdoms Set held some sway, but native gods such as **Jullah**, **Jhil** and **Gwahlur** had large followings of their own, as did countless local demons and spirits.

Turan in the east held **Erlik** and the **Living Tarim** as holiest of gods, while Zamboula bowed to **Hanuman** the horrible man-ape god.

Farther east in Kosala, the cult of **Yajur** offered their bloodthirsty god strangled humans, while in Khitai **Yun** seems to have been worshipped less violently with incense and prayer.

The Gods Of Hyboria					
Name	Culture	Status	Spheres of Influence	Sex	Aliases
Ajujo	Black Kingdoms	Demi	Combat, Luck, Plagues	Male	
Anu	Ophir	Demi	Fertility, Strength	Male	
Ashtoreth	Shem	Demi	Fertility, Protection	Female	
Asura	Vendhya, Iranistan	Intermediate	Healing, Illusions, Knowledge, Serpents	Male	
Bel	Zamora, Shem	Lesser	Chaos, Death, Trickery	Unknown	The Masked God
Bori	Hyperborea	Demi	Strength, War	Male	
Crom	Cimmeria	Demi	(none)	Male	The Grim Grey God
Dagon	Shem, Black Kingdoms	Lesser	Protection, Water, Weather	Male	
Damballah	Zembabwei, Black Kingdoms	Lesser	Death, Evil, Serpents	Male	Set (Stygia)
Derketo	Stygia, Shem, Black Kingdoms	Demi	Healing, Seduction	Female	Derketa (Black Kingdoms)
Erlik	Turan, Hyrkania	Intermediate	Death, Knowledge, Prophecy	Male	The God of the Yellow Hand of Death
Golden Peacock	Shem	Demi	Blood, Trickery	Unknown	
Gwahlur	Keshan	Demi (?)	Darkness, Prophecy	Male	The King of Darkness
Hanuman	Zamboula, Vendhya	Demi	Beast, Illusion, Knowledge	Male	Lord of the Black Throne
Harakht, Hawk-God of	Stygia	Demi	Animal, Knowledge, War	Male	
Ibis	Stygia, Nemedi	Demi	Knowledge, Magic, Protection	Male	
Ishtar	Shem, Koth, Khauran, Khoraja	Lesser	Earth, Healing, Fertility, Seduction	Female	Earth-Mother, Shub-Niggurath
Jhebbal Sag	Pictland, Black Kingdoms	Lesser	Beast, Chaos, Strength	Male	Lord of Beasts
Jhil	Ghanata (Darfar), Picts	Demi	Air, Law, Strength	Male	
Jullah	Black Kingdoms, Picts	Demi	Beast, Strength	Male	Gullah (Pictland)
Kali	Vendhya, Ghulistan	Lesser	Death, Fertility, Healing, War	Female	The Black Mother
Mitra	Western Kingdoms	Intermediate	Good, Healing, Protection, Sun	Male	
Nebethet	Punt	Demi	Death, Luck, Prophecy	Female	The Ivory Goddess
Nergal	Shem	Lesser	Destruction, Plague, War	Male	
Pteor	Shem	Lesser	Air, Fertility, Strength	Male	Adonis
Set	Stygia, Shem, Black Kingdoms	Intermediate	Death, Evil, Magic, Serpents, Weather	Male	Father Set, The Great Serpent, Damballah (Black Kingdoms)
Wiccana	Brythunia	Demi	Healing, Plant	Female	Nature Goddess
Xotli	Atlantis	Demi	Blood, Evil	Unknown	
Yajur	Kosala	Demi	Death, Prophecy	Unknown	The God of Yota-Pong
Yama	Meru	Demi	Evil, Fire	Male	King of Devils
Ymir	Nordheim	Demi	Destruction, Strength, War	Male	The Frost Giant
Yog	Darfar, Zuagirs	Demi	Bats, Blood, Darkness	Unknown	The Lord of Empty Abodes
Yun	Khitai	Lesser	Guardian, Plant	Male?	
Zath	Zamora	Demi	Darkness, Spiders	Unknown	Omm, The Spider-God of Yezud

Taken from "hyboria.xoth.net" by Thulsa

BESTIARY

The fantasy genre is made not only of magical cities, sorcerers, warriors, but also of monsters. In this chapter you'll find a complete list of the monsters you can meet during your adventures. They're taken both from the **Aventure Roleplaying Core Rulebook** and from the **Bestiary**. Some of them are not actually present in Howard's stories, but they've been added to leave the narrator even more choice and to make adventures more exciting, but remember: Hyborian Adventures is a low-fantasy setting, so it's better make the characters encounter with some humans instead of creatures.

Hyborian Age Creatures

- Allip (Bestiary)
- Animated Armor (Bestiary)
- Ankheg (Bestiary)
- Ape (Bestiary)
- Avatar of Decay (Bestiary)
- Baboon (Bestiary)
- Badger (Bestiary)
- Bat
- Bear
- Behir (Bestiary)
- Bison (Bestiary)
- Blood-Pudding
- Boar
- Bodak (Bestiary)
- Caliban
- Camel (Bestiary)
- Cat
- Centipede, Small (Bestiary)
- Centipede, Medium (Bestiary)
- Cheetah (Bestiary)
- Cloacker (Bestiary)
- Corpse-Stitched Abomination (Bestiary)
- Crocodile (Bestiary)
- Crocodile, Giant (Bestiary)
- Crypt Wight
- Deer
- Dire Animal (Bestiary) *appliable to any common animal*
- Dog
- Donkey (Bestiary)
- Draug (Bestiary)
- Elemental, Huge (Bestiary) *Air, Earth, Fire, Water*
- Elephant (Bestiary)
- Ferret (Bestiary)
- Fiend (Bestiary) *all*
- Fox (Bestiary)
- Genie (Bestiary) *all*
- Ghoul (Bestiary)
- Ghost
- Gorgon (Bestiary)
- Hag (Bestiary)
- Hawk
- Horse
- Hyena (Bestiary)
- Jade Eviscerator (Bestiary)
- Kraken (Bestiary)
- Leopard (Bestiary)
- Lich (Bestiary)
- Lion (Bestiary)
- Lizard (Bestiary)
- Lizard, Monitor Lizard (Bestiary)
- Locathah (Bestiary)
- Licanthrope (Bestiary)
- Lynx (Bestiary)
- Medusa (Bestiary)
- Minotaur (Bestiary)
- Monkey (Bestiary)
- Moose (Bestiary)
- Mosquito, Giant
- Mule (Bestiary)
- Mummy (Bestiary)
- Naga (Bestiary) *Guardian*
- Necrite (Bestiary)
- Night Hag (Bestiary)
- Owl (Bestiary)
- Owl, Giant (Bestiary)
- Pony (Bestiary)
- Porpoise (Bestiary)
- Praetor Of Souls (Bestiary)
- Praying Mantis (Bestiary)
- Purple Worm (Bestiary)
- Rat
- Rat, Dire
- Raven (Bestiary)
- Rhinoceros (Bestiary)
- Sahuagin (Bestiary)
- Scorpion (Bestiary) *all*
- Shadow (Bestiary)
- Skeleton
- Snake, Constrictor
- Snake, Giant Constrictor (Bestiary)
- Snake, Viper
- Spectre (Bestiary)
- Spider (Bestiary) *all*
- Swarm (Bestiary) *all*
- Swarm, Killer Bee
- Termite, Giant (Bestiary) *all*
- Tiger (Bestiary)
- Vampire
- Wasp, Giant (Bestiary)
- Weasel (Bestiary)
- Whale, Baleen (Bestiary)
- Whale, Cachalot (Bestiary)
- Whale, Orca (Bestiary)
- Wight (Bestiary)
- Wolf
- Wolverine (Bestiary)
- Wraith (Bestiary)
- Zombie

Character Templates

The darkest secrets of Hyboria lie in the deep of the human mind. Obsessed by the supreme power, men would like to sell their soul to an higher entity to reach it. It's this way semi-humans come to birth, or rather, rebirth as demonic beings. These templates will make the characters feel what corruption is...and you can find them in the Bestiary!

- Half-fiend
- Lich
- Lycanthrope
- Skeleton
- Vampire
- Zombie



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